



HSNT DAY TRIP TO CHANNEL ISLAND LEPROSARIUM AND MIDDLE ARM 25 JULY 2020

BY BEV PHELTS

Eleven vehicles and 26 trekkers met at the Elizabeth River Bridge carpark and drove along the track towards the Middle Arm Aboriginal use site. We then walked about a kilometre to a site where we saw petroglyphs, very unusual in the Top End, and several large shell middens



petroglyphs



Morning tea at Middle Arm



Greg Freeman & Janet Elliott



Jane Munday & Christine Tarbett-Buckley



Kate Bell & Wendy Asche



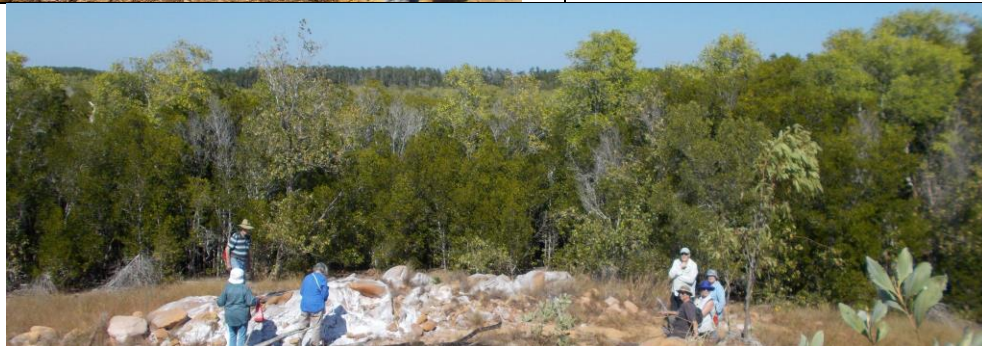
Penny Baird, Ron Innes & Julie Mastin



Peter Siebert



Sue Ridgwell, Libby Siebert, Janie Mason, Derek Pugh



Lunch was at the Channel Island boat ramp car park and then we headed to the abandoned Channel Island Leprosarium site. In 1884, the site was the Territory's first quarantine station. Its hospital and facilities were completed in 1914. In 1931, the site and buildings were converted to a leprosarium which operated until 1955. At the end of its time, most of its buildings were dismantled and moved elsewhere. There was also evidence that the area was used by Defence during World War 2.

The site is very overgrown with only a couple of corrugated iron huts still standing. Two sweet possums had made their home in one of them. Foundations of buildings were still very visible with several sets of stairs that led to nowhere. The jetty had been built with stone and covered in concrete but much of the concrete had crumbled away. Metal beds, chairs and cabinets were scattered in the bush. A pleasant find was a beautiful stone and brick fire place complete with chimney.



Corrugated iron hut



Metal bed inside the hut



The stone and concrete jetty



Metal chair and bed



Stone and brick fire place



Metal toilet - flaming fury with a sea view



Steps that led to nowhere



Foundations from the quarantine station

Participants:

Matt & Earl James, Brian & Lyn Reid, Derek Pugh & son, Ron, Libby & Peter Siebert, Sue Ridgwell, Janie Mason, Ted Whiteaker, Gus Withnall, Ian Anderson, Bev Phelts, Alan Mitchell, Janet Elliott, Greg Freeman, Jane Munday, Christine Tarbett-Buckley, Kevin Coonan, Wendy Asche, Andrew & Kate Bell, Julie Mastin, Ron Innes & Penny Baird

Thanks to Matt James and Brian Reid for organising the trip and doing all the reccie runs that went before it.

Further reading:

Northern Territory Government Fact Sheet, "Channel Island Leprosarium and Reefs", October 2011

Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife, "Channel Island Conservation Reserve Management Plan", December 1997