



# North Head Sanctuary Foundation Inc

## Custodians of North Head

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### Education Room - Bandicoot Heaven

We are closed until further notice due to COVID-19.

### Native Plant Nursery

We have removed all plants from our Nursery bays into volunteers' homes for safekeeping during these times. We hope we are not feeding possums that live near their new homes. Our wired bays kept them safe while immature but due to safety concerns regarding the COVID-19, when we did the watering, we could no longer keep them at the Nursery.

These plants were grown from seed and cuttings and were watered regularly by our volunteers – so many hours were invested in their production.

The good news is that during March, we concentrated on planting out our tube stock which reduced the number of plants we had on hand.

Unfortunately, we cannot take any new volunteers at present but if you would like to join us when restrictions are lifted, please send an email to

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



The top photo taken on 20 January 2014 shows our plantings in front of the old gym. The bottom photo shows What it looks like today.



### Taken on North Head



This photo of a foraging echidna was taken on the Fairfax Walk by Rae McDowell.



A white-browed scrubwren taken by Ian Evans on the old oval. Birdlife enjoy our plantings.



Auricularia cornea (polytricha), Jelly fungus or wood ear fungus taken by Elizabeth Mills.

If you photograph anything interesting or have a tale to tell about North Head Sanctuary, past or present, or the Third Cemetery, please email [northhead@fastmail.com.au](mailto:northhead@fastmail.com.au)

## Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia selloana* & other *Cortaderia* species)

Judy Lambert

Pampas Grass grows in large, long-lived tussocks, often 2 metres high, with its numerous fluffy heads on tall stems reaching above the tussock. The flower heads (plumes) may be white, pink or mauve, fading to brown as they age. Each flower head may produce as many as 100,000 tiny seeds, each about 2mm long. These tiny seeds can travel tens of kilometres on the wind, or in waterways. Roots up to 3.5 metres deep contain rhizomes (underground stems) from which Pampas Grass can spread. Dumping of garden rubbish is one such source.



One of the many garden escapes that have become an invasive weed, Pampas Grass can grow in low fertility soils, often in moist or waterlogged areas – take a look down the gully across the road from Bella Vista in autumn and early winter when seed heads are at their peak.

Pampas Grass is a major weed in the Sydney region, posing a threat to many of our bushland areas.

Photo: Sydney Weeds Committee

Already widespread, the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015* requires land managers to mitigate the risk of it being introduced to their land, prevent its spread from their land where feasible, and to reduce its impact on 'priority assets' (such as Endangered Species and Ecological Communities, including Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub). Once a popular garden plant, Pampas Grass can no longer be traded, carried, grown or released into the environment in the Greater Sydney region.

## Back in Time

Jenny Wilson

Sydney Morning Herald (NSW:1842-1954), 29 March 1930,

'AN INTERESTING SPOT.

All Quiet on North Head.

(BY S.D.)

"Like a military encampment," is one's first impression of the Quarantine Station on North Head. The only thing lacking is the blare of a bugle. One grows to like the place in time. Most of the complaints made by the inmates are merely frivolous and if the place were really under military control the complainers would be dealt with drastically. The disgruntled feeling is engendered mostly by people chafing at the delay in their schedule. Fortunately,

quarantine incarceration does not happen to them every day of their lives and should be regarded in the light of an interesting experience.

North Head is rather a nice place. It boasts of a surf beach and an open-air swimming pool.

There is a delightful Arcadian road leading over the hills to the ocean. The walk is a fine constitutional before breakfast. Anyone desiring real vigorous exercise may try climbing up the switchback railway track. Yes, there is a switchback railway with a bogey running up it, with supplies from the wharf. The bogey is pulled up by a wire. The wire snapped once when the bogey was conveying a load of coolies. The bogey went flying down the hill, but luckily never left the rails. The coolies treated the incident as a great joke.

The station possesses a fine system of shower baths, Lysol and fresh water, a fumigator and a laundry. There are two cemeteries facing the ocean. The tombstones are well preserved by the quarantine staff. In the cemetery are burials dating back to 1830.

## ROCK INSCRIPTIONS

The first things to catch the eyes of quarantined crews are the inscriptions carved in the rocks, the handiwork of other quarantined crews. Judging by the craftsmanship shown in these carvings, there are some clever sculptors ploughing the main. The first inscription reads: Peerless, Liverpool Capt. Flavin 1863. Next is a shield with flag S.S. Victoria 1923. Further along the rocks is a plaque with a shield and rising sun. The inscription runs " P and O ship Himalaya 1897". Then there is a plaque with unicorn carved by the crew of the French ship Calédonien in '98. There is a fine carving of a flag done by the Niagara's crew during the Influenza epidemic in 1918. Next to it is a green shield with laurels done by the same crew. The S.S. Roggeveen of Batavia quarantined in 1920 is represented by a carved lifebuoy. Other ships quarantined during recent years and represented by carvings on the rocks are the Comeric, Shelley, Arafura, St Albans, Barrabool and Makura. Many Japanese ships are represented by that country's curious hieroglyphics, R.M.S Lusitania, O.S N.C. quarantined 1895 is conspicuously engraved with a list of officers and engineers. There are two other good designs, one by the City of Palermo, a plaque with a scroll red ensign and house flag; and the William Plimsoll which brought 500 immigrants out. The latest addition to the carvings is an albatross in flight, carved and painted by a sailor from the Aorangi.'

(This article was written before the Parkhill Reserve opened and before the fortifications were built for coastal artillery.)