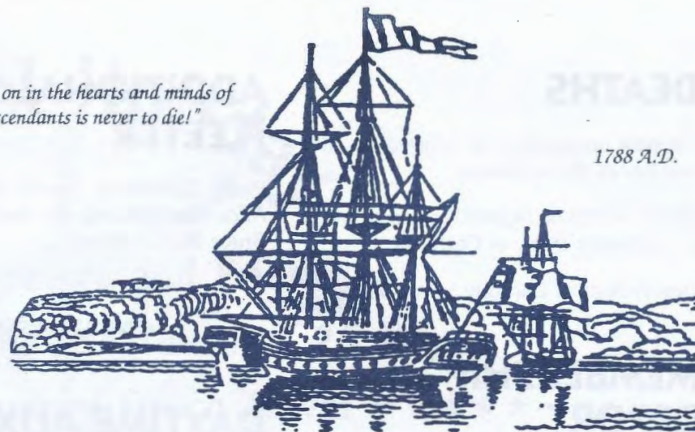


Fellowship of First Fleeters

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

1788 A.D.



NEWSLETTER

JOURNAL OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS INC. NSW 1988

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PATRON: His Excellency the Honourable Gordon Samuels, AC, Governor of New South Wales

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MARCH/APRIL 1998 VOLUME 29 NO. 2

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On March 1 last, I was joined by Vice-President Doug and a number of members at Wollongong for the Charles Throsby Smith Family Reunion. C. T. Smith married first a daughter of First Fleeter William Broughton and therefore all descendants of the first marriage are First Fleeters. Together with the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, our former Patron and State Governor Rear-Admiral Peter Sinclair was a guest of honour. What a joy it was for all of us present to learn that our immediate past Patron was a First Fleeter! The site chosen for the celebration was on the original grant, and the occasion was the two-hundredth birthday of C. T. Smith. The Family Association is to be congratulated for an excellently prepared reunion.

.....

A number of members have inquired about 'The Welcome Wall' to be erected close by the National Maritime Museum. The rather grand brochure I have states - 'If your forebears, family or friends migrated to Australia, their names deserve to be on the Wall.' The Wall will be 100-metres long and will feature names of immigrants engraved on bronze panels. The first names will be unveiled this September and names added each Australia Day until our centenary of federation in 2001. The cost is \$100 one name entry, on a first come, first served basis. Personally I could have thought it more meaningful it commenced with the eighteenth century and progressed from there, but

your 1788 arrival could be adjacent to a 1988 arrival - any takers contact Welcome Wall Info Line 1800 067 511.

.....

I had hoped to visit the newly formed North Coast Chapter in April but unfortunately family commitments have intervened. August is the next viable date and although I am committed to the Saturday I shall make every endeavour to be at Coffs Harbour on Sunday, 2 August.

.....

Congratulations to member Rev. Canon James Payne OBE (F.F. Robert Williams) on the occasion of his fiftieth anniversary of his ordination into the priesthood. I hope to attend the service of commemoration in Canberra on 15 April next. Our best wishes and loving thoughts go out to you, Jim.

.....

The Tunks Annual Picnic will be held at the end of March and as Joy and I will be in Tasmania, I have asked Vice-President Doug accompanied by our Archivist and Tunks Family executive member, Joyce Cowell, to represent me on this occasion.

.....

Former President James Donohoe has been on the seriously ill list recently and we wish him well. For personal reasons Jim has, in his wisdom, decided to take a low profile within the Fellowship, but

in a letter to him I have assured him of our support and appreciation during his three years as president.

.....

Thank you for your letters of encouragement and apologies for any delay in replying to same. Our newly appointed life member, Kath Lenthall (#686) wrote a beautiful letter to tell us she thought the occasion of the Australia Day luncheon went off with quiet dignity. The photos in the Newsletter were good (Kath, I shall forward the negatives to you soon). She also informed us that her First Fleeter's surname is 'Register' not Redchester, as generally supposed.

.....

I have passed over to our editor, Ron Maguire, the transcripts of my ten talks on FM Radio 2CBA, transmitted to the Sydney region last year. I hope they will stand as a record of not only the history of the beginning of our nation but as a record of the struggles of our Pioneers. For the past 12-15 years I have endeavoured to put before you and the Australian public as a whole the richness of our heritage. Let us always keep before us that heritage we have inherited, and be ever mindful, that, in a vital way we together, with our fellow Australians, give to future generations a heritage of which to be proud.

In Fellowship, **PETER**

**Annual Holiday
See page 3**

DEATHS

Deepest sympathy is offered to the families of the following:

MARY GREEN (#2976), passed away 21 February 1998, of Corrimal.

Descendant of Caroline Laycock.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

For period 15 January 1998 to 25 March 1998

We extend a warm welcome to new members joined during this period - 26 adults, one junior and three spouse associates.

JAMES BRADLEY: Mrs Viva Audrey Brown (sp. Mr Bruce Alan Brown); Mrs Robyn Janeen Ethel Lee.

PATRICK BYRNE - ANN SMITH: Mr David Russell Pike; Mr Adam David Pike; Miss Melanie Sarah Pike.

WILLIAM EGGLETON - MARY DICKENSON: Mrs Mona Graham Keough.

MATTHEW EVERINGHAM + PETER HIBBS: Mr Stephen Francis Thomas; Mrs Sarah Leith McInnes; Mr Anthony Stephen Thomas; Mr Matthew John Thomas.

ROBERT FORRESTER: Mr Lindsay Gordon Price.

EDWARD HUMPHREY: Mrs Janet Grace Baker.

JOHN NICHOLS: Mr Adam James Smidt; Miss Melissa Anne Smidt.

CHARLES PEAT - ANN MULLENS: Mrs Patricia Jane O'Mara.

JOHN RANDALL: Mrs Joyce Isabelle Chandler; Mr Johnathan Stanley Rogers; Miss Samantha Jayne Rogers; Mrs Janice Louise McEachran.

JOHN RANDALL + JOHN MARTIN + RICHARD PARTRIDGE - MARY GREENWOOD: Mr Robert John Fidock; Mr Ronald Charles Axam; Mr Stephen James Axam (sp. Mrs Alison Elizabeth Axam); Miss Prue Elizabeth Axam; Mr Nicholas John Axam.

JOHN SMALL - MARY PARKER + JAMES BRADLEY: Mr Robert Stanley Carter (sp. Mrs Nancy Gloria Carter).

WILLIAM WALL: Mr Andrew James Wall.

EDWARD WHITTON: Miss Courtney Jane Dawson (jun.).

ADDITIONAL FIRST FLEETER

Philip Devine to Daniel Stanfield and Alice Harmsworth for #6647 Jonathan Bruce McLoughlin.

DAYTIME AUXILIARY ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Daytime Auxiliary was held on Wednesday, 4 March 1998, at First Fleet House, Woolloomooloo. Twenty members and friends were in attendance with six apologies recorded.

The Convenor spoke on places visited during the previous 12 months. They included: Toongabbie Festival in April; the week trip to Dubbo in May; the visitation to Windsor area and the Sydney International Rowing Centre in June, as well as the successful Soup and Damper luncheon in July, when over 60 persons attended. There were also visits to Elizabeth House in August, Fort Denison in September, Canberra in October and Katoomba in November. The committee also participated in the Fellowship's Christmas party at History House in December 1997 and the Australia Day luncheon in January 1998.

Expressions of thanks were made to members of the committee whose diligence and hard work had made for another very successful year: Anne Davison (who is giving up the post) has been doing the stressful duties of secretary; Joyce Rixon for her husbanding of resources; weekend organiser of functions Phyllis Selby, and Joy Pankhurst's penchant for weekend rambles. Of course, a very sincere 'thank you' was given to Beverly Naughton for her expertise in organising the Christmas party and the Australia Day luncheon.

The treasurer reported a very successful year financially. The Auxiliary purchased another radiator for the office and made a donation to Australian Colonial Marine Enactment Group for their contribution to our functions during the year.

The annual election conducted by Mr Bill Cox, as Returning Officer, resulted in the following:

Convenor/Secretary: Douglas Oakes
Treasurer: Joyce Rixon
Weekday Functions: Phyllis Selby
Weekend Functions: Joy Pankhurst.

During General Business Phyllis Selby requested more support for the trip to Wentworth and reminded those who had stated they were coming that their money was required as soon as possible.

After lunch Patricia Skehan from the Concord Heritage Society gave a talk and presented a photographic exhibition of the Walker Family Estate, Concord, which was very well received. We were most appreciative of her presentation. (See pages 4-5 for article on Yaralla.)

Advance notice is given of a possible trip to Kingsford Smith Airport and a trip to the Dame Eadith Walker Estate, Concord.

Douglas Oakes
Convenor, Daytime Auxiliary Committee.

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.

Mrs W. G. Anderson; K. J. Arch; S. R. Ballard; Mrs Mary Bailey; L. R. Baxter; A. I. & B. J. Bellingham; Rod Best & Louise Baur; Mrs Paula Bosman; Mr C. O. Boyd; Mrs Laura R. Boyd; Audrey P. Cacouris; R. G. Carter; W. E. Carter; Mrs J. Chaseling; Alice Clarke; David H. Crossley; Mrs C. E. Curry; Norma Dawson; Moyna Eggleston; Val Flanders; Mrs L. Goodwill; Mrs P. J. Gore; Valerie Gordon; Patricia Halpin; Ross Hannon; Ian Harvey; Dorothy Jean Heldon; D. C. Hunt; Mrs Joan Johns; Mr & Mrs C. Johnson; Ruth E. Jurd; Mr G. R. Kable & A. Kable; Mrs Mary Kelly; Elgine Kelly; Mrs E. A. King; Marilyn Knight; Mrs Carol Leggett; Mrs Beryl Lewis; Rae Lloyd; Toni Mahony; Mrs C. A. Martin; Mrs J. Martin; D. J. Matschoss; Mrs Ami McLachlan; Richard J. McKenzie; Victoria McPherson; Jill Meredith; Mrs A. N. Moen; H. G. Morgan; Jaimie Morgan; R. V. Morgan; M. & R. W. Morris; Olive O'Reilly; B. J. Patfield; M. Pearce; Mrs Beryl Potts; V. & L. Preddy; V. Reid; Ronald V. W. Roberts; Mrs Betty A. Rowell; B. A. Shardlow; John W. Shortland; Kenneth Sibraa; Myrl Skinner; B. Small; D. Smith; John H. Speers; Evan D. Stafford; C. O. Torbett; Mrs G. L. Tyson In Memoriam William Walter Spence #5856; Cecil & Cynthia Thompson; Catherine Walker; Jean Westmore; Mrs L. E. Wickham; He. Williamson; R. W. Withington.

Annual Holiday

For First Fleeters and Friends
Wednesday, 20 May to Tuesday, 26 May

★★★★★ Five-star Luxury Coach Travel ★★★★★

Coach will leave Eddy Avenue, Central Railway Station, between 7.45 and 8.00am

Pick-up at Strathfield Station (North Side) about 8.30am

Accommodation will be at the Wentworth Central Motor Inn on the Darling River. Cost \$380.

The tour will take in Broken Hill, Silverton, Mungo National Park, wineries, cruise on the Darling-Murray rivers, An overnight stop at Wagga Wagga on forward journey and Albury on the return trip.

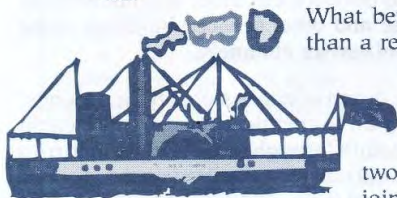
DAY 1

Leave Sydney travelling the Hume Highway, comfort stops and lunch will be had as we head towards Wagga Wagga. Depending on availability of accommodation, our first night away will be spent at either Wagga Wagga or West Wyalong.

DAY 2

Today we travel through Hay, Balranald, Euston and Mildura and head for Wentworth where we will spend the next four nights at the Wentworth Central Motor Inn. There's time to settle in, making yourself at home in your luxury unit; a dip in the pool; a super relax in the spa. Your motel is right in town which makes it possible for you to stroll along the Darling River and enjoy the majestic river gums and rich bird life. Your evening meal is served in the Wentworth Services Club overlooking the tranquil Darling. The club is yours to enjoy.

DAY 3



What better way to start the day than a relaxing river cruise taking in both the Murray and Darling Rivers. You'll see the broad expanse of water where these two famous Australian rivers join. It's 'all-aboard' MV

Loyalty to meet the skipper Captain Eddie Thomas who'll entertain you with stories of the 'early days' of steam paddleboats and barges when Wentworth was the third largest port in New South Wales. After the cruise we board the coach and head for Alambie Winery, a boutique winery on the outskirts of Mildura, for some sampling and a chance to stock up from the cellars. On to Mildura, learn of the Chaffey brothers and their verdant irrigation vision of a hundred years ago. On your tour of beautiful Sunraysia, you'll see Australia's largest vineyard and citrus growing region. Dinner tonight will be at the Wentworth Club.

DAY 4

After a Continental breakfast (provided in your room for this early start), we leave at 7.00am for a trip to Broken Hill, travelling through the vast inland of Australia. Arriving near 9.30am (don't forget we gain half an hour), we visit the famous Pro Hart Gallery, one of the largest private art collections in the country featuring Australian and European paintings. The Pro Hart Gallery also displays Chinese pottery, perfume bottles and a collection of baby rattles. You'll see the famous Roger Electronic Pipe Organ, one of the largest of its type in Australia. There's time for lunch and a stroll around the shops. We drive 25 kilometres to Silverton, little more than a ghost town. Many of its colonial and Victorian buildings have been featured in the many movies, commercials, mini-series and documentaries filmed there. This is where they made 'A Town Like Alice,' 'Mad Max 2,' 'Hostage,' 'Razorback' and many more. Silverton jail houses many interesting relics and echoes of the past. We'll 'walk in a mine' at White's Minerals, Art Gallery and Mining Museum. Light refreshments are available. Leaving fascinating Broken Hill we travel back to Wentworth arriving at about 7.30pm with time to freshen up for dinner.

DAY 5

Adventure begins today! The drive north-east takes us back 40,000 years to Mungo National Park, a series of dry lakes now, but still a haven of native flora and fauna. No other area of Inland Australia combines a record of past environmental and human history spanning the glacial period as does the Willandra Lakes region. We have a picnic lunch in this truly unique location. The focus on Mungo National Park is directly related to the intensity of erosion on the sand lunettes, one aptly named 'The Walls of China.' In fact almost all the significant archaeological discoveries made throughout the entire region have resulted from natural wind erosion. An experienced guide will conduct this tour of Mungo. We return to Wentworth via the historic Port of Pooncarie nestled in the quiet bend of the Darling River. Here you'll enjoy a delicious Devonshire Tea at the CWA Craft Shop. It's then back to dinner and local wines at the Wentworth Club.

DAY 6

Back on the road today heading for home. We head back along the Murray River through a selection of river towns – an unforgettable drive! We spend our last night away at Albury.

DAY 7

The last day of our holiday, is a sort of anticlimax, we depart Albury for Sydney.

Yaralla Mansion

Yaralla was built in the 1860s. The first stage of the house was designed by eminent colonial architect Edmund Blacket in 1857.

It is Italianate in style, which is said to be eclectic, ornate and asymmetrical and was originally derived from the medieval castles of Italy. This style had been transformed through the rural mansions of England before reaching Australia in the late 1850s and was apparently very popular during the boom years following the gold rushes.

The original house, as designed by Blacket, consisted of a two-storey main living area with a central three-storey Italianate tower. Attached to this was a single storey kitchen wing and another single storey wing containing a small conservatory. The stone used in the construction of the house was quarried from the property close to the river and this quarry was later converted into a large swimming pool.

Second-stage additions were made to Yaralla in the 1890s, after Eadith Walker commissioned



John Sulman to design them. He is also credited with designing the stables and coach house.

Yaralla's lack of symmetry, its four-storey tower and Corinthian columns are reportedly typically Italianate.

The use of lattice work on the veranda shows an Indian influence, possibly following Eadith's trip to India.

John (later Sir John) Sulman was also the architect responsible for the Thomas Walker Convalescent Hospital.

In an additional wing to the house, built after the John Sulman alterations, was an extensive conservatory, the Indian Room, a billiard room, a gun room and a bachelor flat.

The main form of transport to Yaralla around the turn of the century was by boat. Yaralla had its own private wharf and slipway with a boathouse. Stone steps and a narrow stone path led from the wharf through a grove of bamboo to the main house.

The Yaralla estate incorporated a large number of buildings in the 1930s before Eadith's death. These included a small power plant, which was the size of a small factory. It was Sydney's first private power generating plant and provided electricity and hot water to the house and other serviced buildings along a series of service channels.

Nearly a dozen cottages stood in the grounds, including an authentic Norwegian log cabin which Eadith brought home from a trip to Norway and had reconstructed on the grounds to the west of the main house. Members of the staff were accommodated in these.

On one of her trips overseas, in 1903, she visited India to celebrate Edward VII's Coronation Durbar (Gathering of Princes) and brought back so many artefacts and pieces of furniture that a special Indian Room was constructed to house them. Its walls were lined with red velvet and encircled by an Indian painting and lattice work high above the doorway.

Yaralla is the name of the main building in the Walker Estate. Patricia Skehan from the Concord Heritage Society, convenor of the Inner Western Group of Historical Societies, presents a Heritage Week display at Westfield, Burwood, each year. Trish, as she prefers to be known, contributes articles to national magazines, local newspapers and to heritage societies, including the Concord Heritage Society Newsletter, on heritage issues such as Yaralla. She is also a speaker at RSL Clubs and Rotary groups. Yaralla is a subject dear to her heart and this is the first part of a history of the Walker Family and the area.

As befitted a grand mansion Yaralla also included extensive gardens, which were believed to be laid out by Thomas Walker when he was arranging the construction of the house. It was likened to an English manor garden, but also included native planting. The extensive lawn areas included a croquet lawn and tennis court. The entrance drive was flanked by a row of brush box and led past a formal rose garden. An extensive grotto, planted with native and exotic orchids, ferns, lilies and succulents, existed on the low land by the river.

Yaralla became one of Sydney's premier estates, not only for its grandeur but also for its social events and links with important people of the day.

Under Eadith's control it became the scene of extensive and glittering entertainment. Gaily decorated ferries carried celebrities from Sydney to Yaralla's private wharf, where they were greeted by a band playing on a pontoon. The line of carriages also coming from Sydney almost formed processions they were so long. The parties for the children were stated to be unique. Yaralla became a centre for society and

almost every visitor of note who passed through Sydney was entertained there.

About 1914 the Prime Minister, Mr Cook, approached Eadith Walker regarding the possible use of Yaralla for the month-long visit to Sydney of the new Governor-General, Sir Ronald

(later to become George VI) and Duchess of York visited Sydney they were entertained at Yaralla.

Yaralla was the venue for the wedding of Banjo Patterson's daughter Grace on 12 December 1931. (Banjo Patterson's wife was Thomas Walker's cousin.)



Yaralla Mansion

Eadith Walker became famous for her parties. Not only were adults entertained at Yaralla, but she held many parties for children because, although Eadith never had any children, she felt a special affection towards them.

Few People knew of Eadith's personal acts of kindness and compassion to the poor and needy, particularly during the depression years, or of her love for animals.

Munro Ferguson. The house was freely made available.

Royal visitors were also guests at Yaralla. The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) reportedly stayed at Yaralla in 1920 for several days. Eadith Walker had a private squash court built especially for his stay and a coat of arms was specially constructed over Yaralla's main gates. In 1927 when the Duke

When she died on 8 October 1937, aged 72, her estate was valued at a mere fraction of the fortune her father had passed on to her – much of the money had gone to charity. From her estate a third part was willed to the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia, NSW Branch. The rest was distributed in accordance with her father's will.

JOADJA GHOST TOWN – SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS SUNDAY 14 JUNE

In a valley of great scenic beauty lies the historic mining town of Joadja; built in the late 1870s to mine the huge deposits of rich shale held in the valley walls.

Our tour is accompanied by a qualified guide, describing the history of the valley and showing us the original buildings and shale ovens that are world heritage listed.

Following our visit to Joadja we return to Berrima for a late lunch and time to explore the many craft shops and galleries housed in the heritage buildings

Cost \$33 which includes morning tea and Joadja admission.

The coach will stop at Cremorne, Central Railway and Beverly Hills or Strathfield.



Please phone the Office 9360 3788 or 9360 3988 for bookings.

Is this the oldest EUROPEAN BUILDING IN AUSTRALIA?

From *The Site Gazette*

Courtesy
*The Friends of First
Government House Site*

In Melbourne's Fitzroy Gardens stands what is undoubtedly Australia's oldest European building – the little brick and stone cottage which once belonged to James and Grace Cook, the parents of the renowned British explorer and navigator, Captain James Cook. Originally built in Great Ayton, North Yorkshire in 1755, the small dwelling was dismantled and brought to Australia in 1934 as part of the celebrations of the centenary of Victoria.

The Cooks originally lived in nearby Marton until 1736 – when the young James Cook was eight years old – the family moved to Great Ayton, where his father took the post of 'hind' or bailiff at Aireyholme, the farm of Thomas Skottowe. There the Cooks presumably lived until James Cook Snr left

Skottowe's employ in 1755 to become a stonemason, and built the tiny cottage where the family was to live thereafter. Perhaps one of his first acts as a stonemason was to carve the 'JGC 1755' inscription (James and Grace Cook) on the stone lintel above the door.

The cottage is built largely of brick, with sandstone foundations and lintels, both materials which were easily obtainable; the stone from Durham and the bricks from the nearby Cleveland Hills. The attached 'byre' or stable was added later, and was probably built of stone because the 1784 brick tax made such construction cheaper than brick. The roof is now covered with 'S' shaped pantiles of a Flanders pattern, which were introduced into Yorkshire around 1800, and probably replaced the original thatching. Set into the stone outside the front entry door is a patch of broken flints, which serves exactly the same purpose as a modern doormat.

The house itself is of two storey construction, and is entered by a covered through passage which opens at one side into a large ground floor main room with a cooking fireplace and dining table, plus two small bedrooms adjacent. Upstairs is the main bedroom and a smaller room at the head of the stairs.

It would seem that Captain Cook did not live in the cottage for any great length of time, since by 1745 he had left Great Ayton to become a shop assistant at Staithes on the coast, then later to Whitby from where he subsequently went to sea, finally joining the Royal Navy in 1755. It is quite possible that Cook might have visited and even stayed with his parents in their little cottage between voyages, but there is no direct proof of this. The only recorded instance of his visiting Great Ayton was in 1772 before he sailed in the *Resolution*, but by this time his mother was dead and James Snr was about to move to the seaside town of Redcar to live with his married daughter Margaret Fleck.

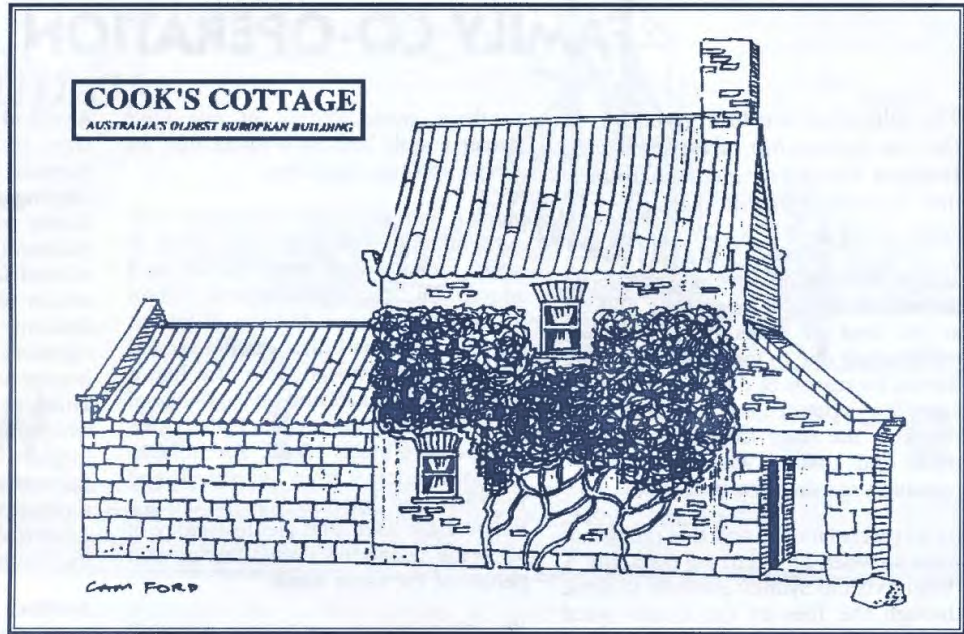
After James Cook Snr left the cottage, it changed hands many times until 1933, when a copy of a local notice advertising its sale was cabled to th-

The dedication stone shown below comes from the oldest British building in Australia – in fact, if we ignore the rough fortifications thrown together by the survivors of the Batavia on the barren reef islands off Western Australia, or the controversial stone huts allegedly built by 16th century Portuguese explorers in the forest near Boydton in NSW, then this building is indeed the oldest European building in Australia. Read its fascinating story!



Melbourne Herald. The item produced a tremendous response, with many calls for the cottage to be bought and reerected in Victoria as a fitting centrepiece for Victoria's 1934 centenary celebrations. Mr (later Sir) Russell Grimwade, a wealthy Melbourne industrialist, took up the challenge and quickly persuaded the then Premier of Victoria, Sir Stanley Argyle, to support the idea.

It was not an easy project – the current owner refused to sell the cottage without the lands and, in a patriotic attempt to prevent American interests from buying it, had made it a condition of sale that the building had to remain in England. Grimwade offered to erect an obelisk of granite from Cape Everard (Cook's first Australian landfall) on the site to replace the house, and after further negotiations the sale was finally agreed upon. The house was carefully disassembled and the 150 tons of brick and stone were carefully packed into 253 cases and 40 barrels and shipped



free of charge to Melbourne, together with clippings of the original ivy from the walls. Local private companies and government organisations erected the building waiving most of the usual charges, and it was opened to the public the following year. The house was closed during the war, and was the subject of a major renovation in 1975.

Today the cottage – Australia's oldest European building – stands in the Fitzroy Gardens as a fitting memorial to Captain James Cook.

Cam Ford

FIRST FLEETER JOHN MARTIN (1757-1837)

Daphne Hazell has brought to our attention that a grave with a tombstone for Mary Martin, the second wife of First Fleeter John Martin, and their daughter Harriet, is located in St John's Cemetery, Parramatta. John Martin and other members of his family are buried at St John's. Daphne Hazell is a descendant of John and Mary (Randall) Martin.

John Martin was sentenced at the Old Bailey on 3 July 1782 for grabbing a bundle of clothing in a house. He was sentenced to transportation for seven years and was initially to go to South Africa. He became sick when Den Keyser was about to sail and was left behind. He was then transferred to the hulk Ceres. In 1787 John Martin was transferred to Alexander for the First Fleet voyage. When he arrived here in 1788, he had only one more year of his sentence to serve.

On 26 August 1792 he married Ann Joy and in November 1792 he received a grant of 50 acres at the northern boundary farm. Ann died 12 February 1806. They had no children.

John Martin then married Mary, the daughter of First Fleeter John Randall, and they had eleven children: John (1807), Sophia (1809), Frances (1811), Henry (1813), Hannah (1815), Richard (1818), Frederick (1821), Mary Ann (1822), Amelia (1824), Harriet (1830) and Nicholas (1832).

John and Mary Martin lived with their family on a farm at Pennant Hills Road, Field of Mars (Ryde). John died there on 19 December 1837 aged 80. He is reported to have, in his will,

left one shilling to his wife, Mary, and the rest of his property to his first five children.

The Fellowship has received permission to install a memorial plaque on Mary and Harriet's tombstone in memory of John Martin.

A dedication service will be held on Sunday, 19 July 1998, at the tombstone in St John's Cemetery, Parramatta, commencing at 3.00pm, John and Mary having been married on 20 July 1812.

DOUGLAS OAKES
Plaques Convenor



HUNTER VALLEY CHAPTER

Last issue a special 'thank you' was extended to the retiring secretary of the Chapter, but it should have been stated as Minute Secretary, and to compound the error the Retiring Minute Secretary was of course Verna Lumby not Verne Mackie. Humble apologies for the mix-up, but Verna the Fellowship and Chapter do sincerely thank you for past assistance and hope you will continue to enjoy our fellowship.

FAMILY CO-OPERATION

The following is a talk given by the late Fellowship member Arthur Ingham Myers (FF Henry Kable and Susannah Holmes) given some years ago.

The problems of an amateur genealogist in researching his forebears are difficult at the best of times but when one realises that one in four Australians are denied by reason of distance, time and cost the opportunity for prolonged research, the need for assistance is a must and this is where family co-operation can so often bear fruit.

As a Queenslander I had this problem – more so when I lived in the far north. A fleeting visit to Sydney annually to delve through the files of the Genealogical Society and Mitchell Library left a sense of frustration, except on the occasional happy find.

The same applies to all of us during visits to the British Isles and elsewhere. There are so many other things to do and view besides research for long lost ancestors, more particularly when there are no known relatives left in the lands of our origin.

You might well say 'Why family co-operation? This wouldn't help me. My brothers and sisters could not care less – in fact they regard me as just an eccentric in pursuit of my hobby.'

You would not be on your own in this. I had the same experience until I discovered that I was not alone, and that in the various branches of our inter-related families there were cousins to the nth degree just as keen and indeed, in many cases, with far more expertise in the subject. You, too, have them.

In giving thought to the pattern of this paper I had decided that rather than set down a recommended approach I would relate my own experience in general terms. What happened in some cases may not apply to yours but I trust from it and the ensuing discussion we may be able to learn something to our mutual advantage through family co-operation.

By an unusual circumstance, probably because later arrivals did not want a 'bar' of us, every one of my forebears were early settlers in Australia arriving between 1788 and 1840 and, as can be expected, were of both free and felon stock with some interesting backgrounds according to family legend. I had a good start on the First Fleet side with a family tree prepared by a school teacher great-uncle some seventy years ago. He had been assisted at that time

by three grandchildren of our First Fleeter couple and as a result had an almost accurate recording.

I took it from there and was able to seek out and enquire of those that I knew or could meet various family details as I added on two generations. Then through the chance meeting of two of the listed cousins I discovered a second cousin, once removed, who also had a family tree. We met and an exchange of information commenced. Then came the greatest break of all. An hitherto unknown relative from Sydney visiting Brisbane and interested in restoring a family vault used that greatest index of all – the telephone book – to contact people of the same name.

By alphabetical accident, through working down the initials, the second person contacted was the nephew of my fellow keeper of the family tree. As a result our First Fleeter's tomb was restored at St Matthews, Windsor and a happy and fruitful friendship developed with the Sydney-siders. They were descended four generations back from another son of our common ancestors. The family tree grew wider as two, then three, then four branches of the family that had been out of contact with each other, in some cases for over 110 years, were united again.

A family reunion was the next step and the resultant publicity brought many more into the family group. Now we had relatives interested who could use the facilities of the Mitchell Library at any time and go grave searching at weekends. Some skilled in research were able to produce the story on an almost week-to-week basis of family events in our founding years. One family member from the Queensland branch – a young naval officer seconded to the Royal Navy – took advantage of his United Kingdom posting to secure copies of conviction records and obtain particulars from military records on another forebear.

What a find this latter document was. It is interesting to record that from that age and its lack of loss of family likeness that army records can give a pen picture of a man born over 200 years ago – his height, colouring, eyes, birthplace, date, former civil occupation – in addition to details of his military service. It behoves us that still retain our old service certificates to file them away for posterity as also our driving licences, passports in time, as these documents will be invaluable aids when your photographs have faded and your great-great-grandson want to know what you looked like back in the twentieth century.

A second family reunion, now doubled in size, brought old family souvenirs, portraits, photographs, newspaper clippings from a by-gone age and a mast family tree superbly prepared by the husband of one of the family. Other related families were now spurred to action to produce their own lines of descent. A very remote cousin in her eighties came forward with her and my lineage from one of Cromwell's captains. This took a lot of living down from my wholly Irish descended wife but all was forgiven when she produced further documents including copies of portraits, an interesting Will, poems and newspaper extracts showing the major part played by the family in the 1798 Irish rebellion.

Another cousin, through her correspondence with an English historical journalist, gave me the opportunity of meeting him and obtaining first hand facts on conditions and life in Norwich Castle gaol in the 1780s.

To the city dweller this next may come as a surprise. Another relative who was interested in the Queensland Branch's century old connection with the grazing industry researched the Register of Stocks and Brands. What a valuable acquisition this information was to us. These records not only listed individual family names, but dates and domicile at the time of registration. We could now retrace our pioneers progress through our large State. By coincidence at the same time the second cousin, once removed, mentioned earlier had received information from the State Archivist of the various family holdings with areas, dates occupied and to whom they were transferred in time.

In all cases every piece of information gleaned has been passed on to the other recorders in the relevant section of the family group.

As a result today we have the material for a great novel – even a film extravaganza – only little bits and pieces are missing. We have also made some close and wonderful friends with strengthened family ties through mutual interest in the deeds and misdeeds of our ancestors with whom we feel very close. Family co-operation alone did it – try it sometime if you have not already done so.

When all is said and done Macaulay summed it up over a century ago when he left those of us interested with these words: 'People who take no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by remote descendants'.