



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 tswombat@optusnet.com.au

Native Plant Nursery

We have a lot of planting, weeding and maintenance to do looking after all our areas. We would love some help. If you would like to join us on any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and 12noon, just turn up or email: northhead@fastmail.com.au.

Pets and North Head

Dr Jennifer Anson, Australian Wildlife Conservancy

North Head is a wonderful place to explore and enjoy the outdoors. There are a number of walking and bike tracks crisscrossing the headland that connect to Manly. It can be tempting to bring your dog when you visit this beautiful place. However dogs are not allowed on North Head and it is important to understand why.

Firstly, your hip pocket. Dogs are prohibited from entering the headland and if spotted you may be issued with a hefty fine of up to \$5,500. Secondly and more importantly, North Head is home to several fauna species including endangered populations of Long-nosed Bandicoots and Little Penguins. Dog attacks can have devastating consequences on native animals. Even on a leash your dog is still a threat to wildlife. Dogs are also potentially at risk from the 1080 baits that are laid across the headland. These baits are targeted towards foxes and are important to ensuring the protection of fauna, however if your dog takes one it may be lethal.

As well as dogs, more and more domestic cats are being spotted on the headland at night. Please keep your cat indoors, especially at night. When they roam at night they kill our wildlife and can decimate populations. It also puts your beloved feline at increased risk of being killed by a car, dogs or fighting.



Please respect and help take care of the amazing animals and ecosystem that exists just outside our door. Leave your dogs at home when you visit the headland and prevent cats from roaming

The snake, the brick, and me

Peter Macinnis

Obligatory disclosure: no snakes were harmed in the making of this article.

As a known thistle-obsessive, I always have a pair of echidna-rated gauntlets in my pocket, but being male, and a bit thick, I often don't don them until I have to. Pulling the heads off *Paspalum*? Bare hands will do, mate! Shifting bricks? Gloves not *definitely* needed.

Well, that was the case: maybe now, I'll change it. With the ditch diggers moving through near the Nursery, some of the Tuesday Mob got in ahead of them to rescue as many plants as we could. These went into pots, and are now back in the ground, but that's another story.

The bricks would be a good starting place. I started moving loose bricks, to access some *Lomandra* plants that would otherwise be lost. I was careful, of course, just in case of redbacks, but I saw none, just what looked like a legless lizard, the right size for the ones I used to see in Balgowlah, but those "swim" through sand, and this was under a rock.



For scale, the snake is sitting on a house brick

More to the point, legless lizards don't have a forked flickering tongue, so I stepped gingerly back, took three photos, and flicked them to the interwebs. My son passed it on via Facebook to a friend, who explained that snakes don't have external ears, but legless lizards do.



For identification, note the eye colouring

What I had was a yellow-faced whip snake, *Demansia psammophis*, and apparently, the coloration around the eye is diagnostic.

According to the Australian Museum and Wilson and Swan's *Reptiles of Australia*, the bite would be painful but not deadly. Mine was small, less than 20 cm, about a quarter of the full size, so with gloves, I would probably have been fully safe: without gloves, maybe not.

So no more bare hands...

Mystery of Jean Baptiste Adonis & the Missing Headstone – Pt.2

Kaye Lee

Headstone found, but what of Jean Baptiste Adonis himself? Jean was born in the Seychelles a creole Able Seaman and one of 15 crew on the barque E. J. Spence, a trading ship which arrived in Newcastle from Mauritius on 30 April 1913. It was under the command of Ships Master John Stronach, whose wife was also on board. Crew members had reportedly suffered from dysentery throughout the voyage of 57 days, with Madagascan Ordinary Seaman Modiste dying of smallpox on 2 April (1,2,3,4,5). Five more crew members (including two boys) became ill with smallpox after the death of Modiste, and whilst they had resumed duties before arrival in Newcastle, they were still shedding scales, so the vessel was ordered into quarantine in Sydney for 3 weeks (6). Flying a yellow flag, the E. J. Spence was towed down the coast, and taken into quarantine by pilot steamer the Captain Cook on 1 May. The five convalescent cases were landed the next day at the quarantine station and the rest of the crew on 4 May for disinfection and detention, as was the vessel also (7).

Was Jean Baptiste one of those suffering from smallpox? If he had been, he might have survived. All five smallpox cases were finally cleared of disease and discharged on 17 and 20 June. Poor Jean Baptiste was however a victim of broncho pneumonia falling ill on May 10 at the Quarantine Station and dying (with no sign of smallpox) on 13 May (8). He was buried in the Third Cemetery on 15 May 1913.

The E.J. Spence, surveyed whilst in dock in Sydney and plimsol line readjusted, loaded 416 tons of coal, 3 1/2 tons of coke, 163 bags of oats & 126 bags of bran and finally set sail for Port Louis, Mauritius, cleared to sail on 9 July (9). Even then, she was an aging ship, and was finally broken up in 1926 (10) What a windjammer though!



(1871). E. J. SPENCE. :
Melbourne. 537 Tons.
Built at Sunderland.
1871. A well known
Mauritius trader.

References

- (1) New South Wales Births, Deaths and Marriages Death Certificate Registration No.9708/1913
- (2) DEATH OF ONE OF THE E. J. SPENCE'S CREW. (1913, May 20). *Daily Commercial News and Shipping List (Sydney, NSW : 1891 - 1954)*, p. 20. Retrieved March 22, 2017, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article158756311>
- (3) SMALLPOX ON A BARQUE. (1913, May 2). *The Sydney Morning Herald (NSW : 1842 - 1954)*, p. 9. Retrieved March 22, 2017, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article15417420>
- (4) Cumpston, JHL *The history of small-pox in Australia 1909-1923*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Health, Service Publication No.29, 1925; Ho.17 E. J. Spence
- (5) BARQUE FLYING THE YELLOW FLAG (1913, April 30). *The Maitland Daily Mercury (NSW : 1894 - 1939)*, p. 5. Retrieved March 22, 2017, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article121298322>
- (6) Ibid (4)
- (7) Ibid (3)
- (8) Ibid (4)
- (9) EXPORTS. (1913, July 10). *Daily Commercial News and Shipping List (Sydney, NSW : 1891 - 1954)*, p. 2. Retrieved March 24, 2017, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article159217282>
- (10) Wear Built Ships. Retrieved March 20, 2017 from <http://sunderlandshps.com/view.php?ref=101671>

Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson



The stone masons have been hard at work in the Cemetery. The gravestones are being restored by

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust. The above gravestone has been placed back on its plinth after over thirty years on being part buried in the ground,.



William Walpole Docksey, aged 27 years old, died on 21st or 22nd May 1900 at Quarantine Station of Bubonic plague. He married Annie Thompson in 1898 and lived in Beattie Street Balmain- He was the third son of John Docksey.