Faulconbridge to Springwood via Sassafras Gully

3 hrs  6.1 km One way  Hard track  338m

This is an enjoyable walk through the valleys joining Faulconbridge and Springwood. Using the Victory and Sassafras Gully tracks, the walk stays close to water as it descends into the valley, returning up through the changing vegetation.

Maps, text & images are copyright wildwalks.com | Thanks to OSM, NASA and others for data used to generate some map layers.
Faulconbridge Station (gps: -33.6966, 150.5638) by car or bus. Car: There is free parking available. You can get to Faulconbridge Station (gps: -33.6991, 150.5638) by car or bus. Car: There is free parking available.

Faulconbridge, in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales, was named after the maiden name of Sir Henry Parkes' mother. Faulconbridge sits on the Great Western Highway and is surrounded by valleys of lush bushland. This picturesque town was a home, and final resting place, for Sir Henry Parkes', heralded as the 'Father of Federation'. Faulconbridge was originally explored by non-indigenous Australians in 1813, by Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson who were searching for a route over the Blue Mountains.

Faulconbridge Station (410 m 8 mins) From the top of Faulconbridge Station, the walk heads off the station overpass to the bushland side of the station (if you come to a car park, you have gone to the wrong side of the station). The walk then keeps the rail line on the left as it follows the footpath down to the road. After a while, the walk comes to an intersection with Sir Henrys Pde, opposite house number 10.

 Victory Track The Victory Track is more formally know as the 'Sir Henry Parkes Victory Track' and is called the 'Victoria Track' in many guide books. The track starts near Sir Henry Parkes' grave in Faulconbridge and leads to Sassafrass Gully Creek. Sir Henry Parks (1815-1896) was a politician and journalist, born in England. He is considered to be the 'Father of Federation' for Australia, although he died of natural causes 5 years before Australia's federation. Parkes was the premier of New South Wales five times. The town Parkes was named in his honour. Parkes would sometime write under the pseudonym 'Faulconbridge' (his mothers maiden name) for the Sydney Morning Herald and other papers and Faulconbridge (the township) was named after his mother when Parkes purchased 600 acres in 1877.

Clarinda Falls is a charming waterfall on Sassafras Creek. The water cascades over a near-vertical wall, into a sandy pool below. The falls are signposted from the main track and provide a nice cool detour, especially on warmer days. The falls are named for the first wife of Sir Henry Parkes, 'Father of Australian Federation'.

Optional sidetrip to Clarinda Falls (30 m 1 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, the track follows the 'Clarinda Falls' sign towards the log fallen on the rock. The track tends left around the hillside, coming to Clarinda Falls. At the end of this side trip, retrace your steps back to the main walk then Continue straight.

Int. Victory Trk and Clarinda Falls (650 m 18 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, the walk follows the 'Sassafras Gully' sign down the hill. The track keeps the creek on the left as it continues down the gully then crosses a creek junction. The walk meanders down the hillside and soon crosses a larger creek junction, before entering a campground clearing (beneath power lines).

Victory Track camping area Victory Track camping area is a fairly large, informal camping place at the junction of Sassafras and Numantia Creeks. The clearing is in a moist section of forest with plenty of shade. Water from the creek should be treated before use.

Victory Track camping area (880 m 24 mins) Continue straight: From the campground clearing, the walk follows the creek, keeping it to the left. The track winds up the hill and back down to the creek a few times and soon comes to an intersection with a faint track on the left (which leads to a pool in the creek).

Victory Track pool The Victory Track pool is an unofficially-named pond in Sassafras Creek. The pond is deep in parts but not adequate for a swim. It does, however, offer a chance to rest and gaze over the water. There is a small sandy beach, some moss-covered rocks and a lovely grove of Sassafras trees around the pool. This is a nice spot to stop, catch your breath and soak up your surroundings.

Victory Track pool (1.7 km 39 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection, the walk heads down the valley, keeping the creek on the left. The walk soon turns left, crosses the creek and continues down the valley, with the creek now on the right. Leading down the valley, the track then crosses a gully to arrive at a blue 'Faulconbridge Station' sign (pointing back the way you came).

Clarinda Falls (1.7 km 56 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection, the track follows the 'Clarinda Falls' sign down the hill. The track tends left around the hillside, coming to Clarinda Falls. At the end of this side trip, retrace your steps back to the main walk then Continue straight.

An intersection with a faint track on the left (pointing back the way you came). The walk steeply climbs the hillside. The walk comes below a rocky outcrop, which it follows around to the right, keeping the outcrop on the right (ignoring the track which leads up the outcrop). The walk comes to an unsignposted intersection with another track.

Turn right: From the intersection, the walk heads up the hill, keeping the rock outcrop to the right. The track tends left towards a house fenceline (house No. 18), which it follows to the end of Sassafras Gully Rd.

More info.