

## Linderman's Pass – rough notes, winter, 2001

We left the Wentworth Falls Conservation Hut at 9.00 after a car shuffle to the top of Jamison's Lookout.

Pleasant walk around over Lillian's Bridge below the golf course with the odd stray golf ball wizzing overhead. Short side trip to Gladstone's lookout. Great views across the Jamison valley to Mt Solitary

Back on the main track we had glimpses of Wentworth Falls through the trees & more expansive valley views then at Moirs Point ? Turned down Roberts Pass. Sign / warning do not proceed without an experienced navigator.

Slip slidey mud, fallen trees, metal steps on Roberts Pass then a steep metal ramp. We took our packs off to slip down under the ramp & onto the steps below. Then more muddy sliding until we finally reached the indistinct Linderman's Pass track marked by a small aluminium arrow. Time for a well earned rest break.

Navigation was not an issue, but the obstacle course track was. We encountered ankle deep mud, slippery rocks, fallen trees (under or over ?) and boulders (over or around ?). We traveled at a leg stretching, snails pace, rewarded by occasional views across to Kings Tableland.

Finally after struggling through a sloping thicket of freshly fallen intermeshed saplings & vine we decided it was time to call a halt for lunch. Our novice walkers were getting tired. We'd been on the trail for 2 ½ hours, but covered only about 4 km. The track notes suggested that the track became better defined after rounding Sublime Point – about 3 km further on.

Setting off again, the track soon deteriorated further, becoming very narrow and unstable in places and a maze of with ankle twisting rocks hidden in the bracken in others. After another hour we reached the ferny flanks of Sublime Point. The track was indistinct, rough & stony but we had no trouble with navigation. Our problem was slow and tiring inexperienced walkers on a track with obstacles of one sort or another every 50 meters or so.

With relief, we eventually reached a small stone cairn and met a westerly breeze heralding the end of Sublime Point at about 3pm. The track improved dramatically, but our tired novices were still very slow. With 2 ½ hours daylight left and a better track we were not too concerned and enjoyed occasional views to Mt Solitary and the Three Sisters through breaks in the trees. At about 4 pm the sun started to slide down behind the plateau above us. The gully where we presumed the track up to Jamison's Lookout looked to be quite near.

We paused to admire the orange, ochre, burnt umber amphitheater of Gordon Falls, crossing the creek twice, second crossing behind a curtain of falling water. It should be only about 2km to the junction with the track up to the cars – surely that wouldn't take long?

The easy track disappeared and was replaced once again by deep, oozy mud and slippery rocks. It didn't improve as we followed aluminium tags on trees over more obstacles. Our pace slowed again as the sun finally dropped behind the cliffs. We were concerned that daylight was fading, Sandy was very slow and tired and Grace was also struggling. Dave and Cathy went on ahead to scout out the track. Dave came back with news of ladders up a cascade. I went on to join Cathy and soon Dave & Tim caught us up at the base of Leura Cascades. A small sign marked the track we had just left as requiring navigational skills.

Cathy and I had a 15 minuet break while Tim and Dave tested routes across the creek until looking for one our tired walkers might manage. We didn't want to compound our difficulties with a sprained ankle. On the far bank there was no indication of the trail described in the track notes leading to Linden Falls and the climb out to Jamisons Lookout.

Tim scouted up the ladders and came back saying there was a Water Board sign warning that trespasses on the ladders would be prosecuted etc., but appeared to get out at the top OK. As dark

was almost on us, and 2 members of our party were flagging badly, we decided that we'd risk prosecution! Tim and Cathy waited for the rest of the group to catch up while Dave and I headed up the ladders. We wanted to get someone to the top before dark in case it was necessary to get help for the others.

It was 5.00pm and very dim under the tree cover. After the ladders we joined the Leura Cascades track. About half way up Dave decided to go back to make sure the others didn't choose any wrong track junctions. I went on in gathering gloom to the deserted picnic area. I walked on to the car (5.30) about 1 ½ km further along Cliff Drive and drove back to the cascades track head to wait. After about 10 mins, I spotted the welcome glint of Dave's torch he dumped his pack and headed straight back down to help the others. At 6.10 a flicker of torch light proceeded them as they finally emerged, tired but intact.

Grace was wet after a slip in a creek, Sandy was limping, exhausted, extolling the virtues of bananas in a crisis and apologizing for holding everyone up. Marian and I felt relieved but guilty for putting them through such a rough day. Dave looked a bit tired, but, heh, it's got to have been good training for his trip to Nepal. Cathy and Tim were mud stained but relieved to have everyone safely back at the cars. Gianni, having enjoyed his first encounter with the Australian bush, was surprised we had met no other walkers. Wonder why!.

Lessons to be learned from this adventure:

1. Always carry a headlamp torch.
2. Don't take walkers we haven't walked with before on tracks we haven't walked ourselves first!. Without our novices, we'd have finished the walk by 4.pm – still somewhat longer than we expected from the description we'd read, but well within daylight.
3. Carry bananas!

Once back at the Conservation hut, everyone was in good spirits. Grace even claimed to have enjoyed her first bushwalk. We're not sure if we believe her!! We'll take her on a nice easy wildflower trail next time.