

Sunday 13th June 2021

Chris and Mary, Faye and I, walked the lower North Shore walk from Cremorne Point to Taronga Zoo this morning. The route is the opposite to the other times I have walked it and, as you'd expect, it created the illusion of an entirely new walk!

But at first, we should arrive at Circular Quay!







Having disembarked at Cremorne Point, the site of the Leisure Grounds, we walked right to the point itself!¹

I have often attempted to imagine this as a Pleasure Garden. Worse, I also attempt to imagine it as a coal loader!²

Before we got to the point, we had already seen our first (and only) Brush Turkey for the day.

¹

'Cremorne, Sydney, was named after the famous Cremorne Gardens in London. The name was first associated with the area when Charles Woolcott, Jacob Clarke and Joseph Simmons established their own 'Cremorne Gardens' here in 1856. Visitors paid to access the site having usually arrived by ferry from the newly-built Circular Quay. The venture did not last long as the entertainments failed to amuse and some of the behaviour was riotous. Cremorne Gardens was one of the first of several harbour-side pleasure grounds. Clifton Gardens, to the east, followed in the 1880s. The combination of fun in waterfront setting might also be seen as a precursor to Luna Park and the now world-famous Sydney Harbour fireworks on New Year's Eve. In the 1880s, the area was turned over to more sedate picnicking when Thomas Nicholson opened another ground, again with an entry fee.'

'The original operators of Cremorne Gardens leased the land from James Milson, son of the man who took up land around present-day Milsons Point in the early 1800s. He, in turn, had bought it from James Robertson who was granted the site in 1833. The name Robertson's Point is still used for the southern-most part of the peninsula but Cremorne Point is now the more common name for the whole area of land, echoing its pleasure ground past.'

'Cremorne Point Reserve continues the tradition of public recreation established in the 1850s. However, the parkland is now publicly-managed and free to enter. It might have been very different. James Milson who bought the land from James Robertson wanted to develop the Point for housing and wharfage. His proposals were contested by various representatives in the colonial parliament, the local council, then called the Borough of St Leonards, and the Department of Lands. At issue was whether Milson had control of the land down to the high water mark. In 1828 a Government Order had reserved all waterfront land 100 feet (approximately 30 metres) back from the water from being privatised. Milson attempted to have this Reserve revoked but not before he had drawn up a subdivision plan which showed suburban lot available for sale down to the water.'

'The matter was finally settled in the Supreme Court in 1891. The waterfront reserve was gazetted as a public recreation reserve to be managed by North Sydney Council in 1907. Today, Cremorne Point Reserve remains the best example of the 1828 100-foot reservation on Sydney Harbour.'

https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/wm11EJC_For_Profit_or_Pleasure_Cremorne_Point_NSW_Australia

² The Rev. W. B. Clarke identified a coal seam running under much of Sydney and proposed it be mined. An experimental copper smelting industry was established in the mid-1840s on the eastern shore but was not successful and was removed by 1849.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cremorne_Point



Robertson Point Lighthouse is at the very tip of Cremorne Point.³

³ Built 1909 Robertsons Point Lighthouse is of the same form and construction as the Bradley's Head lighthouse which was the first of this design to be erected. These lights were built with the first pre-cast reinforced concrete sections¹ for maritime lighthouses in Australia. Light is supplied with mains power. Occulting green light 3 Sec, 2on 1off

<https://lighthouses.org.au/nsw/robertson-point-lighthouse/>





But it was now time to walk and enjoy the Federation architecture along this delightful peninsula.⁴



⁴ Cremorne is a good example of residential housing and land-use history following the first subdivision of 1903. Most of the buildings in Cremorne Point date from the Federation housing period through to the 1920s and 1930s.

There are many fine examples of houses and apartment buildings and, as Cremorne was also a tourist attraction, particularly in the 1920s, a number of large guesthouses were established on the Point.

Ref: North Sydney History Walk: A Walking Tour of Cremorne Point
www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/docs/5_recreation_facilities/













OK, there are some ugly buildings





And some with amazing views

But now it was time to revisit Curlew Camp.⁵ Yes, we need to pay homage!

⁵ Curlew Camp was an artists' camp established in the late 19th century on the eastern shore of Little Sirius Cove, now part of Mosman Bay in Sydney. It was home for some years to several leading Australian artists, such as Arthur Streeton and Tom Roberts of the Heidelberg School, and it was from here that some of their most famous paintings were created. Today the site is still in its natural state and the Mosman Council has built a foreshore walk called the "Curlew Camp Artist's Walk" which traces the journey that the residents of the camp followed when they disembarked from the ferry at South Mosman ferry wharf, then known as "Musgrave Street Wharf," and returned to the camping site.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curlew_Camp



"I sit here in my tent and look across the little bay beneath to the hill beyond, all in massive purple shadow – right across which comes a beautiful mass of clematis and begonia creeper, the stem of a red gum sapling and a young wild cherry tree. Below a few feet is my box with mignonette opening its second set of leaves to the brilliant warmth of the sun which floods all the green and cheerful surroundings of our tent making it like a fairy's bower. All the morning I've been wandering about the hill of bush behind our camp gathering flowers and delicate ferns to plant in our little summer house close by"

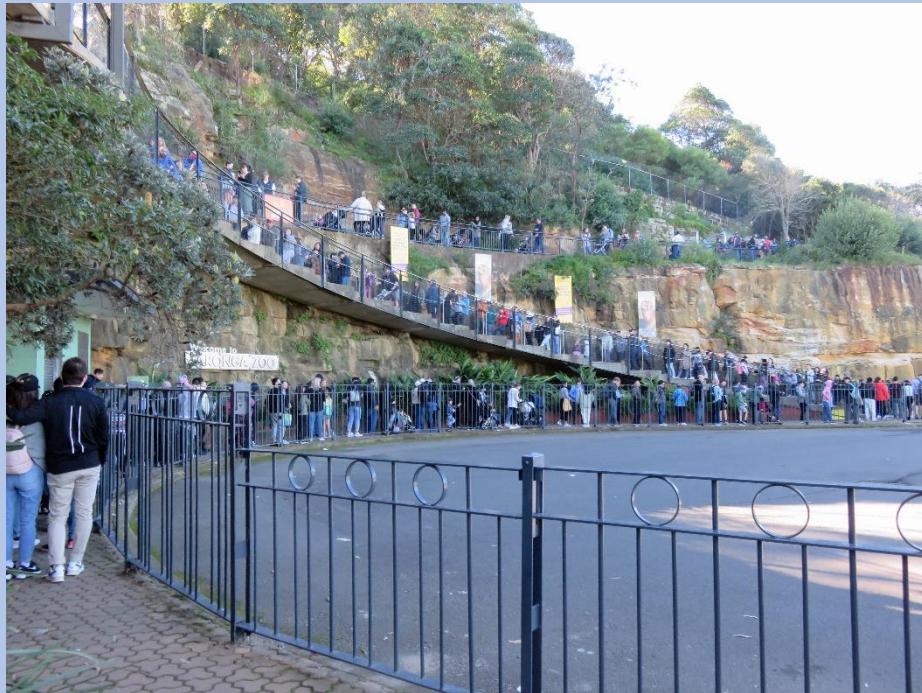
Streeton, 1890s



Pomaderris sp



At about this time we ran into Alix Goodwin and a friend, arrived at Taronga Zoo, discovered a huge queue to enter that site and chose to grab the first ferry out!



Lunch would now be in the Botanical Gardens!

Oh, no A sign indicates Government House is open and there is jazz to hear!





And so ends a delightful day!

