

Founders

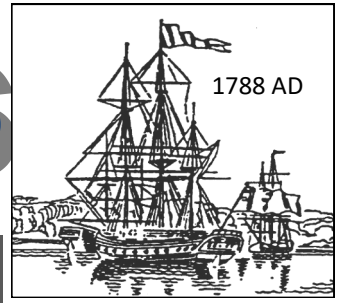
Magazine of the Fellowship of First Fleeters

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PATRON: Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC

VICE PATRON: Paul Kable AM RAN Retd



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

Volume 54 Issue 6

55th Year of Publication

December 2023 - January 2024

LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARD

#6598 ROBYN CONDLIFFE



Members of North Coast Chapter unanimously support this nomination of their Secretary, **Robyn M Condliffe** for the award of Life Membership of the Fellowship of First Fleeters. The testimonial reads as follows:

Robyn is a long-standing and well-respected member of the Chapter and well deserves a full affirmation of her years of service to the Fellowship. As a founding member of the chapter she and her husband **Tony** formally took out membership in 1997. Since that time, when elected as Secretary at the inaugural meeting, Robyn has at various times over 26 years held almost all committee positions.

Robyn's generous hospitality has been in evidence as she has held committee meetings at her residence, providing fellow members with morning tea and a full

three-course lunch. Her dedication to the well-being of her chapter has been outstanding and she has maintained her duties in recent years as secretary, membership officer and research officer with goodwill and friendliness to all.

In 2021 Robyn arranged for her pictorial history of the chapter beginnings to appear in their newsletter. The chapter was inaugurated with 33 in attendance on Sunday 1 June 1997 at Boambee Creek Reserve. Robyn was elected as Secretary and her husband Tony became Vice-President. It was Robyn who suggested the name for the chapter and her choice was supported by the Fellowship Board in endorsing its formation.

Robyn has always held a wider view of membership and was responsible for sponsoring two new chapters in northern New South Wales. She worked for months to set up a chapter in Armidale for members in the northern tablelands and the northwest of the state. Those who attended opted for not one chapter but two. President **Mary Kell** and her husband **Jim** officiated at Armidale while Robyn and Tony went to Tamworth.

Over the years Robyn maintained many links with the New England Chapter and there were several collective visits back and forth for both chapters. As Secretary she has also supported and arranged combined activities with other neighbouring chapters, Northern Rivers, North-West and Mid North Coast.

As Fellowship President I give my personal endorsement to support this award. My wife **Karys** and I have found Robyn wonderfully hospitable, warm and friendly, not only on our visit to the chapter but also at combined Fellowship activities in Sydney and elsewhere. I highly recommend the awarding of a Life membership to Robyn Condliffe and request that this be supported by the members at this Annual General Meeting.

-Testimonial from the AGM, 2023

#7174 W Jon Fearon

FOUNDERS

The magazine of the
Fellowship of First Fleeters

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Note: Other tasks are looked after by our team of faithful volunteers who are usually at First Fleet House on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



I am writing this column on behalf of our incoming FFF President **Gillian Doyle**, who has been unfortunately unwell. Gillian replaces our long term President, Jon Fearon, who retired at the October 28 2023 Annual General Meeting. The AGM was hosted by the South Coast Chapter of the Fellowship and was held at the Wests Illawarra Club in Unanderra, Illawarra, and was attended by 27 – Members, Associate Members, Friends and several visitors.

The Minutes of the 2022 AGM were endorsed, annual financial reports were presented and adopted. **Jon Fearon** delivered his final AGM report and also recommended that Honorary Life Membership be conferred on **Mrs Robyn Condliffe**, for her long service and contributions to the North Coast Chapter.

Our Vice Patron, **Paul Kable**, was re-appointed and conducted the election of Office Bearers, which saw Gillian Doyle elected as President, **Kerrie Anne Christian** as Vice President, and with **Rod Best** as Company Secretary and Director, also **Elizabeth Warren, Karen Lovett, Warren and Judith O'Shea, Paul Gooding,** and **Sharon Lamb** re-elected as Directors. Note, **Peter Yates** is to be confirmed as Director at the November 23 2023 Board Meeting. At the AGM, in addition to Jon Fearon's retirement, two other Directors retired, not having sought re-election, **Brooke Smith** and **Tony Negline**. We thank them for their service.

Jon Fearon, and wife, former FFF Director **Karys**, have given many years of service to the Fellowship, Jon as President and also as Editor of our Founders magazine. During his years as a Director and President, Jon has overseen the celebration of the Fellowship's 50th anniversary in 2018 at the Australian National Maritime Museum, the establishment of new Chapters, and sadly the closing of others, the creation of the FFF website, and also the Fellowship's social media presence on Facebook. He also steered the Fellowship through the challenging years of the Covid-19 Pandemic since 2020, the emergence of DNA as a genealogical research tool, and also dealt with the increasing push for changes regarding Australia Day January 26 in recent times. Jon's and Karys' involvement and contribution to the FFF Central Coast Chapter should also not be overlooked. We will miss them, but wish them all the best in the next chapter of their lives in Cairns.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT)

Our new President, Gillian Doyle, has worked tirelessly as Vice President and Director in recent years. Her various roles have included Research, very successful Events and Publications, notably a compendium on Governor Arthur Phillip and also a presentation pack on the Voyage of the First Fleet: 1787 to 1788. Gillian represented the Fellowship at the Arthur Phillip 200th Memorial in the UK in 2014, and has been an active member of the FFF Arthur Phillip Chapter. Please share my thanks and congratulations to Gillian in her new role as President.

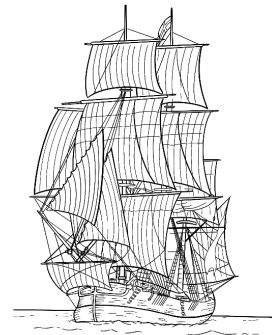
On behalf of President Gillian Doyle - #3152
 Kerrie Anne Christian - #4858



FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS – BOTANY BAY CHAPTER

invites you to a

COMMEMORATIVE LUNCHEON



YARRA BAY SAILING CLUB, 18th JANUARY 2024

The Botany Bay Chapter of the Fellowship of First Fleeters will again proudly host a luncheon to commemorate the arrival of HMAT Supply, the first ship of the First Fleet in Botany Bay on the

18th January 1788

A delicious range of seafood, beef, chicken and vegetarian dishes are available

Food and Drink at club prices

Parking is available in the carpark; early arrival is recommended

Street parking is also possible

Time: 11.30 for Midday meal

Venue: Yarra Bay Sailing Club
 67 – 69 Yarra Road,
 Phillip Bay NSW 2016

RSVP by 8th December 2023:

Jeanette Johnson 0410 221 788

Carol Macklin 0415 376 434

THOMAS HEADINGTON *Convict 'Alexander' (c1763?-1798)*

Thomas Headington was born in 1763 Bray, Berkshire, England, the son of **Richard and Elizabeth Heddinton**, and baptised at Bray on October 30 1763.



Bray, Berkshire—Joseph Powell—1802

He was tried at Abingdon and then sentenced to seven years transportation on July 4 1785.

He had been suspected of 'having broke open a bureau at Bray and stealing there about six or seven Pounds in Cash in a bag also a Wooden Dish with a great many Halfpence and Farthings; amongst which was a remarkable crooked Farthing and two large Silver Spoons'.

An unskilled labourer, Headington was sent to the *Ceres* hulk by mid 1786, age given as 18 years but more likely he was 23 years old, and delivered to the *Alexander* on January 6 1787.

He is then noted as going on *HMS Sirius* to Norfolk March 4 1790.

The Norfolk Island Victualling Book, 1792-1796, also has Thomas Eddington as arriving on Norfolk Island aboard *HMS Sirius* but a check of the shipping musters shows Thomas actually arrived on Norfolk Island aboard *HMS Supply* in March 1790, embarking in Sydney on March 5 and disembarking at Cascade on March 13 1790.

Here, in July 1791, he was supporting three on a Sydney Town one acre lot, having cleared 52 rods and felled 26 rods of timber.* *Note a rod is an old English measure of distance equal to 16.5 feet (5.029 metres), with variations from 9 to 28 feet (2.743 to 8.534 metres) also being used. It was also called a perch or pole.*

He shared a sow with **Susannah Milledge** (or Miller aged 24-*Lady Juliana*) in February. Thomas is now 28 years old.

In 1790 Thomas, aged 28 years, married **Elizabeth Thompson**, aged 43 years, convict *Lady Juliana*. They were one of the many couples married by **Reverend Richard Johnson** in November 1791 on Norfolk Island.

Elizabeth Thompson, with **Elizabeth Scott**, was sentenced to seven years transportation on July 19 1788 at Northumberland Assizes for the theft of 20 yards of printed cotton, 26 yards of calamanco cloth and 12 yards of linen cloth from two linen drapers' shops at Alnwick. They had robbed at least one other shop in the town before they were arrested near the head of Cannongate Street after shopkeepers, realising that the women were shoplifters, went in search of them with the help of a constable. Both women were held in the country gaol until April 16 1789 when they were sent to London for embarkation on the *Lady Juliana* transport. Thompson's age was given as 41 years.

In August 1790, eight weeks after landing in Sydney, Elizabeth was among 194 mostly female convicts sent to Norfolk Island aboard the *Surprize*.

She was issued a pig under **Major Ross's** plan to encourage as many convicts as possible to become self-sufficient.

By July 13 1792 Thomas, now an ex-convict, and Elizabeth, were settled on Lot 59, a land grant of 12 acres (some eleven ploughable) which was made official on 30 December 30 1796. More than five were cultivated by October 1793.

In June 1794 Elizabeth Thompson was recorded as a convict, married, off stores with one child (**Margaret** born November 16 1792) supported by Thomas Eddington, settler.

Thomas died 13 January 1798 on Norfolk Island, age 40 years, survived by his wife Elizabeth and two children Margaret (1792) and **John** (c1796).

In 1805 Elizabeth, whose sentence had expired, was noted as being off stores.

On December 30 1806 Elizabeth Eddington was credited with sixteen pounds 5 shillings for the sale of sheep before leaving for VDL with Margaret aged 15 and John aged 10 years.

A Biographical Dictionary of First Fleet Ships—Part 1

In 1805 Elizabeth, whose sentence had expired, was noted as being off stores.

On December 30 1806 Elizabeth Eddington was credited with sixteen pounds 5 shillings for the sale of sheep before leaving for VDL with Margaret aged 15 and John aged 10 years.

Margaret, aged 16 years in 1808, became the mistress to **Lieutenant Governor David Collins** and had two children **John** (1808) and **Eilza** (1809), both baptised at Hobart on January 14 1810.

Margaret died in Hobart on January 19 1822 after a marriage to **Capt. John Piper** (Free Settler *Pitt* 1792).

Her brother John died in Hobart in 1869.

Elizabeth lived in Hobart from 1811 until her death on April 10 1839 aged 92 years.



His headstone today stands in the Norfolk Island Cemetery Kingston.

The Fellowship of First Fleeters installed a FFF Plaque on Thomas Headington's Headstone on March 6 1980. The FFF Plaque was removed by Norfolk Island Authorities between 2010 & 2013.

Summary

The ships which carried convicts and stores to Botany Bay as part of Australia's First Fleet had personalities and life stories of their own, but complete and accurate biographies have never been compiled. This study documents the careers of these 11 vessels, from when and where they were born to how and when they died.

Seven of the nine merchantmen were involved in the Baltic and West India trades at some point in their careers. Four were employed as east coast colliers. Five of them were chartered by the Navy as transports during the Anglo-French wars, although only one of them was offered for a second voyage to New South Wales. One was involved in the slave trade, and this same ship was sent several times into the Southern Whale Fishery.

Of the 11 ships, seven ended their lives violently. Five were wrecked, one was scuttled, another was taken by a privateer and burned. Two more were taken by privateers, although one of them was recaptured and the other sold.

A Biographical Dictionary

Some of the most significant characters in the story of Australia's First Fleet are the nine merchantmen which carried the convicts, marines and stores to the far side of the world, and the two naval vessels which accompanied them. The *Sirius*, 'so deep with stores and having such broad buttocks, we could hardly steer her until we got better acquainted'. The *Supply*, 'small and rather uncomfortable', a 'very strong vessell, altho' rather too small for the service'. The 'two ladies', the *Charlotte* and the *Lady Penrhyn*, both 'very slow sailors' and, in the beginning at least, 'a very great hindrance' to the fleet. The 'little *Friendship*', a good sailor which pitched and rolled 'most tremendously' as they crossed the Southern Ocean.

These ships had personalities, but they also had back stories, and the hope of long and prosperous futures. There are tales of great courage. On leaving New South Wales, the *Charlotte* and the *Scarborough* launched into the largely uncharted waters of the western Pacific on their way to China. Their crews were already suffering from scurvy and their officers had no idea where they might safely procure fresh food and water. On their way north, they would discover the Marshall and Gilbert (Kiribati) archipelagos, named after the masters of these two ships.

There are also great tragedies. The *Borrowdale*, a Sunderland collier which, prior to being taken up for New South Wales, had shuttled back and forth between Newcastle and London five or six times a year. Under her 26 year old captain, **Hobson Reed**, she would become the third ship in history to circumnavigate the globe from west to east (following Cook's second expedition). Six months after returning from the Antipodes, the *Borrowdale* and her crew were lost in a violent storm off Yarmouth. The memory of the *Borrowdale* and her epic voyage would be preserved in the names of the Reed family for generations.

With some qualifications, we are able to follow the histories of these ships, from when they were launched until they were lost or retired. The biographies that follow help us to understand the wider context of the penal settlement that was established in New South Wales from 1788, reminding us that from 1775 to 1783 and from 1793 to 1815, Britain was almost continually at war; that from the beginning, the transportation of convicts was closely associated with the Industrial Revolution; that the decision of the Pitt government to establish a colony in the south-west corner of the Pacific was intimately connected to the opening of this region to European commerce.

Alexander (1784 to 1806)



Largest of the merchant ships hired for the First Fleet, the *Alexander* was built for a northern shipping family in 1784. She undertook four voyages to St Petersburg over the next two years, returning shortly before she was offered to

government for New South Wales. For her, this was a difficult voyage, losing around 15 percent of her convicts to typhus, and three-quarters of her crew, mostly to scurvy on the way home.

On her return to England, she was sent to Dominica and St Petersburg numerous times, before being contracted to government for the transportation of troops. In 1806, she carried soldiers from the Cape of Good Hope to the River Plate in South America, where they were used for an unapproved (and unsuccessful) invasion of the Spanish colonies.

She never returned. On the voyage home in October 1807 with sick and wounded, she parted from the fleet in a gale, and was leaking so badly that the captain gave the order to abandon ship. Two of the boats managed to get

away before the ship for some reason exploded. The captain, the naval agent and four other men were rescued four days later. Twenty-one sailors and soldiers, along with a woman and a child, escaped in the long boat. They were discovered after six days adrift, 'much distressed': they had virtually no provisions and not knowing when they might be rescued, they had started to eat the remains of one of the soldiers who'd died.

Borrowdale (1784 to 1788)



From her launch at Sunderland in 1784 until she was taken up for the First Fleet two years later, the *Borrowdale* was employed as a collier, shuttling back and forwards between Newcastle and London once a month. On sailing from New South Wales in July 1788, she crossed the Pacific Ocean, becoming the

third ship in history to round Cape Horn from west to east. She lost several of her crew to scurvy, arriving back in the Thames in April 1789 and immediately going on to Sunderland, so she could be refitted for the coal trade.

In the early hours of 31 October 1788, as she was making her way along the coast of Norfolk, the *Borrowdale* was struck by a violent storm. Hobson Reed, the young captain who had commanded her on the voyage to and from New South Wales, tried to take her into Yarmouth Roads, but she foundered on the sands and sank, with the loss of all but one of the crew.

Forty-two ships were driven onto Yarmouth sands that night and 23 of them were wrecked. Reeling from the losses, the northern ship owners and insurance underwriters pressed Trinity House for lights to be installed, and in 1790, two lighthouses were erected nearby at Hasbro'.

From: 'A Fine Passage': Insights into Early Australian Convict Transportation. A periodic newsletter publishing new research into early Australian convict transportation Gary L. Sturgess, Sydney, Australia. +61 (0)419 734180. gary@sturgess.org

*Gary L. Sturgess AOIA+

*Paintings of the First Fleet Ships by Frank Allen

(To be continued)

FIRST CHILDREN BORN IN THE COLONY

Those who work in First Fleet House are sometimes asked to confirm that someone's First Fleet ancestor was the first person in the Colony to do something – first to put foot on soil, first to be born or the like. Normally the Fellowship will officially decline to respond, not because it wishes to avoid heated discussions but because there invariably is insufficient primary evidence to support anyone's claim let alone one claim over another.

One example is when there is a claim that a particular child was the first born. In terms of primary records there are a few journals of the First Fleet surgeons who provide details of when children were born but most of these concern births at sea and some, like that of **Bowes Smyth** is problematic as his notation is opaque. For example it looks like all the births that he attended were of boys but we know that at least one was of a girl. Was he trying to establish paternity?

The next set of records are baptismal records. Only occasionally do the early baptismal records include a date of birth. Baptisms can occur sometime after birth. Children may not be baptised. This might be because the parents are Catholic and don't want a baptism by an Evangelical chaplain. They may not have any faith or they may not want to highlight that they are already married to someone else back in England and have another family there. There would also have been children stillborn or who died shortly after birth who were never baptised.

Sometimes people claim that their ancestor was the first 'English' or 'white' child forgetting that not every person on the Fleet was English or white. The Fleet contained a range of people including, for example, a number of Afro Americans.

The baptismal register of St Phillips starts with children born in 1787 ie before the Fleet even sailed. This includes **William Tilley, Edward Devan, James Perfect, Jane Day** and others. Was this designed to link the child to the new country?

The earliest baptism seems to have been **Joshua Bentley** who was baptised on 21 January 1788 at Botany Bay. But when was he born and was it after his ship had

reached the end of its voyage?

The earliest children baptised after landing in Sydney cove were:

3 February 1788

James Thomas and John Matthew Arscott

10 February 1788

Joseph Downey and Elisabeth Bacon

16 March 1788

Joseph Theakston

27 March 1788

James Baughan

20 April 1788

Frances Hannah Clement

25 May 1788

William Nash

15 June 1788

Mary Ann Turner

22 June 1788

Elizabeth Munday

Surely some, if not most of these were born at Sydney Cove.

Some are also uncertain as to their identity. Is John Matthew Arscott the same boy as John Matthew referred to by **Cobley**? For the connection between Frances Hannah Clement (b 1788) and **Frances Hannah Arndell** (b 1808) see the work of Marj Raven.

When a member of my own First Fleet family claimed that her ancestor was the first girl born in the Colony I pointed out that wasn't baptised until a heap of other children to which she replied "Alright, but she was the first white child conceived in the Colony" to which I replied 'now that is something for which I am sure that we have no written evidence – even if they had been found having sex in the hospital tent!'

It is for these reasons that the Fellowship rarely takes an official stance and why it is so important to record your primary source in addition to family oral history.

#1116 Roderick Best Membership Committee

FFF AUSTRALIA DAY LUNCHEON

LAST REMINDER

SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2024

Harbour Cruise/Luncheon on Captain Cook III.

Departs Sydney, Circular Quay, Wharf 6

All aboard by 11:45 am

ADL Cruise Bookings close on Friday 19th January 2024

Please complete the Booking Form which was included with *Founders 54.5* and return to FFF with payment in full.

COLIN ROBERTSON (WOOLGOOLGA) - WW2 VETERAN

First Fleet Ancestor – Ellen Wainwright.

Member No 6948

The Cowra breakout was the largest prison escape of WW2 and one of the bloodiest. "I have never seen anything like it in all my life". WW2 veteran **Colin Robertson** spent his 19th birthday rounding up the Japanese soldiers.

Colin was born in Victoria in 1925 to a family of 11 brothers and sisters. His father travelled all over Australia working as a shearer and sending money home to support his family. They would only see him a few times a year.

When he was 15 Colin got an apprenticeship in Melbourne with a printer, where he was a hand to machine compositor. In 1943, 18-year-old Colin joined the army. That was the thing to do at that time and he had brothers and a sister also involved in the forces.

Colin joined up at the Royal Park in Melbourne and was sent to Warwick QLD for his basic training. In those days they couldn't send anyone overseas until they were 19. So, they sent all the young men back down to Sydney where they joined the 2nd/41st, known as the 'Young Soldiers' Battalion.

During this time the Wharfies that would load the war ships with ammunition food and supplies went on strike and would not load the boats. A couple of hundreds of soldiers were ordered to load these boats instead. "They would give us a hard time as we went down there every morning in the back of army trucks". The young soldiers would load ammunition and supplies off Pier 13 at Pyrmont where the Star Casino is currently. They were also sent around to Walsh bay to load food and supplies onto boats. Colin was there for 3 months or so until the Wharfies went back to work.

In early 1944, Colin and his army mates were sent down to Narellan to be extras in the film 'The Rats of Tobruk', a 1944 Australian film which follows three drover friends who enlist in the Australian Army in WW2 and their involvement siege of the Libyan city of Tobruk in North Africa.

Late 1944, just before Colin was about to turn 19, over 1,100 Japanese prisoners attempted escape from a prisoner of war camp near the town of Cowra, west of Sydney.

The Cowra breakout was the largest prison escape of WW2 and one of the bloodiest. 4 Australian soldiers died in the escape while 231 Japanese soldiers were killed or committed suicide. "I have never seen anything like it in all my life". Colin spent his 19th birthday rounding up the Japanese. In the aftermath Colin and his fellow soldiers were sent to help recapture prisoners that were scattered

all over the countryside. The Australians would go out in 5-man patrols. While most of the escapees were not armed, the Japanese would scavenge materials and make weapons.



The young soldiers were then sent to the Jungle Warfare Army Training Centre at Canungra QLD to prepare them for the deployment to the Islands. It was a battle simulation-based program where for 28 days straight, a focus on fitness and endurance

under absolute battle conditions was used to climatise the soldiers. "They used to fire live ammunition around all the time, you had to be pretty bloody careful, people did get hurt there".

After their training they were sent to Strathpine, an embarkation point for all the troops that were going to the Islands. "It was a huge camp, maybe 100,000 troops there at the time, American or Australians". At this time the Americans were in the Solomon Islands. Australian troops boarded a ship called Sea Snipe, which carried 3,000 troops to Torokina on Bougainville in the Solomon's where they relieved the Americans.

Colin was a part of the 11th Brigade and was sent to the North of the Island but most of the troops stayed in the South where most of the fighting took place. In the North of the island, they started to take bases along the coast, it was "very fierce and savage fighting. half a dozen real big battles, lots of people hurt, lots of Japanese killed, lots of Australians killed and wounded." Most of the fighting involved a lot of beach hopping along the coast, the only way to move up and down was by barge.

Colin was on Bougainville with the 31st/51st Infantry Battalion until the end of the war. One of the battles Colin was involved in was the Battle of Porton Plantation, one of the few Australian defeats. The Australian's barges got caught on the reef, and the soldiers were forced to leave the barges with equipment, food and ammunition. They then had to fight with whatever they had in their bags. "Most riflemen only had 200 rounds, I had a sub machine gun, I had 500 rounds but they don't go far."

The Japanese set up the machine guns up and the Aussies got peppered. They had to dig holes in the sand amongst the mangroves to try hide from the incoming fire. As they ran out of ammunition, they had no choice but to return to the barges to try and push them back out. They were evacuated after 3 days and the survivors were ferried back to the landing craft.

After the war was over August 15, 1945, Colin boarded a troop transport ship, they were joined by another transport and a warship, The Diamond Diamantina (Now in Brisbane River). The boats were used to transport surrendered Japanese from Islands such as Nauru, Ocean Island and Green Island to then be taken to Rabual in New Britain (New Guinea) a central point they kept the Japanese prisoners.

During that time 2,500 prisoners from Nauru and then 800 prisoners from Ocean Island were transported to Rabual. It was tough conditions, with twenty on deck every half an hour to get fresh air and go the toilet which was a drop toilet off the back of the boat. They had an interpreter that could communicate with Japanese and fortunately they would have no troubles on the boat.

In September 1945, Colin and 30 other troops were left at the Nauru garrison while the ships transported prisoners to Rabual. They were to look after the 600 of the Korean labour forces that cleaned up the island as it was bombed to bits. They were forgotten there until April the next year.

After that they were then flown off the island in a Catalina plane down to Rabual and Colin and his mates were put to work helping guard Japanese prisoners for 6 weeks. There were still 100,000 there which had to be returned to Japan.

In the middle of 1946, Colin (21 at this stage) came home on the HMAS Manoora landing in Randwick, Sydney to then return to Melbourne to visit his mother. He knocked on the front door and his youngest brother answered the door. Colin left when his little brother was 8, he is now 12 and he answered the door with, "Who are you?".



Colin being presented with Medallion by Kevin Hogan MP

Colin said, "I'm your brother, Colin, I don't know who you are", his brother then said "I'm Ted, but I don't know who you are" then slammed the door. 'I could hear him yelling out the back of the house, "Mum, mum there's a man at the door and he says he's Colin" well she flipped, no one knew I was coming home'

Colin had 5 brothers and 1 sister that served and all of them returned home after the war. "The war was a terrible thing for a young fella, but because you're with lots of other people your own age it becomes a lifestyle. It's all heavy discipline, you've got to do what you're told, which you get used to. In all the years that I was service, 3 years and 3 months, I enjoyed a lot of it but there was a lot of it that I didn't. A lot of it was absolute traumatic, like Cowra. More so later, when I was fighting in the infantry."

After the war Colin moved to Hobart, where he worked at The Mercury Newspaper as a foreman for their composing room and later as the Overseer of Government Privity Office. He married and had two sons and a daughter.

In 1970, he came to the mainland, where he bought a caravan park in Halliday's Point. He then sold the business and moved to Woolgoolga in 1988, where he met and married **Pat**.

Colin and Pat took over the Square Dance Circuit holding events all over the area and running a Square Dance Club for over 15 years.



Colin & wife Pat

Kevin Hogan said it was an honour to present Colin with a Medallion marking 75 years since the end of the war. November 2020.

VALE MARY KELL



Mary Isabel Kell née Colls
Life Member Number #6587

14 March 1926 – 11 October 2023

It was with great sadness I learnt of the death of our FFF North Coast Chapter founding Member, and my dear friend, **Mary Kell** in Moruya NSW on 11 October 2023.

Mary and **Jim Kell**, **Lionel Phelps** and **Rod Davis**, all then Members of the Northern Rivers Chapter, formed our Chapter on Sunday 13 April 1997 and we held our first formal Meeting on Sunday 1 June 1997 at Boambee Creek Reserve with 33 in attendance. We had tentatively formed the basis of our Committee with President Mary Kell and this was formalised along with the other Committee positions on 1 June 1997.



Sunday 1 June 1997 at Boambee Creek Reserve; Mary Kell, Front Second from the Right.

Mary a tireless First Fleet guest speaker at Lions Club, Rotary, Toastmasters, Apex, Zonta, Quota, Red Cross and many other Service Groups, also speaking about the First Fleet on ABC and 2 Air F M Radio and numerous Schools of the area.

Mary always remained a very active member of our FFF North Coast Chapter, even after she moved to Moruya NSW in 2017.

While living in Dorrigo, after moving from Tumut NSW, Mary was active in all areas of the Community and in particular the Dorrigo Dramatic Club. They were

performing “The Next Door” when they learnt of Mary’s passing and dedicated that night’s performance in Mary’s honour.

The Lyons Club was also a passion of Mary’s, and she was given the honour of Life Membership in August 2023.

Upon moving to Moruya, Mary, then aged 91, was not happy to stay at home so she joined the Moruya Red Door Theatre and became a very active member and on 11 June 2023 became a Life Member. The Photo on the Facebook Page says; “Wonderful to celebrate Mary’s Life Membership Award by the Moruya Red Door Theatre. As a committee member, director, front of house, former treasurer and beautiful actor, Mary is a treasured member of our theatre community.”



Mary Isabel Kell née Colls, Descendant of **Benjamin Cusley** and **Ellen Fraser (Redchester)** became a Life Member of The Fellowship in 2022. Mary said this was one of her proudest days.

Mary is survived by her two Sons, three Daughters, eleven Grandchildren and twenty - five Great Grandchildren. James Edward Lawrence Kell and Mary Isabel Colls marriage was registered 1945 in Adelong NSW and Jim predeceased Mary by 12 years and 10 days.

Mary’s Memorial Service will be held on Sunday 19 Nov 2023 at Dorrigo RSL and will be attended by Chapter Members.

I will conclude with the heartfelt words of Grandson Lawrence “I am lucky enough to be able to count many things that I am grateful for in the life I have had. By far one of the most is my amazing grandmother Mary Kell. I cannot imagine what it would have been like without such a sensationally awesome person to have there to look up to, be taken care of from and been inspired by. What a life and legacy to be able to look down upon. If anyone has ever passed happily with the knowledge, they have left the world a better place, it is Mary. You will be missed more than most can imagine dreaming of.”

RIP dear Mary **#6598 Robyn Condliffe**

Our Chapters in Action

ALBURY-WODONGA DISTRICT – *Both sides of the Murray River.*

Venue: Usually at Albury Library/Museum, Kiewa St. Albury, Monthly meetings, third Saturday at 10:00 for 10.30 am. **Next Meetings:** 16 December, 17 February
Next Event: 16 December: Christmas lunch **Contact:** Ian Anderson 0426 147 365

ARTHUR PHILLIP – *Milsons Point to Brooklyn and across to all northern beaches.*

Venue: Meeting Room, Old Gordon Public School. 799 Pacific Highway, Gordon – monthly meetings, third Friday at 10.30. **Next Meetings:** 15 December, 16 February: Sue Williams *Elizabeth and Elizabeth* **Next Event:** 15 December: Christmas Party **Contact:** Judith O'Shea 0448 252 167

BOTANY BAY - *Southern Sydney, from Cooks River to Waterfall and west to Liverpool*

Venue: Our Lady of Fatima Church, 825 Forest Rd, Peakhurst. Monthly on third Tuesday 10.30am. **Next Meetings:** 12 December: Kris Kringle and Morning Tea 20 February: 50th Anniversary, Anne Fields *Moorefields Racecourse* **Next Event:** 12 December, Christmas Lunch, Club Grandviews, Peakhurst, January 18: Lunch at Yarra Bay Sailing Club **Contact:** Carol Macklin 0415 376 434

CANBERRA – *ACT, Queanbeyan and surrounds.*

Venue: Various locations in Canberra. **Next Event:** 10 December: Christmas Barbecue, 10 Portus Place, Bruce at 12pm—contact Toni Pike for more details
Contact: Toni Pike 0410 412 778

CENTRAL COAST – *From Lake Macquarie to Broken Bay, highlands to coast.*

Venue: Point Clare Community Hall, – meet monthly, second Saturday at 10 am for 10.30. **Next Meeting:** **Next Event:** Christmas Lunch **Contact:** Margaret Morelli 0409 467 710

DERWENT - *Southern Tasmania NB: New Venue*

Venue: Bi-monthly, 11am, Lindisfarne Community Activities Centre, 37A Lincoln St. **Next Meeting:** 3 February: John Stephenson *Bushrangers and Town Name* **Next Event:** 2 December: Christmas Event Margate **Contact:** Lorraine Polglase 03 6225 5221

EASTERN FARMS – *Ryde, Eastwood, Parramatta, Kings Langley, Pennant Hills and surrounds.*

Venue: The Hall at Brush Farm House, 19 Lawson St. Eastwood –monthly meetings, first Saturday from 10am **Next Meeting:** 2 December: Christmas Morning Tea—no speaker **Next Event:** **Contact:** Jennifer Follers (02) 9799 1161

HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN --*Western Sydney, Penrith to Windsor, Blue Mountains.*

Venue: Hawkesbury Central Library, Windsor, second Saturday of each month **Next Meeting:** 10 February: 10:30 for 11am Steve Ford *Land Records* RSVP required **Next Event:** 7 December Lunch at Nepean Rowing Club, Penrith **Contact:** William Hempel 0410 950 101

HUNTER VALLEY – *Hunter Region, Newcastle and surrounds.*

Venue: Teralba Community Hall Supper Room. 15 Anzac Pde Teralba—bi-monthly meetings, usually third Monday –9:45 for 10am start -12.30pm. **Next Meeting:** **Next Event:** **Contact:** Kerry Neinert (02) 49615083.

MORETON – *Brisbane and South East Queensland.*

Venue: St. Augustine's Anglican Church Hall, Hamilton – bi-monthly meetings, at 10 am on an available 2nd Saturday unless otherwise advised **Next Meeting:** 17 February: (Please note change of date for this meeting only) Julie Webb *Viking Genealogy and DNA Triangulation* **Next Event:** 2 December: Christmas Lunch, Charming Squire, Grey St, South Brisbane, 12 noon **Contact:** Jan Grant 0403 193 647

NORTH COAST – *Nambucca Heads, Dorrigo, Boambee, Coffs Harbour to McLean.*

Venue: Either Mylestom Hall or Coramba Hall, or at members' homes, Bi-monthly, usually first Sunday at 10.30am. **Next Meeting:** 4 February, Mylestom Hall, Speaker TBA **Next Event:** 2 December: Annual Christmas Party—11:30 for 11:50am seating—Coramba Hotel, Coramba **Contact:** Robyn Condliffe 0420 923 140 or (02)6653 6315

NORTHERN RIVERS – *Ballina and surrounding districts*

Venue: Ballina Cherry Street Sports and Bowling Club - bi-monthly meetings, fourth Sunday at 11.30am followed by lunch; **Next Meeting:** 26 January, Celebrating Australia Day **Contact:** Roddy Jordan (02) 6687 5339

NORTH WEST – *Tamworth and surrounds.*

Venue: Various locations – bi-monthly meetings, usually first Saturday at 1.30pm **Next Meeting:** **Next Event:** **Contact:** Janet McLean 0438 465 529

PORT PHILLIP—*Melbourne and Regional Victoria.*

Venue: Various; quarterly meetings, days and times vary **Next Meeting:** **Contact:** Peter Yates pyatesfff@gmail.com

SOUTH COAST – *Engadine to Burrill Lake.*

NB: New Venue: Artisan Room, Wests Illawarra Club, Unanderra – monthly except. Jan, May and Dec. – first Tuesday at 10am - 1pm **Next Meeting:** 6 February: Show and Tell **Next Event:** 5 December: Christmas Luncheon Warilla Sporties 12 Noon **Contact:** Fae McGregor 02 4271 3762

SWAN RIVER – *Perth, Fremantle and surrounds.*

Venue: 16 Inwood Place Murdoch, bi-monthly, usually first Saturday, at 2pm. **Next Meetings:** 2 December: *Show & Tell, Wine & Cheese Tasting* 3 February: Richard Offen **Next Event:** 26 January: Australia Day Brunch, Burswood Park **Contact:** Toni Mahony (08) 9271 7630

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thank you to the Chapters who submitted details of their upcoming meetings and events.

The Purpose of our **Chapters** is to provide present members and potential members the opportunity to become active in various locations throughout Australia. Many of the chapters conduct regular meetings and produce publications of interest as well as arranging various tours and excursions. We invite you to contact any of the above mentioned

Welcome to New Members

Ordinary and Pensioner Members

HENRY KABLE/SUSANNAH HOLMES

#9256 John Edward Thompson

THOMAS CHIPP/JANE LANGLEY

#9257 Doreen Janet Thompson

**HENRY KABLE/SUSANNAH HOLMES/THOMAS CHIPP/
JANE LANGLEY**

#9258 Julie Anne Jones

#9259 Susan Louise Thompson

#9260 Vicki May Fraser

#9261 Karyn Lynette McCabe

#9262 Liane Joy Thompson

MARGARET DARNELL//DOWLING

#9263 Sean Thomas Machin

NATHANIEL LUCAS/OLIVIA GASCOIGNE

#9267 Glenn Raymond Dickson

FREDERICK MEREDITH

#9271 Bruce Robert Murray

#9272 Lyndall Gae Couper

Student Member

WILLIAM HUBBARD

#9268 Cheryl Grace Dale

Associate Members

#9272.1 Garry John Couper

JOHN HERBERT/DEBORAH ELLAM

#9273.1 Yvonne Elgin Cooper

Junior Members

THOMAS RESTELL (RISDALE) CROWDER

#9264 Finn Lewis Millington

#9265 Harper Millie Downie

#9266 Annabelle Mae Downie

WILLIAM HUBBARD

#9269 Callan Jake Dale-Papierski

#9270 Tiana Samantha Dale-Papierski

Friend Member

#F128 Margaret Hutchinson

Deaths

JOSEPH TUSO

8969 Peter Edward Hills of Baulkham Hills, NSW , died 2022.

JOHN HERBERT/DEBORAH ELLAM

#7936 Lorraine Muriel West of Cromer, NSW, died November 2022.

ISAAC TARR

#8877 Beryl Green of Cronulla, NSW, died on 18 June 2023.

FRASER/REDCHESTER ELLEN/ELEANOR

#6587 Mary Kell of Moruya Heads NSW. Mary was awarded Life Membership of the Fellowship in 2022. Aged 97 years. (See article page 10)

Donation Received

The Martin family has made a generous donation to the Fellowship which will be applied to one of the projects we are exploring during our strategic planning review. We are very grateful for their support.

"IN MEMORY OF GORDON MARTIN WHO PASSED AWAY IN FEBRUARY, 10 DAYS SHORT OF HIS 95TH BIRTHDAY.

GORDON WAS A KEEN MEMBER OF THE FIRST FLEETERS & ALWAYS ENJOYED READING THE PUBLICATIONS.

FOR MANY YEARS, HE HAD BEEN RESEARCHING THE

FAMILY HISTORY & DISCOVERED THAT WE ARE DECENDANTS OF JOHN MARTIN, WHO WAS TRANSPORTED WITH THE FIRST FLEET.

THE DONATION IS FROM JUNE, GORDON'S WIFE (JUNE SADLY PASSED AWAY RECENTLY ON 12TH AUGUST). CARL & HIS WIFE VYVYAN, LEX & HIS WIFE HEATHER, DEAN & HIS WIFE CLAIRE, JENNIFER & HER HUSBAND DAVID, GRANDCHILDREN ESTHER, LEAH, NADINE & JUSTINE, GREAT GRANDCHILDREN MASON & PARKER & BRENDAN HUSBAND TO ESTHER.

We hope this helps the First Fleeters to continue their great work. Kind Regards, The Martin Family."

Chapter Secretaries

ALBURY-WODONGA DISTRICT

Ian Anderson 0426 147 365

ARTHUR PHILLIP

Judith O'Shea 0448 252 167

BOTANY BAY

Carol Macklin 0415 376 434

CANBERRA

Geoff Lamb 02 6231 5548

CENTRAL COAST

Margaret Morelli 0409 467 710

DERWENT

Lorraine Polglase 03 6225 5221

EASTERN FARMS

Jennifer Follers 02 9799 1161

HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN

William Hempel 0410 950 101

HUNTER VALLEY

Kerry Neinert 02 4961 5083

MORETON

Jan Grant 07 5491 1891

NORTH COAST

Robyn Condliffe 02 6653 3615

NORTHERN RIVERS

Roddy Jordan 02 6687 5339

NORTH WEST

Janet McLean 0438 465 529

PORT PHILLIP

Peter Yates pyatesfff@gmail.com

SOUTH COAST

Tony Burns scoastcfff@gmail.com

SWAN RIVER

Margaret Hutchinson

0438 881 252