

Editorial

I am delighted and honoured to be writing this, my first Editorial as Toposcope Editor, in the bicentenary year of the 1820 Settlers' arrival in South Africa. This issue therefore has, unapologetically, a strong 1820 theme. One of many factors that precipitated that British emigration scheme 200 hundred years ago was the 1819 Peterloo Massacre. In this issue we cover that event and its context; we also consider the state of sailing ships in those days and in particular, the experiences of one group of emigrants, the Nottingham party. Missionaries and traders alike were witnesses to, and participants in, those turbulent Frontier times: Dr Sandy Shell writes for us about the beloved Rev James Laing (*Indoda Ebisithanda*), while Margaret Snodgrass throws light on the dynamics of Settlers trading with the amaXhosa.

Our LAHS members enjoy being out and about. We report on visits to two nearby Settler farms that still keep the flags of their 1820 antecedents flying. Further afield, our outings to Hilton Farm and the Piet Retief farm that became Riebeeck East were fascinating and fun. Thank you, Margaret Snodgrass and Sally Poole, for organising these very popular excursions.

There is a sense of occasion in having 14 of our own members share their Settler stories, connecting the past with the present and adding personal detail to a history we may have thought was familiar. Our Lower Albany area was the crucible of settlement and struggle, and many descendants had planned this year to honour their forebears at remembrance services or family reunions, but unfortunately these were scuppered by the Covid19 lockdown.

I thank the many contributors – about 20 - who wrote or found articles for inclusion in this edition. I am grateful to Sally Poole and Suzette Grist for their meticulous proofreading, and Margaret Snodgrass, Gwynn Crothall and Yvonne Surtees for other assistance, not to mention their moral support.

This Journal is produced for our Society members, but is available to anyone interested in the history of our Lower Albany/Ndlambe area. We welcome speakers to address the Society on a variety of topics and places but unfortunately, because of Lockdown we have had very few such meetings this year. For that reason may you enjoy, all the more, the articles in this 51st issue of Toposcope

Sue Gordon