

5. Soon you will come to a fork in the track. Take the right hand fork and you will be heading towards the Lake shore known as the "Grassy Bank", named because of the patches of flat grassy areas that are found all along this section of the lake. In times gone by, regular visitors would even take lawnmowers with them before setting up camp for the weekend. At this point you have walked about 3 kilometres and should spend time to take a rest and some refreshment.
6. Continue along the track, taking the left hand fork and walk up a slight rise. You will notice that in this part of the forest, the trees are taller and more substantial than earlier encountered. This is directly due to better soil and more favourable environmental conditions providing for better growth.
7. The track now takes you back to the Lake shore. Continue along this wide level track following the shoreline and you will come to an historical point of interest that is directly linked to the timber industry in this area through the late 1800's. Approximately 500 metres along you will find the remains of a timber loading ramp at the waters edge. You will quite clearly see the large sections of timber running into the water. This is where large logs cut in the area were loaded onto punts to be navigated back to a point on the lake where the boat ramp now stands at the end of Lakeside Drive. The punts were steam powered with stern drive paddle wheels. To this day, this section of the lake is still known as the Punt Arm. If you look very carefully, approximately 5 metres behind the log loading ramp you will find a spike and ring embedded into the base of a large old tree. These rings formed part of the tackle used to load the logs onto the punts.
8. Now if you can retrace your steps back along the Lake for 60 metres, you will see a section of

fascinating rock formation running at about a 15 degree angle down into the water. This is the very edge of a major geological fault that occurred many millions of years ago. This forms the underlying structure of the famous Sydney Basin. This fault line runs right under the eastern part of Australia and rises at Bowen in North Queensland. This feature played a major role in the formation of the coal seams mined throughout the east coast of Australia. In fact, the coal mined as far north as Bowen in Queensland is the same trace source as coal locally mined in Wollongong. At this point take your second rest and refreshments stop.

9. Continue along the track and you will come out on the main road to Durras. You will then walk for approximately 1.3 kilometres of sealed road, continuing until you pass Durras Lake Road on your left and come to a small bridge over Durras Creek which runs into the southern end of Durras Beach. You will then find the 1.5 kilometre walk along the beach back to Lakesea Park to be a pleasant change to the lake and forest walking. As an alternate route you can extend your walk on to Mill Point as mentioned in the next interest point (10), or you may decide to visit Mill Point by vehicle at another time.
10. Mill Point was named after the timber mill that was operational on the point during the early part of our history. One of the old steam boilers still lies in the grass just behind the beach. When the timber reached the unloading site by steam punt (now the boat ramp) the logs were placed onto a set of bogies and were drawn along the tram track route, as shown on the map, to the mill site by draught horses. The milled timber was then floated out to sea on punts and loaded onto steam ships to Sydney. Much of the local timber was used in coal mines in Wollongong and Newcastle.

Historical Forest Walk

(Approximately 3 hours)

Durras Lake and surrounding forests are bathed in fascinating history going back to the last century. It was in those early times that the tall timber was cut and taken to be milled and shipped to Sydney, sometimes encountering incredible hardships due to almost inaccessible terrain. During this historical forest walk you will not only enjoy the natural scenery of the forest and the lake, but you will discover remnants of the logging industry from times long ago.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS

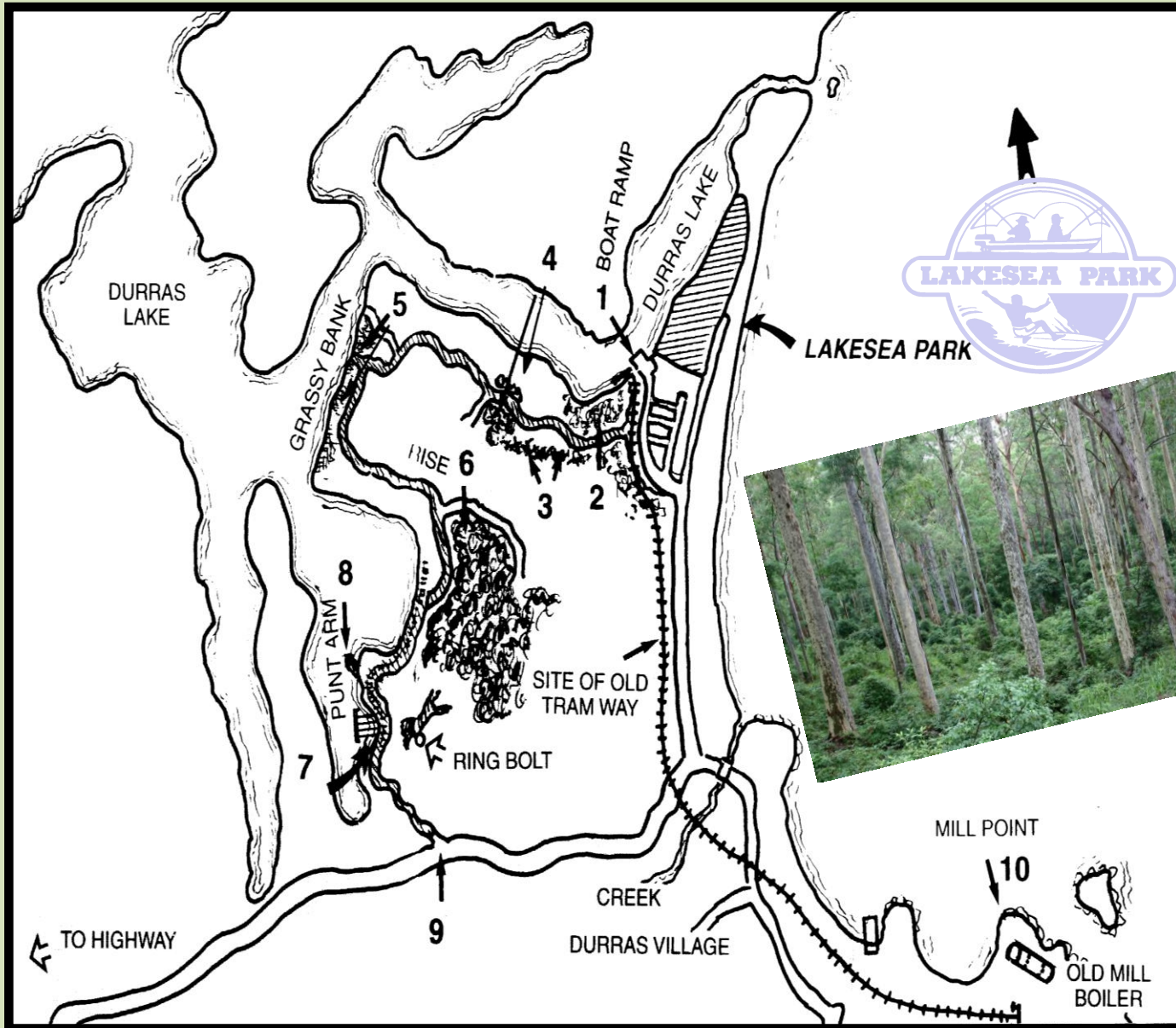
TO START - Walk along the Lake's edge towards the boat ramp. When you reach the boat ramp continue walking along the wide grassy strip following Lakeside Drive. After First and Second Avenue, just before Boomerang Street, you will come to a sandy track on your right marked with Murramarang National Park signage. You take this track for this historical forest walk.

SOME GENERAL HINTS

DO NOT attempt this walk within 2 weeks of heavy rain, or if the lake level is high; and **DO NOT** attempt this walk in the midday heat in summer. Early to mid morning is recommended. Take plenty of drinking water and some fresh fruit for refreshment. Do not forget the personal insect repellent, a hat for when you're having a rest from riding and sun screen lotion. Make sure you wear appropriate footwear.

LITTER

Remember, what you take into the forest please take out with you.



Points of Interest

1. Where the boat ramp is now constructed was originally the site where timber, cut from the forest surrounding the lake shore, was unloaded from steam punts in the late 1800's. If you look to the left of the ramp you will see timber logs embedded in the sand just below the waters edge. These logs are the remains of the unloading platform.
2. As you walk along the track, you will notice that the trees and vegetation on your right are far less substantial than the growth to your left. This is due to poor soil and swampy conditions running in to the Lake on your right hand side.
3. If you look into the forest on your left, about 20 metres in, you will see the start of the growth line of the famous South Coast Burrawangs. In fact you could run a string line along the growth line. This is because the soil conditions have changed dramatically at this point, providing an ideal environment for these famous plants. A point of interest about the Burrawang, it is very slow growing and long living. In fact if you were to look at one around two metres tall, it would be possible to be well over 100 years old. The Burrawang is a Cycad and can be traced back as far in history to the dinosaur days!
4. After walking along the track for around 15 minutes you will see Tea Trees growing on each side of the track. These are a relatively small shrub, growing to around 2.5 metres tall. If you were to pick some of the fine elongated leaves of the tree and crush them between your fingers, you will detect the strong aromatic perfume of the famous Tea Tree Oil.

