

NSW High Country Trip Day 3
Australia Day Weekend January 28th 2008
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Those who had walked through Clarke Gorge and on to the Cave Creek waterfall on Sunday were impressed. When the ranger told us that the

walk through Nicole Gorge was nicer many were keen to try this out before leaving on Monday morning. The signs told us that it was a 6km round trip and the ranger suggested that it would take about 2 hours. Our esteemed leader requested that we be ready to leave by 11am.

As it was going to be a warm day Ian McKinley started gathering the walkers at 8am and we headed off about 15 minutes later. We walked down to the waterhole where we started yesterday but this time headed upstream. Almost immediately the creek bed was dry as the creek now emerges from a spring at the waterhole.

We headed across a bend in the creek and soon found ourselves entering Nicole Gorge. The dry creek bed crossings were an anti-climax after the excitement of hopping across unstable and slippery stepping stones or wading through the freezing water yesterday.

Before long we came across the entrance to Coleman Cave. Everyone went in to the entrance but only Ian Reid and Jordan had torches and ventured further. They went less than 100m into the cave before the roof became so low that they would have had to get onto hands and knees in the mud to continue.



We resumed walking through the gorge, often walking down the dry creek bed. There were frequently spectacular rock cliffs towering over us. At one point a sign indicated that we could see fossils in the rocks but we were unable to find any.

After some time we came to the entrance to Murray Cave. There was some discussion about its anatomical appearance and the minds of men, but I won't go into that.



At this point the track left the valley and climbed steeply up beside the cave entrance. There was a good view further up the valley. We came out onto an open plain. The return walk was across this plain and through another gentle valley. On the way we saw 2 kangaroos and a brumby and foal. The walk took about 2 1/2 hours. All agreed that it was not as interesting as the previous days walk but most were glad to have done it. We were all packed up and ready to go by 11:15.

We drove back to Coolamine Homestead, which we had passed on the way into Blue waterholes, and had a look around. There were a number of buildings, including a 2 seater toilet, mostly in quite good condition. Some of the newspapers lining the walls were said to date back to the 1880s, although I did



not find any earlier than 1939.

We returned to Long Plain Road and then continued south along it. Chris had hoped that we could explore some other tracks on the way out but it was decided that it was too late and they would have to be saved for another day. We stopped for lunch at Long Plain Hut camping area, only a few kilometres from the Snowy Mountains Highway. This area had lush, short green grass. Everyone headed for the shade of the trees around the area as it was very warm. There was also a horse float with 3 horses and riders. During lunch the branch that 1 horse was tied to broke and the horse panicked until calmed by 1 of the riders.

After lunch we all headed to the highway and back to Sydney. In spite of a fine long weekend at the end of the school holidays the traffic was not bad and there were no serious hold ups.

Thanks Chris for a great trip. You will have no trouble filling a trip to go back and explore this area further.

