

Royal Western Australian Historical Society's
Annual Pioneers Memorial Service
on Sunday 26th May 2002 at St Bartholomews Chapel, East Perth Cemeteries,

Commemorating Joseph Hardey

Citation by Greg Hardey

When I consider the Hardey story I can't help but think of the 'Pilgrim Fathers' who left England in a planned and organized way, to follow their faith into the new world.

The Hardey's were people of faith. We know John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, was preaching in and around Barrow on Humber, the small village in the north of Lincolnshire where the family lived. Wesley's diary records he spoke at Barrow at least five times up to his death in 1791. We wonder what affect this had on Robert and Ann Hardey, the parents of Joseph who with his brothers John Wall and William come to the Swan River Colony in 1830, and whom we are commemorating today.

Like the Pilgrims the Hardey's were working class people. After the English 'Enclosures Act' the family had been granted several fields of land while the records show that Robert was a Merchant, working his trade from a grain store in the middle of Barrow. That building still stands in Barrow today.

The voyage to Australia was not undertaken on a whim, it was well managed and planned. Three boys including the eldest son, John Wall Hardey took part in the trip to the Swan River Colony.

Robert and Ann Hardey had fifteen children (10 boys & 5 girls) twelve who lived to reach adulthood. Of these in addition to the 3 who sailed to the Swan River, Samuel was a minister who preached in India, South Africa and the Swan River, Susannah married and sailed for Kingston Jamaica, Edward sailed for India while Henry also came to the Swan River before trying his luck in New Zealand.

Like the Pilgrim settlements to 'New England' the trip to Australia was independently financed. It was backed by a Mr Bernard Clarkson Senior, banker and member of the powerful Missionary Branch of the Committee of British Methodism. Clarkson was a local Methodist preacher at the time John Wesley was still alive. As an aside, two of his sons also formed part of the party to make the trip to the new colony. Bernard Clarkson himself came to the colony at a latter date with 'Uncle John' an uncle of Joseph and John Wall in the Cygnet. This is described in local Methodist history as the 'second wave' of Methodism to the colony.

Other members of the group to make the voyage included the previously mentioned Clarkson Brothers (Michael & James). John Leach (a missionary), other steerage passengers and the Hardey's five indentured servants.

Joseph and John Wall were married to their lifelong partners prior to departure. John Wall married 14 days prior to departure while Joseph Hardey married Ann Robinson 49 days before they set sail.

Their plan was to arrive in the new colony prior to the end of 1830 so they would be eligible for land grants proportional to their capital. We know they intended to farm the land as they brought with them livestock, an assortment of machinery, seeds & plants, household effects, a boat and a variety of building materials. Also included were a library of books and an array of musical instruments, indicating a commitment to the finer aspects of life apart from farming.

The preparation was so complete to include a prefabricated house that was erected in Fremantle and subsequently used as a church

Finally the group left from Hull (on the other side of the Humber) in the 'Tranby' a small 'Snow' (a type of barque) on the 29th September 1829.

Joseph Hardey's dairy indicates the journey was uneventful however dairies of fellow travelers indicated it poured with rain, with the situation so dangerous the captain was ready to abandon ship. Stock were lost, servants absconded at the Cape, there were incidents with pirates and a fireball passed over the ship. Joseph was obviously focused on the job at hand and the Tranby anchored off Fremantle on the 3rd February 1830 after a journey of 128 days.

Brother William died 12 days from the Swan River in mysterious circumstances. Some dairies indicated colic while others speculated he was strangled by a silk handkerchief wrapped around his neck.

Within three days of arrival they had partitioned the Governor for land on the Swan River. Most of the land close to the city we know had been allocated however they were able to convince the governor to allow them to take up the May-lands Peninsula, not very far from here. The Peninsula had originally been set aside as a reserve to be used for a research station.

The manner in which they went about settling the Peninsula indicates the unified desire of the group. The land was surveyed and divided amongst the 'Tranby' folk and they worked in a communal fashion to establish and support each other.

Having arrived early in the colony with a purpose and vision, their achievements were many. Too many to raise in detail. Some of these included:-

Agriculture

Joseph Hardey quickly set about establishing 'Peninsula Farm' at Maylands. By April his dairy notes 'boarding the roof of the house and tarring it', by June he was 'clearing wood off land for com and beginning to sow rye and Oats' while in July 1830 he writes about making a fence across the Peninsula.

The brothers held 204 acres at Maylands with the balance (16,138 acres) allocated in the Avon Valley just outside York at a place called Mount Hardey. The land was originally fanned jointly between Joseph and John Wall but at a later date was split into two properties, Josephs called 'Cold Harbour' while John Wall's property remained known as 'Mount Hardey'.

While the York property has long been divided and sold, Joseph Hardeys original home on the Maylands Peninsula "Tranby House - Peninsula Farm' still remains under the stewardship of the National Trust.

Pioneers

John Wall took place in the second expedition to the Avon Valley undertaken by Robert Dale of the 63rd Regiment. The first had discovered the Avon Valley and had generated favourable reports. In October 1830 Dale undertook his second foray into the hinterland with the Hardey's invited to join the party because of their considered expertise in agriculture. This expedition passed not far from where the brothers were allocated land in December 1830, almost 12 months after their arrival in the colony.

Methodism

During his first Sunday in the colony Joseph conducted a service on the beach for the Tranby' people to express gratitude during their voyage.

Later he sought and gained permission from the governor to preach in the streets of Perth. Joseph spoke under a tree and noted in his dairy the Governors Lady and another came and stood awhile. Both Joseph and John Wall were lay preachers and engaged themselves in extensive social work on behalf of the church. They helped build the first Methodist chapel in Perth called the 'Subscription Chapel' due to the fact that many Methodists bought shares as a contribution to the building fund. This was located on the corner of William and Hay Street where the present Wesley Church stands in Perth.

Education

Joseph was deeply interested in children's education particularly aboriginal. When the 'Education Committee' was formed in 1847 he was appointed to the 'Secular and Scriptural' subcommittee. This in time came to be the Central Board of Education.

This was followed later with one of Joseph's daughters (Sarah) playing a role in establishing Wesley College and later Methodist Ladies College in Perth.

Wine Industry

Being an enterprising farmer Joseph realized the land at 'Peninsula Farm' would lend itself to the cultivation of a vineyard. As early as 1834 he noted in his diary the planting of 6 vines. Later his production reached such a level that he petitioned the governor to allow Store Keepers a license to sell Colonial wines by the bottle to the public.

The product reached such a standard that the Chamber of Commerce awarded him a premium in 1857 for the best sample of colonial manufactured raisins and olive oil while in 1878 wines from his property were the first from Western Australia to win a gold medal in Paris.

Stories

Three family stories of interest.

1. Up until a few weeks prior to departure the Hardey's were booked to sail on the 'Mary'. It was only at the last minute that the 'Tranby' was commissioned when there was some problem with the 'Mary'.
2. Family legend has it that Joseph insisted that none of his daughters was allowed to marry unless she married a minister of the Methodist church. As there was only one minister in the colony all but one remained single. Mary Jane, Joseph's second daughter did marry the Rev. William Lowe who by that time was a widower.
3. Rev. Lowe was already associated with the family in another way as his daughter from his first marriage (Janie Vounder Lowe) had married Joseph's only son, Richard Watson Hardey. Ultimately Janie died young and my grandfather was raised by his aunty, Richard's sister (Mary Jane) and his step uncle who was also his grandfather.

Death

After a life of hard work Joseph Hardey died on the 6th September 1875 aged 71. His obituary in the Inquirer included

Few old colonists have lived a name better known for integrity, uprightness and every quality that commands respect than that of Mr. Joseph Hardey. His life was the fulfillment of a true Christian life and his memory will live green in the hearts of all who knew him. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather his funeral was very numerous and respectfully attended ... nearly every shop in town was closed as the procession passed through the streets.