

Fellowship of First Fleeters

Hunter Valley Chapter

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

All correspondence to: 76 Fletcher St. Adamstown 2289

www.firstfleetershunter.com.au

President:
Barbara Turner
Ph. 49439105

Vice President/Membership:
Cynthia Huggup
Ph. 49558045

Secretary:
Yvonne Bradley
Ph. 49574758

Treasurer:
Helen Pacey
Ph: 40234979



The Coal River Bulletin

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**It was a lively gathering for our
5th birthday celebration!**



We can't believe how quickly the years have gone since a relatively small group met with John & Beth Brooker to re-establish the Hunter Chapter of the Fellowship of First Fleeters in Newcastle. Here we are today, 5 years on, with 77 financial members on the books!



We had as a guest from Sydney, Ron Withington, recently retired Editor of 'The Founders'.

Today Ron was here in his capacity as negotiator on the Fellowship's behalf with Maitland City Council in regard

to the placing of a F.F.F. plaque at the Historic Glebe Cemetery in recognition of First Fleeter, Joseph Trimby. This has been an on-going saga but Ron was pleased to report all hurdles seem to be overcome at last and next week he should receive the go-ahead for us to organise a fitting ceremony and ?a wake!

We were also pleased to have Ron with us to hear the special guest Speaker for our birthday meeting, Gianni Di Gravio, Archivist from the University of Newcastle. Gianni is a most enthusiastic advocate for anything and everything connected to the history of our city, not only from the first English discovery in 1801, but back to 60,000 years of aboriginal history. His enthusiasm is catching and no matter how many topics he covers we are always left wanting to hear more.



Gianni Di Gravio cutting our cake

Today Gionni spoke to us on the importance of Newcastle in the success of the new Colony in NSW – **a much overlooked historical fact he feels!**

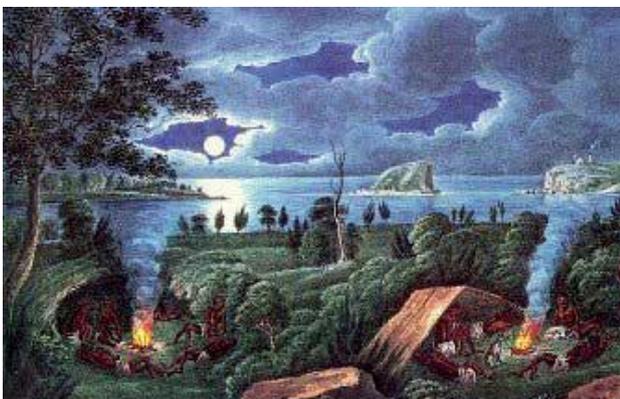
Not only was Newcastle the second settlement in NSW but it was also **the birth place of the Australian economy** with the first ever export for profit being coal to Bengal, India. The profit was an amazing £2/10s.

Newcastle also provided the new colony much needed lime and red cedar for building.

The University of Newcastle has an amazing and fascinating collection of early maps, drawings and paintings of this early time in our history. Gionni pointed out how accurate and meticulous the early pioneers were in their observations and drawings when they are overlayed on Google earth today.

Some of the earlier maps had to be pieced together like a jigsaw, as the one on the right from 1844. It shows the Hunter River at Port Hunter to the falls at West Maitland. He pointed out that due to major flooding through the years, as well as man's intervention, many of the twists and turns of the river have straightened out.

The painting below shows Nobby's as an island in the early days of the settlement.



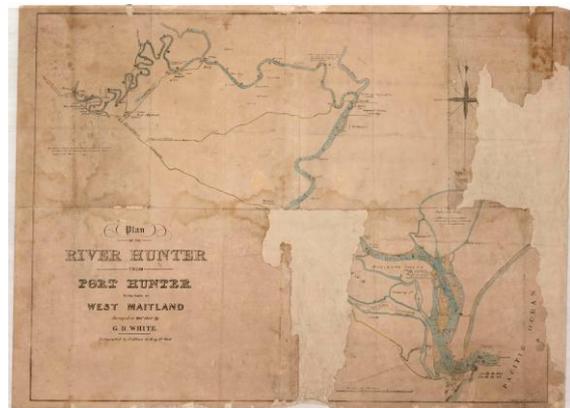
Aborigines Resting by a Camp Fire near the Mouth of the Hunter River, Newcastle, NSW
by Joseph Lycett (ca.1775 - 1828)

The drawing below is of the building of Macquarie pier joining Nobby's to the mainland, making a safe passage for ships entering the harbour.



If you would like to view more of these old paintings and drawings they are available on the internet:

Into Google, type *University of Newcastle cultural collection flickr* (no 'e' in flickr). On the Flickr site search box, type in *Hunter River maps* and select *cultural collections*.



Hunter River 1844

Very Best Wishes to:



July:

2nd Judith Sphiros
4th Dom Swinkles
9th Beth Brooker
10th George Pinkerton
23rd Elizabeth Guildford

August:

5th Robert Carter
13th Raquel Cameron
26th Lee De Bono

Your Editor, Judy Aubin

REMEMBERING THE SAILING OF THE FIRST FLEET

A group of 23 from our Chapter enjoyed lunch together on Friday 11th May 2012 at the Kotara Bowling Club to once again remember and toast the sailing of the First Fleet from Portsmouth, England on 13th May 1787 at 4 am. Below are some happy snaps taken on the day.



John Brooker, made a “dry” toast to the ships of the First Fleet and to all those that sailed in them.

(We were all too busy chatting and had finished the meal and our drinks by then!)



Where did this tradition of “making a toast” come from?

This thought had me *surfing the net* and here is a summary of what I found:

A TOAST - The word toast comes from the Latin "tostus", meaning "roasted" or "parched". Romans learned that toasting bread in front of a dry heat would help preserve the bread. It is also interesting to note that the Romans would drop a piece of toast (blackened from having spent too much time in front of a fire) into their wine. Moreover, they believed that the charcoal would reduce the acidity of their slightly vinegary wines, thus making it more mellow and palatable to drink, thus to origins of giving "toast" while drinking wine.

This habit of drinking wines with a chunk of toast at the bottom persisted and spread to England. By the 16th century drinking a "toast" became the same as saying you're drinking a "glass of wine with a chunk of toast at the bottom". The term "toast" then stretched to an expression of honour for a ceremony and then also to a person or persons being honoured.



Shakespeare mentions the term "toast" in "Merry Wives of Windsor" first published in 1602 but believed to be written prior to 1597. "Drinking a toast" became all the rage in the 17th and 18th centuries. When the party ran out of physical attendees to toast, they started toasting absent friends as an **excuse to keep drinking!**

[Hip, Hip, Hurrah!](#) by Danish painter
[P.S. Krøyer](#), 1888

While tradition shows a toast is made while standing, it is or was, the custom of the British Navy to drink toasts sitting down because below decks in the old-type wooden warships there was not enough headroom to stand upright.

In the British Navy, the officers' noon mess typically began with the loyal toast, followed by a toast distinctive for the day of the week:

- Monday: Our ships at sea.
- Tuesday: Our men.
- Wednesday: Ourselves. ("As no-one else is likely to concern themselves with our welfare" is often the retort and not part of the toast)
- Thursday: A bloody war or a sickly season.
- Friday: A willing foe and sea room.
- Saturday: Sweethearts and wives. ("May they never meet" is often the retort and not part of the toast)
- Sunday: Absent friends.

A Reminder:



There will be no future outings during **July** as winter is not so pleasant for tripping around!

Your invitation to our A.G.M

Monday, August 20th, 2012

Time: 10 am for 10.30 am. Tea and coffee on arrival



Following our meeting **SOUP & DAMPER** will be served as we enjoy chatting around the table

Cost: \$5.00 pp

**We look forward to seeing you at our usual venue
153 Brunker Rd. Adamstown!!**