



Founders

NEWSLETTER OF FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS

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

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

President's report

I am happy to report that First Fleet House has had a facelift – painted inside and out and now, all we have to do, is put everything back!! Our accumulation of records, memorabilia, pictures and bric-a-brac has been considerable over the years, and it will be some time before we get back to normal.

Dr Mollie Gillen wrote a very pleasing letter from Canada assuring us of her abiding interest in the Fellowship but alas, at the age of 91 years, she is losing her sight and requests that we discontinue sending her our newsletter, *Founders*. She wrote: 'You, Peter, and the FFF will remain in my heart and mind – thank goodness for memories.' I have written and thanked her for sentiments expressed, but above all, for her magnificent effort in writing 'The Founders of Australia' and the forthright and challenging introduction in her book. For this work she not only received the honour of being presented with an AM but also received an honorary doctorate from the University of Sydney.

A word of appreciation to Bess Hook (FF John Small-Mary Parker) for her gift to First Fleet House of an unusual three-dimensional likeness of the head of Arthur Phillip. It will add that little bit of our history adorning the meeting room of our headquarters.

I reported in the previous issue of *Founders* that the Japanese TV Asahi was interested to film a presentation on First Fleeters. Initially they were to interview three members, but a change of plans resulted in filming segments of our February Executive meeting, and an interview with Joy Pankhurst, speaking about her First Fleeter Matthew Everingham, Doug Oakes and Rod Best talking about John Small and Mary Parker, and finally myself, giving a run-down on what the Fellowship of First Fleeters is really about, and also a mini-potted history of my forebear William Tunks. They have promised to send a video – we will be able

to make sense of it but more importantly, will the Japanese?

It worries me, that as your representative on the Sydney City's Council for the Sydney-Portsmouth Sister City Committee, that little headway has been achieved as to the repositioning of the Bonds of Friendship which originally stood at Circular Quay, quite close to the landing at Sydney Cove by Arthur Phillip. One would think that those links, which typify the European settlement, and, indeed, be a reminder of the genesis of our nation, should have pride of place. But again it seems to be a question of being politically correct as against being historically correct. Against all arguments put forward to the powers that be they will relegate this important reminder of our past to the Maritime Museum at Darling Harbour. Maybe future generations will take note!

For many years we have been indebted to Betty Parsons (FF Robert Forrester) for doing the calligraphy for members' certificates. Betty has now decided to hand on this important work and we, all of us, thank her for her efforts over the past years. We are fortunate that member Margaret Simpson has volunteered to take on the position.

Upon my retirement from my work in pharmacy, I made a personal commitment, that for the years left me, that I would do my utmost to put forward the part in which our First Fleeters played in the beginnings of our nation. Already this year I have had the privilege in speaking to the Hornsby National Seniors Club and the Brighton View Club. From March to November my diary has speaking engagements to various service organisations in, and around, Sydney for the next eight months. *(continued on page 2)*

WELCOME TO NEW (AND 'OLD') MEMBERS
SUNDAY, 21 MAY, 2.00PM AT FIRST FLEET HOUSE.
RSVP TO FIRST FLEET HOUSE BY 15 MAY.

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News of Members

MEMBERSHIP REPORT FOR PERIOD 13 JANUARY TO 29 MARCH 2000

We extend a warm welcome to new members joined during this period – four adults, two juniors, one spouse associate.

WILLIAM HUBBARD: Mrs Ruby Matilda Helena Thompson.

CATHERINE JOHNSON: Miss Alexandra Mary Hamblin (jun.).

HENRY KABLE – SUSANNAH HOLMES: Mrs Marjory Jamieson Tweedie.

WILLIAM NASH – MARIA HAYNES: Mr Joel Carter Swain (jun.).

JOHN NICHOLS: Mrs Rhyllis Maiklem.

BARTHOLOMEW REARDON: Mrs Patricia Joy Dunn.

Spouse Associate of Earlier Member:
Mr Donald Hamblin husband of Mrs Janet Hamblin.

MARRIAGE

James Gorman, son of David and Vass Gorman (FF Peter Hibbs and Matthew James Everingham) to Donna Smith on 26 February 2000 at St Edmund's Church, Barmera, South Australia.

BIRTHS

Welcome to additional First Fleeters:

GUY KENNETH FALCONER (FF James Sheers-Mary Smith) 19 November 1999, at Lismore, a son for Ray and Monica Falconer, first grandchild for Dorothy Falconer (#6556).

RILEY WILLIAM LOWE (FF Peter Hibbs – Mary Pardoe (Lady Juliana 1790)) 22 February 2000 at Kareena

Hospital, Caringbah. A son for Leanne and Adrian, grandson for Dorothy and Bill Lowe and Heather and Kevin Dimmock. A great nephew for Betty Warn #6110. Ninth generation.

DEATH

Deepest sympathy is extended to the families of the following:

EDMUND GORDON MILLER (#1649), of Gerringong, passed away 22 January 2000. Descendant of First Fleeter Peter Hibbs.

A SNIPPET OF HISTORY

Mary (10 June, 1802 – 28 July, 1867) the only daughter of Ann Davis and Thomas Williams (ex Friendship) married John Dale 23 February 1818 at St John's, Parramatta, at the age of 16 years. They had eleven children in all, William, John, Hannah, Mary, Sarah, Charlotte and David (four deceased).

John and Mary Dale of Dural were of the Wesleyan faith and in the early 1800s held prayer meetings in their home prior to the appointment of an official minister.

Mary Dale was the highly respected local midwife, it would be interesting to know how many children she brought into the world.

Mrs Norma Potter, her daughter Mrs Margaret Knott and her two children, Jennifer and Anthony Knott, are the first from Mary Dale's side of the family to join the Fellowship of the First Fleeters.

ALI WILLIAMS (#6294)



(**President's Report** continued from page 1)

All of us have a wonderful heritage to hand on to our descendants. My sister-in-law Pat Sheriff (FF Matthew Everingham) sent me a treatise, 'Who am I?', for future generations. Your own memoirs can span a number of generations – put it in writing and give it to your grandchildren and maybe you have sown a seed that will endure for many generations to come.

The proposed welcome to new (and 'old') members has been transferred to Sunday, 21 May next, at 2.00pm at First Fleet House. RSVP to First Fleet House by 15 May. We look forward to meeting you.

I mentioned in my last report about a book *Orphans of History*, well-written by Robert Holden. It is a description of the lives of a number of young colonists and their uncertain future as First Fleeters in the new Colony. Young Henry Kable is given as an example of an innocent child whose place on the First Fleet was not secured by his own actions, but by the decision of his convict parents, Henry and Susannah. On the back cover of the book it says 'In giving these orphans of history a voice, Holden not only tells a fascinating story, but fills a vast gap in our understanding of the early European history of Australia.' The book is available in most bookshops and I commend it to you.

In Fellowship
PETER

**Closing date for
copy and pictures
May/June issue
May 30 2000**

**OFFICE HOURS
10.00am to 3.00pm
Monday to Friday**

what's *on*

JOHN AND MARY SMALL DESCENDANTS ASSOCIATION

The Small Family Association has noticed a slight increase in attendance at the Family Reunion, held in October each year.

In response to this increased interest in Family Reunion the Association is having a family picnic at Addington on Saturday 19 August 2000 as well as the Family Reunion on Sunday 8 October 2000 at St Anne's, Ryde.

Addington, situated 813 Victoria Road, Ryde, is a single story house built in the 1890s and for years occupied by a descendant of First Fleeters John and Mary Small. The Small Family Association hold their committee meetings in the building.

The picnic will consist of a bus tour around the Ryde area stopping at sites historically associated with the Small Family, namely, St Anne's Church, Willandra, Williamsdale and the Field of Mars Cemetery and others.

The Family Reunion on Sunday 8 October 2000 will be held in the auditorium of the Ryde Ex-services Memorial and Community Club premises 724 Victoria Road, Ryde. The club is directly opposite St Anne's Church, Ryde.

The family reunion for the last 29 years has been held in St Anne's Memorial Hall, Ryde. As the hall is being demolished for a large development the association was obliged to find alternative accommodation. The new location is within easy walking distance of St Anne's Church. The Thanksgiving service will still be held in St Anne's Church in the afternoon.

After the Thanksgiving service a memorial seat installed near the burial sites of John Small, William Small and Charlotte Small for descendants John and Mary Small buried in the churchyard cemetery will be dedicated.

For further information please ring Doug Oakes on 02 9428 2806, Secretary, John & Mary Small Descendants Association.



REUNION

All the Families of the
Hawkesbury River and
MacDonald Valley

18 & 19 NOVEMBER 2000

WINDSOR HIGH SCHOOL
MULGRAVE ROAD
MCGRATHS HILL

An easy walk from Mulgrave Railway Station
about 1km

Transport from station available by prior
arrangement only

For more information contact:

Peter R. Stewart

PO Box 82

Ashgrove, Queensland 4060

REUNION

Joseph Tuzo William Dredge
Edward McDonald

(First Fleeter) m. Jane Dew 1845
m. Gwen Dredge 1928 m. Rebecca Golsby

TO BE HELD IN CANBERRA

SATURDAY

25 NOVEMBER 2000

Jan & Colin Berryman 6258 2463

Garnet & Marie Dredge 9602 7552

Robin & Norma Hunt 4658 1410

Trev & Marge McDonald 69442065

For further information

please contact the above

KEEP THE SPIRIT ALIVE

The Rope/Family Heritage
Association

cordially invites all members and guests
to our Millennium Family Reunion

CASTLEREAGH HALL

11/58 CASTLEREAGH ROAD

SATURDAY & SUNDAY

20 AND 21 MAY

9am to 3pm both days

Come along, join in the fun – bring your
notes on your family line, and see the unique
merchandise which will be on sale.

Trip Along The Great Ocean Road

Twenty-three members and friends journeyed to Lorne, Victoria, to enjoy the views along the Great Ocean Road. The travellers made their own way to Spencer Street station, Melbourne. Some went overnight by train, some flew down in the morning

We all met safe and sound at the bus terminus to board the Lorne Chalet Coach for a trip through Geelong to the Great Ocean Road and then along the wonderful coastline of Victoria through the towns of Torquay and Anglesea to our base for the holiday, The Lorne Chalet.

'Bob' greeted us and explained the itinerary for the week. After a sumptuous dinner we had the evening to ourselves.

The second day we were shown around the town of Lorne and its surrounding area and also given the history of the town. Lorne is right on the coast and has an excellent beach. A number of us went for an early morning walk along the beach each day.

In the afternoon we went to Winchelsea and visited the historic 'Barwon Park' mansion and enjoyed afternoon tea.

That evening we met a tour group from Western Australia. They had arrived that day and came with us on all our tours. Later in the evening some members tried their luck at Bingo, others went to the local picture theatre.

The next day we travelled some of the world's most scenic and majestic country, through the beautiful Otway Ranges to Port Campbell, visiting the Twelve Apostles, Lord Ard Gorge and London Bridge. Despite a flat tyre at our lunch stop at Glenample Homestead, we were able to go to Peterborough to see the Bay of Martyrs and the Bay of Islands on the way.

This was the highlight of our trip. Unfortunately time did not permit us to leave the bus at all the sights and see their beauty in depth.

The fourth day we visited Erskine Falls. Despite the drought conditions the falls were still a sight to see. We then went on to Teddy's Lookout with its panoramic view of the Great Ocean Road and the Pacific Ocean.

After lunch we journeyed to Split Point Lighthouse at Aireys Inlet. The lighthouse has recently been painted and added to, as a base for the TV show *Around the Twist*. The show was being filmed when we were there with television vans and vehicles all over the place. We offered our services as extras but were told that they had enough people and besides, as we were not members of Actors Equity, we would not be permitted in the show. We returned to the Chalet for happy hour and to be entertained by the staff and local musicians for a very pleasant night.

The next day we traversed some of the incredible country of the Otways. Although drought affected, the

beauty of the area can still be seen. A barbecue was held at the West Barwon Reservoir, reported to be only 5% full. After lunch we travelled to Apollo Bay to join the holiday makers at the Musical Carnival in town. Later we returned back along the Ocean Road to Lorne.

The sixth day being Sunday was a day of rest. A number went to church and others browsed the area visiting the local shops souvenir shopping. Joy Cordiero, whilst visiting the local book shop, saw they had a copy of a rare historical book *Journal of a Voyager to New South Wales*, by First Fleeter John White. The Daytime Auxiliary Committee purchased the book for the Fellowship's library.

John White was surgeon to the First Fleet and the settlement of Port Jackson. He died 20 February 1832 and is buried in St Mary's Church, Broadwater near Worthing, Sussex. One of our memorial plaques is attached to his tombstone.

Monday, our last full day, was spent visiting Bellarine Peninsular and going through the towns of Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove, eventually arriving at Queenscliff. There we visited the local fort to see weapons of a past era. The fort boasts being the first base to fire a shot in anger at the beginning of World Wars I and II. It is still used as a base for training army officers, not only from Australia but other countries as well. We also visited the local Historical Society Museum and had lunch at the RSL Club. That night we were again entertained by the staff and local artists.

Tuesday 28 March we packed our gear and went by coach to Spencer Street bus terminal. Some people stayed over in Melbourne for a few days and others made their way home.

I would like to thank, on behalf of all, Phyllis Selby and Bonney Savill for organising such a successful and enjoyable trip.

DOUGLAS OAKES

Convener Daytime Auxiliary Committee





MARY (SPRINGHAM) HAMBLY AND JOHN OWLES

The Fellowship has received permission to have a memorial plaque installed in the Colonial Section of the Cemetery at Norfolk Island for First Fleeter Mary Springham. The plaque is being made for sending to Norfolk Island. The Administrator has also informed us of the existence of a burial site for First Fleeter John Owles.

We have responded seeking details of the existence of a tombstone for John Owles. Many people who arrived on the First Fleet journeyed through Norfolk Island. Over forty are recorded as being buried there. Memorial plaques have been installed for First Fleeters Thomas Headington and Bartholomew Reardon in acknowledgment of the existence of their original tombstones.

John Owles (1752 – 1806) arrived on the Alexander with the First Fleet. He married First Fleeter Mary Wilson in 1789. They went to Norfolk Island in 1790. We have no record of any issue.

John Owles died 14 December 1806. Mary Owles returned to Sydney in 1813 with James Sheers after receiving twenty pounds for her home with John Owles.

A commemorative plaque was installed at a bicentennial project in 1988 in acknowledgment of the First Fleeters who went to Norfolk Island.

THOMAS FREEMAN (1742-1794)

Judith Dunn of the Parramatta Historical Society has brought to our attention she has found another First Fleeter with a tombstone at St John's Cemetery, Parramatta. Thomas Freeman is buried in Section 4 Row J Number 2.

The grave is described as a sandstone altar style grave. Unfortunately the monument needs attention. The lid was broken into three parts when we went to see the grave. Two parts of the lid were on the grave and one part was lying face down at the rear.

We are indebted to the people mowing the lawns and doing other maintenance work to move the stones on the altar forward and lift the missing part up to make all three parts of the lid cover the grave. The Cemetery Trust will endeavour to have the grave restored so that we can have a memorial plaque attached identifying the interred, Thomas Freeman, as a First Fleeter.

The grave is against the wall just behind the resting place of another First Fleeter, Frances Clements.

Thomas Freeman came to this country as a clerk on Sirius. He was appointed Under Commissary upon arrival in Port Jackson. Thomas Freeman issued clothing to the women prisoners on Prince of Wales and Lady Penrhyn.

He was discharged from Sirius in July 1788 and went to Norfolk Island as Deputy Storekeeper.

Thomas Freeman returned to Sydney from Norfolk Island and was serving at Parramatta when he died 25 October 1794. He was buried at St John's Cemetery, Parramatta on 5 November 1794.

The tombstone reads as follows:

SACRED
TO THE MEMORY
OF
THOS FREEMAN
DEPUTY COMMISSY
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
OCT 25TH 1794
AGED 52 YEARS

The Fellowship of First Fleeters will be having a dedication service for the memorial plaque on Sunday, 29 October 2000.

DOUGLAS OAKES
Convener Plaques Committee.



WEAPONS *of the* First Fleet

The First Fleet, a convoy of six convict transports, three store ships and His Majesty's Ships, Sirius and Supply sailed from Spithead on 13 May, 1787, to found a penal colony at Botany Bay, New South Wales. Among the 1,487 people on board were 213 marines commanded by Major Robert Ross.

In the preparations, correspondence of 23 November, 1786, from the Admiralty Office directed that the Board of Ordinance supply 200 new muskets of the 'Short Land' pattern with steel rammers and bayonets, suitable flints, powder, ball and spare parts as likely to be required to secure and to protect the proposed settlement.

The 'Short Land' pattern musket, also known as the 'Brown Bess' was in British service from the 1740s. It was a smooth bore flint-lock musket of calibre .753 inches (16 g). The barrel length was 42 inches and overall length 58 inches. There was a block foresight but no backsight, a steel ramrod and a steel socket bayonet. The bullet weight was one ounce, the powder charge 4.5 drachms. The estimated muzzle velocity was 600 ft/sec. Besides ball ammunition, small shot was also used.

The Brown Bess flint-lock was introduced to the British Army around 1720. With minor changes, such as barrel length, cocking piece etc., it remained the standard service weapon until about 1840, when percussion became the mechanism for ignition.

What were the capabilities of these weapons? In battle, musket fire was not considered to be worthwhile over 150 yards. Although the Brown Bess has been much lauded, Hans Busk in his 'Handbook for Hythe' (1860) described it as the worst contrived firelock in the whole world! Its accuracy was poor, and the best a man could do would be to hit a two foot target at 100 yards. After all, what could one expect from a smooth bore weapon with only a foresight, a heavy trigger pull of 31 pounds and a loose fitting ball in the barrel? Busk also quotes one gallant veteran who believed he could sit in a chair at 200 yards from another who might blaze away at him all day with one of these muskets, on the sole condition that he should be bound on his honour to aim at him carefully every time. Despite this, it was considered reliable and soldier proof and was used in many parts of the world.

In England, in the 1950s, a group of enthusiasts who collected and shot old weapons was formed, being named the Muzzle Loaders Association of Great Britain. In their yearly shoot at the Bisley rifle range there was an event for the Brown Bess which was 10 shots in 10 minutes at 75 yards at a four foot target, fired from a standing position. As an example of the accuracy of the weapon – in one of the shoots, the best score that could be attained was 27 out of a possible of 50. As well as the muskets mentioned above, some of the members of the First Fleet may have brought their own fowling pieces and also there would have been a number of pistols.

John White, surgeon of the First Fleet, noted for his positive opinions and quick temper, fought a duel with one of his assistants, William Balmain, on 4 June 1788 after the king's birthday festivities. Balmain received a small wound in the thigh. A chronicler, Ralph Clark, at the time wrote :

'... It would not have rested there had not the Govr.

Convinced the two Sons of Escalipio that it was much better to draw Blood with the point of there lance from the arm of there patients than to doe it with pistol Balls from each other.'

White's temper almost led him to another duel with Lieutenant John Long until he was convinced by others that he was in the wrong.

What sort of wounds could be inflicted by the Brown Bess muskets? There is no doubt that the injuries caused by the .75 inch ball could be severe at close range with high morbidity and mortality. All the energy of the ball was utilised in creating the wound because of its large size and surface area caused great retardation. Its velocity was low and it produced bruising and tearing of the tissue. Often it would be deflected by bones and other tissues. Frequently, there would be contamination by bits of clothing and other foreign material.

A good example of the type of wound is that received by Lord Nelson at the battle of Trafalgar, described in 'The Admiral's Wounds' by D. Trunkey in 1994. Nelson was shot by a French sharpshooter at a range of about 15 yards and the ball (which probably came from a Charleville musket, the French equivalent of the Brown Bess) entered the left shoulder

near the acromion. It fractured portions of the second and third ribs, passed through the lung, injured the left pulmonary

artery, passed through the laminae of the sixth and seventh vertebrae and lodged in the muscles, approximately two inches below the tip of the right scapula. When the ball was removed it still had a portion of the gold lace, pad of the epaulette and a small piece of the coat firmly attached.

With firearms being used as weapons of war, wounds became more severe, not only due to the tissue damage, but the contamination, infection and suppuration that followed. Army surgeons had to deal with these problems and so developed battle surgery and the art of surgery itself. Writings dealing with the treatment of gunshot wounds first appeared in the fifteenth century and have continued until the present day. Notable surgeons in the past who have contributed their thoughts on management included Ambroise Pare, John Hunter, Desault and Baron Larrey who was Napoleon's Surgeon General.

In the period around 1790, surgeons were extremely limited with the facilities available and a conservative approach to penetrating gunshot wounds was usually adopted. This involved removal of the bullet, if possible, and dressings. Severe wounds, especially those to the abdomen, chest and head were almost invariably fatal. Limb wounds with shattering of the bones were treated by amputation. Any success where the conservative approach was used was due to the relatively simple wound ballistics of the projectiles at that time.

The Brown Bess, although it was not the most accurate weapon of the time, served its purpose in maintaining control and defence in the early years of the of the developing Colony.

REG MAGEE

Brisbane



CANBERRA CHAPTER

A PROMISING FUTURE

The Canberra Chapter held a Christmas dinner last year at the Canberra Yacht Club at Yarralumla Bay. It was a great success, attended by 31 people and all had a good time. There were even some new members of the Fellowship to meet on the evening, thanks to the dinner being mentioned

in *Founders*. Some of the members are shown enjoying the evening.

The Canberra Chapter



of the Fellowship has been a little inactive over previous years, but it hopes to rectify this in the months to come. A 'planning

meeting' is proposed to be held February or March 2000. It is hoped to draw up a program of activities for the year.

If you would like information on the future, contact either Marion Batchelor on (02) 6288 2558 or Phillip Rosewarne on (02) 6231 8261.

NORTHERN RIVERS CHAPTER REPORT 1999

The last Annual General Meeting of the Northern Rivers Chapter saw a record attendance of 52 persons. Somewhat disappointingly, though, the level of attendance was not maintained throughout the year with most meetings recording the more usual 30 plus. Those members who have been able to attend on a regular basis have enjoyed the customary convivial atmosphere of our meetings and have been regaled by a series of interesting talks. Those who prepared and delivered talks included Margaret Soward who spoke on her First Fleeter, John Ryan; Peter Thompson who spoke both on his First Fleeter as well as providing some most interesting data regarding the convict hulks; Allen Findlay on the events which led to the establishment of the Colony, and myself on the marines of the First Fleet.

Over the years since the formation of the Northern Rivers Chapter many of our members, past and present, have delivered some very interesting talks on a range of topics and have provided us with a wealth of historical data on their own families and other matters. Hitherto, written copies of these talks have been contained in a single loose leaf volume held and ably maintained by our archivist, Allen Findlay. A motion, carried during the year, proposed that we investigate the feasibility of consolidating these papers into a properly printed

booklet with the finished product made available for sale. Since then much work has been put into bringing the project to fruition and at last report, I understand that year 2000 will see its publication. Should this prove successful I hope that further volumes will be produced when sufficient material is available.

A minor deviation at our November meeting from our usual practice of asking one person to deliver a talk, saw the trial of a relatively ad hoc arrangement wherein members were asked to relate short family anecdotes and snippets of interest. So successful was this approach, and because there was insufficient time available to cater for all those who had prepared material, it was unanimously decided that at our March meeting we would continue with this format.

During the year two of our foundation members, Norm and Corinne Stace, left the district to take up residence in Hobart, Tasmania, and whilst the Northern Rivers Chapter was very sorry to see them leave, I especially wish to record not only my sincere thanks to them both for their valuable contributions to the success of the Chapter over the years of their membership but also to express my good wishes to them for the future.

Another of our valuable members to depart during the year was Valerie Fjellstrom. Valerie, for many years, was the very willing caterer for our lunches and as such, is sorely missed. New arrangements have worked well throughout the year but, I must say, Valerie had almost reached the status of 'indispensable' because of her untiring efforts. Our best wishes for the future must be extended to her. However, on this note, I offer my thanks to all of the ladies who have stepped in to assist with lunch preparation throughout the year – not forgetting of course, the barbecue cooks!

At our last Annual Meeting we voted for a change of day for our meetings from the last Sunday in the month to the third Sunday. I trust that this change was not responsible for any fall-off in attendances but, if it was, I would appreciate feedback.

Some of our members unfortunately continue in ill health. David Litchfield, our Publicity Officer, succumbed during the year and is still not enjoying life to the full. I extend to David my best wishes and hope for an early return into our midst. Our Patron, Syd Ballard, has been unable to attend our meetings because of health problems associated with advancing years. Syd, now well into his nineties, has been a valued member of this Chapter and I extend to him our continuing good wishes. Likewise, a former Vice-President, Laurie Holmes, has not been able to attend because of persistent health problems but I trust these will be resolved and we will see Laurie back with us once again.

Finally, as my term of office as your President draws to a close, I wish to sincerely thank all those who have made my task so enjoyable and certainly very easy. I must say that I have enjoyed the three years in office and for that, I thank you all for the confidence you have shown in me during that time. However, I firmly believe that one can remain in these offices too long and that it is necessary for a change to be made so that new ideas, approaches and innovations can be introduced. That does not mean that I will bow out of Chapter work as I hope to be just as involved as in the past.

My sincere thanks to you all and my best wishes to my successor whoever that may be.

ROD DAVIS
President

Some History of Herberts & Old Castlereagh Cemetery

The following is an edited copy of the speech delivered by Rob Herbert, President of the Herbert Family Association Inc. representing the descendants of First Fleeters John Herbert and Deborah Ellam, at a ceremony to dedicate a commemorative plaque at Old Castlereagh Cemetery.

The Old Castlereagh Cemetery dates back to the early 1800s and is one of the first cemeteries in this region. It was most likely established as the result of a decree by Governor Macquarie in 1811 that bodies should be interred in proper burial grounds.

It is believed the cemetery was established adjacent to the Rev. Henry Fulton's school and church. Fulton's church was a wooden structure built in 1813 and was once named St Andrew's. The church burnt down and was replaced in 1878 by the white church located on Church Lane overlooking the Nepean River.

The Rev. Fulton's name appears on a number of Herbert baptism and marriage certificates and it is certain he was acquainted with the Herberts living on the Nepean River. Henry Fulton and his wife Anne are both buried in the cemetery.

Members of other pioneer farming families and settlers such as Harris, Hadley, Cox, Field, Tindale and Machenry are buried here as well as First Fleeters Anthony Rope and his wife Elizabeth Pulley.

Many of the people buried here, including the Herberts, are the first European Australians and they are the pioneers of Castlereagh. Three of John's and Deborah's seven children lie here. They represent the first generation of Herberts born in Australia.

Many of their children lie here as well, life was hard, medical support was scarce and it is sad to see how short the lives of some of those in the second generation turned out to be.

The first member of the Herbert family buried here was 17-day-old John the first son of James and Harriet who died in 1835; their first daughter Frances Henrietta lived only until she was 24, she was buried here in 1857. Their third son, Charles, accidentally drowned aged 16 years in 1855. Buried with him is his cousin John the first son of John jun. and Elizabeth, he died in 1866.

Joseph and Sarah suffered their share of grief as well, loosing their first son John in 1836 aged three weeks; their

daughter Elizabeth died aged 16 years in 1855.

John jun. and his wife Elizabeth suffered too, losing their first daughter, 19-month-old Elizabeth, in 1836. Their son Thomas was buried here in 1848 aged six days; their daughter Margaret was buried here in 1862 aged 16; their son John could almost be thought of as long lived when was buried here in 1866 aged 28 years.

Surprisingly, members of the first generation lived long lives, even by today's standard. Joseph, the son of John and Deborah, who is buried here but has no headstone was the oldest person born in the Colony when he died aged 93 in 1886. John jun., fourth son of John and Deborah, died aged 77 years and James their sixth son was aged 76.

There are at least eight Herberts or their spouses buried here who's grave is not marked by a headstone.

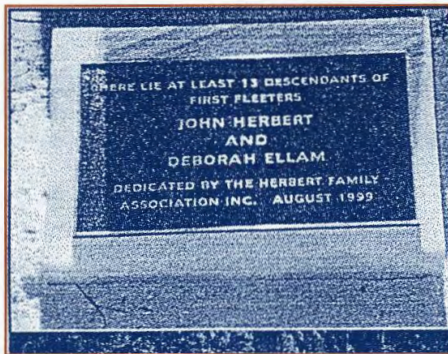
These days the cemetery is heritage listed and is cared for by the Friends of Castlereagh Cemetery who have in recent years kept the cemetery clean, planted native shrubs and lobbied

council to erect the heavy gates at the entrance. On behalf of the Herbert Family Association I would like to congratulate them and thank them for taking the time and making the effort to preserve this piece of Australian social and family history.

Last year, the HFA decided to begin the task of, as far as is practical, restoring the Herbert graves in the cemetery. The committee convened a meeting in the cemetery to determine what could be done and then late last year a party of family members spent a day completing repairs we thought were needed immediately. Part of the work undertaken by the association was to repair the fallen headstones of James and Elizabeth Herbert but were vandalised some time after the cemetery was made more accessible by clearing undergrowth in the early 1980s.

We were able to safely reassemble Elizabeth's stone in an upright position but felt it was better to leave James's stone lying down and repair it where it fell.

We also removed the bottom strand of chain between the sandstone posts and used it to fill the gaps in the top strand. We started work, yet to be completed, on the steel picket fences around the graves of Frances Henrietta White and Charles Paul and John Herbert. It is our intention to replace the missing pickets and paint the fences.



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

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