



# NEWSLETTER

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Please address all correspondence to the Fellowship of First Fleeters,  
G.P.O. Box 4441, Sydney 2001.

Vol. 10 No. 10  
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## From the President

How quickly the year has gone! It is hard to realise we are organising for Australia Day again. Of course behind the scenes the Committee has been working for months, but now it is your turn, by giving your support and thus making their efforts successful. This coming year we are fortunate that our Annual Dinner, in the Ballroom of the Wentworth Hotel, falls on the correct day, 26th January, and I'm sure you're all aware it was a Saturday that the First Fleet arrived in Sydney Cove, so it couldn't be better. This is always a wonderful night, and as we have had so many new members this year I look forward to meeting many of them that night. Our Guest Speaker will be Mr Philip Geeves, historian, author and radio personality — we are extremely fortunate to have such a well-known and busy man. So come along and celebrate with us.

On the Sunday we will be holding our Exhibition (which will be all new exhibits), and anyone willing to help in any way is asked to phone Mrs Mary Bailey on 43 4075.

Then on the Monday morning at 9.30 am His Excellency the Governor will personally receive our Memorial and Letter of Loyalty to Her Majesty the

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*      AUSTRALIA DAY ACTIVITIES      *
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*  Flag Raising.  Saturday 26th January, 1980 -- *
*      Macquarie Place, 11 am.  Costumes, please. *
*                                     *
*  Annual Dinner. Saturday 26th January, 1980 -- *
*      Ballroom, Wentworth Hotel, 7 pm.  Guest Speaker, *
*      Mr Philip Geeves.  Tickets $15 each.  Money and *
*      stamped address envelope to Miss A. Clarke, *
*      P.O. Box 328, Lane Cove 2066.  Hurry, as *
*      tickets are strictly limited. *
*                                     *
*  Exhibition.  Sunday 27th January, 1980.  Details from *
*      Mrs Mary Bailey. *
*                                     *
*  Government House. Monday 28th January, 1980.  Assemble *
*      in costume outside Government House gates no *
*      later than 9.15 am.  Children in costume are *
*      very welcome, but must be supervised by an adult. *
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Queen — only those in costume will be admitted to the grounds. (Costumes may be hired from the Elizabethan Theatre Trust, 153 Dowling Street, or from Atat Box, 305 Pitt Street, near Park Street). Our Fellowship is based on events of 26th January 1788, therefore I appeal to all Members to join in these celebrations.

October was a very busy month for me. I started by flying to Canberra for a Council meeting of A.F.F.H.O. which was most successful, and I hope quite a few members are planning to attend the Congress in Adelaide over Easter next year.

On Thursday 11th October a group again made a pilgrimage to the Arthur Phillip Memorial, and it was my privilege to place a wreath of honour

on the occasion of the 241st Anniversary of the birth of our first Governor.

Over the weekend of 13th/14th October fellow-Committeeman Roderick Best and I attended the R.A.H.S. Conference of Affiliated Societies at North Sydney, and this was proved to be very educational and helpful as well as a wonderful opportunity to meet people from other groups throughout the State.

I have been Guest Speaker on two occasions since I last reported to you -- at the N.S.W. Spoon Collectors Club and the Eastwood Evening View Club.

It was a great honour on the night of Tuesday 16th October to be entertained at Government House by His Excellency the Governor and Lady Cutler. My husband and I were part of a small group of Presidents, accompanied by their wives or husbands, of organisations of which Sir Roden or Lady Cutler is Patron.

Then on Friday 26th October, accompanied by my husband, I attended the Lady Mayoress' Ball at Sydney Town Hall.

Those who missed out on the Coach Trip to Blackheath certainly missed a treat. The Rhododendrons were so beautiful words fail me to describe them.

As this is the last Newsletter for the year I send best wishes to all members and their families for a happy Christmas and hope that the New Year will bring peace, health and prosperity to all.

Beryl Lewis.

#### Membership Report

We welcome the following new members to the Fellowship:-

Mrs Margaret Evans, Roseville. (Wm. Tunks) (Hugh Hughes)

Mr Dennis Clark, Ballina. (Wm. Douglas)

Mr Norbert Wright, Beecroft. (Joseph Wright)

Mr Frederick Samuels, Woy Woy. (Matthew Everingham)

Mrs Dorothy McDonald, Riverwood. (Matthew Everingham)

Mr Peter Lumley, Greenwich. (Matthew Everingham)

Mrs Betty Perry, Bribie Island, Q'ld. (Nathaniel Lucas and  
Olivia Gascoigne)

Mr Richard Chalmers, Turramurra. (Wm. Tunks) (Hugh Hughes)

Mrs Joyce Hawkins and Miss Elinor Hawkins, Pennant Hills. (James  
McManus & Jane Poole) (James Bradley)

Mrs Maude Samuels, Dunbogan. (Matthew Everingham)

Mr Ronald Williams, Bourke. (Ann Forbes)

Mr John Teece, Fairlight. (James Bloodworth & Sarah Bollamy)

Mrs Isabel Weeks, Kellyville. (Richard Partridge & Mary Greenwood)

Mrs Marie Gray, Kellyville. (Richard Partridge & Mary Greenwood)

Mrs Myrl Skinner, Mr Michael Skinner, Miss Deborah Skinner, Merewether.  
(Wm. Tunks)

Mrs Rosemary Orr, Miss Rowena Orr, jnr., Miss Carla Orr, jnr., Junce.  
(Dr Thomas Arndell) (Ann Forbes)

Mary Bailey. Mary Hope-Caten.

#### "Health of the First Fleet"

The October Lecture Evening was an extremely interesting one, the title of the lecture "Some Observations on the Health of the First Fleet". The speaker was Dr Harold Royle, medical historian, from Armidale, in the New England Region of New South Wales.

Dr Royle, with his keen humour, made the talk amusing as well as stark and very realistic. He has gone into the subject deeply and has put

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## "Health of the First Fleet" (Continued)

a lot of time and research into this fascinating subject. Dr Royle spoke of the appalling conditions of London in the 18th Century, with many families living in one room in extreme cold with no ventilation or sanitation.

The convicts were in poor physical shape before they sailed, and ironically, after the First Fleet ventured forth the health of the convicts improved greatly. Governor Phillip, being a man of great detail, insisted on fresh vegetables and fruit whenever possible, and allowed the convicts on deck for fresh air. Although many of the prisoners suffered acute seasickness during the early part of the voyage their health steadily improved.

On June 3rd, 1787, the Fleet reached Teneriffe, anchored, and fresh provisions were obtained. Unfortunately 74 prisoners were sick from intermittent fever.

When the Fleet sailed from Teneriffe the weather became extremely hot, with stifling calms, and living conditions were terrible, for the ships were infested with rats and other vermin. The air in the prisons was heavy and foul.

The women prisoners' quarters had to be battened down to prevent them from making their way through the bulkheads to the apartments assigned to the seamen. Ralph Clark gloomily wrote, "I wish all the women were out of the ships".

His prayer was answered after Cape Town when Phillip purchased sheep and the "Friendship" women were transferred to the "Lady Penrhyn", "Charlotte" and "Prince of Wales" and their place taken by a number of sheep. "I am very glad of it", wrote Clark. "We will find the sheep much more agreeable". Apart, however, from 10 or 12 women who were always in trouble, the women aboard "Friendship" conducted themselves well.

When the "Sirius" and her convoy anchored in Botany Bay on January 20th, 1788, the voyage of 15,063 miles from England had been accomplished. It was a magnificent feat of navigation and seamanship, even more remarkable when the Fleet's health record is considered. Its mortality rate had been far lower than anyone had dared to hope. According to Surgeon White's return of June 30th, 1788, 36 male and four female prisoners had died between embarkation and landing, and for the same period there had been eight other deaths — a Marine, a Marine's wife, a Marine's child and five convict children. Total deaths, 48.

Dr Royle admitted that some of the facts of the talk were dreadful revelations, but such were the times. We were also shown beautiful slides, giving the lecture added interest and atmosphere.

Thank you, Dr Royle, for coming such a long way for our lecture night. We appreciated you coming and giving us your valuable time. We also extend our best wishes to your charming wife, Joan, and we hope to see you both again as our guests.

Sally Kalina.

## Preservation of Norfolk House

Members of the Fellowship, particularly those of the Tunks family, will be pleased to learn of the success of efforts to have Norfolk House, Parramatta, preserved. This lovely old home was built in the 1840's by John Tunks, and here he and his wife Phoebe reared their large family of 16 children.

The Fellowship has been advised that Norfolk House, 467 Church Street, Parramatta, is now the subject of an order under Section 130 of the Heritage Act, 1977.

The effect of the order is that the building cannot be damaged, defaced,

destroyed or demolished, in whole or in part, without the Heritage Council first being advised.

The old Coach House at the rear of the Royal Oak Hotel in Church Street, Parramatta, site of the Shamrock Rose and Thistle Inn, is also covered by a similar order, as is St John's Cemetery, Parramatta.

#### Book on Matthew Everingham

Mrs Valerie Ross has advised that she is hopeful that her book on the life of Matthew Everingham will be released some time in the New Year.

The book is entitled "Matthew Everingham -- A First Flecter and His Times", and will be available at \$13-50 per copy from the Heritage Bookshop, 81½ George Street, The Rocks 2000.

#### Closing of Office Over Holidays

The Fellowship's Office will be closed for only a brief period during the Christmas/New Year period. The Membership Committee, who are in attendance every Tuesday between approx. 10 am and 2 pm, will attend the office on 18th December for the last time this year and resume on 8th January. The office, which is also opened on Fridays between the same hours, will be opened on 21st December and resume on 11th January.

The Fellowship's office is located at Room 312, 3rd Floor, in the Assembly Building in York Street.

#### Annual Dinner

Just one further reminder about the Annual Dinner. Date: Saturday 26th January, 1980, at 7 pm, in the Ballroom, Wentworth Hotel. Tickets \$15 each. Please forward money and stamped addressed envelope to Miss A. Clarke, P.O. Box 328, Lane Cove 2066.

#### Lucas Family Trees

Would descendants of Nathaniel Lucas and Olivia Gascoigne please send to Betty Taber, 3 Garuwa Street, Fingal Bay via Nelson Bay 2315, any information they have regarding Lucas family trees. This is for a bi-centenary book for the Fellowship of First Flecters. (This notice has already been published in the August and October Newsletters)

#### Social Items for Publication. Please!

The Editor of the Newsletter is always pleased to publish personal and social items relating to members of the Fellowship and/or their families. We often do not hear of such happenings (marriages, births, etc.) until too late or not at all. Could members please keep this request in mind? Please make sure all essential details are included (names, addresses, dates where applicable, name or names of original First Flecter or Flectors). This request also applies to information about serious illness or death, though the word "pleased", of course, as used above, does not apply in such matters.

#### Greycliffe House

(Concluding extracts from article in a recent "Ports of New South Wales" Journal. Earlier extracts appeared in June and September Newsletters)

In November 1913 Greycliffe was officially named The Lady Edeline Hospital for Babies. In 1938 the management of the hospital was vested in the Royal Society for the Welfare of Mothers and Babies, and it subsequently became a Tresillian Training Centre to Mothercraft. During these years extensions consisting primarily of fibro and weatherboard were added to the house.

Greycliffe served as a mothercraft centre for 30 years, finally closing its doors in 1968.

In 1970 the house was reserved as part of the Vacluse House Historic Site  
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## Greycliffe House (Continued)

under the National Parks and Wildlife Act. In 1975 the status of Nielsen Park, including Greycliffe House, was again altered, when responsibility for its care, control and management was vested in the Director of National Parks and Wildlife, thus making it one of the key areas of the Sydney Harbour National Park.

Since assuming responsibility for Greycliffe, the National Parks and Wildlife Service has been active in its restoration and in research into its history and architecture. To date much has been achieved and relics, long forgotten, have been uncovered. Among them is a beautifully carved and perfectly shaped sandstone garden wall, discovered only recently when the gardens were being cleared of lantana and privet. Another interesting discovery was of a cellar, with a tunnel leading from under the house towards the well.

With its elaborate fretted barge boards and many gables, the house itself is Gothic in influence, but the chimney pieces are in the Baroque style. Restoration work on the chimneys, long neglected, was a major project in itself.

The original builders of Greycliffe made extensive use of Australian cedar, particularly for doors and staircases. Fortunately most of this woodwork is still in an excellent state of repair.

## Early Encounters Between Europeans and Aborigines in New South Wales

(Continuing Ena Harper's papers on the subject, reprinted by kind permission of Ashfield Historical Society and Ena Harper. The previous instalment concluded with a description of the capture in the Manly Bay area of a native named Arabanoo. Phillip's purpose in having him seized was to try to communicate with the Aborigines)

Arabanoo did not live long among his white captors. There was an outbreak of smallpox among the Aborigines and some were brought into the hospital. Arabanoo went there to help with the care of the patients, caught the disease and died in May 1789. So ended the first attempt to civilise an Aborigine.

After Arabanoo died, Governor Phillip persisted in his determination to procure another native, but it was not till November 25th, 1789, that the first lieutenant of the "Sirius" was able to secure two men.

One of them escaped due to the negligence of his keeper, still wearing the fetter which had been rivetted to his ankle. This was Colebe, the friend of Bennelong, and later he became very attached to Mr White, the principal surgeon. Later he became a familiar part of the Sydney scene.

This is not the place to tell the full story of Bennelong, but it is well known that he became the companion of Governor Phillip, and actually travelled to England and back with him. This friendship did open up better communication with the Aborigines, but Collins makes it only too plain that Bennelong was at times aggressive and unstable in his actions. He was also unattractive to females of his own race, and was often involved in violence with his own people.

Bennelong asked Governor Phillip to build him a hut "at the extremity of the eastern point of the cove", where the Opera House now stands. For a time he would live there, clothed in European dress, then he would feel a longing for the old ways, strip off his clothes and make for the bush. When he had had enough of this life he would return, don formal attire and dine with the Governor.

In April 1789 many bodies of natives were found on the shores of the Harbour. The cause of their death was not known until a family was brought in found to be suffering from smallpox.

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We should note Collins' comment on this happening:

"It was not a desirable circumstance to introduce a disorder into the colony which was raging with such fatal violence among the natives; but the saving of the lives of any of these people was an object of no small importance, as the knowledge of our humanity, and the benefits which we might render them, would, it was hoped, do away the evil impressions they had received of us".

Collins believed that the disease had not been introduced by the white man, but that it was already known to the Aborigines, as they had a word in their language for it.

Two of the patients were elderly men and they died, but two children, a boy and a girl, began to recover as soon as they were treated in the hospital. The children remained with the Englishmen and seemed perfectly contented to be with them.

Boorong, the girl, went to live in the house of the Rev. Richard Johnson. It seems evident that in time she was employed as a servant by Mrs Johnson. Indeed, it has been suggested that this was the reason she was given a home by the Johnsons.

We hear of Boorong a year later. After the wounding of Governor Phillip by one of the natives called Willemerring in September 1790 Collins reports the following incident:

"A few days after the accident Bennelong, who certainly had not any culpable share in the transaction, came with his wife and some of his companions to a cove on the north shore not far from the settlement where, by means of Boorong, the female who lived in the clergyman's house, an interview was effected between the natives and some officers, Mr White, Mr Palmer and others, who at some personal risk went over with her".

There are two observations to be made here, the first being that as the settlement of Sydney became more established Collins records that Aborigines came to live in the homes of Europeans. The second is that in general the Aborigines did not make up a servant population for the Europeans.

Why was this? In the first place there were male and female convicts who could be employed and were used to European ways. Secondly, the Aborigines were never settled in their habits and liked to return to the bush, as was the case with Bennelong.

The Rebel Called Pemulwy. There were some Aborigines who preferred the wild life of the woods and would have nothing to do with the white man. One man in particular showed violent resistance to the Europeans. Pemulwy is first heard of in December 1790, when he dangerously wounded John McIntire, the gamekeeper of the Governor.

McIntire and others who were with him said that the attack was utterly unprovoked. He was in the woods hunting at some distance from the settlement when he was confronted by Pemulwy. Although McIntire quitted his arms, to show his friendship, Pemulwy threw his spear at a distance of 10 yards. This entered McIntire's body under the left arm to a depth of 7 inches, and eventually he died from the wound.

(To Be Continued)

#### Coming Events:

- Nov. 28: Inspection of Victoria Barracks. (Meet at 6.50 pm sharp at Guard House).
- Jan. 26: Flag Raising, Macquarie Place, 11 am. Annual Dinner, Ballroom, Wentworth Hotel, 7 pm. (Also available on Jan. 26, inspection of St Patrick's College, Manly).
- Jan. 27: Exhibition, The Rocks.
- Jan. 28: Presentation of Memorial and Letter of Loyalty, 9.15 am, Government House gates.
- Mar. 2: Start of visit to Norfolk Island.

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