

F.F.F. NEWSLETTER

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Please address all correspondence to the Fellowship of First Fleeters, G.P.O. Box 4441, Sydney 2001.

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April 1978

From the President

Since the last Newsletter much has happened.

I was honoured to go to Canberra, over the Easter weekend, as a delegate to the convening meeting of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations. My husband attended as an observer. It was quite a compliment to the Fellowship that I was elected Deputy Chairman for the conference. It was very hard work, but most rewarding. Much was achieved and when the Federation becomes a reality later in the year, will be a great source of information for our Fellowship. Groups interested in Family History will share their information and save a lot of duplication. Most States and New Zealand were represented, and your Executive are waiting on the relevant material to become Foundation Members.

On 6th April, accompanied by our Membership Committee, Mrs Mary Bailey and Mrs Naida Jackson, I went to Government House to morning tea. His Excellency very cordially received us and sent his best wishes for the continued advancement of the Fellowship of First Fleeters.

On Tuesday 11th April I was guest speaker at Burraneer to a discussion group, new to me, called Beta, Sigma, Phi. A charming group of ladies who showed great interest in the Fellowship, and I am hopeful of some new members as a flow-on from that night.

Argyle Day on the 15th April was, as usual, a great success. We were fortunate with the weather, as we had no rain until late afternoon. I extend thanks to everyone who helped on that day, and particularly to Mrs Margaret Markwell, who did her usual superb job of organising, Mr Des Jurd and Mr Harold Stephenson for their wonderful help with the tent.

Congratulations and thanks to our wonderful Membership Committee, who at this month's Executive meeting presented the names of 20 people for admission as Members. This meant many long days of work in authenticating all applications. It is interesting to note that this list contains the name of one new "First Floeter" -- Hugh Hughes.

Our sincere thanks are extended to Mrs Joyce Cowell and her husband George, who are doing a superb job on our Archives collection. This is very demanding work, and the Executive express their appreciation for what is being done in this regard.

Anyone interested in joining our 10th Birthday "get together" on Friday 28th April at the Weinkeller at 6.30 pm may still do so by ringing me on 709-8974. A beautiful four-course meal will be served for \$5-50 -- what a bargain night out!

A coach trip has been arranged for Sunday 28th May leaving York Street outside our Office at 9 am to go to Gledswood Winery, where the old 1810 homestead may be inspected (Caroline Chisholm is reputed to have lived there for part of her life). Wine-tastings are available, barbecue facilities and a bistro are provided as well as an area for

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From the President (Continued)

picnic lunches, so you have a variety to choose from. On leaving the Winery we proceed through Camden and The Oaks to Burraborang Lookout. All for \$6. Bookings on the same phone number as above. (709-8974) Some bookings are already in, so waste no time, these trips are always most popular.

Over a period of some months your Executive have been working on a plan for the 200th Anniversary in 1988. After visits by me to the City Council and much correspondence, we can now tell you that permission in principle has been received from the City Council to erect a memorial in a very prominent position. Architectural estimates of costs have yet to be received, but I do suggest to you that this is something each and every member can play a part in, no matter how far afield you live. If each member would undertake to raise \$10, outside normal Fellowship activities, we would make a wonderful start. Each person has some skills and could put these to work -- hold pool parties, barbecues, knit something for sale, make cakes; and country people, how about selling us city folk some of your home-spun wool? There are many ways you can all participate in this most important project -- the variety is as wide as your imagination.

Regarding the afternoon at St John's Cemetery, Mr Eric Blair will report in a later issue.

I look forward to seeing many Members at the Weinkeller and on the coach trip.

Beryl Lewis.

February and March Lectures

On Wednesday evening 8th February Mr Keith Thompson gave a very interesting lecture, "Sketching for Children Around the Birdsville Track".

The lecture was not only interesting but so very instructive of what a good tolerant man can do for not only the Aborigines but also the white children in this unusual outback of Australia, where brotherhood and social life are the order of the day. As a result this has wiped out all colour prejudice there.

The space, which seems to go on forever, has shown us the vastness of our country, and its strange beauty.

The colour-slides were beautiful, the art was clever, in its rhythm and construction, and the lettering was ingenious.

I'm sure we would all like to have Keith back again, when he returns after doing such good work for his people.

On Wednesday 8th March Mr Harold Hort (Supervisor of Music in New South Wales for the A.B.C.) gave an interesting talk on "Music of the Early Colony".

He talked of the music which reflected the times and feelings of the convicts and settlers. The theme of hopelessness, sometimes nostalgic, and also acknowledgement of guilt, enter into the lyrics.

The early folksongs seemed to have this theme. Then later there was an affection for the country, perhaps encouraged by Macquarie, and then came the bushranger ballads, the pastoral and the nomadic.

Mr Hort also spoke of the composer Vincent Wallace, the first virtuoso of any note to visit Australia in the 1830's. He organised the first Music Festival, at St Mary's Cathedral in 1836, and started a music school in Bridge Street.

Mr Hort played tapes of Vincent Wallace's famous songs, "Yes Let
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Lecture Evenings (Continued)

"Me Like a Soldier Fall" and the popular "Scenes That Are Brightest" from "Maritana". It was an entertaining evening, and Mr Hort loves his topic -- music. He is a warm person to meet, and we hope he can come again soon.

Sally Kalina.

Isaac Knight

Isaac Knight arrived in New South Wales as a Corporal of the Marines, having been demoted on the way out for a misdemeanour. However, his service in the new colony was of a very high standard.

Early mention of him tells that in May 1789 he searched for two marines who were missing from a shooting party out from Rose Hill (the early name for Parramatta). Unfortunately to no avail. In August 1790 Isaac accompanied Capt. Tench, Mr Dawes and Mr Worgan, with a party of others, on an expedition, and camped a short distance from Prospect Hill. They continued on, stopping at Pyramid Hill and discovering the Nepean River near its source. Tench's party returned to Sydney expressing the opinion that the country they had seen was unfit for agriculture. Following this, on 13th September 1790 Isaac was restored to his former duty as Sergeant.

On 24th May 1791 Capt. Tench, Lieut. Dawes and Sgt. Knight and a private marine set out from Prospect Hill. Their purpose was to ascertain whether Richmond Hill lay on the Hawkesbury River or the Nepean River. They met a friendly native, Deedora, who accompanied them along the river in his canoe, and which they used to cross over the stream in turn. For his courtesy and friendliness Tench gave Deedora a hatchet, much to his delight. The excursion completely proved that the Hawkesbury and the Nepean were one and the same river. Tench named the "elevation which bounded our research" Knight Hill "in honour of our trusty Sergeant who had been the faithful and indefatigable companion of all our travels" (Tench).

We have not found when Isaac married, but there are several entries of births of the children of Isaac and Elizabeth M. Knight. A son, Daniel Marks, born 1804, Aug. 28. A son, John Marks, born 1806, Dec. 2. A son, Isaac, buried Jan. 21, 1809. As two sons have the name Marks, we think that could have been Elizabeth's maiden name.

1806 Muster states Isaac Knight (George Rivers) Grant Hawkesbury Road 100 acres. Wheat 12 ac. Maize 20 ac. Potatoes 2 ac. Pasture 56 ac. Fallow 10 ac. Sheep 1M. Goats 2M. 4F. Hogs 8M. 8F. In hand, wheat 2 bush. maize 5 bush. Proprietor not victualled. 2 convicts victualled. one convict not.

1808 signed address to Gov. Bligh (Banks Papers).

1810 Knight was sent to Castle Hill to plant potatoes (Gov. Macquarie's Memoranda).

1810 July 1. Isaac subscribes to fund for building a Court House at Sydney (Liverpool Subscription list July 1, 1813).

In 1819 Isaac Knight is listed as an Auctioneer at Liverpool, appointment on Aug. 21, 1819 (Gov. & Gen. Orders), and in 1820 as a Landholder, Liverpool in N.S.W. July 24, 1820, Isaac Knight was a signatory to Proclamation of Accession of King George IV.

1821 Autograph on Address of Welcome to Gov. Macquarie on his return to Sydney from Van Diemen's Land July 13, 1821.

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Isaac Knight (Continued)

Isaac died April 11, 1842, aged 92, and his wife Elizabeth died July 15, 1827. Both are buried in St John's Cemetery.

Death notice in "Sydney Morning Herald", 27th April 1842, reads: "At Macquarie Groves in his 93rd year Trusty Sgt. of Tench and Dawes who had battled West from the Hawkesbury with them 50 years before".

(The above address was given by Mrs Naida Jackson on the unveiling of the plaque on Isaac Knight's grave, St John's Cemetery at Parramatta on 12th March 1978).

Obituary

Miss Maude Beatrice Lee (William Nash), of Balgowlah, passed away in hospital on 5th February, aged 91 years. The Fellowship extends condolences to family members.

Early Encounters Between Europeans and Aborigines in N.S.W.

(By Ena Harper. Reprinted by kind permission of Ashfield Historical Society and Ena Harper)

How much does the average Australian know about the first encounters between Europeans and Aborigines in the early days of the colony? Speaking for myself, I must admit I know little of what really happened and found it of great interest to discover the varied reactions of each race to the other. These have been recorded in the journals of explorers and settlers, and we also hope to learn something of what happened in our own local area.

Before commencing this record, it might be as well to give a brief and simple account of the life style and beliefs of the Aborigines in Australia as they existed before the Europeans arrived (or as much as is known from modern research and tribes still existing in their natural state).

Systematic field-work into Aboriginal life and customs did not begin until 1926. Apart from the writings of missionaries or other investigators of tribal remnants in settled regions, the most important anthropological study of the Aborigines was done by Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen in Central Australia and Northern Australia in the 1890's and carried into the 20th century. This was already late in the day.

It is noteworthy that Adolphus Peter Elkin, the Australian who was to become the foremost authority on the Aborigines, did not commence his work until 1918. In that year in his holidays as an Anglican divine he set off with a Bush Brother to look at country beyond Bourke. It was here for the first time that he saw Aboriginal stone implements and old burial sites.

This started him on a career of investigation into Aboriginal life which was to make him a world authority. But it was not till 1927 that planned research began. By this time the Sydney tribes were extinct. After pioneer research work in the Kimberleys, Professor Elkin succeeded to the Chair of Anthropology in the University of Sydney at the end of 1933. These facts are noted to emphasise how long it was before there was any realisation that the Aboriginal culture and knowledge was worth studying.

The fact that their artifacts were perishable made archaeological finds rather scarce. Professor Elkin describes the Aborigines as belonging to the Australoid group of humanity.

(To Be Continued Next Issue)

F.F.F. REVOLUTION
"Honour Thy Father and"

(Concluding B. Garth's interesting account of his great-great-grandparents Edward and Susan Garth, both of whom arrived in the First Fleet. Previous instalments appeared in the October 1977 and March 1978 Newsletters. The Garths and other settlers on Norfolk Island -- before the days of the brutal, horrifying Penal Settlement on the Island -- were uprooted against their will in 1808 to assist in the settlement of Hobart Town. The Garths settled at Sandy Bay)

Again quoting Amy Rowntree in her book "The History of Sandy Bay", "It is pleasing that Garth Avenue commemorates this pioneer family which had the courage to settle on its difficult acres."

Edward's ninety-three acres encompassed some of the most expensive Real Estate in Hobart today. His cobber's land just two blocks up included Wrest Point - one is tempted to dream "What might have been!!".

The Hobart Gazette of 1816 records the news item of a party of five including James Garth (my grandfather's uncle) rowing 150 miles in an open boat to Oyster Bay near Swansea to gather swans' feathers. One of their companions named Kemp was killed by aborigines and buried under a cairn of stones on the beach. One can only wonder at the courage and fortitude of those young men who would tackle 300 miles of some of the most hazardous waterways of the Australian coastline - testing enough for the yachts of today's Sydney-Hobart Race.

My great-grandfather Edward Garth and his wife Ann Billett were both born on Norfolk Island. Ann died in 1896 at the age of 99 and was reported as the last person to remember the Tasmanian aboriginals whom she befriended as a young bride in the 1820's.

I would claim, with reasonable justification, the shortest line of descent from a First Fleeter of any Australian Citizen - and almost certainly the shortest descent in a direct male line from two First Fleeters, viz. four generations. This stems from the fact that my father was born when his father was 61 and my grandfather when his father was 43 - thus skipping two generations. In retrospect I now realise it is not co-incidence that for six generations the eldest male in my family has been given the name Edward among his Christian names.

Research has produced two nice ironies. Firstly concerning the first Edward - having overcome an ignoble start he was elevated to the position of Acting Jailer on Norfolk Island. As such he drew the wrath of one John Morris who attempted to murder him. Later in Hobart two crown prisoners were convicted of stealing two wethers value £1.10.0 belonging to Edward Garth, Farmer - a similar offence to that for which Edward was transported. They were sentenced to 200 lashes and twelve months in irons in the goal gang.

Secondly, a Lt. John Shortland (Founder of Newcastle) spent an enforced stay on Norfolk Island due to the foundering of the supply ship Sirius. As second in rank on the island he undoubtedly directed Edward Garth in the performance of his duties. Today in Sydney Ian Garth and John Shortland, descendants of these men, work for the same Company.

Obviously most folk are not particularly interested in individual cases, but I firmly believe that the Australian character (however we define that term) has been influenced by our convict ancestry. I use the word our advisedly - until the mid 1800's a high percentage of Australians were of convict stock and millions of today's citizens must be of convict descent.

The words from one of our F.F.F. Publications are most appropriate:

"Life was hard for our forebears. They were compelled to get on with the job or they did not survive. We all should continue to be challenged to also work, to build and enlarge the heritage they have given us for our children and their children".

"To live on in the hearts and minds of descendants is never to die".

Membership Committee

We are happy to welcome into the Fellowship the following new Members:

William G. Burchell - Northbridge (Nath. Lucas - Olivia Gascoigne)
Miss Elizabeth Johnson - Stanmore (Frederick Meredith)
Ralph S. Ind - Goulburn (David Kilpack)
Richard McKenzic - East Lindfield (Henry Kable - Susannah Holmes)
Mrs. Ena May Cartwright - Guildford (Matthew James Everingham)
William St. Cyr McDonald - Doncaster, Vic (Nath. Lucas - Olivia Gascoigne)
Mrs. Jeanette Norris - Scone (Anthony Rope - Elizabeth Pulley)
Danny D. A. Norris - as above
Matthew F. Collis - Manly (Eleanor Fraser)
Miss Rosemary L. Newman - Wahroonga (John Palmer)
Richard S. C. Newman - as above
Miss Catherine H. Newman - as above
Malcolm S. C. Newman - as above
Alleyne W. Small - Beaumaris, Vic (John Small - Mary Parker)
Mrs. Ethel H. Carruthers - Eastlakes (Hugh Hughes)
Reuben F. Humphry - Mascot (Hugh Hughes)
Miss Beatrice McLean - Cremorne (William Tunks)
Dr. Harold N. Meers - Lavington (Nath. Lucas - Olivia Gascoigne)
Alfred J. Meers - North Bondi (Nath. Lucas - Olivia Gascoigne)
Geoffrey D. Meers - as above
Miss Laurel Meers - as above
Anthony L. J. Lucas - Coniston (Andrew Fishburn)
Miss Louise A. Lucas - as above
Mrs. Enid J. Matthews - Moree (Nath. Lucas - Olivia Gascoigne)
Karl R. Degraa - Macksville (Frederick Meredith)
Miss Dallas J. Degraa - as above
Mrs. Helen Brownie - Northbridge (Nath. Lucas - Olivia Gascoigne)
Mrs. Jean K. Timmel - Duffy A.C.T. (William Broughton)

Naida Jackson.

Coming Events

28th Apr. (Fri.). 6.30 pm. "Get together" at Weinkeller, Pitt St.
10th May (Wed.). 8 pm. Lecture by Mr Len Werman, "Up and Down the City Road" (on early George St.). (Board Room, Assembly Building).
28th May (Sun.). 9 am. Coach trip to Gledswood Winery.
