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

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## From the President

It is with great regret that I open this report with news of the sudden death of our Vice-Patron, John Harris, on Saturday 7th July 1979. John was a wonderful supporter of the Fellowship; no matter what the function he and his wife Mollye were there. He had had a long career in Local Government, an ex-Mayor of Kuring-gai and the third generation in his family to serve on the Sydney City Council. The original John Harris was a surgeon with the Second Fleet, and Harris Street, Ultimo, was named after him. To his wife and two sons, John and Bruce, I extend sympathy from all Members. We have lost an esteemed Vice-Patron and have lost a good friend.

It was a great honour to go to the Reception, to celebrate the birthday of Her Majesty the Queen, at Government House last month. His Excellency and Lady Cutler made my husband and I most welcome, and it is good to know the Fellowship is recognised in this way. As only two or three other groups were represented, I feel we are particularly honoured.

During my absence in Norfolk Island the "Grave" Committee have been very busy with St Matthews, Windsor. Details appear elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Whilst on Norfolk Island I received permission from the Administrator for the Fellowship to place a plaque on the grave of Thomas Hoadington. This we are hoping to do on Foundation Day, 6th March. Would Members please contact me if they are interested in forming a group to go to Norfolk Island for this event? With group concessions the cost would be approximately \$450 for seven days. This includes air fare, hotel accommodation (bed and breakfast, twin share). Historical Tours can be arranged, and also Government House may be opened for our inspection, "rish fries" on the beach, etc, etc. If enough people are interested, I will get definite figures. So please contact me immediately if interested.

On Friday 22nd June I flew to Melbourne to attend a Council Meeting of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations (A.F.F.H.O.). This is progressing very well, and I hope some Members are already planning to attend the Congress in Adelaide next Easter.

Would Members please note: The visit to Rose Bay Convent -- The request for information re St Matthews, Windsor -- The proposed trip to Norfolk Island.

Beryl Lewis.

## Tour of Convent of the Sacred Heart, Rose Bay

A guided tour of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, New South Head Road, Rose Bay, will be held on Saturday 18th August. Those going on the tour are to meet at the main gate at 11 am sharp. The convent chapel is an example of the work of architect Horbury Hunt, in fact his final work. (Horbury Hunt was the subject of the Fellowship's May Lecture).

Inspection of the Chapel will be followed by lunch at Vacluse House, followed by an inspection of Vacluse House and of Wentworth's tomb. Should prove a most interesting day.

## Membership Report

We have pleasure in welcoming the following Members to the Fellowship:

Mrs Patricia I. Noble and Miss Julie A. Noble, Frankston, Victoria.  
(Anthony Rope & Elizabeth Pulley)

Mrs Gretta Lucas, Drumnoyne. (James McManus & Jane Poole)

John A. Lucas, Drumnoyne. (Nathaniel Lucas & Olivia Gascoigne)

Mrs Annette Hor, North Lambton. (Anthony Rope, Elizabeth Pulley & John Summers)

Charles K. Thompson, Mayfield. (Richard Partridge & Mary Greenwood)

Stuart C. B. Thompson, New Lambton. (Richard Partridge & Mary Greenwood)

Mrs Vicki A. Lamb, Cronulla. (Nathaniel Lucas & Olivia Gascoigne)

Mrs Barbara J. Bushell, Tenarbit. (Anthony Rope, Elizabeth Pulley & John Summers)

Mrs Joan M. Dickinson, Miss Cathryn E. Dickinson and Brett J. Dickinson, Bondi. (Charles Peat & Anne Mullen)

Mrs Patricia M. Drummond, Wagga Wagga. (Charles Peat & Anne Mullen)

Gregory I. A. Lamb (jnr) and Miss Nicole K. Lamb, Cronulla.  
(Nathaniel Lucas & Olivia Gascoigne)

Phillip H. Ridge, Bourke. (Ann Forbes)

Miss Nancy U. Reynolds, Bowral. (David Kilpack)

Mrs Dorothy B. Johns, Hamilton. (John Small & Mary Parker)

We are very interested to note four new names amongst our "First Fleetsters" -- James McManus, Jane Poole, Richard Partridge and Mary Greenwood.

Membership Committee.

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### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 21st September 1979 at 7.30 pm.

Venue: Board Room, Assembly Building, Margaret Street  
(entrance at Jamison Street)

Nominations for Election close on 21st August (Rule 32)

Notices of Motion must be in by 1st August (Rule 35)

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## Bare Island Fort

Bare Island Fort at La Perouse was the topic for our June lecture evening. The speaker was Mrs June Moore, trustee and research officer, Randwick & District Historical Society. Mrs Moore lived on Bare Island for a couple of years, and of course knows her subject extremely well. Accompanying Mrs Moore that evening was Mr John Lunsden, President of the Randwick Historical Society. Mr Lunsden brought interesting and colourful slides of the Fort.

After the Fort was left empty by the War Veterans in 1963, the Randwick & District Historical Society obtained "caretaker occupancy" from the Commonwealth authorities on a temporary basis. With the help of dedicated members of the Society, displays were set up on the history of Botany Bay. The visitor attendance was 1000 and over weekly.

But repairs were badly needed, and pleas for a subsidy towards restoration of the Fort fell on deaf ears. In 1964 the National Trust of Australia put Bare Island Fort on its "classified" register, and in 1967 Bare Island Fort was declared an "Historic Site" by the N.S.W. Government, the National Parks and Wildlife Service taking over the management.

Bare Island Fort was built in 1885. It was built as a coastal defence

### Baro Island Fort (Continued)

scheme. The fortifications consist of five gun emplacements arranged symmetrically in an arc, and linked by bombproof passage. The seaward approach to the island was protected by an 18-ton 10" rifled muzzle-loading gun manned by 15 men. There were also two 12-ton 9" rifled muzzle-loading guns, each requiring 10 men for their operation. The guns were never used in defence, and by 1902 the garrison was finally left in the care of District Gunners.

Baro Island is part of our heritage, and the Fort is being restored to resemble its original style in the 1880's. The Ranger in Charge is Mrs Beryl Barker, one of the Society's trustees, who worked many years on the first museum displays. The Fort is still open to the public, and everyone should visit this historic building.

Sally Kalina.

### Plaques for St Matthews, Windsor

The Fellowship intends to place plaques at St Matthews, Windsor, in the near future. A "search day" will be held there on Saturday 25th August. We are making an appeal for donations for the project, also an appeal for family histories to be read on the day the plaques are unveiled. Here are the names of the known First Fleeters buried at St Matthews:

Thomas Arndell	William Roberts	Henry Kable
Susannah Kable	John Ruffler	Robert Williams
John Merriott	James Smith	William Moore
John Anderson	Daniel Gordon	Charles Gray
Edward Miles (Moyle)	Archibald Murphy	Robert Forrester
Ann Bladdy (Green)	Ann Goodall	William Goodall
William Redford (Radford, alias John Meynell)		Daniel Barney
Richard Richards (could be Lawrence Richards)		Charles Williams
Elizabeth Arndell (Elizabeth Burleigh or Dalton)		
Samuel Chinnery (no mention of death in TDM Files)		

### Volunteer with "P.R." Knowledge Required

The Executive has asked for an appeal to be made in the Newsletter for someone with a knowledge of P.R. work to undertake an investigation into the most appropriate way in which knowledge and historical interest can be fostered between the Fellowship and Tertiary Institutions.

### Annual Ward Havard Memorial Lecture

The President and Members of the City of Liverpool & District Historical Society have invited the Fellowship to attend the Annual Ward Havard Memorial Lecture, to be held in St Luke's Church Hall, Northumberland St., Liverpool, at 2 pm on Saturday 11th August. Lecturer, Mr Frank O'Grady. Subject, "Michael Dwyer, Bond or Free?" RSVP 3rd August to the General Secretary, PO Box 90, Liverpool 2170.

### Visit to Canada

Executive Member Margaret Markwell left Sydney last Saturday (21st July) for a six-weeks visit to her son Peter and family in Calgary, Canada. We wish her a pleasant holiday. Margaret returns to Sydney on 2nd Sept.

### Attention: Queensland Members

We have had a request from a Queensland Member who feels a bit isolated and would like to contact other Members living in the northern State. Name and address: Mr Keith G. Tate, 27 Wattle Avenue, Bongaree, Bribie Island, Queensland. 4507. Telephone: 075 48 1620. We trust Mr Tate has a satisfactory response, and would like to hear from him if he does.

### Note from Editor

Unfortunately several items which should have gone in this issue of the Newsletter have had to be held over. One is the President's interesting account of her visit to Norfolk Island, another is her toast at the Inaugural Dinner of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations. (This arises from the fact that, for personal reasons, the last three pages are prepared first).

## Early Encounters Between Europeans and Aborigines in N.S.W.

(Continuing Ena Harper's papers on the subject, reprinted by kind permission of Ashfield Historical Society and Ena Harper. Much of the previous instalment dealt with the story of such encounters as given by Lieut. Gidley King in his Journal)

Once again the Aborigines were mystified by the Europeans in their clothing. King says:

"They wanted to know what sex we were, which they explained by pointing where it was distinguishable. As they took us for women, not having our beard grown, I ordered one of the people to undeceive them in this particular, when they made a great shout of admiration, and pointing to the shore, which was but ten yards from us, we saw a great number of women and girls, with infant children on their shoulders, make their appearance on the beach....Those natives who were round the boats made signs for us to go to them and made us understand their persons were at our service. However, I declined their mark of their hospitality but showed a handkerchief which I offered to one of the women, pointing her out. She immediately put her child down and came alongside the boat and suffered me to apply the handkerchief where Eve did the Fig leaf; the natives then set up another very great shout and my female visitor returned on shore".

This was one of the happier moments of the meeting of the two races. Lieut. William Bradley tells of a less harmonious happening on the same day:

"...an officer and party of men were sent from the Sirius to clear a way to a run of water on the south side of the Bay. The natives were well pleased with our people until they began clearing the ground, at which they were displeased and wanted them to be gone".

The Europeans could be friendly, but always they were comparing the Aborigines with themselves and feeling that the natives of the country were an inferior race. Surgeon Arthur Bowes tells of an expedition he made next day on the south side of Botany Bay. Accompanied by several other gentlemen they went to haul the seine (fishing net).

"Upon our landing 7 or 8 of the natives came close up to us. They were all provided with lances of a great length, pointed with the bone of a stingray at one end, and a piece of oyster shell at the other grown or rubbed to a fine edge....They live in miserable wigwams near the water, which are nothing more than 2 or 3 pieces of the bark of a tree set up sideways against a ridge pole fastened to an upright stick at each end....Their principal food consists of fish, which they in general eat raw. Sometimes they feast upon the kangaroo, but I believe them to be too stupid and indolent a set of people to be able often to catch them....The women are quite naked & go in miserable bad canoes to catch fish....I presented many of them with glass beads & several gentlemen put ribands & glass trinkets about their heads, but they seemed altogether a most stupid insensible set of beings...."

The Europeans' feeling of superiority was based first and foremost on their superior weapons. Weapons used by the Aborigines were the spear and spear-thrower, the hunting and fighting spears being 12 to 16 feet long with a single point, of hardwood bone or stingray spine fastened together with resin. The fishing spear had multiple points and other weapons were a club and wooden shield for defence. With the use of the spear-thrower the Aborigines were "reasonably accurate up to 60 yards" (Abbie).

Mention has already been made of the musket used by the Englishmen. The average musket of the period was a flintlock smoothbore weighing about 12 lbs. The calibre was .75 in England. With such a musket a well-trained recruit was expected to be able to load and fire in 15 seconds. These muskets were not noted for their accuracy. The

"Early Encounters" (Continued)

best that could be expected was to hit the figure of a man at 80 to 100 yards.

So there was not much difference in the range of the spear and the musket. The difference lay in the velocity with which the spear and the shot travelled. The explosion of the gunpowder was also terrifying to the natives. Two incidents are recounted which show the Aborigines' attitude to the new weapons. Charles Worgan, writing on January 21, states that

"....the Governor had ordered that some of the officers and a number of men from the Sirius should be sent to the south shore to clear ground and dig saw pits. Some of the natives came down to-day both on the south and north sides of the Bay and behaved very funny and friendly. They expressed a little anger at seeing us cut down the trees, but it was only by jabbering very fast and loud. They did not like the soldiers and made signs for us to take them away, before they would venture to come near us. One of them was bold enough to go up to a soldier and feel his gun, and felt the point of the bayonet, looked very serious and gave a significant 'HUM!'"

Two days later Surgeon John White made this significant entry in his Journal:

"While we remained at Botany Bay, as I was one morning on board the Supply, we saw 29 of the Natives on the beach looking toward the shipping, upon which lieutenants Ball & King, Mr Dawes & myself went on shore, landing at the place they were. They were friendly & pacific, though each of them was armed with a spear or long dart, & had a stick with a shell at the end, used by them in throwing their weapons. Besides these, some few had shields made of the bark of the cork tree, of a plain appearance....

"One of the most friendly, & who appeared to be the most confident, on signs being made to him, stuck the end of his shield in the sand, but could not be prevailed upon to throw his spear at it. Finding he declined it, I fired a pistol ball through it. The explosion frightened him as well as his companions a little, but they soon got over it, & on my putting the pistol into my pocket, he took up the shield and appeared to be much surprised at finding it perforated. He then, by signs and gestures, seemed to ask if the pistol would make a hole through him, & on being made sensible it would, he showed not the smallest signs of fear; on the contrary he endeavoured, as we construed his notions to impress us with an idea of the superiority of his own arms, which he applied to his breast, & by staggering and a show of falling, seemed to wish us to understand that the force & effect of them was mortal & not to be resisted.

"However, I am well convinced that they know & dread the superiority of our arms, notwithstanding this show of indifference; as they, on all occasions, have discovered a dislike of a musket: and so very soon did they make themselves acquainted with our military dress that, from the first, they carefully avoided a soldier, or any person wearing a red coat, which they seem to have marked as a fighting gesture. Many of their warriors, or distinguished men, we observed to be painted in stripes across the breast and back, which at some little distance appears not unlike our soldiers' cross belts".

This concludes the account of the first encounters between the two races at Botany Bay. This has been done in some detail, but the intention has been to lay a foundation for understanding later events. One of the notable features of the period was the commanding and complex personality of Phillip. Of course, he was supported by soldiers with more sophisticated weaponry than the Aborigines possessed, but we cannot ignore the fact that his policy was to approach the natives alone and unarmed and the landing at Botany Bay

## "Early Encounters" (Continued)

was accomplished without any bloodshed. How can we explain the paradox of Phillip's character? The following viewpoint is put forward by M. Barnard Eldershaw:

"With his usual tenacity he maintained throughout his Governorship the attitude of mind he brought with him. This was one of justice tempered by expedience and uncoloured by sentiment. Any such scruples in the face of duty would have seemed to him both sentimental and beside the point. The 18th century was so sure of the value of civilization that it considered the conquest of an uncivilized people by a civilized as the height of good fortune for the former. Phillip accorded to the Aboriginal the same justice that he endeavoured to mete out to all sections of the community under him. They were within, not without, his law. In all matters in which their lives came into contact with the settlers, he was their Governor as well as the white man's. He was scrupulous to maintain the peace between black and white along lines of equity".

So Phillip wrote in his first despatch on May 15, 1788, to Lord Sydney these words:

"With respect to the natives it was my determination, from my first landing, that nothing less than the most absolute necessity should ever make me fire upon them, and though persevering in this resolution has at times been rather difficult I have hitherto been so fortunate that it has never been necessary".

A small ugly obelisk marks the spot where Governor Phillip landed at Botany Bay and went to meet the Aborigines alone and unarmed. It is just above the little beach at Yarra Bay, south of Botany Cemetery.

To Cultivate an Acquaintance. As I have just mentioned, the initial confrontation of the Englishmen with the Australian Aborigines at Botany Bay has been described in some detail. However, the permanent settlement was made at Sydney Cove in Port Jackson, and we read from various Journals what happened there.

In a despatch to Lord Sydney dated May 15, 1788, Phillip describes what took place when they got into Port Jackson on January 23 (this is the same despatch mentioned above):

"When I first went in the boats to Port Jackson the natives appeared armed near the place at which we landed, and were very vociferous, but, like the others, easily persuaded to accept what was offered them, and I persuaded one man, who appeared to be the chief or master of the family, to go with me to that part of the beach where the people (Englishmen) were boiling their meat".

Once again Phillip is in command of the situation, and for a while all goes well. On Sunday January 27 Dr Charles Bouchier Worgan wrote the following:

"Early this morning a number of the Artificers and Convicts were sent on shore with the necessary implements for clearing the ground, felling trees, in order that the tents might be pitched for the Battalion.... The boats that were sent to haul the Seine (fishing net) were very successful. They met with some of the natives who behaved very friendly, even helped them to haul the Seine on shore, for which kind office they were liberally rewarded with a portion of the fish".

(To Be Continued)

## Coming Events

- Aug. 11 (Sat.), 2 pm: Ward Havard Memorial Lecture, Liverpool.
- Aug. 15 (Wed.), 7.45 pm: Lecture by Philip Cox, architect, "Norfolk Island - the Architecture of the Second Period, 1827-1856".
- Aug. 18 (Sat.), 11 am: Tour of Convent of the Sacred Heart, Rose Bay.
- Aug. 25 (Sat.): Search Day, St Matthews, Windsor.
- Sept. 21 (Fri.), 7.30 pm: Annual General Meeting, Assembly Building.

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