

# Weemalah, Warumbul and the Meadows Fire Trail

A #LockedDownSydney Field Inspection

August 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

In 1930, or thereabouts, a J.W Ramsay-Sharpe built a memorial cottage to his recently deceased fiancée, Rosemary. In 1931 he was given permissive occupancy by Frank Farnell<sup>1</sup> and he converted it into a charity rest house for those in need. By 1936, after some arguments about whether he had permission to do this, the permissive occupancy was terminated and the Trustees purchased the property and used it until 1967. In that time it was known as the President's Cottage. It was rebuilt in 1976 and that's when it was renamed Weemalah. Rumours had it that Michael Egan used to do the State Budget here, with paper and pencil, during his time as Treasurer! It is now renovated and available for hire as part of the adaptive reuse of these facilities.<sup>2</sup>

At the time of renovation, I was able to inspect it for the then Met SW RAC and as the place was unoccupied, I thought I check out what it now looked like!



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<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the NSW Fisheries Board and Trustee of the Royal National Park  
However, Judith Carrick writes that he died in 1929. That is confirmed in  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank\\_Farnell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_Farnell)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/camping-and-accommodation/accommodation/weemalah-cottage>  
During Covid-19 closures this has been suspended.





The view below the cottage





*Pterostylis concinna* growing on the lawn near the cottage.



The place is now fitted out with an array of solar panels and a substantial battery but there was a smell from the septic tank.

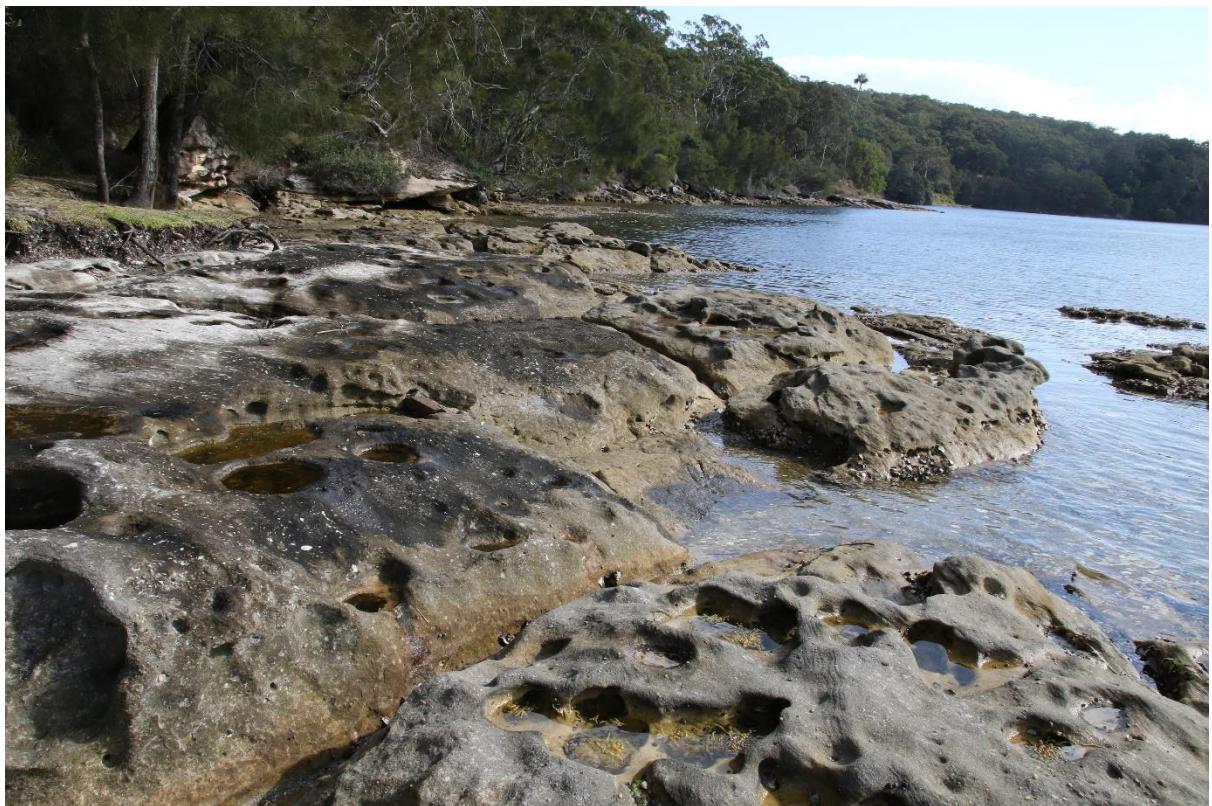




Of concern is that to the north, on Grahams Point, there is clear evidence of abuse by people who must access it by boat, possibly camp, definitely cut wood, light fires and leave a lot of rubbish.







It is picturesque



But there are also weed issues



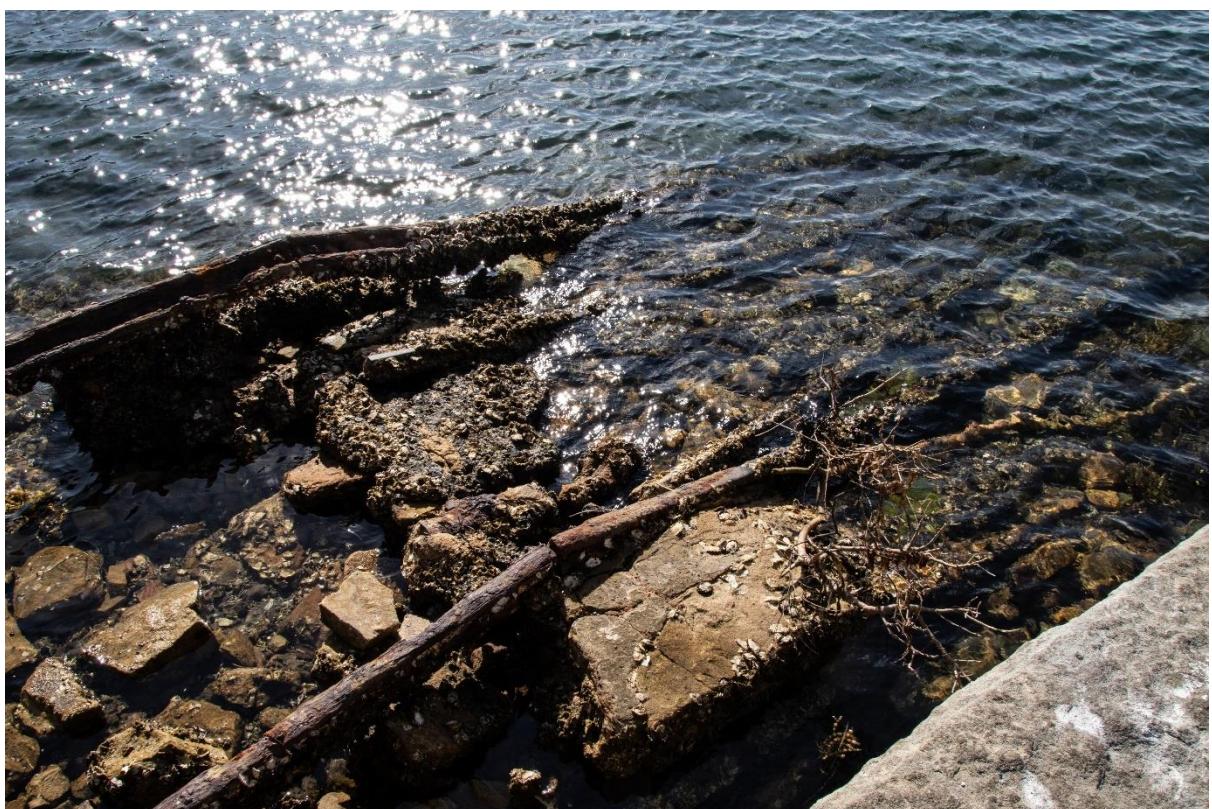
And the midden is being attacked by high tides

We then drove around to Warumbul. This had been a major settlement of guest houses from the time when the Park Trustees had built a two-roomed structure in 1891. By 1900 Warumbul had its own post office and telephone. By 1980 it was all gone.<sup>3</sup> Except, of course, for lots of historic archaeology!



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<sup>3</sup> See J Carrick: History of Royal National Park 1879-2013, published 2014





Faye and I are planning to return to remove some of this pernicious weed



Our last stop today was to walk the length of The Meadows Fire Trail, a return walk of just 3km. The Fire Trail runs from GR231273 (Port Hacking 1:25000) in a NNW direction towards Grays Point. There is probably a route down to the Hacking River along the spur line but it is not clear and the vegetation is thick in this section. There is a view out over the Muddy Creek valley.

Now much of the land to the west of the fire trail has been burnt (a HR) but there was more than enough interest floristically to enjoy the stroll before lunch.







*Euryomyrtus ramosissima*



*Hovea linearis*



*Thelymitra ixiooides*, about to open



*Bossiaea ensata*, I think







*Pultenaea stipularis*





*Glossodia major*



Brian Everingham