



# North Head Sanctuary Foundation

## Custodians of North Head

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Newsletter No 3 March 2016

### More hands needed.

#### Please Help Clean Up North Head

Let's share the load. A few people have already volunteered to help Clean Up North Head, but we need more.

If you can help, even for an hour, please come at any time between 9am and 1pm on Sunday 6 March.

Register at the Gatehouse arch, at the Trust's site off North Head Scenic Drive.

Please wear closed shoes, bring a hat, drinks and insect repellent. Bags & gloves supplied.

For more information, contact Judy Lambert (0427 217 580 or email: [tswombat@optusnet.com.au](mailto:tswombat@optusnet.com.au)).

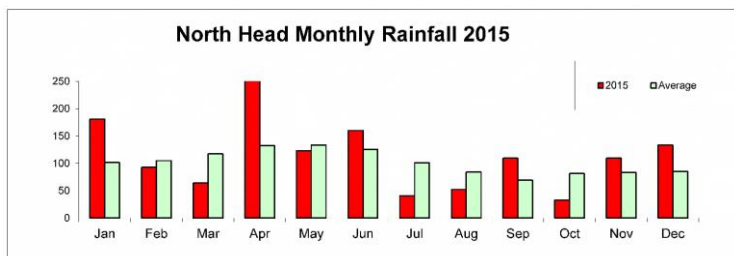
### Native Plant Nursery

If you would like to join us any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and 12noon, planting and removing weeds just turn up or email: [northhead@fastmail.com.au](mailto:northhead@fastmail.com.au).

### The North Head Rain Gauge

Geoff Lambert

It had always been my feeling that North Head, which juts out high above the ocean, was likely to receive more rain than areas even slightly inland. Well - it isn't true. We installed a rain gauge about 6 years ago and now have enough data to show that North Head receives pretty much the same rainfall as nearby places. The Army managed - or should I say mismanaged - a rain gauge for many years, but their records turned out to be worthless. There also used to be a BOM gauge in Manly, but this was decommissioned many decades ago. Therefore, in the chart(s) below, the average (or "expected") rainfall for North Head has been tied back to the Observatory Hill gauge, for which we have 160 years of records. Last year was a little bit above average at 1400 mm, but you can see that this was mainly the result of some very heavy falls concentrated over short periods. As usual, the wettest months were in autumn, but December was also unusually wet. The December wet burst continued into January but has now come to an abrupt stop. Last year was also our warmest year on record. So, if you were wondering why the North Head vegetation seems to have gone berserk – now you know.



### Education Room - Bandicoot Heaven

Our community education room is open 10am to 4pm Saturdays and Sundays in Building 20. We'd welcome some new volunteers to help staff Bandicoot Heaven. If interested, please contact Judy Lambert at [tswombat@optusnet.com.au](mailto:tswombat@optusnet.com.au).

### The thistle saga in four parts - Part 2

Peter Macinnis



Thistles, St Barbara's Avenue, a known infestation site.

In just four years, thistles were so common in Tasmania that the *Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate* newspaper asked "... those who have any interest in fields or gardens to use some diligence in destroying them." To explain the urgency, an 1846 Victorian comment is worth looking at here:

*Another species of thistle ... produces about 100 heads, each containing from 300 to 400 seeds. Suppose we say that these thistles produce at a medium only 80 heads; and that each contains only 300 seeds, the first crop from, these would amount to 24,000. Let these be sown, and their produce will amount to 546 millions. Sow these, and their produce, will be 13,824,000,000,000 ... and a single crop from these, which is only the third years' growth, would amount to 331,776,000,000,000,000; the fourth years' growth will amount 7,962,624,000,000,000,000 ... more than sufficient to stock not only the surface of the whole earth, but all the planets in the solar system, so that no other plant or vegetable could grow, allowing but the space of one square foot for each plant.*

— *Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate*, 25 April 1846, 4.

In March 1832, a correspondent to the *Hobart Town Courier* called for urgent action. The government had to set as many convicts as were needed to wipe the weed out.

*It is not as yet in seed, and close attention for 2 or 3 years in this manner, would, I trust, save the whole island from certain evil, the extent and injury of which is scarcely to be calculated.*

—*The Hobart Town Courier*, 3 March 1832, 2.

Well, that didn't happen, and in 1841, the *Hobart Town Advertiser* suggested a new tool to its readers — and one wonders if the inventor of the tool was the same Mr Gordon who sowed the first thistle seeds.

*... the kind of hoe or spud used by Mr. Gordon, and well adapted for the purpose, as it serves also as a walking stick. It is about three inches wide, made strong, and with a staff made conveniently heavy. It is a good weapon also for snakes, or rather against these intruding reptiles.*

— Quoted in *The Courier (Hobart)*, 8 January 1841, 2

But why had a Geelong newspaper been concerned? We will come to that next.

### Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

#### The Prussen – Smallpox – part two



**The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser**  
Saturday 15 January 1887

#### "The Prussen. Smallpox Cases

The first death which has yet occurred amongst the quarantined persons took place near the close of last week, when William Mills, a young man of 22, and a passenger, fell a victim to the disease. Shortly after death the remains were placed in quicklime, and interred without delay. On Saturday no fresh case of any sort was remarked, but the man Walter Funnell, 21, whose case was very serious, and who was the second person of those detained at North Head who developed smallpox, succumbed to the disease at 4.30 a.m., being the thirteenth day of his illness.

On Monday the sanitary report stood as follows: — 76 cases, 3 deaths, 24 cases under observation, making a total of 103 persons out of the 434 who arrived by the ship. On Tuesday three deaths took place, namely, those of Giacometti Portesano, 40, Italian, unvaccinated, who died on the 14th day of his illness; and Thomas Jenkins,

32, Welshman, unvaccinated; and Mrs. Moore, 25, who had one bad scar of vaccination performed in infancy



Note: Gravestone shows the correct name for Partesana Gervasio who died on 11 January 1887 And he was 31, not 40 years old.



Erected by Tom Moore, memory of his loving wife Mary who died Jan 11 1887, added 26 years (not 25)  
*Not lost but gone before*