



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

February 2014

Issue 84



[Links to other resources and organisations](#)

Information about people on the Endeavour :

Captain James Cook (1728 - 1779)

Most famous for his three voyages of Pacific exploration, Cook was one of very few men from the lower classes to rise to senior rank in the Royal Navy. He was killed in the Hawaiian islands during his third Pacific voyage with *HMS Resolution* and *HMS Discovery*.



Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820)

Independently wealthy, Banks studied at Oxford and travelled to North America as a naturalist in 1766. Banks became very influential after the voyage - he was a trustee of the British Museum, ran the botanic garden at Kew, and was President of the Royal Society from 1778 until his death. It was on Banks' suggestion that the first Australian penal colony was founded at Botany Bay.

Daniel Solander (1733 - 1782)

A Swedish pupil of Linnaeus, Solander came to Britain in 1760, where he was employed as an assistant at the British Museum. He was engaged by Banks to sail with the *Endeavour*, and after the voyage became Banks' assistant and librarian, even declining a professorship at St Petersburg university to remain in London.



Sydney Parkinson (1745 - 1771)

Born in Scotland, Parkinson came to London in 1766 and was soon after engaged by Banks to work at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, where he worked for a year before joining the *Endeavour*. One of two on board artists, neither of whom survived the voyage, Parkinson died at sea shortly after leaving Java.

The Endeavour Botanical Illustrations - The Natural History Museum:

<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/art-nature-imaging/collections/endeavour-botanical/index.dsml>

Sydney Parkinson was the first European artist to set foot on Australian soil, to draw an authentic Australian landscape, and to portray Aboriginals from direct observation. A great quantity of his work survives. The British Museum has eighteen volumes of his plant drawings, of which eight, comprising 243 drawings, are of Australian plants, three volumes of

zoological subjects, of which a few sketches relate to Australia, and many of his landscape and other drawings, mainly of Tahitian and New Zealand subjects. Parkinson was gentle, able and conscientious, noted, according to his brother, for 'his singular simplicity of conduct, his sincere regard for truth [and] his ardent thirst after knowledge'. Two portraits are known: a small head in oils in the British Museum (Natural History) and the engraved frontispiece to his *Voyage*.

Captain Cook and the Quakers

Cook was brought up in Great Ayton where there was a Quaker burial ground and by 1743 four Quaker Families who had their own Meeting House. Quakers had a good reputation for being honest business people and keen to do their duty to their King. When Cook moved to Whitby he was apprenticed for nine years to a Quaker called James Walker who was a Quaker ship owner, so he would have been heavily influenced by Quaker principles. Cook's relationship with the Quakers in Whitby provided him with a social network which was useful to his voyages. It was through a Quaker connection that he met his future wife Elizabeth Batts. Quakers with their beliefs in studying Creation to get nearer to God produced many prominent Scientists such as John Fothergill, Sydney Parkinson and William Cooksworthy.

Source Book: Captain Cook Voyager Between Worlds by John Gascoigne

The Backhouse Family

The Backhouse family owned one of the most famous nurseries. The family wealth came from linen manufacture and banking in Darlington, County Durham. There were a number of botanists in the family. James Backhouse (1794-1869) inherited his brother Nathan's herbarium and later wrote '[his] herbarium falling into my hands first set me to study my botany'. He was apprenticed for two years to a nursery in Norwich. In 1815 he and his brother Thomas bought the nursery business of John and George Telford in York. It soon became a nursery to rival those in London.

In 1831 he and his friend George Washington Walker went on a mission to Australia, to explore conditions in the colony. He sent many samples of Australian plants back to Kew. On his return in 1841 he took up running the nursery again first with Thomas who died in 1845 and then with his son James. Both of them were passionately interested in alpine plants for which they became famous. With the coming of the railway the nursery moved to Fishergate York and in 1853 moved to a 100 acre site (larger than Kew) at Holgate, York. The Backhouse family continued to be associated with the nursery until its closure in 1955.