



Fun fact, Australia's first surfer Tommy Walker once lived in these huts.

### Secret Spaces Hidden Places

## Historic huts with priceless views on the Spit to Manly walk

Along one of Sydney's most iconic walks, the Spit to Manly, are historic relics with million-dollar views - hidden in plain sight.

These rustic odes to decades past are easily missed if you don't take a minute to admire the ocean from Dobroyd Head, the highest point on the trail. But look hard enough, and you'll see a spattering of seven fishermen huts tucked into the eastern end of Crater Cove.

These huts, constructed from corrugated iron, stone and wood were built as early as 1923, originally used by fishermen, and then later as residential houses, particularly during the Great Depression period. As more huts were built, as late as the 1960s, it was also reported the homes were used by artists and others who loved the view, despite the lack of running water.

The huts were occupied as late as the 1980s, until the area was declared a National

Park and the National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) served eviction notices to residents giving them 28 days to move out of the premises.

On a rare sighting, the door of one of the huts was open and I was able to take a peek inside to see a glimpse of the past. It was as if time stopped after the eviction, as the huts remained intricately decorated with bottles and buoys and even tea towels, bowls and mugs were laid out inside.

The precarious location of the huts, perched on the seaside cliffs mean they are exposed to the elements and as such, become more dilapidated every year. Yet designated NPWS caretakers have been looking after the huts since the 1990s and despite discouraging visitors (there is no signage to get to the huts), they are fairly well maintained albeit some local support lobbying for greater historic care.

While the Spit to Manly is scenic enough, this offshoot adventure is an interesting piece of Sydney heritage, worth keeping your eye out for - whether you peer down from Dobroyd or detour off the main path. Just remember to be respectful to the people preserving it and stay safe on the unofficial trails.

### Did you know...

On Getty Images, you can find a picture of Simon Flynn, one of the last reported residents of the buildings, who lived there for 19 years until he was served an eviction notice by the NPWS, according to a report by Andrew Taylor for Fairfax Media. While the residents did challenge the eviction notice and try to argue ownership of the land, the High Court upheld the decision.

Have a great spot you think should be featured?  
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