
Mt Wilson Mt Irvine Bushwalking Group

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WATERFALL CIRCUIT SOUTH OF LAWSON

TOPIC

OUR MARCH WALK

WATERFALL CIRCUIT
SOUTH OF LAWSON and
HAZELBROOK

Friday 20th March 2020

In 1843 Henry Wilson was granted one hundred acres at Twenty Four Mile Hollow. An inn was built in 1845 and named the Blue Mountain Inn; it was located near the present day Lawson Primary School. Henry Wilson was licensee of the Inn. The railway station and the local area were named Blue Mountain after the Inn; the station name was changed to Lawson on 21 April 1879.

Henry Wilson's daughter, Adelaide Mary, was referred to as Adelina. She was a very loquacious young lady who always sported an attractive colourful mode of dress. Because of her talkative nature and bright clothes she became known as The Blue Mountains Parrot. The first waterfall we were to visit today is named after her; Adelina Falls. (Between about 1871 and 1910 they were renamed to Livingstone Falls after Scottish doctor David Livingstone of Stanley's 'Doctor Livingstone I presume' fame, but then reverted to Adelina.)

Eleven walkers gathered at the parking bay at the intersection of Livingstone Street and Honour Avenue; the sky was clear and the air was still, ideal walking conditions. It was good to have Freda Moxom back with us following



Autumn in the Bush

a long absence; we also welcomed Jeanie and Allan Cupitt's son Scott who was visiting today.

We set off down the steps constructed of large blocks of rough-hewn sandstone, which lead us to a crossing of paths. The path to the right leads across the top of the falls to the old golf course, to the left is the fire trail which leads direct to Cataract Falls; we continue straight ahead.

The sound of rushing water can now be heard and glimpses of falling sunlit silver shards can

be seen through the foliage of surrounding trees.

We drop further down into the gully via timber steps, ignore the track to the left, cross Lawson Creek and emerge into an alcove of greenery.

Here a fallen moss-encrusted contorted tree trunk lies amongst copious ground ferns. Fern fronds cascade down the face of the high embankment, many trickles of water drop down the rock face and drip from the ends of foliage clinging to the embankment.

Allan Cupitt notices a golf ball nestled in a tree hollow and asks, rhetorically, of Ray Nesci, what sort of plant is this? It is obvious that it is the seedpod of a 'tee' tree, isn't it.

The track leads us a short distance upstream and we are at the base of Adelina Falls. The falls are running quite well, cascading over the

rocky creek bed on its upper level then dropping over a ledge to fall as a diaphanous curtain into the pool below, a bed of ferns thrives in the mist spray behind the falls. We spend some time taking in the beauty of this delightful spot, then make our way back across the creek and take the right hand track, which leads us downstream beside Lawson Creek.

As we negotiate this section of track we are accompanied by the water music of the creek as it burbles and babbles along beside the pathway. Overhanging ferns and shrubbery hide a lot of this little stream from view but the soothing sound pervades. Occasionally there are miniature cascades plashing over the rock ledges and tiny waterfalls dropping into pools, purling and tinkling as they agitate the clear water; some of these fully visible, others partially hidden from view.

In this section of gully there are towering Blue Mountain Ash (*Eucalyptus oreades*), their smooth, glowing, white trunks rising from folded stockings of dark discarded bark. Also in this area, some close beside the track, are fine examples of Smooth-barked Apples or Red Gums (*Angophora costata*) displaying their pinkish smooth new bark; their old bark having been shed around last November. These trunks, with their protruding rounded lumps and bumps are so tactile, it is impossible to pass them without running your hand over their surface.

Soon the creek drops down away from the track, which rises now, skirts around a long overhang and descends to cross Ridge Creek, just a short step from one ledge to another while the stream flows across a pebble bed beneath our feet.

The track rises again and then descends via a stairway to the base of Junction Falls; so named because they are at the confluence of Ridge Creek and Lawson Creek. The first of the falls we encounter carries the waters of Ridge Creek which initially drop in a narrow band then spread widely across a series of ledges, forming a series of beautiful cascades.

A bridge now takes us across Lawson Creek, the waters of Ridge Creek having melded with it just upstream of the bridge. The combined waters provide an exquisite sight as they course over and around beds of small water-worn boulders.

Just across the bridge we veer left to enter a moist little nook at the base of the falls fed by Lawson Creek. Again, these falls begin their drop as a narrow stream before spreading across a wide series of cascades; there is a small subsidiary fall to the right of the main falls where silken threads drop vertically in front of an ochre coloured overhang. This is a delightful spot to pause for morning tea, and I can sense a minor rebellion brewing if we don't.

Having absorbed some of the mystique of this special place while partaking of morning tea we continue on. We are now walking on the left hand side of Lawson Creek, which begins dropping further below the track. As the gully widens we are again treated to the towering trunks of Blue Mountain Ash and closer at hand the thick vegetation presses in on the path.

Soon we reach a track on our left, which we ignore for the moment, and continue on toward Federal Falls. The track leads us below an imposing rock overhang and into a small pocket of rainforest at the head of which Federal Falls drops, as a fine gauze screen over a dark rock face, into a shallow pool surrounded by a sandy beach. The falls are fed by Cataract Creek.

These falls were named for the Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia on 1st January 1901; the name however was allocated two years before the event. Someone was obviously confident the event was going to happen. In 1882 they were called Hays Cascades after Joseph and Eliza Hay who had large land holdings in the area.

We retrace our steps back to the track junction where steps lead us up past a pre-metric sign painted on the stone wall directing us to Cataract Falls; these steps deliver us to a lookout area that is partially closed, which

affords a view down Lawson Creek. We pass a couple of Angophora, their exposed roots looking as though they have been melted onto the rock shelves they snake across; the track now drops down to take us across Cataract Creek.

Soon we arrive at a short sidetrack on our left, which takes us down to a very pretty little cascade which Keith Painter, author of the Pocket Pal series of bushwalking booklets, has named Rosemary Cascade after his wife. This cascade, perhaps two metres high, drops into a sandy-bottomed pool. To the left of the main cascade a secondary stream of water drops down the rock face to enter the pond near a large swirl pool. While here, a number of bees are seen drinking at the pool's edge.

Continuing on, the track leads us past moss shrouded rock walls and boulders, so lovely to see after the very long dry spell. To our left the clear waters of Cataract Creek flow across a combination of pebble beds and sand.

We arrive at a track on our right, which we will follow later, and continue straight ahead to the base of Cataract Falls. There is a large open cavern here and the water of the falls slides down a smooth rock face into a sandy pool. This area was once known as Shakespeares Glen, it is said glowworms can be seen here.

We then begin the climb out of the gully, and I must apologise to the group, for I forgot about the well-carved face in the rock wall beside the track in this section. It is a little larger than life sized and its age and origin is unknown. If you are unaware of its existence it is highly unlikely that you would see it, even though it is right beside the track; perhaps next time.

At the top of the rise we emerge onto a branch of a fire trail. Here we bid farewell to Freda and Jenny who have decided to call it a day and they return to the cars. The remainder of the group set off on the 1.3 kilometres of fire trail to take us to the start of the track to Victor Falls and on to Terrace Falls; the seventh and eighth waterfall for the day.

On arrival at the creek crossing, where we would pick up the track to Victor Falls, it is obvious the trees and shrubs laid down by the recent flooding in the area would make it extremely difficult to pick up that track; seven waterfalls would have to suffice. We continue along Terrace Falls Road to the direct track down to Terrace Falls

This track, believed to have been built in 1892 at a cost of £14, contains magnificent stonework steps which have stood the test of time. It zig zags down about seventy vertical metres to the bottom of the falls.

At the zig, or was it a zag, on the junction with the track coming in from Victor Falls, Helen decides she is going no further. I agree with that decision, unsure of my legs carrying me back up those steps, regardless of how magnificently built they were; the steps, not my legs. We rest here to have lunch.

The rest of the group continues down to the base of the falls and it is hard to imagine a nicer place to pause for lunch than that. The waters of this creek, an unnamed tributary of Bedford Creek, cascade down numerous terraces, as the name implies, before dropping onto a wide rock platform, where it spreads out, before dropping over the final ledge to make its way toward Bedford Creek. A beautiful sight which, once seen, remains embedded in the memory.

We then climb back to the road and follow the fire trail back to Honour Avenue. Three cars are retrieved from the parking bay to transport the group back to the remainder of the vehicles; much to the relief of my knee and back.

So ends another wonderful day in these mountains. Though less renowned than many other mountain locations, the area we explored today is a real gem in the treasure chest to which we are so lucky to have such easy access.

John Cardy

**OUR APRIL WALK AND INDEED
ALL WALKS IN THE IMMEDIATE**

FUTURE WILL HAVE TO BE CANCELLED.

The coronavirus restrictions on unnecessary travel, social distancing and we older ones being asked to remain at home except for food shopping and essential medical reasons means there will be no walks until such time as these restrictions are lifted, and that is anyone's guess. At least three months and there is every possibility it will be more.

In the meantime I will continue issuing the monthly newsletter, albeit in an abridged form. I have a couple of ideas about content, which I think and hope will be well received.

So, remain bunkered down, remain safe and try not to go stir crazy.

FUTURE WALKS (Tentative Schedule for when the all clear is given)

Mount Banks and Banks Wall.

Tessellated Pavements at Mount Irvine

Waterfall Circuit north of Lawson

Coxs and Lockyers Roads at Mt Victoria

Ikara Ridge and Ikara Head near Mt Victoria

Kanangra Walls

BUSH CARE

BECAUSE OF COVID-19, BUSH CARE HAS ALSO BEEN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

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