



Sunday Drive

Marsden Park
Park Central, Campbelltown

photography by Bob Hughes

Stanwell Park to Wollongong

This drive takes you out of the Macarthur area but one of the benefits of living in Macarthur is it's position and easy access to the beautiful Illawarra coast.

Drive down through Appin, turn left and head towards Bulli and the coast. Just before reaching Bulli Tops take a left onto the Freeway heading towards Sydney. Take the Helensburgh turn off, then Lawrence Hargrave Drive towards Stanwell Park. If you have children with you (or if you like patting small furry creatures) it may be a good idea to stop at Symbio Wildlife Park situated just as you turn onto Lawrence Hargrave Drive. Here you can feed the kangaroos, pat the koalas as well as see lots of other wildlife. Go to symbiozoo.com.au for further information.

Only four kilometres along Lawrence Hargrave Drive and you reach Bald Hill. The views from here are magnificent and there is plenty to watch as it is a favourite spot for Hang Gliding and Paragliding (weather permitting). If you are the adventurous sort you can do a tandem flight or, if you are like me, enjoying an ice-cream and the view is sufficient.

When you have admired the view enough head down the hill to Stanwell Park and onto the spectacular Sea Cliff Bridge. There are parking areas at the end of the bridge so you can stop and have a closer look and take some photos. The drive from here along Grand Pacific Drive is very pleasant as it winds along the coast passing through one little coastal town after another. There are lots of beautiful beaches along here if you want to stop and have a quick swim to cool down but we were on a mission for lunch at Thirroul and Flanagan's Fish Café. This used to be situated on the main road but is now right on the

beach, a very nice place to sit and enjoy some good fish and hand-cut chips. When we were there last they were in the process of getting a licence and extending their hours so we're looking forward to enjoying nice summer evenings there in the not too distant future.

Continue the drive along the coast to the harbour at Wollongong. This is such a picturesque spot and a good place to stretch the legs and walk off the lunch. We headed south to the lighthouse on the headland and then on past there towards the Entertainment Centre. There was an ulterior motive in this as the Entertainment Centre also houses Five Islands Brewery and Bar which offers a range of refreshing cold beers brewed on the premises. I enjoyed the Longboard which has orange peel and coriander added during the brewing process to create a deliciously different taste. Full details can be found at fiveislandsbrewery.com.

Time for the return home, up the steep climb that is Mount Ousley Road. You can continue on this road until you reach the Campbelltown turning and go back the way you came through Appin but we decided we would have one last view of the area so took the turning to Mount Keira lookout. Again there are spectacular views of the coast which reach as far as Kiama on a clear day. From the lookout head back down until you reach the intersection with the Picton road and then turn left. Follow this road until you come to the entrance to the motorway back to Campbelltown and Sydney. Alternatively, if you want to take a more scenic route you can continue towards Picton and take either the road through Menangle or Razorback to return you home.