



North Head Sanctuary Foundation

Custodians of North Head

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North Head Project

8 December 2017-18 February 2018

Manly Art Gallery will be showcasing the works of ten artists with their responses to North Head. The artists include Nick Hollo and Julie Nettleton. Please go and see the exhibition. It will be well worth it.

North Head Discovery Day

Sun 21 January 2018, 10am – 4pm

Special community Discovery Day discovering nature and history of North Head. It's also a 21st birthday celebration. More information when the program is released.

Tears at North Fort

Geoff Lambert



On Wednesday 15th November, just as the SSM results were coming in, the Army took away the guns and other artillery memorabilia from North Fort. They will go into storage at Bandiana on the Murray River near Albury, until the Army opens its new museum at Puckapunyal near Seymour timed to be in 2022. It was an extremely emotional and sad day for the team of restoration volunteers who have worked for so many years on the restoration project. They were inconsolable.

Native Plant Nursery

We have a lot of planting, weeding and maintenance to do looking after all our areas which were suffering the effects of the dry weather.

If you would like to join us on any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and 12 noon, just turn up or email: northhead@fastmail.com.au. The Nursery will be closed between Christmas & New Year.

Education Room - Bandicoot Heaven

Our community education room is open 10am to 4pm Saturdays and Sundays in Building 20. Exceptions are Christmas Day and new Year's Day, but we will be open on Boxing Day.

The Naming of Things

Peter Macinnis

In Russia, the *Nomenclatura* are all-powerful despots, and by an odd coincidence, the laws of nomenclature are a bit despotic as well. For example, scientists call a "platypus" *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*, and our "echidna" is officially *Tachyglossus aculeatus*, raising the question: why is it so?

There are lots of rules for giving names correctly: each scientific name is made of two parts, the genus and the species (unless there is a third name, a subspecies name as well, but we can ignore that matter, because it does not apply here).

Unrelated animals may not share the same genus name, and the first bestowal (so long as it is done by the rules) takes precedence. That is why Platypus, having been given first to a beetle and later to the Australian mammal, can only mean the beetle, for scientists. The "water mole's" name had to change.



AUSTRALIAN WATER MOLE
(ORNITHORHYNCHUS ANATINUS)
John Van Gelder, 1840s

In 1860, George Bennett had the new name for the platypus in his *Gatherings of a Naturalist*.

Australia's other monotreme, which we stubbornly call the echidna was first given the name *Myrmecophaga* in 1792. That was the name of a South American placental ant-eater, but our spiny monotreme is biologically very different.

A clever French scientist, Georges Cuvier suggested saving the day by calling it *Echidna*, the name of a serpent in Greek mythology. Mythological names are fine, but Cuvier did not realise that this name had already been given twenty years earlier to a moray eel. So that name was a non-starter as well.



Bennett would have called 'Junior', who lives near 'Bandicoot Heaven', *Echidna hystrix*.

All this scientific hair-splitting mattered not one whit to the Australians, who had already adopted echidna and platypus as the common names, and we have stayed with them to this day. So, all good taxonomists know that if you give a new beast an already-used name, your name will go. They need to check carefully, first — or box clever.

In the 1960s, one of my teachers found a new genus of flower at Cooperook, and called it *Cooperookia*. Nobody, he said, would have used that as a genus name.

I suspect that *Montypythonoides* and *Thingodonta* got their names on the same principle, but we have an orb weaver spider living on the oval that probably got its name the same way. I had to ask a couple of experts, but they are sure I have a shot of a *Backbourkia*. The tentative ID rests on the way it sits, so I am after more shots



The 2017 UAV vegetation Survey

Geoff Lambert

On Thursday 2nd November, a team of people consisting of staff students and volunteers from the University of Sydney, the Australian Wildlife Conservancy and NHSF took part in the first official UAV (“drone”) survey of vegetation on North Head (picture). Two surveys were run: - one to “ground-proof” the results of NHSF’s five-year longitudinal study in the North Fort area following the prescribed burn of 2012 and; one to make “pre-burn” imagery of the proposed burn area south of the Crossfit Gym. The latter area was ground-surveyed in 2014, so the 2017 UAV survey also has a “ground-proofing” element to it. At both sites both visible-spectrum and a wide-spectrum imagery was acquired.

The preliminary results are most encouraging. The drones flew at 45 metres altitude and, with the cameras used, this gave us a ground resolution of about 5mm. This enables us to identify individual plants and to count and make measurements of canopy over the area. For instance, we can count the number of leaves on a Grass Tree. The images are “geo-referenced” so that we know the position of everything in the images and can import them into a Geographic Information System, then use the GIS to make a range of measurements.

We plan to conduct a further survey of the Crossfit area after the fire has occurred and periodically thereafter. We are very grateful to the Harbour Trust for its help in this survey and for granting us the permissions to fly the two aircraft over its property.

Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson



Photo by Simon Vanderveen taken 8 July 2017

“RUM AND INOCULATION”

“Returned Soldier’s Tribute

The returned soldiers, who, through the Repatriation Department, volunteered for service at the Quarantine Station, North Head, are now being discharged from duty. Some of them complain that they received only 10s a day, while returned soldiers who volunteered for similar work in Victoria and West Australia, they are informed, were paid as much as £1 a day. Men in New Zealand, they assert, also received a like remuneration as well as a bonus when the Dominion was declared clean. At North Head, the men state, they had to do all the heavy work of the station, such as unloading and stacking coal. When a ship came in with fresh patients they did the stretcher work between the shore and the sick ward. During rushes, as when the Medic came into port, they were also asked to do orderly work. Whenever a patient died these returned soldier assistants say they had to dig the grave, remove the body to the mortuary, and bury it. There were 45 of them altogether who volunteered. Out of that number only one contracted the influenza — and he was not inoculated. One of them also favors alcohol in the form of rum as a preventive against the disease. Before he went into the mortuary he was given a tot, and after he had finished the burial another. His opinion is that the authorities allowed him these as a preventive and not as a reward. All the time there were patients at the station, he says, alcohol came in from friends outside. The Italian reservists received whole casks and numerous bottles of wine from their compatriots in the State.”

Sun (Sydney, NSW: 1910 - 1954), Tuesday 28 January 1919, page 8

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