

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

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March 1980

Letter from Buckingham Palace

Our President has received the following letter:--

Buckingham Palace  
8th February 1980

Dear Mrs Lewis,

I am commanded by The Queen to ask you to convey her sincere thanks to all members of the Fellowship of First Fleeters for their kind and loyal message of greetings, sent on the occasion of Australia Day.

Her Majesty received this message with much pleasure.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Fellows.

Mrs B. Lewis

From the President

It is with very deep regret that I open this report with news of the death of Mrs Margaret Markwell on Saturday 15th March. Margaret was a wonderful member, a descendant of William Broughton, who endeared herself to all -- the Fellowship truly was her life. She had been a member since the very early days, her membership number was 143, and she had served as an Executive Committeeman for many years. First contact for a great number of new members was with Margaret in our office on a Friday -- a duty she loved to do. She worked very hard on the Newsletter and also the Social Committee. The success of Argyle Day was largely due to Margaret's efforts. She worked quietly in the background and was always "there". She will be very sadly missed -- the Fellowship has lost a wonderful and much-loved member, and I and my colleagues have lost a very dear friend. To her son Peter, who came from Canada for the funeral, her sisters Joan and Ruth, I extend sincere sympathy from all members.

The Executive Committee have requested that I bring to your notice our involvement in two projects. Firstly the beautiful sculpture "First Impressions" at The Rocks. The Fellowship is providing plaques, to be placed on each of three sides, giving the history behind "The Convict, the Settler and the Soldier". The official opening will be on Wednesday 2nd April at 11 am. Members are invited to attend. Unfortunately, due to a previous interstate engagement, I cannot be there, but hope many members will go along.

Secondly, we are working with the Sydney City Council in erecting a memorial to the First Fleet in the new pedestrian precinct at Circular Quay, Sydney. This will be a twin to one already erected at

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Portsmouth, England, and is called "Bonds of Friendship". This is due to be opened later in the year. I now make a direct appeal to all members to contribute to these projects. No donation is too small, and your gift will be acknowledged in the Newsletter (names only). Committee members have been working with social functions, etc, for a couple of years to enable this idea to become a reality, and I now seek your support -- I'm sure this will give you great satisfaction to know you have helped to place this memorial in Sydney to our ancestors and thus give them the recognition they deserve.

At the Executive meeting on Wednesday 12th March Mr Roderick Best was appointed a Vice President to replace Mr Ted Linn. We welcome Mr Best and I look forward to working with him.

I have had a very busy time since last reporting to you. I attended the opening, by His Excellency the Governor, of the Wedgwood Exhibition at the Opera House -- a highlight of which was to see the medallion made from clay from Sydney Cove and sent back to England by a "First Fleeter". I was a guest speaker at Ryde-Eastwood Legacy, also at Hurstville Leisure Learning Group. A wonderful experience was the honour of speaking at the Annual Dinner of the Exchange Teachers Association at the Sydney Turf Club Function Centre at Canterbury Racecourse. There were teachers present from Britain, Canada, New Zealand, France and other countries as well as Australians who had served overseas, who now know much more about Fellowship of First Fleeters and our early history.

A real delight was my second trip to Norfolk Island. It was fellowship in the true meaning of the word -- many of the group were new members or from the country and we all met for the first time. I thank them all for their friendly co-operation. A report of this trip appears later in this Newsletter.

I look forward to hearing from as many as possible regarding our memorial funds in the immediate future. I also remind members that this is their last opportunity to order copies of the "Bowes Smythe Journal" at wholesale rates (details in February Newsletter).

Beryl Lewis.

### Membership Report

We wish to welcome the following new members:--

Mrs Lyell Judge, Nelson Bay. (Joseph Elliott (Trimby) )  
Miss Gaenor A. Williams, Rose Bay. (John Small - Mary Parker)  
Robert W. Moxham, Boronia, Victoria. (John Herbert - Deborah Ellam)  
Stephen R. Williams, Jnr., Heathcote. (William Nash - Maria Haynes)  
Geoffrey G. Gardiner, Bonnet Bay, NSW. (James Bloodworth - Sarah Bellamy)  
Mrs Mavis M. K. Scarr, Kingston, A.C.T. (James Bloodworth - Sarah Bellamy)  
Harold F. Killick, Kogarah. (Thomas Arndell - Ann Forbes)  
Mrs Sandra M. Machin, Kogarah. (Thomas Arndell - Ann Forbes)  
Mrs Thais Mason, Bentleigh, Victoria. (Edward Garth - Susannah Garth)  
Mrs Meredith G. Barkla, Oakwood Park, Victoria. (Edward Garth - Susannah Garth)  
Mrs Margaret A. Clougher, Taroom, Tasmania. (William Nash - Maria Haynes)  
Mrs Marie M. Adamson, Sandy Bay, Tasmania. (William Nash - Maria Haynes)  
Miss Sandra B. Williams, Heathcote. (William Nash - Maria Haynes)  
Mrs Deirdre B. Cameron, Lismore. (James Underwood)  
Mrs Joyce A. Bruce, Mudgee. (Robert Forrester)  
Miss Joy Hunt, Holland Park, Queensland. (Andrew Fishburn)  
Mrs Rosemary Freedman, Lugarno, N.S.W. (Frederick Meredith)  
Mrs Florence M. Hedges and Miss Amanda J. Hedges (Jnr), Roseville. (Matthew James Everingham)  
Garry P. Hedges, Waverton. (Matthew James Everingham)

Membership Committee

### February Lecture Evening

On the 20th February Mr Ken Tye, of Mosman (a Life Member of the Royal Australian Historical Society), addressed us on "Dorothea Mackellar -- Her Life and Her Work". Mr Tye was privileged to have known the late Miss Mackellar, and through his speaking and his slides brought her personality closely to us.

All Australians know and love her "My Country" -- the wide brown land -- but few know very much of her other lovely poems.

Through the slides we saw her as a young woman who wrote with such insight and fervour of her country -- and ours. The first slide was of an oil portrait now hanging in the Speaker's Room in State Parliament House. Others showed the home at Rose Bay where she was born and other homes in Sydney and the country -- the country that she knew and loved so well.

Mr Tye told us of how he found the locality -- and the home, "Torryburn", on the Allyn River, north of Maitland -- where she had as a girl seen the breaking of the drought in about 1900.

His slides brought the beauty of this lovely area forcefully to us, as they did to her in a hospital bed in 1966.

During his address the speaker read to us, with understanding and feeling, some of her many poems: in one collection alone there are 169 of them, ranging through love of nature, humour, sadness, and in particular, "Colour", of which she had said to Mr Tye, "You know, I think that was as close as I came to writing poetry".

Through what we heard and saw that evening we came closer to knowing and understanding this wonderful Australian poet, and for that we are grateful. We hope to have Mr Tye as our guest again in the near future, and we thank him for giving us a most inspiring and memorable lecture.

Our next speaker is Mr Noel Thorpe, from the Water Board, whose address will be given on "The Streets of Sydney". A year or two ago Mr Thorpe addressed the Fellowship on the Tank Stream, a lecture considered so interesting that many members asked that he be invited again.

Sally Kalina.

### Report on Archives Workshop

On behalf of the Fellowship I attended a workshop at the State Archives Building conducted for International Archives Week. We were taken on a tour of the State Archives and were given several interesting lectures on such subjects as

- \* Establishing an archives
- \* Organising a manuscripts collection
- \* Principles of conservation.

I found this both interesting and informative, and it should be of great assistance to us in setting up the Fellowship's Archives.

Joyce Cowell.

### "Family Picnic Day" at Henry Kendall Cottage

On Saturday 19th April the Brisbane Water Historical Society will be holding a "Family Picnic Day" at Henry Kendall Cottage, located just off Brisbane Water Drive at West Gosford.

Mrs Elaine Fry, Hon. Secretary, Brisbane Water Historical Society, provides the following information: Hours of opening: 10 am to 5 pm. Admission charges: 50c adults, 20c children (5-15 years) -- which will include inspection of Henry Kendall Cottage and Museum. Plenty of parking space for buses and cars. Among the attractions: The usual food stalls (Devonshire teas, hot dogs, etc), produce and cake stalls, the popular pancake-making; spinning, wood-turning, pottery, china painting, lapidary demonstrations, painting by Central Coast Art Society members, a programme of races for the children.

## Visit to Norfolk Island — March 1980

The Fellowship of First Fleeters excursion to Norfolk Island, planned so many months before, finally took off from Mascot on Sunday 2nd March with 28 passengers aboard an East-West Airlines Fokker. The four-hour flight allowed a renewal of acquaintances of country members with the Fellowship's urban members. The captain of the aircraft was interested to know that he had so many F.F.F. members aboard and invited them to visit the flight deck -- a very different affair to the poop deck of the Sirius! Arrived at Norfolk Island the aircraft made a pass over the island before making a 180° turn to land on the main strip, thus giving everyone aboard a bird's-eye-view of our home for a week. Right from the outset Norfolk Island put itself out to welcome us with the members of the Island's Historical Society present at the airport to greet us. The remainder of our party of eight members arrived the next day.

Perhaps Norfolk Island had never before been so minutely inspected. Each day two buses took our members on an organised tour to some part of the island, and every aspect of its history, geography, flora and fauna, administration and social life was inspected and discussed. But this was not enough! In their spare time members hired cars and drove to remote corners of the island inaccessible to the buses; others went horseback riding along narrow bridle paths, while the more energetic went on a hike from the summit of Mt Bates to the Cook memorial. One very fit member was observed hiking up the road to the summit of Mt Pitt and striding off in the direction of Kingston and Cascade. Even the coral and fish in Emily Bay were inspected through the glass bottom of a boat. And, for good measure, the island's local light aircraft was hired so that the coastline could be viewed offshore and the nearby islands of Nepean and Phillip inspected from the air.

From the outset public relations were very good. The local radio station reported our activities over the breakfast session almost daily and the two local news sheets gave us a very good coverage. Members dutifully wore their F.F.F. badges and name bars, and the local business community soon learnt to spot a First Fleeter at a distance. They were very interested in the Fellowship itself and in our own personal histories, especially if our ancestors had any connection with the island's early history.

Our party was accorded a number of special privileges. One was a conducted tour of the recently restored administrative buildings at Kingston by the Hon. William A. Blucher, M.L.A., who explained how the government of the island works and how the islanders are now adapting to the self-government reforms introduced last year. The island's sources of income (mainly postage stamps); the islanders' attitude to such new-fangled ideas as the Torrens system of land titles (many of the islanders zealously guard their original land grant certificates); and the peculiar system of requiring inhabitants to donate a fortnight's labour on the local roads or pay a small tax, were all explained. Another special privilege was a tour of Government House through the courtesy of His Honour the Administrator and the members of the local Historical Society who acted as guides.

Night life on Norfolk Island is almost entirely given over to feasting. There seems to be a convention that one should dine in a different restaurant each night, but to visit every restaurant on the island would require an extended stay. Some restaurants have a special feature such as a dinner the Commandant of the Penal Settlement might have enjoyed, which would include the local fish Red Emperor, roast beef, Colony Ham and Dublin Cream Pie. Between courses at this dinner we sang songs from the Garrison Song Folio -- Botany Bay, 10,000 Miles Away, and Click! ... Our Farewell Dinner, held at historic Bishopscourt, featured Norfolk Island dishes cooked in traditional Pitcairner's style. We discovered that bananas can be

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treated in many different ways besides drowning them in custard. On another night we gorged ourselves on seafood, and the one evening we dined at our own hotel we were treated to a laua feast.

Of course the official reason for our visit to Norfolk Island was to place a plaque on the headstone of First Fleeter Thomas Headington. This duly took place on a significant day, Foundation Day, which is a public holiday for the island. It turned out to be a splendid day, and we began it with a tour of the convict ruins remaining from the Second Settlement at Kingston, under the guidance of Michael Prentice, a young man who really knows his local history, and who has that rare ability to impart his knowledge in an entertaining way. During this tour we visited the old Crank Mill, and, descending into the old basement, Michael told us that these foundation walls were probably erected during the First Settlement. We had our lunch, picnic style, in the ruins of the old civic hospital at which the Fellowship played host to the members of the Norfolk Island Historical Society.

At 2 pm we gathered round the grave of Thomas Headington for the unveiling. Our President expressed the pleasure it gave the Fellowship to be on Norfolk Island for this important event after two years of negotiation. His Honour the Administrator, Mr Peter Coleman, congratulated the Fellowship on its work over the past 12 years and unveiled the stainless steel plaque set in the side of the headstone, observing as he did so that the flag which covered the plaque was a replica of the Queen Anne flag flown in the Colony at the time of the First Settlement, the distinguishing feature being the absence of the cross of St Patrick on it. As members of the F.F.F. stood silently beside the grave we remembered the motto of the Fellowship and wondered if Thomas Headington could ever have imagined in his wildest dreams that such a ceremony would take place at his graveside 182 years later.

It would be impossible to list all the curious things we saw and did, but a short list would surely include a visit to a horse stud where we saw the soporific effect of a man breathing into a horse's nostrils; the delight that bulls experience when their tails are rubbed the wrong way; unloading a ship at Cascade by the use of lighters; banyan trees originally used to mark the boundaries of the settlement and a truly magnificent specimen at the airport; cows grazing at the roadsides at a cost to their owners of \$10 per head per year (last year it was only a dollar a head, so Norfolk Island knows something of the effects of inflation); a tour called "Behind the Hedges" which turned out to be an inspection of the islanders' private gardens; community hymn singing at St Barnabas' Chapel; the ubiquitous Norfolk Island Pine, guavas and lantana and the colourful shrub "match me if you can".

Many of the Fellowship had brought their family histories, so in spare moments we discussed progress and problems, and several consulted early island surveys kindly lent by members of the Historical Society, in the hope of locating where their ancestors had once lived. We feasted as much on history as we did on food, and found our friends in the Historical Society more than willing to co-operate, as unfortunately the history of the First Settlement takes third place to that of the Second Settlement (a tourist drawcard) and the Third Settlement, whose many descendants are so active in the Island's commerce and government today. To the ordinary tourist the legends of Barney Duffy and the Bloody Bridge are the titbits to feed his imagination of "the bad old days", but to the more serious members of our party it was interesting to learn from our historical friends their not so highly coloured versions of these stories.

The names Marie, Dolly, Naomi, Colleen, Agnes, Diane, Chris and Michael may not mean much to most readers of this Newsletter, but to the members of our little expedition they were people who made our stay very enjoyable and with whom we made friends in such a short time. At our farewell dinner we said "thank you" and presented F.F.F. mementoes

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of our visit. We also said in a practical way our thanks to our President, who had succeeded, despite constant changes and many difficulties, in bringing the tour to a successful conclusion.

With a shock we realised that we had survived a week without TV, the newspapers and the radio (almost), and it was with an even greater shock that we realised that back in "civilisation" where we would soon be heading, there were strikes, shortages and disorganised communications. The half-empty suitcases we had brought were now bulging with souvenirs, and even at this late hour there were frantic revisits to the shops to buy something for Aunt Emma or Uncle Joe. In adjoining hotel rooms arguments began as to what was limited by Customs. Was it \$2, \$20, \$200 or \$2000 duty-free on goods? Both drinkers and non-drinkers suddenly became concerned as to how much liquor could be got through Customs duty free. Was it a "reputed quart", "a litre", or "a bottle and a half per person"? And anyhow, what was half a bottle? Some said a full bottle less three nips qualified. It seemed that only the Sydney Customs barrier would solve these problems!

Three of our party left on Saturday's plane, and on the Sunday afternoon our new-found friends, officials, members of the Historical Society and six of our members who, at the last moment, were taken off the loading list to wait another day, farewelled 27 members on their way back to cheerless Sydney. One returning member found his telephone bill waiting for him and ruefully reflected that on Norfolk Island telephone calls are free!

There can be no doubt that we all thoroughly enjoyed our stay and that the Island and its people had a profound effect on us. Just what effect the Fellowship visitors had on the Islanders is hard to assess in such a short time, but there can be little doubt that the Island desperately needs tourists to survive, and the Islanders were bending over backwards to impress us that they are more than worth a visit. Certainly 36 members of our Fellowship can unanimously endorse that.

Geoffrey Squires.

Note by Editor: A very well-written, interesting and informative report!

#### Heart Surgery for a Junior Member

Benjamin Wheatley (Joseph Hatton), aged 2 years and 9 months, a junior member of the Fellowship, who had to have a massive heart operation when he was only a few weeks old, underwent further heart surgery on 6th March. We are pleased to report that Benjamin is fit and well again.

#### Obituary

We regret to have to record the recent deaths of three members of the Fellowship.

As mentioned by the President in her report, the death has occurred of Mrs Margaret Markwell, a very conscientious worker for the Fellowship for many years. This is, in fact, the first issue of the Newsletter over a long period that Margaret did not contribute to, either in contents or in production. This makes it a sad issue of the Newsletter for the Editor and all those connected with its production.

The death occurred in Rankin Park Hospital, Newcastle, on 1st February of Charles Kenneth Thompson, of Mayfield. Mr Thompson had been a member for only a short time, but was very proud of his membership.

Mr August Richard (Dick) Squires, of Queanbeyan, passed away on 14th March, aged 84 years. Mr Squires was the father of Geoffrey Squires, who wrote the report on the Norfolk Island visit.

We extend sympathy to the families of each of these late members.

#### "Early Encounters"

The next instalment of "Early Encounters Between Europeans and Aborigines in N.S.W." will appear in the April issue of the Newsletter.

#### Coming Events

16th April: Lecture, Mr Noel Thorpe, "Streets of Sydney".

19th April: "Family Picnic Day", Henry Kendall Cottage, West Gosford.