## Founders

NEWSLETTER OF FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS

'To live on in the hearts and minds of Descendants is never to die!

PATRON: Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir, AC, Governor of New South Wales

### President's report

t has been a busy month at First Fleet House. The annual subscriptions have been rolling in, keeping our small army of volunteers busy. Our Treasurer, Roy Morris AM – FF Mathew Everingham – is hard at work on the Annual Financial Report due for presentation to the auditors. Roy is still looking for help in the Treasurer's Department – any volunteers??

The proposed Australia Day weekend seminar has had a positive response. There will be some Family Associations participating in this event and we hope that the Premier of New South Wales, in addition to our Patron, Her Excellency Marie Bashir AC, will be with us for some of the proceedings.

Contact Pamela Hempel, Public Relations Officer, Fellowship of First Fleeters, Edenmore, 1 Millstream Rd, Werrington Downs NSW 2747, phone (02) 4730 3527 or email pamela.hempel@panthers.com.au.

My contact is phone (02) 9868 3063 or email pgjn@bigpond.com.

The proposed visit to Central Railway Station has unfortunately been cancelled. The powers that be are worried about terrorist threats, so have discontinued tours of the site. It certainly is a sad state of affairs! Our organiser of activities, Pam Quick, is seeking an alternative outing.

Webmaster and Executive member George Griffiths has announced that we are now registered with Roots Link on the internet and also has given good coverage to the Australia Day weekend activities. In addition to the chapters which are listed on the Fellowship's website, we would like to also include the First Fleet Family associations. Please let us know details for inclusion. My own family Tunks has a good website, worth a look it can be found on the internet go.to/tunks.

The Fellowship website can be found on www.geocities.com/fellowship\_of\_first\_fleeters.

The Soup and Damper Day was held late July and good fellowship was enjoyed by all present. Thanks to Phyllis, Bonnie and Shirley for their efforts on the day. A strong contingent from the South Coast Chapter, led by President Jean Mortimer, was in evidence.

Two Executive members, Pam Quick and Elaine Bennet, together with their spouses, attended the Annual Dinner of the ACT Chapter recently and you'll find details and pictures elsewhere in this issue. Pamela Hempel and husband William attended the AGM of the North West Chapter in Tamworth, early August and we have been promised some details for the next issue of Founders.

Our appreciation to Barry Quick for the installation of a sensor light at the rear of First Fleet House premises. This should deter unwanted visitors from this area.

The Tunks Descendants Association plans to hold a day bus tour of the Hawkesbury area in November which will include sites of general interest not only in Parramatta but Wilberforce, Castlereagh and Windsor areas. For details contact FF member John Daniell AM on phone (02) 9418 1279 or email jvdan@optusnet.com.au.

Recently I have been heartened that quite a number of primary schools have shown interest in the First Fleet and in its wisdom the Executive has set wheels in motion for the publication of a special First Fleet kit for use in these schools. Member Janice Eastment, President of the Small Family Association, has been working in conjunction with Vice-President Rod Best and several others with this end in view. I think you will agree it is a step in the right direction and I look forward to the printing and distribution of this project.

In Fellowship PETER

#### **INSIDE**

- 2 News of Members
- 2 ANNUAL RAFFLE
- 2 Buy-a-Brick
  Donations
- 2 FAMILY HISTORY
  CONFERENCE
- 3 WHAT'S ON
- 4 FREDERICK MEREDITH
- 6 COCKATOO ISLAND
- 7 BRIDGECLIMB WINNER
- 7 CANBERRA CHAPTER ANNUAL DINNER
- **8** CONVICTS ONLINE
- 8 New Banner Design Competition

#### **News of Members**

#### MEMBERSHIP REPORT

FOR PERIOD 25 MAY 2003 TO 26 JULY 2003

We extend a warm welcome to new members joined during this period; eight adults, one junior and two spouse associates.

PHILLIP DEVINE + WILLIAM EGGLESTON – MARY DICKENSON: Mr Alan William Carwardine.

WILLIAM DOUGLAS - MARY GROVES: Mr Kenneth Lloyd Jones.

ANN FORBES: Mrs Barbara Ellen Littler

ALICE HARMSWORTH – THOMAS HARMSWORTH: Mr Timothy John Marsden.

HENRY KABLE - SUSANNAH HOLMES: Mrs Joan Dorothy Price (sp Mr William Michael Price).

JANE LANGLEY - PHILLIP SCRIVEN: Mrs Christine Laurel Gallagher (sp Mr Thomas Gallagher).

SAMUEL PIGOTT: Miss Sophie Isabelle Tyson (jun).

JOHN REDMAN: Mr Darryl Swinbourne Wanless.

ISAAC TARR: Mr Clive Ernest Grohs.

#### **DEATHS**

Deepest sympathy is extended to the families of the following:

LLEWELLYN HUNTLEY EVANS (#571), passed away suddenly at Merimbula on 25 June, a few minutes after turning 85.Descendant of First Fleeter Thomas Jamison and John Griffiths.

LESTER DAVID WATTERS (#5125), of Matthew Flinders Drive, Cronulla, passed away 25 April 2003. Descendant of First Fleeter Elizabeth Cole.

#### **ANNUAL RAFFLE**

A BridgeClimb for two people will once again be one of the major prizes in the Fellowship's Annual Raffle to be drawn at the Australia Day 2004 Celebration Dinner on Saturday 24 January 2004.

Full details of the raffle, which is our major fundraising event, will be included in the September/October issue of Founders, along with tickets.

#### **BUY-A-BRICK DONATIONS**

The Fellowship thanks the undernamed for the generous donations made to its Buy-a-Brick Fund. The names have been inscribed in the fund register.

I Anderson, Shirley Anderson, Mary Bailey, B J Benoit, Shirley Bramich, Richard Byrne Chalmers, Shirley Clark, Mrs B Duns, K Shaw, J Eastment, James and Joan Edwards, Mrs D Endicott, Mr P Franklin, Mrs D Hazell, RW Hurst, M E Kelly, Elizabeth King, Richard McKenzie, A J Martin, Ailsa Moen, A N Moen, Mr Brian Nash, G E Porter, Charles Ross, Jean Westmore, Mrs J R Whitehouse, TW and H T Williamson.

The NSW & ACT Association Of Family History Societies Inc.

#### **ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE 2003**

Theme: Voyage of Discovery Continuing the Journey

To be held at Central Coast Leagues Club, Dane Drive, Gosford

#### FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER TO SUNDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2003

Hosted by Central Coast Family History Society Inc.

Inquiries: Convenor (02) 4344 6512 or (02) 4324 5164

Online registrations to: 2003nsw&actconference@centralcoastfhs.org.au

Closing date for copy and pictures Sept/Oct issue Sept 30 2003

**OFFICE HOURS** 

10.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday

## what's

#### HARBOUR HISTORY AND HERITAGE CRUISE SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2003



On board the restored heritage timber ferry Lithgow you can enjoy the splendours of Sydney Harbour in a boat that has been carrying passengers across the harbour for over 70 years. The slatted seats, large open windows and traditional laid deck give Lithgow a comfortable sunny atmosphere. Lithgow was restored for the 1988 Bicentennial celebrations and is now a fine example of a classic timber ferry of Sydney Harbour.

We will cruise to Chowder Bay for a guided tour of Chowder Bay/Georges Heights, exploring defence fortifications hidden away for more than 100 years, tunnels and historical buildings, as well as enjoying magnificent harbour views. The tour lasts one and a half hours. Please bring water and wear good walking shoes.

There are two tours: 10.30am-1.00pm and 2.00pm-4.30pm Limited to 40 each tour

The ferry departs from Pyrmont Wharf, the public wharf located at the end of the Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour

You may take the ferry trip only and wander around the old buildings at Chowder Bay if you wish while the tour is taking place.

> Return ferry trip Adults \$13.00 Children \$10.00

> > **Guided tour**

Adults \$8.00 Children \$5.00 Family \$20.00

Book by calling FFF office on 9360 3788 during office hours. When booking please indicate the number attending and whether taking ferry trip only or ferry and tour, also morning or afternoon tour.

#### Australia Day Weekend 2004

Since our announcement of the planned Australia Day Weekend seminar, including the Celebration Dinner on Saturday 24 January 2004 and the Picnic Day on Sunday 25 January 2004, we have been heartened by the very positive response. Already quite a few bookings for both the conference and the dinner have been received.

Five speakers have been confirmed to address the conference. In addition, invitations have gone out to several dignitaries requesting them to join us for some of the proceedings. It is understood that quite a few Chapters and Family Associations are also planning to attend.

Profiles on speakers and a brief conference outline will be included in the September/October issue of Founders along with further details of the proposed workshops for young people.

Please remember that as numbers for the Conference and Celebration Dinner will be limited, all bookings close on Monday 15 December 2003. Those who book and pay in full prior to 31 October 2003 will automatically be placed in a draw to win a great accommodation package for two people as outlined in the previous issue of Founders.

#### **Arndell Family Reunion**

The Reunion of the Arndell Family will take place at

Cattai National Park

Wisemans Ferry Road

Cattai

on

#### **SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2003**

commencing at 11.00am

Enquiries: Mrs Jill Davis (02) 9498 7230

#### Samuel Pickett & Mary Thompson

Descendants sought for Reunion and book

planned for Easter 2005

Please contact

Penny Ferguson

79 Perry Drive, Chapman 2611

Phone: Home (02) 6288 6122 Work 0402 464 427

Email: fergcanb@alphalink.com.au

#### **TOUR CANCELLATIONS**

**TOUR OF CENTRAL RAILWAY** – Unfortunately State Rail have cancelled all tours of Central Railway as they are deemed to be a terrorist threat.

TRIP ON THE JAMES CRAIG - The trip planned for

November has also been deferred as the cost was prohibitive. Perhaps next year we will reconsider or find another sailing ship, the *Bounty* perhaps, again depending on cost. Details of the replacement tour appear above.

### FREDERICK MEREDITH

c.1783 - 1836

rederick Meredith arrived in Australia with the First Fleet in 1788, as steward to Captain John Marshall of the *Scarborough*. He is believed to have been born in Denham in the UK. No concrete evidence of this has been found – there are many theories of his origins. We do know that he stated in Muster records that he was from Denham – whether he was born there or simply grew up there is another debate.

On 23 February 1788 Frederick appeared before the magistrate charged with having given rum to a convict in exchange for an 'opossum'. Frederick was found guilty of the charge and sentenced to receive 100 lashes. However, it is stated in the journal kept by Surgeon Arthur Bowes Smyth that the young man was only doing what Captain Marshall had told him to do. Captain Marshall, together with some other

men, took up the case with Governor Arthur Phillip and the sentence was reduced to 50 lashes.

SIRIUS

Canberra.

On 2 May Frederick left duty on the Scarborough and was transferred to the Sirius crew, just two days before the Scarborough left Sydney Cove for the return to England via China. The Sirius crew were given Garden Island by the Governor to grow their vegetables. During breaks from work he sat down and carved his initials on a rock at Garden Island. Those initials are still there to this day. Attempts have been made by the Meredith family to preserve these initials by erecting a shelter over the rock to protect it from the elements. This rock carving has been photographed and is on display in the Museum of Australia in

In October the Sirius under Captain John Hunter sailed for the Cape of Good Hope via the Horn in search of food for the starving colony. It arrived back in

Sydney Cove on 6 May 1789. In March 1790 the Sirius sailed for Norfolk Island, arriving in less than a week. The ship was wrecked on reefs in Sydney Bay, only 750 metres from the shore. The ship's crew managed to bring the provisions up on deck and transfer them to shore, using a complicated hauling arrangement which was also used to get the ship's company to safety. The total operation lasted two days. Frederick returned to Sydney Cove on the Supply and was employed as a shepherd for John Palmer. In May, a daughter was born to Frederick Meredith and Mary Allen, a convict. The child was named Charlotte Matilda Meredith.

Frederick Meredith must have returned to Sydney on board the *Supply* as his name appears as a witness in court on 24 August.1790 where he gave evidence at the trial of a convict named 'Hugh Low'. Low had stolen a sheep and was sentenced

to death and executed. Frederick is described as 'a baker late of the Sirius' when giving evidence. At this time the Sirius crew were still on Norfolk Island. The crew of the Sirius returned to England as they were obliged to do so that a court martial could be held to determine the cause of the wreck. When they departed the colony on the Waksamheyd Frederick Meredith was with them. They arrived back in England in April 1792 and Frederick was then paid off from the navy.

#### BELLONA

In July 1792 the *Bellona* sailed for Sydney Cove, and listed with other free assisted settlers was one Frederick Meredith, whose trade was listed as 'baker'. He described himself as a baker, 28 years old and in good health. Unknown to him, his

daughter Charlotte had died in May 1792 and Mary Allen was living with another convict, Edward

Pales. The Bellona also carried 17 convicts, one of whom was Sarah Mason, later to become the wife of Frederick Meredith. At the time Frederick seems to have his attention fixed on a convict named Anne Case. On 10 May 1793 a daughter named Amelia was born to Anne Case. This child did not live long, dying in 1794. The father was named as Frederick Meredith. The Bellona arrived in Sydney on 16 January

1793 and the settlers were given land grants at Liberty Plains. These settlers included Thomas Rose, Edward Powell, Thomas Webb, Joseph Webb and Frederick Meredith. The settlers took possession

of their ground the first week in February.
Two hundred years later, in 1993 at
Macquarie University, almost 2,000 descendants
met to celebrate this event. They were the
descendants of the master of the *Bellona*, the settlers
and the convicts.

The first land grant to Frederick Meredith was 60 acres at Liberty Plains (now known as

Homebush) which he called Charlotte Farm. Frederick was later to be given three more grants of land – one at Concord in November 1794 which he called Charlotte Field and two at Bankstown.

The third child born to Frederick Meredith was again another daughter, who was also named Charlotte. She was born on 26 April 1794. Mary Kirk was the mother of this child. Charlotte survived to lead a very interesting life. Mary Kirk also had an adventuresome life. She appears to have remained friends with Frederick Meredith. In 1800 she married Robert Inch who was lost at sea in 1808, and Mary herself was lost in 1809. Both were lost on the Hawkesbury. Frederick Meredith appears as the executor of Mary's estate.

It would appear Frederick then settled into a steady relationship with Sarah Mason. He also became one of the 50



men sworn in as
voluntary police and
known as the
Loyal Sydney
Association.
Frederick Meredith

later became the Chief Constable and Postmaster of Liverpool.

On 17 March 1801 Frederick Meredith and Sarah Mason had their first child - the first of six.

They named this child Frederick after his father. Following the birth of Frederick junior came Sophia, Elizabeth, William, Ann and Eleanor. The first four children were born prior to their marriage which took place at St Phillips on 26 February 1811 after Sarah received her full pardon. The birth of the other two children followed. Frederick junior followed his father into the Police Force. Frederick's other son William also became a constable on the Liverpool Road, and Frederick's youngest daughter Eleanor married a Minto constable, John Burrows. Sophia and Ann had moved to Tasmania by 1823.

In 1809 Frederick was granted 120 acres at Salt Pan Creek on the Georges River. In 1809 he described himself as a baker at 15 Chapel Row (now Castlereagh Street). In this same year he was speared in the ear by Aborigines whilst defending a neighbour's (Bond) farm at Salt Pan Creek. This also seems to be about the time they moved to Bankstown. His bakery was transferred in 1810 and in later years moved up to the land grant on Liverpool Road, Bankstown, known as Gunsborough. The second grant of land at Bankstown was known as Harefield. Frederick and Sarah spent the rest of their lives at Bankstown and Sarah died on 1 August1832. Frederick married widow Ann Day the following year on 19 February 1833 at St Lukes Liverpool.

On 7 July 1836 a notice appeared in the Sydney Gazette: 'On Thursday June the 23 at his farm, Banks Town, Mr Frederick Meredith aged 71 years, greatly respected. Mr

Meredith arrived here as a sailor in the First Fleet and has been a resident on the Liverpool Road.' Frederick and Sarah Meredith are buried together in the Pioneer Park Cemetery at St Lukes, Liverpool.

Needless to say there are thousands of descendants of Frederick Meredith today and they are scattered all over the globe. A Frederick Meredith Descendants group was formed in 1985 and still exists. There is an active committee which organises family reunions, significant events and celebrations as well as the restoration of headstones belonging to the family. The next big event for the Merediths will be and exhibition at the Liverpool Museum titled 'The Merediths – Then and Now'. The exhibition will open in September 2003 and run until January 2004. It will be a visual record of the contributions the Merediths have made to our country over the years. Some of the more well known members of the family include:

- \* Craig Knowles, recent Minister for Health;
- Gwen Meredith, the author and radio personality of the ABC series Blue Hills;
- Dr Wayne Hawthorne, heart and lung transplant specialist at Westmead Hospital;

and of course probably the most well known person these days,

Kerry Packer.

All members of the FMDG are definitely looking forward to the exhibition. It should be an exciting event. Perhaps an outing could be arranged at a later date in the year to visit this exhibition.

RECOGNITION: THANKS ARE EXTENDED TO PATRICIA MEREDITH, AS SECTIONS OF THIS RESEARCH HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM HER WORKS. THE MEREDITH FAMILY ARE GREATLY INDEBTED TO HER FOR HER ENTHUSIASM AND PERSISTENCE IN DETAILING THE FAMILY'S HISTORY.

The above is adapted from a talk given by Pamela Sadler to the South Coast Chapter earlier this year.

#### THE CHILDREN OF FREDERICK MEREDITH

CHILD	BIRTH	DEATH	MOTHER
CHARLOTTE	09.05.1790	1792	MARY ALLEN
AMELIA	10.05.1793	1794	ANN CASE
CHARLOTTE	26.04.1794	05.03.1852	MARY KIRK
FREDERICK	17.03.1801	10.02.1861	SARAH MASON
SOPHIA	08.06.1803	03 04.1890	SARAH MASON
ELIZABETH	08.07.1805	DIED AS INFANT	SARAH MASON
WILLIAM	01.03.1807	04.04.1878	SARAH MASON
ANN	21.06.1811	16.08.1880	SARAH MASON
ELEANOR	17.11.1813	20.02.1893	SARAH MASON

## COCKATOO

On Saturday 24 May, members from the South Coast Chapter plus three Sydney members of the Fellowship visited Cockatoo Island. Member Les Baxter and I walked in the footsteps of our convict ancestor William Parrott, who re-offended and was sentenced to five years hard labour on the island.

Cockatoo is the largest island in Sydney Harbour. Originally 12.8 hectares, it has been increased by reclamation to 17.9 hectares. There are no known records of Aboriginal use of Cockatoo Island, other than fishing.

1839 A prison was constructed to house twice-convicted prisoners who were formerly sent to Norfolk Island. Governor Gipps put the convicts to work digging underground grain silos out of sandstone on the highest part of the island. The idea was to conserve supplies of grain in the natural rock – which made the silos airtight – preserving the grain for years. The convicts dug out more than 20 silos with hand made tools. Today only 12 remain.

1841 Superintendent Charles Ormsby was appointed to take charge of the convicts. Sandstone was quarried by these convicts to be used in the Sydney area.

1842 Construction of the convict prison.

1850-

1870 The Fitzroy Dock and the machine shop were built under the supervision of Captain Gother Kerr Mann. Other buildings were also constructed under his supervision. To construct the dock, pumping machinery had to be shipped out from England and explosives were used to remove the sandstone from the cliffs above.

1857 The Fitzroy Dock was opened. Today this dock is still in tact and is a perfect reminder of the skills and hours of hard work by our convicts. They had no work cover or unions to support them. Several convicts tried to escape from Cockatoo Island but only Frederick Ward managed to swim to the mainland. Ward's Aboriginal mistress met him with dry clothes and a horse. They rode north together where he became the bushranger known as 'Thunderbolt'.

1870-

1880 The Island was renamed 'Bileola'. An industrial school for neglected girls and a reformatory for those convicted of crimes was established. The training ship Vernon was anchored off the north corner. This ship accommodated wayward and orphaned boys. A tall fence was erected to keep the boys and girls separate but all through history no barrier has ever been too large for young lovers.

1890 The Sutherland Dock was completed and shipbuilding and repair work expanded.

1913 Australia builds its first steel warship, HMAS Houn, on Cockatoo Island. At the end of WWI The Titian, a floating crane, came into operation. The crane jib, designed to lift 150 tons, was 58 metres above the deck at the fullest extent.

1930-

1945 The private company Cockatoo Island Docks & Engineering Company Ltd leased the facilities. During these years my late father worked there as a boiler maker/welder. After the fall of Singapore, during WWll, the American Navy was desperate for a facility in the Pacific to repair ships. They were so impressed with the standard of work that most of their ships were sent to Cockatoo Island for refits and major repair works. Altogether about 350 ships were repaired there between 1939 and 1945.

The Turbine Workshop still houses a 12.2 metre long

lathe, but because of its size it is uneconomical to relocate.

The South Coast Chapter members left home from about 7.00am to join our coach at four different pick up points along the way. Everyone thought it was well worth the effort.

#### JEAN MORTIMER

Information: Tour Guide and Sydney Harbour Federation Trust.

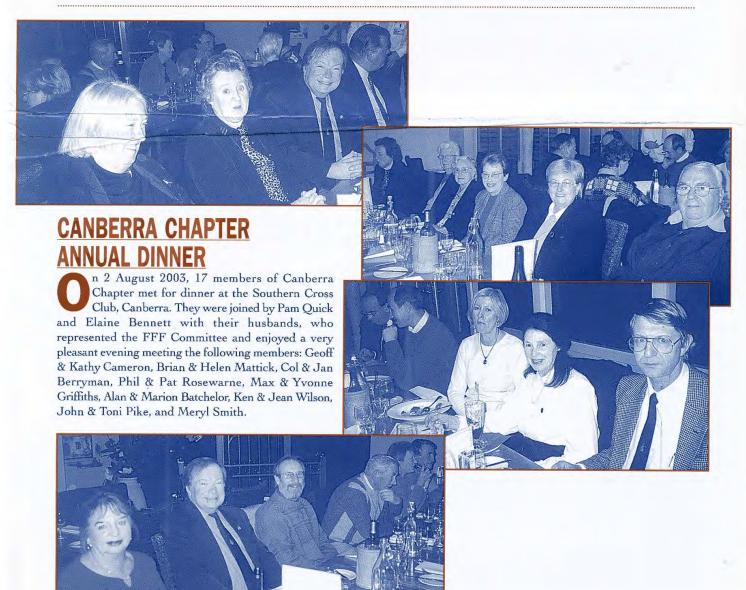


## It's a long way to the top

The winner of the 2003 Annual Raffle prize of a BridgeClimb for two people, Norma Hunt, was joined by her husband Lyle, when they both ventured forth to climb the famous Sydney Harbour Bridge, known affectionately to the locals as 'the coathanger'. Judging by their big smiles they both enjoyed the experience.

The Sydney Harbour Bridge, officially opened on 19 March 1932, is the largest single span arch bridge in the world. The arch is 503m long, 134m high and 49m wide. Flanked by four concrete and granite pylons, it is the crucial centre piece of Sydney's transport network. The steel work alone weighs 52,800 tonnes and is held together with six million rivets.





new website will be of interest to many members of the Fellowship. The website provides transcripts of trials heard at the Old Bailey between 1760 and 1799 and includes details and rulings on several thousand convicts sent to Australia on the first three fleets. Details appeared recently in an article in the Sydney Morning Herald and generated some good PR for the Fellowship. President Peter Christian was contacted by the journalist concerned and was able to provide

It is understood Melbourne's *The Age* also ran a front page story.

The website address is www.oldbaileyonline.org and is described by the two British historians who set it up as the largest single source of information about 'non-elite' lives ever published. The site is easy to use and enables searches to be carried out based on name, age, sex, occupation, type of crime or punishment.

If you go to the State Library of NSW website at

# Convicts

several profiles in addition to the names of some members who may like to be involved in the article.

Unfortunately the article in question was not as complete as one would have liked, but Pam Quick was interviewed re Jane Langley and a rather grand photo of the Johnston crypt at South Head cemetery was published, including the eldest daughter of our late patron and Governor of New South Wales, Sir David Martin – FF George Johnston and Esther Abrahams.

www.sl.nsw.gov.au you will be able to see and read the copy of Governor Arthur Phillip's letter to his patron and former prime minister of Britain, The Marquis of Lansdowne, which was recently purchased from an unidentified Australian private collector for inclusion in the library's First Fleet Heritage Collection. The letter was written on 'rag' paper made from cotton fibres and makes reference to the spectacular beauty of Sydney Harbour when he wrote 'with out exception the finest harbour in the world'.

### banner design COMPETITION

embers will be aware that the Fellowship has a special banner which is displayed at all FFF functions and events to identify our group. As the current banner is getting rather worn, the Executive has decided that it would be appropriate to replace the banner with a new one and unveil it at the Australia Day 2004 Weekend.

Rather than just make a new version of the present banner, which is pictured here, we are



conducting a competition inviting members to design a new one. If you don't believe you can draw your design, simply provide a description of the elements and wording you would like to see on the new banner.

As time is of the essence all entries in this competition must be received at First Fleet House by 31 October 2003. The winning entry will receive a suitable prize which will be awarded at the Australia Day 2004 event.

Opinions expressed herein are those of the article authors and correspondents and do not necessarily reflect the policy or views of the Fellowship of First Fleeters, nor the views of the Editor. The Editor reserves the right to omit any material considered unsuitable for publication. Space limitations may result in some material being held over to another issue. RON MAGUIRE, Hon. Editor