



North Head Sanctuary Foundation Inc

Custodians of North Head

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Newsletter No 138 April 2020

Education Room - Bandicoot Heaven

Unfortunately, we have had to close due to the COVID-19.

If you need help with identifying a flower, have a look at <http://www.northheadsanctuaryfoundation.org.au/nursery/QRcodes/North%20Head%20Plants.htm>

which is an alphabetical list of some of the plants you can see on North Head.

Native Plant Nursery

We are on a care and maintenance basis only during these troubling times. Unfortunately, we cannot take any new volunteers at present.

Blue Heliotrope (*Heliotropium amplexicaule*)



Photo Jenny Wilson

Blue heliotrope is growing near our Nursery area and behind the childcare centre. It is a summer-growing perennial herb, which is extremely drought-hardy and is a major agricultural weed in NSW. It is hard to remove as it has a complex system of spreading roots occurring at several depths.

There are several ways that it might have got there: On someone's shoes or clothes? On vehicle tyres? By birds?

For more information see

<https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Details/19>

North Head Sanctuary Foundation

If you would like to support us by becoming a member, please download a form at

www.northheadsanctuaryfoundation.org.au/join/membership.htm or email northhead@fastmail.com.au

If you photograph of anything interesting or have a tale to tell about North Head Sanctuary, past or present, the

Third Cemetery, please email

northhead@fastmail.com.au

Eating the Wildlife

Peter Macinnis

I once set myself the task of writing a *Bicentennial Rhyming Australian Cookbook*. It was just an amusing exercise to see what one might do: it led to my getting a museum job, but that's another story.

A kangaroo or wallaby stew

Is nicer than it sounds:

Be sure your roo is nice and new.

And not yet out of bounds.

To the best of my knowledge, all native animals are protected, and just as well, given what pangolin-eating has led to. Still, in a survivalist post-Covid-19 apocalyptic world, what could we eat?



On 8 November 1930, 'A.L.E.' reported in *The Age* that an old salt had claimed echidnas were edible, but this man had not tried it. The same article claimed that bandicoots had a fine white flesh that many preferred to rabbit, while the writer called it "equal to venison".

A lifetime earlier, in November 1861, a talk by George Bennett of the Australian Museum wrote in *The Argus*: Wombat ... is always regarded as a great treat. The lively night animal, the bandicoot, is, when cooked, only to be compared with sucking-pig in flavour. The opossum is good also, especially when curried or stewed, but the monitor lizard, or guana, if one could overcome the repugnance of its appearance, is delicate and excellent food.

Bennett added that:

The talegalla or brush turkey [*Alectura lathamii*] is excellent, the legs being regarded as the epicure's portion, and the eggs are delicious.

The explorer Emily Creaghe, who rode from Normanton to Darwin while pregnant, cooked curried duck on the

evening of 17 April 1883, but reported that the shooter of the duck had apparently left the quills in the flesh. In the morning she realised the “quills” were thousands of flies which had evidently blown in as she was making the curry, coming off the long grass, which was covered with flies. Unwisely, she told the men, who were all promptly ill. Emily may have been pregnant, but she does not say she was also ill. Perhaps she was made of tougher stuff. I think I'll stay with store-bought foods, though a number of explorers thought “blue-mountain pie” delicious: those birds turn out to be rainbow lorikeets!

Mind you, if you simmer a toilet roll for two hours, it makes a delicious stew that will feed six, my neighbour says.

(Peter Macinnis had hoped to follow in the footsteps of Emily Creaghe during May. Covid-19 put a stop to that.)

Book Review

Kaye Lee

Despite failing eyesight, Lady Jean Duncan Foley has succeeded in giving us a well researched insight into the life and customs of both Aboriginal people c.1788 and quarantined people from 1835 in her new book *Healings and Burials at Sydney's North Head*.

Describing North Head as both a place of healing and a burial island, (based on both Aboriginal oral history and the sixteen burial sites discovered there) Foley uses the customs of the Eora people to show what practices Aborigines may have used at North Head to minimize pain, heal and finally bury or cremate their loved ones. Details of the Koradji medicine men working their magic, healing ceremonies observed by Watkin Tench and David Collins, the Be-an-ny women's method of pain relief, and burial and cremation practices of the Eora all make for an interesting first chapter.

The following chapters, initially outline quarantine practice before the use of North Head, then give a detailed history of quarantine at North Head, the role of the hospital ships Harmony and Faraway, the three distinct burial grounds and the virulent epidemics that contributed to their use until 1925. The various cases detailed give a bleak and dismal picture of what sufferers had to endure, particularly those from Sydney town in the smallpox epidemic – victims, dead or alive, rowed out to North Head with their loved ones, homes and clothes burnt, the lives of many cut short.

Of great appeal to this researcher are the excellent appendices provided in relation to quarantine burials. Categorizing those buried at North Head by burial ground, as well as facts and figures relating to causes of deaths by place of burial and other details, these lists provide an easy to use reference to anyone researching individuals who may have died in quarantine at North Head.

Whilst the accuracy of the odd detail might be questioned, overall this book is a mine of information, not just about healing and burial practices carried out at North Head, but to the wider understanding of the pressures and deprivation faced by sufferers and those who cared for them. Lady Foley is to be congratulated on yet another great book.

(The book costs \$35 and can be bought from Q Station reception which is at the entrance to Q Station.)

Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

Catholic Press (Sydney, NSW: 1895 - 1942), Saturday 19 May 1900, page 13

“OBITUARY - MR. ARTHUR REID.

The death of Mr. Arthur Reid, late of Goulburn, which took place last Saturday morning at the Quarantine Station, North Head, has caused wide-spread regret. But 26 years of age, his manly, straightforward actions had won for him the highest esteem and respect. Some 12 months ago he came to Sydney to assist his brother-in-law (Mr. Walter McAlister) in hotel business, and during that short period he made many friends. He died as he lived, a devout Catholic, which is a comfort to the aged father and to his sisters and brothers, who have been left to mourn their loss. Though the dread disease from which he died prevented them seeing him, or kneeling by his bedside— a most painful circumstance — the true Catholic piety which characterises Mr. Reid's family was very visible with them all. In conjunction with the hero priest (Rev. Father Ignatius), who is stationed at the Quarantine Station, their prayers were hourly offered for the departing soul, and that they were not offered in vain was fully borne out by Father Ignatius, who states the death was most edifying and saintly. May he rest in peace.”

Arthur Reid was quarantined to 4 May and died of the plague at 6.10am on 11 May 1900. He was buried the same day with Father Ignatius officiating Minister.

Independent Review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The Australian Government advising that it is committed to delivering improved national environmental laws to ensure a healthy environment and a strong economy. The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) is the Australian Government's central piece of national environmental law. The EPBC Act requires there be an independent review at least once every 10 years.

For more information see

<https://epbcactreview.environment.gov.au/resources/term-reference>

The public are invited to make submissions until **17 April 2020**.