



ADVENTURER LEVEL JOURNEY

Mt Victoria to Blackheath Station

Saturday 10th April to Monday 12th April 2010

Hannah Stainlay

1st Bangor Scout Troop

The Green Level Journey required me to plan and undertake a hike of at least 30 km with at least four other Scouts into unfamiliar terrain requiring two nights out-of-doors using lightweight equipment and carrying food. As the Journey Leader, this involved a huge amount of preparation. Before I left on the big adventure some of the things I had to do were: find a journey advisor to help me organise the journey and make sure I was competent to lead it, decide on a suitable route, invite four Scouts that I thought would be capable of undertaking the journey and meet with them to prepare them for the journey, keep a detailed log of everything I did, plan a menu and purchase the food items, complete paperwork such as A1 parts 1, 2 and 3 and National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) paperwork and write a Journey report, plan transport to and from the journey, visit the Blackheath NPWS office, and on the walk making sure everyone was safe and happy. It was a big task and the preparation was quite a challenge. I started hike preparations in December 2009 and we went in the April 2010 school holidays. The Scouts that attended were Elanna, Lachlan D, and Lachlan H from 1st Bangor and Luke (Mario) from 1st Bass Hill and myself. The route I chose was from Mt Victoria to Blackheath station via the Grose Valley, camping on the first night at Burra Korain Flat and the second night at Acacia Flat on the edge of Blue Gum Forest.



We met on Saturday morning at my house and were driven by some parents to the start of the walk on the road to Victoria Falls. After stopping for lunch at Victoria Falls Lookout we made our way down the steep descent to Silver Cascades where we stopped and looked at yabbies in the water. From here we went on along the muddy track to where we spent our first night, Burra Korain Flat. Even though the weather was a nice temperature we found the water certainly wasn't when we all jumped in for a swim after a day of walking.



Camp site at Burra Korain and swim before dinner

On Sunday morning we packed up and began walking quite early so we were able to get ahead of time. This day's walking was much harder as the track had been eroded and trees had fallen across it in many places. As the leader I walked in front of the group, but soon was not so happy to be leading when I almost trod on a huge brown snake lying in the middle of the track.

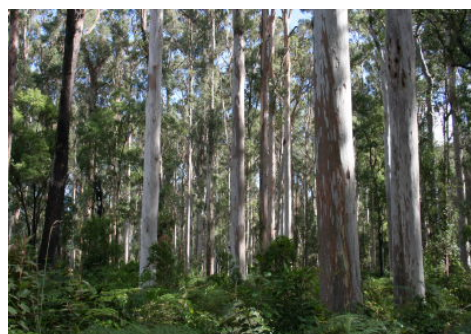
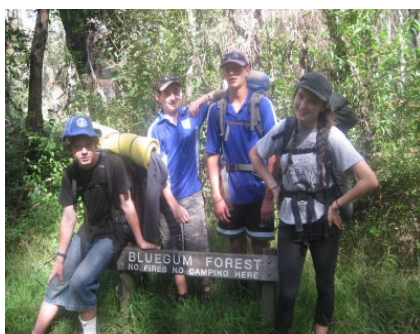


Crayfish Creek



A rough trail

We stopped at Little Blue Gum Forest for lunch where again the wildlife seemed to love me and I had a huge spider swinging from its web just a few centimetres in front of my face. Walking along the river and passing many people in this section of the track, we reached the campsite, which was a nice open grassy space. We again went swimming in the ice cold water.



Blue Gum Forest

We started early again on day three, but everyone was tired and still walking on a track dominated by erosion and fallen trees.

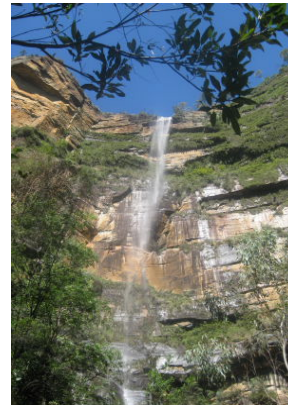


Junction Rock

The 2.9 km hike up the steepest part of the walk was not as enjoyable. Even though the map showed how steep it would be and we knew what to expect, our bodies were exhausted as we trudged up the stairs to Govetts Leap Lookout. Mario showed us all up by running up the stairs then coming back down to meet us, then walking up again. He wore the consequences a few days later and whinged about how sore his muscles were.



At the top at last



Govetts Leap Falls

When we finally made it to the lookout and car park we were all relieved, until I told them we still had another 3.8km to go. This was mainly filled in with silent walking as everyone tried to power on to the train station at Blackheath. It was a relief when we got there and we went and treated ourselves to hot chips before getting on the train. We caught the train back to Strathfield where the parents met us with happy faces.



Blackheath Station

Thanks to Elanna, Lachlan, Lachlan and Luke who helped make the journey a great success and a lot of fun.