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Scenic Drives

Before you set out.....

The Rylstone Region offers stunning scenery of rural and wilderness landscapes. Many of the drives below are to destinations where good walks are possible. Refer to the District Map. Distances are included in the descriptions, and local businesses or your accommodation operator can provide advice, guidance and copies of the District Map.

On all of our roads, please be on the lookout for stock and wildlife, especially in unfenced areas and at dusk. You may find sheep, cattle, kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, eagles and possums feeding near, or crossing the roads. Please drive slowly on unsealed roads to minimize dust and erosion, and be aware that some sections may be slippery or corrugated. Please leave gates as you find them. As some drives cover long distances, it's a good idea to have a full tank of petrol before you start, and to take water with you.

To Print Out A Guided Map [Click Here](#)

Capertee Valley Drives

The Capertee Valley is the second largest enclosed valley in the world and features glorious exposed cliff escarpments, a volcanic plug and buttes rising out of lush rolling grazing land.

Leave Kandos via Dabee Road and turn right where it meets the Glen Alice Road, or leave Rylstone via Fitzgerald Street and head right at the Y junction. Pass around the edge of Coomber Mellon Mountain and under the proud bluff of Mt Marsden (point of the Great Divide) and descend into the valley. From here you can follow the Capertee Road to the small community of Glen Alice, enjoying the beautiful landscape. Return via the same road. Approximately 78 kms return.

Additional options:

1) You can penetrate even further into the valley by going on into **Glen Davis**. This now sleepy village, named after the Davis brothers of the Davis Gelatine Company, but originally known as Green Gully, was developed as the site of a shale oil industry during WWII that lasted 12 years before closing. The Capertee River, which drains the valley, has cut a gorge from here through to the Colo River, that joins the Hawkesbury River. The rock walls towering above the valley are spectacular, especially in late afternoon light. Food and drink available at Glen Davis. Approximately 104 kms return.

2) **Dunville Loop** leaves the Capertee Road below Mt Marsden (18 km from Rylstone/Kandos) and returns to the Capertee Road before Glen Alice. This pretty 24 km loop drive (unsealed) into a cliff lined side valley can be done as an addition to your Capertee Drive or as a pleasant trip on its own. Leave gates as you find them. Allow at least 30 minutes for the loop.

Cox's Creek - Narrango Road Loop Drive

This drive takes you east into sandstone escarpment country where you will follow the meandering Cox's Creek towards Nullo Mountain, returning via Olinda and the broad Cudgegong Valley. Take the Bylong Valley Way north out of Rylstone or Kandos. Two km north of Rylstone turn right into Cox's Creek Road (becomes unsealed after 8 km). Enjoy the stunning rock formations on the left side of the road as you pass through rural and bushland areas. The road eventually emerges from the rocky country into the Cudgegong River valley (and back onto a sealed road) at the small community of Olinda. Turn right into Narrango Road and follow this back to Rylstone (15 km) past Dabee Station, the original pastoral lease granted in 1820 that opened up the valley to colonial settlement. Approximately 50 kms. Allow 2 hours.

Additional options:

1) At the junction of Cox's Creek Road and Nullo Mountain Road (22 km up Cox's Creek Road), turn left and climb up to the top of **Nullo Mountain**, where rich basalt soils and a cooler wetter climate have grown enormous trees and lush pastures. Travel along the top of the mountain as far as your curiosity takes you, then return by the same road, and rejoin the journey.

2) At the village of Olinda, turn left into Mt Coricudgy Road and follow this further east into Wollemi National Park and on to **Dunns Swamp** (7 km from Olinda). See Dunns Swamp Scenic Drive.

Dunns Swamp Waterway

This beautiful waterway was created in 1926 by a dam built to provide water to the Kandos Cement Works. It is surrounded by many beautiful pagoda-shaped rock formations. Here you can take a number of short walks, picnic, camp, swim, fish (with a licence), canoe, or take a boat cruise. From Rylstone, head east on Fitzgerald Street (look for the signs to Wollemi National Park, turn off Ilford Road next to the Hospital). After 2 kilometres head left at the Y junction into Narrango Road. From Kandos, take Dabee Road to the intersection with Glen Alice Road and continue straight across on the unsealed road. Brown's lane takes you across to Narrango Road. Follow Narrango Road through the broad valley to the village of Olinda (15 km from Rylstone). At Olinda continue straight ahead on Mt Coricudgy Road (the continuation of Narrango Rd, becomes unsealed after a kilometre). Pass over the cattle grid and past historic Bird's Hut. At this point the road enters Wollemi National Park and through a narrow pass in the rocks (go slow and toot horn for safety). Continue on to the left hand turn off to Dunns Swamp (Ganguddy). Follow this track for 2 km to the picnic ground and camping area. For boating see Wollemi Afloat entry under Waterways and Wilderness). Basic facilities such as composting toilets, tables, and wood BBQs are provided. Take water, firewood, and food. Approximately 52 kms return. See also Dunns Swamp entry under Waterways and Wilderness.

Additional options:

1) At the Dunn's Swamp turnoff continue straight ahead (east) for a further 12 km to the **Kelgoola Picnic Ground** in Coricudgy State Forest. There are great views of more pagoda rock formations and Mt Coricudgy along the way. The picnic area is on the headwaters of the Cudgegong River at the base of Mt Coricudgy. No facilities, take water, firewood, food. Please close any gates and leave as you found them. Return via the same road.

2) For the really adventurous, if logging in the Coricudgy State Forest has finished, it may be possible with a 4WD vehicle to ascend to the top of **Mt Coricudgy**. Before attempting the climb, check with State Forests Dubbo Office Ph 02 6884 5288 about gates and road conditions. The road continues beyond the Kelgoola Picnic Ground through a gate that is locked when logging in the Stae Forest is underway. This may be the case until at least Autumn 2006. Turn left off the Hunter Main Trail to Mt Coricudgy and later return to Rylstone/Kandos by the same route.

Fern Tree Gully Reserve and Beyond

Ferntree Gully can be accessed off Bylong Valley Way, 17 km north of Rylstone. Turn right into a sandy track at the sign, and follow this for about 2 kms to the picnic area and parking spot. There are a number of walking tracks at Ferntree Gully that take you down into the cool narrow ferntree-studded valley floor, and/or around the top edge of the rocks where you can get an overview of the valley and the unusual rock formations on either side. Allow an hour minimum to do the full loop walk returning to the picnic area, longer if you like to dawdle inspecting the rock formations, ferns and orchids along the way. Take food and water. Medium grade walk, ascents/descents on some uneven slopes and stairs. Return from the picnic area and turn left into the Bylong Road to return to Rylstone. Approximately 40 km return. See also Ferntree Gully Reserve entry in Wilderness and Waterways.

Additional options:

1) Either on the way in to, or out of, Ferntree Gully, pass the turnoff on Bylong Valley Way and travel another 3 kms to the top of **Growee Gulph**, where headwaters of the Goulburn River have cut a stunning gorge down through the sandstone rock layers almost 300 metres/1,000 ft deep. Continue on down the steep winding road into the Gulph, with great views of enormous rock faces on the sides of the Valley. You can stop at the roadside picnic area (5 kms down the Gulph) and then return, or go all the way down into the Bylong Valley before retracing your steps. At the bottom of the Gulph, you can turn right into Growee Road (unsealed) to explore up a side valley for a few kilometres for more views of the cliffs. Return the way you came.

2) Return to Rylstone via **Breakfast Creek Road**. From the Ferntree Gully turn off, return along Bylong Valley Way for 7 km and then turn right into Breakfast Creek Road. This unsealed road (11 km) takes you through a pleasant valley in escarpment country into the top end of the Lue Valley. There are some gates, please close once you go through. The road intersects the Lue Road. Turn left and return to Rylstone, 9 kms.

[Download the Ferntree Gully Brochure](#)

Kandos - Lake Windamere - Rylstone Loop Drive

This lovely scenic drive takes you from sandstone cliff country into the heavily folded ranges to the west and past Lake Windamere, with some great vistas.

From Kandos take the Sydney Road. As you pass under the overhead line that carries buckets of limestone to the cement works 2 kms from Kandos, look for a right hand turn off (unsealed) that takes you to the Rotary Lookout just above the road. This offers an elevated view back into the valley, and of Kandos at the foot of Coomber Melon Mountain. Rejoin the road for 16 km until it intersects the Castlereagh Highway north of Ilford. Turn right onto the Highway and climb up to and then over Aaron's Pass (named for the Aboriginal man who guided William Lawson, of the trio who found a way over the Blue Mountains, to the fertile river flats on the Cudgegong River above Mudgee). You will descend a large hill. At the bottom turn right into Cudgegong Road for 1 km to Lake Windamere and Cudgegong Waters Park on your left. Entry to the park is by a \$2 coin operated boom gate. Here you can picnic, go boating (with your own equipment), or go fishing (licence required) for Silver Bream, Golden Perch (Yellowbelly) and Murray Cod, or just relax and enjoy the view. There are camping facilities and you can hire a caravan or pitch your tent on the shoreline. The original town of Cudgegong is now drowned under the Lake. When you are ready to leave, turn left into Cudgegong Road and follow this back to Rylstone. Take in the spectacular view of the Cudgegong Valley and the varied peaks of the Great Dividing Range as you cross over Old Maids Hill. Approximately 60 kms in total, all sealed road.

Drive slowly as you pass along the edge of the lake and note the folded rock strata in the road cuttings. This includes folded layers of limestone approximately 400 million years old. Some of the local limestone has been transformed through the effect of great heat and pressure into marble. Cudgegong Marble from the area was used for the interior of Commonwealth Bank in Sydney.

Kandos/Rylstone - Mudgee Loop Drive

If you are planning a visit to Mudgee during your stay, why not take one road on the way to Mudgee and another on the way back. Both roads offer great views and this drive can be done in either direction.

Leaving Rylstone travel north on Bylong Valley Way 4 km and take the left hand turn off on the Lue Road towards Mudgee. The road travels down the beautiful Lue Valley, passing through the small hamlet of Lue, and emerges into the Mudgee Valley on Lawson Creek. You enter Mudgee on the northeast side of town, close to one of the vineyard areas. Once in Mudgee, return to Rylstone/Kandos via the Castlereagh Highway (Sydney Road) - follow the signs. This takes you past more vineyards into hilly country and past Lake Windamere. When you are 33 km from Mudgee, turn left into Cudgegong Road and return to Rylstone (21 km) or to Kandos (28 km). Take in the spectacular view of the Cudgegong Valley and varied peaks of the Great Dividing Range as you cross over Old Maids Hill. Approximately 110 kms without sightseeing in Mudgee.

Additional option:

If returning from the Mudgee via the Castlereagh Highway, at approximately 20 kms take a left hand turn and drive 3 kms to view the enormous **Dam Wall** on the Cudgegong River that has created Lake Windamere. There is a viewing platform and a picnic ground with toilets.

Scenic Stops and Return Journeys to Sydney

Pearsons Lookout

On the Castlereagh Highway (Sydney Road) approximately 5 kilometres south of the village of Capertee, it is well worth stopping for a few minutes at Pearson's Lookout for spectacular views into the Capertee Valley. The sandstone escarpments light up in the afternoon light and the atmosphere in the valley is always changing with the passage of sunlight, cloud, fog, and rain. The large butte sitting to the right is Pantoney's Crown, named after William Lee, the first settler in the valley. It is now a Nature Reserve in Gardens of Stone National Park and is included in the Blue Mountains World Heritage Wilderness.

Return to Sydney via Mt Vincent

Return from Rylstone/Kandos to Ilford and turn left into the Castlereagh Highway. Pass through the hamlet of Ilford and look for the first left hand turn (unsealed) to Mt Vincent, after the Public School on your right. This road winds east and up onto the high plateau of Mt Vincent past vineyards and rural properties with some scenic views. The road rejoins the Castlereagh Highway at Running Stream on the other side of Cherry Tree Hill where you can continue your journey to Sydney. Additional 10 kms, additional 20 minutes to travel time.

Return to Sydney via Capertee Valley

See Capertee Valley Drives. This deviation is well worth doing if you have the time to spare. Follow the Capertee Road all of the way, emerging from the valley to rejoin the Castlereagh Highway at Capertee. Approximately 77 km without side trips, allow an additional 45 minutes to the journey.

This is the site of the Cudgegong Business Group, including Rylstone Regional Tourism Association, and has been created with funding assistance from Mid Western Regional Council. © 2008