

## Wollongong Botanic Gardens Mid-week drive.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

It was the usual meeting place for our south coast events , Maccas at the junction of Heathcote Road and the Princes Highway, Heathcote.

Where would we be without our Maccas????

Around 20 of our participants were on hand at the prescribed time with some electing to drive directly to the Gardens.

After a leisurely drive of approximately 40 minutes (less for some) all arrived safe and sound.



There was certainly an excellent network of paths to explore the 27 hectare site! It overlooks the city of Wollongong from its highest point at the GLENIFFER BRAE MANOR HOUSE and features an impressive collection of native and exotic plants from around the world. The Garden is also home to a range of native wildlife including Bower Birds, RingTail Possums, Kookaburras, native bees etc.

In the 1950s the Hoskins family dedicated a large part of its land to the Wollongong City Council to create a Botanic Garden...as a codicil in his will he stated that the land was never to be sold off. This didn't include Gleniffer Brae which was sold in 1954 to Sydney Church of England Girls Grammar School.

The Botanic Garden was officially opened to the public in January 1971.

By the late 1970s the school at Gleniffer Brae had closed and was added once again to the Botanic Garden site.

Members were given a guided tour, by buggy at no charge for 30 to 40 minutes.....and our volunteer guide Per produced a very informative commentary for its duration.

Worth a mention is the fact that there are 20 **permanent gardeners** looking after the gardens!



It was good to see Strat making a welcome reappearance, taking time off from his many overseas jaunts!



A picnic lunch followed a relaxing morning tea and was enjoyed by all with most members bringing their own chairs....the weather was a bit humid, however after lunch there was a drop in temperature accompanied by some welcome rain.

Use was made in some instances of the great BBQ facilities and I didn't hear a single complaint about the delicious food on hand....I suppose if one supplies and prepares one's own food there really isn't much room to be unhappy!

Once again a very enjoyable day!



Thanks must once again go to our fearless leader Mark Herz.

Writer: **Willie Gong and contributors.**