ARALUEN
History Trail

THE TREASURE TRAIL

ARALUEN HISTORY TRAIL

01. Araluen Campground
02. Anglican Cemetery
03. Catholic Cemetery
04. Union Church
05. Araluen Federal Hall
06. St Patrick's Church
07. Recreation Ground
08. War Memorial
09. Araluen Hotel
10. Neringla Turn off

FIND OUT MORE
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Map

ARALUEN

To Majors Creek (Road closed)

Majors Creek Mountain Road

Church of England Cemetery Road

Bells Creek

Araluen Creek

Araluen Road

To Bells Creek and Braidwood

APPLE TREE FLAT — 2

Araluen Road

Dirty Butter Creek

Majors Creek

Araluen Road

1

Majors Creek Mountain Road

Dirty Butter Creek Road

Dirty Butter Creek

Quong Tart Close

Victoria Street

BURKETOWN

Naughtons Close

Byrnes Lane

Salvia Lane

4 — Araluen Road

3 — Camp Street

Del Ponte Lane

Kelly's Lane

Araluen Creek

NEWTOWN

Hospital Hill Road

5
6
7
8 — **REDBANK**
9

Hospital Hill Road

10

To Neringla

To Mudmelong and Moruya

CROWN FLAT

Note: Map not to scale.

Dig a little deeper

Found your treasure?
Don't forget to share it with us!

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VISIT QUEANBEYAN PALERANG — QPRC — ARALUEN FEDERAL HALL — ARALUEN VALLEY HISTORY

EXPLORE MORE OF QUEANBEYAN-PALERANG

Come for lunch at one of our charming cafes, stay for a glass of wine or two at our renowned wineries, and stroll through the many galleries, fashion boutiques and antique shops in between. Traverse through ancient forests, take in the beautiful sun-dappled walks and set up camp under the starry sky.

Add to this some fascinating historical relics and modern parks and picnic areas, and you'll have endless spaces to explore and adore in Queanbeyan-Palerang. Create moments that you know you'll treasure forever in Braidwood, Bungendore and Queanbeyan.

There's so much to discover if you just dig a little deeper.

#FOUNDMYTREASURE

ARALUEN
History Trail

Araluen, also known as the 'Happy Valley' and 'Valley of Peace', is a beautiful sunken valley that was created as the Moruya River and its tributaries sculpted the land and formed the stunning mountains that surround the valley and create the challenging entry into the valley.

The Arralyin people, the valley's original custodians, were part of the Yuin Nation. They spoke Dhurga, a language spanning from south of Nowra to Narooma, encompassing Braidwood and Araluen, which continues to be spoken today.

European settlers arrived in the 1820s, and a gold rush followed in 1851, transforming the valley into a bustling hub with over 4,000 inhabitants by the 1860s and '70s. Mining reshaped the landscape drastically, depleting alluvial gold and eventually fading out by the 1930s.

In the twentieth century, agriculture, especially peach orcharding, took over as the primary industry. Despite the rich history, remnants like historic structures, ruins, and archaeological sites are barely visible in Araluen today. Use this heritage guide to better understand Araluen's past.

1 ARALUEN CAMPGROUND

The Araluen campground is a perfect base to explore the rich history of the valley. Nestled under the shade of casuarina trees, try your hand panning for gold in the creek and keep an eye out for heritage signs about gold mining in the area and the former villages of Burketown and Deep Creek.

2 ANGLICAN CEMETERY

The Church of England cemetery was gazetted in 1863 as a General Cemetery. It is the resting place for Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Wesley denominations. Declared a Historical Site in the early 2000s, over 250 people are buried here.

Charles Faulkner, a teacher at West Araluen school, was buried here in 1856 but his grave is unmarked. Alexander Waddell, co-discoverer of gold in the area, was also buried here.

3 CATHOLIC CEMETERY

Plans for a Catholic Cemetery were announced in 1859, and the current site was visited and blessed by Archbishop Polding in 1869. The earliest burial on the site was an infant, Michael Hourigan, who died in 1870. His grave is unmarked, but a family plaque can be seen on the side fence. Over 170 people are buried here.

It was declared a Historical Site in the early 2000s.

4 UNION CHURCH / NEWTOWN

When the Araluen Union Church was built in 1911, it was part of the village of Newtown. Built on land donated by the Mundy family, Union Church is owned and maintained by a local trust and available to multiple denominations.

5 ARALUEN FEDERAL HALL

Built in the 1890s, and recently renovated, the Araluen Federal Hall is a central hub for the people of Araluen and a great venue for events. The Hall has plenty of historical signs and objects that explain different aspects of the history of the valley.

6 ST PATRICK'S CHURCH

The current St Patrick's Church is the fourth Catholic church structure in Araluen. This beautiful stone church was completed in September 1941, replacing a wooden structure in the same location. The first Catholic church was built in about 1854 at Sweeney's Flat, Mudmelong.

7 RECREATION GROUND

A central gathering point with BBQs, picnic areas, playground equipment, a tennis court and more. Located in the former village of Redbank, stop here to find out more about social and sporting life in the valley.

8 WAR MEMORIAL

Unveiled in 1931, this memorial was built with granite donated from the Moruya quarry, the same place that supplied all the granite for the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The memorial was built on land donated for the purpose by Mr W.U. Alley.

9 ARALUEN HOTEL

From having dozens of pubs in the 1850s, Araluen now only has one. The building was originally Alley's Perseverance Store, but when the Araluen Arms Hotel burnt to the ground in 1927, the publican transferred the license to the store and it became the Araluen Hotel in 1928. It is an important social hub for the valley.

10 NERINGLA TURN OFF

Stop here for wonderful views north up to Majors Creek and to find out about the former villages of Mudmelong and Crown Flat.

DID YOU KNOW?

QUONG TART CLOSE

Named for Mei Quong Tart who, aged 9, emigrated from China with his uncle in 1859, bringing a shipload of Chinese miners to the goldfields around Araluen and Braidwood. He was a man who successfully bridged two very different cultures. For some time, he was the Government Interpreter for the districts of Braidwood, Araluen and Majors Creek, friendly with both Chinese and European settlers. He went on to become a prominent 19th century Sydney merchant.

HOSPITAL HILL ROAD

Named for the hospital that was apparently located nearby. In 1871, it was described as one of the most 'fair and conspicuous' buildings in the valley, built on the crest of the hill with a fine view over the valley. By 1887, the hospital was closed, and today, no trace of it remains and no records exist that show exactly where the hospital was.

DEL PONTE LANE

Named for the Del Ponte family who arrived in Australia from Ticona, an Italian speaking canton in Switzerland. They purchased land in Araluen in the early 1860s and established a vineyard from which they produced and sold grapes, wine and brandy.

SALVIA LANE

Named for Giovanne Salvia who emigrated from Switzerland to Araluen around 1860. He had the forethought to bring grape cuttings with him and set up a vineyard. He died in 1881 and was buried in Newtown, Araluen.

DIRTY BUTTER CREEK ROAD

One of the original tracks miners used to get down into the valley, this road was named for the creek it runs alongside. Why the creek was named Dirty Butter is a mystery today – some say a load of butter accidentally crashed into the creek, others say when it is in flood the water looks like dirty butter. Today, Dirty Butter Creek Road is a dead end.

In the 1850s, along with other tracks, it was used as a slide to transport goods and materials down the steep and treacherous mountains. Slides were cleared strips of land from the top of the valley to the floor. Triangular sleds were built for a one way trip to the bottom, merchandise was strapped on and then winched to the bottom.

MAJORS CREEK ROAD

One of the original main tracks into Araluen. Important during the gold rush, the gold escort used the road to transport gold out of the valley. On 13th March 1865, Ben Hall's gang attempted to rob a gold escort as it travelled along this road to Braidwood. The troopers mounted a stout defence forcing the gang to flee empty handed. The road is now closed, perhaps permanently, due to land slips.

BYRNES LANE

Named for the Byrne family who farmed this part of the valley.

NAUGHTONS CLOSE

Named for the Naughton family who initially came to the valley for gold but eventually took up farming and dairying. They also set up one of the first cheese factories.