

BOWEN'S BEACHES

A BOULDERER'S GUIDELET



WELCOME TO THE BOWEN'S BEACHES GUIDELET

WARNING

Rockclimbing can be hazardous. The web-site moderator, editors and author, accept no responsibility for any inaccurate or incomplete information, controversial grading or reliance on fixed protection. This guide presumes users have a high level of ability, will have received training from a properly skilled rockclimbing instructor, will properly use appropriate equipment and have care for personal safety. Boulder high, or above an uneven landing, or without a competent spotter, or without a bouldering mat carries an increased risk and is not recommended or endorsed. No responsibility will be accepted for the consequences of any action undertaken on the basis of information contained in this guide.

Bowen's beaches have a lot going for them. It's a glorious tropical climate, with cooling sea breezes. The Coral Sea laps upon clean white sand, and the water clarity is second to none. Yet the best part of course is the proliferation of wind and water weathered granite outcrops that stretch from Greys Bay to Rose Bay. The height of these granite boulder clusters is generally 12m or less, providing an exceptional array of quality boulder problems. Along the coast line the surface of the rock is clean and naturally free of moss and lichen; **the tide needs to be slightly out to make the most of these locations.** Areas of good rock extend up into the bushland beyond the coast, yet lichen makes an appearance. As a whole Bowen's granite has a responsive abrasive quality. There are face problems, small overhangs, caves, cracks, corners, highballs and three move wonders. Two trad routes are listed at Mother Beddick. The best time to visit is late autumn, winter and early spring, it is simply too hot to enjoy it through summer. This guidelet is not definitive, it is an introductory selection of problems from the various areas at Bowen's Beaches. There are hundreds of possible problems out there and walking to the areas described here will reveal the potential, and you'll certainly find what you need. Enjoy the read and happy cranking!

GETTING THERE

Bowen is coastal town situated in North Queensland. It's in the northern section of the Whitsundays. To get an idea of its location, look at a road map of Queensland. It's just off the Bruce Highway, 190km north of Mackay and 202km south of Townsville. You can't go wrong. Driving into Bowen, look out for the "Beach Resorts" signs and follow them. On the way, you will pass a small shopping centre with a Woolworths where you can pick up any last minute supplies. The climbing is around two notable beaches, Horseshoe Bay and Rose Bay, both of which have excellent camping at Caravan Parks. If you are staying a while, follow the signs to whichever is your preference. Horseshoe Bay is a good starting point for a first visit. Park at the beach, good spots can be walked to from there if you wish.

CAMPING

A popular spot to camp is Horseshoe Bay Resort, (Ph: 07 4786 2564). Simply follow the signs to get there. All the campsites are powered and have a water tap, they are in fact a caravan site. These campsites are \$20 to \$23 for the night. The next step up is a cabin, these are \$49.50 for the night. Rose Bay Caravan Park, (ph: 07 4786 2388) is also a top spot and has similar sites, with power and a tap. A campsite for the night is \$17.60 for two and an extra \$6.60 for each additional person. A van is \$55 a night. Again just follow the signs. Both places have all the usual amenities you would expect at a caravan park, hot showers, barbeques and a pool. They also have the advantage of being beside the beach and most importantly, the climbing can be walked to. Some of the campsites are in full sun, so a big tarp over your tent will make things a bit more comfortable. It is a good idea to book ahead as it does fill to capacity with Southerners escaping winter.

CLIMBING GEAR

A bouldering mat, tape and chalk bag should be the first things thrown in the boot. The routes on rope are all trad, there are no bolts. A set of wires, some large hexes, a range of cams with big sizes, slings and quickdraws, will do fine. Big bro tubes and extra rope to extend your belays could come in handy for new route setting. A plastic brush and nut tool will prove useful to clean new holds and placements. Aside from that, your boardies or cossie and some snorkeling gear will keep the fun factor up when you're not climbing.

STYLE & ETHICS

Knowing the history of access issues throughout Queensland, it is clear that rockclimbers can make themselves unwelcome through unethical actions. So... First up, don't initial the start of routes. Bolting? **Bowen's Beaches are first and foremost a bouldering area.** Your money would be better spent on a bouldering mat, tape &

chalk. It is important to remember what looks like a nice short sport route to one climber is a highball to another. Working your problem on top rope is quite acceptable. **At this time there are no bolts at Bowen's Beaches.** Chipping? Don't even go there. Good rock is an asset to the entire climbing community and understanding ethical issues is vital to the longevity of this, the empress of sports.

YOUR GUIDE TO THE GUIDELET

This guide describes several separate areas within the larger Queens Bay to Rose Bay landscape. For each area a number of problems are covered in detail with topo photos. These lines are a sampler of problems and they are intended to reveal what is there, and what is possible. Problems that are detailed have a clean surface, logical start & finish, positive landing, and have worthwhile problems nearby. Chalk is quickly cleaned from the rock through the action of tide and rain, so you won't be able to see all the worked problems. I hope that this approach to the guide gives the visiting climber a sense of discovery throughout.

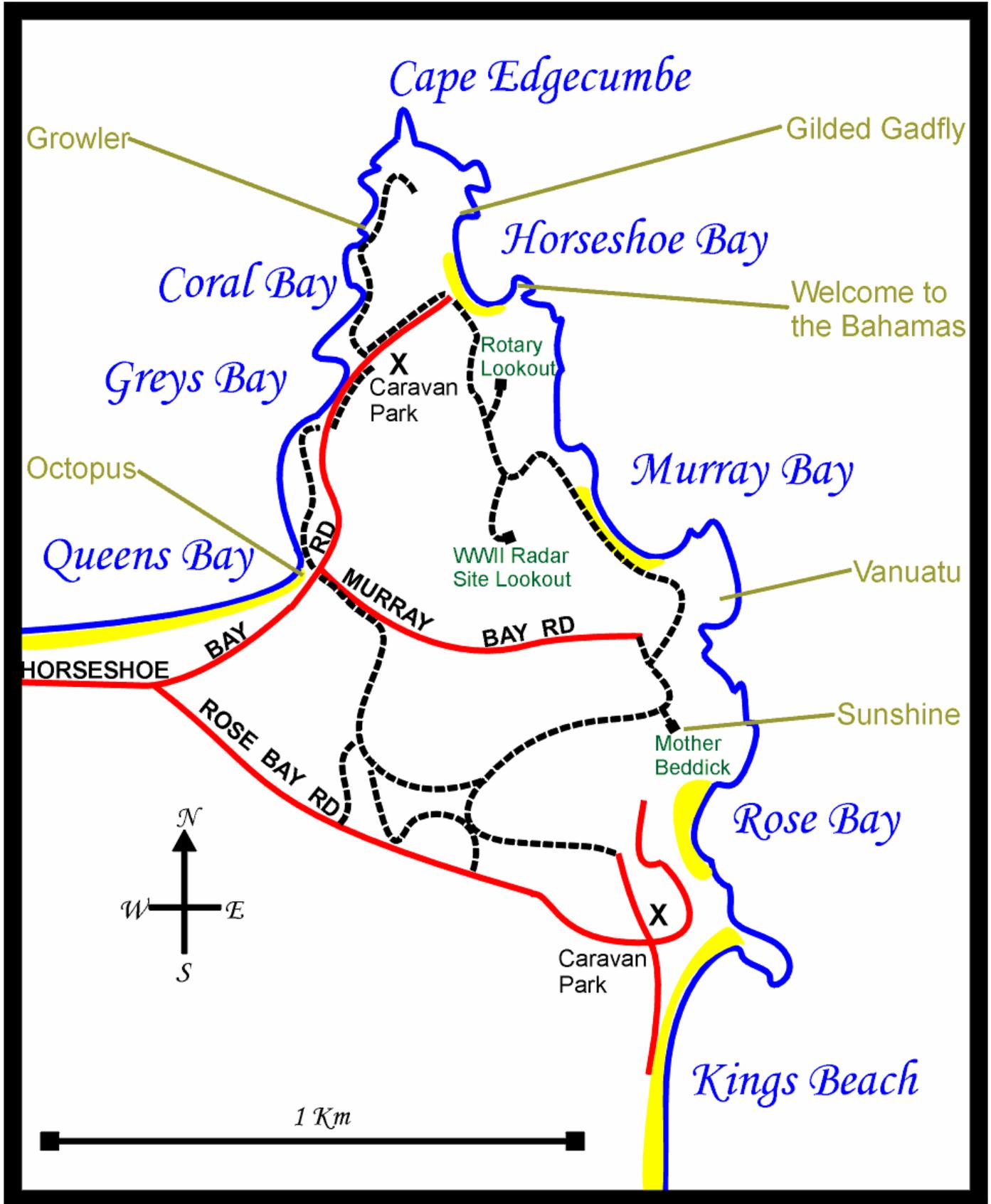
NEW LINES

If you would like to add to the next update of this guidelet email me, westerntaipan@hotmail.com. I am particularly interested in problems that raise the standard, or are at locations not yet covered. Be safe and enjoy.

THE VERMIN SCALE

Australian Grade	Vermin Scale
16-21	V0
22	V1
23	V2
24	V3
25	V4
26	V5
27	V6
28	V7
29	V8
30	V9
31	V10
32	V11
33	V12
34	V13
35	V14

Bowen's Glorious Beaches



QUEENS BAY SOUTH

Queens Bay South is the very beginning of the rock. The Octopus Boulders pictured below is just off Horseshoe Bay Rd and directly across from the Murray Bay Rd intersection. Walk in the path to the shelter, there it is. Just off to the right, in the park can be found the Broken Glass Boulders, the seedy habitation of crusty yobo boulderers.



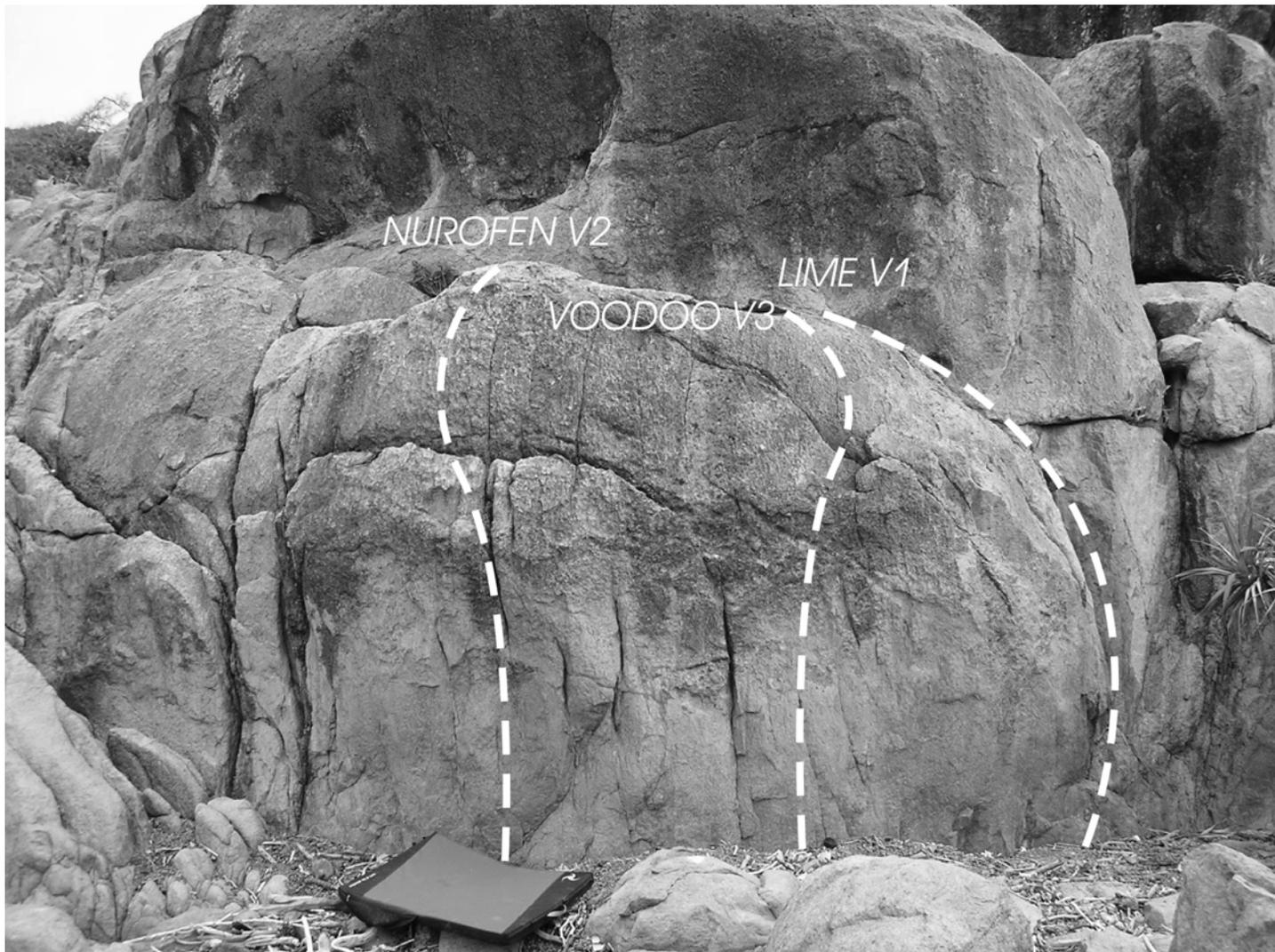
CORAL BAY TRAIL

The Coral Bay Trail is actually a nude beach trail. It starts at a carpark on Horseshoe Bay Rd, directly across from the Horseshoe Bay Caravan Park office. This trail meanders along the coast past Coral Bay to the point. There is plenty of signage stating Nude Beach, to keep you on the right track. Along this trail are numerous boulders, some are serious highballs. This trail is an ideal place to wander along, and veer off to discover some wicked clusters. If you've ever wanted to tan your tockle while bouldering, here's your chance.



HORSESHOE BAY NORTH

Horseshoe Bay is particularly picturesque and is very popular for swimming and hanging out. The north side of the bay, that's to the left looking at the sea, has some impressive overhung rock formations starting at the end of the beach and the rock just continues on around the point of Cape Edgumbe. Walk along the high tide mark through the boulders as far as you care to go. The topo below is located about 50m along from the end of the beach.



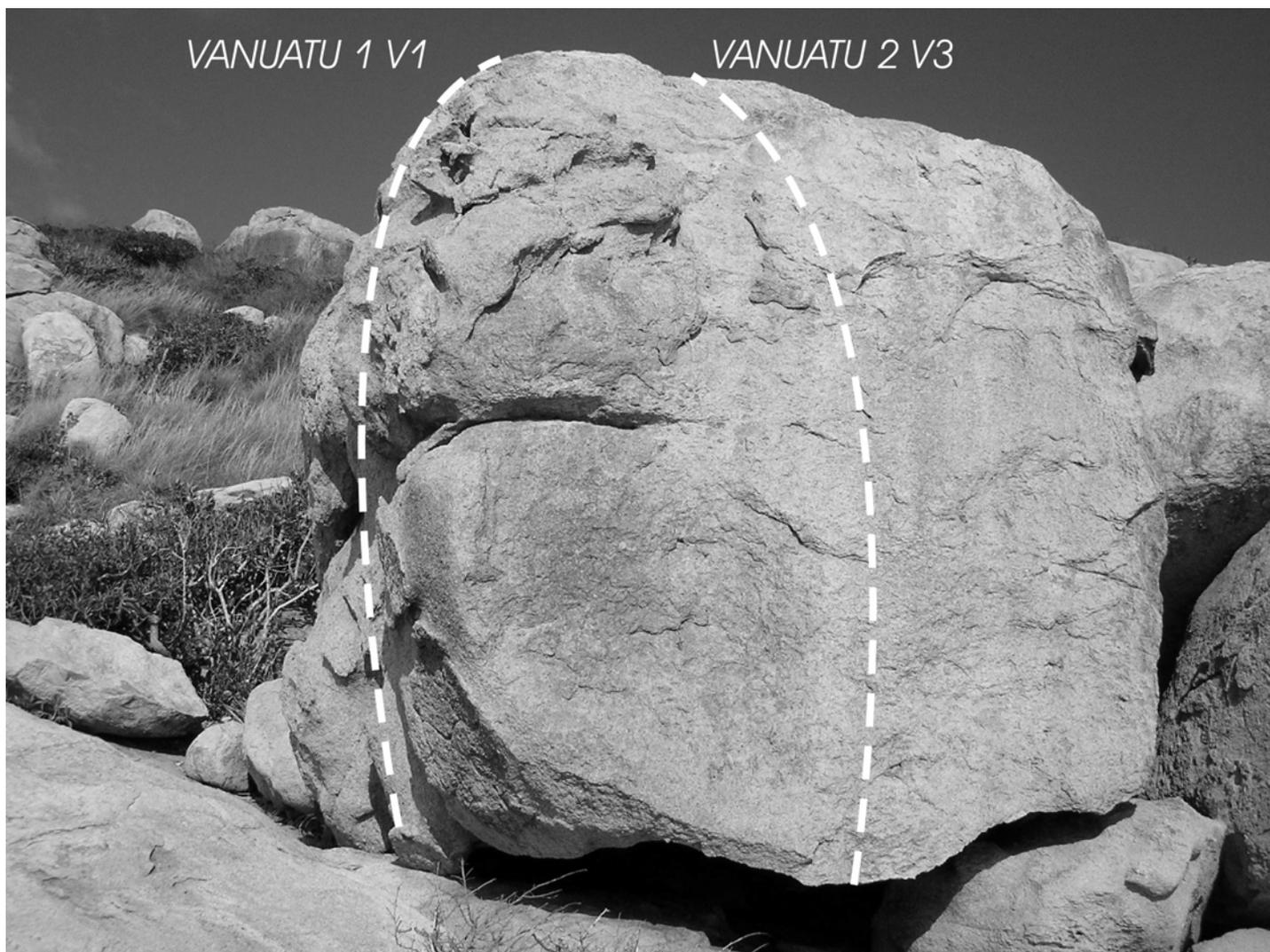
HORSESHOE BAY SOUTH

Horseshoe Bay South is at the right side of bay looking out to sea. The Prow pictured below is quite obvious, and the classic line, Welcome to Barbados*** is found around the back. Steve Baskerville cranked out two higher graded problems just to the right of this on a boulder that is partially submerged by the tide, these are Seaside Slopes 1 & 2, V5 & V6 respectively.



MURRAY BAY SOUTH

Murray Bay South is a secretive area and is easily accessed via the end of Murray Bay Road where there is a track entrance. Walk in the track with the Murray Bay sign, after a short distance, veer off this to the right and head towards the water. There are some obvious whopper boulders to the left. The Vanuatu Boulder pictured below is found by walking around to the right for 100m and generally keeping high of the boulders. It is beautifully situated overlooking the rock below. Anyway, you can continue on around for another 100m or so where a notable wall can be found. This wall was established by the Townsville crew, on a JCU climbing club trip.



MOTHER BEDDICK

Mother Beddick Lookout distinguishes itself with a large round boulder as its crown, named Mother Beddick of course. It has a panoramic view over Rose Bay and outlying islands. To get there, start at the end of Murray Bay Rd, the trail will be about 500m. Alternatively, start at the end of Banyan St in Rose Bay, just up from the caravan park, the trail will be 860m. To access the climbs, scramble left around Mother Beddick, then right and all the way down. Walk right around the face.



Sunshine 35m 15 ***

Immaculate trad.

1. Starts in the corner beneath the roof. Scramble up to the corner to belay. Go directly up the corner to the roof, traverse L beneath the roof to stand on the face. Go up the twin cracks tending L to the ledge.
2. Go up the corner, then up the crack, tend R up the slab.

Excellent natural pro throughout, big cams required.

Luke Hyam, Debbie Hyam 9/4/05

FA Luke Hyam, Debbie Hyam 25/12/02 – A1

You, m e & the Coral Sea 40m 14 *

A ramble.

1. Starts at the crack and tree 5m R of Sunshine. Up the crack, belay on the ledge.
2. Step over the void and up the corner at L to a ledge. Up the short pleasant chimney then over R to the ledge. This ledge is shared with Sunshine, as is the final pitch.
3. Up the corner, then up the crack, tend R up the slab.

Excellent natural pro throughout.

Luke Hyam, Debbie Hyam 9/4/05

See ya there...