

## Activities

The Fellowship takes an interest in matters historical and in heritage matters relating to the First Fleet.

We are in the process of placing all family trees on our computer, access to be available to all Members.

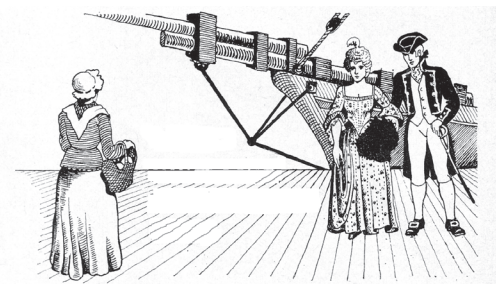
An important activity is the location and identification of graves of First Fleeters. A bronze plaque is then attached to the tombstone and an unveiling ceremony and a family reunion are held.

Meetings and events are arranged from time to time. An annual celebration is held to mark Australia Day.

Numerous Family Associations have been formed to keep Members up to date with their co-ancestors.

The Fellowship has established a series of Chapters in Sydney suburbs, regional NSW, the ACT and Queensland. Chapter membership is available to bonafide Fellowship Members and Friends, to provide localised identity, and meetings and events additional to those arranged from First Fleet House.

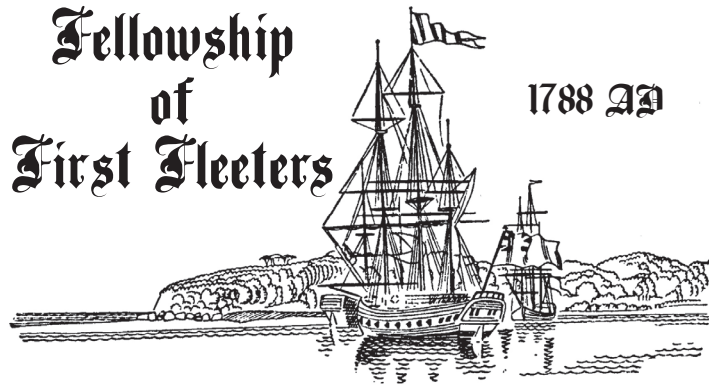
News of Chapter and Sydney-based activities is set out in *Founders*, the bi-monthly Fellowship magazine, which is posted to Members and Friends.



First Fleet House is wholly owned by the Fellowship, and contains an extensive library. The office is staffed by volunteers on weekdays. For a full profile of the Fellowship go to: [www.fellowshipfirstfleeters.org.au](http://www.fellowshipfirstfleeters.org.au)  
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# Fellowship of First Fleeters

1788 AD



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



## The First Fleet Story

In 1770 during the reign of George III, Captain James Cook sailed along the east coast of Australia landing in Botany Bay. Because of Cook's favourable report, the British Home Secretary, Lord Sydney, decided to send convicts to Botany Bay to relieve the overcrowded hulks and prisons of England, and to extend the Empire.

For this purpose a fleet of 11 ships was assembled to carry some 1500 convicts, seamen, marines and their wives and children to establish a new colony. These ships were the flagship *HMS Sirius*, *HMS Supply*, the transport ships *Alexander*, *Charlotte*, *Friendship*, *Lady Penrhyn*, *Prince of Wales*, *Scarborough*, and the storeships *Fishburn*, *Golden Grove* and *Borrowdale*.



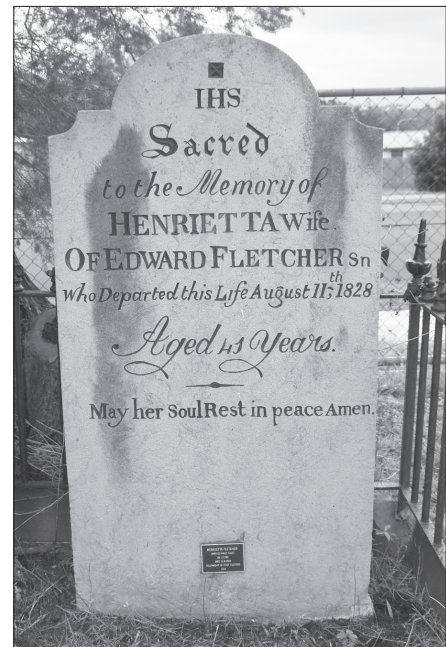
The Fleet left Portsmouth on 13 May 1787. The leader of the expedition was **Captain Arthur Phillip** who can take the credit for the success of the voyage.

All the ships arrived safely in Botany Bay by 20 January, 1788. This Bay was considered unsuitable, and after exploring further up the coast, Captain Phillip decided to move the Fleet to Port Jackson. All were moored in Sydney Cove on 26 January, after a voyage of eight months.

Captain Phillip gave orders to “live in amity and kindness” with the aboriginal people, and on the whole they did. Disease decimated many tribes, and it was not until later when more convicts and settlers arrived that significant trouble began.

An acute shortage of food almost ruined the colony. Convicts and other settlers were hanged for stealing food – a most heinous offence in the early days. Food was so scarce that in February 1788 Phillip sent *Supply* to Norfolk Island with an initial party of eight marines, six female and nine male convicts to set up farms. In October 1788 *Sirius* was sent to the Cape of Good Hope to take on food. In March 1790 *Sirius* was wrecked off Norfolk Island, severely restricting the prospects of a steady food supply.

The Second and Third Fleets arrived in Sydney Cove adding to the burden. It was not until Rose Hill (Parramatta) was properly settled and cultivated that the settlement could feed itself.



*Grave of First Fleeter Henrietta Fletcher, née Langley, located and commemorated with a plaque by Fellowship members.*

## What is the Fellowship of First Fleeters?

The Fellowship is an organisation composed of descendants of those who arrived in Sydney Cove with the First Fleet on 26 January 1788.

The Fellowship was formed in 1968 and since then over 7700 descendants have established their lineage to the First Fleet.

Membership is open to anyone who can prove his or her relationship to a First Fleeter – convict, marine, seaman or Government Official. Associate and Friend memberships are also welcomed.