

WELCOMING ADDRESS – CITY TATTERSALLS CLUB
27 APRIL 2018

Descendants of Mordecai:

Welcome to this first of three lunches to be held during our celebration of Mordecai's arrival in the colony of New South Wales.

Before proceeding, it is appropriate that we should acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which we meet and the traditional custodians of all the lands upon which descendants of Mordecai Solomon now live and have lived for two centuries.

We also acknowledge and honour their elders, past and present.

And of course, we also acknowledge our own elders, past and present.

Firstly, I would like to thank, on behalf of us all, John Shrimski for the incredible hard work he has done in organising the detail of our celebrations. John's project management skills have been invaluable in getting us all here today.

And also, I should acknowledge our third conspirator, Adrian Paul, for his great contribution as well.

So how did all this start. Well, it was about two years ago, when after several years of corresponding with Adrian and John, I flippantly suggested we celebrate Mordecai's arrival.....

And they took my suggestion seriously and so the work began

Little did we really know how much work would be involved for us nor the time it has taken?

Some people would think we were mad to have even started.

The organising of the Facebook page, the writing of additional material for the website, tracking down family members, working out a programme providing a wide range of events to choose from and make attendance worthwhile, finding and checking venues, drafting speeches, debating detail, reviewing countless emails, drawing of maps, checking locations and just keeping on top of what needed to be done...

And so it goes.

It has taken a lot of time but the three of us have had a ball doing it although that's not to say it hasn't been stressful at times,

Occasionally it has been but we muddled through.

I am sure you can imagine what it is like when three guys whose average age is over 70 are trying to organise something!

And most of this has been by email contact only with only the occasional phone call.

Despite all of that, I don't think we were mad at all.

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For me, an interesting part has been having a few beers at Coffs Harbour Golf Club with Adrian whenever I was passing through Coffs driving between my office on the Central Coast and my home in Brisbane from time to time .

It gave us the chance to discuss not just the celebrations but to also discuss how to solve the problems of the world.

This really has been a wonderful and enriching journey.

A journey occasionally tinged with sadness when learning of the passing of a family member or of their illness preventing them from being here today

However, it has been mostly filled with joy as we made contact with many family members with whom we had lost touch or in fact, never met or even knew existed.

It has been a journey of discovery, the forging of enduring friendships, and I should add a journey of yet again finding out what a small world it is in which we live.

Some examples of how small the world is are that we have found:

Two of us organisers went to school with descendants of Mordecai without knowing we were related.

And another worked with another descendant of Mordecai without knowing they were related.

And the son of one of my cousins lives almost around the corner from my home in Brisbane.

Truly amazing

So where does that bring us now? here today, we have people from just about every state of the Commonwealth and from New Zealand and Great Britain

And to all of you who have travelled from overseas welcome again to the land of your forefathers.

We have family members ranging in age over at least an 80 year period.....

And at this point I should acknowledge my cousin, Geoffrey Gibson as I believe is the senior descendant of Mordecai present here today.

One of the wonderful discoveries I have made during the journey leading up to these four days of celebration is how accomplished are so many of the next generation that is those who are the great great grandchildren of Mordecai.

I believe, based on what I have seen, they are even more accomplished than earlier accomplished generations!

How proud we are of you and how proud I am sure would Mordecai be if he could see your accomplishments today

It is to you that we entrust the future and the story of Mordecai and the history of our family.

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We ask that you now carry the baton of the Solomon family into the future.

That's not to say, of course, that those of us who are older will stop researching the Mordecai Solomon story; a story which, as Adrian will relate, is full of intrigue and mystery.

And, as we do, our knowledge of our family history will become even more enriched.

So again, welcome to you all.

Now before introducing Adrian Paul I should outline today's format:

Adrian Paul will shortly address us on the mystery of Mordecai Solomon; this will be followed by a short Q&A.

After the Q&A our meals will be served. When we finished eating there will be a short address from a descendant of each of Mordecai's children.

At the end of our lunch we will move to the northern end of the Pool of Reflection at the War Memorial in Hyde Park where we will hold a short commemoration of all our ancestors who have served in the armed forces over the last two hundred years not just those we know but also those we don't know.

After the War Memorial commemoration, we will be guided to East Sydney by John Shrimski who will show us the buildings once owned by Mordecai.

I now ask Adrian Paul to speak on "The Mystery of Mordecai Solomon"

Geoffrey Solomon

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