

THE GREAT GUIDE WALKABOUT



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BRITANNIA PARK, YARRA JUNCTION, VICTORIA

Britannia Park, 70 km east of Melbourne, is nestled in the heart of the Yarra Valley, in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range, and consists of 14 hectares of land, a mixture of natural bush and old English gardens. The property, owned by the Girl Guides Association for over fifty years, is situated on the edge of a State Forest, in an area originally settled during the gold rush and then developed as a centre for the large timber industry. Two of the residential houses on the property were built for the manager and foreman of the nearby mill.

The weather at Britannia Park, like Melbourne, can be varied. Because of the proximity to the mountains, we can have extremes of weather conditions; in summer it can be hot (up to 35°C or more) but it can also be cool, especially at night, and rain is a distinct possibility. The average summer daytime temperature is about 23°C, and 17°C at night. The usual camp attire for summer is shorts and T-shirt, but a pair of long trousers and a jumper or sweatshirt is often useful. It will be colder on our off-site overnight activity, which will be in the mountains at Lake Mountain (elevation 1,573 metres). Like most places in Australia, flies and mosquitoes are ever present, and insect repellent is definitely necessary. Long trousers and long sleeves in the evenings are sometimes preferable for protection against the "mozzles". For sleeping, a sleeping bag, a woollen blanket and an inner sheet or bag should be adequate for all expected weather at night.

In Victoria we are not subject to cyclones and floods but we are susceptible to bushfires. Consequently fire safety and precautions are a compulsory part of all our outdoor trainings. All camps have a fire drill and evacuation program, and the Great Guide Walkabout is no exception. We will be having a fire drill on the first day in camp, and clear instructions will be given to you in the camp booklet, to be received prior to camp. Fire safety measures **MUST** be adhered to at all times. If a total fire ban is declared, no fires (including gas) are allowed in the open. Don't worry though, you won't starve, as we do have alternative cooking facilities arranged. We do ask each participant to bring a 100% wool blanket to camp (if possible) and this must be kept ready folded at all times **ON TOP** of each camper's personal gear (**NOT** securely tied up in her bedroll).

Whilst we do not wish to alarm girls not familiar with these procedures, it is important that they understand and realise the importance of them, and we ask your help in preparing the girls beforehand on what will be expected, and to reassure them if necessary.

The program sub-committee has arranged a wide variety of activities - girls will be able to choose one of the following full-day off site activities - flying, horse riding, steam train ride, visit to Melbourne, canoeing, and go-kart driving. There are twelve "on site" activities - cascading, caving, JOTA, bush dancing, abselling, crafts, ropes course, copper enamelling, orienteering, screen printing, water sports and computer activities. Girls will be able to choose two of these as half-day activities. There will also be a camp challenge, and perhaps the highlight of the camp will be an off-site overnight camp when the girls will travel by bus to Lake Mountain through some of Victoria's most spectacular mountain scenery. They will go on a bush hike, do grass skiing and sleep overnight in hike tents, returning to Britannia Park the following afternoon.

All camp participants will be provided with a shady camp hat, a camp scarf and woggle and a camp booklet. T-shirts will be available to buy at camp, and pre-order forms for these and other camp souvenirs will be sent out later. There will be a camp shop and canteen; the shop will accept Bankcard, Mastercard and Visacard. Banking facilities have not yet been finalised but some provision for storing valuables will be available.

We are not planning a parents visitors day as the programme will be opening each day which will mean some girls will be off site on each day. However, we are having an Association Day, where members of the Movement are invited to visit the camp and be part of this exciting event. This day will be on Monday, 20 January, and more details will be published in G.I.A.

I hope this letter gives you some idea of what to expect at the Great Guide Walkabout and I look forward to when you join us at Britannia Park next year.

Sincerely

Helen Rawady
Chairman - Planning Committee