



# Fellowship of First Fleeters Hunter Valley Chapter

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

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[www.firstfleetershunter.com.au](http://www.firstfleetershunter.com.au)

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## The Coal River Bulletin



**Newsletter No: 69**



**19<sup>th</sup> August, 2019**

President Barbara opened our Annual General Meeting at 10.30am presenting her report on our activities for the past 12 months. This also included reports from committee members. Treasurer Phil followed with his audited financial report and Cynthia with an update on the status of our membership.

Barbara thanked the 2018-2019 Committee for their support during the past year and all positions were declared vacant.



**2018-2019 Committee members from left:**

Bill Gow, Judy Aubin, Barbara Gow, Caroline Rupee, Kerry Neinart,  
Cynthia Huggup, Phil Aubin, Don Huggup  
(Three members absent – Di Stepa, Cheryl Brown, Gail Travan)

Some time ago Barbara had reluctantly given notice that, following the AGM, she would not be able to continue as President and Bill gave notice that he would be retiring as Librarian. Today they both officially submitted their resignations from the Committee.

At this point no nominations had been received for the position of President or Vice President. On advice from First Fleet House Kerry outlined options for us to remain a viable FFF Chapter. Many ideas had been discussed previously at committee meetings and the option that seemed best for our Chapter was that the vacant positions be filled in an **acting capacity only** and **for only one year** (or perhaps less if they were filled permanently along the way).

Terry Musgrave kindly put up his hand for the position of Acting President and George Pinkerton for the position as Acting Vice President.

**OUR SINCERE THANKS TO TERRY AND GEORGE FOR TAKING UP THE CHALLENGE!**

Further nominations were received and accepted for the following positions:

Acting President: Terry Musgrave  
Acting V/ President: George Pinkerton  
Secretary: Kerry Neinert  
Treasurer: Phil Aubin

Committee members:  
Membership: Cynthia Huggup  
Librarian: Dianne Steppa  
Newsletter: Judy Aubin  
Technical Officer: Don Huggup  
Caterer: Caroline Rupee  
Web Master: Phil Aubin  
Assistants: Cheryl Brown, Gail Travan

The AGM was closed and the General meeting opened with Terry in the Chair.



All members wish to sincerely thank Barbara and Bill for their commitment to our Hunter Valley Chapter. When Barbara took over as President her encouragement and support was greatly appreciated by all. Barbara was also at the helm for our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in 2017. Bill has kept our Library in good order, efficiently recording borrowings and returns and displaying appropriate items at our meetings for the past few years.

Their enthusiastic support will be sadly missed on the committee and our only consolation is that they will continue to attend future meetings whenever they are able.

Barbara and Bill were presented with a native orchid each and certificates of our appreciation.

**Our Guest Speaker was our member Roger Heading** – in the photo below, Roger is standing between Acting V/President George (left) and Acting President Terry.



Roger introduced us to First Fleeters William Bryant and Mary Broad who are remembered for their daring escape from the penal colony at Port Jackson with their two small children and seven convicts in December 1790.

William Bryant was a Cornish fisherman who became involved in smuggling and other illegal activities to supplement his income while Mary Broad who, with 2 others, committed a violent robbery. William & Mary were both sentenced to hang but later had their sentence commuted to seven years' transportation.

When the First Fleet set sail from Portsmouth both William Bryant and Mary Broad were on board HMS *Charlotte*. On the 8 month voyage from England Mary gave birth to a daughter Charlotte who she named after the ship they were sailing on. Within days of arriving in NSW William and Mary were married by Reverend Richard Johnson in the first marriage ceremony in the new colony.

William's skills as a seaman were in great demand and he was put in charge of fishing to supply fresh food for the colony. He was held in high regard and allowed to build a hut for his family at Farm Cove where he started his own garden - a rare privilege for a convict. A year later, when rations were severely dwindling and the colony facing starvation, Bryant was caught holding back some of his catch for his own use (perhaps to sell) and was sentenced to 100 lashes. He was also evicted from his hut and put to work on the brick-making gang. The colony soon missed his skills and he was able to return to his hut and continued fishing. The following year saw the arrival of a son for the couple who they named Emanuel.

Supplies brought out by the Second Fleet had barely warded off the threat of starvation and the long term prospects for the colony still looked bleak so William decided that escape was their only option to survive.

A Dutch ship bringing provisions from Batavia (Jakarta) arrived in the colony and was to stay for several weeks. William and his wife befriended the Dutch captain and acquired from him the things they would need for their escape - a compass, quadrant, chart, rice, salt pork, flour, a barrel for water, two muskets and ammunition.

When the Dutch ship left Port Jackson there were no other ships in the harbour to make chase and with no moon and the monsoon season fast approaching William decided to make their escape when darkness fell the following day. With his wife, two children and seven other convicts he boarded the governor's cutter and loaded the provisions and equipment.



A cutter is an open boat with two sails and six oars to be used when the wind dropped. The escapees made their way past South Point without being spotted and into the open sea. It was only the next morning that their escape was discovered.

Before they reached the more sheltered waters of the Great Barrier Reef the weather deteriorated and they survived two storms, at one time being blown out to sea without sight of land for eight days and bailing furiously. Reaching the Great Barrier Reef they were able to stop on uninhabited islands and replenish their food stocks with fresh turtle and shellfish.

They continued on through the Torres Strait into the Gulf of Carpentaria and finally, 69 days after leaving Port Jackson, having sailed 3,254 miles, they made landfall on the island of Timor. The escaped convicts had prepared a story to explain their arrival in a small boat. Bryant took his wife's maiden name calling himself William Broad and told the authorities they were survivors from a shipwreck on the Great Barrier Reef. The Dutch governor believed their story and provided them with shelter, food and clothing.

Sometime later another four small boats arrived in Timor; one carried Edward Edwards the Captain of HMS *Pandora* which had sunk off the Barrier Reef. The small boats also held the survivors of the *Pandora's* crew plus ten *Bounty* mutineers whom Captain Edwards had successfully captured. It was then that Bryant & Co. were discovered to be escaped convicts and imprisoned. They were not treated badly in prison on Timor but their luck changed for the worst when Captain Edwards successfully chartered another boat. The escaped convicts and the *Bounty* Mutineers were put in chains on the ship's deck open to the elements and given only enough food to prevent starvation as they sailed for the Cape of Good Hope.

On arrival at Batavia many on board had become ill with fever and were admitted to the Dutch East India Company hospital, The Bryant's son Emanuel died, followed 3 weeks later by his father William. At the Cape of Good Hope Mary with her daughter Charlotte and the remaining four convicts were handed over to the Commander of HMS *Gorgon*, John Parker, who was returning to England from Port Jackson. On this final leg of their journey back to England they received better treatment. Mary was given a cabin to nurse her ailing daughter but Charlotte didn't survive and was buried at sea.

When Mary and the remaining four convicts finally reached London they would have been expecting to face the gallows. Instead they found they had become something of celebrities and James Boswell took up their cause and they were pardoned.

After spending the summer in London in lodgings provided by Boswell, Mary decided to return to her family in Fowey. Boswell gave her a small annuity, which was cancelled by his family after his death in 1795. At this stage Mary disappears from the records.

During their epic voyage of 69 days the escapees found coal at Glenrock Lagoon near Newcastle, discovered many of the islands of the Barrier Reef and crossed the Arafura Sea. William Bryant's voyage of 3,250 miles to Timor is recognised as one of the most incredible ever made in an open boat and has come to rank alongside that of fellow Cornishman William Bligh who navigated 4,200 miles in an open boat after the Bounty mutiny.



### August

16<sup>th</sup> Brian Halson  
16<sup>th</sup> Valerie Davies  
26<sup>th</sup> Lee De Bono

### September

2<sup>nd</sup> Trevor Jones  
3<sup>rd</sup> Andrew Pacey  
7<sup>th</sup> Malcolm Burns  
14<sup>th</sup> Sharon Black  
15<sup>th</sup> Joy Pinkerton  
18<sup>th</sup> Norman Hannah  
20<sup>th</sup> Judy Aubin  
30<sup>th</sup> Gary Ballhouse

### October

10<sup>th</sup> Logan Cherry  
22<sup>nd</sup> Brittany Pacey  
29<sup>th</sup> Neil Pacey  
29<sup>th</sup> John Green



Your Editor, Judy Aubin

*Dates for your Diary:*

### We hope you can join us for our next General Meeting

**WHEN:** Monday 21st October

**WHERE:** Community Hall,  
Anzac Pde. Teralba

**TIME:** 10am for 10.30 am start  
Tea/Coffee on arrival

**GUEST SPEAKER:**  
Janece McDonald

**TOPIC:** Bee Keeping in the Hunter.

**COST:** \$7 (includes lucky door prize)

It would be appreciated if you would bring along a **small** plate of finger food, savoury or sweet, to share over lunch. Looking forward to seeing you there!

## Outing, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2019

### A car pooling visit to Historic Alison Homestead



#### 1 Cape Road, Wyong

Situated on the first land grant in the Wyong area (1825) Alison homestead incorporates a Museum with a wide range of memorabilia. Outbuildings display examples of machinery from the early days and include a furnished Slab Hut part of the Yarramalong Public School of 1872.

We will meet at 10.30am at the Wyong Milk Factory Café for morning tea (see directions below) or for the tour only at 11.30am at the Homestead. Our tour will be followed by a light lunch of mixed sandwiches and pavlova in either their indoor or outdoor seating areas and will be complimentary for our HV Chapter members and \$15 for visitors.

**Directions:** From Belmont or Maitland join the M1 motorway and exit at Sparks Road then turn right passing over the M1. Turn left onto Hue Hue Rd for about 6 kms to Yarramalong Rd. Turn left passing over the M1 again onto Alison Rd and left into Cape Rd to the Homestead or right down the hill to the Wyong Milk Factory. The Cafe has plenty of indoor and outdoor tables for morning tea. Then possibly a visit to the small Chocolate Factory next door?? **See maps below**

Contact Phil on 0417543563 for further details and car pooling.

**Final numbers needed by 6<sup>th</sup> September.**

### VISIT TO STATE LIBRARY OF NSW

**Monday, 4th November**

At the last meeting Delma mentioned the interesting article on the front page of the last issue of FOUNDERS - the history of the first Sydney cemetery 1820-1888.

Known as the Sandhills, Brickfield or Devonshire Street Cemetery it is thought that there had been at least 30,000 internments there including many early settlers and 46 known convicts. The cemetery closed in 1901 to make way for the building of Central Railway Station and graves were moved to other Sydney cemeteries.

**Delma and others have expressed interest in travelling to the State Library of NSW to view their display “WELCOME TO DEAD CENTRAL” and would welcome the company of all interested members and friends.**

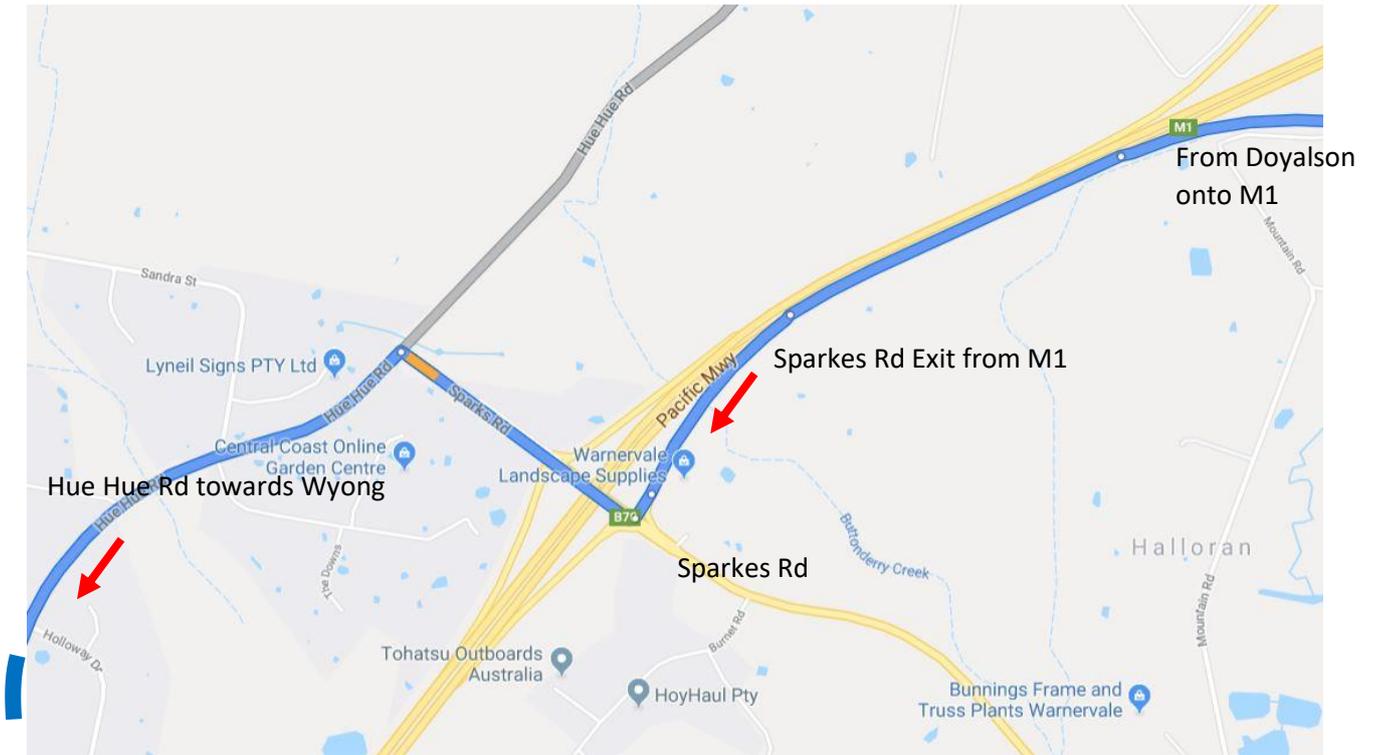
It was suggested that we travel to Sydney by train – the 7.30am from Broadmeadow and meet if possible in the 3<sup>rd</sup> carriage. Otherwise we could catch up at Central before training it to Martin Place, or meet at the Library in Macquarie Street.



If we don't know we should never *assume*.  
It could make an *ass* out of *u* and *me* !!



From Maitland



Approx 6km

