

Armidale Bushwalkers



Armidale Bushwalking Club Issue No 10

www.armidalebushwalkers.org phone 6775-2026

Day walk across Cathedral Rock National Park

by David Lawrence

We were a split party, with 1 driving solo from Guyra to Native Dog Rest Camping Area, and the Armidale contingent coming in three cars (needed for the car shuttle) to drop most



off at Barokee. Then cars and drivers headed around to Native Dog. Somewhere on the way James had a puncture and found that his wheelbrace didn't fit his wheel nuts. Luckily, Betty was behind him, with the correct though oddly enough, not her own car! There's a lesson there somewhere. Anyway, a change of tyre and we arrived around Native Dog, dropped two cars, and headed back in one to Barokee.

With the shuttle and the puncture, it was close to 11 before we started walking. The day was fine, with a high overcast and a hint of clouds to the East. We walked the good track

past small granite tors and open grassy woodland of Messmate Stringybark, Mountain Gum, New England Blackbutt and Hill Banksia, with an understorey of Snow Grass and Bracken Fern, and met the southern start of the Cathedral Rock circuit on our right after about 850 metres. Staying on the main track, we walked on for another 1.25 km to the ridge junction for the Cathedral Rock climb.

The smaller track was pretty clear, with directional arrows where it crossed over open rock expanses. However, if you weren't watching for the next arrow, it would be quite easy to find you'd strayed off into some rocky cul-de-sac, or over some cliff edge. We took our time, and were careful of our footing as we crept up between, over and once under the jumbled mass of granite tors that leads up to the summit. The last 15 metres is a matter of hanging onto a chain (which looked strong enough to lift several elephants) while edging around a boulder and up to the top.

The high point is at about 1550 metres, giving a view is almost 360 degrees, with just the top of Round Mountain at 1584 blocking a slice to the southwest. The cloud we'd seen earlier was cloaking Point Lookout and another slice of the horizon to the east, but in between we could pick out many of the landmarks of the Eastern New England-

Chandlers Peak and Mount Duval and the Macleay Valley and

Soon the chilly summit wind blew us back down, and we were glad to hit the junction of the main track to eat our lunches out of the wind. We chatted about other trips- which covered a fair bit of the world , as James, Yuval and Mohammed were visiting from their home countries- plus the bushwalker perennials of best footwear and foodstuffs for walking. We didn't linger long, as our late start meant we soon needed to pack and head on to across the park.

A few hundred metres further, at the northern junction of the track around Cathedral Rock, we passed through a mini-forest of Mountain Honeysuckle, the tall banksia common in the New England. In Spring, you'll see Orchids, Buttercups and Native Violets, especially around the watercourses in these parts. We also saw a weird little plant that looks like a 40 cm Christmas tree- Bushy Clubmoss. It is a something of a relic from early days of the plant kingdom, from before seed plants evolved- but is widespread, and grows happily beside the track in a few places.

An hour or so later, we reached a significant stream divide. Behind us, all the waters flowed south via the Oaky, Chandler and Macleay to enter the Pacific at South West Rocks. In front of us, they ran north via the Guy Fawkes, Boyd, Nymboida and Clarence to meet the Pacific north of Yamba. The divide is crowned with granite tors, piled

up to about 1400 metres at Woolpack Rocks. We had a lazy afternoon tea here, and spread out the map so Penelope could point out Crown Mountain and Nightcap Mountain, near her place about 56 kilometres away to the Nor



Armidale Bushwalkers on Cathedral Rock

NorWest.

Soon we moved on, to skirt the swamps that are a major feature of the park. They are richly endowed with sedges and rushes, including the "Button Grass" so well known to Tasmanian walkers, plus a lovely array of Spring-Summer flowers- Lilies and Pennyworts and Daisies and Forget-Me-Nots and Bluebells- it's a wonderland for those who tread carefully into the soggy stuff. Gradually tiny streamlets appeared, and we crossed Native Dog Creek – just a couple feet wide- to arrive at our cars about 4 o'clock. We farewelled Penelope for her solitary drive home via Guyra and points north, and shuttled around to pick up the lone car at Barokee. Then home by dark after a very pleasant 17 km, our last Autumn walk for 2007.

Cathedral Rock National Park

Maps

1:250 000 Armidale Special SH56-10 Edition 2

(Not needed on the track walks)

1:25000 "Ebor"

1.25000 "Maiden Creek"

NPWS Cathedral Rock (sketch map)

Access

Travel: Armidale-East on Waterfall Way- 68.0 (New England National Park turnoff)– continue - 5- turn left onto Cathedral Rock road- 8- Barokee Rest Area. Total 81 km.

To reach the Native Dog Campground

(ignore turn left onto Cathedral Rock road above)continue on Waterfall Way-2 km- T-junction- turn left onto Guyra road- 7 km- turn left into Cathedral Rock Native Dog campground. Total from Armidale 82 km.

It takes about 1 hour to drive from Armidale to Barokee or Native Dog.

Accommodation

Campsites at both Barokee and Native Dog are well set out, spacious and offer tables, barbecues, tentsites, and toilets. Fees at both rest areas are \$3 per adult and \$2 per child per night. No bookings are required.

Nearby there is Hotel/Motel accommodation in Ebor(about 4 km from the Waterfall Way- Guyra Road junction. Several homestays are also available- contact the Armidale Visitors Centre Armidale Visitor Information Centre 82 Marsh Street Tel: 1800 627 736 Email: avicadm@bigpond.net.au

Walks

Walk Type DW- One Day Walk; BP (3d2n) – Backpack, 3 days, 2 nights; CC (2d2n)- Car Camp, 2 days, 2 nights

Approx Daily Distance S = Short (Less than 10km) ; M = Medium (10-15 km) ; L = Long (15-20 km) ; XL = Extra Long (over 20 km)

Terrain 1 - Graded track,some incline. 2 - Graded track, hills, creek crossings3 - Rough track, steep sections, creek crossings4 - Off track,

moderate terrain 5 - Off track, thick terrain 6 - Rock climbing and exposure

Fitness Level Needed A - Low fitness; B - Moderate fitness; C - Good fitness; D - Good fitness with agility; E - High fitness; F - Strenuous - experienced walkers only!

Track Walks

1. The easy Warrigal Track provides a 1km circuit stroll from the Native Dog Creek Rest Area through dry woodland and granite boulders. Rating DW S 1 A

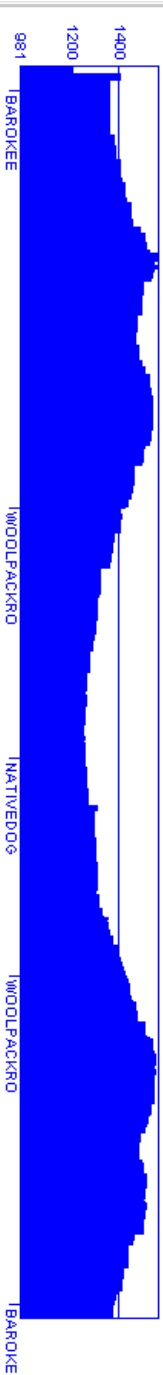
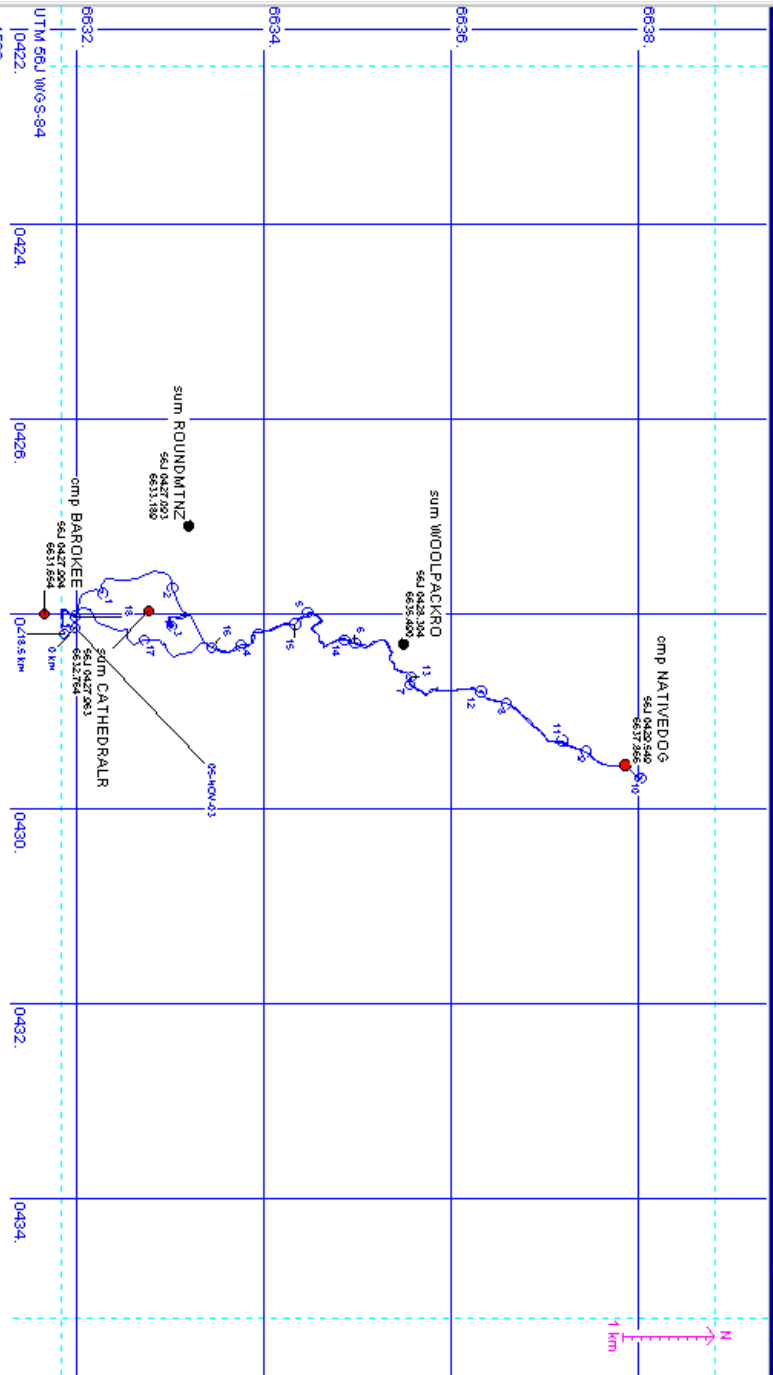
2. The 6 km circuit walk from Barokee Rest Area across wetland and around Cathedral Rock takes about 2½ hours. Rating DW S 2 B

3. The above circuit plus climbing the Rock itself takes about 4 hours. Getting to the summit involves some rock-scrambling, with a 15 metre chain assisting in the last bit. The top at 1550 metres, with only nearby Round Mountain at 1584 metres (highest point between North Queensland and the Australian Alps) blocking a small section of the 360 degree view, is a great place to see a lot of NSW- the 1:250 00 Armidale map is worth spreading out here. Rating DW M 4 D

4. The 10.4 km through walk from Barokee to Native Dog is a moderate (Rating DW M 2 B) with a good surface, a few easy ascents, and the option to climb Cathedral and Woolpack Rocks (the last adds 1 hour).

Information

For more information, contact the NPWS North Coast Region, Dorrigo Plateau Office, PO Box 170, Dorrigo NSW 2453. Ph: 02 66572 309.



Cliffs Trail Daywalk 24th June 2007

Kathy, Peter Rodger, Lorraine and a number of others must have felt pretty smug about the bushwalking trips they had lined up. Firstly, on the Long Weekend of 9-11th June, there was Kathy's trip into the Long Point gorges, with the wet-weather alternative of the Inverell Club's walk way out west at Mt Grattai. This was to be followed by Peter's walk from 16-

But good news, Inverell Bushwalkers are going to do Mt Kaputar instead. ...Pity about that second big wet in the West on the 22nd, wasn't it?

So I got a sad email from Kathy saying "Lorraine and I are going up the coast. We're going to find a bushwalk somewhere!" Then a cautious phone call from Peter- "Do you think the Cliffs Trail daywalk will still be going on the 24th?"

Surprisingly, it did. It was a good start, with the Sunday dawn bringing threatening cloud, but with the forecast mentioning only "the possibility of showers(?)". We left Armidaile at 8.15, arrived at Thungutti at 9.15, and left the majority happily boiling the billy while we took three vehicles down Cunnawarra Trail on the

car shuttle. It is a good car road to the creek, but 4 WD thereafter, so it took a while. That made it about 11.15 before we returned to start walking from the Wrights/Robinsons Knob Car Park.

The nine of us wandered through the grassy forest and towering Ribbon Gums, with Jim



24th in Kanangra Boyd in the Blue Breaks.

Well, on the Long Weekend, the gorges were wet, cold and windy, and Mt Grattai was alternatively wet, windy and snowing. So that took care of backpacking for that bit.

Never mind, it'll be OK down South later in the week. Then firstly Peter got sick, and secondly the Kowmung was up, so that wasn't possible. Bummer!

So let's do a short trip – four days in the Wild Dog Mountains down by Breakfast Creek and the Cox sounds pretty good. Well, I guess you heard about the party of 12 scouts who were helicoptered out of Breakfast Creek due to the wild weather down there.....



and Daniel and Martin talking incomprehensible computer stuff, Peter R. showing Moya and Julie map-reading tricks, and Peter v.H. and David trying to put a few names to the many plants along the ridge. Craig meandered along behind taking photos as we dipped out of the grassy forest into rainforest and back in again. The track was an overgrown fire/logging trail, with hardly any timber across it, heading gently downhill- the very

rest of the trip. Through the thick timber, we caught glimpses down Cedar and Spring Creeks and views along the Macleay River Valley to the hills near Kempsey. At one point- much to the delight of Martin, visiting from Germany- we listened to a lyrebird taking us through his repertoire of calls- first a Golden Whistler, then a Catbird, followed by a medley of treecreepers and others. Truly, its name should be spelt "Liar"- but what a lovely liar it is!



Cliff's Trail looking East

best of walking surfaces. With the late start, we decided to do the only real climb – a steady 150 metres uphill on a good grade- before lunching on its crest with 8 km behind us.

As usual, the subject turned to gear and food- Jim described a chip-billy thingy he'd seen on the Internet (see <http://www.thermette.com/>) which launched everybody into the old wood vs. gas vs. metho debate. That kept us happily boiling away as we munched our sandwiches and rehydrated fruit and the other delicacies peculiar to bushwalks.

We'd definitely done the hard bit by now, and it was almost all gently downhill for the

Then we took the turnoff down to onto the cleared land, to find Jeff and Kerry welcoming us to their house. It's the loveliest location- at the top of a gentle 200 metre slope down to a very big dam framed by giant Blue Gums, and then another 200 metres to the creek, with the wall of rainforest of the Cunnawarra Road ridge as a backdrop.

There's a verandah where they sit at dusk to watch the Greater Gliders soaring amongst the crowns of the gums, and I suspect having a good red to salute the end of the day.

We had taken our time, so it was about 4.15 with winter shadows lengthening as we said goodbye and climbed into our cars. Paul Birdar from the Rural Lands Protection Board had told me where we could find Red Cedars, but the day was fading, and it was definitely an item for a future trip. As Peter Rodger says, "The trouble is, every trip I do just leads to more trips being put on the to-do trip list!".

The Silent Pool – Nymboida River 15 April

by Kathy King

Seven Armidale Bushwalkers drove out to the Deer Vale Loop on the Dorrigo road to meet the Ulitarra Conservation Society who

Apparently, the river goes underground somewhere above this rockface and emerges under this “Silent Pool”.

The Ulitarra group had thought to bring swimmers and quickly changed for a brief dip. The universal cry as they leapt into the water was “It’s bloody cold!”. David Lawrence was asking if anyone had climbed the rock to find

the place where the river disappeared. We could read his mind ticking over, plotting another walk here to find the secret spot. We had a leisurely lunch beside this beautiful pool fringed with rainforest and ferns. Then we wended our way back along the river bank again and up the steep fire trail to the cars.



were leading the walk. We left our cars on a nearby farm and walked into the Bagul Waajaarr Nature Reserve down a steep fire trail to the Nymboida River which was a small, rushing stream here. After a getting-to-know-you morning tea and a de-leeching session, we set off upstream along the narrow bank. This was slow going as each step had to be thought about carefully to avoid rocks, holes, fallen logs covered with vines, and to negotiate rocky sections which we had to tippy toe around to avoid falling into the river. About 1 km upstream, the water cascaded out of a still pool – but the river stopped here. There was an incoming stream. Eerie. At the back of the pool was a tall rock face where in previous times the river may well have tumbled over a small waterfall. But not today.



Always Remember

Avoid the use of containers and wrappings that may become excess baggage on the way out. There are a range of containers and utensils that are lightweight and recyclable. Carry out all rubbish e.g. glass, cans, paper, aluminium foil and food scraps.

Don't burn or bury rubbish. Burning creates pollution and buried rubbish may be dug up and scattered by animals. Digging also disturbs the soil, causing erosion and encouraging weeds.

Carry a plastic bag for rubbish. If you find litter left by others, please remove it. Show you care even when others don't.

When in camp and on the track be considerate and courteous to others. In camp promote and demonstrate behavior that will minimise the impact and maximise the satisfaction of the experience.

Do not disturb the ground to improve a tent site.

Offer what is required if others need help. Recognise that some individuals that need help will rarely ask for it. Volunteer it.

Do your share of water collection.

Don't step over other people's food.

The sound of CD players, mobile phones and similar devices are out of place in the natural environment, Always ensure that your behaviour and activities are not offensive to others. Camp as far away from others as conditions will allow.

Respect the rights of landowners and managers. Don't enter private property without seeking permission. In National Parks, and other protected areas abide by regulations and encourage others to do the same.

Leave slip rails and gates as you find them. Make sure when you open a gate the last person through knows it must be closed.

Be hygienic

The accumulation of faeces is a threat to quality of the outdoor remote natural area experience and risk to the health of the visiting public. In shallow soils, the rate of build up of waste due to frequency of use and the inability of waste to decompose make this a critical issue.

Remove the waste from the bush altogether as you would with any other rubbish. In sensitive locations consideration should be given to avoid camping.

Keep water pure

Wash cooking utensils well back from the edge of lakes and streams

Always prevent soap, detergent toothpaste, oils and food scraps from getting into natural water systems. Always swim downstream from your source of drinking water.
