

Scenic & Historic Drives

ROUTE

7

THE SWALLOWTAIL TRACK

Taralga to Marulan

Some say this area is the most picturesque area of the region

ADVENTURE DRIVE

Although a four wheel drive is not necessary (except for during adverse conditions) drivers should note that parts of this route consist of rough roads and steep descents.

Average Speed: 40 - 50kmh

Time: Approximately 1hr 45min

Distance: 57km

We suggest you take a picnic to enjoy where the Swallowtail Track crosses the Tarlo river - bliss!

TARALGA

This charming village was originally planned for workers on the Macarthur estate of 'Richlands'. The sons of John Macarthur received land grants in the district in the early 1820s and convict labour was used to shepherd the sheep and clear the land. Settlers took their products to the Sydney market across the Swallowtail Track.

From Taralga Post Office - travel south towards Goulburn.

Turn first on left into Bunnaby St, follow around sharp left hand turn (Macarthur st). On the right is:

1. Taralga Catholic Church: Officially opened in 1934 by Bishop Barry. The circular spiral brick columns were fired at Gulsons Goulburn. You can enter the Church from the right hand side. The woodwork within the church is silky oak. The altar was made from marble quarried in the Wombeyan Caves district. Next door is the Sacred Heart Convent and School which closed in 2005. Turn right after school into Walsh St. 100 metres on left is the

2. Taralga Showgrounds: This is the home of the annual Agricultural Show, the Australia Day Taralga Rodeo and numerous other community events. There are also powered sites and an amenities block available for caravans and campers - ph 4840 2077.

You now have 19km (12km of sealed road and then 7km of dirt) to reach the Anglican Church, St Mathews.

3. St Mathews Anglican Church: This well maintained church and graveyard date back to the 1890s and it is a lovely spot for a thermos of tea or coffee. The view to your right is of the Cookbundoon Ranges which the Swallowtail Track runs through. Just inside the gate of the church is a rock memorial to all the pioneers who settled in Bannaby. If you wander around the back of the church you will find some comfortable benches and a 'drop loo' with a view over the Bannaby Woolshed. Drive to the base of the hill and turn right - this road has no road name but is signposted 'Marulan'. If you wish you can pass the turnoff to have a better look at the Bannaby Woolshed and then return to the Marulan turnoff.

4. Bannaby Woolshed and Shearer's Quarters: These were built in 1886. Nearby the wool wagon and bullocks were based. The bullocks and wool wagon were last used in 1948. One of the locals, the late Greg Gordon, as a young lad worked with the bullocks and remembered their names well. The leads were Cockey and Dart, then Tiger & Toby, Nugget & Miller, Flower & Red, and last were Fuddy & Major.

Follow the road for three kilometres until you arrive at a gate. This is the beginning of the Swallowtail Track which steeply descends to the Tarlo River. From here on in please watch for livestock. Although this is a public road it does cut through private land.

5. Tarlo River: This is a wonderful place to camp or have a picnic. Enjoy a stroll along the river. Watch out for platypus, snakes, echidnas and frilled neck lizards. Imagine the bullock trains stopping for a drink of fresh running water before climbing out of this magnificent gorge. We suggest you don't light fires and request that you take all rubbish with you. This area is so beautifully untouched and clean we would like to keep it this way. Thank you! Once you cross the river it is now a 1km climb to a stock gate on top of the Cookbundoon Ranges.

6. Cookbundoon Ranges: Until the next 'T' intersection (13 km) you are travelling on top of the Cookbundoon Ranges. This area comprises of open forests along the summit. The geography is of classic spur-gullies

and ranges with the elevation of up to 950m. When you arrive at the 'T' intersection, turn left and follow till you arrive at the Big Hill church.

7. Big Hill Church: This church was opened in 1878 and was designed by Goulburn architect H O Bell. Beside the church is a little well kept cemetery. The first burial was of John Bogg who was killed on Christmas Eve 1878 when hit by a cricket ball while umpiring a friendly cricket match. His gravestone can be found near the front boundary to the left of the church. Return to the 'T' intersection and continue straight ahead. You are now 21km to Marulan. Once you pass Jeffereys Rd, you will pass the Big Hill Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade.

The road to your left is Old Macquarie Rd. This was originally the first road to Sydney. Continue for 4km till you reach Gibraltar Rd on the left. Turn here and travel for a couple of kilometres till you can view the Gibraltar Rocks. Return back to the main road and turn left. Once you have crossed the Wollondilly River you have entered the Goulburn Mulwaree Shire. The next intersection is of Bulls Pit Rd, Carrick Rd and Cannyonleigh Rd. Cannyonleigh Rd was the second major road to Sydney. This area is known as Brayton.

8. Brayton: Turn right into Bulls Pit Rd. Approx 500m on left is Brayton cemetery and the site of St Mary's Church which was burnt down in 1965 bushfire. Turn back towards Brayton and about 100m before the corner, there is a track on your left to the old marble quarry. It is possible to drive part of the way and the remaining 500m is an easy walk.

This rural village was once named Longreach until in the early 20th century the Postal Department asked that the name be changed as it was confused with a large town in Queensland. The Postmaster at the time was Mr Lacey and it is believed that he chose the name Brayton after Lily Brayton, a popular actress of the time.

Return to intersection and turn right. You are now only 9 kilometers from Marulan. When you reach suburbia, turn left into Brayton Rd and then right into George St. The Information Centre is on the left hand side in the beautiful gift store, Brides & Blooms.

MARULAN

Prior to the coming of the Europeans, Marulan was the junction of four aboriginal territories - that of the Gundagarra, Wadi Wadi, Wandandian, and Ngawal peoples. Marulan was the crossover point and the meeting place of these peoples.

Marulan was first visited by colonials in 1798 when the expedition by Wilson, Price, Hacking, and Collins camped there on their early exploration of the interior.

The first mention of Marulan was made by Charles Throsby in 1818 on the great journey of exploration he headed with Meehan, Wild, and Hume which led to the discovery of the Goulburn Plains and Lake Bathurst.

ROAD SAFETY

Remember these are country roads and you'll need to be aware of livestock and of bush animals such as kangaroos, wombats and rabbits - particularly at dusk when they are most active.

If there are any gates closed on the road, you can just open them and drive through, but please remember to shut them behind you.

Funding assistance by:



New South Wales
Department of State and
Regional Development

First for Business

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From the Information Centre (Brides & Blooms) in Marulan - travel north on George St, cross railway bridge and turn left into Brayton Rd. Travel till 'Give Way' sign and turn right. Keep on this road for 9½ km to 'The Five Ways'. This intersection is of Bulls Pit Rd, Carrick Rd and Cannonleigh Rd. Cannonleigh Rd was the second major road to Sydney. This area is known as Brayton. This area is known as Brayton.

1. Brayton: Turn left into Bulls Pit Rd. Approx 500m on left is Brayton cemetery and the site of St Mary's Church which was burnt down in 1965 bushfire. Turn back towards Brayton and about 100m before the corner, there is a track on your left to the old marble quarry. It is possible to drive part of the way and the remaining 500m is an easy walk.

This rural village was once named Longreach until in the early 20th century the Postal Department asked that the name be changed as it was confused with a large town in Queensland. The Postmaster at the time was Mr Lacey and it is believed that he chose the name Brayton after Lily Brayton, a popular actress of the time.

Go back to Five Ways and turn left into Brayton Rd. Travel another 3km and you will cross the Wollondilly River. You are now in the Upper Lachlan Shire. At the top of the hill turn right into Gibraltar Rd. Travel 2km to view Gibraltar rocks and then return to Brayton Rd.

Continue on another 6km, up "The Pinch" to the Big Hill Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Shed. Old Macquarie Rd is on the right. This was originally the first road to Sydney. About 3km past the fire shed you will come to a fork in the road, veer right (Big Hill 5). Continue straight ahead, past the road signposted Big Hill 4. Follow this road to the end and you will come to the Big Hill Church.

2. Big Hill Church: This church was opened in 1878 and was designed by Goulburn architect H O Bell. Beside the church is a little well kept cemetery. The first burial was of John Bogg who was killed on Christmas Eve 1878 when hit by a cricket ball while umpiring a friendly cricket match. His gravestone can be found near the front boundary to the left of the church. Return a couple of kilometers back the way you came until you arrive at an intersection to the right (sign posted, Big Hill) turn right. You will now travel 13km along the top of the Cookbundoon Ranges.

3. Cookbundoon Ranges: This area comprises of open forests along the summit. The geography is of classic spur-gullies and ranges with the elevation of up to 950m.

When you arrive at a stock gate this is the beginning of the Swallowtail Track which steeply descends to the Tarlo River. From here on in please watch for livestock. Although this is a public road it does cut through private land.

4. Tarlo River: This is a wonderful place to camp or have a picnic. Enjoy a stroll along the river. Watch out for platypus, snakes, echidnas and frilled neck lizards. Imagine the bullock trains stopping for a drink of fresh running water before climbing out of this magnificent gorge. We suggest you don't light fires and request that you take all rubbish with you. This area is so beautifully untouched and clean we would like to keep it this way. Thank you! Once you cross the river it is now a 3km climb to another stock gate. You will now drive a bit further till you reach a 'T' intersection. On the right you will notice the Bannaby shearers' quarters and shearing shed. You will be turning left here but for a better view of the shearing shed you can turn right and then return.

5. Bannaby Woolshed and Shearer's Quarters: These were built in 1886. Nearby the wool wagon and bullocks were based. The bullocks and wool wagon were last used in 1948. One of the locals, the late Greg Gordon, as a young lad worked with the bullocks and remembered their names well. The leads were Cockey and Dart, then Tiger & Toby, Nugget & Miller, Flower & Red, and last were Fuddy & Major. Continue up the road till you reach St Mathews Church on the right hand side.

6. St Mathews Anglican Church: This well maintained church and graveyard dates back to the 1890s and it is a lovely spot for a thermos of tea or coffee. If you look to the left, the big view is of the Cookbundoon Ranges which the Swallowtail Track runs through. Just inside the gate of the church is a rock memorial to all the pioneers who settled in Bannaby. If you wander around the back of the church you will find some comfortable benches and a 'drop' loo with a great view over the Bannaby Woolshed. You now have 19km (12km of sealed road and then 7km of dirt) to reach the outskirts of Taralga.

TARALGA

Taralga was originally planned for workers on the Macarthur estate of 'Richlands'. The sons of John Macarthur received land grants in the district in the early 1820s and convict labour was used to shepherd the sheep and clear the land. Settlers took their products to the Sydney market across the Swallowtail Track. As you enter the outskirts of Taralga you will notice the Taralga Showgrounds on the right hand side.

2. Taralga Showgrounds: This is the home of the annual Agricultural Show, the Australia Day Taralga Rodeo and numerous other community events. There are also powered sites and an amenities block available for caravans and campers - ph 4840 2077.

Go straight ahead and turn left at the 'T' intersection. On the left is the Sacred Heart Convent and School which closed in 2005. Next door is the Taralga Catholic Church.

1. Taralga Catholic Church: Officially opened in 1934 by Bishop Barry. The circular spiral brick columns were fired at Gulsions Goulburn. You can enter the Church from the right hand side. The woodwork within the church is silky oak. The altar was made from marble quarried in the Wombeyan Caves district. Follow the road around to the right and then turn right into the main street of Taralga, Orchard St. The Information Centre is on the right hand side at the Post Office.

ROAD SAFETY

Remember these are country roads and you'll need to be aware of livestock and of bush animals such as kangaroos, wombats and rabbits - particularly at dusk when they are most active.

If there are any gates closed on the road, you can just open them and drive through, but please remember to shut them behind you.

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