

Let's Take a Walk: Fred Hollow's Reserve (Glebe Gully), Randwick

This relatively short, but beautiful walk through Fred Hollow's Reserve, or Glebe Gully, requires a moderate level of fitness to climb the many stairs on the boardwalk. The walk is **430 metres** long and takes about 30 minutes each way with time to stop and get a glimpse of what a paradise the area must have seemed like before it was developed. However, I found it well worthwhile to make the return: a kilometre all up. Take good walking shoes, a hat, sunscreen and a bottle of water.



Entry: is either by a pathway from the end of Bligh Place Randwick or from Alison Road, Randwick (about 150 metres west of Carrington Road on the North side). Both entrances are marked by Randwick City Council signs.

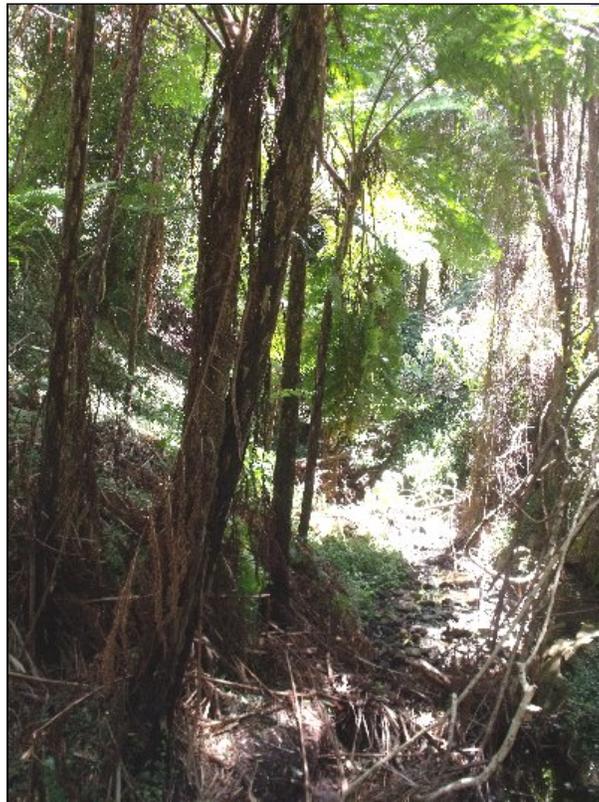
Fred Hollows Reserve is a remarkable survival as the last of the rainforested gullies which once led down from the ridges at Randwick to the Coogee Basin. The area was known as Glebe Gully because in 1857 it was a part of 16 hectares of *Glebe lands* granted to St Marks Church, Darling Point. It was renamed in 1993 in honour of a local resident, eye surgeon and environmentalist, Professor Fred Hollows (1929-97). Hollows became an iconic Australian figure because of his pioneering work repairing the ravages of eye diseases amongst Australian Aborigines and the disadvantaged of several Asian and African countries.

In the late 1970s, local resident opposition to building plans encouraged Randwick Council and other authorities to prevent tower blocks being constructed here.

Rainforest Gully

A track with steps, viewing platforms, bridges and information plaques winds up through a creek-centred gully that is still delightful. At times it is hard to imagine that you are in the centre of one of most densely populated areas of Australia with buildings, only few hundred metres away, hidden by dense foliage. It is a tropical rainforest retreat.

Somehow, a rare gully skink species survived here to be discovered in the 1980s. At the top end, formerly a quarry and then tennis courts, the track crosses a creek often coloured orange by algae from iron deposits, before climbing to Bligh Place where the tower blocks did gain hold.



At the northern end of Fred Hollows Reserve, walk to the end of Bligh Place and turn left into Clovelly Road. Walking in a northerly direction for a 120 metres takes you to Frenchmans Road where there are shops, cafes and a pub where you can relax with a drink after your exertions.

Paul Convy
