



# North Head Sanctuary Foundation Inc

## Custodians of North Head

ABN 97093480659 P.O. Box 896, Balgowlah, NSW 2093

northheadsanctuaryfoundation.org.au

email [northhead@fastmail.com.au](mailto:northhead@fastmail.com.au)

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### General Meeting – Saturday 7 March at 2pm

Our speaker is Indigenous knowledge-holder Aunty Fran Bodkin. Everyone welcome. Meeting will be held in Bandicoot Heaven, Building 20 on North Fort Road..

### Grevillea buxifolia



Aboriginal use of *Grevillea buxifolia* or Grey Spider Flower  
The nectar was collected by washing the flowers in water until it had turned honey coloured. It was then given to young children as an enervating drink.

The flowers of the Grey Spider Flower were often used by children to frighten other children or unaware parents, by placing flowers near to sleeping victims, and then waking them up with a cry of “look out for the big spider.”

This was usually only done when the children could escape quickly.

Text from Aunty Fran Bodkin, D’harawal Knowledgeholder

Photo Ian Evans

### Botanical cards- New & Old

Judy Lambert

Our award-winning botanic artist Julie Holcombe has produced two new card designs.

These are available, along with many previous cards, at our community information room, Bandicoot Heaven.



*Erythrorchis cassythoides*  
Black Bootlace Orchid



*Lambertia formosa*  
Mountain devil

### Education Room - Bandicoot Heaven

Our community education room is open 10am to 4pm Saturdays and Sundays in Building 20. Call in, say hello and have a look at our displays.

Maybe you would like to learn about volunteering in our education room. Ask one of volunteers or contact Judy Lambert at [twsombat@iinet.net.au](mailto:twsombat@iinet.net.au)

### Native Plant Nursery

You are welcome to join us any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and 12noon to help with the planting, weed removal or maintenance. We have huge piles of mulch to spread on the Old Oval and elsewhere. Help is always appreciated.

For more details email [northhead@fastmail.com.au](mailto:northhead@fastmail.com.au)

Or just turn up and ask for Jenny, phone 0414735350.

### Invasion Day ceremony on North Head

Geoff Lambert

For some years now, the Indigenous communities of the Sydney area have held a sunrise ceremony on North Head on the 26th of January each year. This alternative Australia Day ceremony was broadcast live on ICTV, SBS and Channel 10 – you can probably find a podcast somewhere.

The smoking ceremony was conducted by Uncle Dennis Foley. Dennis was on the NHSF Committee for many years until he took up an academic position in Canberra. There were a series of panel discussions (with participants perched on stools with Sydney Heads as a backdrop) interspersed with singing and dancing.



### Editor’s note

Articles or photos welcomed.

If you would like to receive a copy of our e-newsletter, please email [northhead@fastmail.com.au](mailto:northhead@fastmail.com.au)

## Independent review of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

“The Australian Government is conducting an independent review of the Harbour Trust and its legislative, financial and governance arrangements. With the Harbour Trust now approaching 20 years old, the review is an opportunity to take stock and ensure that arrangements are fit for the future.”

There is another public forum on 18 February from 6pm to 8pm at Pullman Sydney Hyde Park. Registrations required. For more details see <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/independent-review-of-the-sydney-harbour-federation-trust-public-forum-tickets-86618176297>

## 2019 Rainfall Statistics

Geoff Lambert

NHSF has its own pluviometer, established in 2009, as part of our effort to monitor and restore Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub, to aid the NHSF Nursery in its watering regime and to model water flow and availability in the Hanging Swamp. This continues a (rather haphazard) tradition established by the Army and continued by Sydney Water at its STP in the days of on-shore discharge at Bluefish. By tradition, Australian rain gauges are meant to be read at 9am every day by postmasters, postmistresses or farmers' wives! Legend has it that this tradition was begun by Clement Wragge (also sometimes called “Inclement Wragge”), the world's first Government Meteorologist, who operated out of Innisfail in Queensland – Australia's wettest place. He was a very strange person. His greatest claim to fame was that he began the tradition of naming cyclones. Clement figured that farmers' wives were the best people to read rain gauges on a consistent basis – it would be part of their morning chores after getting hubby off to work behind the plough and the kiddies off to school. On North Head we can't arrange for a daily 9 AM reading by a farmer's wife, but we do like to read it as often as possible. The chart shows the results from 2019.

As you can see, March and June were exceptionally wet months- each with about 3 times the normal rainfall. This had some interesting effects on post-fire regrowth.

Kate the Botanist noted two distinct height classes in several species. Note that there was no rain in August and December and only 3mm in October. This is the first year in which we have seen months like these.

## Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

Evening News (Sydney, NSW:1869-1931), 22 March 1900  
“THE PLAGUE. BURIAL OF PEPPER AND HEATON. TWENTY-NINE CASES AND TEN DEATHS TO DATE. The bodies of the latest victims of the plague — Sydney Cecil Pepper and Vincent Heaton — were buried last evening at the Quarantine Station Cemetery, Spring Cove, in graves numbered 57 and 58 respectively. The same precautions against danger of infection were observed as in the former interments, the bodies being saturated with disinfectants; the coffins swathed in disinfected cloths, etc. At the time of Fleming's attack twenty-nine cases had been reported, ten of which have proved fatal, while recovery has only taken place in one instance. The remainder are still ill. About half a dozen suspicious cases were investigated yesterday, but one of which — that already reported at Balmain — proved to be plague. The number of persons inoculated yesterday was 1051, bringing the total to date up to 3323. Dr. Thompson last night decided to remove the inoculating quarters to the old Exhibition Building, in Prince Alfred Park, where those who wish to be inoculated will receive attention today. (Note William Fleming, aged 22 years old was released from Quarantine on 18 April 1900).

Australian Star (Sydney, NSW: 887-1909), 29 March 1900  
“DEATH OF GATES.

The Board of Health has been advised of the death of John Gates, in the Quarantine Hospital. The patient was 26 years of age, and was living at Parker-street, off Hay-street City. He is the man who was on Monday night taken to the Sydney Hospital, suffering apparently from convulsions and placed in the isolation ward, pending a diagnosis of his case. Death occurred at 8.30 p.m. on Tuesday, and the burial took place yesterday within the Quarantine enclosure.”  
His grave is number 61.

North Head rainfall 2019

