



BUSHLAND NEWS

*KATANDRA BUSHLAND SANCTUARY NEWSLETTER
Summer 2020*

Best wishes for the New Year.

The summer of 2019/2020 has not been a good one for the Australian environment. The extreme drought continues to grip much of the nation and the wildfires have decimated huge areas of bushland. Our thoughts are with all those affected by both the drought and the fires. Fortunately, the north eastern areas of Sydney appear to have escaped the worst of these events, for this year at least. This said, the bushland in Katandra is still extremely dry and could do with some good rainfalls soon.

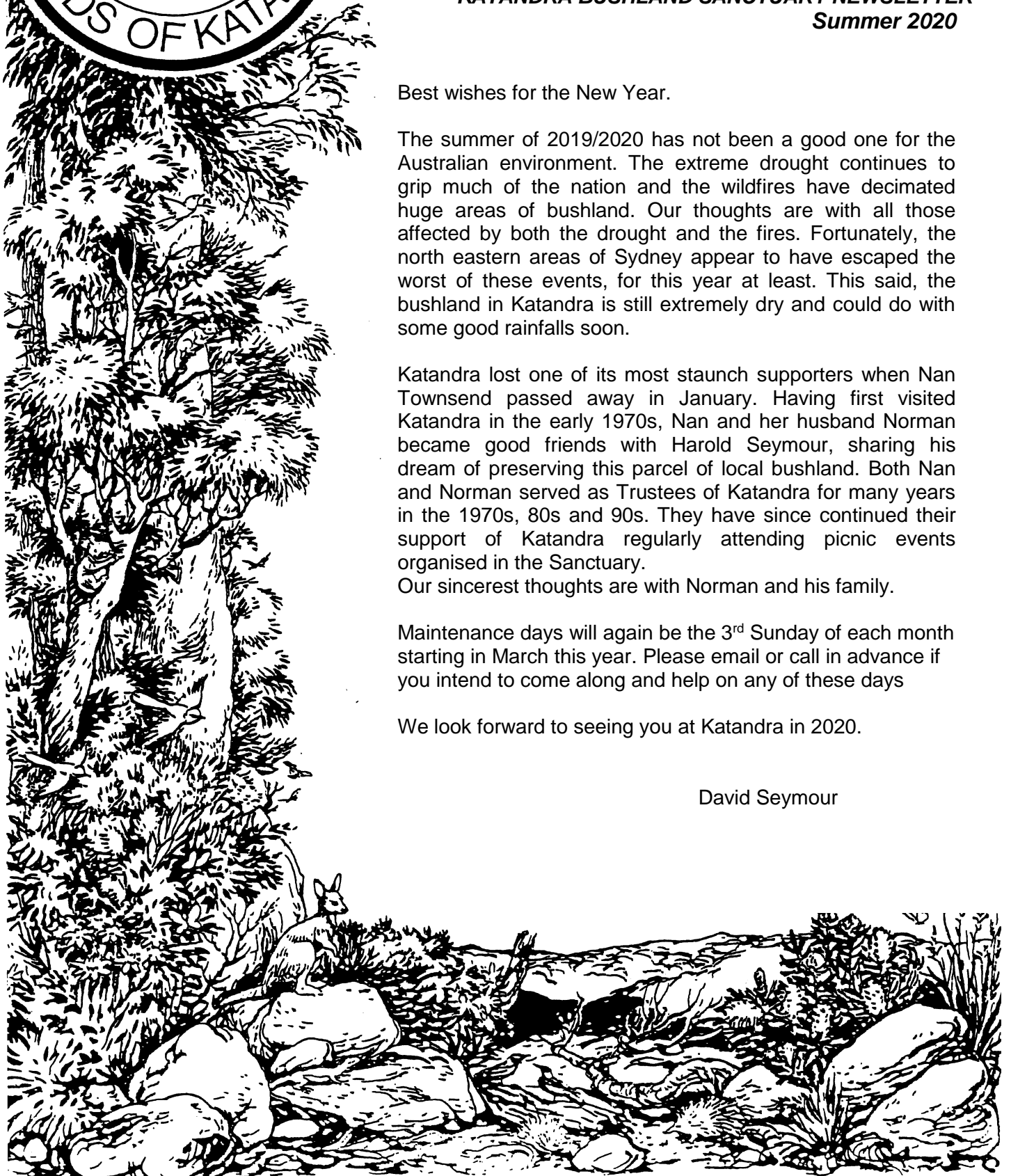
Katandra lost one of its most staunch supporters when Nan Townsend passed away in January. Having first visited Katandra in the early 1970s, Nan and her husband Norman became good friends with Harold Seymour, sharing his dream of preserving this parcel of local bushland. Both Nan and Norman served as Trustees of Katandra for many years in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. They have since continued their support of Katandra regularly attending picnic events organised in the Sanctuary.

Our sincerest thoughts are with Norman and his family.

Maintenance days will again be the 3rd Sunday of each month starting in March this year. Please email or call in advance if you intend to come along and help on any of these days

We look forward to seeing you at Katandra in 2020.

David Seymour



Vale Nan Townsend

Katandra lost one of its staunchest supporters when Nan Townsend passed away in January, aged 98.

Nan first visited Katandra in the early 1970s with husband Norman and immediately fell in love with the place. She had a wonderful knowledge of the plants having completed a wildflower course at Ryde Horticultural College and an advanced course at the Royal Botanic Gardens. She did a lot of what she called “the women’s work” – keeping the weeds out.



Nan was appointed to the Katandra Bushland Sanctuary Trust in 1979, a position she continued in for 20 years. She also wrote the Sanctuary’s regular Ranger Reports for 15 years up until her retirement from the Trust.

Nan was a special person with a wonderful, often described as dry, sense of humour. The story about “Nan’s boys” (see next article) typifies her sharp mind and the sense of humour she always had. On her retirement from the Trust an article in the Manly Daily titled “**The lady who went bush**” began -

‘Nan Townsend is not a “nice little old lady” – she is an old lady with attitude. The dynamic Bayview individualist doesn’t suffer fools and knows what she wants and what she doesn’t.’

In the article she did not disclose her age, just saying that she was “a bit over 40 – that’s a good bit”.

Katandra is still a beautiful example of local bushland today because of the dedication of people like Nan.

Nan will be sorely missed



Nan and Norman Townsend in Katandra

Nan’s Boys

Nan Townsend was on the gate at Katandra welcoming visitors to the Sanctuary not long after the bush fire in 1994. It was almost closing time and three young boys, 17 or 18 years old, arrived in what she described as an “old clap trap car”. They got out and wanted to go for a walk. Her first thought was “here we go, marijuana is going to be planted”. Nan said to them that they were arriving very late, the Sanctuary was closing soon and that they would have to be out in half an hour. Any way the half an hour was up and there was no sign of them. Judy Abell, who was also there, went down the track and finally rounded them up. On her return she told Nan that they were found off the walking track. Nan wasn’t happy. “I told you not to go off the path young monkeys.”

One of the young boys replied “I was photographing some orchids”
She wasn’t going to take that feeble excuse, so she thought she’d test him.

She said “oh you know that we’ve got ironbark orchids here as well”

“Oh” the boy replied “Dendrobium aemulum, have you?”

Nan was floored, in her words “he squashed me”
But not to be outdone, Nan fired back “you’ve no right to go off the paths, for this the three of you have got to have punishment”.

Being after the fire there was a lot of repair work to be done in the Sanctuary, so Nan told them

“Next Sunday all these sleepers here have to be carried down into the sanctuary. That’s your punishment, for next Sunday”. Then she added “I’ll provide a bbq lunch if you come”

After they left Nan didn’t think she would see them again. But the next Sunday, down they came - “here we are Nan!”

Their names were Mat, Mat and Dom. For some reason Nan called them Dot, Dot and Dash. In Nan’s words - “They arrived in this awful old car, but they were gorgeous. They did in one Sunday what would have taken us a month or more to do. And they came down faithfully each Sunday for the next few weeks and were just so helpful. Dot, Dot and Dash became known as “Nan’s boys”.

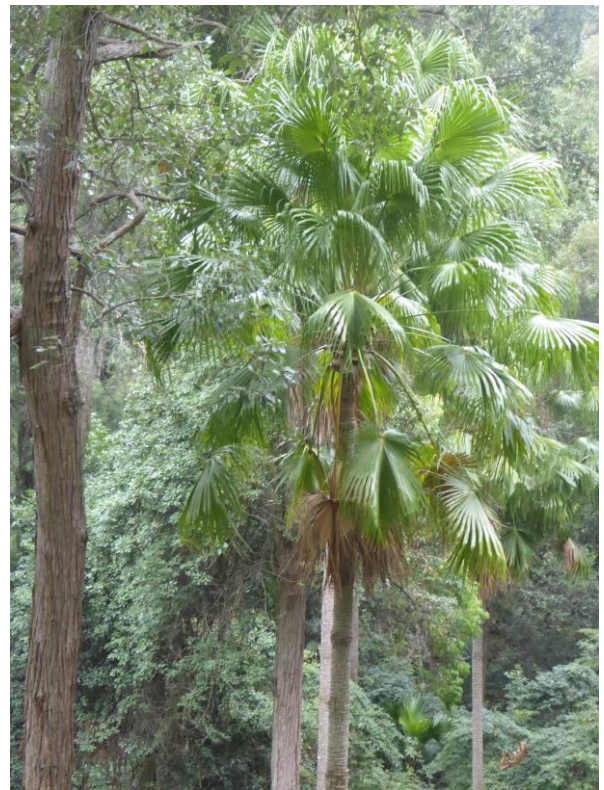
Livistona australis (Cabbage Tree palm)

Palm trees belong to the Arecaceae family of monocotyledons, with large evergreen leaves that are usually either palmately (fan-leaved) or pinnately (feather-leaved) compound. These leaves, known as fronds, grow in a spiral arrangement from the top of an unbranched stem. Like all monocotyledons, palm trees lack a lateral meristem (cambium) that allows for continual growth in diameter, hence the rather narrow, cylindrically shaped trunks.

The *Livistona* genus of palms are fan palms native to Asia, Australasia and the Horn of Africa. Species endemic to Australia include *L. alfredii* (Millstream Fan palm), *L. australis* (Cabbage Tree palm), *L. nitida* (Carnarvon Fan palm) and *L. humilis* (Sand palm).

Livistona australis or Cabbage Tree palm, grows along the east coast of Australia from southern Queensland through New South Wales to northern Victoria. It thrives in moist sclerophyll forests and rainforest margins and is one of Australia’s tallest native plants, growing to a height of up to 30 metres. The Cabbage Tree Palm is the only *Livistona* species growing in Katandra.

The fronds are up to 4 metres in length with short black curved spines towards the proximal end.



Livistona australis in Katandra

The leaf blade is costapalmate with the frond stem extending to form a midrib (costa) into the leaf blade.

Many palms are said to be “self-cleaning” as the dead spent fronds drop from the trunk to the ground. One of the characteristic features of Cabbage Tree palm is that the dead, brown fronds tend to be retained for some time, almost forming a skirt hanging down from the crown of the trunk. Below this the trunk is naked and relatively narrow, bearing leaf scars along its 30 to 40 cm diameter length. Cabbage Tree palms are dioecious meaning that individual plants are either male or female. Clusters of creamy yellow flowers form on branching inflorescences in summer. Only female Cabbage Tree Palms bear fruit, round and red, turning black when ripe.

New growth at the top of the tree, known as the cabbage, is sweet and edible, able to be cooked or eaten raw. The heart of the trunk has been cooked as a medicine to ease a sore throat. The fronds have been used for weaving, thatched roofing and making hats. The fibrous bark used to be made into fishing line by native peoples.

When fire swept through Katandra in 1979, Nan and Norman Townsend used the burned remnants of Cabbage Tree fronds to make numerous attractive pendants (see picture left) which were given to fellow supporters of Katandra.

Katandra website: www.katandra.org

KATANDRA BUSHLAND SANCTUARY

Foley's Hill, Lane Cove Rd, Ingleside NSW
Department of Lands Reserve No 86487
Founder: the late Harold Alfred Seymour
Managed by Katandra Bushland Sanctuary Trust.
Phone: 0431857407

OPEN: Every Sunday: July, August, September,
October

HOURS: 10 am — 4 pm

ADMISSION: \$3 donation

KATANDRA BUSHLAND SANCTUARY TRUST PO Box 365 Mona Vale NSW 1660

President: David Seymour
Vice-President: David James
Secretary: (acting) David Seymour
Treasurer: Peter Hammond
Minutes Secretary: David Malin
Bushland News Editor: Marita Macrae

(Cover Design by the late Walter Cunningham)

**Enquiries: phone 0431857407 or by email
information@katandra.org**

Volunteers are needed

If you can assist on maintenance days or with
welcoming visitors to Katandra on open days,
please phone 0431857407

DIARY DATES 2020

SAUSAGE SIZZLE

Sunday 3rd May, 12 noon

Enjoy a sausage sandwich and
drinks provided by the Trust.

FOUNDER'S DAY

Sunday 16th August, 12 noon

Bring your lunch to cook on the wood burning
BBQs. The trust will provide 'dessert', drinks, tea
and coffee.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Sunday 6th December, 4.30 pm

Cold meats, drinks and salads are provided, but
please feel free to bring along some sweets or
savouries to share before or after. Also enter the
raffle to win one of Ruth's sort-after Christmas
cakes.

SANCTUARY MAINTENANCE 2020

(3rd Sunday March–November)

9 am Sunday 15 March

9 am Sunday 19 April

9 am Sunday 17 May

9 am Sunday 21 June

9 am Sunday 19 July

9 am Sunday 20 September

9 am Sunday 18 October

9 am Sunday 15 November

PUBLIC OPEN DAYS 2020

Each Sunday of July–October

10 am – 4 pm

Katandra Bushland Sanctuary Trust
PO Box 365 Mona Vale NSW 1660