

FOKE



FRIENDS OF
KU-RING-GAI
ENVIRONMENT

2015 FOKE Heritage Festival Event
in association with the National Trust's Heritage Festival



Annie Wyatt Walk



Tree Lovers' Civic League planting 1949. Courtesy National Trust of Australia (NSW) Archives.

Sunday 3 May, 2015

Ticket Office
Gordon Railway Station
Gordon, NSW, Australia
10am-12 noon

Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment was formed in 1994 to defend and promote Ku-ring-gai's cultural and natural heritage.

Annie Forsyth Wyatt

Annie Wyatt [1885-1961] grew up in Rooty Hill in the 1890s where she witnessed the ‘wanton destruction’ of its trees, bushland, forests and fine colonial houses. This profoundly affected her for the rest of her life.

Annie led a conventional and comfortable life as a married woman living in Gordon with two young children. However one day in 1927 she was outraged by a Ku-ring-gai Council garbage truck dumping rubbish into a bushland valley near her Gordon home. She gathered her neighbours – Mrs Edith Bradfield, wife of John Job Crew Bradfield Sydney Harbour Bridge engineer and Mrs Ada Holman wife of former NSW Premier William Holman, to discuss what she could do. This spurred her on to form the **Ku-ring-gai Tree Lovers’ Civic League to defend and promote Ku-ring-gai’s** natural heritage. The League went on to protest against the dumping of rubbish in bushland, the clearing of trees on newly subdivided blocks and selling publically owned bushland. It contributed to saving bushland at Balls Head Reserve on Sydney Harbour, Palm Beach, Cottage Point, and in the Royal National Park.

In 1934 the St Ives Blue Gum High Forest at Dalrymple Hay Forest on Mona Vale Road, St Ives was under threat from subdivision. Annie and her husband formed a fundraising committee to purchase the land and pressured Ku-ring-gai Council to **making a contribution**. **This St Ives Blue Gum High Forest remains one of Sydney’s** most significant remnants of Blue Gum High Forest left. The Ku-ring-gai community was again galvanised to save this unique and precious forest when it was again threatened with development from 2004-2007.

For twenty years Annie actively supported the Prisoners Aid Association of NSW and was **president of its women’s section from 1938-1941**. During World War 2 Annie was president of the Gordon Branch of the Red Cross.

At the Australian Forest League’s ‘Save our Trees’ Conference in November 1944, Annie Wyatt moved a motion to form an organisation similar to the English National Trust. This was passed by acclamation. In April 1945 the National Trust of Australia (NSW) was formed. The ‘**Tree Mayor of Ku-ring-gai**’, Cresswell O’Reilly chaired its first provisional committee. Annie served on the National Trust’s Council from its official foundation on 5 November 1947 until her death and was vice-president from 1951-61. **The National Trust campaigned vigorously after WW2 to save Sydney’s** Hyde Park Barracks and Mint Building in Macquarie Street from demolition.

Annie Wyatt, an unashamed ‘ardent tree lover’. She left Gordon to live in St Ives in the 1950s to ‘get closer to the bushland and away from the concrete and bulldozers’. She rejected the notion of ‘progress’ that emerged as the dominant ethos after WW2. **Annie efforts to protect Sydney’s natural and built heritage through the establishment of the National Trust establishes the claim that Ku-ring-gai is the birthplace of the Australian environment movement.**

Timeline — Annie Forsyth Wyatt

- 1885 A.F. Wyatt: Annie Wyatt born at a time when there was deep concern about the loss of many of Australia's forests, including those in Ku-ring-gai.
born
- 1890 5 yrs old Railway comes to North Shore.
- 1891 6 yrs old Annie Forsyth Evans's family moves to rural and forested areas of Rooty Hill.
- 1894 9 yrs old Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park opens.
- 1900 15 yrs old Bubonic Plague in Sydney establishes a Royal Commission.
- 1901 16 yrs old Federation of Australia.
- 1902 17yrs old Australian women are first in the world to vote in their nation's elections.
- 1910 25 yrs old Concern about many native birds and wildflowers facing extinction.
- 1913 28 yrs old Annie Forsyth Evans & Ivor Bertie Wyatt marry at Manly.
- 1914 29 yrs old Australian Red Cross formed. Annie's 3 younger brothers serve in WW1.
- 1915 30 yrs old NSW Branch of Forest League formed. Deep concern about clearing of forests. Annie's first child Ivor Forsyth Wyatt born. Later her daughter Lynette is born.
- 1926 41 yrs old Annie moves to Gordon and builds house at 26 Park Avenue. Neighbours include Ada Holman, wife of former Labor/Nationalist Premier, Dr Bradfield who designed the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Professor Waterhouse of 'Eryldene'.
- 1927 42 yrs old Annie founds the Ku-ring-gai Tree Lovers' Civic League. Branches are formed in other areas including Lane Cove, Mosman and Orange.
- 1931 46 yrs old Balls Head, on Sydney Harbour is reserved.
- 1932 47 yrs old Opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. NSW Premier Jack Lang later dismissed for defying Commonwealth ruling on repayment of overseas loans.
- 1934 49 yrs old Annie Wyatt campaigns to raise funds to purchase 11.5 acres to prevent subdivision of Dalrymple Hay Forest, Mona Vale Road, St Ives.
- 1937 52 yrs old NSW Government recommendation to demolish Hyde Park Barracks, Macquarie Street, Sydney.
- 1938 53 yrs old Australia's Sesquicentenary. Annie is president of the Women's Prisoners' Aid Association of NSW from 1938-1941.
- 1939 54 yrs old Australia declares war on Germany.
- 1942 56 yrs old Three midget submarines enter Sydney Harbour.
- 1944 59 yrs old 'Save the Trees, Conserve Our Forests' Conference. Annie Wyatt's motion to form the National Trust is passed by acclamation.
- 1945 60 yrs old National Trust of Australia (NSW) formed. Chaired by Cresswell O'Reilly.
- 1958 63 yrs old Ivor Bertie Wyatt, Annie's husband dies at St Ives.
- 1960 75 yrs old Annie awarded an OBE for historic preservation and conservation.
- 1961 76 yrs old Annie Forsyth Wyatt dies.

FUTURE EVENTS

Allen Strom—a remarkable Chief Guardian of Fauna

SATURDAY 20 JUNE, 2015

10am-12 pm **Cost \$35**

Bookings essential. Course No: 52WK099 Contact WEA, SYDNEY, Ph: (02) 9264 2781
info@weasydney.nsw.edu.au www.weasydney.com.au

Let's Get Serious About Habitat *Wildthings Talkfest*

SUNDAY 19 JULY, 2015 from 12 noon

Turrumurra Masonic Hall, Pacific Hwy, Turrumurra www.wildthings.org.au

Annie Wyatt & the Conservationists of the National Trust

SATURDAY 27 JUNE 10.30am-11.30 am

Northcott Function Centre, 1 Fennell Street, North Parramatta. Bookings essential. Contact (02) 9635 8149 or ogh@nationaltrust.com.au Cost: \$15

Myles Dunphy—Bushwalker Extrordinaire

SATURDAY 29 AUGUST 10 am-12 pm

Cost: \$35 Bookings essential. Contact WEA, SYDNEY, Ph: (02) 9264 2781

Eryldene Open Weekends on 2nd weekend of every month from April to September

JOIN FOKE — Ku-ring-gai's environment needs you!

FOKE Membership Form

Name (incl title)

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of Home Address:

.....

Suburb:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

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Hereby applies for membership of Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment Inc. (FOKE). In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the rules of the Association for the time being in force.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

Membership Fee

Annually January—December

Ordinary

\$10

Concession (student/senior citizen)

\$ 5

Donation

Amount enclosed

Date received:

Date admitted:

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