

4 Sandy Hollow to Wollemi

150 km • 3 hrs driving time

Sandy Hollow – Baerami – Wollemi & Goulburn River National Parks – Merriwa – Sandy Hollow

(some 30km of gravel roads between Honeysuckle Creek picnic area and the Merriwa side of Goulburn River National Park, but suitable for all vehicles)

- ✓ Spectacular scenery
- ✓ Sandstone escarpments
- ✓ National Parks
- ✓ Wineries
- ✓ Horse studs
- ✓ Country Towns
- ✓ Rural Villages
- ✓ Wildlife (sightings possible along much of the drive)



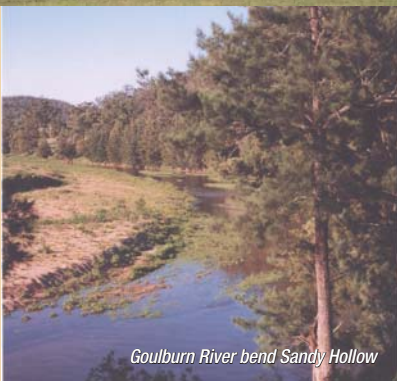
Train at Phipps Cutting



David Mahony Art Gallery alfresco coffee



Horses at Bylong Valley



Goulburn River bend Sandy Hollow



Baerami Rd

km Sandy Hollow Small rural village, with many vineyards and horse studs, it was put on the map by the infamous Sandy Hollow railway being built during the 1930's depression. It remained unfinished until the 1980's, when the line was completed to allow shipment of coal from Ulan to the port at Newcastle. Have a coffee at David Mahony's Gallery (p10) before heading east along Golden Highway and turn RIGHT onto Bylong Valley Way.

1 Bylong Valley Way Cross the bridge over the Goulburn River. This was built in the 1950's to replace the old bridge destroyed by flooding in 1955. The prominent peak of Mount Dangar (670m above sea level) can be seen to the right.

Pass horse studs on the left and continue on to

11 James Estate Winery (p13) James Estate Winery is set within the 1560 acre property. The complex contains a fully integrated wine manufacturing and bottling facility as well as a spacious cellar door and tasting area open 7 days a week. James Estate exports globally.

14.5 DETOUR - Baerami Creek Road The road follows the floor of this scenic valley. Just past Baerami Thoroughbreds on the right is Baerami Homestead, a 2 storey Victorian mansion built of local sandstone in 1875. There are olive, cattle, and pecan nut farms.

Baerami Oil Shale Relics 24 kms down Baerami Creek Rd. These relics are in the Wollemi National Park. Easy access is via 1km of private property. This is an important historic site featuring machinery and other relics of a turn of the century oil shale mining venture.

Reubens Fire Trail starts at the relics and links up with Widden Creek Rd 8.4km further on. This is a good walking trail passing old mine adits, powder magazines and hand built roads

Return the 24 kms to the Bylong Valley Way and to

15 Baerami Tiny rural village. The hall was built in 1925 with timber slabs and is still used for bush dances, play groups and other local functions.

Continue over the **Baerami Creek bridge** passing Baerami Church (now privately owned) on the left and Dingo Creek where the Bushranger Thunderbolt had a hide-out.

Continuing, Wollemi National Park is on the left and the Goulburn River to the right.

23 Phipps Cutting BBQ/picnic area with toilets, & well-marked trails into Wollemi National Park. There is a short walk to the left, which takes you up to a bench with views across the farmland. Other walks take you directly into the park where there is an abundance of wildlife including brush tail possums, kangaroos, regent honeyeaters, peregrine falcons and wedgetail eagles. The

Bicentennial National Trail also passes here.

27 DETOUR - Widden Valley Way 30 km detour with spectacular views of sandstone ridges and escarpments of the Wollemi National Park; picnic beside the Widden Brook.

44 Honey-suckle Creek Picnic Area Fireplace and toilets, surrounded by thick bushland and trees.

45 Cox's Gap Tunnel is on the right. This is a straight 761m tunnel and was one of the few parts of the original Sandy Hollow Railway project to be completed. To avoid going over the steep Gap it was used by motorists on the Ulan Rd until "reclaimed" as a railway tunnel in 1982. In the 1970's it featured in the opening sequence for the TV motor show Torque with Peter Wherrett with a car bursting from the tunnel. The rail line is mainly used to transport coal from Ulan and ore from Cobar.

Continue along the Bylong Valley Way to the

57 Railway crossing

Turn RIGHT at the signpost for Wollar driving for 14kms through farmlands RIGHT turn onto the

71 Ringwood Road sign-posted Merriwa.

78 O'Brien's Crossing The Goulburn River crossing is part of a Travelling Stock Route - massive boulders are strewn about the gently flowing Goulburn River. Another good picnic spot.

Continue along Ringwood Road into the Goulburn River National Park.

83 Lee's Pinch Lookout A well-marked 800m loop walking track with 3 lookouts providing exhilarating, extensive views over the park. This really is a must on this drive!

Continue on the Ringwood Rd to the T-intersection at the

114 Golden Highway

Turn RIGHT to Merriwa.

DETOUR - Turn left to visit Cassilis 37 km before returning along the Golden highway to Merriwa. Cassilis is a heritage listed town.

120 Merriwa A little country town, Welcoming Centre and Visitor Information Centre (p16), two pubs, clubs, Merriwa Sports Club (p18) and shops including Merriwa Cakes & Pastries Bakery (p15) and KT's on Bettington Gallery and Café (p10), visit Stone Hill Vineyard (p13) Continue on the Golden Highway back to

150 Sandy Hollow for a well earned rest!