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## OLD MERYLA ROAD – Morton National Park

**Follow an historic Aboriginal route and old road, see beautiful views stretching across the valley, enjoy lush vegetation and a waterfront lunch spot**

### MERYLA PASS TO LAKE YURRUNGA VIA GRIFFINS FIRE TRAIL AND OLD MERYLA ROAD

**Grade:** Medium to Hard. Mostly easy graded trail. Many fallen trees to negotiate. Last 3km return is a steep climb. Good level of physical fitness required.

**Length:** 16km return

**Time:** 6 hour walk



Old stone retaining wall

### OVERVIEW

The Old Meryla Road is a fascinating glimpse back to a time of early exploration and hand built roads. After the steep descent from Meryla Pass most of the trail is a well shaded, gradual slope. The trail descends through lush rainforest and wet sclerophyll forest and passes an historic coal seam and the old farm area of Gales flat. After 2.5km the Old Meryla Road branches off to the right from the main track and continues for 5.5km until it disappears into the stored water of Lake Yarrunga which was flooded in 1975. The Old Meryla Road is historically significant on two counts: It was the route of the first entry into Kangaroo Valley in 1818 by a white man, Charles Throsby. He was led into the Valley by an Aboriginal man known as 'Timelong'. Nearly 80 years later, in 1896, a road was constructed on this route. There are amazing stone retaining walls, especially where the creeks cross under the trail. On the high side of the trail you can see evidence of drill holes used for fracturing the solid rock. Lake Yarrunga is a good spot for lunch before retracing your steps back to the car park. The last 3km of the return walk is a steep climb back to the car park.

### USEFUL INFORMATION

This walk is best done in spring, autumn or winter. If walking in summer avoid the hottest part of the day. The turnaround point is at Lake Yarrunga where there is fresh water for cooling off. Boil or sterilise water before drinking. If walking in spring or summer keep an eye out for snakes basking in the heat. All snakes should be treated with caution and left alone. Let someone know where you are going and when you are due back. Dogs are not allowed in the park. There is mobile phone reception at the car park but not on the walk. Walk-in camping permitted at Gales Flat.

### HOW TO GET THERE

The walk starts at Meryla Pass in Morton National Park which is 46km or around a one hour drive from the Kangaroo Valley post office. The road is mostly sealed except for the last 10km which are dirt but suitable for 2WD cars. There are some rough sections including fording a shallow creek. From Kangaroo Valley post office cross Hampden Bridge and continue up Barrengarry Mountain. At just over 17km is Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre with a wonderful waterfall, cafe and toilets. Continue straight ahead towards Moss Vale for around 12km until you pass route 79 on your right (to Moss Vale and Bowral). Just after this, at 30.5km, turn left into Meryla Road. In around 6km the road becomes dirt and at 46.3km you arrive at the end of the road.

### TAKE WITH YOU

Take plenty of water, sun protection, comfy walking shoes and a first aid kit. Warm and wet weather gear should be included in your pack as weather can change very suddenly. Take snacks and lunch for this full day walk. A map or sat nav is a useful addition. Wildflower and bird field guides for enthusiasts.

### FLORA

Blueberry Ash, Brown Barrel, Sydney Peppermint, Cabbage Tree Palm, Callicoma, Coachwood, Jackwood, Daisy-bush, Grass-flag, Grey Gum, Grey Myrtle, Lillypilly, Pencil Cedar, Pittosporum, Sandpaper Fig, Sassafras, Tree Fern, Turpentine, Two-veined Hickory, White Stringybark.

### FAUNA

Greater and Yellow-bellied Glider, Ring-tailed Possum, Sugar Glider, Swamp Wallaby, Wombat, Long-nosed Bandicoot, Water Skink, Sacred Kingfisher, Brown Goshawk, Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo, Crimson Rosella, King Parrot, Wonga Pigeon, Superb Lyre bird, Satin Bowerbird, White-browed Scrub-wren, White-throated Treecreeper, Eastern Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler, Lewins Honeyeater, Pied Currawong.



### RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Kangaroo Valley is an international award winning responsible tourism destination, help us keep it beautiful for now and future generations.  
[www.visitkangaroovalley.com.au](http://www.visitkangaroovalley.com.au)

**Waste** – Don't throw rubbish out of your car. When walking don't drop litter or tissues on the trails - carry out whatever you carry in. Dispose of litter in the bins provided in the village or at your accommodation place.

**Fire** – Avoid lighting fires especially in the bush fire season, usually September to April.

**Toilet Etiquette** – There are public toilets in the village at Hampden Bridge car park, near the ambulance station and Osborne Park. If away from public toilets bury all waste at least 100m away from water courses. Do not leave disposable nappies etc as litter.

# OLD MERYLA ROAD

## Kangaroo Valley EXPLORER

**START**

**Meryla Pass**  
2.5km to Old Meryla Road  
8km to Lake Yarrunga.

*In 1818, an Aboriginal man named Timelong, led explorer Dr Charles Throsby down Meryla Pass, to Yarrunga Creek and Kangaroo Valley. From here Throsby established a route across the Shoalhaven River to Jervis Bay.*

This part of the trail is on the edge of the Ettrema Wilderness Area. NSW is one of the few developed places in the world where wilderness still exists. Here, the immense silence is broken only by nature.

On the high side of the trail are the remains of long drill holes on the fractured rock surfaces. These holes were probably packed with explosives to blast sections of rock away.

First views of Lake Yarrunga. In 1976 Tallowa Dam was built at the junction of the Shoalhaven and Kangaroo Rivers. Lake Yarrunga was the name given to the stored water created by flooding the river and creek valleys.

**Lake Yarrunga - 8km from start**  
Lunch spot and turnaround point. Here the old road disappears under the water. If you look across the lake to your left you will see the road re-emerging on the other side at Beehive Point.

↑  
To Nowra  
Road &  
Fitzroy Falls

MERYLA ROAD

Old coal seam - In the 1860's coal mines were established in the gullies around the Bundanoon area.

Views across Yarrunga Creek (Yarrunga is an Aboriginal name meaning 'large trees') to Mount Carrialoo, Mount Moollatoo (Aboriginal name meaning 'Grassy Mountain') and Mount Scanzi.

Gales Flat - Old farm site with large grassy area and plenty of shade. There are unusual large rocks at the entrance to this area.

**Old Meryla Road  
2.5km from start**  
5.5km to Lake Yarrunga.  
Take care climbing over fallen trees.

OLD MERYLA ROAD

Notice how gentle the slope of this trail is. Originally an Aboriginal route, this trail closely follows the contours of the land making for easy walking both up and down.

A road was constructed on this route in 1896; it was intended to connect the Southern Highlands to the coast. The road was hand built by contractors and their skill is evident in the substantial stone retaining walls on the low side of trail.

A wide and well constructed road; imagine the horses, carts, carriages and people that must have passed along this same route.

CRANKEYS CREEK

GRIFFINS  
FIRE TRAIL







YARRUNGA CREEK

To Jacks  
Corner Road  
& Kangaroo  
Valley

**MORTON  
NATIONAL  
PARK**



### LEGEND

-  Walking track
-  Locked gate
-  Cliff line
-  Parking
-  No pets
-  Walk-in campsite

SCALE

0 0.5 1km

*There are many Indigenous heritage sites and walking trails throughout Kangaroo Valley which date back thousands of years. The Valley was known as a meeting place for the inland Gundungurra people and the coastal Yuin people from the Dharawal and Dhurga language groups.*