



## PENSHURST RSL TRAVEL CLUB NORMAN LINDSAY GALLERY THURSDAY 12 MARCH 2020

Showers around this morning, but wouldn't prove to be a problem. Only 25 of us today and Geoff from Hopkinsons Coaches was our driver. Departure was at 8.30 am, but it took 30 mins just to reach Greenacre! However, once on the M4, it was easy travelling to the Glenbrook Visitor Information Centre for a short comfort stop. Some of us made good use of this time by purchasing from their great little shop.

We'd arrived at Norman Lindsay's home at Faulconbridge (Springwood) by 10.15 am and our first priority was the pre-ordered morning tea in their charming cafe. Wow, what fabulous homemade scones along with a wonderful blackcurrant or blackberry jam (not sure which) and a clotted-style cream. They also treated us to tea of our choice or a barista coffee. Highly recommend.

Paul, the gallery's guide, gave a brief talk before introducing us to Norman's etching and drawing studios where he had spent so much of his life. There was time to wander the immediate garden, admiring the risqué sculptures that the artist is so famous for. Most of these were completed between 1920 and 1940, but he was still sculpting until shortly before his death in 1969 at the age of 91. His method was applying wet cement to a metal frame, and his wife, Rose Soady, was his model for the legendary nymphs that feature so prominently.

Then it was time to view the main house which was built from 1898, but discovered by Norman and Rose in a dilapidated and overgrown state in 1912 and purchased by Rose at the end of that year. Renovations and several additions were made over the years and, shortly before he died, Norman made the decision to bequest the property to the National Trust of Australia which purchased it in December 1970. Sadly, but understandably, we weren't permitted to take photos inside any of the buildings, but the garden wasn't a problem.

After our coach "bottomed out" at the driveway exit, Geoff was forced to reverse all the way back to the entrance, not an easy feat! A good half an hour's drive from Faulconbridge to Leura, 1½ hours had been set aside that afternoon to purchase lunch (at own cost) and browse the quaint shops. Having visited for morning tea a few years back, we thought we'd try our luck at Bygone Beautys Teapot Museum for lunch, but very sadly it was closed. Apparently, only open three days per week and Thursday is not one of them! Outside the "Loaves & The Dishes" was a guy spruiking the benefits of his café, so many of us ended up in there. The food and drinks were excellent.

We left Leura at 2.45 pm and Geoff suggested a quick stop at the Three Sisters at Echo Point in adjacent Katoomba. [*Aboriginal dream-time legend has it that three sisters, 'Meehni', 'Wimlah' and 'Gunnedoo' lived in the Jamison Valley as members of the Katoomba tribe. ... The brothers were not happy to accept this law and so decided to use force to capture the three sisters causing a major tribal battle.*] Currently, the lookout is dominated by massive hoarding panels concealing the impressive upgrades due to be finalised by August this year, however it was still possible to take in the wonderful views. Such a popular spot, but not overly crowded today and no sign of where the recent bushfires had been. In fact, we didn't see any fire damage all day. Amazing when you consider the amount of bush in that vast area and the many, many homes that are completely tucked away.



An uneventful drive home, with Nadeen and Beverley winning the Lucky Seat vouchers, and we were back in Peshurst by 4.45 pm. It had been a very pleasant way to spend the day.