

YOUR GUIDING LIGHT

South Australian Tourist Guide Association

SATGA NEWSLETTER

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Greetings from your Editor,

Once again my leading article can not ignore the current world wide situation affecting most countries and in particular our involvement in tourism.

Headlines like '*Jaws of life as tourism faces dark winter*' and '*Tourism loses \$23bn and rising*' make sad reading after years of positive increases in the sector around the country. Add to this national downturn affecting many tour operators the estimated loss of around 100,000 employees jobs in the industry the forecasts are of dire straits for the next two years at least.

By 2022 it is estimated to see a reduction of 30 per cent in the tourism industry and only a fast track opening of borders between states and nearby bubbles to New Zealand and selected routes to Islands in the Pacific would assist the industry. For example the operator of Hartley's Crocodile Adventures wildlife park in north Queensland, a family run business are losing \$170,000 a month and have been forced to lay-off 55 staff across their three wildlife tourism businesses. Recent data based on payroll information to the tax office quotes a drop of a fifth of turnover and rising. This relates to a loss to tourism of at least \$11.8bn at the end of May after international borders closed.

Now we face additional situations like State lockdowns and border closures. This will further reduce domestic travel as well and a report quotes nights away from home for April/May last year have fallen from 20.5 million to just 4.6 million.

On a brighter note let's not forget that border issues within Australia are not new. Due to errors made by surveyors in the early days our SA border with what became Victoria veered of the 141 degree meridian longitude and was finally redrawn much later. In the process we lost 1,300km² of territory to be forfeited to our neighbours. What a confusion if you lived there.

P.T.

K I revisited



A field of Xanthorrhoea or Yacca

My recent trip to the lovely Kangaroo Island gave me a good view of nature's ability to re-grow many species after terrible fire damage. The Yacca, also known as grasstree is coming back to glory with blossoms covering the centre stem and new shoots from its base. Native plants are survivors but the regrowth will take a while to cover the main burnt out region of Flinders Chase and large trees will take many years to be replaced. How lizards, skinks and geckos have survived is still to be discovered. A recent program on TV pointed to techniques used by animals to survive the fire front where koalas climb to the top of a tall tree and try to see the fire front pass and kangaroos bounce along the burning front to hop right through at a lower density path. Groups of red tailed black cockatoos have been seen again near casuarinas, acacias and banksias the source of their seed supply. We spotted the Kangaroo Island wallaby at Murray's Lagoon and as locals tell me there is great hope that wild pigs may not have survived. I was also fortunate to meet up with Trevor Hammond at their boatshed along the inlet American River. The R.I.G. or rebuild *Independence* group had a farewell evening at the shed to thank a group of students from Flinders University that had concluded a dig nearby of what they called an 'anomaly' of marine origin.

The student leader will publish their findings soon. It was a great evening to meet other members of the re-build group, Cont

cont..... KI re-visited

local dedicated volunteers with plenty of enthusiasm including Toni the person to captain the schooner once completed. It will soon be a tourism must visit we hope. P.T.



Pennington Bay

Staying with KI I wish to include some information given to me by Joc S. as a review to a book just published by Wakefield Press. Titled:

The Kangaroo Islanders-A story before colonisation 1823, by W.A. Cawthorne and edited by R. Hosking

This short novella, penned by Adelaide colonial schoolteacher William Anderson Cawthorne in 1854 appears as a simple “ripping yarn” and written in the best “Boys Own” tradition, laced with Olde English Nautical terms, set on exotic Kangaroo Island. On the surface this early serialised historical story, is a rare incite into SA’s pre-colonial history and early European encounters with the Continent’s Aboriginal inhabitants. Cawthorne’s father was the first lighthouse keeper at Cape Willoughby on K I in the 1850’s. Whilst visiting his father Cawthorne heard his stories of the early days of sealing as well as the yarns, anecdotes, gossip and hearsay from a hand full of the remaining old sealers still resident around Hogg Bay. He also talked to some of the Palawa, Tasmanian Aboriginal women such as “Old Bette” and “Bumblefoot” (Maggerlede), the sister of Truganinni. These first hand accounts along with a few official sources of the time formed the detailed fabric of this story. As is recorded a small group remained over several winters and stayed permanently giving the backbone to some of these stories.

This publication by Cawthorne gives the reader a good insight to the early settlers lifestyle on the island, their interaction with Aboriginal women and their survival techniques.

Please note: Joc has procured a discount, now \$34 please contact him on his mobile 0409 200 450

CRUISE SHIP UPDATES

Some 13 ships are still parked in waters near Manila with almost 125,000 crew members on board.

But that was only the beginning. Long after the passengers were gone and the cruise ship story had faded from the headlines, thousands of employees were still stuck on the vessels, far from their homes in India, Indonesia, the Philippines and other far –flung nations.

Most were barred from boarding jets to return home. The cruise companies decided to sort most of their employees by home country, regroup them on their own cruise ships and sail them home. The result however was a disorganised shuffling of workers between vessels that increased their risk of exposure to the virus. In interviews, crew members and officials described dangerous conditions for employees on ships owned by the world’s largest cruise lines. Some cruise ships had allowed employees to congregate in restaurants and bars, serve themselves in buffet bars and even hold parties. Again some ships with outbreaks often did not enforce such basic precautions as social distancing.

The logistics of repatriating cruise members to more than 100 nations was a nightmare for cruise companies, including Royal Caribbean, Carnival and Norwegian Cruise Line.

Some Nations had closed their borders whilst others only allowed limited access under constantly changing rules, therefore thousands of crew members have not made it home.

The latest information from companies refers to the adoption of a colour coded rating scheme for ships – red, yellow or green – indicating its status. Only ships that earn a green rating can fly crew members on commercial flights. To obtain a green rating a ship has to show that it was clear of the virus for at least 28 days. Current situation only 20 of 49 ships have been cleared so far.

The good old days

In a book from the Goolwa area about life between 1877 and 1920 of the region including Port Elliot, Middleton and the mission near Lake Alexandrina I discovered some interesting reading from times gone by when this State had to struggle. The effort to live by rules and regulations created a state of frustration then as it does right now.

Let's start with a light-hearted decree by the Port Elliot council announced in February 1884. It read as follows in respect to swimming in Horseshoe Bay: the Ladies Beach as it became known had its origin to control promiscuous interaction between sexes and a police trooper was appointed (some men had succumbed to temptation) to prevent males from fishing at the Breakwater within view of the bathing ground. But by 1912 the Progress Association under pressure to open access for men and to assist tourism erected two separate bathing houses between the jetty and Commodore point on condition that suitable bathing costume be worn.

During the depression moral was again tested and local council had arrested persons addicted to the use of intoxicating liquor and in particular women using obscene language or unlawfully using abusive words in a public place (today this type language is pretty common including presentations on public television by so called comedians). To camp at the shipyard which happened regularly by the homeless was deemed to be named a rogue or vagabond and given a month's imprisonment with hard labour at the Adelaide Goal. Poor Mrs Bearing a 'phrenologist' was placed in prison for one month for having no lawful or visible means of support. Summons upon summons went out for a host of breaches of the law, most of which were related to destitution. While the unemployed men decided to go on 'wallaby', women had no support and had children to look after as well as their own survival.

P.T.

What we could have enjoyed

Again I can only refer to the common reference in respect to cultural events: **Check it ON LINE**

SCIENCE MONTH of AUGUST

SALA living arts events

The Zoos in both Adelaide and Monarto are back in action

I have also been informed that Elder Hall will be the venue for some live musical performances to limited numbers.

For the science buff

When the naturalist Alexander von Humboldt visited northern Venezuela in 1799 he was not prepared for a source of fat used to flavour food and give fuel for torches used by local tribes. Even when the expedition followed a small river to the mouth of a cave he had no idea what to expect. Sounds reverberated against the rocky vault and echoed in its depth. Piercing shrieks and snarls met the group as they entered the darkness. When the guides raised their torches the light revealed multitudes of funnel shaped nests located about 20m above them. The cave was full of thousands of **birds** locally known as *diablotin*, "little devils" also commonly named oilbirds.

The oilbird is the only species in its own genus fitting the young birds well. Their oil is clear and odourless and so pure it lasts for a year without going rancid. Indigenous people had known about this bird for centuries and harvested its fat taking only young birds weighing half again as their parents near the entrance of the cave. They forage in the surrounding forests at night for fruit of palm and laurel trees, which they swallow whole, regurgitating the seeds. By living in a dark cave and only hunting at night at very low light, the oilbird does not use sonar like the bats, but has developed other tools. It has special long bristles around its beak, which it uses tactile sensing through touch and it also has the most light sensitive eyes of any vertebrate on earth.

This fascinating information and more can be sourced from:
The Bird Way, by Jennifer Ackerman