

The Lowke family

At our June meeting John Lowke gave an interesting talk about his Lowke family in Australia.

His great grandparents, Peter and Magdalena Lowke, came to South Australia on the *Helene*, arriving in December 1851. They came from Kotitz, near Hochkirch, in Upper Lusatia. They were part of the large Wendish contingent led by Johann Zwar, which founded the settlement of Ebenezer in the Barossa Valley.

Peter built his original clay and straw home himself, by candlelight at night, after farming during the day.

His Reise-Pass (passport) has the spelling of his name as Locke, but it seems that he changed it to Lowke, which is the spelling he used in Australia.

They had four children: Johann, Maria, Andreas, Christiane (Anna). Maria was born deaf. Andreas married Johanna Kockrick, but he died aged 25 years in an accident when his horses bolted while he was carrying produce from Ebenezer to Kapunda. His son Andreas later moved to Narrogin, WA, and many descendants still live there in WA. The youngest child Anna tragically died aged 18 years when they were burning stubble.

They lived at Ebenezer for the remainder of their lives; Peter dying in 1895 and Magdalena in 1904. They are buried in the Ebenezer cemetery.



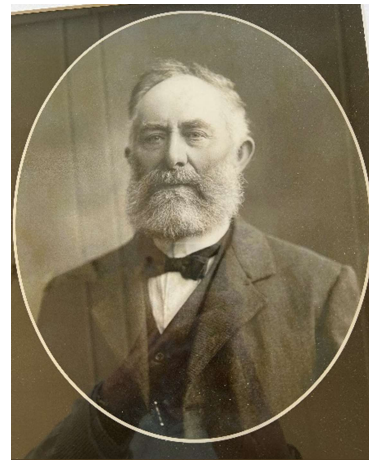
The eldest child Johann (1843-1929) was John's grandfather. He became the teacher at the Immanuel

Light Pass school. At

nights he studied with the Light Pass Pastor

Staudenmeyer.

He taught for 2 years at Hope Valley before returning to teach at Light Pass. He taught there for 43 years and was



also the church organist for 65 years. The marble baptismal font in the Immanuel church is dedicated to their valued teacher and organist Johann Lowke. The organ was one built by Daniel Lemke, another Lutheran teacher. Johann had five children, and most of his descendants live in the Barossa Valley.



*Baptismal font in Immanuel Light Pass Lutheran church
Note Johann Lowke's name at the base.*

John's father, Charles Lowke, was the manager of the Eudunda Farmers store in Tanunda for 23 years. He was a member of the Nuriootpa Brass Band. Earlier he had worked at Broken Hill, and then on the construction of the trans-Australian railway from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie, for which he was in charge of the government store. As the railway construction proceeded, the store had to be shifted progressively along the line.

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The Lowke family (cont.)

John Lowke started his working life as a mathematics and physics teacher at Unley High School and at Riverton High School. He was also a lecturer at Adelaide Teachers College.

In the years 1964-1975 he worked as Senior Physicist at the Westinghouse Research Laboratories in Pittsburgh, USA. He then returned to Australia to lecture in electrical engineering at Sydney University for 5 years. The next 20 years were spent working for the CSIRO, where for 8 years he was Chief of the CSIRO Division of Applied Physics.

He is now Adjunct Research Professor in plasma physics at the University of South Australia, based at Mawson Lakes. His current research projects include designing a plasma source for possible treatment of wounds, including cancer tumours, and solving the mystery of the structure of lightning. He has received a number of international awards for his work.



*Lemke organ from Immanuel Light Pass church,
but now kept in their hall*
