



North Head Sanctuary Foundation

Custodians of North Head

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Education Room - Bandicoot Heaven

Our community education room is open 10am to 4pm Saturdays and Sundays in Building 20.

We'd welcome some new volunteers to help staff Bandicoot Heaven. If interested, please contact Judy Lambert at twsombat@optusnet.com.au

New brochure on its way

NHSF has recently been successful in gaining funding from Northern Beaches Council's small grants program. We are grateful for this support, which will enable us to produce a new brochure about the many layers of history and heritage on North Head. The grant conditions require completion by April next year, so watch out for this new product which will be available at Bandicoot Heaven.

Return of the Tawnys

Judy Lambert

Over the past year one of the bonuses of being on roster at Bandicoot Heaven has been the opportunity to introduce visitors to our local pair of owl-like Tawny Frogmouths. Active at night, this pair roosted during the day in the WA peppermint tree outside the Montessori Childcare Centre. These hard-to-see birds caused new interest when they built a nest there. However, the nest was short-lived. It came down during a big windstorm a couple of months ago, and we found the broken remains of an egg among the ruins.

But our sadness was soon replaced with good news. The pair of Tawnys had returned, with a fluffy young offspring with them. All three can usually be found in one of the WA peppermint trees along North Fort Road.



Photo Geoff Lambert

Native Plant Nursery

If you would like to join us any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and 12noon, planting, removing weeds and doing maintenance, just turn up or email:

northhead@fastmail.com.au.

Our last Nursery day will be Tuesday 20 December and we start up again on Tuesday 2 January 2017.

Ocean Care Day - Sunday 4 Dec 10.30am to 4.30pm

will be held on Manly's spectacular surf beach and include a program of environmental talks, music, eco exhibitions, stalls and local art.

NHSF will have its usual stall at Manly's annual Ocean Care Day.

Piece be with you...

Peter Macinnis



"When Allan and Emma Macpherson went up the country in the 1850s, they camped in style."

In 1986, for amusement, I wrote *The Bicentennial Rhyming Australian Cookbook*, all about eating Australian fauna. On the strength of it, got a job at the Powerhouse Museum, though that's another story, but reports of eating Australian animals became one of my temporary obsessions.

Joseph Banks ate stingray at Stingray Harbour, later renamed Botany Bay, calling it "...not quite so good as a skate nor was it much inferior...". At the Endeavour River on 14 July, Lieutenant Hicks killed a kangaroo, of which the skin and bones would be saved for science, but the rest, said Banks "...provd excellent meat..."

Surgeon George Worgan said some people compared young kangaroo to veal, but he had his doubts. The emu, he said, was like young beef.

Ludwig Leichhardt ate everything, commenting memorably that about "...a strange mess was made of cockatoo, Blue Mountainer, an eagle hawk, and dried emu." The Blue Mountainer, by the way, is our rainbow lorikeet.

Ernest Giles liked what he called the lowan, the malleefowl to us, and in early October 1873, he met the challenge of carrying a dozen lowan eggs, but passed over the eating of fertile eggs: "...parboiled, youthful, Lowans' eyes are considered quite a delicacy in the camp." He saw a perentie in 1874, and said one would make two meals for his party.

George Bennett favoured eating Australian animals: "...flesh of the Talegalla, Australian Bustard, Wonga-wonga, and many others, is delicious for food...". We know the bustard and wonga pigeon, but talegalla? We know it on North Head as the brush turkey: what a pity Thanksgiving has passed...

Bennett said Aborigines ate the platypus, but this was no recommendation "... nothing in the shape of provender comes amiss to him, whether it be snakes, rats, frogs, grubs, or the more delicate opossum, bandicoot, or flying squirrel." Here he is in full flight:

Wombat is rarely to be met with, but when procured, its flesh 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.

Settlers ate what they could get. In 1856, the adventurous Emma Macpherson said of the goanna meat: "I have heard it compared to that of a chicken and of an eel, and suppose it somewhat resembles both." At long last, somebody uses the line "tastes like chicken"!

Mrs Macpherson said people ate goanna eggs, and cockatoo soup (it resembled hare soup, her husband told her), while she tried a pie made of lories and rosellas. She said "kangaroo rabbit" (bilby?) and rock wallaby were as good as rabbit and hare, and the wallaby should be eaten with currant jelly.

Here is why my rhyming cookbook failed to fly:

The kangaroo or wallaby stew

Is nicer than it sounds.

Be sure your 'roo is nice and new,

And not yet out of bounds.

References

Banks, Joseph, *The Endeavour Journal of Sir Joseph Banks, 1768-1771.*

Bennett, George, *Gatherings of a Naturalist in Australasia, 1860.*

Giles, Ernest, *Australia Twice Traversed, 1889.*

Lady, A (Mrs Allan Macpherson), *My Experiences in Australia, Being Recollections of a Visit to the Australian Colonies in 1856-7, 1860.*

Leichhardt, Ludwig, *Journal of an Overland Expedition in Australia, 1847.*

Worgan, George B., *Journal of a First Fleet Surgeon.*

Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

Australian Town and Country Journal Sat 14 Apr 1900 The Bubonic Plague.

On 6 April 1900

"Arthur Yates, 18, residing in the city. The last-named patient was reported from the Sydney Hospital, whither he had gone for treatment. The usual course was followed by the hospital authorities. They suspected the nature of the illness, and communicated with the Board of Health. He was not allowed to mix with the ordinary patients." (He died on 8 April at the Quarantine Station, one of three deaths, the other two being Mary Quinn, aged 34 from Balmain and John Gaynor 28 from Ultimo)

"Frederick Boshell, 3½; living with his parents at a hotel in King-street, within the area just released from quarantine. The child died before he could be removed" on 8 April. His mother Mary Boshell aged, 30 was the wife of the licensee of Caledonian Hotel. She was ill and taken to Quarantine but she survived.

"Elizabeth Langford, 61, who died in the Isolation ward at Prince Alfred Hospital. This patient was taken to the hospital from some place in William-street. She had hardly any of the external symptoms of plague, but there being a doubt as to the nature of the disease she was placed in isolation, death occurring late on April 6. A post-mortem was made, which clearly revealed that it was a case of plague. The body was sent to the Quarantine Station for burial."

On Monday, April 9

"Moon Kee, a Chinaman, residing in Stephen-street, off Macquarie-street South. The authorities were informed of this case early on Monday morning, but the man died before the officers of the Health Department arrived. It was ascertained that the deceased came from Bourke to Sydney on April 3, but he had only been living at the address given since April 6. This is the first Chinaman to be attacked. The body is to be sent to the Quarantine Ground for interment."

(No age or other details were known.)

"Archibald Munro, 16, Ancrum-street, North Sydney.

John Toms, 14, Duke-street, Woolloomooloo.

Both these lads were-employed at the one establishment in Castlereagh-street. The place was quarantined, and as has been the practice in like cases, the other employees therein it is computed that they number nearly a hundred-will have to present themselves daily for medical examination at the Department of Health Offices." (On 11 April 1900, Oswald Munro died but John Toms survived.)

"Arthur Bertram Bullock, who died at Belmore street, Tempe. The body was taken in to the Sydney Hospital, and a post-mortem examination being made it was afterwards removed to the Quarantine Station for burial." (He was buried about midnight on 8 April 1900).