



FRIENDS OF THE ORPHAN SCHOOLS

St John's Park Precinct New Town Tasmania

Issue 37

NEWSLETTER

February 2020

FOX'S FEAST

Our annual event for descendants of Orphan School children will be held on 23 February 2020, the last Sunday in the month.

Fox's Feast was an event that brightened the often bleak year of the children of the Orphan Schools. John Fox was a waterman who plied his trade on the Derwent and he left a bequest to the Orphan School children when he died in 1859.

Our Guest Speaker will be well-known author and historian, Dr Alison Alexander, who will speak about Lady Denison and her involvement with the Orphan Schools. For those who would like to know more about this topic, see Richard Davis and Stefan Petrow (eds.) *Varieties of Vice-Regal Life*, 2004 – or better still, come and listen to Alison on Sunday!

Fox's Feast will start at 11 am and finish at 2 pm. BYO picnic lunch. We will provide tea and coffee. Share with us a 'Taste of Fox's Feast' as enjoyed by the children on their special picnic day.

Our Secretary and Tour organiser, Jane Hodgman, has been researching the food and entertainment provided for the children as part of Fox's Feast and has provided the following summary:

FOX'S FEAST TREATS FOR THE CHILDREN

'cake and tea' (Jan 1861) at the residence of the Hon. H. Cleburne, Restdown

'meat, pudding, cake and confectionary and fruit, milk and water etc.' (Feb 1866) Cornelian Bay

'the feast in the shape of bread and cheese, buns, cakes, lollies and ginger beer' (March 1867) Cornelian Bay.

'milk, tea and other refreshments' (Feb 1868) Rosny Hill

'the refreshments, provided by Mr Cox of Murray Street consisted of buns, cakes, ginger beer and fruit

of all kinds' (22 Feb 1871) – Cascades, in the bush near Degraeves Brewery.

ENTERTAINMENT

a trip across the water in Mr Cleburne's punt, *The Queen* (Jan 1862)

'the youthful Band of Hope . The recently organised band of juvenile musicians from the Institute' (Feb 1865)

'Mr Gagliarti had his drum and fife band on the ground and various pieces were effectively played' (Feb 1866)

'cricket and other games' (Mar 1867)

'the children ... to the number of 420, headed by their fife and drum band arrived at Rosny ... where swings were erected, bats and balls distributed' (Feb 1868)

A site tour will be offered at 2 pm, \$20 pp. Book online at orphanschool.com.au.

Joyce Purtscher's booklet, *The First True Friends of the Orphanage*, which tells the story of John Fox and another benefactor, George Dexter, is available from the Friends of the Orphan Schools for \$5.00. Dianne Snowden's book, *Voices from the Orphan Schools*, will be available at a special discounted rate of \$40 [RRP \$50], cash only.



CONSTITUTION FOR FRIENDS OF THE ORPHAN SCHOOLS - SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

There will be a special General Meeting on Wednesday 4 March 2020 at 5.30 pm to consider a special resolution to approve the constitution. If you would like to see a copy of the draft constitution before the meeting, please contact convenor@orphanschool.org.au.

EXCITING NEWS FROM NEW ZEALAND

Last week Committee Member Bernadette Bell made an exciting discovery: 'I'm visiting my pen

[sewing] skills was Mrs Mary Martha Girle. Her daughter, Mary Ann Girle was a student of around 11 years of age in May 1838, was possibly one of the sewers of the sampler. When Mary Martha Girle and her children Thomas, Samuel and Mary Ann left the orphanage in December 1838, they went to Launceston where Mary Martha and Mary Ann were employed as teachers at the Frederick St School'. More from Bernadette in the next newsletter.

Another Queen's Orphan School sampler has emerged in an overseas collection.



pal of my teenage years in Wanaka, NZ & find she had a Hobart connection. More talking/looking at a family history book & find out her relative was a sub-matron at the Queens Orphan School in Hobart. Mary Martha Girle had arrived in Hobart aboard the Boadicea in 1836 with her 3 children. My friend has a book written about the family with a few references to the orphan school. What a coincidence!'

You might remember in the last newsletter in the story of the sampler Joyce Purtscher wrote 'One teacher who may have had the responsibility of teaching these

NEW PUBLICATION

Joyce Purtscher, Tasmanian Index of Children and Families Contained in files of SWD1 (Neglected Children's Department) 1888 - 1936 [Mt Stuart, Tasmania] Joyce Purtscher, 2019.

Joyce Purtscher has published yet another index, the result of many months of painstaking transcriptions. This time Joyce has indexed the Tasmanian Archives SWD1 files of the Neglected Children's Department and provided a link to the actual online content of each file. The index is an important

contribution to Tasmania's social history during the years 1888-1936 and will be a useful source for family historians and other researchers. It is available to buy through the Hobart Branch of the Tasmanian Family History Society at Bellerive and online at <http://www.hobart.tasfhs.org/care.php>.

The neglected children's index can now be searched on our web site.

FROM THE SHADOWS UPDATE FEBRUARY 2020

Unfortunately, it is no longer possible to have the unveiling of the statues in mid-March. We are waiting to confirm a new date and will let you know as soon as it is confirmed. If you have any questions about this, please email info@fromtheshadows.org.au.

On a positive note, the statues have arrived safely in Hobart and we have almost reached our fundraising target. We only need another \$10,000 to reach our target. To date, we have raised \$205,000 in sponsorships, grants and fundraising. All donations, no matter how small, will be gratefully received.

To donate to this important project, please visit our website at <https://fromtheshadows.org.au>

or email info@fromtheshadows.org.au

or phone 0409 140 657.

Our website now includes a Donate button to make it easier for you to donate.

Donations can also be made by direct deposit.

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Please put your name in the description field. If you would like a receipt, please also email your name and contact details to treasurer@fromtheshadows.org.au

Cheque

Donations can also be made by cheque made payable to From the Shadows Inc.

Postal address: PO Box 4659, Bathurst Street Post Office, Hobart, Tas. 7000

We appreciate any support you can give.

Dr Dianne Snowden AM
Secretary, From the Shadows Inc.

2020 Deadlines for Friends of the Orphan Schools newsletter articles

1 May 2020

1 August 2020

1 November 2020

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