

Cam introduces Phillip Sullivan for traditional welcome –

Phillip 'I think he might be telling us something – he might be to hot with that blanket on.'

Minute silence

'Got to watch ourselves because we have the Captain of the nsw fire brigade here'

'We are here to celebrate the life of a wonderful man.'

It's a big stone hey, a beautiful stone? It represents something doesn't it? Give it 200 years and I reckon it will still be here. What a legacy to leave behind. You can some see what a man like Fred done. We all know what he done – he was an eye doctor. He come fix up eyes and I can see my old aunties here in the front – and know doubt he fixed up there eyes.'

'But I don't think that was the real deal about Fred. It was, but ... it was good for him to go and show people that you can do things practical, you can give a person the ability to see with their own physical eye – to see colour, to see things moving, actually see it with their physical eyes. But I think the deal about our old mate, and that is what he was to us, he still is our old mate, is the unseen thing, the spiritual eye. Because as the world is today, it is all about what we see with our eye and what we can gain with it. It never was with Fred. Because he went amongst our mob and he didn't see an old black woman sitting down, or an old African woman sitting down or an old white woman sitting down he would just see an old woman sitting down, or an old man sitting down and that is why persons like myself, young people who don't know much about him but still talk a lot about him because he had this awesome thing about him, about seeing people with his spiritual eye. And that he'd fix up the natural eye. And what captivated a person like me that never met him is that he cared for people. There is no law in the world that you can't care for people. No law in the world is written that you can't love anybody, there is no law in this whole wide universe to say that you can't give respect to somebody. And that is exactly what he gave to us, he showed us that black and white fellas, young and old them attributes. And I believe they only come from one place – that's where it comes from – up there. Values that are passed down through the ages, and he just grabbed onto them. Us mob do the same, that's our attributes, we care, we share, we respect eachother. We don't see things with our natural eye, we see them with our spiritual eye, with our heart. And I think that if we are to leave here with anything today it is that yes, he was an eye doctor but he was a very special eye doctor because he saw things with his spiritual eye, and that is why he went out and done his work. He did it, he didn't sit back and write a paper about it, he went out and did it. And so today we honour him for that, we come from all over the place – us mob here, we come under an old coolabah tree – and that was his wish.

Buried under a coolabah tree, under the shade of a coolabah tree. So we come here today and we give him honour because he put us first. He put my old aunties first, he put us all first.

Explanation of smoking ceremony (Melissa)

Introduction of Frank Brennan

Frank Brennan: As Jilpia (surname) said on the way here, 'we are much happier than we were this time 13 years ago'. You remember we came here to this place for the burial of Fred after a big state funeral at the cathedral in Sydney. There is another big state funeral on there in Sydney today, at the opera house, a different sort of occasion. But this is a big broad country and we are very happy to be remembering Fred.

Introduction

'People right around the country are with us here is spirit 13 years on.'

Family: John, daughter Kate, Anna, Ruth, Rosa, Cam, Emma.

'Fred it is great that we can all gather here in this place 13 years on, we have crossed many dry gullies, but there have been the cleansing rains. And we are giving thanks for the blessings.'

'We come home to this place to bless you and to thank you for all that you have given us.'

Explanation of billy sprinkling and leaves.

Engonia mob and family take blanket off

Cam back to do intros.

Sally Davies, representing Bourke council as deputy mayor.

Sally Davies 'Fred is known to many people in Bourke and surrounding villages as the man who turned on the lights. Through his love and dedication to the eye care of so many people Fred was able to perform miracles and for that we as a small community among many are very appreciative. Fred's ability to interact with all people and his get the job done attitude is what made him so amazing and in turn, so highly respected. We as a community and as a nation are very fortunate to have Fred's vision continued through the work of the eye team.'

'This new sculpture will bring new life and further recognition to the grave of an incredible man.'

Majorie – old woman who will come up with sisters to deliver poem.

Pat – from Bourke hospital, now down in Stockton. Just celebrated 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Poem

Cam: 'The beauty of being thirteen years on is that you get to see what sort of work has been done in that time and one of the best things that has happened over the past decade or so is that fact that The Fred Hollows Foundation has gone from strength doing eye work not just in Australia but around the world.'

Introduces Brian Doolan.

"He is working with the Hollows Foundation to keep the good work that Fred and Gabi and many of the people around this rock here today got started years ago."

Brian: "It is an honour to be here to represent The Fred Hollows Foundation. I would give Fred a report card on what The Foundation has been doing but I think he would get out of that hole and kick me in the bum and say 'work harder'. But it has been an amazing journey for The Fred Hollows Foundation. We can sit here acknowledge that fact that there is well over a million people in the world who can see because of the work that Fred started and because of the work that The Foundation carries on. I can say to you that one day someone is going to send me a bill for the job that I have got, because it is a real privilege. I get to go to all of these countries, like south Africa and Eritrea and Kenya and Pakistan, across to Vietnam and China and Cambodia and I see the work of Dr Phuc in Vietnam, I see the work of Rubina Gillani in Pakistan, I see Fiki and her group down in South Africa, I see Dr (Goyta) and the fantastic work that people that are carrying on that vision in Eritrea. I see Sanduk Ruit in Nepal – a man that has probably done more cataract operations than anyone on the face of the planet.

I see all of those people and I get to say then .. I then, on behalf of all them get to represent the Fred Hollows Foundation. I can't put into words the privilege that that is and I find it hard to describe to you just how much that this is happening because of what Fred started. I say to you only this, there are a lot of people that, like you, are following the example that Fred set. And they are doing nothing less than creating miracles everyday. And thanks Fred for kicking us, for pushing us, and for showing us that's possible.

**BRIAN FINISHES**

Cam thanks Brian and introduces Gabi. "I'm sure one or two of you have spoken to Gabi at some stage, and are aware that Gabi can speak at length. Before I let that happen I just thought I might look around and see if there was anyone else who had something to say – because this isn't about anybody except it is about everybody here.

William Bates.

My name is William Bates and I'm from way down south, at Wilcannia – the mutawingi country. It is good to the family again, I was quite excited when I got the letter from Gabi to invite us up here to Bourke. I'd like to have a dollar for every time I passed Fred here over the years, coming to Bourke when I was part of the regional council attached to ATSIC and I worked with Philip and a lot of the people around here knows me.

Sitting over there is my missus Norma and me son Smacker and the fella sitting on his haunches in the middle helped carve that rock over there, Badger Bates. The one over there. The one with the camera over there is my daughter Angela – she is with SBS television, the program Living Black. When she found out about it she kept tormenting me about it, so I rang up Brian and asked if she could have permission to come out and film it, and I thankyou for that. She will be able to tell everyone when it goes to air. I think it is quite a good program.

As I said I am from down south, and most importantly, we are from the mutawingi country, one of the first national parks in NSW to be handed back to the Aboriginal people, and we bring our blessings and our greetings to everyone up here, and especially to Fred. I first met him in Wilcannia around the early 70s I think it was, and said what you is an eye doctor, and he said 'yeah'. He come there quite a lot, as he did around the world, to help people and fix their eyes. I suppose he is like our god out in that country of wullawara, and he comes from up there too.

It is good to be back here. I was proud to be one of the pall bearers at the funeral. As I said, I've had a lot to do with Fred but one of I suppose the funnier things that I've had with him was in the middle 70s. I asked him if he was an eye doctor and he said yes. And I said 'what else can you do? Can you fix knees?' He said "We'll see, what do you want done?" I said "I want the cartilage taken out." So the next time I heard from him was a letter from the hospital in the north of Sydney there, anyway he sat me up there and they took me cartilage out. And I've still got a bandage on it. It breaks down every now and then. That is what happens when you get silly things done I suppose.

But anyway it is good to be here today. We came up the river today and I wished he'd have told us, from looking up there, what the road was like. Then I could have went round through Cobar. I'll certainly go back that way. Once again I think it is good to see everyone here. I don't know if Badger wants to say anything or not, about that stone, I kept at him until he come up here because he was one of the people that carved that stone, and there is a story attached to it. He might just explain that to us.

Badger

Hello, my name is Badger Bates. Like Philip said before, I used to be a national parks officer years ago. For 21 years and then an old fella by the name of Laurence Beck came to Broken Hill to do memorial things there for Fred. They wanted me to be the local artist and I said "No, I'm just a boomerang maker from Wilcannia" and the bloke said no the stone is just a little bit harder than wood, so you can do it. And I done it and also with Fred, I met him in Wilcannia, like William said, years ago and he was a great man but also to me, Fred done a lot for me in my life – he is still with me when I carve stone. He made me carve stone and from that day on I never looked back. I put a bit of carving on this stone, around the other side, and it means water hole, kangaroo tracks and emu tracks and that. It was an honour to meet Fred and to be invited up here today by Gabi, thankyou very much.

Cam

I think this rock here, that Andreas (who is a mad Austrian who is around here somewhere) has picked up from some sheepfield down near Tumut, he has pulled it out of someones garden – heather's garden, just give me a second, and it has been brought up here.

I think it is a fantastic thing because as a young man Fred used to do a lot of climbing in New Zealand and he seemed to believe that as kids we should do a lot of climbing. And whenever we would stop by the side of the road at a trig point or a survey point or a wall or a fence or something he would have us climbing up it. And that is why this bit of rock over here by the camera was such a lovely thing to have here – but this one here as well. It is a bit more alive. The kids can come here and climb on it, and sit on it, and you can have a guess about what you think it looks like most, but I think it is a much more living bit of rock than the one that used to be here.

Gabi

I think this rock is just the most amazing piece of stone. I love what Badger and you mob did, that beautiful sculpture over there. We love that one. It is just so nice, they go together so well.

To me the polishing of the stone represents the polishing of the lenses.

To me it is very special that those names (Fred and Dad) are still on that rock. Emma played a very big part in deciding where they would go.

References Heather and Gary for donation of rock.

The other grave was only ever meant to be temporary.

There are a lot of people who are thinking of us today.

Ian Cameron – Bourke medical mob

I was here here when Fred did his first eye clinic, when he first came out of the big city. I'd dropped out of uni. I guess one of the things about being here then when I dropped out of uni was that I was supposed to be doing 40 hours a week of anatomy, bio-chemistry and physiology and at home I had a whole lot of people Fred Hollows and Max Camian???and a whole stack of other people who were all doing proper medicine and I think that is part of the thing about Fred.

People remember the larrikinism, running out to north bourke and having a few drinks and then Gabi coming and picking people up. But people forget that it was actually built on incredibly hard work. He was a doctor first and his medicine was the best in the world. He was an epideemiologist?? there was drinking, there was no food, there was no running, there was no laughing until everything was written up. People forget that it was proper medicine. I remember on this day, or a couple of days later, thirteen years ago talking to Paul Torzillo and we were saying that hero is sort of a dirty word in Australia and just to continue Frank Brennan's thing there are places you can find heroes and you find them under the coolabah tree in Bourke, not at the opera house.

But hero is sort of dirty word in Australia, but Fred was a true hero and he made that through work and that was the important thing, that was the important thing for the medical people.

Gabi- Reg Murry

Reg used to play a lot of chess with Fred. Reg worked with us on the trachoma program the whole time. He was the most amazing person. Guess who turned up here first yesterday? It was Rego – he was never late for Fred – he kept the show on the road.

Bruce

Taught Gabi to ride in pony club when she was eight or nine.

We were devastated when Fred passed away. We knew how ill he actually was. We have a poetry night every few months up the valley from where we live and we were having a poetry night this particular night and I organized with Gabi a speaker phone hook up to a phone besides Fred's bed. And I had just written what I considered a good poem about Australia day and flying the flag. So there we are at a restaurant with about 40 or 50 people in it and I recited the Australia Day poem over the telephone to Fred on his bed at Farnham House, and back came the usually croaky voice 'good on ya mate'. And another group of people were touched by Fred. And I guess by the sound of me I'm touched by Fred.

Tom Keneally

Well Fred thought I was a bit of a wus, and how right he was. I had none of his front, none of his capacity to bamboozle governments, I wish he had. I wish he was still here. Our commonwealth, as good a place as it is, compared to other various commonwealths and places around the earth, would be even better,

more splendid, less compromised, if he were here to bash on doors. At his mass, his state mass, said by the revered Frank, a woman approached me who was a journalist for the magazine 'Who' and she said he was upset with the fact that I had called him 'a wild colonial boy of surgery'. He was professionally insulted because he was a great surgeon in world terms. We think he was a world class larrikin but he was also a world class doctor. His literary biographer, from Oxford University, was in Sydney at the time of his death, writing his medical biography, as distinct from his biography of deeds. So this woman said that he said 'That bloody Keneally has got me all wrong' but then she told me the story that he immediately told her afterwards that an administrator came and urged him to join in a voluntary effort to reduce use of bandages to 80% of what the usage was now. And he said 'I threw the bastard down the stairwell.' So he wasn't a wild colonial boy at all – were you Fred? Haha. But he was also a great doctor as well. I think today, in Asmara, they are, I know, turning out lenses to European certification level. Lenses that cost, if they are manufactured by Americans or Europeans, cost a hundred and thirty or more dollars, they are turning them out for seven dollars and everyone of the canisters they put them into in Asmara, in Eritrea has Fred's mug on it. So the face, even the visage of Fred, is everywhere in the world and you have still got us scared Fred, and we are doing our best son, but if only you were here to be our Gordon Tallis and break down all the doors like you once did, we would be much better.

Frank

I would like to thank on your behalf Gabi, Cam, Emma, Rosa and Ruth for inviting us today and inviting us into your family so intimately on this occasion. As they sprinkle the rock lets pray a blessing in thanks for fred. God stuff

You give us the vision to see that there need be no division between rich and poor, black and white those who are different. Keep us always strong, in your image and in the way of this rock, may we be solid as we go fourth in our world and we ask gods blessing on all of us, in the name of the father and of the son and the holy spirit.

Gabi thanks Virginia –she is the person that keep all of our memories of Fred in order.