



Lookout, here's a top shelf view, and a very nice beacon

Secret Spaces Hidden Places

A micro adventure for a sky high view

If you've ever driven down Warringah Road, and noticed the brown sign pointing to 'Governor Philip Lookout,' this could be the mini detour you've never taken but should.

It's a micro adventure for sure - as the route to the lookout is no more than a ten minute walk from the carpark. But on a sunny, windless day, it's also a gateway to a perfect picnic spot at 155 metres above sea level.

The four-hectare reserve overlooks the coastline of Manly, towards the eastern beaches and city, plus neighbouring leafy suburbs. While the reserve boasts a 360-degree radius, growing trees block some of the outlooks,

but it still gives a sense of the sprawling nature of the northern beaches suburbs and beyond.

The lookout is named after Governor Arthur Phillip, whose gold bust greets you in the stone archway at the start of the path. Some of the 17th century bricks seen here were even transplanted from his birthplace in Hampshire, England and presented here in 1991.

Phillip is credited with the first overland exploration from Manly to Pittwater in April 1788. According to the Northern Beaches Council, Phillip led a group westward to try to find the source of water supplying Middle Harbour, but

how close the group actually came to Beacon Hill is still up for debate. Much of the route he took can be seen from the top of the lookout today.

Once you enter the stone archway, you'll find yourself on a gentle pathway and stairs, surrounded by tangled trees and the sound of birds. The path leads to an open grassy mound on sandstone heath at the top, scattered with a few benches for a place to rest.

The open area is your picnic spot for the afternoon. Or if you time it right - your sunrise or sunset viewing post, with vantage points both east and west.

Did you know...

There is a trigonometrical beacon (also known as a fixed surveying station) still standing at the top of the lookout that was first installed in 1881. This spot gave 'Beacon Hill' its name and is still used to aid with navigation and surveying. Today, many locals use the spot to survey the New Years Eve fireworks!

How to get there

Heading east on Warringah Road, you'll see a brown sign post for 'Governor Phillips Lookout,' just past Beacon Hill Reserve. The lookout has a small car park at the base of the walk that can accommodate up to six cars. Or if you're travelling by bus, hop on route 174X, which travels north from Wynyard station, with a stop at the base of the path.

Have a great spot you think should be featured?
Email us at mail@thetawnyfrogmouth.com.au

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