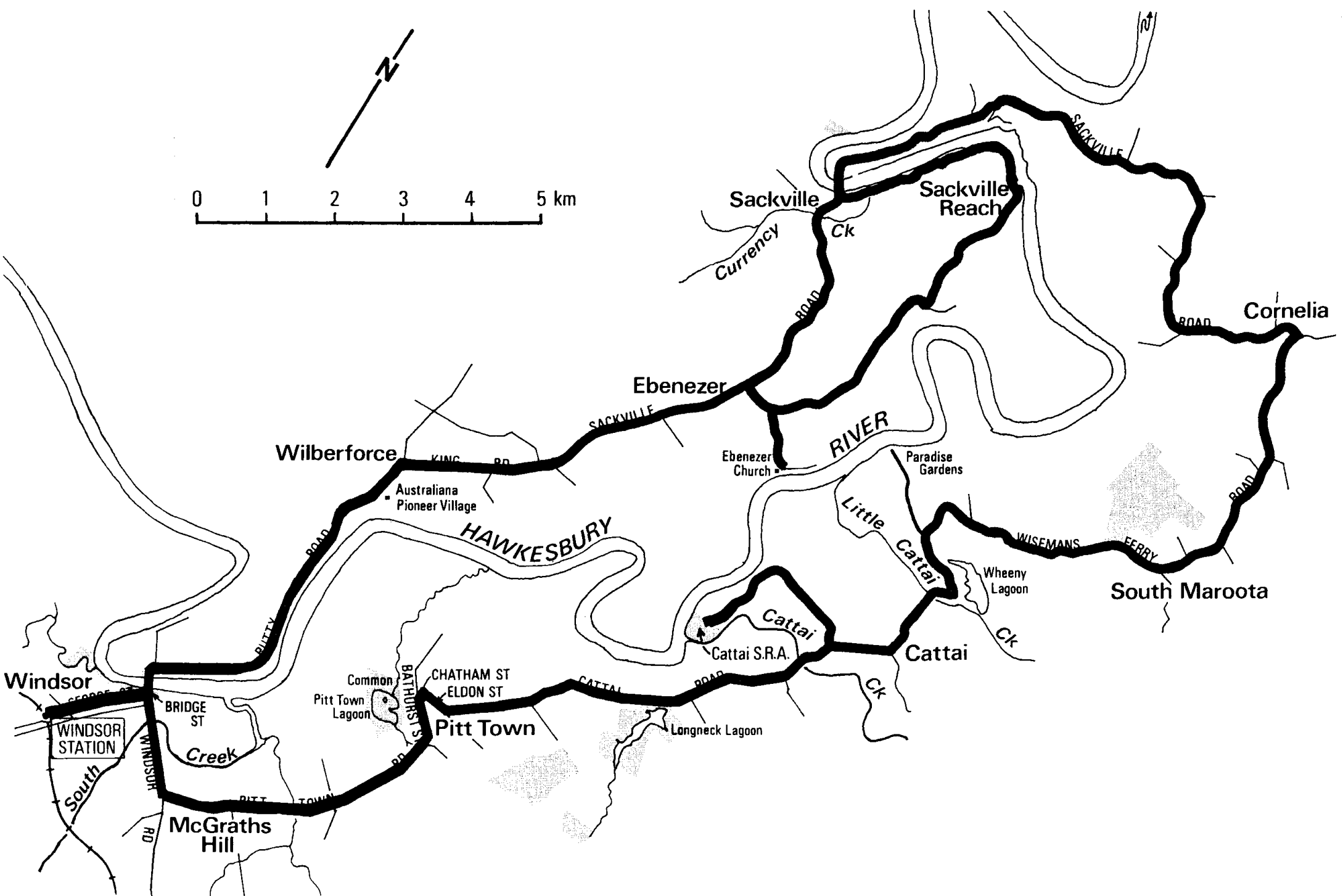
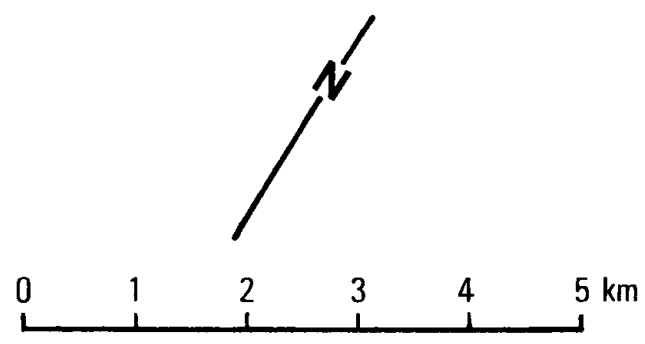




22. The Windsor Sackville loop

Location

Starts and finishes at Windsor Railway Station.

Distance

47 kilometres

Description

This is a tour through some of the old towns of the Hawkesbury area.

The area was settled as early as 1794, in the desperate search by the first colonists for suitable farming land. Crops flourished in the rich alluvial soil, and in 1796 Governor Hunter reported that there were 400 hectares under cultivation.

At first the river was the sole means of transportation to Sydney: the roads came later. The towns were established by Governor Macquarie in 1810 on the ridges above the flood-prone river flats, and many buildings still exist from this early period.

Route

From Windsor Station ride up George

Street through the shopping centre and past the pedestrian mall. Turn right into Windsor Road and left at McGraths Hill into Pitt Town Road.

Pitt Town is one of the five Macquarie towns. You can still see the town Common — the open marshy area on your left.

Take the Cattai Road and after about 6 kilometres you'll see the Cattai State Recreation Area (opened in 1983) on your left. It used to be known as Caddie Park and is based on the Arndell family estate. The beautiful sandstone homestead was built by convicts in 1821 and is being restored to its original condition. The remains of the earlier homestead (1799) are nearby. Both Cattai and the nearby Paradise Gardens have picnic areas, barbecues, water, toilets and swimming.

Continue along the Wisemans Ferry Road for 10 kilometres then turn left into Sackville Road. There is a roadside stall here selling fruit and drinks. Carry on

down to the punt which is operated by the DMR. Once on the other side of the river you have two choices. There is a shorter route saving about four kilometres straight on to Ebenezer, or the longer, quieter route along the river via Sackville Reach. Either way you should make the short detour to Ebenezer Church, the oldest church building in Australia.

Back on the Sackville Road, carry on past Wilberforce — another Macquarie town with a fine old church — onto the Putty Road. Australiana Pioneer Village is on the left, an evocation of the past centred around Rose Cottage, built in 1798, and the oldest timber dwelling in the country.

The Putty Road back to Windsor is very busy on weekends, so keep well to the left. Cross the river, go up the short hill and turn right into George Street to get back to the station.