

MT KEIRA

**MORE
THAN
JUST A...**

**SCOUT
CAMP**



Rich in History - Rich in Heritage

MT KEIRA RICH IN HISTORY, RICH IN HERITAGE

... MORE THAN JUST A SCOUT CAMP!

Whether you visit Mt Keira Scout camp as a scouter, or for a private wedding, conference, family group or part of a training or team building group, Mt Keira Scout Camp welcomes you. We know that the beautiful sub-tropical rainforest and the unique flora and fauna that abounds will enhance your visit, occasion or business session. Our facilities are designed to blend with and complement our rainforest environment so please do not expect a 5-star resort. Our site was established in 1940 and is a gem within the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area (IESCA). We can provide a variety of entertaining rooms (some adjacent to external break-out areas), ample space for a marquee, bunk style accommodation, internal and external dining areas, full kitchen facilities suitable for caterers or self-catering, a swimming pool, and parking. Flexibility is offered in abundance.

The IESCA occupies over 2000 hectares of land along the escarpment and adjacent plateau. In addition to its stunning scenic beauty the escarpment supports a diverse, and in many cases unique and rare, range of animals and plants. Rainforests are a particular feature of the escarpment and the Illawarra Subtropical Rainforest assemblage, in which the Mt Keira Scout Camp nestles, is the most luxuriant of the rainforests south of Sydney.

Almost 70% of the native vertebrate animals found within the Sydney Basin Bioregion have been recorded in the Illawarra region - including 23 species of frogs, 49 reptiles, 74 mammals, and over 300 birds. Many of these species are regionally significant. For example, the sooty owl is an endangered species and the population of logrunners in the Illawarra is isolated from the other populations.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is responsible for the conservation and protection of the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area's values including Aboriginal cultural heritage, historic heritage, natural heritage and scenic values. The protection and conservation of these values at the Mt Keira Scout Camp are part of this responsibility and are managed through the operation of a licence to Scouts Australia.

The Mt Keira Scout Camp is located within an area historically occupied by the Wodi Wodi (also spelled Wadi Wadi), the aboriginal custodians of the Illawarra who spoke a variant of the Dharawal language. The escarpment as a whole, named Merrigong, is significant to the local Aboriginal community, having great symbolic and historic importance for Aboriginal descendants who maintain a continuing association with the area.

We pay tribute to the Dharawal people who were the original custodians of this beautiful place.

MT KEIRA SCOUT CAMP IS A VERY POPULAR PLACE, SO BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL.

For Bookings please phone (02) 4274 1099 between 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday and choose the "Bookings" option.

You will find more information concerning bookings at our website.

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WELCOME TO MT KEIRA

... MORE THAN JUST A SCOUT CAMP!

At between 68 - 80 million years of age, Mt Keira certainly enjoys a significant history in the Illawarra.

Keira is an indigenous term meaning high mountain and the aborigines called it Djera, meaning wild turkey. First maps of the area refer to it as Keera and some time later the 'I' was added.

"According to the Alcheringa, the dreaming of the local Aboriginal peoples, Mount Keira is Geera, the daughter of Oola-boola-woo, the West Wind. The story of the creation of Mount Keira is tied to the creation of the Five Islands, which sit just off the Wollongong coast. In the story, Oola-boola-woo had six daughters, Mimosa, Wilga, Lilli Pilli, Wattle, Clematis and Geera. They lived a-top the Illawarra escarpment, and one by one the first five children misbehaved, raising the ire of Oola-boola-woo, who cast them and the stone beneath them out to sea, forming the Five Islands.

Geera, who was now the only child left on their escarpment home, had no one to play with and no one to talk to as her father was often away. Geera spent all day sitting, hunched over and watching the camps of the local Aboriginals and looking out to sea to her five sisters. Eventually she turned to stone, dust and leaves building up around her until she became a part of the escarpment. She is known today as Mount Keira."[^]



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Mount Keira Road was built using convict labour in 1835-1836. The Scout camp was established in 1939 by Sid Hoskins of Hoskins Kembla Steel Works (later BHP) and CFT "Chief" Jackson (the founder of Scouting in this Region), Mr H R Lee and others and later described by Lady Baden Powell (wife of Lord Baden Powell), "surely one of the most beautiful campsites in the world".

Mt Keira is a well-preserved sub-tropical rainforest and a large area is enshrined within the Mt Keira Scout Camp. Easily accessed by road with a scenic winding drive through historic trees and glens with flora and fauna in abundance

The rest we will leave for you. Come and explore; enjoy our facilities for a camp, wedding, conference.... we are a venue of beauty serenity, peace and tranquillity. Most of all we are a natural, beautiful, Australian wonderland, ready to welcome and amaze you and your event.

[^] Illawarra Aboriginals: An Introductory History.

THE LODGE AT ITS SURROUNDINGS



THE PATH FROM THE
GLEN TO THE LODGE

The lodge is the focal point of Mt Keira with its charming timber and sandstone building, huge open sandstone fireplace, panelled walls, timber beams and cathedral ceiling. It is ideal for weddings, conferences and even small intimate occasions.



• The Lodge set up
for an imposing wedding reception.



The Lodge features full audio/visual facilities, and a delightful office.



• With beautiful timber features, the bunk rooms in the Lodge combine many practical features from a bygone era.

• A view of
the Lodge and
its lawn area
from part of
the historic
Sorensen Wall.



• Interior of the
Lodge. "How you set up
and decorate the Lodge
is only limited by your
imagination"

• The Lodge, featuring
its magnificent timber
cathedral ceiling is
set up for another
beautiful wedding.



THE LODGE IS THE CENTRE OF ALL MT KEIRA ACTIVITIES



• The Lodge interior

• The Lodge grand hall



• The Lodge office

• The Lodge wedding set-up with stage



THE GLEN

... LET OUR NATURAL BEAUTY HIGHLIGHT YOUR SPECIAL EVENT



The Glen is the most recently developed and one of the most popular areas at Mt Keira. It highlights the true natural beauty of the rainforest and is most suitable for outdoor functions due to its close proximity to The Lodge. Numbers are easily catered for and meld beautifully due to the spectacular effect from the trees and bush. The area suits small family gatherings, intimate concerts through to weddings and large events:

- » superb for both small and large weddings
- » ideal for outdoor functions
- » excellent floodlighting, dramatically highlighting the environment during low-light and evening events
- » special event backdrop floodlights of trees and mountainside
- » wired for sound with a PA and music system available to "just plug in"
- » bring your own iPod or CD
- » standard power outlets available
- » the Lodge is adjacent for indoor facilities or use during inclement weather
- » flexible vantage points to suit photographers, providing angle shots and positions for higher ladder shots
- » 100 seats available
- » recitals
- » afternoon teas
- » buffet and meals
- » reunions
- » corporate team development



• *The Glen comes alive with its magical rainforest atmosphere and enchants any occasion with its natural beauty, tranquillity and peace.*

• *It is waiting to enhance your special occasion and energise your guests with what nature does best - delivering nature's WOW factor!*



BUSH CHAPEL & PULPIT



The path to the chapel starts at the South end of the swimming pool and winds its way through the tropical rainforest. The rustic seats of the chapel blend in with the stunning surroundings. When you arrive, look up and see the beautiful tree ferns high up in the rainforest trees, the great giant Figtree alongside the chapel, and the pulpit flanked by massive natural rocks.

Apart from its obvious use, the chapel has been utilised for many different events:

- » meditation classes
- » renewal of wedding vows
- » environmental talks
- » training sessions
- » “quiet time”
- » melding with nature
- » music recitals

The Bush Chapel features a lovely natural amphitheatre set in a beautiful bush setting, which has been the scene of very many weddings. Indeed, it has become quite a tradition for newlywed couples to sponsor a tree for perpetuity in the vicinity of the chapel - a loving memory that can be revisited on anniversaries, birthdays or other special occasions.

- The Sorensen designed Bush Chapel, pulpit and steps.



NATURAL BEAUTY & SERENITY FOR YOUR SPECIAL DAY

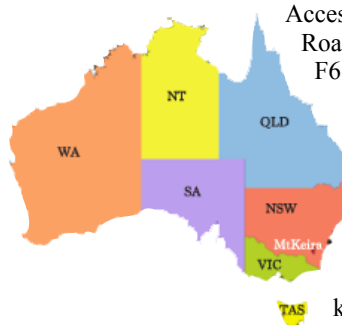


Photo courtesy H.Deer Photography: www.hdeephphotography.com.au

LOCATION OF THE CAMP

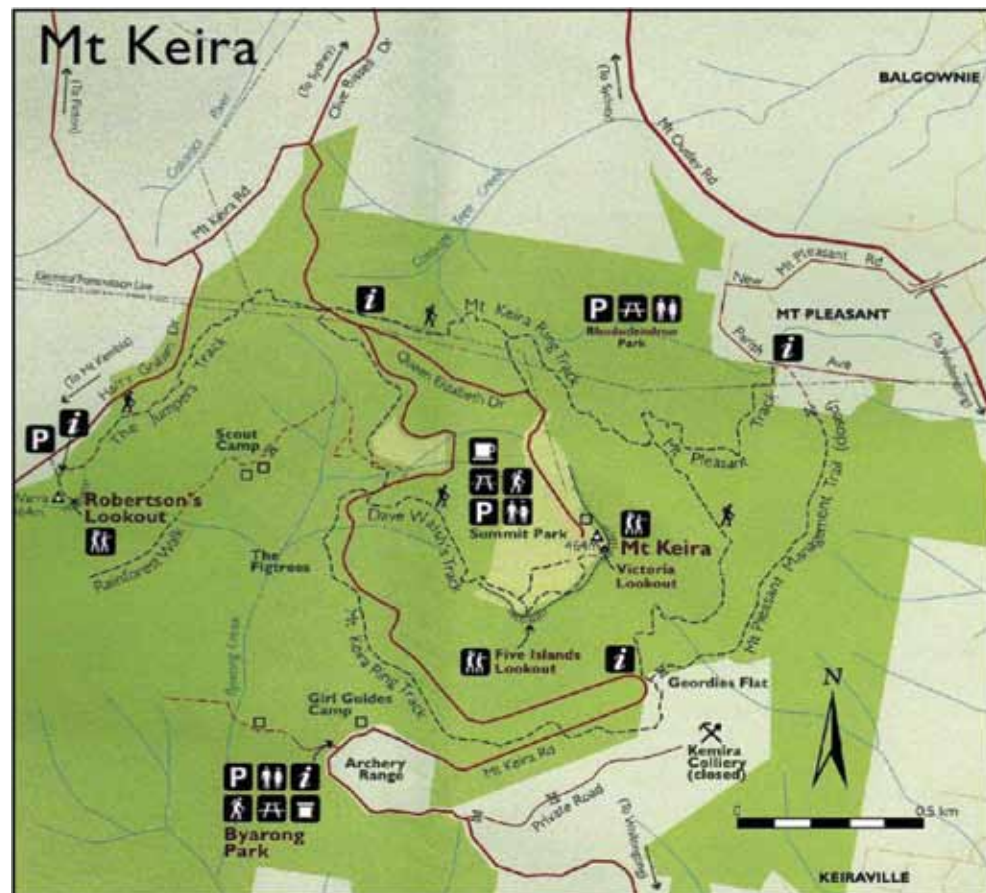
The Mt Keira Scout Camp is situated on the Southern Slopes of Mt Keira, immediately west of Wollongong on that part of the South Coast of New South Wales generally known as the Illawarra Region.

The site comprises many hectares of beautiful rain forest and is surrounded by the National Parks and Wild Life Area.



Access to the Camp is through a private road leading off Mt Keira Road, and the usual means of reaching the Camp is to leave the F6 Freeway from Sydney at the Figtree Exit (Southbound), turn left briefly towards Wollongong from the Freeway Exit, and then left up the Mt Keira Road. The Camp is 5.7 km beyond the Mt Keira turnoff.

The Camp may also be reached from the F6 Goulburn-Sydney Freeway by departing the Freeway at the Wollongong Exit, and turning off the Picton-Wollongong Road at the Mt Keira Exit. The entrance to the Camp is 1.0 km past the Mt Keira Summit Exit.



MT KEIRA & PAUL SORENSEN (1890-1983)

Much of the layout of the Mt Keira Scout Camp follows Sorensen's original design but his signature work can be seen in the dry-stone-walling terraces and retaining walls, and in the stone steps leading down from the Lodge to the main Camping Flat.

Born in Copenhagen, Paul Sorensen's early training was at the Danish Horscholt Plantescule, where he worked under the highly respected horticulturist, Lars Nielsen. While at the Plantescule his experience included maintenance of the gardens at Villa Hvidore, the summer home of Queen Alexandra of Denmark, where he learned about high quality landscape design.

Sorensen migrated to Australia in 1915, a time of war, severe drought and little employment. On the point of despair, he found work in the gardens of the highly fashionable Carrington Hotel in Katoomba and, from there, attracted the attention of other guesthouses and hotels.

His first break in garden design came in the 1920's when he began to acquire wealthy business clientele. Sorensen had designed many gardens of note in Leura and Katoomba for clients who valued his poetic and meticulously detailed approach. With 'Everglades' in Leura, he was able to design on a large scale, and Everglades remains his most famous monument.

Sorensen created the gardens for the Hoskins' family homes in Bowral and at "Glenniffer Brae" in Wollongong. It was while working at "Glenniffer Brae" that A.S.Hoskins asked him to do something with the Scout Camp design.

The Mount Keira Scout Camp remains almost pure Sorensen in planting, planning and character.

Small glades have been cleared within the

rainforest, carefully preserving large Illawarra Flame Trees (*Brachychiton acerzfolius*) and Australian Red Cedars (*Toona australis*). Sorensen marked the entry to the campsite with paired Jacarandas and one *Cedrus atlantica*. The path leads from these through natural rainforest to the main camping area.

Cedrus deodara and *Cedrus atlantica* planted in a grove, divide this glade from the next which houses the Lodge and features distant ocean views. These glades have been levelled and the cut banks allowed to regenerate. At the foot of the banks are drainage channels built with stone gathered from the site and carefully designed to fit perfectly into the wild surroundings.

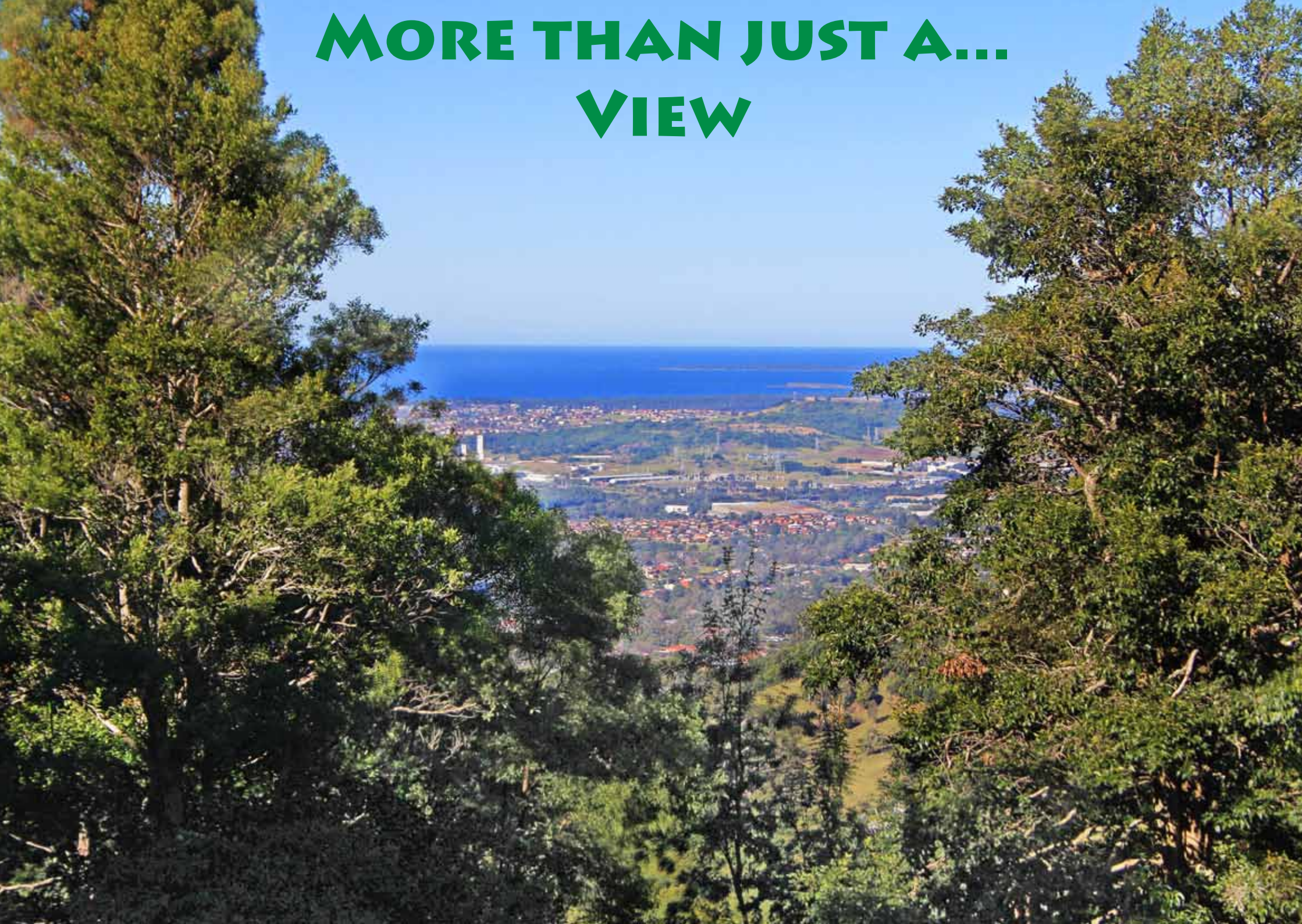


From the Lodge a meandering path begins, leading between enormous Fig trees and other rainforest giants to the chapel. Here a natural rock outcrop has been combined with typical Sorensen stonewalls and steps, to form the chapel pulpit. Only a small clearing was made for the congregation and the split log pews rise from a floor of leaf litter and bracken.

The quality of the environment testifies both to the ability of Sorensen to design a low maintenance facility and the respect by users for their camp.

An extract from "AUSTRALIA'S MASTER GARDENER: PAUL SORENSEN AND HIS GARDENS" by Richard Ratcliffe, Kangaroo Press 1990. (Pp 60-61 of Chapter 4 – THE HOSKINS)

**MORE THAN JUST A...
VIEW**





CAMPING AREAS AND CAMPFIRE CIRCLES

There are two main Camping Areas.

The Main Flat is a large grassed area which can accommodate a large number of tents and campers. The area can be floodlit at night and is serviced by male and female toilet and shower blocks and also includes a self contained disabled shower and toilet.

Firewood is available and water from a natural spring-fed storage tank is on tap.

A large Wet Weather Shelter is available for inclement weather and is equipped for cooking and eating and indoor activities.

The other camping area is Northcott Flat which is smaller and is suitable for overflow camping or smaller camps.

It is also serviced by a male and female toilet block.

- The magnificent intimate Cub Campfire circle.



- Natural rain forest backdrop blends nature seamlessly with the camping and campfire areas.

- There is also a smaller more intimate Campfire Circle for Cubs – the two being connected by a bush track and bridge.

- Camping areas abound.

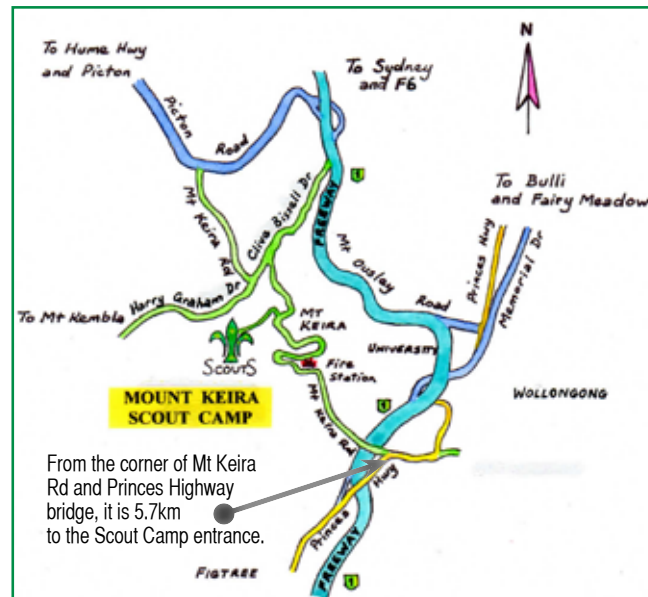


- Flood lights and foot lights for night use and has wheel chair access.

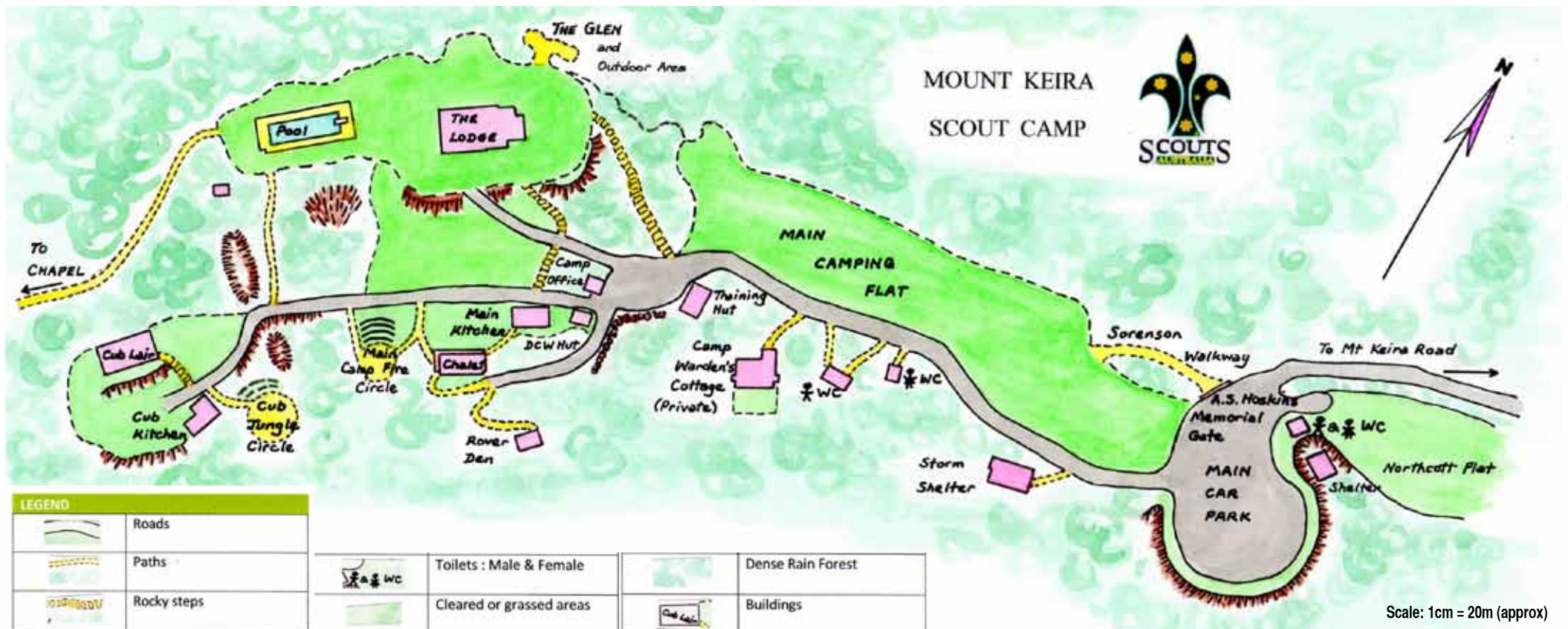




• The David Walsh Memorial Gates



• The Hoskins Gateway



A VENUE FOR PERFORMANCES



The Mt Keira Scout Camp often conducts its own "Music in the Rainforest" with the support of Rotary, as well as making all areas available to organisations, community members for private and public functions.



Proudly supporting your community

For over 133 years.



IMB offers better value banking to the local community. Better Value Banking is demonstrated through better service, better products, better value to our members and better support for our community.

THE CAMP KITCHEN, DINING ROOMS AND CAMPFIRE



- The covered and enclosed barbecue area attached to the camp kitchen.

- The camp kitchen is fully equipped, featuring a commercial stove, dishwasher and bain-marie.



- A campfire is always a popular event at Mt Keira.



- The dining room provides great flexibility for a variety of activities.



- The Lyrebird room, adjacent to the dining room, is suitable for smaller functions and meetings.

- On a fine night the outdoor campfire circle provides another mood for bonding and communicating - at one with nature.



CHARLES JACKSON CHALET



- *The Chalet accommodation comprises five bunk rooms, each with bedding for eight people.*

The Charles Jackson Chalet accommodates 40 people in four bunk rooms. This is an ideal accommodation complex for training courses, study groups and smaller convention and conferences.

The lower level provides male and female showers and toilets.

This complex is handy to Camp kitchen and dining area, campfire circles and conference facilities.

- *The upper level of the Chalet bunk rooms, with toilet and shower facilities on the lower level.*



CUB LAIR AND CUB KITCHEN

- *The Cub Lair main hall is 70sq metres with shower and toilet facilities. The hall also contains two bunk rooms with ensuites accommodating a further 12 adults.*



The Cub kitchen is an attractive building with a fully equipped commercial electric kitchen at one end of the building, leading to the dining hall with featured rough brick walls, a vaulted timber ceiling and windows offering a panoramic view of the coast to the mountain escarpment.

There are walking paths connecting all venues in the camp as can be seen on the plan on page 18, interspersed with beautiful grassed and treed areas and all serviced by a central service road.

- *Driveway access to Cub kitchen.*





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Major Brochure Supporter:

IMB Community Foundation Grant

Magazine Committee:

David Coates OAM, Kevin Donald OAM, Barry Wilson

Design & Typeset:

Barry Wilson, WestonPrint Pty Ltd

Printing:

WestonPrint Pty Ltd Kiama

Region Coordinator:

Kerrie Latham

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Contributions:

Sue Nairn for detailed camp map

National Parks & Wildlife Service for area map

Ian & Sylvia & Dreamlife Photography & Video*

Mark Weekes of Real Estate Products Group

Avraam & Hayley & H.Deer Photography*

Michael Hough AM RFD ED*

Carolyn & Alan*

Norman Melvin of Wollongong Camera Club

Front Cover image supplied by ©AAM2013

*Wedding photographs

IMB Community Foundation

IMB are proud supporters of the communities in which IMB members live and work. Each year around \$500,000 is distributed through the IMB Community Foundation to assist in the running of community projects.

Since its inception in 1999, the IMB Community Foundation has given over \$6m in funding to support more than 350 community projects.

IMB is proud of our long association with Mount Keira Scout Camp

Visit your local IMB branch today, call 133 462 or visit imb.com.au



Community
Foundation

MORE THAN JUST A...

