

Media Article March 2021



Norah Head Lighthouse Reserve

Norah Head Lighthouse is located on the Eastern edge of the beautiful Norah Head Village. It has been standing and operating continuously for 118 years this year. The Lighthouse is the grand old lady of the Central Coast and is a real flasher. Some say there is a 'presence' in the Lighthouse tower with many people claiming they 'have felt a hand on their shoulder' but when turning there is no one there. However, there is a real presence of place at the Lighthouse Reserve. The views are spectacular and the beaches and rock shelves are a gold mine of experiences for inquisitive young minds plus there are plenty of lawns for a family picnic.

The craftsmanship associated with the design and construction of the Lighthouse and the Keepers Quarters is amazing and it makes you realise just how skilled and knowledgeable the people were all those years ago. Initially the Lighthouse was manned by three families who also ran a small farm to grow their own food. No supermarkets or corner shops in those days.

The Lighthouse Reserve is maintained by four groups of volunteers including a Land Manager Board, Coastcare volunteers who look after the natural resources, a Maintenance crew who carry out most repairs to the Keepers Quarters and our Tour Guides who accompany people through the Lighthouse tower including a visit to the top of the tower where the Chance Bros lens is installed, another engineering marvel. Now that NSW is on top of the COVID pandemic we need more volunteers for the Coastcare team and the Lighthouse tours. If you are interested this is what you need to know.

Coastcare volunteering.

The Reserves Natural Resources are impressive for such a small area. There are over 150 plant varieties and almost as many different birds. The land animals are mainly small nocturnal mammals and reptiles so take care where you place your feet! The two main functions of the Coastcare team are the removal of weeds and the replacement of native vegetation. These two functions ensure the Reserve's native vegetation is protected and improved which is why the Reserve has such prolific bird life.

The age group of these volunteers is generally between 60 and 85 years. This work keeps people connected and helps enormously with their fitness. The duties can be either in the Reserve's bushland which can be quite steep or maintaining the public area of the Reserve. Two of our volunteers are both 80+ years and both look after the steep slopes on the Reserve and are amazing gentlemen, as are all our volunteers. Morning tea is at 10:00am when the homemade scones and cake is produced and a few embellished stories are told.

Tour Guides

Our Tour Guides are provided with the history of the Lighthouse Reserve so that visitors are given correct information. This includes the religious connection where symbolic errors were deliberately placed into the Lighthouse structure (only the Lord is perfect). Tour guides are also informed of who was responsible for having the Lighthouse built and why, plus the requirements needed to be a Lighthouse Keeper in the early 1900's, i.e. Lighthouse Keepers must be male, married and short. Job requirements that would not be acceptable today. To find out why—think about becoming a Tour Guide. It is a beautiful location to hang out with people with like interests and to make some new friends.

If you are interested in becoming a tour guide you need to be relatively fit to climb the 94 steps up the Lighthouse Tower. There are landings between the four sets of stairs so you can catch your breath. And the views! Did I mention the views? From Newcastle to Sydney and across the Central Coast. You can actually see Sydney's Centre Point Tower on a clear day. Also, picture the RAAF's latest F-35A Lightning stealth fighter flying around the Lighthouse Tower while you are at the top. It is not unusual for a pilot to give you a wave and the noise of jet engines can be felt as well as heard. If you are not up to climbing stairs, we still need people to sell admission tickets, to take enquiries or man our small souvenir shop.

The Norah Head Lighthouse Reserve Volunteers are generally good mates and refer to ourselves as the Lighthouse Family. If you are interested in joining us or want additional information refer to the contact details on the attached advertisement.

Neil Rose
Chair
Norah Head Lighthouse Land Manager Board

Norah Head Lighthouse Reserve needs more volunteers particularly Coastcare volunteers and Lighthouse Tour Guides.

If you are interested contact Site Manager Ms Tracy Stubbings at:

Info@norahheadlighthouse.com.au or call 0452 564 102. Alternatively, visit the Lighthouse Reserve on any Tuesday or Friday morning when our volunteers are on site and see either Neil, Ian or Tracy