



EXPLORER CAMPCRAFT JOURNEY

16-17/Oct/2009

Report and pictures by Egil.

1 Objectives

Provide an opportunity for Scouts to complete an Explorer level Campcraft journey.

The activities involved in the overall project, including planning and preparation beforehand plus review and reporting afterwards, should allow the Scouts to complete a major part of the Explorer level Campcraft badge, including questions –

- 4) Navigation – at least half the questions.
- 5) Cooking – all questions.
- 6) Camp activity – all questions except A.
- 7) Journey – all questions.

2 Pre-Hike Preparations

2.1 Patrol Members

Five Scouts and two Leaders participated in this activity.



2.2 Training and Planning Activities

Planning meetings with action items in minutes took place.

- 15/Feb – first planning meeting.
- 8/May – set tentative date for hike.
- 26/Jun – second planning meeting.
- 4/Sep – third planning meeting and loaded pack weigh-in.
- 13/Sep - All day practice hike with full load.
- 18/Sep - Lookup train timetables and pick appropriate service.
- 18/Sep - Lookup train fares.
- 18/Sep - Booked camp site with South met office.
- 25/Sep – fourth planning meeting.
- 15/Oct - last meeting and loaded pack weigh-in.

2.3 Menu and Food Quantities

Scouts must prepare their own food menu for four meals plus morning and afternoon teas and carry all the food supplies. Scouts individual reports will list specifics here.

2.4 Personal Gear List

Scouts should prepare their own personal gear list for a two day one night light weight camp and be prepared for a variety of possible weather conditions. Scouts individual reports will list specifics here.

2.5 Patrol Gear List

Consider tents and meal cooking requirements. Scouts individual reports will list specifics here.

2.6 Pack Weights

For health and safety reasons the load carried by each Scout should not exceed 20% of body weight.

NAME	Body Weight	20% Safe Load	Safe All Up	Actual All Up
Lachlan D	58	11.6	69.6	68
Lachlan H	53	10.6	63.9	64
Jack	43	8.6	51.6	54
Joshua	41	8.2	49.2	50
Daniel	49	10	59	60

2.7 Transport Arrangements

- Make own way to Sutherland train station, meet by 08:00 on Fri 16/Oct.
- 08:23 train from Sutherland to Heathcote.
- Walking from Heathcote to Helensburgh.
- Private car pickup from Heathcote train station by 15:00 on Sat 17/Oct.

2.8 Maps Used

- **Campbelltown 9029-1N** 1:25,000 topographic map copyright Department of Lands, 2000.
- **Appin 9029-1S** 1:25,000 topographic map copyright Department of Lands, 2000.
- **Heathcote to Waterfall** walk maps, tracknotes and photos from Wild Walks bushwalking online guidebook.

2.9 Escape Routes Along Journey

- From Mirang Pool via Mirang Road to Princes Hwy, Heathcote.
- From Minda Pool via Abaroo Gully track to Princes Hwy, Heathcote.
- From Myuna Pool via Bondel Ridge track to Princes Hwy, Waterfall.
- From Yellow Pool via Water Gully track to Warabin St, Waterfall.
- From Cawleys Road via Cawleys Track to McKell Ave, Waterfall.
- From Wilson's Creek Road to Helensburgh train station.



3 Notes Taken On Hike

Friday 16/Oct

07:45 – Arrived at Sutherland train station on a fine cool sunny morning. Everyone arrives by 08:00 and after each Scout purchases their own ticket and we wait for the next train.

08:23 – Boarded southbound train.

08:35 – Arrived at Heathcote station; turned on GPS to track walk; headed west towards Heathcote Scout Camp.

08:56 – Entered the 'Friendly' walking track at rear of Scout camp heading downhill west south west. We keep our jackets on to guard against the cold wind.

09:25 – Crossed over the water supply pipe line on a small metal bridge and joined the wide sealed service trail at an intersection with a signpost pointing to Lake Eckersley and Mirang Pool in the south west direction that we are headed.

09:40 – Reached Mirang Pool. The service trail is now unsealed and follows the contours in a mostly southerly direction. The large pipe line is on our left and on our right the valley drops away to the Heathcote Creek. There are great views to cliffs on the western side of the valley.

10:00 – Arrived at the Battery Causeway and take off our jackets to enjoy the glorious sunshine and have a morning tea break. The Scouts explore the creek.

10:30 – Depart the Battery Causeway and at the southern end of the causeway we turn left onto the Bullawarring Track initially heading south east and then turning south following the Heathcote Creek. Much slower walking now as the track is rough, narrow and overgrown in many places.

11:10 – After a steady climb we reach a track junction signposted to Lake Eckersley. We continue south on the Bullawarring Track.

11:30 – Met a group of 15 girls from The Ilwarrar Grammar School (TIGS) traveling in the opposite direction as they had left Camp Coutts that morning doing their bronze level Duke of Edinburgh award.

11:40 – Met a group of boys from the same school.

12:25 – The track dropped steeply down the hill side to the Heathcote Creek and we arrived at the signposted junction with the Mooray Track. Great spot for lunch on the flat rock platforms beside the creek. We all took off our shoes and socks to refresh our hot feet in the cold creek and enjoyed lunch in the warm sun. A GPS exercise revealed our lunch spot was at Lat 34° 07' 19S,



Long 150° 58' 21E, 124m altitude, accurate to 4m tracking 11 satellites.

13:48 – Departed lunch spot heading south and shortly after the track turned more south east.

14:14 – Looking north east from the track there are clear sandy patches down by the creek that look like camping spots.

14:30 – The track does some sharp turns as it ascends to a rock platform beside a waterfall that drops into the Kingfisher Pool. We pause for some photos beside the waterfall and then explore the caves in the creek bed above the falls.

14:40 – Leaving the caves we pass through the Kingfisher Pool camping area where there is a pit toilet and then rejoin the main track heading east south east.

14:58 – Arrive at a T junction with a wide fire trail beside Yellow Pool. We turn left and follow the fire trail north for just a few meters, cross the creek and then turn right into the narrow Waterfall Gully track heading east at first and then more south east.

15:10 – Arrive at a junction with a wide fire trail and we turn right heading south. After a short distance the wide trail follows the eastern shore of Lake Toolooma.

15:25 – Arrive at a locked gate junction with the Camp Coutts road and turn right heading towards Camp Coutts.

15:35 – Arrive at Camp Coutts. Distance walked = 9.6km. Setup camp on the Heritage Area.

16:20 – The tents are up and we start a fire to boil the billy. It is a very mild sunny afternoon in camp with a cool breeze and a little scattered cloud.

16:45 – Enjoy a cup of billy tea and snacks for afternoon tea.

16:50 – A patrol council decides that we should finish dinner and have the washing up finished by 19:00 before it gets dark.

21:00 – Retire to bed and talk quietly about log updates before falling silent by 21:30.



Saturday 17/Oct

It was a cold night with a clear sky. The kookaburras woke us at first light but we were so tired we went back to sleep easily.

07:30 – Out of bed, started campfire to boil billy, then cooked breakfast.

10:45 – Departed Camp Coutts heading south on wide fire trails along Coutts Gully. Noticed some bright red carnivorous plants in damp ground beside the trail.

11:20 – Reached the Princes Hwy and sat in the shade for a short break. Saw an old double deck bus go by. There is a cool breeze and the sun is warm.

11:25 – Turned west along the hwy for a few hundred meters, then crossed the road to another wide fire trail heading south. Easy walking along the wide gravel trail.

11:40 – Reached a wide concrete bridge over the freeway; plaque says built in 1972. There is a locked gat on the eastern end of the bridge and the road is now sealed. The Scouts are in high spirits and talking happily as we continue in a south east direction.

12:00 – Came to the top of a hill with views over the railway line where maintenance works were in progress. Very easy going on the sealed road. Four rail maintenance trucks drive by and the crews wave.

12:10 – Stopped for lunch in the shade beside the road. Some Scouts found long sticks in the bush and played staff wars.

13:05 – The road crossed the railway line and another locked gate marked the end of the closed road. We have reached civilization again as there are now houses along the road. Saw an unusual shaped house that looked like a yurt.

13:25 – Arrived at the Wilson's Creek crossing where there was a waterfall and plunge pool on the downstream eastern side of the road and a long bricked tunnel on the upstream western side of the road. The Scouts enjoyed exploring both and we had afternoon tea.

13:55 – Left Wilson's Creek heading east up hill to the Helensburgh train station. This last up hill section was where we really became aware of how tired our muscles were.

14:00 – Arrived at the station. Distance walked today = 5.7km. While waiting for our car lifts home we had another Patrol council to review aspects of the journey. There were a few lessons learned but all five Scouts had done their best and successfully completed the hike part of the journey.

14:22 – Departed by car for home.



4 Assessment

4.1 Accuracy of Distance and Walking time Estimates

Using a string along the proposed tracks and measuring the string against the map scale, the distance was estimated to be 15km; actual was 15.3km.

Day one estimate 9.5km; actual 9.6km.

Day two estimate 5.5km; actual 5.7km.

Using Naismith's Rule to estimate walking time.

Day one

- 4km easy going estimate 48m; plus 30m for change in altitude 1h 18m; actual 1h 25m; average walking pace 2.8km/h.
- 5.5km rough estimate 1h 50m plus 1h for change in altitude 2h 50m; actual 3h 42m; average walking pace 1.5km/h.
- Day total estimate 4h 08m; actual 5h 7m for 9.6km, making the averaging walking pace 1.9km/h.

Day two

- 5.5km easy going estimate 1h 50m
- plus 30m for change in altitude
- 2h 20m; actual estimated walking time was 1h 55m for 5.7km, making the average walking pace 3km/h.

SUMMARY

	DISTANCE, KM		TIME, HH:MM	
	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL
DAY 1	9.5	9.6	4:08	5:07
DAY 2	5.5	5.7	2:20	1:55
TOTAL	15.0	15.3	6:28	7:02

Distance is relatively easy to estimate by taking measurements on maps.

Walking time is much harder to estimate. The day 1 estimate was 1 hour less than actual while the day 2 estimate was 25 minutes greater than actual.

4.2 Lessons Learned

- **The GPS must be set to the same Datum as the maps used.** Our topographic maps used the GDA94 datum but the GPS was set to the WGS84 datum. Consequently when we tried to match the GPS co-ordinates to the map, there was a mismatch of about 2,000 meters from our known position.
- **Check for train track maintenance.** Only realized a week in advance that trains were not running on the Saturday.
- **A training and exercise preparation schedule is paramount** when you are not used to walking such distances nor carrying such weights. The schedule should increase distance walked and weight carried gradually over time so that your body builds up strength and stamina. A long term schedule of three to six months is recommended.
- **A personal gear list is essential.** Some Scouts forgot personal gear items, indicating that a checklist had not been used.

- **Food quantities should be measured out to save weight.** Some Scouts used a small amount of food from a large packet and so the extra unused food left in the packet was unnecessary extra weight to carry.
- **Biscuits with vegemite and cheese are still VERY dry.**

4.3 Things that Worked Well

- The whole Patrol got on well together and support and co-operation were great.
- Deciding to rely on fires to cook meals saved the weight of carrying fuel stoves and so worked well on this occasion when Scouts struggled to stay under the weight limits – but that strategy is not appropriate for some circumstances or weather conditions.

4.4 Views and Opinions

- We were lucky to experience ideal weather conditions. Mornings and afternoons were cool enough to require a jacket while the clear sunny days were so mild that we didn't get sweat on our faces at all.

