

## **FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK INCORPORATED**

### **MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING**

**Held on Thursday 27 February 2020**

**At the Environment Education Centre, Farnell Avenue, Royal National Park**

**Meeting opened:** at approximately 4.00 pm

**Chairperson – Ian Hill.**

**Minutes – Ian Hill**

#### **A/ Preliminaries**

##### **Acknowledgement of Country**

Ian Hill gave the acknowledgement of the traditional owners of the land

##### **Members present**

Ian Hill, David Robson, Peter Stitt, Basil Ellis, Peter Donley, Diane Townley, Josie Piper, Tony Larkin, Tony Walker, Pam Allen, Wendy Saunders, Peter Kahn, Neville Bethe, Helen Lewis, Sandra Lloyd, John Arney, Ralph Cartwright.

##### **Visitors present**

Adrian Johnstone (NPWS).

##### **Apologies**

Helen Voysey, Liz Donley, Jo Keohan.

#### **B/ Routine Business**

##### **Adoption of Previous Minutes**

The minutes for the 17 October 2019 Special General Meeting had been circulated for comment and corrections. They are posted on the website.

##### **Correspondence**

Mention was made of Ralph's recent email regarding new members

##### **Treasurer's Report**

The treasurer Ralph Cartwright presented the current financial information as at 25 February 2020 and tabled it at the meeting. Current assets are \$8,014 and there are currently 42 members.

\$2743.18 was spent on the new website which is now complete.

#### **C/ Other Business**

Feedback on Meeting with Shaun Elwood

Ian Hill gave a quick summary of the questions raised and answers from Shaun. See Attachment 1.

## Litter Tools

A discussion occurred about buying litter tools. Neville Bethe stated he has a bag full at home which Friends of Royal can borrow when required and some members have their own. As a result it was considered that at this point further purchases are not required.

Litter Collection Activity to be finalised. Currently it is scheduled for 9.00 a.m. Monday April 20<sup>th</sup> at Wattamolla. This is a date in the school holidays

## Tools for landcare

Friends made the decision to spend a budget of \$1000 on tools for the Royal Bushies. This will provide each of the 4 regular Royal Bushies with a kit consisting of a leather pouch, a belt and 4 tools which fit in the pouch. The tools are a pair of secateurs, a trowel, a saw and a knife.

Jo Keohan was tasked to price the leather pouches and tools.

Suggested suppliers are:-

Forestry Tools <https://www.forestrytools.com.au/>

or Arborgreen <https://www.arborgreen.com.au/>

## Advertising.

Members approved the purchase of 2 'A frame' advertising, plus a spare set of inserts for around \$250. It is now noted after the meeting that the final cost of \$255.05 was paid on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

## Lady Carrington Estate South

Ian Hill outlined the concerns of development outside town Helensburgh town boundaries into currently environmental zoned lands. Over the holiday period Wollongong Council staged a Preliminary Exhibition Period with a proposal to rezone an E3 zone and some E2 land as R2 Residential. This would have three major impacts on the Upper catchment of the Hacking River. They are native vegetation loss, constriction of the already compromised Tall Forest Wildlife Corridor and increased water pollution in the Hacking River from Storm water runoff. The native vegetation loss includes the removal of 12.1 ha of native vegetation and the removal of 2.7ha of the Endangered Ecological Community known as Southern Sydney Sheltered Forest. Of further concern is the constriction of the Tall Forest Wildlife Corridor by 35% not including edge effects between Helensburgh and Otford. This is the one remaining wild life corridor free from highways for wildlife transfer between the Royal National Park and the Illawarra Escarpment and other lands to the south.

A letter of concern was sent as part of the exhibition to Wollongong city from Friends of Royal. See Attachment 2.

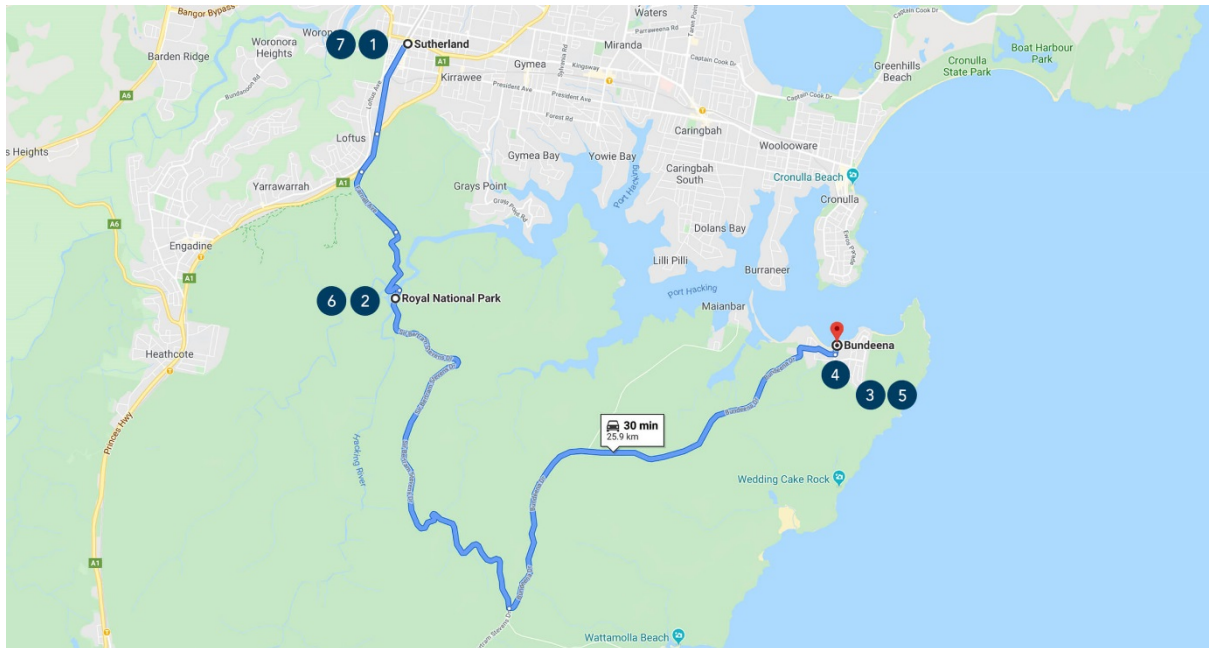
## Park Connections

4.45 p.m. Park Connections Bus Operations presentation by Tony Walker from Park Connections.

Initial Trial was for three Bus Services. The service from Otford Railway Station is suspended due to lack of patronage. The three services are and were as follows.

### Park Connections 1

#### Route 1 Sutherland to Bundeena including Coast Track via Audley



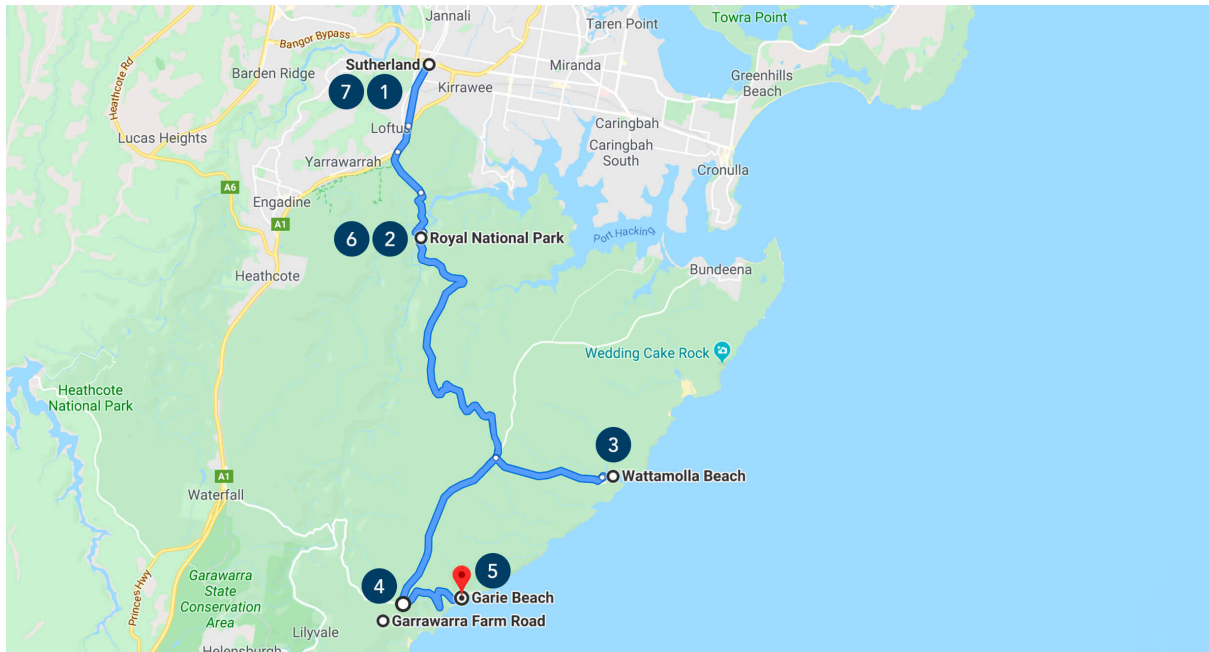
Begins with a Bundeena Wharf 6.40 a.m., Coast Track Bundeena 6.45 a.m. Sutherland 7.35 Mondays to Fridays and then runs every 2 hours beginning at Sutherland at 8.00 a.m. operating as follows:

Sutherland, Audley, Coast Track Bundeena, Bundeena Wharf, Coast Track Bundeena, Audley, Sutherland.

Last run 6.00p.m.

### Park Connections 2

#### Route 2 Sutherland to Wattamolla and Garie Beaches via Audley

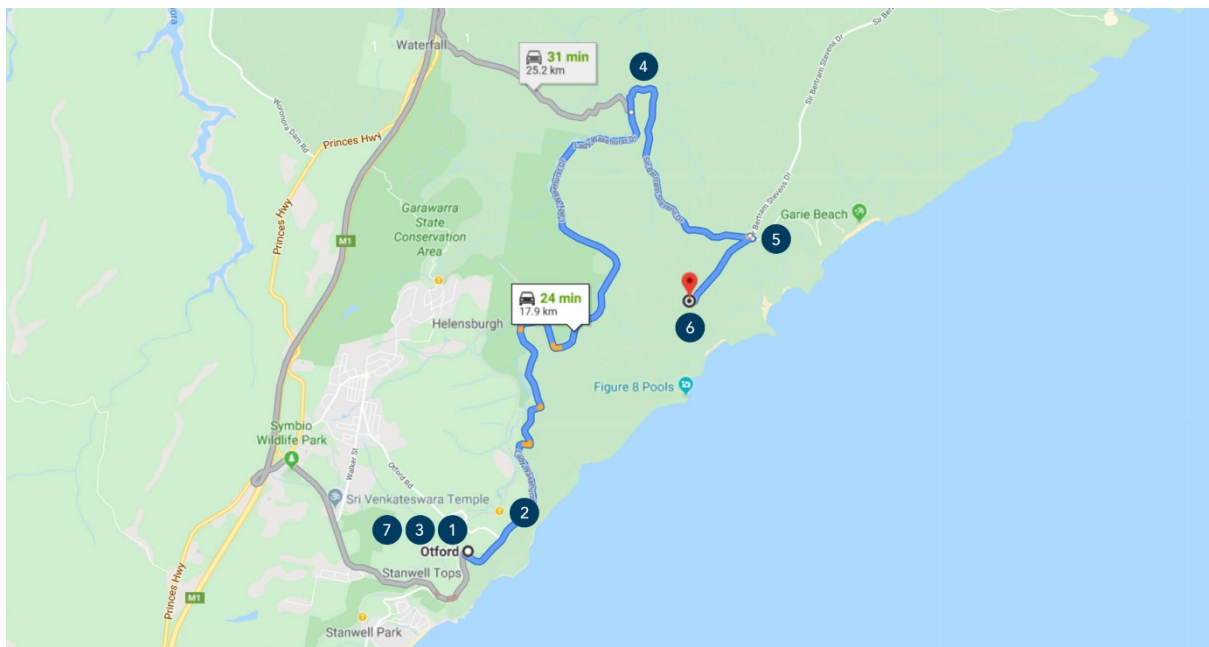


Begins Sutherland and runs every 2 hours beginning at 9.00 a.m. and finishing at 7.00p.m. Sutherland, Audley, Wattamolla, Garie, Garrawarra Farm Carpark, Audley, Sutherland.

### Park Connections 3 Suspended Service

Route 3 Sutherland to Wattamolla and Garie Beaches via Audley

Otford Railway Station, Otford Lookout, Otford Railway Station, Lady Carrington Drive, Garrawarra Road, Garrawarra Farm Carpark, Otford Railway Station



7 trips beginning 7.50 a.m., 9.20a.m., 10.50a.m., 12.20p.m., 15.20p.m., 16.50p.m., 18.20p.m.

Cost \$9.00 single and \$15 day pass.

Bookings recommended. Book online at Park Connections.

You may also be able to buy a ticket on the bus if there are seats available.

A comment was made from the floor of the meeting on the seemingly lack of local, (and wider?) advertising / promotion of the service. --Tony Walker acknowledged the comment. Adrian Johnstone also replied that the topic was being discussed within NPWS to see if assistance to the promotion of the service could be given.

#### 5.05 p.m. Park Report

Adrian Johnstone gave a report on recent NPWS work.

- Fires began in the State in September 2019 at Glenn Innes and staff rollout of branches. By November staff rollout began using Canadians and Americans  
Despite the concerns of Royal National Park Closures it was only closed for two days which corresponded to catastrophic fire warnings.  
Fire fighting continued until late January.  
Section 44 Shane Fitzsimmons in charge of all operations  
US fire fighters present in Australia for 30 days.  
Two different approaches to firefighting  
Australian technique is a scorched earth approach by back burning towards the fire front. Control line established and back burn towards the fire.  
Canadian Technique uses direct attack and hoses.

Wollemi Pines saved using control lines, pre hazard reduction burns and then by firefighters dropped into the area igniting a back burning towards fire front as the fire approached. The fire as a result went around the area of concern.

- Adrian advised the following proposed hazard reduction burns for 2020  
They are Artillery Hill, Warumbul Ridge, East Maianbar, Woodfield Avenue Bundeena  
SFAZ south of Bonnie Vale.  
Goarra Ridge north of John Paul Village Heathcote East  
Tramline  
Beauty Point, Georges River  
Illawong GRNP
- Staff Changes  
New Rangers Staff: Jodie McGill and Mel Keith
- Storm Damage Hail impacts in main office
- Hurstville Office closes. Staff now located at Parramatta
- Mobile Assets Unit led by Michael Vader now transferred to Royal National Park Audley Office
- Consultancy Review of Environmental Factors on Wattamolla track to the beach
- Warumbul House filming up to and including October

At this point Neville Bethe advised that the house had been broken into and was vandalised and now in a very poor state.

- Police have a trail bike unit

#### Website

Dave Robson gave a report on the website, volunteer update and volunteering as follows. Prior to input from Dave the website was facing collapse. There was no administrator and no one knew how access codes or how to manage it.

Robin Thebe who is a local website developer under the business name of WordPress Guru was engaged and the new website was running within 6 weeks. Our web-site sub-committee are most pleased with the outcome.

The main focus of the website is to encourage volunteering and in particular those people interested in bush-care.

The website contains a volunteer calendar, litter clean-up dates, guided walks and bird watching activities.

See:-

<https://www.friendsofroyal.org.au/>

Notice was given of track trimming event at Jibbon Head Loop track Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March beginning at 9.00 a.m. at the corner of Eric Street and the entrance to Jibbon Beach.

#### Volunteers Update

The NPWS website can be described as clunky. The Royal National Park is not exhibited. Three times this has been chased up and the section displaying all volunteer activities in the state is outside the control Gaylene Harris. Friends of Royal wants to see the Royal National Park added to the NPWS website under volunteer activities.

#### VIP Royal National Park Volunteering

All volunteers in the Royal National Park now register under the heading of Royal Bushies Banner for bush care or track trimming.

#### Events

*To attend any of the following activities please register through the event calendar*

<https://www.friendsofroyal.org.au/volunteer/volunteer-calendar/>

*Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 9am...Track Trimming ....Jibbon Headland Track.....meet at the entrance to Jibbon Beach*

*Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 9am ....clearing Prickly Pear from an unnamed RNP headland on the south side of Port Hacking.....access by boat.... meeting point details will be provided on registration (picture shows outbreak)*

*Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 8.30am.....guided walk....birds and other fauna.....8.30am Wattle Forest then Lady Carrington Drive.....register and details will be sent out*

*Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 9.00am....guided walk ...plants.... register and details will be sent out*

*Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 9.00am....litter collection ....Wattamolla*

## **General Business**

Emu Trackers presentation by Sandra Lloyd

Emu Trackers is a not for profit group run by volunteers. It stages guided walks and tours for paying customers. It operates worldwide in North America Europe and Asia and has won a gold medal for Adventure Tourism.

Emu Tracker activities use public transport and typical activities might originate at Sydney Terminal Train Station and return as a day trip by 6.00p.m. Costs would be \$79 for a day trip. Saturday Walks in the Royal National Park are 12km in length depending on the clientele. The Sunday walk in the Royal National Park from Otford begins there with the arrival of the train at 9.30 a.m.

Money is donated to charities by the Emu Trackers and in Australia to the Indigenous Literary Foundation and UNICEF Australia.

Heritage Day at Govinda Valley Wendy Saunders

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. at Govinda Valley 51 Lady Carrington Road Otford. Entry \$25 inclusive of lunch and talks. Bookings via Eventbrite. Refund Policy

Contact the organiser to request a refund. Eventbrite's fee is nonrefundable. Cost \$27.46

Meeting closed at 6.00 p.m.