

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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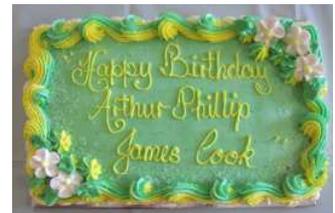


The Coal River Bulletin

Newsletter 17 – October/November 2010

The focus of our meeting on the 10th October was two-fold:

- to acknowledge all Sailors who were part of the First Fleet
- to celebrate the birthdays of Arthur Phillip on October 13th and James Cook on October 27th



WELCOME!

We were delighted to welcome to the meeting the National President of the Fellowship of First Fleeters, John Haxton – it was great to have John come along as it was the first opportunity for many to meet him face to face. It was a pleasure to see Phil Alexander too - Phil has been a member of our Chapter for a long time, but has previously had other commitments on a Monday. We were also happy to greet first timers John Hogan, Carole Goldsworthy and her partner Douglas.

Our President Barbara and Secretary Judith were not able to join us today due to family concerns so hope we didn't appear too disorganised at this meeting. Some of us were wearing two hats - I'm sure you can identify with this - sometimes we have difficulty coping with only one hat!

In keeping with the theme of the morning our Secretary, Yvonne, had prepared badges with the names and images of the ships of the First Fleet. We clipped these on to show in which ship our ancestors sailed on that long voyage.

We received an apology from today's Guest Speaker who was not well - hope you are on the mend Elizabeth. Warren Hislop, a great friend of our Chapter, happily presented 'titbits' on the life of Arthur Phillip, both at home in England and in the new Colony of NSW. We appreciated Warren 'filling the breach' and sharing his wide knowledge. His topic was most appropriate!

Barbara and Judith supplied the special birthday cake for Arthur Phillip and James Cook and John Haxton did the honours of cutting it before we enjoyed chatting over a light lunch.





Birthdays



There are also other famous (?infamous) members of our Chapter who are celebrating their birthdays before the end of this year

Greetings & best wishes to:

Judith Pepper: October 28
 Rhondda Glass: October 29
 Noelene Snowden: November 1
 John Brooker: November 9
 Barbara Turner: December 1
 Shirley Anderson: December 20
 Cynthia Huggup: December 22
 Bruce Agland: December 26



Your invitation to our Christmas Meeting and Luncheon

at

“Monets” Restaurant

in the historic Commandants Cottage
 Watt Street, Newcastle

on

Monday 13th December

10 am for 10.30am meeting
 Coffee & Tea on arrival

Luncheon served about 12.30pm

Cost \$16.00

Pay for own drinks
 BYO – no corkage charge

Your Choice of Menu

Roast turkey, ham & cranberry sauce
 Grilled Perch, Lemon Sauce & summer salad

Plum pudding
 Pavlova

Bookings and payment essential before November 13th

If you have not booked and would like to attend please ring Noelene on 49 593702, or on her Mobile 040 3668536. SMS welcome.

If you missed paying at the October meeting please post cheque to our treasurer

Judy Pepper

19 Bell Street, Speers Point. 2284.

**Plenty of parking in the grounds of James Fletcher Hospital: \$4 per car.
 Car pooling could be a good idea!**

Many thanks for your donations to the
Christmas Raffle.

There will be three prizes containing an *interesting* variety of goodies!



Your Editor, Judy



FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday, November 15th

At last -the long awaited visit to the historic
Goat Island in Sydney Harbour.

We are looking forward to 11 members from the South Coast, Central Coast and Southern Highlands Chapters joining us - all in all 33 people have been booked in.

A reminder of the arrangements for our visitors: We will all meet at the Commissioners Steps, near Cadman's Cottage, at Circular Quay by 10.15am.

For the Hunter Chapter members our train departs Newcastle 6.35am, Broadmeadow at 6.45am, Cardiff 6.52am, Fassifern at 7.03am, Wyong at 7.38am. For those who can board in the number one carriage of the train please do so.

At Central we will catch the city circle train to the Quay. If all goes to plan there should be time to grab a take-away coffee at the Quay while Noelene collects our tickets!



It was agreed that we should once again approach the Council for a site on the Newcastle Foreshore to erect our FFF stall on Australia Day. We created a lot of interest last year. More details at the December meeting - this could be your first FF Diary entry for 2011!



Victoria Barracks: 9th September 2010



Original Officer's Quarters

It was great to have members from the Central and South Coast Chapters join us for another most interesting and enjoyable outing.



Volunteer Guides greeted us at the Barracks Entrance Gate and we were offered a very welcome cup of tea or coffee. This was followed by a pleasant surprise – the Army Band members are off to Afghanistan next week would be entertaining us. The timing for our visit was spot on as the Band only plays every 6 weeks or so!

When the band marched onto the oval through the Royal Engineers Arch they certainly got our toes tapping and the piper who is on exchange was an added bonus.



We were then divided into small groups of 4 or 5 and with our guides enjoyed a two hour comprehensive tour of the 32 acres. I'm sure we were all impressed by the extent of the complex, its beautiful sandstone buildings and long history.

Building commenced in 1841 using local sandstone and imported Welsh slate for the roof. It was built to house 650 men and was completed in 1848. The many buildings throughout the grounds included Officer's quarters, hospital, chapel, court room, prison, drill and mess halls and kitchens.

The barracks were first occupied by the 11th (Nthn Devonshire) Regiment of Foot and the English troops vacated in 1870. During WWI and WWII the barracks were the Administrative Headquarters of the Australian Forces.

We concluded our visit with a wander through the Barracks Museum which is housed in the former Military Prison.

Adjacent to the Barracks complex is the Paddington Town Hall and across the road is the 'PADDO' RSL where we enjoyed lunch. Beside the Town Hall is the site of the old water cistern which has been creatively transformed into a two level park. This has retained the integrity of the cistern remains while becoming a pleasant retreat in the heart of the busy suburb.



Did you know?

** The main barracks building is 742ft long, approximately 100ft shorter than the Titanic.

** The main barracks is the largest stone building still in use in the Southern Hemisphere.

** The Wallabies use the Barracks Oval for training sessions prior to Test Matches played in Sydney.



MACQUARIE PIER

A BRIEF HISTORY OF NOBBY'S BREAK WALL NEWCASTLE

In June 1801, Lt. Colonel William Paterson, with two other officers, a party of marines and a gang of convicts arrived at Coal River to work the coal, extract lime from the abundant shells in the area and exploit the cedar. When the senior officers left, the settlement struggled under inexperienced leadership and it was closed in 1802.

Another convict outpost was re-established in 1804 as a designated place of secondary punishment. Coal mining had the dual value of being both dangerous and punishing work while also producing a potentially valuable resource for the new colony. The first commercial profit in the fledging Colony of NSW was made at Coal River: £2/10/-

Governor Macquarie re-named the settlement 'Newcastle' after the great coal Port in England. The penal colony closed in the early 1820's when the majority of convicts were sent to Port Macquarie. However a small workforce remained to continue mining coal and to work on the break wall to join the mainland to Nobby's island. A break wall was essential to provide a safe passage into the treacherous harbour where coal, lime and timber were loaded for export.



The construction was a huge undertaking and Governor Macquarie showed great interest in this project and laid the foundation stone to commence the work on the 5th August 1818 at 4pm. He visited the area three times and Captain Wallis named the breakwater *Macquarie Pier* after him.

Construction commenced in 1818 (from the mainland side) using convict labour under the command of Captain Wallis. The stone fill was quarried from the Fort Scratchley area (then named Signal Hill). Work was abandoned five years later due to financial constraints and the pier only extended halfway to Nobby's Island.

In 1836 work on the pier recommenced under the command of Captain G. Barney and this time Nobby's Island was quarried for rock. The pier was finally connected and completed in 1846.

The foresight to construct such a break wall 192 years ago was honoured with the unveiling of a commemorative plaque at Nobby's surf club. This plaque will be laid where the Macquarie pier stonework began. Together with the Great North Road, Nobby's break wall is one of the largest convict constructions in New South Wales.



HER EXCELLENCY, PROFESSOR MARIE BASHIR,
GOVERNOR OF NSW
UNVEILED THE MEMORIAL PLAQUE ON
4TH AUGUST, 2010 AT 4PM