

Mrs Joan Ross,
Hon. Editor,
F.F.F. Newsletter,
GPO Box 4444,
SYDNEY. 2001.

Vol. 5 No. 1
January 1974

From the President

The Fellowship now officially has its own premises in Sydney. This is Room 25 on the seventh floor of the Kembala Building in Margaret Street. You will recall that in the last Newsletter I mentioned that we were in the process of signing the lease for permanent office premises for the Fellowship. The lease for Room 25 has now been signed, and the room is our property as from 1st January.

It is with much regret that I have to announce the sudden death, at the age of 55, of Fellowship Executive Committee member Vince Parker. Vince Parker was an enthusiastic and hard-working member both of the Executive Committee and of the First Fleeters Co-operative Society. Vince will be sadly missed by the Fellowship.

As from Australia Day this year, an annual Australia Day celebrations will be held in the historic Rocks area. These celebrations are to be held in conjunction with the official flag-raising ceremony. This will be a real family day outing, as there will be many events of interest to both parents and children. These include a pageant, a fishing competition in Sydney Harbour, theatrical groups, bands, a street market, etc. A special feature this year will be the official handing-over of the St Catherine's Dock stone. This stone, whose arrival in Australia was publicised recently in the press, is part of St Catherine's Dock, now dismantled. It was from St Catherine's Dock that many First Fleeters left Old England for Botany Bay.

The first meeting for 1974 of the Fleet Committee will be held on the second Tuesday in February, 12th February. As in the past, Fleet meetings will continue to be held on the fourth floor of the Assembly Hall in Jamieson Street.

I am looking forward to seeing as many members and friends as possible at the Anniversary Day dinner. We had hoped to have present the Minister for Immigration, Mr Al Grassby, but he will not now be returning from overseas in time to attend the function. I did receive a long telegram from Mr Grassby which will be read out at the dinner.

I wish now to take this opportunity to thank all those members who sent get-well cards and best wishes to me while I was in hospital recently.

Owen Cavanough Fellowship

Descendants of Owen and Margaret Cavanough are invited to attend a family gathering in the Ebenezer Presbyterian Church, on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, at 11 am on Sunday 27th January.

Anniversary Dinner

Members who have not yet obtained their tickets for the Anniversary Day Dinner are reminded that they may still obtain them from the Hon. Ticket Secretary, Mrs J. Hooke, 14 Chisholm Street, Turramurra 2074. Tickets cost \$8 each. Please order your tickets for yourself and party as soon as possible.

The Anniversary Day Dinner this year will be held at the Menzies Hotel Banquet Room on Saturday 26th January. This is the first time since the Fellowship began holding its Anniversary Day Dinner that the 26th of January has fallen on a Saturday. This should enable members from much farther afield to attend. (Further information on Page 4).

Marathon Surf Boat Race

Just a reminder that the Fellowship has assisted in sponsoring the Marathon Surf Boat Race from Fairy Bower to Harbord on the Anniversary weekend. To be held on the Monday, this race is part of a carnival to commemorate the sailing of the First Fleet from Botany Bay to Port Jackson. The Fellowship has made a donation of \$50. This gives members a special interest in this event.

Re-enactment of Battle of Vinegar Hill

Interesting news-item from Bert E. Eston, 13/7 Telopea Street, Collingwood:

"Rouse Hill Public School ran a pageant in November which included a re-enactment of the Battle of Vinegar Hill in which Maj. George Johnston and his 50 soldiers defeated a few hundred armed Irish convicts who had escaped and mutinied in the Hills district. The site of the skirmish had been established as being where the Rouse Hill Public School now stands, and a plaque in commemoration was unveiled in the school grounds.

"I was invited, but unfortunately the first date was washed out by rain and the second date was also a wet day and I did not venture forth. However, the Headmaster, Mr Howley, has since told me that the pupils faced the rain just as staunchly as the convicts and the troops faced the bullets. He hastened to add that the hangings that followed the battle were not re-enacted."

"The First Farmer of Sydney Town"

Under the above heading, the following item on James Ruse appears in "The Restless Markets of Sydney Town," compiled and edited for the Sydney Farm Produce Market Authority by J. G. Blackwell (1970):--

"Remarkably enough in our history, Australia's first successful farmer, James Ruse, is one of the most obscure and unsung pioneers of the Colony of Sydney Town.

"In the welter of historical works of Macarthur, Blaxland and early Governors, scant references only are to be found of the Cornishman who inspired Phillip, his officers, the convicts and free settlers of his day by his basic skills in seed farming which ultimately led to the successful provisioning of the Colony and to the concept of development of satellite areas through the land settlement of emancipists.

"Were it not for Clifford Tolchard's 'The Humble Adventurer,' an account of Ruse, and of other works, most notably Sir Stephen Roberts' 'History of Australian Land Settlement,' we would know precious little about the
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dour transportee from Launceston in the south of Britain who, in 1789, settled on and lived off his 30-acre land grant at Rose Hill, was the first man to use compost to aid vegetation and who built the Colony's first plough with his bare hands.

"His influence on the development of vegetable and grain cultivation, though the lead he gave to the many farmers around the Hawkesbury flats was every bit as important as the work Macarthur did for wool-growing. Perhaps it could be said that, at a time when the titled few regarded the Colony as their 'oyster,' it was Ruse who showed the way for the advancement of the less fortunate. Phillip and Macquarie did the rest.

"Ruse came to Sydney Cove in the Scarborough, a 430-ton member of the First Fleet. It is claimed he was one of the convicts who chaired Captain Hunter ashore from the row-boat which bore the first group to set foot on Australian soil. True or not, he was one of the first to wade ashore on the vast, lonely continent on which circumstances had virtually exiled them from the teeming civilised world of England.

"Ruse was a model convict who had the personal philosophy that he and his fellow felons had much more to fear than the lash and the chains. It is said he once declared that he and Governor Phillip would starve to death in the same year unless food was won from the raw ground of the Colony.

"He was a thickset man, blessed with immense physical strength. Virtually an illiterate, he was stoic and confident. Phillip liked him because he was honest at a time when many, including some of his own officers, were either sabotaging the colonisation effort or being merely 'passengers,' subsisting on the rapidly-dwindling official rations. Many challenged Phillip's wisdom in making Ruse the Colony's first settler on a grant of 30 acres at the Government Farm at Rose Hill, Parramatta, which he took up in 1789.

"Ruse dedicated his farm, known appropriately as The Experiment Farm, together with his inventive skills, to his Patron. His approach to cultivation was new to the Colony. He felled timber, burnt the stumps and dug the ashes deep into the ground. Grass and weeds and withered leaf-mould he dug back to fertilise the ground and to keep the soil moist against the hot sun. He thus became the first person in Australia to use compost, a standard practice in gardening today.

"He grew maize and turnips principally, as well as wheat, barley and some herbs. He laboured through a five-month drought in his first year of farming but still produced results, and within 15 months he was able to decline further support from the Government."

Personal Jottings

Marriage on 15th December of Jane Bailey, daughter of Mr & Mrs F. W. Bailey, of Mollstonecraft, to David Lindeman, son of Mr & Mrs Gordon Lindeman, of Quirindi. Jane is a descendant of William Broughton, and Broughtons were well represented at the wedding. David is a descendant of the Dr Lindeman, who founded the Lindemans wine firm. Marriage service at the chapel at Tocal Agricultural College at Paterson, and reception held at Lyndhan Estate Winery at Braxton. Couple spent their honeymoon at Mouna, and are now making their home at Quirindi. Doug Oakes just returned from interesting holiday in New Zealand and Joy Tallman just gone over the Tasman to New Zealand. Margaret Maxwell well and truly settled back home after her three-month visit last year to her son Peter and family in Canada.

Message from the Treasurer

Hon. Treasurer Mrs Joy Wallman wishes to notify members that membership fees for 1973-74 are now well overdue. If members have not already paid and wish to remain in the Fellowship and receive the Newsletter, would they please send their fees as soon as possible? If fees are not paid by the end of January, members will be placed on the retired list, and a joining fee of \$5 will then have to be paid to re-enter the Fellowship. Postal charges are so high nowadays that it is no longer possible to send copies of the Newsletter to unfinancial members. Remember, this is a privileged Fellowship to be in!

Fees should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Mrs Joy Wallman, 23 Shellcove Road, Neutral Bay 2089.

Postscript from President

The Fellowship is in need of stack chairs for its new office premises. Donation of a chair would be greatly appreciated. Can anyone help? There is a need for a dozen or so chairs.

Anniversary Dinner Prizes

There will be at least two lucky door prizes at the Anniversary Day Dinner this year. Donations to date include the following:--

1. An autographed copy of the book "Cadmans Cottage, The Life and Times of John Cadman in Colonial Sydney 1798-1848," by J. Selkirk Provis and Keith Johnson. Copy presented by the authors.
2. A leather writing-case, presented by Miss Lola Wilkinson.
3. Iced Anniversary cake, presented by Mrs Beryl Lewis.

Ticket secretary Mrs Beth Hooke reports that there has been quite a deal of enthusiasm about the dinner, particularly from the Fishburn and Cavanough descendants.

"Cadmans Cottage"

"Cadmans Cottage, The Life and Times of John Cadman in Colonial Sydney 1798-1848," by J. S. Provis and K. A. Johnson, traces the history of Sydney's oldest surviving dwelling, the two-storeyed stone barrack built in 1816 on the west side of Sydney Cove. It is more than the story of the cottage, as it also tells the fascinating story of John Cadman and his contemporaries during his 50 years' residence in New South Wales.

The book is supplemented by 260 reference notes and an extensive index together with a selection of illustrations. The first edition was limited to 1500 copies, of which 500 were signed and numbered (most of them already reserved). Price \$6-80; price of a signed and numbered copy, \$7-25.

Cadmans Cottage, of course, was officially opened for public inspection last October by the Minister for Tourism, the Hon. T. L. Lewis, M.L.A..
