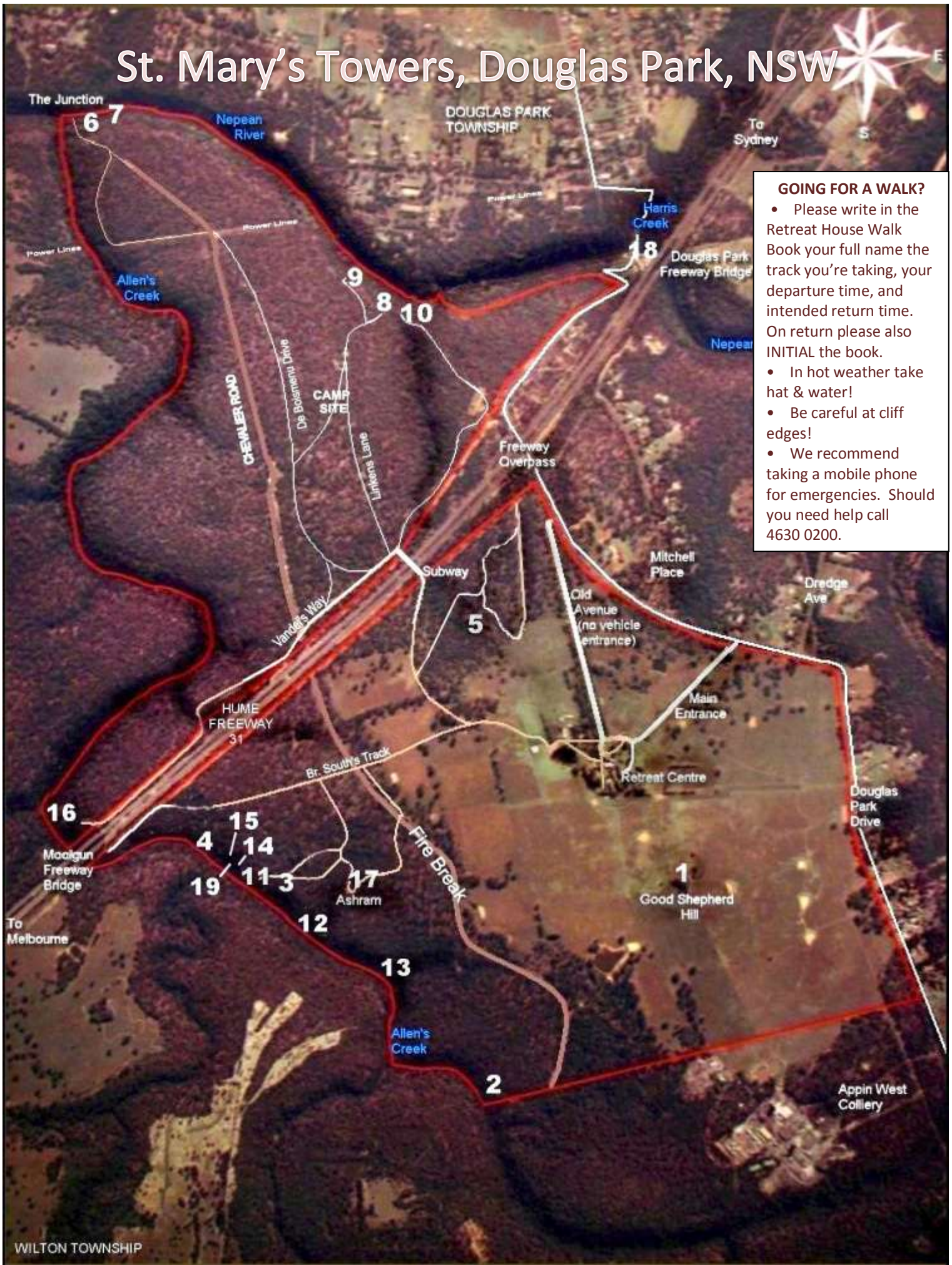


# St. Mary's Towers, Douglas Park, NSW



## GOING FOR A WALK?

- Please write in the Retreat House Walk Book your full name the track you're taking, your departure time, and intended return time. On return please also INITIAL the book.
- In hot weather take hat & water!
- Be careful at cliff edges!
- We recommend taking a mobile phone for emergencies. Should you need help call 4630 0200.

## BUSH WALKS AT ST. MARY'S TOWERS

### DETAILS OF WALKS:

ALL markers for return journeys back to the Retreat Centre are WHITE. Many walks begin from the front of the main (Mitchell) house and there are signs on the dirt roads that lead out from there to the turnoff to most of the tracks.

#### 1. GOOD SHEPHERD HILL

*(approx. 10-15 minutes - one way) ORANGE markers*

The Hill at the back of the Retreat House. Go to the gate at the right side of the stone wall of the cemetery. Turn right into the cattle laneway and go along it until you get to a double gate on the left. Go through the gate making sure to leave them as you found them, and walk up to the top of the hill. In front of the small grove of trees you will find the statue of the Good Shepherd. The views are spectacular.

#### 2. CUTCLIFF'S CORNER

*(approx. 50 minutes - one way) No coloured markers*

Follow the trail to the Ashram sign and follow the fence line on the left until the Fire Break Road. Follow the fire break for some distance. This narrows near its end until you finally come to the southern perimeter fence. Beyond this fence is the West Appin Colliery. If you turn right and follow the fence through the bush you will come to the Allen's Creek Gorge, where you will be able to sit on the sandstone ledges and admire the gully before you. If you are quiet you may see rock wallabies and other native animals.

#### 3. CRIB GROTTO & VERIUS VIEW

*(approx. 35 mins - one way) PURPLE & WHITE*

Follow Br South's Track to the turnoff sign and proceed across the field. Continue straight past the 'intersection until you come to The Sacred Heart (top) Trail on your right, follow this trail which has RED markers. As you continue down the gully you will come to a large rock on your right (The Crib Grotto). Go further until you come to the PURPLE & WHITE markers which lead to Verius' View, and the beautiful cliff view before you.

#### 4. COCHARD'S CAVES

*(approx. 45 mins - one way) WHITE & PURPLE markers*

Follow Br South's Track to its end, then left along the fence line towards the Freeway Bridge. (You will pass the turnoff to the Grotto Track.) The trail then winds down to the river and you will come to some beautiful caves.

#### 5. TREAND'S TRACK

*(approx. 45 minutes - one way) GREEN markers*

Follow the road to the Subway and you will come to a gate marked 'Bio-Bank' area. The road then divides into two. Take the right side road with GREEN markers and follow it until you come to a road on the right. You will then cross a creek and on top of the hill you turn right and follow the GREEN markers. A sharp left turn follows this. The walk is very easy to follow. On the way back you will join the track again, turn right and go downhill.

#### 6. THE JUNCTION WALK & KERRINS LOOKOUT

*(approx. 60 mins - one way) YELLOW markers*

A long but easy walk to where Allen's Creek and the Nepean River meet on the property. Follow the dirt road through the subway under the Freeway. Turn left into Vandell's Way, right into De Boismenu Drive, past the Cadet Camp Site and follow the track until you join Chevalier Road at the power lines. Continue along the road, which veers to the left just before Kerrins Lookout on the right. A rough trail will then lead down the steep escarpment to the river and a beautiful swimming spot. The undergrowth at times may make it hard to get to the end.

#### 7. OUR LADY OF LOURDES GROTTO

*(approx. 50 minutes - one way) BLUE markers*

Follow the way to the Junction (as above) YELLOW markers. The track to Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto is on the right, and is not far from the Junction Turnoff. It will take you to the top of the cliff - the descent is hard but not long.

#### 8. McGRATH'S RETREAT LOOKOUT

*(approx. 50 minutes - one way) WHITE & RED markers*

Follow YELLOW markers to the far side of the Subway. Go Straight ahead into Linckens' Lane and past the Cadet Camp Site - Keep to the right side trail to its end at McGrath's Retreat and a stunning view of the Nepean Gorge from above. An easy walk.

#### 9. ST THERESE GROTTO

*(approx. 60 minutes - one way) RED markers*

Follow the trail to McGrath's Lookout, St Therese's grotto trail is on the left side of the trail, just before you reach McGrath's Lookout. It is a long windy bush track and is a fair walk. Once you have come to the top of a cliff, you will follow a short hard decline to the Grotto.

## **10. BISHOP GSELL'S LOOKOUT & EYE OF THE NEEDLE**

*(approx. 60 min - one way) PURPLE & WHITE*

Follow the dirt road through the Subway under the Freeway. Turn right along Vandel's Way and follow the PURPLE & WHITE markers. You will come across a large semi-cleared area, turn left and follow the markers which lead to Bishop Gsell's Lookout. The Eye of the Needle is on the left of the lookout. Follow the PURPLE EYE markers to a narrow mouth of a large and interesting cave. Once through the narrow opening and down the steps, it opens into a large cavern through which you can see the gorge. On the return, once you have come to Vandel's Way, you can either turn left or right. The right will bring you back the way you came, the left will lead you to a sealed road, where you will turn right and go over the Freeway overpass and back to St. Mary's Towers. There is also an alternative way to the lookout, which is a more shorter and direct route! Go down the Old Driveway in front of the Main House, go through the gates and then turn left onto Douglas Park Drive (a sealed road), cross over the Freeway and when you have turned a sharp right hand corner; you will see a gate on the left hand side. Follow the PURPLE & WHITE markers.

## **11. SACRED HEART GROTTTO**

*(approx. 40 minutes - one way) RED markers*

There are two tracks to the Sacred Heart. Follow Br. South's track to the turnoff sign to the Grotto track. You will come to another sign that points right to the Gully track, which is shorter but harder. Or go straight ahead to the Top Track which is easier. Both tracks meet at the top of the Crib Grotto. As you continue along the trail, you will notice the path going down to the Sacred Heart Grotto. There is a small ledge and a rope to help you down. You will enter a very large overhanging cave, turn and look up and you will see the statue of the Sacred Heart.

## **12. ST MARY MACKILLOP GROTTTO**

*(approx. 8 min from Ashram) BROWN - BLUE CROSS*

Follow the trail to the Ashram. Behind the Ashram is a trail leading to St. Mary Mackillop Grotto. It has BROWN markers with a BLUE CROSS. The trail is very easy. This area is an ancient and sacred site of the *Dharawal* people, the traditional custodians of this land. Please tread respectfully.

## **13. IMMACULATE CONCEPTION GROTTTO**

*(approx. 40 minutes - one way) BLUE markers*

When you reach the Ashram, turn left along the Grotto trail and follow the BLUE markers. There is a right hand turn into the bush and down a windy trail into a gully. There are a couple of hard spots to navigate. When you get there it is possible to continue onto Mary Mackillop Grotto. It is a short but quite steep trail.

## **14. ST ANTHONY GROTTTO**

*(approx. 40 minutes - one way) YELLOW markers*

Follow Br. South's track and after a short time you will come to a track on your left which will lead to an intersection. Follow the Grotto Trail on the right. You will pass the Gully track to the Sacred Heart and then come to a turn off to St. Anthony's Grotto on the left. It is only a short walk down hill. Just as you descend down the cliff; it is on the right hand side.

## **15. ST JOSEPH GROTTTO**

*(approx. 50 minutes - one way) ORANGE markers*

Follow the directions to St. Anthony's Grotto and just continue along the track till you come to a sign to St. Joseph. It is a hard walk downhill with two hard spots. The last spot (almost there) has two ways of getting down. On the left is a rope to assist with getting down over a rock, or alternatively there is a walk track to the right.

## **16. OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART GROTTTO**

*(approx. 60 minutes - one way) BLUE markers*

Go through the Subway under the Freeway and left along Vandel's Way. It is a long walk mostly along a dirt road that is near the Freeway. When you come to the Freeway Bridge (Moolgun Bridge) follow the track downhill towards the bridge pylons where the road will seem to stop. Continue on until the road resumes and at a sharp left turn there is a sign to your right. There is a short steep incline and the statue of OLSH is on your right before you get to the river.

## **17. ASHRAM**

*(approx. 30 minutes - one way) GREEN markers*

This walk is very popular. Follow Br. South's Track across the field to the gate. Turn left and follow the GREEN markers.

## **18. DOUGLAS PARK BRIDGE & RIVER CROSSING**

*(approx. 30 min - one way) No markers*

Down the old driveway, through the gates and turn left onto Douglas Park Drive (sealed road). Cross Freeway Overpass and continue down the winding road to the historical Nepean River Crossing and recently added fish ladder. To the right and towering overhead is the F5 Hume Highway Douglas Park Bridge. This is a pleasant swimming spot for locals. Please be careful of traffic on the road keeping to the curb at all times. The walk back up is a strenuous aerobic workout.

## **19. DIVINE MERCY**

*(approx. 45 min - one way) WHITE and RED markers*

A giant natural under rock cave. Follow the trail with YELLOW markers to St. Anthony's grotto. When you get there, instead of turning sharp to the right, go down a further 12 metres. Follow the trail on your right which has RED and WHITE markers for about 90 metres.