



North Head Sanctuary Foundation

Custodians of North Head

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Next Meeting - Wed 20 November 2013

Please come on Wednesday 20 November at 6.30pm and hear updates.

Ocean Care Day- Sun 1 December 2013

The Manly Environment Centre will host the 20th Ocean Care Day Festival, a free fun community event on Manly's spectacular surf beachfront. Check out the eco exhibitions and local art, while learning more about our gorgeous local environment as well as today's big issues.

We need volunteers to staff our display stall for a couple of hours. If you're able to help, please contact Kathy Ridge this week, by emailing kathryn@ridgelegal.com

Three new walking tracks.

Geoff Lambert

The Harbour Trust has made two new walking tracks on North Head recently.

These were funded by money from a grant and would not have happened otherwise.

Track # 1 is a very short metal grille track which ascends from near the Bluefish car-park to the footy oval. This was built to discourage haphazard scrambling up the bank, which was causing erosion. Track #2 commences opposite the front door of Bandicoot Heaven, runs through our showcase planting area and curves around through the swamp to the west of the gun park, to rejoin the original route of the Gunners Walk where it enters the bush. On this new track there is a T-junction, from which a side-track descends through the bush to emerge on North Head Scenic Drive at the roundabout. It is the intention of NPWS to extend this track down through the bush to Collins Beach- but they have no money to do it yet.

In addition to these tracks, the NPWS has put in a new track which runs from Manly Hospital, down the south side of the Shelly Beach wall; then through the wall into the grounds of the Tourism School and eventually to South Steyne.

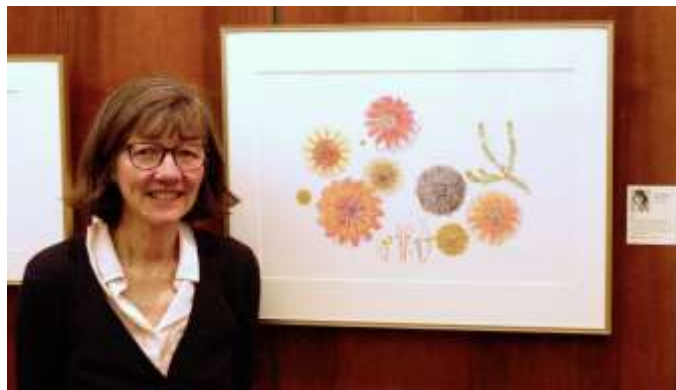
Education Centre – Bandicoot Heaven

Our education room is open every weekend EXCEPT when tracks are closed because of extreme fire danger. Call in and see us, for a chat or for more information about the new tracks from 10am to 4pm in Building 20. We also have Julie's cards in stock.

Native Plant Nursery

Due to the hot weather, we have had to water our recent plantings more than usual. If you would like to help, just email northhead@fastmail.fm or turn up any Tuesday or Friday morning.

Julie Nettleton exhibits in USA



In September Julie's painting of 'Banksia ericifolia' from her North Head Sanctuary series was shown in the 14th International Exhibition of Botanical Art and Illustration at the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Carnegie Mellon University, in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania.

This prestigious exhibition has been held every three years since 1964 and this year it showcased 41 artworks by 41 artists from 10 countries. Julie was honoured to have her painting acquired for the Hunt's permanent collection and it was also selected for the cover of the exhibition catalogue and promotional advertising.

The Hunt Institute specialises in the history of botany and all aspects of plant sciences and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. It holds a vast collection of plant images, books, manuscripts, portraits and data files.

More information - <http://huntbot.andrew.cmu.edu>

Vale - Michael Rolfe

Michael Rolfe, a founding member of the North Head Sanctuary Foundation Inc, was known to many of our members for his tireless efforts in protecting and restoring Sydney Harbour.

The President of the Sydney Harbour Association, and the prior Sydney Harbour Foreshores Committee, Michael implemented, with many friends, a clear vision of a healthy working harbour whose beautiful shores were accessible to everyone, not cloistered behind millionaires fences. He fought the privatisation of Sydney Harbour waterways and foreshores on a range of fronts, but most consuming was his community battle against the Rose Bay Marina and the dodgy deals which including lead players from Labor's most infamous scandals.

Michael brought that experience to the early days of the NHSF and made a very valuable contribution to setting the direction of the organisation.

A clever, positive and rational man we will all miss dearly, none more so than Sydney's environs.

Rulingia hermanifolia

Geoff Lambert



are rarely found north of Sydney Harbour. There seem to be fewer than a dozen plants on North Head. The flowers are very small- never more than 4 mm in diameter. The plants are usually very low, spreading shrubs.

The leaves essay

Peter Macinnis

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe had a bit of a thing about leaves. He wrote a poem about the leaf of the *Ginkgo*, and probably saw the leaf as a symbol of love. Goethe was many things, and also a curious botanist—some might say a peculiar botanist. He thought the leaf was the basic unit of the plant: "from top to bottom a plant is all leaf...".

I thought of this when I sighted a *Lomatia* along one of the tracks a few weeks back. At least, I think it was a *Lomatia*, but now I have my doubts, because of where it was growing. I'll



need to visit it later in the year to check the flower, but *Lomatia* is one of those once-seen-never-forgotten leaves.

That started me thinking about distinctive leaves, like Canada's maple leaf, the serrated leaves of the



Banksia and the gracefully curved leaves of some gums. Again, once seen, never forgotten, though I'll bet that somewhere out there, some other plant has taken on a similar design.

That's why botanists, both before and after Goethe, used flower parts for identification, despite Goethe's ideas. Still, leaves help in identification, and they are certainly worth attention.

A leaf is just a plant's way of catching sunlight, while hopefully not losing too much water. Most Australian plants have tricks to hang onto their water. She-oak



needles are really branches with the leaves tightly attached, all except for little scales sticking out.

Every walk brings me "leaves" to admire, but some are fake leaves

like those on *Bossiaea* which are really cladodes,



flattened stems. The leaves of wattles are often phyllodes, flattened petioles or leaf stalks, and in each case, the change is designed to save the plant from losing water.

Another way to avoid losing water is to discourage animals from eating the leaves. Biting a leaf opens wounds that the plant "bleeds" from, and what is eaten represents a loss as well. That explains this rainforest leaf, which I



saw on the Dorrigo Plateau, has such nasty spines, though as you can see, small animals just dodge around the spines.

Listen, young Goethe, forget about plants as



symbols of love— even the leaves remind us there's a war on out there. Some leaves are even mined!

Spring wildflower walks

Judy Lambert

This year our spring wildflower walks have seen the full spectrum of weather.

Our morning walk on Sunday 15 September saw 16 people start out in quite heavy showers. Undaunted they carried on and by the time we reached the Third Cemetery the skies were clear and sunny and the views stunning. Our next walk on Saturday 28 September saw 15 people enjoy what might have been the peak of this year's outstanding flower displays – orchids, masses of flannel flowers and much, much more. Then it was time for walk 3 on 13 October. Alas high temperatures, dry conditions and strong winds saw North Head tracks close because of extreme fire risk – Trying again for Sunday 27 October, but not all of the 18 people registered can come that day.