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Valuing landscape, performing landscape: a case study of the Illawarra Escarpment

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Valuing landscape, performing landscape:  
A case study of the Illawarra Escarpment

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

from

University of Wollongong

by

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Australian Centre for Cultural Environmental Research
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Abstract

In material terms the Illawarra Escarpment is a steep linear stretch of Australian sclerophyll forest, rainforest and sandstone cliffs. It is a major physical feature in the everyday lives of the 200,000 residents of the City of Wollongong, New South Wales. This research project sprang from asking how the Illawarra Escarpment is valued by residents. This project sought to go beyond gathering statistical information on use-categories, attitudes and values by asking what kinds of roles the Illawarra Escarpment plays in the everyday lives of people. Rather than conceptualising self and landscape as mutually exclusive, the primary objective of this research project is to illuminate the problem of assessing social value by probing the tensions and mechanisms of self-world relations. The aims of this thesis are therefore twofold. First, the thesis aims to contribute to recent debates in the geographic literature that redefine landscape, following John Wylie (2007), as ‘the creative tension of self and world’. Second, the thesis aims to contribute to methodological debates by exploring the use of diaries as a performative research tool. This was achieved through drawing on empirical materials gathered from a mixed-methods approach to closely examining the everyday encounters and mobility practices (different walking practices and train driving) of an illustrative sample of four residents of Wollongong. Empirical material drawn from four of 18 people who participated in this project forms the basis of this thesis. This allowed opportunities to explore the self-world tensions that are landscape. The empirical materials demonstrate how self and world are enfolded into each other in the process that is landscape. The mechanisms and processes of self-world relations are shown to be reliant on the qualities of difference, contrast, relief, and diversity.

Alert to the theoretical and conceptual debates arising from the re-materialisation of landscape in geography, the contribution from the personal geographies of the Illawarra Escarpment to the discipline are as follows. Methodologically, the key contributions of the thesis are (1) that different writing genres provided different insights into the self-world tension that is landscape that I term ‘sensuous’ and ‘reflective dialogues’, and (2) a method of analysing text that focused on the performative mechanics of the writing, in particular how writing momentum was generated and sustained, rather than on the posited meaning. Conceptually this thesis contributes to discussion through empirical examples that illustrate the everyday tensions of self-world relations and how they may be creative.
Here, I build on the concepts of ‘rhythm’, ‘attunement’ and ‘entrainment’. I argue that the rhythms of the body become entrained to, or synchronised with, multiple other rhythms that comprise the ‘event’ of landscape. Examining the processes of attunement/entrainment revealed the essential role of the breaks or gaps between engagements in enabling the iterative and incremental process of attunement and embodied learning. These processes also highlighted the effects of experiencing the flows enabled by the successful synchronisation of rhythms that may lead to the acquisition of skills, harmonies, realisations, transcendences.
I, Patricia C. Macquarie, declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Patricia Macquarie
4 October 2012
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This thesis would not have been written without the expert advice, encouragement and patience of my supervisor, Gordon Waitt. I would like to express my great gratitude to him for making possible a fascinating and enjoyable personal journey of discovery. Due to his outstanding skills as a supervisor, it is a journey that has come a very long way from where it started. Special thanks, too, to my second supervisor, Lesley Head, without whose inspiration, initial encouragement and assistance the journey would not have been undertaken, as well as for her invaluable constructive criticism of the whole thesis towards the end of the writing. I would like to acknowledge with thanks the help and advice provided by Chris Gibson for the design and implementation of the Escarpment Survey.

Many sources of academic inspiration and scholarship have been acknowledged in the thesis but there are two others that have been important to this research that I would like to acknowledge. Discussions held between AUSCCER and two Scandinavian universities as a series of video-conferences on Writing (Alternative) Landscapes were especially relevant and well timed for this research. In addition one of the participants, Gunhild Setten of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, was, through her writings and seminar discussions, an early source of inspiration and reading recommendations, one of which became central to my arguments on narrative. A second special source of early inspiration was an Institute of Australian Geographer’s 2-day postgraduate workshop in Hobart in 2008 conducted by Hayden Lorimer (University of Aberdeen) on Landscape, mobility and practice, and subsequent advice and papers he kindly emailed.

This research project would not have been possible without the generosity, skills and talents of the 18 volunteer participants who accepted the invitation to be involved with the project, wrote diaries and contributed in many different ways. I wish to express my special gratitude to the four diarists who featured in the thesis. Their interest and generous sharing of their lives was a joy. It has been a great privilege to know you all.

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To my husband, Bill
and my mother, Ivy
with gratitude for their love
and ‘practical reason’
Illawarra Escarpment
- Photos by project participants
In what ways can geographers theorise how people value landscape? What methods provide culturally meaningful accounts of how people may value landscape? How do people value the Illawarra Escarpment, New South Wales, Australia? This thesis addresses these questions through drawing on recent discussions of the concept of landscape to critically examine peoples’ lived experiences of the Illawarra Escarpment.

As a starting point to investigate these questions, I begin by drawing on the works of Tim Ingold, John Wiley and Mikhail Bakhtin to outline briefly how the terms landscape, the self, performing and valuing are being conceived in this thesis. This is followed by an outline of the research aims and objectives, background information on the case study area, and the reasons for the selection of the Illawarra Escarpment. I conclude the chapter by providing an outline of how the thesis is organised. The four main results chapters focus on a personal engagement with the Illawarra Escarpment through a particular mobility practice. Each chapter draws on empirical materials sourced from written diaries, conversations and mobilities ethnographies. Particular attention is paid to how writing itself is a performance, and how different genres of writing provide different insights into the relationship between landscape and the self.

1.1 Landscape and the self

As outlined in Chapter 2, the concept of landscape in the discipline of Human Geography has a long history of controversy and fluctuating fortunes. Chapter 2 charts how over a century of debate, critique and reinterpretation has given the term a breadth, depth, richness and complexity more closely approaching ‘the excessive and transient aspects of living’ (Lorimer, 2005:83). Throughout this thesis landscape is conceptualised as an amalgam of the non-human and the human that encompasses both materiality and perception. Landscape is conceived as the moving and changing flux in and through which we all have our existence, a relational, embodied and progressive process rather than an object. Ingold (2000:198) conceives landscape as interaction, process and mutual constitution. He emphasises how landscape must be conceptualised as a relational process. ‘It [landscape] is a living process; it makes men [sic.]; it is made by them (Inglis, 1977:489)’ (Ingold 2000:198). John Wylie (2007:217)
in his book *Landscape* more recently conceptualised landscape as ‘the creative tension of self and world’. In this understanding of landscape humans are not regarded as having a monopoly on agency. All forms of non-human existence also have agency. Human life is dependent on the agencies of other presences in the landscape. As Wylie further states in Merriman et al, (2008:203):

Landscape isn’t either objective or subjective; it’s precisely an intertwining, a simultaneous gathering and unfurling, through which versions of self and world emerge as such.

Consequently, individual subjects are conceived as producing landscape both in the sense of how they perceive landscapes and in the sense of how their practical engagements may change landscapes. Yet, at the same time, the prior materialities and perceptions of landscape are understood to have helped produce the individual. To complete the circuit numerous individual subjects, acting singly or together, materially and perceptually alter and produce landscape. The two are mutually constitutive – a circuit of self-world relations. In this thesis, therefore, by landscape I mean a relational, embodied and progressive process through which a person inhabits the world, and in turn, how the world inhabits a person. Ingold (2000:156) encapsulates the same idea in a more poetic but everyday way:

…landscape is the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them.

Both the actual space shared, and the individual’s perception and experience of it, overlap to a greater or lesser extent with those of other people inhabiting the same spaces. As such, landscape is the fluid basis of sociality and community.

Following from this conception of landscape as process, there is a need to say a little more about how ‘the self’ is conceived throughout this thesis. Mikhail Bakhtin, a philosopher who saw the everyday as a ‘source of life-enhancing power’, argued that we must grasp the qualities of the concrete deed or ‘act’ as it constitutes the essential ‘value-centre’ for human existence. Bakhtin provides the central philosophical statement for this project concerning ‘the self’. I quote from Gardiner’s commentary on Bakhtin (2000:49-50, italics added):

For Bakhtin, the self must be understood as a dynamic, embodied and restlessly creative entity that strives to attribute meaning and value to its life and surroundings. We are forced to make certain choices and value-judgements with respect to our Being-in-the-world, to transform the proffered ‘givenness’, the objective facticity of our environment, into a coherent ‘world-for-me’. … Only if we think and act in ‘participative’ fashion, *in tune with the rhythms and textures of*
everyday life, can we be wholly ‘answerable’ for our actions, in the sense that we are reflexively conscious of the existential and ethical implications of our acts.

What Bakhtin is striving to outline is a phenomenology of what he terms ‘practical doing’, one that focuses on our embodied activities within a lifeworld, which “exists ‘prior’ to the more rarefied operations of abstract cognition” (Gardiner, 2000:50). Bakhtin argues that theoretical cognition is only one aspect of a wider ‘practical reason’ …and that the paramount reality of human being is our embodied existence within the everyday lifeworld…[that] constitutes the primary terrain on which our values are actively constructed, in which a world of contingency is transformed into one of meaningfulness (ibid.).

Valuing is a concept whose meaning varies depending on the field or context in which it is being used. How the processes of valuing operate as part of the self-world relations of landscape is the subject of this thesis. Bakhtin’s focus on practical doing and our embodied activities within a lifeworld aligns with the orientation of this research which is located within the performative paradigm. As the above quotations from Bakhtin illustrate, he regards the construction of meaning and value as being integral to the process of embodied performance. In Bakhtin's words embodied performance is ‘in tune with the rhythms and textures of everyday life’ and involved with the making of ‘choices and value-judgements…to transform…our environment, into a coherent ‘world-for-me’ (ibid.). In this thesis valuing is regarded as knowing by doing (Castree, 2005, on Thrift) - a process that is embedded in everyday action and performance. Consequently, this research has an emphasis on movement: from the minute bodily movements involved in the operation of the senses, such as eye movements or the vibrations in the ear, to the more obvious movements of human mobility involving the feet, wheels or wings.

Chapter 2 provides a broader literature review of the ontological and epistemological frameworks that underpin this thesis.

1.2 Aims and objectives
To address my research questions, the aims of this thesis are threefold but interrelated, namely, empirical, conceptual, and methodological. The thesis aims to:

(1) engage in the discussion of the rethinking of landscape by gaining insights into valuing processes through the everyday mobility practices of four participants;
(2) contribute to theoretical discussions on landscape conceived as creative self-world tensions;
(3) contribute to methodological discussions that are re-examining texts as more-than-representational data sources.

My first objective is, therefore, to anchor this thesis in the recent upsurge in attention to landscape in the literature. Rather than conceptualising self and landscape as mutually exclusive, the primary objective of this project is to examine the ‘creative tensions’ between self and landscape. My argument in Chapter 2 is that how people value landscapes can be better understood through probing self-world relations.

If landscape is conceptualised as tensions between self and the world, this makes conceptual space for the study of personal landscapes. Rather than categorising individual values, this thesis examines the embodied, relational and progressive valuing process as an alternative approach to the problem of endeavouring to categorise social value as ‘attitude’. I examine how values are generated, sustained and challenged. My objective is to reveal, or recover from the taken-for-granted obscurity of everyday existence, the generic processes or mechanisms involved in self-world relations. By generic I refer to basic performing and valuing processes that can be generally applied to everyone’s self-world relations, that is, universally human processes rather than individually specific values. For example, the repetitions and rhythms of dwelling driven by the human need for rest, relief, difference and contrast between places and states such as home and elsewhere or responsibility and relief; the processes of the entrainment of bodily rhythms to the extraneous rhythms of other organisms or entities that enables performance. These processes, as demonstrated by the four diarists, are collated and discussed in Chapter 8. I aim to provide concrete examples of such universal processes and tensions between self and world, and how they may be creative. Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 therefore closely examine how personal landscapes are sustained through individual engagements and are always embedded within wider social norms and practices. Attention is specifically given to how the Illawarra Escarpment becomes valued through everyday mobility: specifically, different walking practices and the practice of train driving. A more detailed justification for the approach taken is provided in Chapter 3 (refer to p 35 for a summary).

The philosophical approach adopted in this thesis is most closely aligned to that of the post-phenomenologists. Alternative approaches could have been adopted such phenomenology or post-structuralist feminism. There are, indeed, similarities and differences between these approaches. I build on the work of John Wiley, Tim Ingold, and Nigel Thrift as well as more recent work from Tim Edensor and a range of other
scholars, for a number of reasons outlined in Chapter 2. In summary I argue that the work of these scholars offers possibilities to reconceptualise the phenomenology of landscape and dwelling beyond the dualities of materiality/perception, nature/culture, non-human/human. These scholars have foregrounded ideas that unite the materiality, animation and agency of ‘the world’ with an individually-perceiving embodied self that encompasses both the sensuous and reflective, non-cognitive and cognitive aspects of human existence.

Conceptualising landscape as tension between the self and the world raises important methodological questions. This brings me to the second objective of this project, which is to explore the use of written text in the form of solicited diaries alongside participant observation as a performative research tool. If the act of writing is an embodied movement of hand and eye, with the support of the rest of the body, propelling the pen across the page (or tapping characters across a computer screen), in what ways is the when, where, and how of this performance important and relevant to a project examining landscape conceived as a tension between the self and the world? By giving consideration to the different ways of generating ‘writing momentum’, insights are provided into how the reciprocal relationships between self and landscape are performed. Chapter 3 outlines how this project contributes an innovative method of analysing texts as performative.

This project employed a mixed-method approach including a postal survey, and ethnographic work that included walk-alongs, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, diaries and follow-up conversations. The postal survey was the entry point to the project, indicating the most important sets of ideas as to how people living in Wollongong value the escarpment as well as facilitating the recruitment of participants in the project. Next, the project employed a range of enthographic tools to better understand how the Illawarra Escarpment is valued not only as a narrative resource to understand self-world through landscape, but also the embodied geographical knowledge of the Illawarra Escarpment which includes the agency of such entities as rocks, plants, horizons and gaps. Chapter 3 outlines why the diaries are a particular focus of this thesis. Rather than examining the dairies for discourse, I argue that diaries are valuable to provide clues to understanding the embodied dimensions of landscape. While acknowledging the importance of both the embodied presence of the researcher, including their presence in the diary, I focus on the use of text as a performative research tool. The aim is to contribute to geographic discussions both theoretically and methodologically on thinking of the use of diaries beyond textual analysis. To do so this
Chapter engages with not only ideas of narrative writing but also the theorising of writing as an embodied performance.

1.3 Location, background and significance of the case study

In this section, I help contextualise the case study by providing the location, physical characteristics, and cultural backgrounds to the Illawarra Escarpment. While mindful of how I am conceptualising landscape and of the limitations of reducing landscape to location and a material entity, the research context provides essential background. This context is particularly important for the reader unfamiliar with the Illawarra Escarpment. Yet, in the spirit of the conceptual framework, the description of the Illawarra Escarpment provided here embraces the idea of relationality, the material folded with the cultural, as well as other tensions inherent in the ambiguities of this particular landscape.

1.3.1 Positioning the Illawarra Escarpment: tensions and ambiguities

The Illawarra Escarpment is a linear stretch of Australian sclerophyll forest and rainforest that clothes the steep eroding edge of a sandstone plateau. The escarpment encircles and defines the Illawarra region and is a major feature of the environment for the 200,000 ethnically diverse people living in the coastal city of Wollongong in New South Wales (refer to map provided in Figure 1). It is a wall of sandstone cliffs, steep forested slopes and ridges rising abruptly 400 metres above sea level. To quote the geomorphologist Robert Young (1983:12):

The Illawarra Escarpment is one of the most striking features of the NSW coast, for it runs like a great unbreached wall for some 120 km and dominates the plains below.
The height of the Illawarra Escarpment increases rainfall and limits the amount of suitable land for property expansion. The escarpment runs the entire length of the western boundary of the Illawarra and beyond, and is a major factor in producing and fixing the physical, political and social boundaries of the Illawarra. The ridges of the
northern escarpment run obliquely to the coastline and then drop directly into the ocean (see Figure 1). In the south, at Kiama, the escarpment again approaches closer to the coast and is connected to the sea by the basalt outcrop of Saddleback ridge. The escarpment thereby helped make the political boundary of the Illawarra, dividing it from the Shoalhaven district in the south, the farmlands of the Southern Highlands to the southwest and the outskirts of the Sydney metropolis, 100 kms to the north and northwest.

The physical presence of the escarpment has important implications for how people think about Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia. Ingold’s (2000:167) description of the implications of a major physical feature is apt for the escarpment:

…it draws the entire landscape around it into a unique focus: in other words, by its presence it constitutes a particular place. …And for those who are gathered there, the prospect it affords …is what gives it its particular character and identity.

The Illawarra Escarpment is central to constituting the character of the Illawarra and Wollongong. This argument is illustrated through how the various affordances and ideas surrounding the escarpment help fashion the geographies of the Illawarra and Wollongong.

Whole and fragment

For many conservation biologists and environmentalists, the escarpment is highly valued for its biodiversity, in spite of the unmanageable spread of ‘exotic weeds’ and ‘feral animals’. In particular, high numbers of deer are regarded as a problem. The rainforest has been assessed ‘as the most extensive in the Sydney Basin Bioregion and the southernmost of only six major locations of rainforest in New South Wales’. Fifty-four different types of vegetation community have been identified, providing habitats for a wide variety of fauna including a number of endangered species (NPWS, 2003). For the Office of Environment and Heritage of the NSW State Government, the Illawarra Escarpment is part of a connected regional network of reserved areas positioned as important in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem sustainability policies. The Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) accounts for only 30% of the escarpment and is fragmented into four separate areas strung along the escarpment. From a management point of view this fragmentation is exacerbated by a variety of land tenures. The escarpment is mainly private (67%) rather than public (33%) land.
ownership. However, the escarpment is commonly conceived as a whole entity by local residents partly due to its high visibility and distinctive shape, and the fast regeneration of dense vegetation.

The escarpment has a 40-year history of public activism and proposals for its management as a whole entity, including a National Trust assessment in 1975. This assessment positioned the Illawarra Escarpment on a Classified List of landscapes “which are essential to the heritage of Australia and which must be preserved” (National Trust of Australia (NSW), 1976:3). In 1999 a State Government Commission of Enquiry was held into the future management of the escarpment that culminated in the Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan (2005). This plan set out the rationale for the City Council’s current management strategy. The Plan was based on comprehensive biophysical studies but no comparable social/cultural studies were conducted. The National Parks and Wildlife Service argued that management of the whole escarpment was essential to the viability of the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area. [NPWS, 2003] The escarpment is both socially and ecologically fragmented but popularly conceived, and attempted to be managed, as a whole entity. The fragmented land ownership works against a cohesive environmental management plan for the Illawarra Escarpment.

Wild and settled
The Illawarra Escarpment is well known for providing what many may understand as dramatic scenery, fashioned by the tourism industry since the 1930s as wild, sublime, picturesque and pristine (Metusela and Waitt 2012). The escarpment affords views of the coastline and Illawarra district spread out like a map below. Furthermore, the topographical relief also affords many opportunities for recreation: tracks for walking, mountain bike riding, horse riding; winding mountain roads for car, motorbike and road bike enthusiasts; cliffs for rock climbing, take-off sites for hang gliding. This set of affordances and ideas help make the escarpment very different from the ordered, cultivated parks and gardens of suburbia. More generally the escarpment’s relief, variety and contrasts are stimulation for bodily movement and the senses. The escarpment introduces an element of the unpredictable and the incalculable (Solnit, 2001) to form an opposition or tension between the ordered and the disordered, the planned and the chance, the formal and the free.

In spite of its appearance of naturalness, the escarpment is much affected by successive waves of inhabitants. Firstly there are the thousands of years of
inhabitation by the Aboriginal people of whose impact we know little. In the 19th century the Illawarra escarpment became the first site of industry in the region due to logging and coal mining. The mining of high-grade metallurgical coal from the escarpment underpinned the later siting and development of the iron and steel industry close to the artificial harbour built at Port Kembla in the early 20th century. The thick vegetation veils many remnants of past uses. The vegetation is currently thicker and more widespread than at any other time in the last 100 or so years, due to changes in energy sources, the demise of farming in the Illawarra and the introduction of government conservation and urban greening policies. Even though the escarpment is no longer mined, coal seams several kilometres back under the plateau continue to be mined. Hence, the existing escarpment outfall infrastructure and railheads in four locations are still used and remain economically important for the coal mining industry.

Residential development has spread up the lower slopes of the escarpment and in one case the historic mining village of Mt Kembla has expanded into a modern suburb. Wollongong City Council’s Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan (2006) has used re-zoning of the escarpment to limit further urban development and protect habitat for native flora and fauna. The introduction of this re-zoning has caused extensive conflict amongst rural landowners, developers and conservationists. In addition, the escarpment is criss-crossed by roads and railways, tracks and paths (both official and unofficial) power lines, communication infrastructure, fire breaks and access roads, and mining outfalls. The Illawarra Escarpment is the outcome of an intricate weaving of ‘nature’ and ‘culture’, a mutually constituted relational landscape.

Striking and everyday

On the coastal plain where most people live, the escarpment rises in topographical relief. The ground under your feet, as it were, rises up so that it can be observed horizontally. This is a difference and a visual relief that looms large in the everyday world. Difference and relief play important roles in everyday life affecting what is noticed against the backdrop of the familiar and forming the alternations of everyday rhythms. For example, the escarpment provides a different texture that is in sharp relief from other aspects of the environment. The season and time of day alters the way the light falls on the depths and folds of its ridges and gullies covered with thick vegetation, which, together with its sandstone cliffs, forms an ever-changing textured tapestry that is a contrast to the textures of the urban, suburban and industrial landscapes of the city and the blue expanse of the ocean. For people living in Wollongong the escarpment is a striking yet familiar feature of everyday geographies - an apparently unchanging
feature of their horizons, part of their sky. The escarpment is visible from almost everywhere in the city and enjoyed for views of, and from it, as well as being experienced through living, working or playing, travelling through or climbing over. Residents must travel over it to leave the city. The escarpment is part of their everyday worlds, always there and often not noticed, a familiar backdrop to their daily lives.

*Barrier and link*

The escarpment operates as both a barrier and a link. As a barrier, the escarpment is the edge of a plateau or upland. This edge is a disjuncture in the height of the ground forming a wall or steep barrier that prevents easy access to and from the Illawarra. Access is made even more difficult because of the dense vegetation. In the past the formidable barrier of the escarpment was intensified by the thickness of the vegetation that even extended across the coastal plain. In 1836 the botanist and Quaker, James Backhouse, sent by the government on a mission to look into the living conditions of the convicts assigned to the Illawarra, descended the escarpment on foot via the Aboriginal track at Bulli, but then had to reach Wollongong, another 8 miles to the south, via the beaches as there was no track through the impenetrable vegetation of the coastal plain (Beale et al, 1991). The history of the Illawarra is a story of difficult access – originally only possible by sea, the surf and lack of good harbours making this also hazardous. Ways through, passes through the rock formations of the cliffs, and tracks, are enabling devices to bridge the abrupt disjuncture in ground levels, as well as to penetrate the thick vegetation. In the early colonial days the Illawarra was famous for the size of its timber which included valuable cedar and the lush variety of its vegetation: the rainforest species, the enormous eucalypts and fig trees, cabbage tree palms, tree ferns and orchids. The Illawarra was known as the ‘Garden of New South Wales’ (Cousins, 1948, 1994). Remnants of this vegetation remain, and eucalyptus forest with a thick understorey of bushes and vines quickly regenerates. Today, the escarpment acts as a boundary or buffer zone for the Illawarra, contributing to the separation of the city from the urban sprawl of Sydney. As a barrier the escarpment prevents the ease of industrial commerce to and from the major harbour of Port Kembla. The escarpment is both accessible to residents because of its proximity to the city and inaccessible because of steepness, ruggedness and dense vegetation. It is not well-served with properly constructed and maintained walking tracks.

As a link, the escarpment operates as a connector carrying a railway and three major roads via three different mountain passes out of the city. The railway was completed in 1888. The line between Sydney and Wollongong required four specially engineered
tunnels and a number of viaducts. The escarpment is also a wildlife corridor connecting the Royal National Park in the north with the Buderoo National Park in the south.

On the one hand, the escarpment is a major feature that helps tie the different places of the Illawarra together. Living with the escarpment is something that all residents of the Illawarra share. On the other hand due to the greater width of the coastal plain in the south, conflict over land management has divided the more rural south from the north, the interests of landholders in the south being opposed to policies supported in the north (Wilson, 2012). The escarpment is a palpable presence as a powerful entity—a major influence on the climate and environment and therefore on all the other forms of life that inhabit the Illawarra. As a disjuncture, discontinuity or break, it allows or enables some things but prevents others.

The Illawarra Escarpment has ambiguities, tensions and conflicts in abundance. These attributes are not unique to the Illawarra Escarpment; to varying degrees they play out in landscapes adjacent to metropolitan centres. For this reason, the Illawarra Escarpment was considered to be a potentially fertile case study for an investigation into the creative tensions of landscape.

1.4 Thesis outline and organisation
The thesis is composed of nine chapters. The theoretical and conceptual framework is provided in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 provides detailed descriptions of the mixed methodology used, including a postal survey, solicited diaries and participant observation of diarists’ personal landscapes. A justification is provided for why diaries can also be conceptualised as performative. Analytical implications are outlined when attention turns to how the diaries are written. Chapter 3 also provides a rationale derived from the ‘non-representational theory’ and the ‘performative’ literature to justify the use of written texts for investigating embodied practices. A novel method for the analysis of texts as performative is outlined.

The main body of the thesis is composed of four chapters, each one presenting a selected diarist and centred on an analysis of their diary. This data is supplemented by conversations and the participant observations of the researcher during shared activities with the participant. (The full text of each of the diaries is provided in Appendices C, D, E and F). Each of the four diaries is representative of the four main writing genres identified from the total of 12 written diary texts received for the project.
The ordering and arrangement of the four diary-chapters is organic and incremental in the sense of the writing and reading order aligning with the development of the central arguments. Each diary-chapter introduces different aspects of self-world relations that build on the preceding chapter. The four diaries, written in very different genres and styles, throw each other into relief and reveal different aspects of thinking about valuing as an inherently spatial and mobile process. Each diary highlights, and provides concrete examples of the importance of mobility in how participants’ value the Illawarra Escarpment in their everyday lives.

Chapter 4: Reflecting on home: the rhythms and tensions of dwelling
This chapter is based on a diary written by a woman in her thirties who had recently taken a break from her career to look after her first child. She wrote a journal-style diary about living and walking on the escarpment. The text was supplemented by two participant observation events: a walk with her and her son (carried in a backpack) in the escarpment forest on one of her usual routes and by a visit to her home. In this chapter the analysis of a retrospective journal-style diary introduces the concepts of reflective dialogue and reflective attunements to better understand how she values the escarpment through the comings and goings of everyday forest walks. This diary contrasts with a very different style of writing in the chapter that follows.

Chapter 5: Acting and reacting: sensuous dialogue with the landscape
A retired pharmacist and a keen bushwalker with a long career as a supporter of bushland conservation, recreation and National Parks, wrote a solicited trip diary about his routine walking and cycling interactions with the escarpment. Participant observation was carried out by accompanying the diarist on a routine morning walk and was then followed up with several conversations at the diarist’s home. This present tense in-the-moment style of writing provides glimpses of the unobtrusive workings of what I term a sensuous dialogue with the escarpment. I employ the concept of routine attunements to explore how valuing can be understood as a process of alignment and realignment with other entities and presences during a regular walking exercise route.

Chapter 6: Responsibility and relief: working the escarpment railway tracks
A freight train driver wrote a diary of his working trips driving freight trains on the escarpment as well as his car driving trips between work shifts. In this chapter I build on the concept of attunement. Attention is given to the sensuous attunements achieved by the synchronisation of bodily rhythms encountered as part of the operational skills of
train-driving, and the mobile experience of landscape as part of a freight train assemblage. I introduce the concept of entrainment in this Chapter to explore the rhythms of other objects, entities and presences. Participant observation was particularly important for the interpretation of this diary. It was achieved with a trip in the cab of the locomotive on one of the usual routes, as well as a home visit and conversations during a walk in the participant’s favourite reserve on the shores of Lake Illawarra. This reserve has a broad view of the southern part of the escarpment.

Chapter 7: Finding your way, sustaining self: the landscape in long perspective and measured against the self
This final empirical chapter is based on an autobiographical diary of reflections written by a university administrator, bushwalker and father of a young family who lives close to the escarpment. Although in this period in his life due to family and work commitments he is not able to regularly engage with the escarpment as in the past, he wrote a single life story about the role of the escarpment in his journey to maturity, identity and autonomy. The diary text was supplemented by conversations during two visits to the diarist’s home. This chapter departs from the analysis of a diary genre written over time, to present a single autobiographic narrative of reflections on past bushwalking engagements with the escarpment. This Chapter focuses on the concepts of reflective attunements in memory and the role of sensuous moments in memory. This diary demonstrates a change of focus and orientation and therefore perspective that takes place during a life course, and through which values change and evolve.

Chapter 8 – The tensions, flows and dislocations of self-world relations
In this chapter the insights and conclusions drawn from each of the four empirical chapters are amalgamated and discussed.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion
In this final chapter I draw overall conclusions by stating how the aims of the thesis are addressed and fulfilled, and the implications of a post-phenomenological approach for understanding landscape as a process of assessing individual social value. Suggestions are made for future research directions.
Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework for my argument that acknowledges the oppositions, tenisons, messiness and ambiguities of the relationships between self and world that are the Illawarra Escarpment. To do so, the chapter is structured in three parts. Firstly, I trace the different schools of thought that have fashioned the landscape concept. Secondly, I introduce recent theoretical directions relevant to the landscape concept based on the writings of Tim Ingold, Nigel Thrift and John Wylie. Intersections between these three strands inform the theoretical framework for this thesis. Thirdly, I discuss how my theoretical framework was enriched through the concepts of valuing and culture; perception, action and memory; mobilities and rhythm; and narrative writing.

2.1 Theoretical traditions of landscape

As a geographical concept, landscape has a controversial history and fluctuating fortunes. Historically, the landscape concept has been disliked by some geographers for its perceived lack of precision (see Hartshorne, 1939) and, on the contrary, preferred by others for its inclusiveness and the tensions and ambiguities it incorporates (see Lowenthall 1961, Tuan, 1974). Currently, the concept has its champions and detractors. Some contemporary geographers do not find the landscape concept useful, and instead prefer to work with the concepts of place and space (see Cresswell in Merriman et al 2008). Detractors often point to how landscape has privileged the eye, and that to visualise is to set at a distance. Advocates, while acknowledging how the eye has often been conceptualised as separating the observer from the observed, maintain that this need not necessarily be the case. For example John Wylie (2007:150-151) argues that the “observer and observed, self and landscape, are essentially enlaced and intertwined in a ‘being-in-the-world’”. Oppositions are subsumed into landscape as reciprocal process or, as Wylie (2007:1) argues, ‘landscape is tension’ - a concept that encompasses both ‘nature’ and society, the material world “out there” and the sensing, perceiving, thinking self/body/subject. Wylie (2007, 167-168) comments that a notable feature of recent landscape work is the increased attention paid to tactile, as opposed to visual, landscape experiences. He writes: ‘…In this way …notions of landscape begin to merge with notions of place;
landscape and place conjoin intimacy, locality and tactile inhabitation’. Current conceptions of landscape may be thought of as a cross fertilization of three strands of geographical traditions with broadly differing emphases: the North American, initially emphasising the materiality of landscape; the British, more concerned with perception and human consciousness; and the Northern European, conceiving landscape in terms of polity, law and custom. In what follows, a brief overview is given of these three strands.

2.1.1 **American beginnings: The Berkeley School and J. B. Jackson**

The landscape concept was first developed in human geography by Carl Sauer (1925, 1956, 1969) and his students in what became known as The Berkeley School at the University of California. This approach sought to establish geography as a field science of landscape and conceived landscape as ‘a cultural entity, the distinctive product of interactions between people and topography’ (Wylie in Gregory et al, 2009). Also from the Berkeley school, Clarence Glacken’s work *Traces on the Rhodian shore* (1967) wrote the history of human concern with human-environmental relations in the western world. The Berkeley school was instrumental in highlighting the human role in changing the earth.

Another independent but influential American geographer, J. B. Jackson, working between the 1930s and 1990s, in 1951 founded *Landscape Magazine*, which published innovative geographical writing on landscape. Jackson was concerned with the increasingly urban world of everyday post-war America, hitherto neglected as a subject for geographical study (Wylie in Gregory et al, 2009). He foreshadowed in his study of ‘vernacular landscapes’ the current ethos of the everyday bodily practice, that aligns with the research direction of this project. Wylie (2007:52-53) quotes Jackson (1997:205) on ‘hot rodders’ taking part in the landscape:

> The view is no longer static…the traditional way of seeing and experiencing the world is abandoned; in its stead we become active participants, the shifting focus of a moving, abstract world; our nerves and muscles are all of them brought into play.

These American influences together with the detailed studies of landscape history of Hoskins (1954) in the United Kingdom, formed the basis for the later emergence during the 1970s of humanistic geography. Humanistic geography sought to put the human subject at the centre of landscape studies as a response to what some saw as the dehumanising effects of the post-war ‘scientific’ reformation (Buttimer, 1993:47). Humanistic geography consists of multiple and sometimes conflicting approaches that
draw upon a wide range of humanist philosophies. One approach, particularly concerned with concepts of landscape as 'lifeworld' and therefore relevant to this project, is based on the philosophy of phenomenology (Sharp in Gregory et al, 2009).

2.1.2 Landscape phenomenology

Landscape phenomenology is a long-standing and major strand of thought within human geography originating in the philosophies of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) in the late 19th century and developed during the late 20th century through Martin Heidegger’s work on dwelling and being-in-the-world. Landscape is conceived as a ‘lifeworld’, as a world to live in, not a scene to view’ (Wylie, 2007:149). More recently new directions have been found in a revisiting of Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962 [1942]) and unfinished work *The Visible and the Invisible* (1986 [1961]). These directions have diverged from a basis in human conscious intentionality, and an emphasis on human agency at the expense of non-human agency, that are features of humanistic geography. Merleau-Ponty collapsed the perceived opposition between engaged being-in-the-world and detached gazing by seeking, as Wylie (2007:150) argues, to redefine vision in corporeal terms. I elaborate on Merleau-Ponty’s work below in outlining Wylie’s contribution to the landscape debate in Section 2.2.3.

2.1.3 The ‘new’ cultural geography

During the 1980s and 90s the landscape concept was reinvigorated through the embrace of cultural theory. At least two strands of landscape writing emerged, one focussed on the politics of landscapes, the other troubled the nature/culture dualism of previous landscape thinking. Cosgrove was one of the driving forces in reconceptualising landscape as an ideological ‘way of seeing’ by applying social and cultural theory from art and literature (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988, Cosgrove 1998). Landscape was variously conceptualised as symbol, icon, text and veil, in fact, as a representation that could be read (deconstructed). The politics of landscape was an important cultural strand. This work employed landscape representations as a mechanism to illustrate how particular social groups established and maintained social power through the circulation of particular representations of landscapes (Duncan and Duncan 1988, Duncan 1990, Mitchell 1996). In the politics of landscapes, feminist geographies emphasised the importance of gender (Rose 1993, Nash 1996). Landscapes as texts could be ‘read’ to reveal how social differences were both naturalised and sustained. This so-called ‘cultural turn’ bequeathed many insights into how writing, picturing and reading landscape sustained social inequalities. However,
the focus on representation and circuits of culture undervalued the agency of the non-human world and tended towards geographies of detachment rather than engagement. A key critique of landscape as representation was the artificial separation between the ‘looked at’ and the ‘lived in’ landscape.

2.1.4 The nature/culture binary
The concept of cultural landscapes was part of the geographical lexicon of Carl Sauer. Cultural landscape came under increasing attack from scholars in the 2000s, drawing on ideas like those of the French philosopher Michel Foucault that illustrated that ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ were themselves the product of a particular Western way of giving order to the world. Cronon (1996) and Castree (2005) have both argued that ‘nature’ can be conceptualised as a cultural construct. Likewise, Mitchell (1995) called the concept of ‘culture’ into question. Mitchell (1995, 110) stressed that ‘it is a fallacy to assume that culture has an ontological existence’, and has stated that ‘there’s no such thing as culture’. There is, instead, ‘only a very powerful idea of culture’. Furthermore, the work of Latour (1993) (actor-network theory) and Haraway (1991) (hybridity) have helped dismantle the culture/nature categories rather than just twining them together, and posited the agency of the non-human as being at least equal to the human. Not surprisingly then, Lesley Head (2004:244) in a review of landscape and culture wrote that ‘…the term cultural landscape seems to carry too much baggage, and it has virtually fallen out of the human geography lexicon’. There were also concerns voiced outside the discipline of the term ‘cultural landscape’ being too human centred and ‘hiding’ the realities of non-human agency (Plumwood 2004). Consequently, during the 1990s and first half of the 2000s self and landscape were not as much to the fore as central organising concepts in human geography.

2.1.5 Landscape concept in crisis
As a result of these concerns, by 2006, when this research project commenced, the use of the ‘landscape’ concept within the discipline was at a low ebb. Initially I used the term ‘terrain’ to avoid unwanted connotations arising from the often close alignment of landscape with the nature/culture dualism. Also much new work in the discipline, undertaken in response to the challenges of the modern world - globalisation, networks, hybrids, etc. - does not always sit easily with earlier notions of landscape. Rose and Wylie (2006:475-476) in their guest editorial “Animating landscape” point out this tension between more recent and earlier notions of landscape – “varied non-representation, post-human, and vitalist geographies of performance, embodiment, materiality, and culture-nature …exist in something of a state of tension vis-à-vis
concepts of landscape”. They comment further that the conference session from which the themed issue of *Environment and Planning D* grew “at times felt like a quixotic venture, the term ‘landscape’ itself beyond rescue”. In similar vein, after 2003 the journal *Progress in Human Geography* opted to discontinue reports on landscape, a feature of the journal since the early 1990s. However, since then, after only four years, Wylie in his book *Landscape* (2007:216) wrote:

> the decision to discontinue landscape reports can be strongly challenged, given the wealth of new writing inspired by phenomenological and non-representational understandings of embodiment, materiality and performance. ...Hopefully the work discussed [in this book] …amplifies the fact that landscape continues to be…a key idea in geography.

In this theoretical framing of the project I argue that due to these recent debates and interventions, the geographical concept of ‘landscape’ provides a comprehensive and challenging theoretical framework for investigating how people value the Illawarra Escarpment.

### 2.2 Revitalisation of the landscape concept

Two major intersecting strands of thought emerged during the 1990s: (1) landscape phenomenology emphasising the ‘lived’ landscape and landscape as process, and (2) non-representational theory emphasising the actuality and materiality of embodied practice and performance. This thesis is located at the intersection of these two strands. I particularly draw upon the work of anthropologist Tim Ingold (1993, 1999, 2000). His work has been embraced within cultural geographies of landscape primarily through the advent of ‘non-representational theory’, or what is sometimes called ‘the performative turn’ (Wylie, 2007: 162). Within this confluence of landscape phenomenology and the performative, John Wylie’s (2006, 2007, 2009) recent work is central to this thesis, his performative definition of landscape ‘as the creative tension of self and world’ inspiring the starting point of this investigation into the performing and valuing of landscape through the mechanisms of dwelling. Equally, the work of Nigel Thrift (1996,1999, 2001, 2004), whose ‘non-representational theory’ spearheaded the ‘performative turn’, has inspired an emphasis on embodied engagement and performance. Thrift’s radically re-theorised being-in-the-world recognises the pervasive non-cognitive aspects of existence. I now outline how the work of Tim Ingold, Nigel Thrift and John Wylie has contributed to this project.
2.2.1 Tim Ingold – landscape as dwelling

The social anthropologist, Tim Ingold, whose influential work is based on equating landscape with the phenomenologist idea of human dwelling-in-the-world, is a major source of conceptual interpretation for this project. Ingold (2000:195-198) conceives landscape as interaction, process and mutual constitution. Ingold (2000:195) uses the idea of the ‘taskscape’ to extrapolate on interactivity. He defines a task as “…any practical operation, carried out by a skilled agent in an environment, as part of his or her normal business of life”. That is,

…tasks are the constitutive acts of dwelling. Every task takes its meaning from its position within an ensemble of tasks, performed in series or in parallel, and usually by many people working together. …It is to the entire ensemble of tasks, in their mutual interlocking, that I refer by the concept of taskscape.

This leads Ingold to his main argument that “…the landscape as a whole must likewise be understood as the taskscape in its embodied form: a pattern of activities ‘collapsed’ into an array of features” (ibid. p 198).

As Wylie (2007) points out in his review of the landscape concept, phenomenology has been critiqued for focussing too much on the agency of the individual at the expense of the role of historical and material contexts. He also notes that humanistic geography has been critiqued as conceiving of human action as relying on intention and human consciousness. Wylie (ibid. p 184-5) concludes his review of the critiques of landscape phenomenology by commenting that Ingold’s work ‘perhaps remains too subject-centred, too humanist…’ He points to Ingold’s (2000:207) summative definition of landscape:

Landscape, in short, is not a totality that you or anyone else can look at, it is rather the world in which we stand in taking up a point of view on our surroundings. And it is within the context of this attentive involvement in the landscape that the human imagination gets to work in fashioning ideas about it.

Wylie highlights Ingold’s use of the term ‘attentive involvement’ as indicating that ‘even in Ingold’s work there is a partial reintroduction of the intentional subject’. In the wider context of Ingold’s work, particularly his 1999 paper Tools for the Hand, Language for the Face, I argue that ‘attentive involvement’ may also be interpreted as referring to the unconscious involvement of the body through the senses resonating to the landscape rather than to only a fully conscious intent.

Recent critiques have reinterpreted the dwelling concept. I have drawn on Paul Harrison’s (2007) paper, The space between us: opening remarks on the concept of
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Harrison reinterprets dwelling through a comparison of Heidegger’s concept with that of Levinas. Harrison argues that dwelling is constituted by an opening onto the world – gaps and fissures - rather than a bounding. This focus on the ‘spaces between’ and detachment rather than engagement or coincidence is relevant to my argument. The gaps or spaces between engagements have an essential role to play in the mechanisms of self-world tensions.

2.2.2 Nigel Thrift – ‘non-representational theory’ and the ‘performative turn’

Contemporary interest by geographers in performativity has resulted in a burgeoning literature discussing the theoretical and methodological challenges. A performative framework reflects an approach that understands the spatial as constituted through a constellation of activities, connections and disconnections of both humans and non-humans. One advantage of applying a performative approach is how it makes geography come alive by drawing on concepts that explain how situated social practices are afforded, including ‘rhythm’, ‘embodiment’, ‘materiality’, ‘mobility’, and ‘fluidity’. This set of concepts acknowledge the important role of performance in both restricting and enabling social practices of the senses and ‘being-in-the-world’ through the alternations of engagement and detachment that are inherent in dwelling. I quote a foundational theoretical statement for this project taken from Castree’s (2005:229-230) interpretation of Thrift who:

…focuses on a world in which we are dwellers not observers, multi-sensual participants not detached spectators. We come to know by doing, and we do because of what we already know in an iterative process where the material world affects us and we affect it. …we engage with the material world …using all our senses: we are practical beings not just intellectual ones. Much of our understanding of, and action upon, this world is thus, in Thrift’s view, never formally represented or representable at all because it is tacit, sensuous, habitual and precognitive.

Thrift goes much further into clarifying the embodiment of the self - how the human body (not just the mind) interacts with the material world. Thrift (2004:85) reminds us of an important point not often made:

Human life is largely lived in a non-cognitive world, yet the implications of this statement are only now being thought through. In the quite recent past, the push of the world was too often replaced by models of analytic contemplation which could not capture the practical logics of the body or the restless nature of the body’s contact with the world…

I quote here in full Thrift’s (ibid. p 90) view of human/environment interactions as this passage is central to this thesis. He extends the concepts of thinking and ‘mind’ out
into the world and foregrounds the body and all the senses as primary sources of knowledge.

So let me say it clearly: only the smallest part of thinking is explicitly cognitive. Where, then, does all the other thinking lie? It lies in body, understood not as a fixed residence for ‘mind’ but as ‘a dynamic trajectory by which we learn to register and become sensitive to what the world is made of’ (Latour, 2000 p 1). It lies in the full range of micro-kinetic nerve languages that call us into being, not just vision (which is so often assumed to be the touchstone of knowledge) but all the senses (including senses of bodily movement like proprioception). It lies in the swell of affective contagion which has its own reasons and logic which we are only just beginning to consider. It lies in the specific circumstances of spaces and times which are able to be sensed and worked with but are often only partially articulated, what Ingold (2000) calls the ‘resonance to environment’ – the somewheres words can’t take you. None of this is meant to suggest that cognition is not important. Rather, it is to problematise what cognitive thought might consist of, to radically extend what thinking might be by extending intelligibility out into the world, and to look more carefully at what the connections between the cognitive and the non-cognitive might be (Clark, 2001).

This is a far more problematised and encompassing idea of the self/body/subject that includes the ‘practical logics’ and sensuous experience of the body’s contact with the world beyond the limits of reflective consciousness and intentionality. It provides a more comprehensive conceptual framework for examining landscape as performative. It is concerned with human mind as not consisting only of internal processes but sensuously interfacing at a pre-cognitive level with an external framework that is landscape.

2.2.3 John Wylie and the landscape concept

Inspired by the turn towards the materialities of performativity, the mid-2000s has witnessed an upsurge in landscape geographies, primarily written by the British geographers. Much of this renewed interest in landscape has been due to the work of John Wylie (2002, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009), one of his main contributions being the rethinking of the conditions of the gaze. Wylie posits a conception of vision and landscape that includes both the ‘lived in’ and the ‘looked at’ landscape. His work has breathed new life into the landscape concept. This work is based on an understanding of the dimension of depth put forward by Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1968) that more precisely elucidates the underlying, physical conditions of the gaze and therefore the formation of the self. Merleau-Ponty argues that the conditions for vision are firstly a material world and secondly a perceiving subject. We are so concerned with the subjective, the human, the cognitive, and the cultural (which indeed all affect how we see, and ultimately what we see), that we overlook the other side of the conditions of
the gaze: the role of the material world in supplying the primary physical conditions for
vision in its life forms. To clarify, Wylie (2006:524) states that the dimension of depth:

“…is present in the world being perceived *from the beginning*” (Casey, 1991:7
emphasis in original). Depth… is not created by the subject’s vision; it is instead
the means whereby there is for us a visible world. … Visible depth is therefore
“less a dimension than a medium in which both perceiving subject and perceived
world are immersed” (Casey, 1991:10).

Wylie further explains (p 526):

In a sense, without depth there could be no perception, and both seeing and
things seen are already possessed by depth. Visible depth ensures that what we
find in the world is dimensionality, a ‘thickness’ into which we delve.

Wylie (p 522) outlines how the depth of field (the total area in front of and behind an
object held in focus by a lens) is the crucial dimension or medium in which visual
perception arises, and, further, that landscape *is* depth:

A figure gazes upon a landscape. Sees depth. Sees a world unfolding into the
yonder, a field of vision receding, diminishing, converging, and softening into a
perceptual horizon. …landscape becomes the medium of depth. Landscape
becomes ‘depth itself’, empirical extension, the actual view that recedes from the
perceiver.

In this paper, *Depths and folds: on landscape and the gazing subject*, Wylie combines
Merleau-Ponty’s work on ‘depth’ with the later work of Deleuze (1992) whose central
theme conceives the world as an incessant process of folding. Wylie (2006: 530) states
that:

both Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty envision a material ‘lifeworld’ beyond and
before a subject who encounters or surveys it. Both insist that this world is not
inert, that it does not comprise ‘objective space’; rather, its manner of being is
fundamentally processual. And both suggest that the subject who will ‘come to’ a
point of view upon this world, as an assemblage of perceptual faculties and
epistemological capabilities, will be assembled precisely through processes of
folding and intertwining.

Wylie recognised the similarity between Merleau-Ponty’s processes of intertwining and
Deleuze’s processes of folding. For Merleau-Ponty self and landscape are entwined
and emergent (Wylie 2007:14). When we look, what is occurring is an ‘*enlacing
together* of body and world…’ (ibid. p 150). Exactly what Deleuze means by folding is
difficult to describe but seems to be a more precise defining of Merleau-Ponty’s
intertwining of self and landscape, body and world. Following Deleuze, Wylie
(2006:532) expresses landscape as a ‘generative…process of folding and unfolding in
depth’ that

connotes the mutually sustaining rhythm between immanent depths and
emergent relations of seer and seen. Thus it folds the material and the sensible,
a process which creates and crystallises particular points of view and visions: percepts.

This process seems akin to Bergson’s account of perception (that I discuss below in section 2.3.1) as the circuit between (or continual folding together of) present and past, perception and memory – ‘a movement of differentiation of virtualities in the light of the contingencies which impact it’ (Grosz, 2005:108). For Bergson, perception primarily involves the unfolding of the world in depth as landscape.

Featuring in Wylie’s *Depths and folds* (2006) paper are pairs of words constantly used of visible depth (or landscape) in relation to the self: the “affordance and sustenance” of; it “harbours and sustains”; as the medium through which our embeddedness in the visible world is “announced and maintained”; the “surprise and safe conduct” of subjective vision. Wylie thus underscores that not only does vision primarily arise, or is formed, from the attributes and processes of the material world but – and this is an important point for this thesis on valuing landscape - vision continues to be sustained or maintained by these attributes. As Wylie (2006:527) notes, ‘to put this perceptually, the self perceives through an attunement with landscape; selfhood is reciprocally solicited and conducted by the levels of sense in the landscape’.

The conception of landscape as “the creative tension of self and world” put forward by Wylie (2007:217) is the reciprocal interaction of the ‘perceiving self’ with the material world that even more emphatically acknowledges and gives equal weight to both elements in the process or relationship. We are reminded though that of the two elements that comprise landscape, self and world, the world is primary. We, the subjects emerged from the world through a formative on-going process of the folding together, overlapping and diverging, of observer and observed. This constitutes a radical decentring of the human.

Wylie (2007:214) argues that landscape writing supplies what some other approaches to human geography lack: ‘a certain depth provided by the perspective of a subject’ and that how ‘different senses of self and landscape are emergent and changeable through practices such as writing’. Wylie goes on to suggest that one way of exploring these emergent senses of self and landscape is through the concept of ‘affect’. He says:

Affect precisely describes domains of experience that are more-than-subjective and yet at the same time formative of senses of self – and formative, for example, of senses of self and landscape (ibid).
I take the term ‘more-than-subjective’ to mean the types of forces that are common to all humanity, that are a fundamental part of the human condition of being-in-the-world. Such forces, while beyond representation, give rise to generic formative processes and are therefore relevant to the generic valuing processes with which this project is concerned. Wylie (ibid. p 215) goes on to explain:

…[affect] connotes configurations of motion and materiality – of light, colour, morphology and mood – from which distinctive senses of self and landscape, walking and ground, observer and observed, distil and refract. …The circulation and upsurge of affects and percepts is precisely that from which these two horizons, inside and outside, self and landscape, precipitate and fold.

Wylie (ibid.) concludes that his stance on landscape constitutes

…what might be termed a post-phenomenological understanding of the formation and undoing of self and landscape in practice. Therein, landscape might best be described in terms of the entwined materialities and sensibilities with which we act and sense.

Thus, although Wylie regards himself as advancing a broadly phenomenological approach to landscape, the traditional phenomenological centring of the subject has been addressed and balanced by attention to the animation and agency of landscape conceived as process. Wylie (2007:175) cites Alphonso Lingis’s book, *The Imperative* that presents the landscape’s materiality in terms of force and animation. The external landscape we encounter ‘is not mere lumpen or dead matter, a lifeless mass onto which we project meaning and value’. Instead,

…it is not that things barely show themselves, behind illusory appearances fabricated by our subjectivity; it is that things are exorbitantly exhibitionist. The landscape resounds; facades, caricatures, halos, shadows dance across it. Under the sunlight extends the pageantry of things (1998:100).

For Lingis, the visible world not only transcends the subject, ‘in the sense of exceeding our perception of it, it also summons and directs it in certain ways’ (Wylie 2007:176) (my italics). In other words, the excess of landscape is not limited by the perceptions, meanings, or understandings that single human subjects or cultures can put upon it.

In another sense of the agency of landscape - and one particularly relevant to a case study of the Illawarra Escarpment - Rose and Wylie (2006:476-7) argue that in this post-modern world topography still matters. They comment that ‘in prioritising vectors, trajectories, and connections, topological and vitalist geographies present a curiously flat and depthless picture’. They go on to say:

Perhaps this is where landscape might creatively insinuate itself…: landscape reintroduces perspective and contour; texture and feeling; perception and
imagination. It is the synthesis of elements, so elegantly traced by topologies, with something added; lightless chasms, passing clouds, airless summits, sweeping sands.

This inclusiveness of the myriad affordances of landscape – the diversity, relief, differences, contrasts, history – are essential to the tensions and mechanisms driving the forging and sustenance of individual selves, and the growth of their competences, sensibilities, intellects and concsciousness.

To conclude this section on the recent theories underpinning the concept of landscape, I present Wylie’s overall argument for the landscape concept (as he re-stated it in Merriman et al, 2008:203) bringing together and interweaving the material and human:

...we often seem to have the choice between landscape conceived as a material entity in some form – animate or inanimate – and landscape as idiosyncratically located in the eye of the beholder. But I think that a more productive agenda for landscape geographers lies in abiding within and creatively using this tension between materiality and perception. ...landscape isn’t simply something seen, nor a way of seeing: landscape is rather the materialities and sensibilities with which we see. Landscape is a seeing with; an act which precipitates and distributes subject and objects, selves and worlds.

The suggestion in this passage is that a productive research agenda lies in working with the tension between materiality and perception and indicates a sense of balance in Wylie’s work. Wylie’s more recent paper Landscape, absence and the geographies of love (2009) is also concerned with balance: the need to balance absence (detachment) against a valorising of presence (engagement). This is a need that is supported by the findings of this thesis that emphasises performance and engagement but also argues that the absences of disengagement or detachment have an essential role in the mechanisms of an individual’s constant attunements to other presences in the landscape.

2.3 Enriching the landscape concept
To further enrich how the landscape concept was employed in this thesis, I have drawn on a number of other theoretical concepts: valuing and culture; perception, action and memory; mobility and rhythm; and narrative writing. I outline each of these in turn.

2.3.1 Valuing, the performative and culture
This thesis is examining how a particular landscape is related to, engaged with, and valued. The processes of valuing in the context of the self-world relations that are landscape are what this thesis is endeavouring to explicate. Bakhtin’s conception of the
construction of meaning and value as being integral to ‘practical doing’ (as outlined in Chapter 1) aligns with Thrift’s (2004) ‘bodies-in-action’, with the full range of senses, interacting with their environments. To again quote Castree’s (2005:229-230) interpretation of Thrift’s thought cited above in section 2.2.2: ‘We come to know by doing, and we do because of what we already know in an iterative process where the material world affects us and we affect it’. This is a broad description of the everyday valuing process - the creative tension of self and world that this research is investigating. Crouch (2000:64) further develops this idea in relation to the concept of culture:

Popular culture is made and remade through what people ‘do’. A process rather than a product. Place becomes understood as something through which and with which lives are lived and identity and myth made.

In relation to this idea of culture as an embodied process rather than a set of ideas or a product, I wish to emphasise the creativity of individuals in everyday action in making sense of their worlds - the ability of people to create their own ‘lay geographies’ (ibid.) and meanings from a combination of their interaction with both the non-human and human worlds. As Crouch (ibid.) says: ‘Of course the individual is neither completely free nor only a receiver of the second-hand’. In other words, the individual’s response to the world is connected to their cultural background but this is a factor amongst many factors in the on-going creative becoming of an individual. Habits and understandings originating in the culture can be modified and adjusted through an individual’s own embodied, everyday habits and experiences. It is from a starting point of this performative, processual concept of culture that this investigation into how a particular landscape is valued commences. This study seeks to go beyond cultural differences to demonstrate the essential role of landscape in human performance, identity and consciousness.

2.3.2 Perception, action and memory

In analysing the embodied and performative aspects of landscape engagement and writing in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 it became necessary to identify philosophical underpinnings and clarify terminology with regard to perception, action and memory. I have drawn on Grosz’s exposition of the relationship between the work of Henri Bergson, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Gilles Deleuze. Grosz (2005) identifies Bergson as the foremost philosopher of perception and memory, which he defines in operational terms – an important consideration for this project that is centred on the performative. Her exposition compares the positions of Bergson and Merleau-Ponty arguing that they are more similar than may first appear. She supplements this position with the more
recent thought of Deleuze. I quote the relevant sections in full as they are central to my arguments involving the mechanics of perception and action as well as my use of the terms ‘actual’ and ‘virtual’ throughout the chapters. I outline Grosz’ (2005:96-102) argument for (1) present/past and action/perception; (2) memory: the actual and the virtual; (3) habit and habit-memory, and (4) Bergson’s philosophical position on the basic mechanisms of life.

(1) present/past; action/perception

Bergson conceives of the present/past and action/perception in the following way:

…the present is that which is acting, while the past can be understood as that which no longer acts (Bergson 1988, 68) … Perception, being linked fundamentally to action, is actual, and is directed to an impending or immediate future. It is preparatory for and governed by the imperative to act, and harnesses memory to fill in the details of perception in order to most directly and easily facilitate action. Habit assures perception of its pragmatic grasp on objects.

… Perception can never be free of memory, and is thus never completely embedded in the present but always straddles elements of the past. This movement from the multiple circles of memory must occur if a productive circuit between perception and memory, where each qualifies the other, is to occur, that is, if there is to be the possibility of a reflective perception or a directed recollection. (italics added)

The circuit between, or folding together of, present and past, perception and memory is important to my interpretations of self-world mechanisms.

(2) memory: the actual and the virtual

On memory, Bergson’s descriptions and definitions are as follows:

Instead of memory being regarded as a faded perception, a perception that has receded into the past, as its commonplace representation dictates, it must be regarded as ideational, inactive, or purely virtual. A present perception and a past recollection are not simply different in degree (one a faded, diminished, or muted version of the other) but different in kind.

… The past is that which no longer acts, although in a sense it lives a shadowy and fleeting existence; it still is, it is real. Its reality is virtual, for it exerts its influence indirectly, only through its capacity to link to and thus to inform the present. The past remains accessible in the form of recollections, either as motor mechanisms in the form of habit-memory, or more accurately, in the form of image memories. …Perception is a measure of our virtual action upon things. (ibid. p 102-103) (italics added)

Reflection on memories, that Bergson describes as ‘placing ourselves in the past’, is the realm of images and ideas that he names ‘the virtual’ as opposed to the ‘the actual’. Grosz (2005:108) quotes Deleuze on Bergson:….the virtual must be conceived as “Real without being actual, ideal without being abstract (1994:209)”, whereas “…the
movement of actualisation is the opening up of the virtual to what befalls it’. She goes on to say:

This indeed is what life…is of necessity – a movement of differentiation of virtualities in the light of the contingencies which impact it.

The images of memory (the virtual) are real but different in kind to the actual. Therefore throughout the thesis I have distinguished between the actual (present action) and the virtual (memories), between interaction or dialogue with actual landscapes and interaction or dialogue with the virtual landscapes of memory.

(3) Habit and habit-memory
In relation to the two italicised references in the above quotations, Bergson’s description of the role of habit in assuring ‘perception of its pragmatic grasp on objects’ is central to my interpretation of repetitive routines in bodily interactions with actual landscapes. Both of the ideas of ‘habit-memory’ or body-memory as the motor mechanisms of actual engagement, and the ‘image memories’ of virtual engagements are relevant to the two different types of self-world attunements discussed in the results chapters.

(4) Bergson’s position on the basic mechanisms of life
Grosz (2005:98) states that two notions of life distinguish Bergson’s philosophical position: (1) the idea of the organization of images around a central nucleus of bodily interest and activity and (2) the interposition of a temporal delay between stimulus and response.

The relationship between the virtual and the actual, between mind and matter, memory and perception is stated thus:

Mind and life are not special – or vital – substances, different in nature to matter. Rather, mind or life partake of and live in and as matter. Matter is organized differently in its inorganic and organic forms: this organization is dependent on the degree of indeterminacy, the degree of freedom, that life exhibits relative to the inertia of matter. ... [The brain] inserts a gap or delay between stimulus and response which enables but does not necessitate a direct connection between perception and action ... enabling it to bring memory to bear on perception, widening the circle of perception’s relevance.

Grosz (2005:111) concludes: ‘The force of difference, the force of virtuality ensures the future the innovative power of a leap’. Reflection, therefore, in the sphere of the virtual, is essential to the circuitry of the becoming of the actual. The philosophical notion of a gap or delay between stimulus and response ‘which enables but does not necessitate a direct connection between perception and action’ is an important one for the my
arguments in this thesis relating to the attuning of the rhythms of the self to the rhythms of other encountered presences in the world.

2.3.3 Mobilities and rhythm
Current research on rhythm and mobilities facilitated rethinking landscape as performative. Central to the thesis was recent work on rhythm, particularly Tim Edensor’s (2010) edited text Geographies of Rhythm: Nature, Place, Mobilities and Bodies. This text takes as its inspiration and starting point Henri Lefebvre’s (2004) Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life. Lefebvre developed understandings of how repetition, routine and ritual may work in people’s lives. Lefebvre’s work on rhythm was also the basis for another important text for this project: Evans and Franklin’s (2010) paper on equestrian dressage. This paper introduced the concept of entrainment. I use the concept of entrainment in Chapter 6 to illustrate and explicate the mechanisms of self-world attunements.

In my search for interpretations of the role of repetition in everyday life I found it necessary to go beyond the geographical literature. The writings of cognitive scientists Daniel Dennett (1996) and Andy Clark (1997, 2001) were helpful, particularly their conceptualising of how material features are manipulated and become part of the intertwining of action and cognitive thought. They argue that mind rather than replicating capacities, interfaces with external materialities, making landscape not only a terrain to be negotiated but equally a resource to be factored into solutions (Clark, 1996:220). Clark and Chalmers (1998:7-8) argue for ‘an active externalism, based on the active role of the environment in driving cognitive processes’. As Clark (2001:142-143) explains, the notion of the brain as a problem-solving engine ‘is really the notion of the whole caboodle: the brain and body operating within an environmental setting’. Instead of replicating the capacities of external media, the brain ‘must learn to interface in ways that maximally exploit their peculiar virtues’ (Clark, 1996:220).

To address the particular mobilities featured: walking in Chapters 4, 5 and 7, and train driving in Chapter 6, an extensive literature review was conducted, particularly for walking. For this thesis Ingold and Vergunst’s edited text Ways of Walking (2008) was a key text. Two papers were of particular importance: Edensor’s Walking through Ruins and Lorimer and Lund’s A Collectible Topography: Walking, Remembering and Recording Mountains. These two chapters were basic to understandings of both the sensuous and reflective aspects of walking in general and essential to the interpretation of bushwalking in Chapter 7. Edensor’s paper was essential to my
interpretation and articulation of the sensuous affordances of bushwalking. Lorimer and Lund’s paper provided insights into popular recreational walking practices and the role of landscape in memory and reflection, learning, identity formation and becoming.

In the case of train-driving no specific academic literature was available so that research into automobility was used for a general grasp of wheeled mobility discussed in Chapter 6. Here Thrift (2004), Urry (2004) and Featherstone (2004) provided general background on automobility conceptualised as hybrid entities or assemblages comprising bodies and machines and understood as operating within a total enabling system. These insights and concepts were useful in thinking about the railway system and the assemblages that are trains. Following Thrift (2001, 2004), Sheller (2004:226-7) developed the idea that motion and emotion are kinaesthetically intertwined. For Sheller emotions are a key means the body has of sorting the sensations of the non-cognitive realm. Sheller’s (2004) work aided thinking about the emotions of train driving. Evans and Franklin (2010:179) in their paper on equestrian dressage (mentioned above) further develop this argument that ‘movement is paired with emotion’ for both horse and rider. DeLyser (2010) in her paper on rhythm and mobilities using the writings of early women aviators also explored Lefebvre’s emphasis on ‘dressage’ (repetition-based training) whilst incorporating Bissell’s (2007:277) contention that the practice of waiting is woven through the fabric of the mobile everyday. Delyser concluded that a heightened attunement to changing circumstances emerge from training but are not determined by it. A recent contribution to the mobilities literature that was very timely for this project was Bissell and Fuller’s (2011) edited text Stillness in a mobile world. These discussions of stillness as an inherent part of movement provided a balance to understandings of mobility that proved indispensable to this thesis in that they revealed the relativity of the experience of movement and time; that going-with can be different to going-between, that stillnesses or suspensions can be experienced while all is in motion.

2.3.4 Narrative writing
Chapter 3 put to use theories underpinning the use of writing, conceived as performative, as a methodological tool. These are outlined in Chapter 3. Addtional important sources of insight into narrative writing were Cronon (1992), Wylie (2007), Edensor (2008), Ingold and Vergunst (2008), Ingold (2007), Lorimer (2003, 2004) and Solnit (2000).
2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I argued that landscape is a contested concept. I began by outlining three broad strands of thought about landscape: as artefact, as ‘way of seeing’, and as performative. These competing ideas about landscape result in rich and ongoing debates over the value of the landscape concept in geography. These debates not only foreground the landscape concept in geography, but also keep the concept alive and fresh. The chapter then outlined the contributions of three scholars that underpin the arguments in this thesis: Tim Ingold, Nigel Thrift and John Wylie. I argued Nigel Thrift and John Wylie offer possibilities to reconceptualize the phenomenology of landscape and dwelling beyond the dualities of materiality/perception, nature/culture, non-human/human. To do so they foregrounded ideas that unite the materiality, animation and agency of ‘the world’ with an individually-perceiving embodied self. This is the conceptual starting point for this investigation of how individuals value the Illawarra Escarpment. Valuing is therefore understood in this thesis as an ongoing performative process, arising from the ‘creative tensions of self and world’ (Wylie 2007:217).
In this chapter I outline the rationale for why a mixed-methods approach is appropriate to investigate valuing as the creative tension between self and world. The chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section I outline how the project unfolded. In the second section I explain the implementation of the mixed-methods. In a context of limited data about how people understand and use the Illawarra Escarpment in their everyday lives, a postal-survey was an appropriate starting point for this project to identify general trends. Furthermore, in this project the postal-survey was a recruitment mechanism. In Stage II of the project 18 selected volunteers were invited to further participate, and I explore the application of participant observation, informal conversations and solicited diaries. A form of participant observation involved the researcher in at least two planned activities/meetings to experience the performance of various forms of mobility and to nurture an on-going relationship with the participant.

In the third section, in the current climate of experimentation with 'more-than-representational' (Lorimer 2005) research methods in cultural geography, a justification is provided for the selection of written communication in the form of solicited diaries alongside participant observation as the central data for this project. I outline a novel analytical approach that conceives diary writing as an embodied performance. This approach pays attention not only to the 'when, where and how' of the writing, but also to the attributes and limitations of narrative genres. Through paying attention to narrative genres insights are provided into what kinds of knowledge was either facilitated or rendered invisible by the genre used.

3.1 The project unfolds
3.1.1 Generative factors
The initial impetus for the project sprang from asking how the Illawarra Escarpment is experienced and valued by the residents of Wollongong. The Illawarra Escarpment is a major feature in the everyday lives of residents but its management (as a mixture of public and private land) is fraught with conflicts. Insights into the social values of such a landscape are essential for conflict resolution and justice for stakeholders. However, although very comprehensive biophysical studies of the escarpment have been carried out as a basis for writing management strategies, there are no comparable social studies. But how are the social values of the escarpment to be assessed for a population of 200,000? Similar questions are frequently being asked by natural
resource managers. It is not just a matter of the specific ways in which the escarpment is used but how it is experienced and valued. What kinds of roles does the escarpment play in the everyday lives of people? From the outset this project took a ‘performative’ orientation, valuing being conceived as essentially performative – ‘knowing by doing’ - and therefore involving various kinds of mobility. Flowing from this conceptual orientation, participant observation in the form of ‘go-alongs’, such as walking and talking (Kusenbach, 2003) was regarded as an essential constituent of the methodology. It was planned that these ‘go-alongs’ would be both a starting point for in-depth studies of participants, a way of ‘getting-to-know-you’ in the recruitment of participants, and an essential source of performative experience for myself as researcher in collecting empirical data for the project. Early in the project (as discussed in Chapter 2) a resurgence of research theorising ‘landscape’ in geography influenced a decision to use Wylie’s (2007:217) definition of landscape as the ‘creative tension of self and world’ as the starting point of this thesis. A second factor in the generation of the project was my personal interest in ‘landscape’ springing from my migration to Australia from England as a teenager. Arriving in the Illawarra at age 14, I have lived all my life since then in sight of the escarpment. It is a landscape well known to me, embodied over a long period and entangled with my personal history. It acts for me, to use the words of the project participant featured in Chapter 7, as ‘a huge mnemonic device’.

3.1.2 Transformative stages

Following a postal-survey as a starting point, in the absence of other studies, the data generated in Stage I of the project consisted of a database of 483 survey responses to both closed and open questions addressing individual engagements with the escarpment. The database included the contact details for the 183 respondents volunteering to be further involved with the project. As a project embracing mixed-methods, a decision was necessary as to the most suitable methods for Stage II. After a review of possible methods it was decided that solicited diaries would contribute, through a recording of successive entries over time, an important dimension of performance by providing insights into on-going routines and rhythms of the diarists’ lives. Diaries would also provide an opportunity for participant to ‘voice’ their thoughts, where the presence of the research took the form of linked-pages in a book. Data from the kinetic and sensuous experiences of informal spontaneous conversations and shared activities of participant and researcher would balance and complement the diary texts.
The decision to employ solicited diaries instead of other in-depth methods that used sound and/or visual recording techniques was partly influenced by my educational background in Literature and History with a research qualification in Literature. This Arts background was a major factor in the development of the project because of its relevance to analysing written texts. In addition my employment background in a science administration context during the 1980s and ‘90s saw the development of environmental science and environmental studies that necessitated the coming together of Arts and Science disciplines in order to address environmental management problems. This experience fostered my interest in the application of skills taught in Arts disciplines to the social aspects of environmental management.

The project design closely followed a mixed in-depth methodology that necessitated a winnowing and narrowing process. Figure 2 below provides a Flow Chart depicting this process.

**Figure 2 – Flow Chart of narrowing process**

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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5000 postal</td>
<td>18 participants in joint activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surveys</td>
<td>12 written diaries received/analysed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>483 responses</td>
<td>4 diarists selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>database (9.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>183 volunteers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>willing to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An intense process of sifting, collating, grouping, and ordering of the survey information for each of the 183 volunteers was used to select a short list to enable the contacting of 18 potential participants. Following a shared activity with each of the 18 people who agreed to participate, they were invited to write a diary. All initially agreed to write a diary for a period of at least a month. This resulted in receiving 12 written diaries, one photo diary and an oral biography.

A major turning point in the project was the diversity of the diaries received. The range of writing genres and styles used by the diarists was far greater than expected, genres
often being mixed within one diary. How best to encompass, and do justice to, this rich diversity in the project? Answering this question necessitated a much greater engagement with understanding narrative genres and story-telling strategies. This made analysis of each of the 12 written diaries, the identification of four categories and the grouping of the diaries according to their main genre, time-consuming. However, this ultimately became a strength of the project as different ways of writing revealed different valuing processes. The diaries written in the past tense journal style were the most numerous making selection of one representative diarist difficult. The present tense writing was much less frequent, one category that proved to be important to the project being used by only one participant. Biographic writing appeared in several diaries but one diary was particularly culturally meaningful, consisting entirely of well-crafted biographic reflections.

A further important element in the transformation of the project was the development of a performative method for analysing texts. The performative act of writing foregrounded how writing is produced rather than the posited meaning. Section 3.3 outlines in more detail how diary texts were interpreted as performative.

These methodological developments resulted in extending the empirical and theoretical aims of the thesis. A methodological strand was included on the experimental use of text as a performative research tool. This necessitated a greater concentration on diary analysis and less on other aspects of the mixed methodology, namely participant observation activities, and more discussion of my embodied performance as researcher. However, Chapter 6 explores my participation on one occasion (in the locomotive cab of the freight train). This decision to incorporate a methodological strand also meant not only a major engagement with theoretical writings on both landscape and performativity but also with the theories of narrative writing. This reduced the time and space for approaches that engaged more fully with other aspects of the performative methodology.

The mixed methods employed provided information and embodied experience external to the diary text and allowed the diary entries to be placed in the broader context of the diarists’ lives. Here not only my educational background but also my own life experiences proved invaluable in the understanding and interpretation of the diaries through empathy with diarists’ everyday rhythms and embodied experiences that resonated with my own, particularly in the following areas:

- Home duties and child care routines.
• A daily walking routine that monitors the home territory (and includes views of the escarpment).
• A lifetime engagement with bushwalking as a leisure pursuit combined with an interest in the native flora and fauna.

The performance written about in this thesis that is completely outside my own embodied experience is train driving, the form of mobility featured in Chapter 6. This meant that the experience of riding in a freight train locomotive along with the participant and his co-driver was essential for the inclusion of at least some insights into this type of mobility and occupation. The participant observation was necessarily supplemented by the generous extra involvement of the participant train driver as well as a railway consultant to provide the necessary technical information.

Overall, the trajectory of the project was a progressive narrowing of focus to concentrate on a very small number of representative and illustrative individuals. This approach is justified for this project for the following reasons:
1. There are no landscapes without a particular self or subject, although the experience of individuals may partly coincide or overlap to some degree.
2. Valuing is performative and all performance is subjective. How values are formed, sustained and challenged in everyday life was examined. This provided an alternative way of addressing the problem of investigating the social value of landscapes such as the Illawarra Escarpment inhabited by large multicultural populations.
3. By narrowing to a small number of individuals, the ambit of the project immediately broadened when able to consider the escarpment as particular examples of self-world interactions - as a place to live, work and play and to experience through the actions of viewing, dwelling, working, walking, driving, riding, talking, remembering and writing – that is, as a process of the co-constitution of self and world. The loss of demographic breadth allowed a vertical depth at the level of the individual in which broad generic valuing processes could be identified and illustrated.
4. There are calls in the academic literature for an embodied and performative approach to the interpretation of subjective data. (This point is outlined in more detail below in Section 3.3 which argues for using written representations as a performative research tool.) Prime examples of this approach are Wylie’s (2002, 2005, 2009) and Edensor’s (2008) writings using their own walking experiences as the only source of empirical data.
3.2 Implementing the mixed methodology

I now outline the main features of the methodology in Stages I and II of the project and how they were applied and integrated.

3.2.1 Stage I - Postal-survey and recruitment

A literature review revealed no academic or municipal government studies specifically examining how residents valued the Illawarra Escarpment. The Wollongong City Council’s (2006) *Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan* drew upon the work of environmental scientists, with recommendations made by some non-government organizations and community groups. Due to the lack of baseline knowledge about the diversity of ways in which residents valued the Escarpment it was appropriate to commence this project with a survey to identify themes and concerns.

Therefore, in order to identify types of engagement with the escarpment and broad themes as a starting point for this project, a questionnaire entitled *Tell us what you think about the Escarpment* was distributed by letterbox drop to three representative cross-sections of the Wollongong Local Government Area: North, Central and South. The survey distribution was designed to sample people from as broad a range of socio-economic groups as possible, and living at a variety of distances from the escarpment. The two-page survey consisted of a combination of closed and open questions (see survey form in Appendix A) about types of engagement, attitudes to management problems and what they liked and disliked about the escarpment. The response rate was 9.6 per cent (483 of a possible 5000 questionnaires delivered). According to Hay (2005) this is the expected return for a mail out survey.

Broadly-speaking, the 9.6 per cent who completed and returned the questionnaire may be categorised as engaging with the escarpment as:

1. dwellers (living on or near the escarpment) (98%);
2. recreationists (78%);
3. regular travellers (66%); and
4. employees (11%)

Respondents could be attributed to more than one of the categories.

The largest categories of recreationists were walkers/hikers/joggers (60%) and visitors to lookouts (52%). Other popular recreational categories, each approximately 35%, were picnic-ers, car-drivers and observers of flora and fauna. Particular sports as forms of recreation were relatively small ranging from cyclists (9%) and mountain bike riders (6%).
through rock climbers (2%), four-wheel drivers (1.7%), and horse riders (1.7%) to hunting/archery (0.6%).

In general, people did not take the survey as an opportunity to complain or push their opinions on management but rather to be appreciative of the escarpment. People who do not fit this typology generally did not return a survey. Furthermore, no respondents claimed an Aboriginal identity, and 80% of respondents were Australian-born.

Of the 483 survey respondents, 183 (38%) volunteered to be further involved with the project. This provided a pool of potential participants for more in-depth fieldwork. The survey questionnaires also provided a comprehensive and readily available source of information on each potential participant. The survey encouraged respondents to write as much as possible in response to the open questions thus providing examples of their written expression. These two kinds of information greatly assisted the selection of participants for the second stage of the fieldwork.

3.2.2 Stage II – selecting participants and in-depth methods
Following a review of current methodologies, a mixed-methods approach that aligned ethnographic ‘go-alongs’ alongside solicited diaries was selected for the project. Eighteen volunteers were invited to be further involved, six being drawn from each of the three postal-survey sample areas, thus maximising the inclusion of people living variable distances from the escarpment and covering a broad mix of socio-economic backgrounds. For selection participants were required to return a survey response that:

1. indicated engagement with the escarpment according to at least one of the above respondent typologies,
2. indicated a type of engagement with the escarpment suitable for the participant observation of the researcher,
3. had been written in an individually expressive way.

Participants who fulfilled these criteria were then sampled to be representative on the basis of gender, age and occupation.

I now discuss the implementation of the methods selected and how they were integrated.
Ethnographic ‘go-alongs’: participant experience and informal conversations

Go-alongs were an essential part of the methodology in complementing, contextualising and assisting with interpretation of the diaries, getting to know the diarists and being able to ask questions about their everyday routines. Most importantly they provided the researcher with embodied experiences of being-with the participant while on-the-move. Examples of participant activities undertaken for the project were a walk along a usual route, a visit to a favourite area or park, or to the participant’s home, backyard or work environment, or by travelling along with the participant on a regular route. The rationale for these joint activities was to join in a normal activity rather than organise a special event, thereby experiencing part of the participant’s everyday life and not taking up more time than usually given to the activity. Crang (2005:230) reporting on Latham (2003) noted that:

...“the ‘go-along’ (Kusenbach 2003) – interviewing people as they stroll through their neighbourhoods to capture their biographies, linking places and events, their spatial practices and the social architecture”.

I concur with Anderson’s (2004:260) conclusion to his paper *Talking whilst walking:*

This practice of talking whilst walking is also useful as it produces not a conventional interrogative encounter, but a collage of collaboration: an unstructured dialogue where all actors participate in a conversational, geographical and informational pathway creation. ...atmospheres, emotions, reflections and beliefs can be accessed, as well as intellects, rationales and ideologies.

These collaborative ‘unstructured dialogues’ or conversations were an important part of the participant experience as they illuminated the how and ‘why’ of what respondents do. They were a shared experience and enjoyment that greatly assisted the formation of an on-going relationship with the diarist. Conversations with respondents were regarded as part of the performance of an activity rather than as a produced text.

I wrote extensive field-diaries for all the shared activities with the 18 participants (as set out below in the Table of Project Participants provided in Appendix G). The method of producing these was based on my personal skills. My employment history had included long experience in using a combination of shorthand notes and keyboard transcription. I was more comfortable with recording the data from participant observation using a combination of unobtrusive brief shorthand notes and memory rather than using a recording device and subsequent transcription from sound. My field-diaries were written up immediately after the field activity whilst the experience was still fresh. These field-diaries aimed at including as much detail as possible as a trigger for my later
recall in bringing to mind the events, people, places, movement, atmospheres and feelings. They followed a format of commencing with a thumbnail sketch of information from the survey response followed by a description of the participant, the place (house, backyard, landscapes moved through), personal social and historical details that the participant supplied during conversation, chronological description of my experience of the shared activity, conversations, etc. Some conversation and information was recorded verbatim, for example, answers to key questions, but mostly I recorded my retrospective descriptions and reflections after the event. At this stage of the project much data was generated in an experimental situation, all information about the 18 participants’ lives and modes of performance in relation to the escarpment being deemed relevant.

Solicited diaries as a major source of in-depth data
Several geographers have already begun to consider the role of various genres of diaries as ethnographic performance. For example, Lorimer (2005) revisited subjects’ field-diaries not as accounts written in place, but as embodied acts of writing, walking and navigating that are acutely spatial and sensual. Lorimer interpreted the field-dairy as an act of intimacy: containing expressions of private musings or meditations that operated as an aid to making sense of place. Similarly, solicited diaries are increasingly deployed by geographers following the recognition of written diaries as agents of self-discovery in and through space, for the author, as well as for those who read the text. In doing so, geographers extend the longstanding lead of biographers, historians and literary scholars. Diaries are important for telling not only history, but also geography because how diarists narrate journal entries is always temporally and spatially situated. In this case, the discontinuous writing of reflective diary entries are often positioned as a written form of talking that allows thoughts, experiences, images and ideas to settle and circulate in the mind over time. The reflective diary makes a track through experiences, through the chaos of life, the kaleidoscope of experience, thereby creating some order and recording details and sequences that may not be remembered in a semi-structured interview. As Meth (2003) argued, solicited diaries offer opportunities for longitudinal insights, discontinuous reflections that reveal the interplay of current and past experiences and the spatial and temporal dynamics of an individual’s changing thoughts and feelings. Geographers are increasingly recognising that subjectivities are not separate entities situated in place, but rather are co-constituted through a constellation of past and present embodied experiences, emotions, affects, acts, ideas and encounters that comprise place.
While most diaries were hand written, the writing production norms of the self-reflexive diary were substantially different from those written on the move. While a travel diary contained textual corrections and scoring out, these tended to be absent from the reflective and autobiographical diaries. Instead, the neatness of writing in several diaries suggested they were outcomes of earlier drafts. Further, biographical reflections using a computer instead of a notebook had the advantage of virtually unlimited, invisible editing. This suggests the writing practice of the ‘small story’ and autobiographical diaries is in part constrained by certain ideas of what is acceptable and appropriate expression and presentation for consumption and judgement within an academic thesis. Choice of subject matter is to some extent mediated or limited by what diarists found they could write about, that is, found it possible to write about. For example, content needed to be interesting to the diarist in order to generate sufficient writing momentum usually through some kind of emotional leverage.

The use of solicited diaries for the project indicated a further clear exclusionary tendency as regards education (diarists were mostly professionals with tertiary education) and age (diarists were aged over 30 years). The technical qualities of the solicited diary perhaps operated against social inclusion through requiring the individual to write about the escarpment for wide scholarly discussion, comparison and appreciation. The diaries were also limited by the types of subjectivities that may find diary writing a suitable and appropriate research tool.

The selected 18 volunteers, after participating in a joint activity with the researcher, were invited to keep a diary of their everyday interactions with the escarpment for one month. Each participant was given a small, bound, hardback notebook measuring 11 cm by 16 cm, each page ruled with guiding lines for writing. The notebook was chosen to indicate that the content was valued by the researcher. The small pages with dividing lines offered an invitation to fill the lines with ‘private’ writings rather than drawings. However, one participant also included drawings on separate pages, and another illustrated his diary with 29 photos and two poems. In order to follow an ethos of performance, the writing instructions were minimal. No basic narrative outline was given to the diarists of how a diary entry may be read. Instead, each person was asked to write at least 3 entries per week about their interactions with the Escarpment. (See Appendix B for the diary-writing guidelines given to each participant). For various reasons not all of these undertakings translated into actual writing, but most did. Twelve written diaries were returned, ten being handwritten in the notebook provided and two participants opting instead to use their computers. Each person wrote in a very
different way - the name ‘diary’ sometimes encompassing major elements from other genres.

Close examinations of the diaries revealed that the outstanding characteristics of the very varied texts were (1) the tense in which the diary was written, (2) whether it was continuous or discontinuous writing and (3) the type of stories being presented. Four basic categories of diary were identified based on these characteristics. Although a number of genre categories were frequently combined within one diary, it was possible to categorise diaries according to the main genre used. The four categories are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1 – Diary categories identified

| Past tense |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| **Journal-style**          | Talking about self and world: **event driven – a series of small stories** | 7 examples received (A variety of practices and mobilities) |
| Discontinuous writing      | Relating self through memory: **narrating larger stories** that reflect self and world | 5 examples (A variety of practices and mobilities) |
| Biographic                 | Reporting on negotiating the terrain, and some of the sights as part of the action; **the trip as story** | 3 examples received (Train driving, car driving, cycling) |
| Continuous writing         | Presenting walking the terrain; **the walk as story** | 1 example received (walking) |

Integrating mixed methods
Using a combination of methods for a small number of participants allows the researcher to approach a person’s everyday practices and performances from different perspectives: survey responses, go-alongs and extended conversations on different occasions (recorded in my field diary), phone calls, letters and emails, and the diary texts. A Table of Project Participants is provided as Appendix G. This sets out the shared activities and diaries received for the 18 participants, grouped according to main diary category (as listed in Table 1).
All diaries were analysed and categorised. However only four diaries were selected for detailed analysis and writing up in the thesis (see Table 2 below). The decision to focus on four diaries was informed by a number of factors:

1. to illustrate each writing genre as a different manipulation of time that provided a different perspective on dwelling with the escarpment. Diary selection was informed by the argument that different writing styles illustrate different aspects of self-world relations, as set out in Table 1.
2. to write personal geographies of the valuing processes of the Illawarra Escarpment that drew on go-alongs and diary entries.
3. to explore the valuing processes of landscape through different forms of mobility. The train driving diary was selected as an example of wheeled mobility as well as an example of engagement with the escarpment as an employee.

Due to the extra research and time involved in researching the literature for the theoretical backgrounds to car driving and cycling it was necessary to limit the types of mobility covered in depth to two. Cycling and car driving diaries therefore, although available and used as part of the research context, were not included for individual mobilities analysis.

### Table 2 – Four diarists selected to represent genre categories received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past tense</th>
<th>Journal-style Discontinuous writing</th>
<th>Amanda 30+ Small stories of everyday life</th>
<th>• The escarpment as home • Routine forest walking for leisure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biographic Continuous writing</td>
<td>Steve 30+ One larger life story</td>
<td>• The escarpment in long perspective • Bushwalking as leisure pursuit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present tense</th>
<th>Being there stories Discontinuous writing</th>
<th>Sean 30+ Working trip log</th>
<th>• Working and travelling on the escarpment • Freight train driving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-the-moment Continuous writing</td>
<td>John 70+ Trip diary - the walk as story</td>
<td>• Routine walking on the escarpment • Patrolling and monitoring the home territory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Using written texts as a research tool
#### 3.3.1 Text as a methodological problem
The limitations of text to fully represent the immediacy, movement and richness of experience must be acknowledged. And yet most kinds of qualitative data are transcribed into text in order to be studied. A real-time performance such as a
conversation or a form of mobility cannot be fully captured in a written account. In the current climate of experimentation with ‘more-than-representational’ research methods in cultural geography (Lorimer 2005), the selection of written communication in the form of solicited diaries as a major source of data for this project requires further clarification and argument. With the advent of Thrift’s ‘non-representational theory’ and the emphasis on performance and mobility, the discipline has been struggling with new research methods that will tap into this ‘performativity of the everyday’. Thrift’s critique (2000:3) is ‘that with the re-emergence of qualitative methods what is surprising is what a ‘narrow range of skills [there] still is, …and the narrow range of sensate life they register’. Crang (2005:232), in responding to Thrift, concludes his review of qualitative methods as follows:

While we have talked around emotion, there has been less work through emotions – at least not that is acknowledged. The body has recently become an important topic of work, but not yet something through which research is often done. ... But I think it does raise issues about the investment in specific notions of what ‘research’ is, what evidence is and how the two relate to each other.

In their introductory paper Thrift and Dewsbury (2000:429) examine the research process itself as a “performance” and conclude by quoting from Pratt’s (2000) paper “Research performances” published in the same special issue of the journal Environment and Planning D:

She urges us ...to question critically whether our current modes of practice amount to more than those of ‘colonising humanists’; and to engage seriously in the task of making visible the conventions of our research practices. In particular she calls attention to the rupture that ‘goes largely un(re)marked’ – ‘the now of the research’ – by speaking out for a retooling of our expectations, as geographers, of how and what we ‘listen’ to in the empirical field.

In championing the extension of what we ‘listen to’ to encompass more than what is spoken and written, Thrift and Dewsbury (ibid.) further conclude:

...we are convinced that the notion of performance is vital in articulating the questions now facing the practice of geography, most especially because it increases our awareness that the ‘sensations, percepts and affects’ we are in the process of apprehending (holding still) are ‘beings whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994:164)’.

A major concern, therefore, with this project’s use of diaries is that the researcher is once again left analysing texts - representations that cannot capture the full reality of practice, action, experience. All research seems inescapably reduced to a text. The question in the title of Crang’s (2005) review of qualitative methods reverberates again: ‘...there is nothing outside the text?’ In reflecting on texts - the inherent difficulty of
studying the performative being that it won’t stand still - we lose the immediacy, the movement and therefore the essence of the experience.

3.3.2 Addressing the problem of accessing the performative

In thinking about how to approach this methodological problem of how actual practice and text relate, I have taken the following statement as a guiding principle in the use of text for this project. Dewsbury, Harrison, Rose and Wylie (2002:438) write:

Non-representational theory takes representation seriously; representation not as a code to be broken or as an illusion to be dispelled rather representations are apprehended as performative in themselves; as doings. The point here is to redirect attention from the posited meaning towards the material compositions and conduct of representations.

Understood in this way, by redirecting attention ‘...towards the material composition and conduct of representations’, the text is the embodiment of a writing practice. Wylie (2007:208-210) in his book Landscape devotes his final section to landscape writing: biography, movement, presence and affect. He quotes Lorimer (2003:203) on the use of representational sources:

The key requirement is a creative engagement with, and imaginative interpretation of, conventional ‘representational’ sources, rather than the identification of a previously ignored or oppositional realm of non-representational practice.

And again on the need to think about reanimating the embodied co-constituted relations between people and their environment:

...searching questions: how best to encounter the textures and cycles of work that leave a landscape replete with meaning? What creative strategies might be employed to reanimate, however temporarily, the embodied relationship between individual subjects and an environment? (Lorimer, 2006 p 504) (my italics)

Likewise, DeLyser (2010:154) writing more recently on the rhythm and mobilities of early women aviators also draws on the Dewsbury et al (2002) paper quoted above to argue for her use of historical narratives. With aims that are similar to those of this project, DeLyser concludes that she has endeavoured to:

focus on the shaping of lives through ‘everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urgencies, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions (Lorimer, 2005:84)’. In particular ... how the rhythms of flying can be seen as ‘architectures of sensation, narrative and embodiment’ (Edensor and Holloway 2008:499)…
As Dewsbury et al (2002:438-439) express it, representations (such as diary text) ‘do not have a message; rather they are transformers, not causes or outcomes of action but actions themselves. Not examples but exemplary’.

Therefore, in accordance with the above arguments, diary texts in this project are being examined as embodied performances, ‘apprehended as performative in themselves; as doings’, and attention is being redirected from ‘the posited meaning towards the material compositions and conduct’ of producing a text (Dewsbury et al (2002438)).

3.3.3 Diary writing as embodied performance

Having established a case for employing written text in an innovative way for investigating the performative, I now turn to presenting diary writing as embodied performance. In this section I argue that diary writing is both an embodied and a reflective act. I consider how it fits into the writing disciplines of history and literature as a form of non-fiction but argue that the boundaries between non-fiction and fiction are blurred. I discuss how texts, like other forms of representation, are regarded – quite rightly so in many contexts – as disembodied artefacts or as ‘works of art’. I then outline how, in contrast to regarding the diary texts traditionally as disembodied, the diaries have been primarily analysed as embodied performances, equally valuable for the writer apart from their value for a reader.

What is a diary? A diary is a history of what happened during that day, week, trip, walk, outing, journey – a mini history – a written record of what the diarist did and how he or she reacted, that is, a story rather than a chronicle because not dispassionate or unemotional (Cronon, 1992:1351). Particular diaries have been regarded as both history and literature. Studying in the related disciplines of history and literature usually results in the realisation that there is much less difference between non-fiction and fiction than one may have originally thought – the boundaries are blurred. Imagination and interpretation play a large part in both. More than facts are needed to write history and fiction is constructed out of facts and histories. Both are built on the experience and imagination of the writers. One uses fictive characters and the other uses ‘real’ characters but the fictive characters are usually based on the ‘real’ and the historical characters are reconstructed by detective work that requires imagination and interpretation. Both accounts are a combination of fact and fiction – one person’s interpretation of the most likely story. As Cronon (1992:1348) comments on two histories of the Great Plains published the same year: ‘Although both narrate the same
broad series of events with an essentially similar cast of characters, they tell two entirely different stories'.

To ask a related but more basic question: what is writing? Writing is an embodied act of eye and hand with the required support of the rest of the body. Writing evolved to help overcome the ‘tyrannies’ of time and place, distance and absence by ‘preserving’ experience, knowledge, ideas and communication to be used in a different place at a later time. Writing is mainly a consciously reflective act. Sometimes writing can seem to flow out automatically like movements for other familiar tasks, or like speech, but it usually takes more thinking about, more care, as one is aware it is longer-lasting evidence of one’s self than speech. More bodily effort and skill is required to make oneself understood, as immediate feedback is not available from one’s audience. A text, like a drawing or painting, when detached from its author becomes an object or artefact. On a daily basis we read texts written by people we do not know and are not likely to meet. We are taught that any piece of writing, and especially a work of art such as a painting or a piece of literary fiction, should stand alone, speak for itself. One usually cannot, and should not need to refer back to the painter or author for essential information. Once finished or published, a text's or a representation’s multiplicity of meanings are set free – there is never only one ‘correct’ meaning or interpretation. Biographical information about an author can be especially misleading when used to help interpret a text because writers are frequently using strategies that distance themselves from the text. For all of the above reasons we tend to think of a text as disembodied.

In contrast to this traditional disembodied way of understanding texts, I have examined the diary texts as embodied. Instead of employing content or discourse analysis, I examine them as performative, as embodiments of a practice – the practice of writing. In other words I examined the materialities and conduct of writing: the ‘who, when, where, how and for whom’ of a text. I have paid attention to as much information as possible that is external to the text itself, especially information gained from activities and conversations with the diarist, and to interpret the diary entries within the broader rhythms and context of the diarist’s life. The materialities of the writing, of course, have also been carefully considered by analysing the text itself, in particular the mechanics or ‘how’ of the writing: the structure of the text as a whole, the style and genre, how writing momentum is generated, the sources of emotional leverage and the strategies used to overcome writing problems. The ‘how’ of the writing also includes the content and meanings that encompass many elements of language. Written language is more
than words: it also comprises structure, grammar, punctuation, movement (pace, rhythm and tempo), tense, person, texture, tone and imagery. Susan Smith, in the Limb and Dwyer (2001:34-36) text on qualitative methodologies, rightly draws attention to the differences between speech and writing, as follows:

In-depth interviews, for example, become valuable not for the text into which they are transcribed, but for the conversation as it takes place. Talk is different from text; that a story constructed through conversation is different from a story in a book; that what we can know when people talk to one another disappears when that talk is transcribed. Bakhtin recognized this in distinguishing ‘sentences’ from ‘utterances’; the former can be repeated, reproduced and analysed with reference to logic and grammar; the utterance is a practice, knowable only as it is said in one context or another. Speech is a practice that demands attention not just to what is said, but also to how it is told.

Of course, speech is a practice and written sentences are very different from ‘utterances’. Yet, I emphasise that writing is also a practice. What Smith is arguing for speech – that it demands ‘attention not just to what is said, but also how it is told’ - also holds true for writing. As well as words, writing includes many other elements such as rhythms and imagery, strategies and effects that are different from those of speech but nevertheless are employed to help compensate for the lack of expressiveness in sound, tone, movement, gesture and facial expression that are intrinsic components of speech. This is an argument for paying attention not only to word meanings but also to ‘how’ the story is being told, that is, to the many aspects of written language beside words that communicate the overall emotions, affect and meanings.

There are three layers or stages of producing and activating a text: the original experience or performance; the writing performance; and the individual reading (Berleant, 1992:34). Of course, one of the primary ‘readers’ of a diary text is the writer, who is able to revisit experiences and ideas that may have been lost or temporarily forgotten in the ‘hurley-burley’ of living. This may trigger other thoughts, reflections, memories, realisations, and result in more writing. The reflection and ordering of the writing process itself tends to clarify thought and lead to further connections and realisations. However, there are inevitable disjunctures or failures to coincide between the experience and the performance. There are further disjunctures between the writing and different readings. Readers are not just passive consumers of a text: they contribute to its production by what they bring to the reading of a text and how they inhabit it (de Certeau in Gardiner, 2000:175).

Depending on their level of skill and experience of writing, writers are aware, sometimes consciously or at a more unconscious level, of the inherent difficulties of
writing. Attempts are usually made to narrow the gap between an experience and its representation. One common way is to manipulate the use of tense in grammar. When talking or writing about action people tend to use the present or present continuous tense even though they are always speaking or writing after the event. This achieves a sense of immediacy or the idea of forward movement, or of denoting their presence in the action, of 'being there'. Present tense is also used for on-going, habitual practices that currently happen regularly. This is a collapsed portrayal of many similar occasions. When accounts written after the event are written in the present tense as if they were just happening, imagination and artifice are required. A small number of present tense accounts in diaries written during the activity were received for the project. Although the action has only just taken place, it is still after the event. In order to write about the action in the present tense, the writer needs to re-image the action in his/her mind. The more usual way of writing a diary is to complete the activity, or the day's activities, and then write about it afterwards usually at home, writing in the past tense. Most of the diaries written for this project were of this type.

3.3.4 Towards a performative approach to diary analysis

Following the argument outlined above, moving towards a performative approach to diary analysis required careful consideration of the ‘who, when, where and how’ of the text. To clarify this process, Table 3 provides more detail.

Table 3: Guidelines employed for a performative approach to textual analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For whom</th>
<th>The diarist’s perception of the audience and the purpose of the diary.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>The diarist (age, gender, occupation, address, ethnicity, length of time of residency, regular modes of mobility, interests) and their social context, including such things as current preoccupations and stage of life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| When and where | 1. Time of writing (day, month, year) and the time in relation to the events being written about: whether during or after.  
2. The place of writing: at the scene; at home, at work, in a waiting room or wherever. The time and place of writing both affect the perspective of the writer.  
3. The time and place of writing in the broader context of the events and rhythms of the diarist's life as such factors as familiarity and difference affect perspective and perception. |
| How      | 1. Materials used: handwritten in notebook supplied using a biro or pencil, unedited or edited; using a keyboard/computer/email and edited.  
2. The genre chosen, writing strategy, organising structure, style, grammar, tone, rhythms, imagery; orientation and focus.  
3. The writing momentum: propelling energy, impetus, motivation, emotional leverage; the writing problems encountered and the solutions found; the path taken step by step, changes in direction, the development of the writing as it unfolds over time. |
Although I was very interested in what the diarist was saying – the meanings, opinions, preferences and reflections – my overall approach was to pay particular attention to what the diary revealed about the routines, rituals, rhythms, refrains and mobilities of the diarist’s everyday life. In other words, by concentrating on what the diaries revealed about what the escarpment was for, it became possible to identify some of the valuing and meaning-making processes that flow from these practices. What a diarist is saying is not being ignored – it is frequently used to illustrate points – but it is considered as part of the overall embodied writing performance.

3.3.5 Method of diary analysis applied
Analysis was conducted in the context of my participant experience with the diarist and other information recorded in my field-diary. The main directions of the analysis were as follows:

1. The overall structure of the diary and how the text developed and changed. Any abrupt changes or discrepancies usually revealed writing problems and showed how they were overcome by a change in writing strategy, or a change in content or writing genre.
2. How writing momentum was generated and sustained through interest or emotion and what kinds of leverage were required to make the particular kind of writing ‘work’.
3. What particular qualities the writing had and why and how these were produced.
4. A close examination of the writing genre chosen and what kinds of experience it facilitated or rendered invisible.
5. What type of self-world relations were most strongly illustrated by the diary.
6. What repetitions, rhythms and tensions the diary revealed and how these were embedded in the broader context of the diarist’s everyday life.
7. What valuing processes the diary revealed through the creative tensions of self-word relations.

The actual method of proceeding with this kind of analysis was far more like a circular prowling around these writing features and aspects of analysis than linear progress. In the case of each of the four empirical chapters, there was an individual, jerky and messy coming together of data from various sources: the embodied activities and conversations, the diary text, information from the participant and other sources, and insights from the geographic and other literature. As the thesis writing progressed
performative insights into writing operations not only came from the diarists’ writings but from the difficulties and experiences of my own writing performance in endeavouring to write this thesis. I reflect on the writing of this thesis as a performance in Chapter 8, Section 8.2.3.

Throughout the data collection and analysis I have sought to maintain as far as possible my own embodied engagement through shared activities and face-to-face conversations with the participants, and through memories of my own past embodied experience when relevant. As part of this performance of ‘the now of the research’ (Pratt 2000), I have endeavoured to allow the conceptual and methodological aspects of the analysis of the empirical data to unfold together rather than imposing ideas and methods. I have tried to follow a performative way of ‘carrying yourself into the craft of study: where the shape of a topic cannot be said to exist, but rather to occur in the act’ (Lorimer in Merriman et al, 2008:196). During the course of the research the questions being asked and the type of data collected prompted a different approach to the textual analysis. I have gained many insights from the geographical and other literature but endeavoured not to be constrained by them, but to follow Thrift’s (2004:83) notion of theory as ‘a modest supplement to practice, … a useful toolkit, a means of amplification, but never a panacea’.

The kind of writing analysis employed, although considering the small detail of the ‘how’ of the writing in terms of language, grammar, tone, imagery, tense, rhythm etc., was primarily focussed on wholeness rather than fragmentation. Writing results chapters on a diarist’s self-world relations required interpreting all of the available data rather than extracting evidence on particular aspects or themes. The integrity of the text was maintained by accounting for the whole of the content in the analysis. In practice this meant analysing the diary text in the broader context of the rituals and rhythms of the diarist’s everyday life by drawing upon my field diary notes from participant observation, go-alongs and follow-up conversations.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has charted the project methodology. A central feature of the methodology is its responsive, experimental and innovative attributes. The methodology was responsive to the debates around the landscape concept and non-representational theory and the unexpected range of writing genres represented in the solicited diaries received. I have argued (following Dewsbury et al, 2002) for
conceptualising writing not just as a disembodied text but as an embodied performance. I have advocated taking an embodied approach to textual analysis by directing attention to the ‘when, where and how’ of the writing rather than only to the posited meaning. I have argued for the relevance of written text in the form of solicited diaries as a performative research tool for investigating what a particular physical feature, like the Illawarra Escarpment, is used for in everyday life. I have argued that writing is not only useful for what it tells about a personal landscape (and everyone’s stories will be different) but even more useful for what it demonstrates about performative landscape processes and self-world relations. The methodology was innovative in developing an analytical approach that was alert to how different writing genres revealed particular self-world engagement. This finding has highlighted how overlooked writing genre and style of text has been in the geographical research advocating the use of diaries. How a diary is written has important implications for what insights are provided into the tensions of self and world.

The analysis is experimental in that I have sought to maintain the integrity and wholeness of the data gathered on an individual participant rather than breaking up this data and arranging it according to themes and arguments. For each participant this required interpreting participant observation field notes, conversations and diary texts as a whole entity rather than fragmenting this data as evidence. The type of analysis required was one that unpacks the details of the circuitry of individual performing and valuing to reveal insights into the self-world tensions. This ethos has informed the presentation of results that aligns Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 with individual participants/diarists.
Reflecting on home
Photos by project participants

At home in the rainforest...
18 Sept 2007
We live in Strathalpine Thirroul. It’s almost one of the highest places in Thirroul. The Escarpment is at the end of our street, to the north, and also to our west behind the houses. I feel like we live in the rainforest and we have lots of large trees around our house. We look south east, over through some large gum trees on our property, across Leishman Park which has some fantastic trees, over Thirroul to the sea. The sea and sky provide a lovely blue backdrop for the green.
4.1 Introduction

The epigraph quoted from Tim Ingold’s *Lines: a brief history* is a reminder that writing is an embodied practice, and an acknowledgement of the ‘improvisatory effort’ involved. The most numerous type of solicited diary received for this project was the conventional journal-style narrative about the events of the day, or week, and their associated memories, a series of small stories or anecdotes written after the event. This first empirical chapter is based on one journal-style diary written for the project by a young woman, Amanda. She wrote dated entries about living and walking on the Illawarra Escarpment. Amanda’s diary is illustrative of how the escarpment is valued as simultaneously home and elsewhere. To gain insights into this valuing process I focus on (1) what the participant does - her routine practices of everyday engagement with the escarpment - ascertained from participant observation, conversations and her diary, and (2) on her diary writing itself as an embodied practice by particularly considering how the text was written.

The discussion is structured in four parts. Firstly, I examine how writing momentum is generated through a series of small stories about home and elsewhere. Secondly, I consider the genre: what is required to make this type of writing ‘work’, as well as its limitations. Thirdly, I draw on Tim Edensor’s recent book *Geographies of Rhythm* (2010) to help illuminate how Amanda values the escarpment through different rhythms and forms of mobility evident in her diary, and from participant observation. Edensor (p 2) quotes Lefebvre (1996:230) who asserts ‘rhythm must be understood as ‘an aspect of movement and a becoming’. Fourthly I identify the generic valuing and meaning-making processes demonstrated in the diary which itself constitutes an expression of everyday reflective valuing processes.
4.2 Amanda and her journal

Amanda is a woman in her thirties, a town planner by occupation, who had recently resigned from her work to look after her first child. Her son, Gabriel, had his first birthday during the diary-writing period. Amanda and her husband had settled in the Illawarra two years before and bought a modest 1970s house situated in a street high on the escarpment in Thirroul. Establishing a home and family is currently what Amanda is very much involved in doing, having taken a break from her career. Her diary is valuable for this project because it provides a small slice of everyday life living on the escarpment - an impressionistic account of her everyday occupations and rhythms including walking. The diary, hand written over a period of a month, consists of 14 dated entries that transposed to six pages of typescript (see Text Box 1 below for an extract from the diary and Appendix C for the full text). Amanda was invited to be a diarist for this project for three reasons: (1) as a stay-at-home mother of a young child; (2) because of the expressive way that she wrote in her escarpment survey response; (3) because she routinely walks escarpment tracks, and 50% of survey respondents reported engaging with the escarpment through walking. Amongst participants, her diary is the most fully-developed example of a journal-style diary received. The diary was supplemented by two participant observation sessions: a walk in the escarpment forest with Amanda (with Gabriel in the backpack) along one of her regular routes, and a visit to her home. In addition the diary was studied in the context of the twelve other diaries received and in particular as one of the seven using past tense journal-style entries.

Walking the forest tracks is a routine and evidently important part of Amanda’s everyday life. Amanda informed me that she and her family try to walk through the forest at least three or four days per week in the late afternoon. Usually, Amanda’s husband carries the baby in a backpack while she handles the two border collie dogs. During the month the diary was written only eight walks were managed due to more rain than usual and consequently too many leeches. Amanda writes ‘I hate leeches and they cause problems for the dogs’. As there is no usable track into the forest at the end of their street, they normally drive two or three streets to a vacant block of land that provides informal access to a range of forest tracks and ways through. They have two or three alternative routes that they use to vary their regular walks. In reply to my question Amanda told me that their main reason for walking was for pleasure – she said that she enjoyed the ‘exercise, the vegetation, the coolness, fresh air and bird calls’. She said that they were in the habit of walking before they had the dogs but the
need to exercise the dogs helped to keep them walking when they are busy. She also articulated how regularly walking through the forest is an important part of her son’s experiences. Amanda wrote: “he sees trees and birds and takes in the calmness of his surrounds. It will also be part of what he considers home”. The walks have the additional attraction of being a time that all three of them, plus dogs, regularly spend together. She reported that they rarely meet anyone else on their walks, just occasionally a trail or mountain bike rider.

4.2.1 The ‘how’ and ‘when’ of the writing
Amanda chose to write her diary at home, by hand, in the small notebook provided, which she returned unedited at the conclusion of a month’s entries. Her diary is entirely made up of dated entries talking about herself and her everyday world, a discontinuous narrative or series of small stories - reflections on events in retrospect. The fourteen entries contain a total of 22 discrete small stories or anecdotes. Some are brief paragraphs and some are more substantial whole entries about a range of events in her daily life. At the time she wrote, the escarpment was the place where she lived, worked, walked and played, interspersed with the special events of trips, visitors and holidays away.

Amanda’s diary can be described as a reflective dialogue - the on-going dialogue we have with ourselves or with a listener or imagined reader - between ourselves and our memories of people and places, of where we are now and where we were. Reflective dialogues are defined as dialogues with the virtual landscapes of memory (Grosz, 2005). (The theoretical underpinnings for conceptualising perception and memory used in this thesis are discussed in Chapter 2.)

Amanda’s reflective dialogue necessarily manipulates time in the relating of stories by telescoping or compressing time in order to summarise, shorten, select, to make what she regards as the ‘best’ track - the most relevant and interesting - through the chaotic real-time unfolding of everyday events. But her reflective mode of writing with its storying manipulation of time is punctuated and qualified by descriptions of especially remembered, sensuous moments: still windows on past moments-in-time rather than the unfolding of narrative events. I quote an example of one of these moments, from the six that occur in the text:

I was lying on the grass, soaking up the sun and looking back to the escarpment. It was a very warm moment, partly from the sun, but also a feeling of contentment, being enclosed to the west by the escarpment. It felt reassuring, or something. Maybe like a gateway.
Two descriptions of recurring moments also occur, for example

I’ve also heard an owl several nights running. I love the soft “hoot hoot” as a background noise at night time. It’s often been a comforting noise I have heard returning to bed after Gabriel’s late night/early morning wake-ups.

These moments were made memorable by the emotions they evoked – in these two cases, subtle, difficult-to-articulate emotions often linked to home, comfort and contentment.

4.2.2 Writing momentum

Amanda’s diary illustrates that writing about the ordinary, familiar everyday events of one’s life is often not easy. Generating sufficient writing momentum may be a problem. Remembering the familiar afterwards may also be difficult with other pressing matters. As Amanda herself comes to realise, everyday events become so ‘normal’ that you often fail to notice and remember what you see because it no longer ‘stands out’ of the ordinary. Amanda also seemed to share the common feeling amongst participants generally that what you do manage to notice and remember is all too ordinary and mundane, just not interesting enough to justify the effort of writing, especially for someone else to read. Nevertheless, Amanda’s diary unfolded in a particular direction and momentum was generated.

Interpreting the diary as a whole, its structure, content and direction, the most noticeable feature is the abrupt disjuncture between the first two entries and the rest of the diary. These first entries (that transposed into a 1/2 page of typescript each) are identically structured. They both give accounts of Amanda’s routine escarpment walks on each of two consecutive days. They treat the walk as a single event and are descriptions rather than stories. They have no overall progression (such as a story would provide), nor chronological sequence to provide momentum. However, there are two or three mini-stories embedded within the accounts - on leeches, on the easing of a toothache and on inspiring views - that help the writing leverage. Although the two accounts are lively and enthusiastic, their similar format make them appear as if written to a formula. Both include a ‘dot-point’ list of what was encountered and both record the predominant sense exercised that day: sound in the first walk – birdcalls and noisy trail bike; sight in the second due to the particular quality of the light. The writing is rather ‘stiff’ compared to the much easier flow of the rest of the diary. Although the diary-writing guidelines provided for the project and supplied to Amanda (see Appendix 5) were broad and did not especially emphasise escarpment walking, the writing
‘formula’ used for these two entries can be seen to have originated in the guidelines and, understandably, to have provided the starting point for the diary.

Text Box 1
Extract from typescript of Amanda’s diary – second and third entry

16 September
What a treat! A walk in the rainforest two days in a row. We walked from Sylvan Way along a number of single tracks. Then turned uphill to our power line lookout.
We encountered:
  - no other humans – yippee!
  - lots of bird calls
  - some rustling in the bushes as the forest critters scurried away.
Sight was a noticeable sense this time, as the light was highlighting tree trunks and plants we don’t normally notice.
As I was about to start on our slow hill climb up to the power line lookout, I looked up to the top of the escarpment. The topography, rock formations, cliffs and vegetation all combine to create a totally unique and inspiring view. I feel very lucky to be able to live so close to this view. I also looked along the track we were going to walk up and saw from a distance the stand of tree ferns we often admire when we walk past. From further away they made a wavy blanket of soft fern leaves and look stunning, all stepping down the steep hillside.
We got back to the car with two leeches on one dog, but just in her fur. It was a great walk.

At home in the rainforest…
18 September
We live in Armagh Parade, Thirroul. It’s almost one of the highest places in Thirroul. The escarpment is at the end of our street, to the north and also to our west behind the houses. I feel like we live in the rainforest and we have lots of large trees around our house. We look southeast, through some large gum trees on our property, across Leishman Park which has some fantastic trees, over Thirroul to the sea. The sea and sky provide a lovely blue backdrop for the green canopy. It’s not how most people see our view. They think the trees block our view of the water but I don’t agree. I think the trees are the view.

I am struggling through 10 tonnes of paperwork and bureaucratic regulation trying to get the deck extended. I have been noticing the fine line between wanting to keep the “green” feeling of the area by retaining the trees and vegetation, and the planning convenience of getting trees cut down before starting even such a small project. Council would like any building work to be 8m from our tree. The tree is currently 5m from our house, so it just won’t work! And then there’s the bushfire regulations. I’m sure they won’t like development closer to the tree.

As a planner, it’s interesting being on the other side of the counter. But only for a short time, as I lose interest, snowed under by that 10 tonnes of paperwork. Just to extend our deck 3 m, we have to get plans drawn up, a bushfire report, an arborist report and an engineer’s geotechnical report. Phew, the cost of all these experts will almost be the same as the builder’s quote to do the job.

Anyway, this exercise has had me thinking over how best to retain the greenness of our area without getting carried away. I don’t think we have the best system in place yet as I think the regulations are too onerous on small jobs like this, but let illegal land clearing go unprosecuted. If they are going to be so stringent on the requirements to extend a deck 3m, then why not devote the same rigour and energy to those who break the rules.
Here, at the beginning of the third entry, the writing strategy and range of topic abruptly changed and set the pattern for the rest of the diary. Although it is impossible to know what was in Amanda’s mind when she picked up her pen to write the third entry, she was aware enough of making a change, a broadening out, to have re-commenced with a sub-title: ‘At home in the rainforest...’. It is as though she had felt a little dissatisfied or impatient. Amanda also seemed to have realised that her interactions with the escarpment are embedded in the whole of her daily life, implicated in almost everything she thinks and does as the escarpment is her home. After this change the writing flowed more easily as if she has realised that she can relax and write as whatever is happening in her life is connected to the escarpment. (Refer to Text Box 1 above for the relevant section of Amanda’s diary). The main focus of the diary then became the escarpment as home. She continued to give accounts of her routine walks as a home-making practice (there are six further brief accounts of walks) as they occur amongst her other daily home-making activities, but not as a major focus. There were no further descriptions of walks as attempted in the first two entries. She says: ‘I feel like we live in the rainforest...’. She seems to be saying: the escarpment is not just a place where I go – it is the place where I live.

As Amanda sat in her house (probably when son Gabriel was asleep or playing) she propelled her biro hurriedly along the lines of the notebook. For the person reading the diary to understand her meanings she had to use grammar, clear spelling as well as form each letter and word carefully. She was not writing notes just for herself and there was no first draft. She is directly communicating her actions, feelings and thoughts to others for the project. After the initial momentum of feeling enthusiastic about the escarpment and wishing to fulfil her commitment to write a diary for the project, her pen was then powered forward, gained momentum each day, by affects and emotion, either still current or strongly remembered. Faced with the writing task and the blank lined page each entry, as Ingold (2007:146) reminds us, was ‘a deeply sensual, embodied and improvisatory effort’. Involving sheer physical effort, the inscribed lines themselves are expressive for the reader ‘quite apart from the words written in them’. Amanda’s diary demonstrates the Dewsbury et al (2002:438) injunction that representations ‘are apprehended as performative in themselves, as doings’ rather than as just another text.

Having decided to broaden out the scope of her subject matter by writing about home, Amanda plunged straight into her first substantial story – a very noticeable ‘change of
gear’ to her previous entries. This story is about personal conflict concerning a tree, an example of a domestic situation caused by ‘10 tonnes of paperwork and bureaucratic regulation trying to get the deck extended’. Her time-consuming investigations for a planned home improvement brought her into direct conflict with retaining ‘the greenness of our area’ but also complying with the building regulations. Their house is small and the back balcony is narrow. She and her husband planned to extend the balcony 3 metres to convert it into more living space in the form of an external deck. Unfortunately, to meet council building requirements and bushfire regulations a large eucalypt tree would have to be removed or the deck would be less than 8 metres from the nearest tree, the minimum distance allowed. Amanda comments in frustration:

…it just won’t work! …I think the regulations are too onerous on small jobs like this, but let illegal land clearing go unprosecuted. If they are going to be so stringent on the requirements to extend a deck 3m, then why not devote the same rigour and energy to those who break the rules.

Referring to her former occupation, she commented: ‘As a planner, it’s interesting being on the other side of the counter’. Amanda is dismayed to find that a deck extension to allow some outdoor living space for her family will mean the destruction of a valued tree that she enjoys from her back windows. Here the emotions associated with conflict, a sense of frustration, and unfairness caused by what she perceives as unreasonable and unequally-policed rules, aided the writing momentum provided by the movement of the story: the sequence of events and the drama of investigation, discovery, conflict and dilemma.

More often Amanda’s writing momentum was generated by the happier emotions associated with stories about outings, holidays, experiences of unfamiliar places as well as homecomings, that is, by events that were the least everyday: what stood out in relief from her everyday routine. Drawing comparisons between unfamiliar and familiar landscapes provided most of the writing leverage. More than half of her 22 stories are comparative. Her stories usually describe an event or landscape, draw comparisons, tell how she feels or what she thinks. These are emotions, ideas and stories that run through her mind when she reflects on the events of the day or the week - what she remembers because it ‘stands out’. From these reflections she chooses the stories to write about.

4.2.3 Limitations of the writing genre used

It is clear from her diary that her family’s escarpment walks are regarded as a very enjoyable and important part of their lives. However, Amanda does not describe the
actual sensual and physical engagement of walking. Her writing on walking experiences is mostly brief in comparison to other subjects on which she writes. How she feels about the rainforest is perhaps beyond words. Her descriptive, narrative writing does not match her assertions about how ‘great it is to be back’ in the rainforest after a break. The amount and expressiveness of her writing on this subject does not reflect the evident importance of the escarpment walking in her life, as both part of home and as contrast and relief from the constant responsibilities of the domestic realm.

Looking more closely at the anomaly of this gap between action and sensation on the one hand and narrative description on the other - the inarticulate aspect of Amanda’s otherwise articulate writing - two points can be made, one concerning the attributes of the walking experience itself, and the other concerning the writing style.

Firstly, the practice of forest walking is something active and immediate that Amanda experiences through the action of her walking, sensing body; the negotiation of the rough and sometimes steep rocky track and the stimulation of the senses. She is both ‘going out’ of the house and ‘being taken out of herself’. Forest walking is ‘time out’ that is physically and sensuously enjoyable - a welcome contrast to her other domestic routines and responsibilities. Forest walking involves embodied knowledge or sensuousness that may neither be necessarily conscious or verbalised (Taussig, 1992:141). Therefore the walks are difficult to express formally in writing. Amanda’s regular walking is ‘written’ into her body through repetitions of movement, rhythm and her senses. Her walks do not need to be written on paper. The effort of writing is contrary to the spirit and benefits gained by the absorbing immediacy of the activity itself.

The second point refers to the writing practice: the means of expression Amanda used for her diary, the style or mode being past tense narrative in a series of small stories. Although an appropriate and effective way of writing that enables reflection on the events of her everyday life, the description of continuous walking action through an unregulated, even chaotic, richly sensuous environment is at odds with the straightforward, narrative, discontinuous “telling about” of the story mode. Further, the first two diary entries, written exclusively on walking, are remembered afterwards at home and treated as whole single events. This is an awkward and ill-fitting structural framework for describing an experience of traversing terrain on foot: a continuous sequence of
very small events and a kaleidoscope of ‘multi-sensual effects’ – the kind of walking in rough terrain well described by Edensor (2008:132-3).

Past tense narrative, on the other hand, the ‘series of small stories’ mode demands that something be at least slightly in relief, ‘standing out’ as unforeseen or different against the everyday routine rhythms in order to act as leverage, a ‘pushing-off’ or launching point. Amanda’s diary entries nearly all start with a highlight, something out of the normal routine - events that are the least ‘everyday’ such as holidays, trips away and visitors. Although the writing form enables (or even demands) descriptions of events, stories and thoughtful reflections, it limits the expression of other aspects of experience involving action and sensation (the sensuous): what we know with our bodies and senses without having to necessarily reflect on it or verbalise it. These kinds of narrative accounts present ‘a curiously disembodied view of what is an intensely somatic experience’ (Edensor, 2008:130). Or, as Ingold (2004:322) puts it: embodied experience is ‘pushed into the wings (De Certeau, 1984:121)’ in order to make way for a more detached and speculative contemplation’.

Perhaps it is no surprise then that Amanda’s other everyday walking experiences, those in her house, yard and suburban streets, are not much written about either. These are ‘the comings and goings of camp life …a constantly iterated process of walking here, there and everywhere’ in the words of Lye, Tuck-Po (2008:24) speaking of her fieldwork with the Batek of Malaysia. These words could equally be applied as a description of any carer’s movements in a suburban household, for example, between kitchen, laundry and washing line. As Ingold & Vergunst (2008:2) remind us: ‘Walking is not just what a body does; it is what a body is’. Like the forest walking action, the domestic action is also ‘understood’ and only alluded to when escaping from it to take a welcome break by taking ‘a walk’ in the forest. In contrast, Amanda’s writing strategy on her experience of the escarpment as home was to mostly use contrasts and comparisons with other landscapes. Crucially, her writing strategies are in the realm of reflection, thought and contemplation rather than movement and action.

In summary, Amanda’s diary must be read in the light of both the kind of experience that forest walking is – its kinaesthetic, tactile and multi-sensual effects - and the requirements and limitations of the structure of the chosen style of writing that requires reflections on events and experiences. Retrospective journal-style entries engender stories rather than the direct reflection of movement, embodied action and sensation.
4.3 Valuing processes

4.3.1 The rhythms of everyday life

In trying to understand the forest walking routine in the broader social context of Amanda’s everyday life I found Tim Edensor’s work on rhythm and space illuminating. The rhythms of the roles and occupations of a mother and home duties person that Amanda is currently engaged in provide a ‘backdrop to life against which the usual and the unusual unfold’ Edensor (2010:14). For Amanda there is the ‘backdrop’ of the invariant, though slowly changing, bodily rhythms of, and caring routines for her baby: his meals, sleeps, plays, baths. Also the routine maintenance chores of looking after her household and family: the cleaning, washing, shopping and cooking that provide a stable, organised environment. The actual physical work of caring for house and family is not mentioned by Amanda in her diary, except when commenting on taking a break from domestic labour: “It was lovely to leave the clearing up [after visitors for Gabriel’s first birthday lunch] and house activity and go for a walk”. Woven in with these almost ‘invisible’ background rhythms are myriad other rhythms. A noticeable one is the less frequent rhythm of holidays, time off, trips away – referred to by Edensor (2010:16) as the rhythms of carnival and festival when everyday rhythms are suspended. These are the special events that are out of the ordinary: public holidays and weekends away, overseas annual holiday, special treats and visitors. Special events feature strongly in Amanda’s diary. The events that Amanda writes about are, first, those that are sensed as least everyday, and, second, those that ‘stand out’ in relief against the rhythmic daily routines (as the escarpment itself is ‘in relief’ in the wider Illawarra landscape).

What Amanda’s diary is mainly about is what she senses as different through, particularly, sight, sound and touch. Just as repeated actions and experiences become embodied and automatic at a level below consciousness, we also become conscious of differences automatically without any conscious intention or special watchfulness. Our resonance to landscape (Ingold, 2000:200) is a kind of automatic monitoring, an awareness that especially in familiar situations is below consciousness. Much incoming data forms a background of normality and specific objects and sensations are not brought to the forefront of consciousness unless sufficiently different. Without this automatic monitoring and screening mechanism we would be impossibly bombarded by stimuli, the ‘excess of the world’ (Rose 2002) and be unable to operate efficiently. Like the framework provided by rhythmic routines that become habituated, automatic monitoring is another way to ‘economise on life’ (Edensor, 2010:14).

What do Amanda’s stories reveal about the processes of valuing? Two main self-world mechanisms are demonstrated by Amanda’s participation in this project: (1) the tension
between home and elsewhere in the alternating bodily rhythms of dwelling, and (2) the processes of ‘reflecting on’ and storying that mainly comprise her writing genre.

4.3.2 The tension between home and elsewhere
Firstly, as the main focus of her diary shows, Amanda’s central value for the escarpment is as a family home. Amanda’s house is tucked in against the main, thickly forested escarpment to the west and an encircling forested ridge to the north. Her house is located on a sheltered, level, suburban cul-de-sac along a high escarpment ‘bench’ not far from a shopping centre providing the usual services. This leafy, sheltered position is facilitated by the topographical, biological and climatic attributes brought by the escarpment, such as rainfall, fresh air, coolness, as well as Amanda’s preferences for greenness, aesthetically pleasing views of trees with their accompanying birdlife. The steepness of the roads climbing up the escarpment from the main road and shops is made workable by bitumen, modern drainage and ownership of a vehicle. In Amanda’s estimation environmental benefits and suburban comfort and convenience have come together. In her diary Amanda constantly returns to the theme of home as the diary progresses. It is clear from talking to Amanda that not only the house itself was carefully chosen but also the sheltered niche on the tree-covered escarpment. She also writes often of where she lives, its cosiness, coolness, being amongst trees, and being sheltered to the west. She is very conscious of the escarpment’s presence providing a favourable location. This is particularly evident in the passages she writes on homecomings. For example:

The trip home was quite long and it is always such a relief to turn onto Bulli Pass and see Wollongong spread out below. We check the surf at Sandon Point first, then open our windows to get some sea air into the car. I love that the escarpment provides such a distinct homecoming. It really provides a dramatic break from the climate, roads and landscape up the top, to the sea air made cooler by the rainforest, and the narrow, winding roads. And while it’s not as expansive or large as the Blue Mountains, it is still an impressive geographic feature that gives a distinct identity to the region and towns.

Amanda has a liking for trees, for living close to trees and enjoying views of trees and the variety of birdlife they bring. Her diary frequently mentions the birds visiting her house and backyard and the sounds of their calls. Amanda’s experience of the escarpment is multi-faceted and all-encompassing. She feels as if she lives in one of its micro-climates. She experiences the escarpment against the sky from her house windows, backyard, from the surrounding suburbs, at closer range when she goes walking regularly in the rainforest and at a distance when she goes to the beach. More
subtly the escarpment gives a feeling of protection and security. As she says, the escarpment brings ‘a feeling of contentment, being enclosed to the west…’.

Secondly, a significant rhythm in Amanda’s daily life is that of the family walks in the escarpment rainforest. Amanda values the close, accessible presence of the escarpment forest landscape: the unpaved and the uncultivated, a varied topography of steep slopes, benches, rocks, scree and cliffs, and thick vegetation. A track is required for access and to make reasonable progress through the forest. This suggests that this landscape while used by humans is mostly the domain of non-humans. This landscape is the antithesis of regulated domestic and suburban space. In Australia this terrain is colloquially referred to as ‘the bush’: land covered with predominantly native vegetation, not cleared for pasture or agriculture (although parts of the escarpment were farmed in earlier times). It is what most people may refer to as ‘nature’, ‘wilderness’ or ‘the wild’. However, Amanda does not use any of these terms. She mostly refers to ‘rainforest’. At times Amanda seems to use the terms ‘escarpment’ and ‘rainforest’ interchangeably but mainly she uses ‘rainforest’ for the landscapes with which she is the most familiar through everyday encounters and interactions, and ‘escarpment’ to describe the whole landform against sky.

Amanda writes about the rocks, cliffs and vegetation combining to create a ‘unique and inspiring view’, the trees, the ferns, tree ferns and spring flowers, and the chance to see birds and hear their calls. She refers to the walks as ‘a treat’ and when prevented from going because of rain she says: ‘But that’s okay, we’ll appreciate it all the more once it’s dry enough to return’. After another wet spell she says:

It felt great to be back in the forest after we had left it to the leeches for a while. I was suffering from a toothache and being in the forest eased the pain, partly because it’s a calming place to be, and also because there are other things to notice, think about, smell and see.

She obviously appreciates what she experiences as the calmness of the forest, the distraction and the stimulation, both mental and sensual. In Amanda’s words there is a sense of being ‘taken out of yourself’, of relief from everyday routine responsibilities.

The repetitive but irregular routine of these walks form a kind of counterpoint to other routine rhythms, their irregularity being due to the counter rhythms (Edensor, 2010:2) of the escarpment forest itself, in particular its weather and the life cycles of leeches. These walks are an ‘extra’, say, in comparison to preparing meals. They are dispensable but not dispensed with. There are other ways of getting fresh air and
exercise and exercising dogs – places without leeches - but Amanda chooses to walk in the rainforest. Although she makes it clear that the walks are an aesthetic experience, calming and enjoyable, she does not reflect on them in her writing as she does on other aspects of her life. In conversation, though, when I visited her home, she had more to say in answer to my question: ‘How would you feel, apart from lacking exercise, if unable to do your routine forest walking?’ I quote my record of her reply directly from my field diary.

She said that she would miss the serenity, the movement of the trees, the immediacy, connecting with what is real, tuning into what is happening in the non-human world. She finds it calming, reassuring. She likes the knowledge that it all happens whether she is there or not. She explained: “It is not dependent on you. On the beach the waves happen whether I am there or not. Also if you walk an area often you feel as if you ‘own’ it, you notice changes. But you don’t have to maintain it or be responsible for it – it all happens without you”.

Understood in the context of her other domestic routines (recently greatly changed from those of a fixed routine of leaving home for the office everyday) and in the light of the above conversation, it is evident that this counter rhythm of walks in the rainforest is a valued contact with the world outside her house and backyard. For Amanda, rainforest walks are a welcome respite from the responsibilities of the domestic round. In her words the walks are a ‘treat’. She can engage in the expression of other less exercised bodily skills and sensuous capacities as well as youthful propensities for exploration of the world, enjoyment, carefreeness and playfulness. In the limited context of Amanda’s escarpment walks, the escarpment is unbounded space in which she is free to explore, improvise a different route, go a little further depending on the time available and Gabriel’s comfort and happiness. As Lorimer and Lund (2008:194-195) argue:

There is a distant horizon-hovering openness – a less locatable elsewhere…that enables people to raise to consciousness an aspirant version of their self. …Most obviously, mountain landscapes are therapeutic, places where people go to put their self more in tune with what are commonly perceived as the timeless rhythms, elements, volumes and surfaces of wild, romantic nature. …Counter-intuitively, belonging and security can be qualities found in places that are elsewhere.

And, tellingly, they go on to point out that ‘elsewhere can simply mean landscapes that are not workaday’ (p 195). This seems to best encapsulate the role of the escarpment forest as Amanda’s most readily available ‘elsewhere’. There is a sense in which Amanda finds calming and reassuring the different, alternative non-human rhythms of the escarpment forest that she is not responsible for maintaining. The escarpment rainforest as ‘elsewhere’ help sustain her in the effort of making a home and looking after a family. The forest walking routine is also a continuity that links to her identity as
a person before her new role as wife, mother and carer, house owner and owner of dogs. (Her diary has three references to walking at earlier times in her life). It is a routine that helps to sustain her identity especially now that she is not currently involved in that other aspect of her identity, her career, with its connections with landscapes and people outside her home. The escarpment provides a whole fascinating life-world that, as she says, does not depend on her for its maintenance – a free gift of movement, sensation and difference. The attraction of forest walking for Amanda from both her comments in conversation and her diary, seems to lie in its different, contrasting or complementary rhythmic qualities to those of living in a suburban house where Amanda is largely responsible for its maintenance. By contrast the escarpment forest is a richly varied environment, with agency or multiple agencies of its own and not dependent on human agency. As an autonomous, mainly unregulated environment (in the sense of not requiring human intervention for its survival except for protecting it from damage from too much human intervention) it retains in large measure, qualities of unpredictability and incalculability (Solnit 2000:10). In the forest Amanda is like a regular visitor, without maintenance responsibilities, ‘at home’ but nevertheless in another domain of life, with its different non-human life rhythms, that ‘all just happens’. For her it is an arena of difference, discovery, renewal, recreation, re-creation, a rest or change from the ordered, the regulated, and the domestic. To summarise, Amanda’s value for the escarpment mainly revolves around its provision of an accessible ‘elsewhere’ that is a complementary part of the familiarity and responsibilities of the domestic routine.

The rhythmic flow of domestic events is irregularly punctuated by the forest walks that are regarded by Amanda as ‘time-off’ and a treat - an intermediate rhythm that is half way between the rhythms of ‘house activity’ and the rhythms of ‘days off and trips away’ (Edensor, 2010:9). There is a constant tension or pull between home and ‘elsewhere’. It is ‘lovely to leave the clearing up and house activity’ and go out, but it is also ‘always such a relief’ to come home. The diary shows that Amanda is constantly seeking to explore landscape, to go out and experience the world but she is also enthusiastic about home and homecomings. Her most frequent landscape explorations are her forest walks but there are also journeys to close and distant places for day trips or weekends and for a longer holiday overseas.

Amanda’s forest landscape, as both different from but part of home, operates as both a familiar and different landscape causing a fertile ambiguity or tension between the familiar and the different. Amanda herself acknowledges this ambiguity. In
conversation she notes: ‘..if you walk an area often you feel as if you “own” it, you
notice changes’, but she also realises and records early in the diary that ‘it’s funny how
things in our everyday life become so normal’, that you fail to ‘see’ them. The familiar
and repetitive can be both an aid and a block to ‘noticing difference’, they can both
assist and dull perception. This is a coming together of opposites, both the familiar and
the strange, the known and unknown, the normal and different. Likewise Blunt and
Dowling (2006:13) discuss the opposite qualities of home. They argue that home
encompasses the qualities of intimacy and shelter through relationships with the wider
world. Lefebvre (in Kofman and Lebas, 1996:17-18) states even more clearly that ‘what
people want is to be able to hold onto and combine oppositions, such as inside/outside,
intimacy and environment...’ – a tension or constant movement between withdrawal
and engagement. These are the opposite poles of home and elsewhere that produce
the rhythms and tensions of our dwelling-in-the-world. Further these oppositions may
encompass other opposite qualities, for example, the planned, regulated, ordered
suburban and domestic spheres in contrast to the unregulated and disordered qualities
of the forest place. Though frequently folded together and intertwined with the
suburban, the forest landscape retains in greater measure qualities of chance,
improvisation and experiment – what life happens apart from human life - making it an
instructive arena of difference and discovery.

The repetition of the forest walks produces recurring experiences that become
embodied by the senses and the ‘muscular consciousness’ (Bachelard 1969:11-12).
Furthermore, there is repetition in the corresponding reflective processes. Memories
and images from the forest walks later circulate in the mind in the same way that
images or melodies may keep recurring like a refrain (Edensor, 2010:14-15). Just as
actions can be both conscious and unconscious, images or sensations may be
reflected in memory both spontaneously and intentionally.

4.3.3 The processes of ‘reflecting on’ and storying
These monitoring, ‘resonating’ and reflective processes of memory are taking place
continuously but they become more precisely formulated when concretely expressed in
the writing genre that Amanda used. Conscious attention is only arrested by things that
stand out of the ordinary, an unusual noise, a strange smell, a movement, an
unexpected bright colour that intrudes on our consciousness perhaps causing varying
degrees of surprise. The conscious mind then reflects on what has arrested attention
either at the time or later when the on-going action allows time to ‘reflect’ the event,
bring it to mind, and reflect on it more thoroughly. ‘Reflecting on’ is a central process in
attaching value. ‘Reflecting’ is a metaphoric way of describing mental imaging, of bringing back to mind a previous experience. These are reflections of, a reflecting of images and sensations in memory, a recalling, often very vividly, of previous scenes and situations. We are then able to reflect on the reflections. There are two kinds of reflection, ‘reflections of’ and ‘reflections on’, although the distinction is not often made. ‘Reflecting’ or ‘recalling to mind’ ideas and images stored in memory is different to ‘reflecting on’ those images. ‘Reflecting on’ is an additional process, a particular type of thinking, of having time to allow past events to circulate in the mind when the pressure of immediate action has passed. Reflecting on is a contemplative, meditative pondering in which there is a chance to make connections and disconnections, allow associations of ideas to happen, a marshalling of related knowledge, memories, feelings, a re-collecting of similar and contrasting experiences.

Clark (2001:145) helpfully refers to this process as ‘off-line thinking’ as opposed to ‘on-line thinking’, which is that kind of thinking that occurs when the body is fully engaged in action. Conversely, the ‘reflecting on’, or off-line thinking, is more technically described as ‘our ability to engage in second-order discourse, to think about (and evaluate) our own thoughts’ (ibid. p 145). It is not necessarily a completely conscious or intentional process, although it often is. Ideas and images often recur and circulate in the mind seemingly spontaneously, like a refrain, without being initiated by conscious intent. The process of noticing differences and reflecting on them is a collating and ordering process that involves making comparisons, gauging, measuring one object or situation against another, qualifying one experience by comparison with another, discriminating between, judging, appreciating, perhaps positing cause and effect.

Amanda illustrates the process of ‘reflecting-on’ in her diary entry after returning home from holidaying in the Cook Islands. Amanda’s experiences of the ‘new’ landscapes she visits are measured against the ‘home’ landscape of the escarpment. On holidays in the Cook Islands she notices the similarities and differences with an implicit comparison with the Illawarra Escarpment:

The island – we stayed on the main island of Rarotonga – has a dramatic interior of rugged rocky mountain peaks and steep hillsides covered in rainforest. It looks quite impenetrable and imposing. A lot of the time we were there, there was cloud below the mountain peaks which added to the mystery of the island. Below the mountains are farms, houses, shops and roads etc. to the beach. From the beach, a ring of coral protects the island from the surf, and depending on the distance out to the surf, there are many sheltered places to swim and snorkel.
In spite of the similarities in the description, on returning home after two weeks Amanda notices other differences and again compares the Illawarra Escarpment with the Cook Islands:

It was a great contrast to Thirroul/northern Wollongong, with ocean surf beaches. In particular, what really struck me when we got home was how linear the escarpment is. We had just spent two weeks on a small island – the whole island is 31 km around – where the view inland was impressive. It was quite a contrast coming home and looking north up to Stanwell Park and beyond, at just how long the escarpment is. The green headlands marking distance along the coast was quite striking after our holiday away.

Amanda’s sequences of explorations, noticing differences, making comparisons yield ever more discriminating apprehensions and appreciations of the materialities of different places through reflecting on bodily sensory experience. The two following extracts were written after a process of reflecting on the escarpment through comparisons and contrasts with her experience of other places:

the sea air made cooler by the rainforest’ as compared to the dryness of the inland plateau;

[the escarpment] is so very green, lots of different colours of green. And very close – the rainforest is very dense vegetation... I couldn’t see myself walking beyond the end of our street as the vines and undergrowth are so thick.

There are many other instances of comparisons leading to measuring, qualifying, discriminating, evaluating. As Amanda wrote, contrasting landscapes provide ‘new lenses’ to sense the familiar anew – a process of becoming sensitive, of ‘seeing’ more clearly, in more detail (Thrift 2004:90). The ability to ‘see’ (or to hear, feel etc) is an ongoing process of learning, of education of the senses themselves, of refining and making further discriminations through the continuous embodied experience. As she realises and writes in her diary ‘It’s funny how things in your everyday life become so normal, then looking at some other view or place makes you think again about what you see everyday’. Amanda’s writing demonstrates a process of noticing differences or contrasts and reflecting on these, making comparisons and incorporating this knowledge into her world view as part of her embodied knowledge. This in turn shapes attitudes and opinions, either supporting existing ideas or expanding or adjusting or even changing her understanding. It is an on-going process of experiential learning and landscape is the basic medium in which learning and evaluating occurs. As Lorimer and Lund (2008:185) demonstrate with their case study of ‘Munro-bagging’, collecting embodied experiences of landscape is an on-going lifelong learning process. This, of course, includes encounters with people and experience of social situations that occur within particular landscapes throughout people’s lives. These images, ideas, feelings
and experiences may coalesce into ‘little narrative swirls’ (Cronon, 1992:1351), proto-stories that we tell ourselves about what we like or dislike, what we value, how things have come about, our interpretation of the flow of events.

From the formation of the ‘little narrative swirls’ it is a short step to exchanging these in conversation with others, telling others our stories and listening to other people’s stories. With each rehearsal or telling our stories become more formed, more assured, less tentative. Amanda’s diary stories make a track through the chaotic detail of everyday life bringing some order and meaning by clarifying how she feels and what she thinks, and what she values. The writing process itself helps to clarify and formulate the story. In her longest, and final story, Amanda’s points of comparison are stimulated by a visit to an exhibition of landscape paintings by Sidney Nolan at the NSW Art Gallery in Sydney. This comparing and contrasting occurs because these painted ‘stories’ or representations are of types of landscapes that have been experienced by Amanda. As Lund (2008:101) points out by quoting Bruner ‘the full power of a story is never felt unless it is realized in an experience’ (1984:73). The ‘Ned Kelly’ paintings remind Amanda vividly of the landscapes of her childhood in Victoria. She says of the artist that he ‘really captured the feeling of the landscapes. Pretty flat, sandy, red-coloured, open woodland. …that openness from a dry heat’. She contrasts these landscapes she has known to the escarpment she experiences on her return:

To come home to our home in the rainforest in Thirroul was a great contrast and made me think again about the escarpment. It is so very green, lots of different colours of green. And very close – the rainforest is very dense vegetation and I certainly feel that living close to the rainforest. It probably felt closer on our return home because it was 100% humidity, with showers on and off. The air felt very dense, whereas the Sidney Nolan paintings depicted that openness from a dry heat. In most of the Ned Kelly paintings the vegetation was of tall eucalypts that you could readily walk through (unless Ned Kelly pulled you up). I couldn’t see myself walking beyond the end of our street as the vines and undergrowth are so thick. And of course the topography was quite a contrast from the flat Victorian plains to the steep escarpment.

For Amanda the escarpment is a whole different contrasting experience, a practical learning experience that, as she says, ‘gets so ingrained into you’, which is another way of saying that the escarpment becomes part of her, or embodied, as one of her life’s ‘collected’ and ‘recollected’ places (Lorimer and Lund, 2008:198) always available on recall for contrasting, comparing, collating and recomposing, measuring and evaluating: producing meaning, making sense.

This on-going meaning-making and valuing process is also always embedded in a social context in which we compare our stories with those other people tell in order to
reinforce or re-assess our ideas through comparison with the similar and contrary views of others. Amanda is constantly measuring her understandings, values and preferences against those of others – a process of corroboration, authorisation but sometimes of resistance or opposition. Katrin Lund (2008:94) quotes Jackson (2002:16): ‘stories are a kind of theatre where we collaborate in reinventing ourselves and authorising notions, both individual and collective, of who we are’. Throughout the diary there is a thread of references to Amanda’s reflexive awareness that her values are sometimes not the values of others. She says in her third entry:

We look southeast, through some large gumtrees on our property ... over Thirroul to the sea. The sea and sky provide a lovely blue backdrop for the green canopy. It’s not how most people see our view. They think the trees block our view of the water but I don’t agree. I think the trees are the view.

Amanda also told me when I visited her at home that the neighbours adjoining their back boundary would like the trees in her backyard cut down as they disliked the untidy ‘mess’ of leaves, sticks and sheets of bark constantly raining down from the huge eucalypts. She said of her neighbours, with a rueful smile, ‘They throw anything that comes off the trees back over the fence into my yard’. It is revealing that when she writes that a friend from Victoria is staying with them she reports enthusiastically: ‘He was very impressed with our escarpment backdrop and it was lovely to have a visitor who appreciated the value of what living next to the escarpment means for us…’. Like most of us she likes to have her views shared and reinforced by others. She goes on to say: ‘I’m sure some of our relatives think we are living in an uncivilised jungle! But they’re probably the ones who need to walk in the escarpment the most’. Similarly she is enthusiastic about meeting and talking to a man who also walks through the same forest tracks as she does, though in the mornings rather than in the evenings, and being able to exchange with him mutual appreciation and shared enjoyment of the escarpment forest.

Amanda’s stories usually conclude with endeavouring to articulate a meaning or value, to draw a conclusion, make a comment or pose a question that is reaching towards increased understanding. Many of Amanda’s stories express aesthetic values: what she enjoys, likes or dislikes. She accepts many of these values, preferences and pleasures without question (though noting that not everyone feels the same) and only sometimes speculates on them in an endeavour to arrive at a ‘cause and effect’ conclusion or a reaching towards a better understanding. For example, she questions why the escarpment causes her to feel contented and reassured. She concludes tentatively that ‘maybe it’s like a gateway’. In her first diary entry she comes to an
interesting but unexpected conclusion about one of her dislikes. She states that she hates leeches and that they exclude her from the forest but she concludes that in spite of this she values their intermittent presence as they limit the amount of people pressure on the forest and help to preserve it from too much damage. As she puts it ‘I like it that the rainforest has its own built in mechanism for having a rest from people’.

In some of her stories Amanda highlights the relationship between people and landscapes. For example her reflections on the effect of the escarpment on her son:

It’s partly the environmental benefits the escarpment creates... But its also the imprint it will have on him mentally and as a person. It is so precious being able to walk with Gabriel in the rainforest where he sees trees and birds and takes in the calmness of his surrounds. It will also be part of what he considers home.

To illustrate her meaning she tells a story about a friend ‘who has grown up and lived all her life in the Wollongong region’. She reported that the friend said that ‘when she travels she feels a bit open or exposed without the escarpment running along the west.’ Amanda concludes: ‘I love the fact that this topography gets so ingrained into you and I think its great that Gabriel will have that too’. This story shows Amanda’s awareness of how experience of the landscape becomes embodied, part of the person. As part of noticing differences and making comparisons Amanda also becomes aware of the embodied processes involved in perception. She realises that her very ability to ‘see’ - her perception - is affected by what she normally experiences. She says of her visit to the Blue Mountains ‘[they] didn’t have a great deal of water, and it took a slight mental adjustment on my part to stand and look at a view and not see water’. Amanda extends this contrasting landscape theme when she concludes the last entry of the diary.

‘I’m not saying one landscape is better than the other. But having lived 25 years in Victoria, I’m enjoying the beauty and contrast that the escarpment gives to this region. The Sidney Nolan pictures showed a familiar landscape and reminded me of places I’ve previously lived in and visited. They contrasted starkly to the escarpment and gave me some new lenses to look at it again. It’s a beautiful and unique place, I feel privileged to live amongst it and, at the very least, have it as the backdrop to my everyday life.’

In these last three instances, Amanda’s reflections have gone beyond learning about herself and her world to gaining insights into the generic processes and mechanisms of self-world relations. This last passage is an appreciation of the quality of difference or uniqueness itself and how reflections on embodied experiences leads to heightened awareness and an enlarged consciousness.

As her diary shows, Amanda is constantly drawn to ‘elsewhere’, going out. Her thinking and writing patterns that I have identified hinge on noticing difference, the strange, the
new, the unique, that contrasts with the familiar and the normal of the domestic everyday. The reflective meaning-making and valuing process that is evident in Amanda’s diary is one that is generic to human operations. It can be seen that the process is dependent, too, on the landscapes available to be experienced, their diversity and inclusiveness of a variety of both human and non-human features and forms of life that provide differences, contrasts and relief. Of course, through our everyday activities we are initiated into social imaginaries which make possible shared practices and responses. Each different landscape that we experience throws others into relief, heightening our perceptions and evaluations of different qualities, processes and life forms, and possibly qualifying and modifying previous understandings and values.

4.4 Conclusion
Amanda’s experience of living and walking on the escarpment is primarily kinetic and sensuous. This experience is related via the reflections of her retrospective writing in absence. In the writing of Amanda’s reflective dialogue, absence enables reflection, and landscape, though not actually present, still has a powerful role in the valuing process through the presence of ideas and images in memory. Amanda’s virtual and constantly re-inscribed escarpment and her other familiar landscapes from living and travelling in other places – are ‘the looming presence of landscape in memory, and hence within senses of self, identity, community and belonging…(Wylie 2009:279). Amanda’s reflective dialogue can be seen as a kind of attunement to virtual landscapes of the past. In this way the past in the form of the values and meanings generated by reflective dialogue is brought to bear on present and future action.

Amanda’s writing genre illustrates a valuing process underpinned by ‘reflecting on’. The writing genre used does not lend itself to describing how valuing may operate in-the-moment through embodied engagement. Nevertheless, Amanda’s diary provides a small window on landscape – the tensions of self and world and how they work creatively for her. Sensuous moments recorded in her diary provide insights into how the sensual body helps make sense of landscapes. For example, Amanda provides insights into the role of repetitive walking in the escarpment forest in her everyday life – the place and meaning of this practice for her – as simultaneously home and elsewhere. For Amanda her ‘escarpment home’ is reliant upon contrasting and complementary qualities: the domestic qualities of the suburb and the aesthetic ‘wild’ qualities of the escarpment. Her ability to constantly move between ensures the
containment of opposites, the maintenance of self-world relations with each aspect or quality sustaining the experience of the other.

However, what Amanda perhaps most vividly exemplified is the essential role of memory, reflection and reflecting-on in the valuing and meaning making process – the special human attributes of second order thinking and storying. Amanda's record of her comings and going between home and elsewhere, between intimacy and environment, inside and outside showed the continual alternating movements inherent in dwelling. From these movements flowed the reflective processes of noticing difference, comparing and contrasting, measuring, discriminating, evaluating, leading to a process of storying and social interaction: a continual process of learning and valuing. This is a process of becoming, of increasing knowledge and understanding, of heightened awareness which in turn affects expectations, perception and the development of sensibilities. Other landscapes with contrasting experiences provide 'new lenses' with which to see the familiar anew, and, in the return movement of the circuit, the familiar provides the basis against which the new is sensed and apprehended. Amanda's diary also demonstrated how reflections on events coalesce into stories that interweave with other people's stories to form a track through the complex details of life.

Finally, what Amanda demonstrates is that the escarpment provides resources to reflect on, think with – 'wideware' as Clark (2001: 143-7) terms it. Just as the boundaries between forest and suburb are fluid, negotiable and often illusory so are the boundaries or differentiation of thought and action, the intertwining of the virtual and the actual, the past and the present. Landscape becomes part of us: our embodied and reflective knowledge, or 'environmental scaffolding' (Clark, 2001:160-1) against which we measure new experiences and re-evaluate past ones.

In the next chapter based on a participant who has written in a completely different style, I will consider more direct and sensuous descriptions of a walker’s engagement with the escarpment terrain.
It's a grey overcast day,
cloudy misted. It's early,
the garbage man has not come
I hear out the back lane.
Look up, it's still. The air
is like a thick cool blanket.
Not the usual免费 or in
Flemington Park.
A kookaburra in the cook-
ignites, quietly, quietly
The cool crisp air makes for
very going up the hill.
Early workers come. We
are one.
Chapter 5

Acting and reacting:
sensuous dialogue with the landscape

Surely this sense [of everydayness] includes much that is not sense so much as sensuousness, an embodied and somewhat automatic “knowledge” that functions like peripheral vision, not studied contemplation, a knowledge that is imageric and sensate rather than ideational, ...a knowledge that lies as much in the objects and spaces of observation as in the body and mind of the observer. What’s more, this sense has an activist, constructivist bent; not so much contemplative as it is caught in medias res working on, making anew, amalgamating, acting and reacting (Taussig, 1992:141-142)

As discussed in Chapter 4, Amanda wrote about her everyday world living and walking on the escarpment, by reflecting on events in retrospect - what Taussig refers to above as ‘studied contemplation’. From considering the production of reflective knowledge that Amanda’s diary exemplifies, in this chapter I investigate the acquisition of a different type of knowledge - the kinetic and sensuous bodily knowledge that the interactive experience of walking on the escarpment provides. I do this through a detailed examination of a diary written on-the-move. This diary narrates in-the-present bodily interaction with the escarpment. It is written in the spirit of Taussig’s depiction of everyday mode: ‘caught in medias res’, that is, caught in the midst of things. I consider how this type of writing fits existing narrative categories such as ‘interior monologue’ and ‘stream of consciousness’. I argue this writing style is more accurately described as a reflected ‘sensuous dialogue’. This type of writing, combined with participant observation and follow-up conversations provided further insights into how the escarpment is valued. This chapter is structured as follows. I begin by introducing the participant, John, and examine the ‘how’ of the writing, in particular, the features and achievements of what I term a reflected sensuous dialogue. Next I explore the theme of presences and absences. Finally, I investigate the process of self-world attunement through the everyday routines of walking a familiar route. This discussion challenges aspects of Edensor’s recent argument (2008:136-138) that narrative writing cannot effectively capture the sensuous worlds of walking.
5.1 John and his writing on foot

5.1.1 The who, when and where of the writing

John is a retired pharmacist, now in his seventies, who grew up in Sydney. He moved to the Illawarra in the 1960s, at the beginning of his career, to set up a pharmacy at Cringila, the closest suburb to the Port Kembla steelworks. John is an experienced bushwalker who has been active throughout his life in supporting the establishment of national parks. On returning from an extended camping tour of the west coast of the US and Canada between 1960-1964 he joined the South Coast Conservation Society and worked with well-known environmentalists in the Illawarra, including Doug Gibson, Alan Sefton and Ken Ausburn. He subsequently travelled widely and studied national parks around the world. Over many years he has been proactive in volunteering to manage bushland reserves and maintain walking tracks. He was the editor for 15 years of *The Smoke Signal*, the monthly conservation journal of the South Coast Conservation Society. During the 1970s he wrote a long-running series of weekly articles published in *The Illawarra Mercury*, on bushwalking, backpacking and camping. For the past six years since retirement, he has lived in the beachside escarpment suburb of Austinmer, continuing to take an interest in environmental management issues, travel and walking.

John walks alone on regular but varying early morning excursions from his house not far from the beach, climbing up suburban roads and escarpment tracks through the forest, along a high level escarpment bench and down again through reserves and streets - a circular route usually finishing at the beach for a swim in the rock pool. (My first introduction to John was to accompany him one morning on this route). He improvises the route depending on how physically fit he is feeling and on the weather. Like Amanda, rain and leeches keep him out of the forest quite often in the summer. Alternatively, ‘for a change’, he cycles the coastal cycleway. The diary consists of eight undated entries. Each entry is an entire event, either a walk or a cycle, beginning at his house and either finishing there or at the beach. Unlike some diarists John does not write only about the escarpment bushland but includes the whole of his suburb, beach and ocean in his entries, though his house and backyard are not included.

The diary is a sequential descriptive narrative of John’s actions, sensuous experiences, feelings, encounters and memories written as he walks along. It is not the result of later recall or reflection. The handwritten notebook that I received from him contained entries that were hurriedly scribbled down. No editing of the text was carried out at all (see Photocollage prefacing the chapter for a sample of John’s handwritten notebook). All of the walking entries were written while he was on foot, pausing every 300 metres or so to
quickly write down what he has done, seen and heard in that section. When I asked John about this unusual writing practice he replied:

It is normal practice for me if I am on my own or with a walking mate. It’s not really possible with a group or even with my partner as more conversation is happening or pauses are not so possible. Although I have been forced to do it at times, I don’t like writing up notes at the end of the day, after the event. It’s hard to remember and the freshness has gone.

The effect of the writing is almost as if the text was spoken into a recording device. This long-standing habit of John’s was originally formed during his boyhood Scouting days when he laboriously wrote his logbook for ‘badges’. (He showed me some of these logbooks that he has kept from the 1940s complete with maps and illustrations drawn during cross-country treks). Since then John continued to regularly practice this style of writing during his Australian and overseas travels.

5.1.2 A different type of narrative

John’s diary provides a record of continuous movement in real-time, a descriptive narrative of the connection of his body with the escarpment terrain (see Text Box 2 below for a typescript of the first entry. The full text is provided as Appendix D). Whereas Amanda wrote of events and happenings in her everyday life at home after they had occurred, John wrote his diary only when he was out, on the move, either walking or cycling. I argued in the previous chapter in agreement with Edensor (2008:136) that the structure of Amanda’s retrospective narrative is not suited to writing about walking which is ‘a kaleidoscope of intermingling thoughts, experiences and sensations, so that the character of a walk is continually shifting’. In contrast, John’s present tense narrative, that I have termed reflected sensuous dialogue, is far more effective at capturing at least some of the essence of his walking experiences.

John wrote from a very different perspective, not looking back at a concluded walk but whilst he is still engaged in it. Expressed in the narrative is something of the immediacy, the embodied action, sensations, and the unfolding journey. Although I agree with Edensor (2008:138) that ‘words can but feebly allude to sensations, and the selective content of an account can refer to no more than a tiny proportion of what is experienced’, John's narration of his sensuous dialogue with the escarpment comes much closer to capturing the actual embodied performance of walking. For example
Text Box 2 – Extract from typescript of John’s diary – first entry

It’s a grey overcast sky, evenly-coated. It’s early – the garbage man has not come. I head out the back lane and look up. It’s still there towering above the silent house top. Quickly over the railway and beside bushland. Note the bush regeneration in Felix Ryan Park. A kookaburra on the overhead wires quietly looking and waiting. The cool crisp air makes for easy going up Hill Street. Early workers cars with one person hurrying down to work. Look back for a glimpse of sun-streaked ocean. I am higher now and distant views south along the coast open up. The whole day unfolds. A sea of roof tops down at Thirroul. Fingers of land out into the ocean. The distant finger “stack” at Port Kembla and the high-rise skyline of Wollongong city, in haze. Surf noise in the background. A currawong warbles in tall trees. The road levels. A bower bird calls to a mate in the forest. The last of the houses. The escarpment looms behind them.

I’m heading to the fire trail gate past the unregistered vehicles that have been here for years. After 10 minutes I am in the bush. Vandalised National Park sign no longer legible. Powerline easement starting to grow over again. All still, quiet and green.

Flanagan’s Creek still bubbling along despite the drought. Cool and clean from the escarpment. Complete tree canopy overhead. Speckled sunlight coming through on the leaf-covered coalwash road. I leave this and head up the old incline track. Hard-packed stonework in places. Now only a track wide. Must have been from the mining pit prop days. Temperate rainforest already but the ground is bone dry and dirty. The leaf cover crackles underfoot.

Out into the “Scout Camp” clearing bursting with sunlight and green grass – an oasis in the escarpment slopes. Glimpses of cliff tops way above the treetops.

Back into the shade of the Gibson Track. Doug Gibson, a gentleman birder with an encyclopaedic knowledge of the natural world. The NP track barriers are still in place after 3 years. Past a grove of cedars. Then cross Flanagan’s Creek again. This time in quality rainforest gully. Pause for a drink of hand scooped water. The track winds pleasantly along the level bench through tall re-growth – the original forest was heavily logged in the early days of Illawarra settlement and again later for mine pit props and boiler firewood. Mountain bike ramp over fallen trees cross the track. I brush against ferns and cabbage tree palms as they try to reclaim the track. Dry shady gullies crowded with palms. Tree trunks silhouetted against the ocean light to the east. A remnant massive tree stump from the days of the old growth forest - complete with slot for the plank step. A small weed-choked region opens to the left and allows a glimpse of massive grey cliffs towering above. My favourite rock lookout in the centre piece. The swamp is ringed with cabbage palms. A low-flying jet breaks the silence.

The water level is lower than usual. These small hollows are often formed along the bench levels. A labelled Livistonia palm from the old days of the Bulli Park Trust. A raised wooden walkway across the outlet for the swamp. Hasn’t flowed for many years. The young cabbage palm fronds are fluttering in the early morning air movement. Should have brought a camera to capture the new shoots in many tones of green. Always amazed to see the dense regrowth from the fires of 2003.

Still no action on the Sublime Point Track reconstruction. Head north through more
open fern groves. Sun emerging and creating a stunning backlit forest of bright green and black. More old tree stumps. Governor Macquarie said they were the biggest trees in the colony in 1820. Not any more. They have totally disappeared. A whipbird cracks beside the track. I pause but cannot see it in the undergrowth. Date palm seeds like ball bearings underfoot. Down we go – glimpses of the blue ocean behind the forest. No people. Cockies screeching as we drop down to the road at the Austinmer Fire Station. Past a giant lonely termite mound - a rare sight. Exit onto the road down a steep dirt chute – a snigging route from the logging days. A giant grove of Casuarinas beside the road. Houses and parked cars but no people. I look back. The cliffs are visible soaring away above and dramatically sunlit. Small puffs of white cloud.

In Buttenshaw Close “Tommy’s Tree Care” is noisily reducing an old eucalypt to sawdust. Quickly down the worn forest access tracks through Allen Park and leave the houses behind. The ocean noise dominates the hillside. I enjoy the dance down the rough rocky track. Past the immaculate green tranquillity of the Austinmer Cricket Ground. More tall bush down to Railway underpass, past 6 houses on the right side set in trees. The underpass was originally a coal railway leading to a jetty at Brickyard Point. I turn into Austinmer Street with its track-like footpath lined with date palms and old high hedges.

John wrote:

A whipbird cracks beside the track. I pause but cannot see it in the undergrowth. Date palm seeds like ball bearings underfoot. Down we go – glimpses of the blue ocean behind the forest. No people. Cockies screeching as we drop down to the road at the Austinmer Fire Station. … I look back. The cliffs are visible soaring away above and dramatically sunlit. Small puffs of white cloud.

When asked about his writing practices he commented: ‘I find it best to capture impressions at the time with no reflections, editing or embellishments’. I take this to mean that he concentrated his attention on recording his immediate interactions. John’s in-the-moment text is peppered with brief reflections that are noticeably more frequent on the level sections of track where the going is easier. These reflections usually take the form of explanations and brief insights into particular versions of the history of places and objects rather than personal reflexive comments. John seldom overtly intrudes a personal narrative, for instance, in the way that Amanda does. At times these are implied by the tone of voice and imagery.

This kind of first person, present tense narrative is regarded in literary theory as a method of representing consciousness known as ‘interior monologue’ or ‘stream of consciousness’ (Martin, 1986:140). Novelists often employ an interior monologue in their writing in trying to describe the workings of the mind of fictional characters, as
illustrated in the works of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf (Solnit, 2000:21). John’s narrative could be described as an interior monologue: one person thinking alone - relating the stream or flow of his conscious thoughts. In discussing the relationship between thinking and walking Solnit (ibid:21) says

A solitary walker is in the world, but apart from it, with the detachment of the traveller rather than the ties of the worker, the dweller, the member of a group. … As a literary structure, the recounted walk encourages digression and association, in contrast to the stricter form of a discourse or the chronological progression of a biographical or historical narrative.

John’s writing about walking the escarpment does not match any of the points made in Solnit’s discussion of walking narratives. He does not have ‘the detachment of the traveller’ (someone who is passing through a place) but he does have ‘the ties of the dweller’ (the familiarity of someone with a vested interest in the home territory). The recounting of his walk has strict chronological progression but attempts to resist digression and association – the ‘kind of unstructured, associative thinking…most often connected to walking’ (ibid). John’s orientation is not inward, depicting an interior or ‘inner life’, but outward to the world, not monologic but interactive (or dialogic) through action and sensation by engagement with the plants, track, topography and sky. Val Plumwood (2002:33) distinguishes between monologues and dialogues in discussing what she terms ‘the ecological crisis of reason in human/non-human relationships’. She writes:

In these contexts of interrelationship, not monological but different dialogical strategies aimed not at self-maximisation but at negotiation and mutual flourishing are rational. But a dialogical model requires a basic level of mutuality and equality, give and take, response and feedback, that is not available in monological systems. Dialogical logics assist conflict resolution, conversation, and fair exchange. It is significant that these dialogical systems are not the kind of formal reasoning systems the intellectual life of the west has made pre-eminent, but rather monological logics that impose a centrically-conceived One upon a passive Other.

What Plumwood is advocating is an attitude or way of relating to the non-human world that is based on dialogue or interaction between two presences rather than a monologue that posits meaning onto the other. John’s reflected sensuous dialogue demonstrates this ‘basic level of mutuality and equality, give and take, response and feedback’ of the walking, perceptive body/mind. As Lorimer (2008:196) puts it ‘an openness of attitude whilst being present in or propelled through the flux of the world’.

John represents his walking actions and reactions with the escarpment as directly as possible through a sensuous dialogue, with minimum reflections that, of course, would have existed simultaneously. With John’s writing there are no small reflective
constructed stories with explicit pre-conceived plots. Instead there are chronological narratives with a different underlying orientation that are mostly free of reflective comments positing John’s conclusions or meanings. End points, conclusions, interpretations, meanings are the result of reflecting on events and connected to the type of narrative used. His narratives do not have beginnings, middles and ends - the conventional story structure. Their real-time action could be termed continuous beginnings or ongoing middles. They have very quiet downbeat endings. For example, in the first entry John concludes:

I turn into Austinmer Street with its track-like footpath lined with date palms and old high hedges.

The story is not defined by its ending as Aristotle remarked: ‘the end is everywhere the chief thing’ (Cronon, 1992:1367). Instead the stories are diffuse, open-ended and ongoing. As Ingold (2007:90) says ‘there is no point at which the story ends and life begins’. It is a different way of storytelling with a different underlying orientation. It is a larger on-going story of relationships with human and non-human worlds. Edensor (2010:69) remarks:

Both the conventions of walking and its unfolding, sensual and contingent apprehension are difficult to elucidate in academic prose, and luckily there are several challenging walking artists whose work highlights these issues and the rhythmic dimensions of walking.

He turns to the work of artist Richard Long:

Long locates the human walker as one element in a seething landscape, a presence that moves from self-consciousness and self-absorption to an awareness of the presence of other energies and lives in which the rhythms of the self flow with other rhythms during the journey.

Edensor (ibid.) also quotes from Campbell-Johnson’s (2009) review of Long’s work:

[Long] leads us on a voyage in which it is the movement itself that makes sense. His solitary human figure is like a calibrating mark on a vast natural canvas. A mote caught up in that fundamental flux between the formal and the free, it helps to articulate relationships between ourselves and wider universal forces. It heightens our sense of attunement, speaking of harmonies and rhythms.

These kinetic and sensuous experiences, subtle resonances and awarenesses are ‘written’ into the body through interactive practices but not often onto paper with a biro or a printer. These sensations are often unconsciously inscribed and enter consciousness via the imagination through images and sensations without the aid of language – that ‘more recent technology’ as Clarke (2001) terms it - that plays a much larger role in the formation of reflective knowledge or second order thinking.
All writing is essentially a reflective act, even John’s brief pauses to quickly scribble down events, observations and sensuous experiences on the track. His thoughts while writing would have been different to his thoughts while walking, and what he records is selected from a kaleidoscope of sensations. And some skill and artifice is required to produce the effect of the in-the-moment unfolding of a walk. In spite of this John’s present tense narrative is complementary to Amanda’s past tense writing and manages to reveal tone, mood, atmosphere, flow, movement and rhythm. These attributes are discussed in more detail below.

5.1.3 The how of the writing

John’s diary records the in-rush of sensory data in brief, often abrupt note form, generating lists of actions, sensuous intrusions, views, observations, encounters and memories (see Text Box 2 for a sample of the text). One might expect that a list of brief descriptions of actions and objects that comprise an on-going commentary of walking, written quickly whilst on the move, would make uninteresting reading. The surprise is that the first long entry is like a prose poem. It has a poetic quality almost like a song John is singing to himself with variations on a well-known theme. The writing moves beyond a descriptive, dispassionate chronological list by the integration of other affordances of language: movement, rhythm, tone and imagery. The writing is informal, economical, densely packed with detail, but precise, fresh and individually expressive. Each event, encounter or action is usually contained in one, or sometimes two sentences. The use of four sentences, for example, to briefly reflect on a remnant tree stump is an exception:

More old tree stumps. Governor Macquarie said they were the biggest trees in the colony in 1820. Not any more. They have totally disappeared.

The text is comprised of a continuous succession of small sensuous moments rather than containing sensuous moments as highlights or illustrations. What John records are those moments that stood out of the chaos of in-coming sensory data – sorted by different, more intense feelings and therefore made memorable enough to allow his briefly reflective act of writing. These feelings are mostly implied rather than explicitly stated and are further discussed below under tone and imagery.

- movement and rhythm

The outstanding feature of John’s writing is that it portrays movement – the forward movement of the unfolding journey as well as a variety of other walking movements.
The sentences are frequently truncated with a verb or subject missing and ‘understood’, giving an impression of the rhythm of a brisk walking pace:

Surf noise in the background. A currawong warbles in tall trees. The road levels. A Bower bird calls to a mate in the forest. The last of the houses. The escarpment looms behind them.

The writing creates a feeling of constant movement with sensuous experiences crowding in. The escarpment topography is important: the ups, downs, alongs; the texture of the surface of the track, the ‘dance down the rough, rocky track’ or in the rain ‘slowly down, picking my way from rock to rock’; distant views down the coast and views of dramatic cliffs; where the water flows, where particular plants grow; alternating sunlight and shade; bird calls; ocean noise. He describes the surface condition of sections of the track demanding different kinds of walking movement: ‘Date palm seeds like ball bearings underfoot’; ‘Down we go – glimpses of the blue ocean behind the forest’.

As well as the variation in walking rhythms, another rhythmic effect is produced by the repetition of groups of actions and observations being broken up into sections by a short contrasting statement like a ‘coda’ that acts as a break in the continuity, like a change of pace or direction or a change of gear, a slight pause before starting again. Nearly every break in the rhythm of the content ends with one of these ‘codas’ or quiet downbeat finishes, for example: ‘All still, quiet and green’; ‘A low-flying jet breaks the silence’; ‘Small puffs of low cloud’. Within this larger repeating pattern, the internal pace and rhythm of each of the sections varies with the terrain. Entries are faster and tenser on uphill and downhill sections where the walker must focus on each step but more relaxed, with longer sentences and time to digress slightly into why things are the way they are, when traversing through the forest on the level escarpment benches. However, because I am analysing the writing performance and not the actual walking performance itself, it would seem that these rhythms are as much of writing or thinking as of walking. Or perhaps the two become fused? The rhythm of thinking mirrors the rhythm of walking. Solnit (2000:5) explored this alignment between thinking and walking:

Walking itself is the intentional act closest to the unwilled rhythms of the body, to breathing and the beating of the heart. It strikes a delicate balance between working and idling, being and doing. It is a bodily labor that produces nothing but thoughts, experiences, arrivals. …Walking, ideally, is a state in which the mind, the body, and the world are aligned, as though they were three characters finally in conversation together, three notes suddenly making a chord. (2000:5)
This alignment or acting together of ‘the mind, the body and the world’ is a major factor in the wholeness and unity of this piece of writing, the movement and rhythm automatically incorporated without conscious intent on John’s part, an instance of Taussig’s ‘sense of everydayness’, ‘an embodied and somewhat automatic ‘knowledge’ that is ‘imageric and sensate’ (1992:141-142). It is also an illustration of the embodied quality of the act of writing itself.

- **tone and imagery**
What John’s narrative does through the immediacy of sights, sounds and tactility is to take the reader along with him almost step by step. It is not just the movement and rhythm, though, that propel both the writer and the reader along but also the emotion in the motion – the tone in which the narrative is written, carried in the way things are said and the imagery used. As well as moving and acting, John is also reacting to his experiences. Appreciation and pleasure are implied by the way views, spectacles, aesthetic effects are described. There is a sense of affection expressed for well-known places, for example, the sunny ‘Scout Camp’ clearing as ‘an oasis in the escarpment slopes’; ‘…a glimpse of massive grey cliffs towering above. My favourite rock lookout in the centrepiece’. How things are that day is being measured against previous knowledge, and a range of emotions are either directly expressed or implied: joy, pleasure, appreciation, reassurance, surprise, amazement, impatience, concern and regret. The emotions are often indicated by the inclusion of one small word such as ‘still’ or ‘again’ or more directly by the use of adjectives such as ‘stunning’, or embedded in what is selected for recording and in the movement itself.

- **intangibilities: atmosphere, mood, aura**
Sounds feature strongly in John’s account and are very evocative of the atmosphere of a place: ‘a whipbird cracks beside the track’; ‘ocean noise dominates the hillside’. The account is full of descriptions of surface texture and the interaction of the light with the topography, vegetation, rocks and ocean. For example, ‘Speckled sunlight coming through on the leaf covered coalwash road’; ‘Sun emerging and creating a stunning backlit forest of bright green and black’. Perhaps we should take a hint from John when he said in conversation: ‘I find it best to capture impressions at the time…’. In trying to produce impressions of what the experience was like that day John is something like a painter outlining, with a few quick brush strokes, light, movement, fleeting impressions. A frankly swift and impressionistic account captures more of what Edensor claimed cannot be captured by more conventional narrative (Edensor, 2008:137): ‘momentary impressions, atmospheres, rhythms, sensations and effects’ of walking through the
escarpment than is possible with more heavy-handed ‘reflections, editing or embellishments’ (as expressed by John) using more usual forms of narrative. As Edensor (2010:75) expresses it: ‘The temporality of the journey is articulated by a pared-down selection of vivid experiences – for to capture the totality of the flow of a walk...is impossible’. The narrative conjures atmosphere, the flavour of things in that place on that day at that time – witnessing the morning take place – or as John expresses it: ‘The whole day unfolds’. In commenting on one of Georges Perec’s experiments in social description – a piece of French fiction written in what seems to equate to our present continuous tense – Howard Becker (2001:65-66) says:

Because there are no specific events...the story feels amorphous, an atmosphere more than a narrative, an aura that surrounds you rather than a journey you make. In this it strongly resembles an ethnographic description of a culture or way of life, of shared understandings and routine activities undertaken in accord with them.

John’s observations include just as much of the social human world as the non-human aspects of the escarpment, of the suburb as well as the forest. For example: ‘Early workers’ cars with one person hurrying down to work’; ...past the unregistered vehicles that have been here for years’; ‘Vandalised National Park sign no longer legible’; ‘Mountain bike ramp over fallen trees cross the track’. John’s narrative is not a ‘nature’ tale. The text is full of references to the human objects and processes of suburban living. The human and the non-human are mixed together. The atmosphere evoked is not of a non-human sphere of life but a ‘description of a culture or way of life, of shared understandings and routine activities undertaken in accord with them’ as it is expressed in the above quotation. Evoking the aura of the place helps to engender the impact of its presence, through intangibilities as well as materialities, that is both ‘spirit and substance’ (Ingold, 2010:23).

5.1.4 Diary structure, writing momentum and poetic happenstance
John would not normally record in a diary his familiar routine walks - only those while on vacation. The experience of the traveller is fleeting and may be accompanied by a consciousness of not passing that way again. There is a motivation for trying to ‘capture’ and remember the moment. In the case of the dweller, experience of the landscape is written into the body, ‘captured’ by repetition. This is ‘habit-memory’ as Bergson terms it, ‘one bound up with bodily habits’ (Grosz, 2005:100) or as Judith Okeley (2001:104) puts it ‘the whole body is the means to understand and resonate with the world. The body becomes the memory…’. Hence, the walking body may become unaware of one’s immediate surroundings but the repetitive renewing of the
neural pathways and muscular consciousness associated with engagement and sensuous experience continue even when one is immersed in thoughts quite removed from present circumstances. The world can be kinetically and sensuously absorbed without conscious attention. Consequently, one may not be as inspired to write about routine journeys in quite the same way as ‘new’ journeys. This difference would seem to explain the overall structuring of John’s diary writing. Table 4 shows the size, type and sequence of the entries. (Although I am interpreting walking as a way of experiencing the escarpment, the cycling entries are included to maintain the overall ‘picture’ of John’s everyday routines.)

Table 4 – List of John’s diary entries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry type – shaded entries indicate full escarpment walks</th>
<th>Typescript (pages)</th>
<th>Estimated month or season</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Road/forest/reserve walk</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Spring – early Sept indicated by dryness</td>
<td>Sunny, very dry, drought not yet broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Road/reserve walk only plus swim</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Spring/ early Summer</td>
<td>Raining previous day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Cycle south on coastal cycleway plus swim</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Recent rains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Road/forest/reserve walk plus swim</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Summer – Australia Day – 26 January</td>
<td>Sunny but damp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Road/reserve walk only plus swim</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Summer - February</td>
<td>Light rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Cycle south on coastal cycleway</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Summer - February</td>
<td>Clear but recent heavy rains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Road/reserve walk only plus cycle south plus swim</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Summer - February</td>
<td>Wet night and showers later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Road/forest/reserve walk</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Early Autumn - March</td>
<td>Sunny but cooler and still damp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4 illustrates, the most noticeable structural feature is the size of the first entry (1-1/2 pages) as compared to subsequent entries that varied between 1/3 to 1/2 page each. The first entry is three times longer than each of the other entries. However, although the three full forest walks (indicated by shading in Table 5) were widely spaced in time, the two latter ones are brief summaries compared with the wholeness and poetics of the first entry. When asked about the difference in length between the first and the following entries John attributed the lack of writing momentum to laziness. Writing became more of an effort, possibly detracting from the pleasure of walking. The comprehensiveness and descriptive detail of the first entry is not repeated in any of the subsequent entries.
However, it is not just a matter of entry size and detailed content. The unusually strong sense of the connection of body and ground in the first entry is not present to the same extent in the others. There is also something different in the quality of the writing – a poetic quality – a sense of quiet joy – not present in the other entries. The first diary entry was written after three months away driving and walking in Western Australia. After an extended absence, the walk was an opportunity for John to re-discover his long-standing connections with the escarpment after experiencing unfamiliar places. The specific 'when' of the first entry helps interpret his opening reference to the escarpment's presence: ‘It’s still there towering above the silent house top’, and explain why the entry has a certain wholeness, has better flow or momentum and appears to have been easier to write than the subsequent walking entries. On re-establishing his routine escarpment walks, writing momentum flagged and was not strong enough to overcome the routine and effort of writing. Repetition was already writing the sensuous into his body.

Without wanting to de-value the role of John’s writing skills, the poetic quality of the first entry has been produced by what Edensor (2008:127) calls ‘happenstance’. As Lorimer and Lund (2008:192) say in elucidating ‘happy combinations’ of the planned and the chance, ‘...a spatiality of practice emerges through circumstantial factors, finds its openings in the chance occurrence and is simultaneously propelled by the most careful and choreographic of designs’. Apart from aiming to capture fresh impressions, John’s writing is not thought out, edited or crafted in any way except by skills acquired by previous practice. It is a spontaneous reaction to how things were on the track that day. The poetic or aesthetic quality of the first entry is a fortuitous but accidental effect brought about by the particular situation on the day and aided by John’s language skills honed in a lifetime of writing. All of John’s diary entries are written in the same style but circumstances conspired to produce a more poetic account in the first entry. John is immersed in the action, the flow of time and responding quickly to the most ‘vivid impressions’ (Edensor, 2010:75). Gerber (1997:13) quotes Bourdieu to make this point about a present rather than a past perspective:

This immediacy of practice, this ‘immersedness’ of those who practise in the stream of time is what prevents them from standing back to reflect on what they do(1990:81).

John’s diary is an outcome of the application of his way of recording walking experiences as a means to re-live holiday moments in unfamiliar landscapes. This proved to be most successful immediately on return after absence. The writing is the result of immersion in the flow of time rather than emergent from reflection. The
spontaneity of the writing brought immediacy, freshness, an unfolding on-goingness. As Edensor (2010:75) highlights by quoting Campbell-Johnson on Long: ‘…it is the movement itself that makes sense… It heightens our sense of attunement, speaking of harmonies and rhythms’ that are not readily expressed verbally and do not need to be in order to be felt and understood.’ John’s diary, and in particular his poetic first entry, demonstrates the interaction of sensuous and reflective dialogues in the attunement of self and world that enables performing and valuing.

5.2 Sensuous dialogue
At least two presences are required for a dialogue. At first it seems a little strange to talk about a dialogue between a human and the landscape until Wylie’s (2007:217) definition of landscape is remembered: ‘the creative tension of self and world’. This is a pre-language or non-verbal bodily and sensuous interaction or dialogue that occurs between every creature and its physical environment. All creatures both benefit and suffer from their material worlds and humans manipulate and exploit their material context even more than other species. Building upon the concept of landscape as tension between self and the world, in what follows I examine how sensuous dialogues provide insights into presence, agency and rhythm.

5.2.1 The presence and agency of the landscape
The escarpment is a landform that runs the whole length of the Illawarra and completely blocks the western horizon. Although the escarpment can be understood as a mosaic of ecosystems with differing vegetation types, land uses and land tenure, in their everyday lives people think of it more as an entity, a presence. Most survey respondents indicated that they are aware of the escarpment’s tangible physical impact on the Illawarra climate bringing increased rainfall and some shelter from the drying inland winds, greenness, lushness, bird and animal life and improved air quality. Of the more intangible values that people wrote about in the survey, most were tied to the escarpment’s constant physical presence. These responses that give agency to the escarpment clustered around the following themes:

- Its grandeur, majesty, magnificence, power, strength, awesomeness.
- Its enduring presence and air of permanency, seemingly unchanging amidst change; a link to the past – the variously geological, Aboriginal and colonial pasts – seen as reassuring and enriching.
- Its quality of constantly drawing or demanding our attention, reminding us of ‘nature’ or ‘the wild’, and imparting an Australian sense of place.
Likewise, in John’s narrative the escarpment ‘looms’ and emerges as a physical presence. Certainly it constantly draws his attention and in one entry he refers to it as ‘a bright and healthy stand-by guardian’. In his long first entry the focus swings between the senses of sight, sound and touch, between near and far, small and large. The escarpment is a unifying presence in a mass of detail, a conglomeration of presences, the small and close presences made possible by the environments created by the large presence. John witnesses and evokes the presence of the escarpment through his narrating of his sensuous dialogue as solid, material, tactile as well as textural and atmospheric. The presence of the landscape is made real through action and sensuous engagement. Rose (2006:538) refers to Wylie’s paper on the ascent of Glastonbury Tor:

‘subject and object are co-emergent in the ascent. … Landscape and subject are, thus…co-constitutive. They come into being as forms of presence, through the physical, tactile, and sensory process of ascent.

Rose (ibid, 548) elucidates this point about the agency of the landscape by saying:

Understanding the landscape … means developing an awareness of how the landscape engenders becoming. It means exploring the landscape not as something that represents or reflects identity but, rather, as something that makes identity possible.

Wylie (2007:175-176), in discussing the presence and agency of landscape in his book Landscape writes of being profoundly influenced by Alfonso Lingis’ book The Imperative which ‘paints a picture of landscape’s materiality in terms of force, animation and perception. The external, material landscape we encounter is not mere lumpen or dead matter, a lifeless mass onto which we project meaning and value. Instead,

...as soon as we open our eyes, the light, the depth of the tangible, the hum of the environment besets us, soliciting, enticing, badgering. The exterior is not an empty and neutral but a resplendent, beguiling, bleak or stifling expanse. Reality weighs on us; we cannot be indifferent to it. (Lingis, 1998:119)

...it is not that things barely show themselves, behind illusory appearance fabricated by our subjectivity; it is that things are exorbitantly exhibitionist. The landscape resounds; facades, caricatures, halos, shadows dance across it. Under the sunlight extends the pageantry of things. (ibid:100)

Wylie (ibid.) comments further:

For Lingis, therefore the visible world not only transcends the subject, in the sense of exceeding our perception of it, it also summons and directs it in certain ways. A sense of self arises in the course of gazing as a vector of response to exteriorities – to encountered others, to sights and sounds, to both textures and intangibilities.
The eyes of the gazing subject are not an exercise of judgement or a bestowal of meaning upon a passive and neutral scene. Instead these eyes arise and look through a tension with the world, with visibilities, sonorities and tangibilities, an unfolding tension that, as Lingis says, ‘organises as it proceeds’.

According to Wylie (2007:176), Lingis’s purpose in *The Imperative* is to supply ‘a phenomenology of perception which brings out the order and ordinance inherent in the perceived field’ (ibid, p5), ‘imperatives to action which guide, imply and ordain corporeal sensibilities’ Put differently and coming from the very different discipline of cognitive science, Clark and Chalmers (1998: 7-8) similarly argue for ‘an active externalism, based on the active role of the environment in driving cognitive processes’.

(These arguments from cognitive science are covered in more detail below in Section 5.2.3). Agency not only resides in the human presence but in the presence of the material world itself. Some examples of this from John’s diary are:

I brush against ferns and cabbage tree palms as they try to reclaim the track.  
Always amazed to see the dense regrowth from the fires of 2003.  
I enjoy the dance down the rough rocky track. [Or in rain...] Slowly down picking my way from rock to rock.  
Track almost overgrown on the approach.  
Date palm seeds like ball bearings underfoot.

John is forced to shift his body in certain ways, as well as his ideas, according to what is encountered along the track. John is narrating a sensuous dialogue, an unfolding creative tension between self and world that as Lingis says above, ‘organises as it proceeds’

5.2.2 Acting and reacting: the human presence

Much of everyday cognitive processing, according to Thrift, takes place as bodily action and sensuous experience, a major focus of John’s narrative of his sensuous dialogue with the landscape - ‘...knowing the world through the body and the body through the world’ (Solnit 2000:29). These are the aspects of experience that Edensor (2008:130) maintains are absent from the usual type of storytelling narrative. As Thrift (2004:90) reminds us ‘...only the smallest part of thinking is explicitly cognitive’. Or, to quote Woody Allen, ‘Ninety percent of life is just being there’, as Andy Clark (2001) does for the epigraph of his book *Being there: a cognitive science of the embodied mind*. The on-the-ground bodily uptake of action, experience and sensory data often happens automatically at a level below consciousness so is difficult to express in words but it is a primary form of knowing and therefore of meaning production and valuing. It is ‘written’ into the body in ways that do not depend on language, a knowledge that is, as Taussig puts it in the epigraph, ‘imageric and sensate’. As Thrift (2004:90) says ‘able
to be sensed and worked with but are often only partially articulated...the somewheres words can’t take you...’.

John’s account of his walking is selective of what is recorded and what is not (Cronon 1992:1352). John’s character and personality and the situation on the particular day determine what is noticed and recorded and what is ignored. There are the unconscious and conscious selection processes of the individual screening the potentially bewildering influx of sensory data, attending to what stands out and what interests as well as consciously choosing what to write about. As well, the account includes something of John’s thoughts whilst writing which would not be the same as his thoughts whilst walking. The account is John’s individual ‘story’ of the journey through the escarpment landscape on those particular days – a narrative that includes some of his sensuous dialogue with the landscape. The main unifying or integrating factor in the recording of a kaleidoscope of sensuous impressions, memories and reflections is the presence of John’s monitoring consciousness as revealed in his recorded actions and reactions. What is experienced is being measured against his previous knowledge of walking the terrain. Meaning and value are embedded in both what he notices and selects to record and how he expresses it through tone and imagery. There are recurring refrains, on-going themes or stories that form the basis of this consciousness some of which emerge from his diary, for example, cycles of ruin and regeneration both social and ecological, the mechanics of how the physical world works, how the human history of terrain and track affects its current form and character, how features of the landscape speak of absence and loss.

5.2.3 The presence of absence and the absence of presence
Absence and loss is a striking aspect of John’s sensuous dialogue. Yet, as, Wylie (2009:287) argues, there is:

…a tendency within current forms of landscape phenomenology and cognate studies of materiality and memory...to valorise presence, via tropes of immersion, engagement, coincidence and excavation. ... Without attentiveness to the constitutive aspects of absence, dislocation and distancing...

As has already been argued above, John’s reflections occur especially in the middle part of the walk where ‘the track winds pleasantly along the level bench’. These reflections are triggered in passing by the less noticeable traces and remnants that speak of lives now absent. Absences feature strongly in John’s walking reflections. The landscape is ‘littered’ with memorials to past presences (Wylie, 2009) both human and non-human. Most of us would remember times when we have felt, intuitively and
uncannily, that a place is ‘haunted’ by former presences. In John’s account, the gradients and surfaces of the track, as well as John’s recognition of the forest as tall re-growth, tell of use by loggers for pit props and boiler firewood in earlier coal mining days. On two occasions remnant massive tree stumps from even earlier times remind him of the absence of trees from the old-growth forest, said to consist of ‘the biggest trees in the colony in 1820’ but now ‘they have totally disappeared’. The observation of a stump ‘complete with slot for the plank step’ can conjure in the imagination the ghostly presence of the logger who fashioned it. John’s use of the name ‘the Gibson Track’ reminds him of the personality and special attributes of a former colleague now gone. The convenience of a railway underpass that John uses as a more direct way back home through the suburban streets is available due to the former existence of a coal railway leading to a jetty.

These absent presences are not apprehended solely via somatic engagement with materialities but require the input of other aspects of perception: memory, reflection, previous knowledge and imagination. Landscape is characterised by its absences as well as its presences. As Ingold (2000:198) says quoting Inglis (1977:489): ‘a landscape is the most solid appearance in which a history can declare itself’. Landscape speaks not just of the present, the actual, but also of the virtual - of memory and the past. Not only ‘the body becomes the memory’ (Okeley, 2001:104) but also the landscape as the tension between self and world becomes the memory. These insubstantial and fleeting visitations introduce awareness of a longer scale of time and a different perspective on the transient attributes of life that may impact reflections. Therefore, meaning and value have a bearing on future action. In this way the virtual - remembered versions of the past - becomes part of the agency of landscape.

As Wylie (2009:282) reminds us, it is not possible for us, as subjects, to be totally present. He says:

Looking at landscape is always looking-with-landscape. But looking-with landscape will always also...convoke a certain distancing in which a ‘subject’ and a ‘world’ are separately articulated. ... ...there is a necessary failure to coincide. There is here no full coincidence or co-presence of self and landscape, no fulsome being-in-the-world.

For example there are times when we can be almost completely absent whilst present – perhaps ‘unseeing’ in the presence of great spectacle if, for instance, overcome by an emotional memory. More usually we are in states of consciousness made up of varying degrees and combinations of engagement and reflection, actuality and virtuality,
absence and presence. The next section continues this theme of absence and presences in relation to routines and habitual rhythms

### 5.2.4 Routines and rhythms

Routines and habitual rhythms are a very noticeable aspect of John’s sensuous dialogue. From his diary entries and participant observation, John’s walking constitutes a routine but irregular and varying rhythm in his early mornings that is important in his life. He prefers his full walking circuit that includes the escarpment forest but if conditions on the day exclude the forest he still walks the roads and reserves on the lower slopes of the escarpment or cycles the coastal cycleway. When I asked John why he chose his particular routes he answered that he would be bored just walking along the beaches and the cycleway. During a walk with him on his usual suburb/forest circuit he told me that:

He likes sometimes to wander off the track to investigate objects of interest such as remnants of logging and mining activities or particular trees and animals. He said that he does so discreetly, sometimes making his own track without linking it directly to the existing tracks. He showed me where he had found evidence of a previous track and re-opened it himself. (Extract from my field diary)

His second diary entry on walking a road/reserve route also indicates that he likes to explore and improvise:

Past the possible west trackhead spur. Should establish a route. Whip birds – sky rapidly clearing. Can’t do it without a hat or sunnies. Decide to turn back…

John’s morning exercise routines, like those of Amanda, demonstrate a sense of irresistible attraction or compulsion underlying the rhythmic repetition. It is not just a matter of physical exercise – a large part of the motivation is interest and enjoyment. The long first entry particularly demonstrates how the repetitive routines constitute a type of patrolling to remake home territory: a monitoring or updating, a seeing how the world is. For example, John writes: ‘the water level is lower than usual’; ‘Still no action on the Sublime Point Track reconstruction’. Included in this patrolling is the improvising of routes to suit conditions and the occasional exploration in which the normal boundaries are breached.

It is striking how frequently this notion of repetitive routines is referred to in passing in the recent writings of diverse disciplines on human behaviour/culture without any very clear explanation. The idea of territorialisation is used by Waitt et al (2009:45) to interpret routine walking on criss-crossing paths in an urban bushland reserve. They argue that:

…the regular, repetitive weaving through the familiar criss-crossing paths, and the ability to view the land from a variety of perspectives, enables the walker to move through, and to territorialise the reserve as ‘their’ place.
As Amanda expressed it ‘if you walk an area often you feel as if you ‘own’ it, you notice changes’. Here the idea of ‘owning’ your world is used in the sense of knowing it. Illustrating this kind of knowing, Lorimer (in Merriman et al, 2008:196) quotes from an essay by Richard Mabey, a well-known nature writer, who by having come to know one patch of the English countryside most intimately claims:

…beyond particular experiences, the Chilterns nurtured in me an understanding of the grammar of landscape… …these generic beats in the rhythm of places. … Perhaps knowing one place intimately is to have a way of knowing all places (Mabey 2006:5).

Lorimer (ibid.) goes on to comment:

Being attuned to the most local of conditions offers him unlikely resource to make claims for a universally applicable form of awareness. …what Mabey posits is an openness of attitude while being present in, or propelled through, the flux of the world; be these landscapes which are actual, textual or imaginative.

The words ‘an openness of attitude while being present in, or propelled through, the flux of the world’ describes John’s way of writing with his focus on present action rather than end-points and meanings. As the world is not static but continually in ‘flux’ or process, its changes need attending to, and constant monitoring makes sense to allow for adjustments, extensions and new interpretations.

All of the above insights are helpful and plausible but still do not satisfactorily explain the role of repetitive routines such as regular walking. Edensor (2008:12) suggests that these ‘regular attentions with the familiar’ also seem like a constantly keeping in touch with, a tuning into, the concrete, the tactile, the actual, rather than the interior world of memories, reflection and imagination. One of the more helpful descriptions is from the cognitive scientist, Daniel Dennett (1996:152) when discussing the human memory retrieval mechanism that he describes as a technology:

We build elaborate systems of mnemonic association – pointers, labels, chutes and ladders, hooks and chains. We refine our resources by incessant rehearsal and tinkering, turning our brains (and all the associated peripheral gear we acquire) into a huge structured network of competences.

This ‘incessant rehearsal and tinkering’ in the on-going structuring of a ‘network of competences’ is an apt description of both John’s and Amanda’s regular walking routines. Clark (2001:148), writing in the same discipline, argues further that if the human mind is an extended system comprising body, brain and world, then we need to constantly keep the world ‘in the loop’. This repeated ‘loop into the world’ as he calls it, ‘allows the subject to find new interpretations…’: Clark (1997:218) also describes this
process as “reaching out” to the world, a phrase that describes both John’s routine attentive monitoring of his exterior world and Amanda’s constantly seeking elsewhere:

...in this “reaching out” to the world we sometimes create wide cognitive and computational webs: webs whose understanding and analysis requires the application of the tools and concepts of cognitive science to larger, hybrid entities comprising brains, bodies, and a wide variety of external structures and processes.

In his book *Mindware: an introduction to the philosophy of cognitive science*, Clark (2001:142-143) argues

The naked biological brain is just a part ...of a spatially and temporally extended process involving lots of extraneural operations, whose joint action creates the intellectual product. ...the notion of the “problem-solving engine” is really the notion of the whole caboodle: the brain and body operating within an environmental setting. .... We humans actively create and exploit multiple external media, yielding a variety of encoding and manipulative opportunities whose reliable presence is then factored deep into our problem-solving strategies.

The words ‘reliable presence’ remind me of John’s opening comment on the escarpment: ‘It’s still there towering above the silent roof top’. Clark (1997:153), in using research on infants’ developmental behaviour (Thelen and Smith 1994:260) as an illustration reports that it was concluded that the behaviour observed (learning to reach) could be seen not as under the control of a fixed inner resource of developmental patterns prefigured by the genes but rather as emergent out of ‘a continual dialogue’ involving neural, bodily, and environmental factors and that solutions were discovered in relation to the children’s own situations and abilities, ‘carved out of their individual landscapes’. This ‘continual dialogue’ would seem to be a plausible description of more general practical learning and calls to mind John’s ongoing sensuous dialogue. Clark’s major point is that ‘biological systems profit profoundly from local environmental structure’. The environment, he states,

is not best conceived solely as a problem domain to be negotiated. It is equally, and crucially, a resource to be factored into the solutions. ... Such structures, molded by an iterated sequence of brain-world interactions, can alter and transform the original problem until it takes a form that can be managed with the limited resources of pattern-completing, neural-network-style cognition. ... The brain need not waste its time replicating such capacities. Rather, it must learn to interface with the external media in ways that maximally exploit their peculiar virtues. (1996:220) (my italics)

John and Amanda’s routine walking on the escarpment forms an interface between their internal and external worlds in order to make the best use of the rich resources for moving, sensing and thinking available in their environments, and accessed via the body through action and sensation as well as later through reflection. Dennett
(1997:144-145) in summing up the human situation in regard to ‘external tools’ throws more light on the role of those ‘regular attunements with the familiar’:

We keep pointers’ and ‘indices’ in our brains and leave as much of the actual data as we can in the external world… A human mind is not only not limited to the brain but would be rather severely disabled if these external tools were removed – at least as disabled as the near-sighted are when their eye-glasses are taken away.

As Taussig (1992:141-142) expressed it: ‘…a knowledge that lies as much in the objects and spaces of observation as in the body and mind of the observer’ (my emphasis). Dennett (1997:145) then goes on to point out the downside of leaving the data in the external world:

The more data and devices you off-load, the more dependent you become on these peripherals…

In dealing with this problem of dependency in the argument, in view of the fact that the human attributes of mobility and adaptability have been crucial in the success of the species, Dennett (ibid.:144-145) goes on to describe that other side of the familiar:

...nevertheless, the more intimately familiar you become with the peripheral objects thanks to your practice in manipulating them, the more confidently you can then do without them, sucking the problems back into your head and solving them in an imagination disciplined by its external practice. (my italics)

So we humans have evolved to have it both ways! We make maximum use of whatever, tools, structures, processes are available in our environments by interfacing with them but we are not limited by them. We can access their virtual counterparts in memory. Further, in a broader sense, we gain transferable knowledge from all engagements with the world in practice because these bodily interactions continually maintain, correct and extend our somatic and sensory competences and our imaginations, that is, the quality of our ability to move, sense and think. As John Wylie (2002:454) realised on the summit of Gladstonbury Tor, and expressed by quoting Merleau-Ponty, ‘my power of imagining is nothing but the persistence of the world around me’.

The physical connection of body and ground, the exercise of all the senses is ‘written’ into the neural pathways and muscular consciousness of the body and becomes continually renewed, adjusted and more deeply and indelibly etched and, in many cases, automatic, through repetition at a level that does not involve language. It is fed into the central consciousness via memories of feelings, images, smells and sounds, a knowledge that is ‘imageric and sensate’ (Taussig, 1992:142), and the ‘outer’ becomes the ‘inner’, an ‘imagination disciplined by its external practice’ (Dennett, 1997:145). To
express this another way: memory is continually adjusted and renewed by the contingencies which impact it when ‘the actual object (re) meets its virtual counterpart’ – ‘the unpredictable, uncertain actualisation of virtualities’ (Bergson/Deleuze in Grosz, 2005:100-110).

5.3 Self-world attunement

In this section I turn to the process of attunement - an integral part of the tension between self and world that is landscape. To attune – to use a dictionary definition - is to adjust or accustom something to become receptive or responsive to something else. From my readings of John’s and Amanda’s diaries, I outline the processes of how self-world attunement may occur through the repetitive routine walking of the home territory. Self-world attunement I argue draws upon the connections between sensuous knowledge and reflective knowledge, between engagement or presence and disengagement or absence.

Firstly, self-world attunement is conceptualised as an ongoing process. Self-world attunement may be thought of as the ongoing forging and maintaining of competences by engagement with external structures, processes and life forms encountered in the everyday, so as to better move, sense and think. As discussed above, at one level, self-world attunement is conceived to rely upon the repetitive, recurrent, habitual routines of everyday life to ensure the maintenance of bodily inscription and the ongoing exercise and education of the body and its senses. These bodily competences are kept currently ‘in practice’ and ‘up-to-date’ and therefore readily operable.

At another level, self-world attunement is also reliant on memory, on previous knowledge of how things were on earlier walks, and on reflecting on the differences noticed. For example, John’s and Amanda’s detailed appreciation of how things are now is based on information from past iterations. Self-world attunement is a cumulative learning process important in the on-going formation of consciousness and identity. And, yet at another level self-world attunements while reliant upon the repetition of engagements are also conceived to require the absences, or gaps of disengagement. Most obviously these gaps, or ‘time out’, enable the transition from fatigue to freshness and the ability to monitor change over time. These are conceived to be an essential component required for the generation of reflective knowledge (as mentioned in the second point above). But, most importantly, the absences of disengagement allow the
reflecting on' of second order thinking – a re-grouping or gathering together. As Bergson puts it:

Movement and action drives the memory image away; repose and disconnection from the pressures of action enable memory images to flood consciousness. (Grosz, 2005:101)

During engagement in action both sensuous dialogue and some reflection take place, but in the absences or stillnesses between attunements there is additional time for recollection and reflection, the incorporation of new experiences, an unconscious and conscious circulation of ideas and images in the mind, a re-combining and re-ordering which impacts future engagement and action. One obvious effect that comes to mind is the chance to develop and adjust strategies and tactics for coping with, or optimising future attunements.

Self-world attunement is therefore conceptualised to require repetitions – the normal pervasive, incessant, back and forth movements inherent in dwelling, as well as the movements between engagement and withdrawal, presence and absence. These repetitions and alternations are necessary not only for the production of both sensuous and reflective knowledge but also to provide a mechanism for the two kinds of knowledge to interact and qualify each other in the space before being applied in the next attunement. In this way the knowledge generated by the whole body/mind can be brought to bear on the next round of perception and action – ‘the unpredictable, uncertain actualisation of virtualities’ that makes change and innovation possible (Grosz, 2005:110). In this way the imagination is ‘disciplined by its external practice’ (Dennett, 1997:145).

5.4 Conclusion
Two threads of the thesis are woven through this chapter. The first thread addresses the methodological question of texts, in a project that is interested in the unconscious as well as the conscious. The chapter introduced the concept of a reflected sensuous dialogue to challenge arguments that writing can never capture the embodied experience of walking. While acknowledging that all writing is essentially a reflective act, John’s present tense writing while on the track demonstrated that some kinds of narrative do have the potential to express walking’s ‘immanent, embodied, sensual characteristics’, at least impressionistically, and do not ‘consign [them] to secondary importance’ (Edensor, 2008:138). In trying to capture his walking experience, John refrained from overtly reflecting on his own meanings and values. John’s diary with its
in-the-moment unfolding of action, its lack of explicit storying and focus on the journey rather than end-points and meanings, provided a narrative of a sensuous dialogue performing the escarpment as a presence ‘that engenders its own effects and affects’ (Rose, 2006:542), ‘imperatives to action which guide, imply and ordain corporeal sensibilities’ (Wylie, 2007:176).

The conceptual comprises the second thread of this chapter. The reflected glimpses of John’s sensuous dialogue with the escarpment recorded in his diary demonstrated the acquisition of a knowledge that is not reflective but directly kinetic and sensuous, ‘written’ into the body; enhanced and renewed by repetitive everyday routines. The sensuous dialogue operates without the need for language, because it resides in the neural pathways, muscular consciousness and automatic reflexes of the body and feeds the imagination through memory of images and sensations. The rich excess of the living landscape affords resources to better move, sense and think with. In these ‘imperatives’ to action and reaction, in the stimulation of the body, mind and senses and the development of the imagination, lies a generic process through which the escarpment generates meaning and value for many people in many individual ways in their everyday lives.

In conceptualising landscape through this interpretation of John’s diary I argued for the importance of the agency of other presences and absences, both human and non-human, experienced as part of the repetitive routines and rhythms of dwelling. Building upon these ideas I then introduced the concept of self-world attunement – how the creative tensions of self and world work to produce both sensuous and reflective knowledge through the repetitive alternations of presence and absence.

The concept of self-world attunement is further explored in the following chapters. In Chapter 6 I explore how self-world attunements form the routines, rituals and habits of regularly driving a freight-train through the Illawarra Escarpment.
Working the escarpment railway tracks
- Photos by project participants

16-8-07 Very heavy thaw
Light rain caused rail down
To son through wilderness
15km through Stanley Park
Lights of the long dwelling
As another trip away begins.
No wildlife to be seen but
Plenty of plans overhead only
Up abit by Helensburgh.

16-8-07 Coming home no animals
From Helensburgh to Ottawa burst
Out of Bald Hill tunnel I get
The same feeling every time (nearby
Home) We have a manager riding
Along with us to Pt McMurray

See a deer and wallaby at
Seabank near coalcliff come
Out of Clinton tunnel can
See wollongong and Pt Kembla
Lights more so aber scarsborough.
Explain about cold one hop to
Him and what things are like
When heavy rain plays made on
The coast. Long evening in office
17-8-07 Drive up ourley usual
Chapter 6
Responsibility and relief: working the escarpment railway tracks

Transport, then, is distinguished not by the employment of mechanical means but by the dissolution of the intimate bond that, in wayfaring, couples locomotion and perception. (Ingold 2007:78).

In this chapter I conceptualise a diarist as a ‘wayfarer’ who engages with the escarpment by working as a freight train driver transporting goods to and from the Illawarra. Tim Ingold in the above epigraph makes an interesting distinction between transport and what he refers to as ‘wayfaring’, a word that seems to have fallen out of modern usage. Ingold is using the word in its older or more basic sense than the dictionary meaning, generally given as ‘journeying or travelling, especially on foot’. He defines wayfaring as ‘the most fundamental mode by which living beings inhabit the earth’ (2007:81), and ‘to go along is to thread one’s way through the world rather than routeing from point to point across its surface’ (2007:79). Ingold goes on to expand his meaning in the following way:

...creatures of all kinds...are wayfarers and that wayfaring is a movement of self-renewal or becoming rather than the transport of already constituted beings from one location to another. Making their way through the tangle of the world, wayfarers grow into its fabric and contribute through their movements to its ever-evolving weave. ...And it takes us back to the fundamental idea that life is lived not at points but along lines. (2007:116)

This distinction between transport and wayfaring is relevant to the practices of train driving and train passengering. As Ingold (2007:78) says:

...The transported traveller becomes a passenger, who does not himself move but is rather moved from place to place. The sights, sounds and feelings that accost him during the passage have absolutely no bearing on the motion that carries him forth'.

Although using mechanical mobility, a train driver by the very nature of his work is a wayfarer because the ‘intimate bond between locomotion and perception’ is not dissolved. In other words, the senses responsible for controlling the motion are also responsible for perceiving the world travelled through. As Ingold (1999:434) says:

It is not difficult to think of examples where action and perception still coincide, even though the application of force is indirect. The sailor, hauling in a rope through a pulley block, still feels the wind in the sails.
In the writing of a text, Ingold (2007) also distinguishes between wayfaring, a focus on the journey - what happens along the way, and transport, a focus on the destination or end-point. Although the rail freight has to be transported to a destination, for the train driver the focus is on the journey, in this case, traversing the escarpment.

The diary interpreted in this chapter was written by Sean, a man in his thirties who drives diesel locomotives for a rail freight company, mainly leaving from and returning to the Port Kembla rail terminal. He lives at Lake Heights overlooking Lake Illawarra, only a five-minute drive from the harbourside industrial complex of Port Kembla. Sean has lived all of his life in the Illawarra, mainly in the suburbs around the shores of the Lake Illawarra in view of the Illawarra Escarpment. He has written a diary for this project reporting on his journeying through the escarpment both when train driving and by car. Sean was invited to be a diarist for the project because of his working relationship with the escarpment but also because of his critical appreciation of the benefits as well as the drawbacks of the escarpment recorded in his survey response. He shows a keen sense of different framings of the escarpment. On the one hand, he appreciates the favourable climatic effects and the benefits of forested ecosystems with diverse vegetation and animal life so close to the city. On the other, considered from the perspective of market forces he understands how the escarpment operates to reduce the ‘ease of commerce due to limited access to Wollongong and Port Kembla’ caused by the rugged escarpment terrain (Sean’s survey response).

This chapter draws on Sean’s diary alongside participant observation, a walk, follow-up conversations and technical information supplied by Anthony Gogarty, a railway consultant. To help familiarise the reader, the first two sections of the chapter provide background information on train driving and rail freight transport together with an account of experience gained from participant observation. I follow this with an analysis of the diary itself, its structure, content and style of writing. Next I apply insights gained from the recent academic literature on mobilities - on entrainment and the production of mobile assemblages - to train driving. I investigate the processes of attunement by examining the movements, rhythms and emotions of Sean’s working life. I point to the importance of alternating rhythms between states of responsibility and relief, of setting out and coming home, of freshness and fatigue. I argue these alternating rhythms are central to understanding how people value landscape when conceptualised as unfolding self-world tensions. Further this dialectic or tension between these and other kinds of oppositions is a creative force in forging further attunements, flows, moments, awarenesses, sensibilities, harmonies, transcendences and presences.
6.1 Participant observation: climbing the escarpment in a freight train

My ride up the escarpment, therefore, sitting in the cab of Sean’s freight train was essential for some understanding of train driving and for a grasp of how Sean (and his co-driver that day) experienced their work. I joined Sean’s train at Port Kembla at 5.30 am one fine November morning for the trip up the mountain on the Moss Vale line. The atmosphere in the cab as we left Port Kembla was similar to the enjoyable anticipation of a day out on the weekend rather than a day at work – a feeling emanating from both Sean and his co-driver, not just the way I was feeling which was fascinated but more tentative. They were very keen to point out railway details and sights. It seemed to add to their enjoyment to have someone with whom to share their experiences of their work and mobility. Sean’s account of this trip was written up as one of his diary entries and is reproduced in Text Box 3 below.

Riding in the cab is very different from travelling as a train passenger. Passengers do not see the track and how the train negotiates the terrain. There is a panoramic view of the escarpment and, on this particular route through areas otherwise difficult to access, a privileged view that few people experience. This particular branch line, connecting the Illawarra with the mainline from Sydney to Melbourne at Moss Vale, is steep, with the steepest grades still being operated for freight transport in the southern hemisphere – steeper but shorter than the famous ascent over the Blue Mountains west of Sydney and with the curves in the track being tighter and closer together. Only experienced drivers are able to undertake the route because of the skill required to control the train on the descent with a heavy load.

On the ascent of the escarpment there is a strong sense of dynamic negotiation and tactile engagement with the topography: the steepness, the confined spaces, rocky cliff faces, and forested gorges. The train weaves its way slowly around the cliff faces on a single track on a seemingly narrow ledge, with crumbly rock-face above and a sheer drop below. Two tunnels have been cut to accommodate the track near the top of the escarpment. Safety measures are continually in view: A rock shed to protect the train from falling boulders - a damaged wire mesh fence shows clearly where a huge boulder had gone straight through; and slip-areas have slide fences with sensors that relay any disturbance of the ground to the signal system, automatically turning the signals to red to prevent a catastrophic derailment. My first reaction to this experience was that there must have been a very strong economic reason for constructing a railway through such steep and unstable topography. The line was built for precisely
the same reason that we were hauling 30 empty trucks that day – the need for limestone from the tableland quarries to smelt iron ore in the blast furnaces of Port Kembla. It was for this reason that the track was built back in 1932 – the same year as the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Compared to the rusty-looking battered exterior of the locomotive, the interior of the cab was surprisingly comfortable, pleasant and modern, equipped with ergonomic leather seats and instruments: computer and radio housed in a console under the windscreen. I was surprised to discover when part of the console cover was removed, generous sized tea and toast-making facilities were revealed. We were soon enjoying tea and raisin toast. This helped to make up for a rushed 4.30 am start to the day.

Between changes in the setting of the controls due to changes in the grade, Sean and his friendly co-driver mate were relaxed and had plenty of time to look around and describe the features of the journey. It was obvious that they were both keenly interested and enjoyed the experience themselves. The ‘limestone run’ is just one of their routes but for Sean the one that he enjoys the most. He enjoys the views and spectacles, the forested gorges, the plentiful animal and bird sightings – far more than can be seen whilst driving on the roads. Also, there is a certain kind of exhilaration in what Sean termed ‘running the mountain’ in his diary; of having acquired the skills to be able to traverse this difficult topography and also to regularly experience such rugged, uncultivated places in a way that few other people are able to do. There is a sense of appreciation of the unique interactions forged by this type of work, the traversing, experiencing and working of the topography.

In the driving cab of the locomotive on flatter, straighter sections of line, the feeling of the movement is of ‘sailing’ along (to use a metaphor from Sean’s diary) high above the ground and with a huge sense of mechanical empowerment. It was not until trying to disembark from the train where there is no platform that I realised how high the cab is above the ground. At times the pace seems slow and dignified – but when trying to see something at close range, the train seems to be rushing past, blurring the close up, making it difficult to see small things such as waratah. The seductiveness of the motion experienced in the cab of the loco is the combination of powerful engines producing smooth, groundless movement combined with a high, panoramic view. The experience was so enjoyable that I did not want to leave the train where alternative transport back to Port Kembla had been arranged. But I had to leave because I was not permitted to enter the limestone quarry.
Text Box 3 – Sean’s diary entry for participant observation on freight train

9227/2928 limestone.  Good day for a train ride – glorious cool, clear morning. We set sail at 0605. Finally got Pat on for a train ride. All good on departure roll B7. Report departure to Parramatta, check radio system is functioning OK with calls to Wollongong Complex and log on to Train Control in Junee then settle in for the ride. Following some trains on to the main at Unanderra North then up the mountain we go. We see deer at Farmborough Heights.

Explaining the sights and line ahead. We see more deer just above Dombarton and go through the “snowshute” (No. 1 Illawarra Range rock shed) and past a lovely waterfall and into No. 1 Illawarra Range tunnel. We climb alongside slide fences which are connected to the signal system. If a rock fall occurs it breaks the circuit putting signals back to red. Just before the look post we leave the face of the escarpment. Turning inland we pass through the gap entering Flying Fox Creek and Sydney Catchment Authority land. We follow Flying Fox Creek up grade to Illawarra Range No. 2 Tunnel (long tunnel). Exiting it is only a short distance to a white-knuckle moment as we cross the viaduct with awesome views down the Avon River valley. A couple more corners take us to a speed restriction where we pass close to a crumbling cliff face and another slide fence. Our speed pegged down to 20 km we traverse this area and are soon up to 40 km, our track speed for this segment of line. So far we have seen deer and a few wallabies along with heaps of parrots and a couple of kookaburras. The land levels out a little, the line straightens and we approach Summit Tank. Green signals beckon us onward and we pass through the Tank on the mainline. The line gently climbs from here to the 110 km post then drops down to cross Calderwood Creek at a point only about 30 m from the edge of the escarpment. On exiting a cutting we see a large roo rolling around on the ground. We ponder what he is up to but continue on. At 112 km the climb resumes. We enter more rugged country again with views of the upper reaches of the Avon Dam though never see the water. The waratahs are just about finished for the season. However, there are still a number that still look good. We come out of the rugged area and before too long cross Molly Morgan swamp. Before long we are back into the bush. We see another wallaby and a lyrebird just as we near Mount Murray loop. More green lights keep us going. We have now left SCA land and enter farmland with scattered pockets of bush. We pass under the Tourist Road then the coast is again in view. The railway location is aptly named Oceanview. We approach another slip area. This one has a digitised voice telling that the slip site is clear and we are OK to continue. If we don’t hear it that means that there is maybe a problem and we stop the train and walk into a box to check if 3 green lights are illuminated. If so we go, if not we stay until track inspector certifies the line OK.

We continue away from the coast for good this time and head inland past the Boy’s Bridge where two drivers lost their lives needlessly through someone’s negligence. An old bridge abutment collapsed in heavy rain. A train hit it derailing the lead loco before striking the abutment of the new bridge. The cab of the loco was destroyed sealing their fate. We pass the back of the famous Robertson Pie Shop and continue on toward Ranelagh House. We see another wallaby and the valley where Babe was filmed. We pass the platform which is at the summit of the line then drop in toward Robertson with more green lights and plenty of whistle for the crossings. We drop down away from Robbo and into the fog passing the upper reaches of Wingecaribee Swamp. We pause at Burrawang to bid farewell to Pat and continue on to Moss Vale and Medway Quarry at South Marulen. On the way back we see the usual amounts of animals including unfortunately that big kangaroo now without his head after being struck by a train. Was he sick or injured (snakebite?). We are following a coal train so have a spell at both Mt Murray and Summit Tank pulling up at the platform for a look from the lookout.

On the way down we get relieved at the 100 km. Exiting by road vehicle we take our time as Jay had never been up here and it had been 12 years since I had been up here. The road is awesome and just as I remembered. We see deer and wallabies and birdlife galore. We pull up at a lookout above Dombarton for photos and a look see. We both straight away think of Pat who had missed out on this (sorry!). Along the road some more we are on a ridge with the coast on one side and bush and a reservoir o the other. Before long we are at the big banged up SCA gate which we lock up again. Pass around the back of Mount Kembla before heading down through Mount Kembla and back to Port Kembla and the end of a big work day.
6.2 Background on freight rail transport

Firstly, as readers’ experience and knowledge of rail transport would vary, I provide brief background information of railway mobility. I then discuss train driving as both embodied and performative.

6.2.1 The basics of the railway system

A railway track is an alternative approach to solving the problems of wheeled transport over varied terrain that impedes movement. A rail line creates a continuous homogenous surface for the wheels to run smoothly as well as being engineered to eliminate steering. It developed out of the use of rails, usually with horses, to haul heavy loads from mines during the early stages of the industrial revolution. The great advantage of a railway is that

the friction or rolling resistance of a smooth metal wheel running along a smooth rail is much lower than that of any road vehicle. … It means that an engine of a certain power can haul a much greater load on rails than it could do on the road, and haul it with greater speed and safety. (Rolt, 1968:12)

However, the friction between wheels and rail is insufficient for steep gradients that require building expensive cuttings, embankments, viaducts and tunnels. Once the rail track is laid it is an economical form of transport especially for hauling freight, the track both solving the problems of, and exploiting, the topography.

A railway track is different from a road in that it cuts through country and across roads, often taking the shortest possible route with the least grades. In the engineering of railway lines the grades are limited as much as possible especially on mainlines (Rolt, 1968:12) so that the track literally cuts through the terrain to level out the track. Of course, modern, high-speed motorways connecting cities are also built to reduce hills and bends. But in general roads and road-vehicles have a much greater capacity to climb hills and take bends.

I argue that becoming a train driver necessitates being in tune with all kinds of life. In addition to learnt knowledge of train-driving regulations, a train driver must be intimately attuned to the features of the train and track; its grades and curves. Every trip is a re-engagement that makes a train driver acutely aware of the topography of the country they are traversing. Train driving is the skilful and creative application of mechanical means and diesel power to the momentum or inertia generated by gravity and slope. Train driving is very different to automobility. Driving a car is a continuous
moment-to-moment activity, mostly automatic but it nevertheless calls for constant attention, adjustment and improvisation as the driver controls every aspect of the vehicle’s movement. Train driving is far more choreographed or orchestrated. There is no constant monitoring of, and decisions about, steering and other traffic - two major aspect of car driving - as this is taken care of by the rails and the signal system. However the amount of generated momentum impacting the ability to bring the train to a halt accurately is far more problematic and subject to variations depending on the type of train, the particular track and weather conditions.

Changes in grade are important and each route has a gradient chart which shows the angle and length of each section of grade of the track and the tightness of the curves. In seemingly flat country frequent slight changes of grade can require more attention and adjustment than a steep track where the grades are long and even and the controls can be set. The driver then only has to monitor the speed and the track ahead. The inability of a train to stop quickly requires drivers to be very alert to the life and movement ahead. Managing to pull up 3000 tonnes of train strung out over a kilometre, without running past the red signal, may be nerve-racking in some conditions. Running even a metre past the signal will be electronically registered by the system and investigated. The driver will be formally required to answer for the infringement. With light trains, when the ratio of power to weight is greater, the driving is easier because any errors of judgement are more easily counteracted. Conversely, the inertia of a loaded train requires a great deal of power to propel it forward slowly when fully stopped. The driving of heavy freight trains requires skill to make maximum use of the momentum generated by the weight of the freight. Economic/fuel efficient working of train and track requires embodied skill gradually built up through practical experience.

Another characteristic feature of rail-tracks is that they provide a completely different orientation to roads. Houses tend to show their fronts to roads but more often than not their backyards to railways. Railways, as an invention of the industrial revolution, often connect factories within a city, or create ‘resource hinterlands’ that are orientated to ports and factories. Since automobiles have become normalised as part of the everyday life in cities, neighbourhoods follow roads and vice versa. As Thrift (2004:46) notes ‘large parts of the landscape near roads are being actively moulded by formal techniques like viewshed analysis so that they make visual sense to the occupants of cars as they speed by’. Furthermore, today, railway journeys often help sustain understandings of ‘back country’ and ‘wilderness’. For example, the Moss Vale line.
Sean’s comment in the escarpment survey demonstrates this kind of practice: ‘It is unreal up top seen by hardly anyone’.

6.2.2 The embodied qualities of train driving

To illustrate the embodied qualities of train driving I first discuss the practices of becoming a freight train driver. I asked the railway consultant what makes a ‘good’ train driver. The reply was twofold:

(1) ‘knowledge of the track is essential’.

In addition to basic training in the mechanics of train driving, drivers must be trained and certified for each particular route. A driver cannot drive a train on an unknown or even a little known track. Train and track are not readily interchangeable in the way that roads and motor vehicles are thus allowing improvisation on unfamiliar or alternative routes. Detailed knowledge of the track is essential as the brakes have to be applied well in advance in order to slow or stop the train. Furthermore, changing speed varies depending on the weight and length of the train (a kilometre or more), the amount of horsepower (up to three locomotives are used), the grade and curves of the track, the presence of other trains and weather conditions. For example, in wet weather speed has to be reduced due to ‘greasy rails’. At times sand is used on the track to ensure traction.

(2) ‘a skilled working of the terrain is best practice’

Train driving requires knowledge of train regulations, but also a visceral knowledge of a particular train on a specific route. Visceral knowledge of the track enables optimising fuel use and minimising wear of brakes.

Trainee drivers are required to complete two years of on-the-job training with experienced drivers before they become certified to take charge of a train. This is in addition to formal technical education in the mechanics of track and train, the intricacies of the traffic control system and safety training. As mentioned above, driver certification is only for a particular route. Each subsequent route is learnt through practice and repetition and certified separately. Hauling freight by rail, a driver is minutely attuned to the ups and downs of the grades and the curves of the track whereas when driving a car one has to just put one’s foot down and hardly think at all about hill and dale. Through practice - repetition of sensuous and kinetic experience – a train driver has to get ‘a feel for the game’ (Bourdieu, 1990:82). Sean noted in
conversation that changes in the sound and even the smell of the diesel motors alerts
him to check the instruments and monitor performance. Of course train drivers use
instruments to monitor speed, locomotive performance and braking, but they still sense
situations with their whole bodies and become aware of changes through their senses -
the feel of how things are going.

Making maximum use of the momentum generated by the topography and the weight
of the train, as well as the slowing effects of inertia, involves improvisation, that is
anticipation and judgement generated by practice. This embodied process parallels
Daniel Dennett’s description of the operation of the human brain:

fundamentally an anticipator; an expectation-generator. It mines the present for
clues, which it refines with the help of the materials it has saved from the past,
turning them into anticipations of the future. And then it acts, rationally, on the
basis of those hard-won anticipations. (1996:57)

To become a freight train driver also requires adhering to regulations that govern the
movement of freight trains. Freight train regulations stipulate a crew of two drivers at all
times, the drivers being in touch with the train control centres by radio and computer.
Drivers cannot be in charge of a train for longer than 11 hours. If this time limit is likely
to be exceeded a relief crew is sent by road to take over the driving before the
destination is reached. Sean’s diary has two instances of being relieved of the train
before arriving back at Port Kembla and one instance of he and the co-driver being
sent by road to relieve the crew of another train.

6.3 The diary of a train driver

Sean wrote a total of 29 dated diary entries consisting of 19 train and 10 car trips. The
diary is an almost continuous record of all of Sean’s travel. Missing dates are due to
rostered days off. The journey itself provided the organising principle and initial writing
momentum. If Sean did not think there was anything worth reporting, in matter-of-fact
fashion, he left the entry very short. In a group of repeated trips subsequent entries
were usually brief. This suggests that inspiration to write is more about the unusual
than the familiar. Storying with events and observations out of the ordinary was
required for writing, or it was recorded by Sean as ‘just another trip’ with ‘nothing out of
the ordinary’.
The diary was handwritten in the notebook provided and returned to me unedited. Opportunities to write on the job were variable, hence entries were often written afterwards at home. Sean said that writing up a trip at home helped him to unwind after a work shift. Most of the entries are short summaries of trips varying in length between 2 and 17 lines except for the one entry that is 59 lines equating to 1-1/2 pages of typed text. This is the trip that I was on board for participant observation. This account (reproduced in Box 2 above) illustrates the eventfulness and complexity of a train driver’s engagement with the track that fashion their understanding of landscape: the grades, curves, tunnels, cuttings, viaducts, overbridges, signals, assorted safety measures in dangerous areas, speed restrictions, kilometre posts etc. These details are mixed with many wildlife sightings, views, topographical information and stories.

6.3.1 The ‘how’ of the writing and the limitations of the style

In spite of the variations, already noted, as to where and when the diary was written (and often afterwards at home), Sean’s use of the present tense remained constant. The diary was written as if ‘in-the-moment’, and in Sean’s case, sometimes in the present continuous tense so that it has a sense of immediacy, of going along, journeying. But, Sean mostly used the present tense in retrospect and in a completely different way to John. He wrote using a colloquial way of speaking - an informal, storytelling mode that one often hears but does not often see in writing except occasionally as dialogue in fiction. But, it is a frequently heard way of speaking when events are being related in which the speaker was present in the action - as a way of denoting presence, not just indicating time (present as distinct from past or future) but as a way of overcoming absence. It is a ‘being there’ kind of storytelling mode about past action. One of the diary’s car entries well illustrates this way of relating events:

Busy on the Pass with wet and foggy conditions. Bloke behind me is in a hurry. I don’t see the point. Nearly home and not going to do anything stupid as there are cars and trucks ahead. We get to the bottom of the Pass and this guy takes his chance and decides to overtake 6 cars and trucks in one hit. Car comes from other way. Me and guy in front back off. Overtaking car loses control and ends up through an Armco barrier and in a culvert. We all park and go head to lend assistance. Bloke climbs out of passenger side window, his 4WD ute a write-off. He is uninjured. Some people stay – I’ve seen enough and head for home, a little shook up but glad not to be directly involved. Good break away but night shift beckons.

Sean has used this same way of relating all of his diary entries. Unlike John’s continuous recording in real time, the writing is discontinuous and episodic in character. Like Amanda’s diary, the writing momentum is more dependent on events that stand out in relief from the ordinary: the driving details, wildlife sightings,
spectacles and change. The writing is a reporting, story-telling type of narrative that is inherently retrospective. The time sequences are compressed because of the trip lengths and uneven writing opportunities.

Emotions were also important in generating writing momentum. Sean’s main concern is discharging his work responsibilities – doing his job of delivering the freight at the expected time as economically as possible without infringing any of the regulations. Some entries are dominated by a sense of homecoming, of the impending ‘relief’ of the responsibility of the train. Other entries convey the expectant, fresh, buoyant feeling of ‘setting sail’. Each entry implicitly expresses a mood – how things were that day – from the ‘ho hum’, tedious, business-as-usual, through interest, speculation, satisfaction, pride, pleasure, enjoyment, enthusiasm and elation to relief, frustration, annoyance. The diary relates very little of Sean’s kinetic and sensuous experience of the motion of the train itself. The attraction and pleasure of the motion, or its limitations and difficulties, are mostly ‘understood’. This may be partly because familiarity now renders it ‘taken for granted’ by Sean as being part of the train driving experience, and a more personal aspect of experience not normally commented upon. It may also be partly because the actual motion has been ‘abstracted for the purposes of the narrative plot’ (Edensor, 2008:10) in a similar way that Amanda’s walking mobility was not described. Moods are mostly embedded in the tone and the rhythm of the writing rather than expressed by direct comment. And yet there are hints and references in the diary to the embodied attributes of train driving such as:

‘...we set sail...’;
‘...train will roll you all the way home. Momentum is a good thing.’;
and the very topographic
‘...and the hill resumes stealing speed...’:

Sean’s writing combines some of the features of each of the two styles used so far by Amanda and John. Like John, Sean is writing in the present tense about action, the movement of the unfolding journey and the sights going by. The text is not overtly reflective but much less descriptive in character than John’s. In spite of the similarities to John’s present tense writing, the retrospective storytelling mode is the dominant feature of the text.

In addition the two following diary entries describe the motion of the train and the strategies employed to negotiate escarpment sections of the track.
Heavy train light on horsepower = slow trip. We set sail – I'm driving. Green lights all the way to Scarborough where we wait for a passenger [train]. Then set sail into Clifton tunnel and a 40 km board at the Sydney end. I hold train back in dynamic braking till just past the platform at Coalcliff. Then slowly come out and let 3400 t. of train push us down a dip onto a 60 km board and the hill resumes stealing speed as we hit the viaduct right on its 40 km board.

...40 through Clifton tunnel then 60-65 from the other side (south) of Scarborough down to Coledale then 70 km to Bulli then get up to 75 km and train will roll you all the way home. Momentum is a good thing.

These entries portray something of the embodied ‘feel' of train driving skills and the satisfactions of getting the strategy right.

6.3.2 Diary structure – routes, rosters, repetitions and rhythms

The work roster and the alternating routes dictate the structure of the diary. The working trips (all departing from Port Kembla rail terminal) involve two rail routes:

- the Illawarra line (double track) north along, up and through the escarpment via a series of four tunnels (and on up the coast en route to Sydney and Newcastle)
- the Moss Vale line (single track) southwest and immediately climbing steeply up the escarpment and across the tableland to Marulan (joining the mainline south at Moss Vale).

Due to the work roster, the diary divides into three sections, the particular route determining the characteristics of a working trip. The Illawarra Line is a longer and busier double track carrying passengers and freight to the metropolitan areas of Sydney and Newcastle, cutting through the ridges of the escarpment where it meets the ocean via four tunnels. The trips to Newcastle span two days and are mainly undertaken at night, the trip up being recorded in a separate diary entry to the trip back after an overnight stay and return to Port Kembla the following day driving a different train. In contrast the Moss Vale Line, usually to haul Marulan limestone back to Port Kembla, is mostly accomplished during daylight hours, both trip up and back recorded in the same entry. Sean in conversation expressed a preference for the route to Moss Vale because of its physical diversity.

The rhythms of Sean’s everyday life are evident in the repetition of working trips and the rostered shifts. The freight rail company has an interest in maintaining the certification of its drivers on each of their routes. Certification would lapse if enough practice on a particular route was not maintained over a one-year period. A table summarising the diary entries is provided in Appendix H to show the rhythmic repetitions of Sean’s everyday life in this 3 month period. The diary, in three sections according to route, commences in winter with six trips either up or back from
Newcastle, the escarpment sections traversed mainly after dark. In spring the route changes to the Moss Vale line with seven trips and there is much to observe during daylight hours at that time of year. The route then changes back to the Newcastle run again with another six trips but this time, due to daylight saving, more of the escarpment is travelled during daylight hours.

6.3.3 The rhythms of mobility
The train driving entries report and summarise each trip – Sean’s story of the mood, flavour, atmosphere and distinguishing features of each journey through the escarpment. The entries comprise a string of small stories like varied beads on the thread of the rail track. The journey is the story. Most entries are a mixture of the following three aspects: (1) the type of train and progress through varied terrains and conditions, particularly reporting on factors producing slowness or stoppages, (2) passing the time with interest and enjoyment through engagement with the track and the landscape - the events and spectacles of the passing scene, and (3) the social interactions and rhythms of dwelling in the cab of the locomotive. Entries also often conclude with a very brief evaluative comment about the trip or the impending ‘relief’ of going ‘off the locos’. Sean himself encapsulates all of these aspects in one particularly brief entry:

9227/2928 limestone. Another good day on the mountain with something to see, good conversation, music and no incidents’.

The three main aspects identified above neatly align with Edensor’s ‘three senses in which the rhythms of mobility constitute place’ (2010:5), namely, (1) the rhythms and patterns of mobile flow, (2) the rhythms of passing familiar features, and (3) the rhythms of the vehicle’s interior. I summarise and illustrate the content of the diary using these three aspects of the rhythms of train driving.

The rhythms and patterns of mobile flow
To illustrate the importance of patterns of mobile flows, Edensor (2010:5) uses Lefebvre’s (2004) example of the ‘stop-start rhythms of pedestrians and traffic and their variations over the diurnal cycle’ observed from his Paris window. Patterns of mobile flow ‘thus contribute to the spatio-temporal character of place, whether dynamic or placid, fast or slow…’. This constant movement is apparent in Sean’s diary - the ebbing and flowing of such mobilities as people, cars, other trains, animals, weather and seasons, the continual flux that is landscape. This is well illustrated in the following longer and lively entry:
6WB3 to Newcastle. Gotta love daylight saving. We leave Port at 1740 and straight away are on the tail of another train as the peak hots up. We wait between Lysaghts and Coniston for a train to follow off the coast line. We follow him all the way to Thirroul. Yellow lights, level crossings and concentration are the order of the day as always. He gets away a bit but catch him by Coledale. Its good to see the coast in daylight up here – it has been a while. No animals to be seen – just people out and about in backyards, winding down in the evening. We have a breather at Clifton to wait for a pass[enger train] to come off the single track through Clifton tunnel. Then it’s our turn. We follow a slow, loaded grain train. Due to the drought grain is being imported through the Inner Harbour. This one is going to Inghams [poultry farm] at Berrima via Sydney and the lesser grades than the mountain though a longer route. More yellow lights and slow speed. It is quite a hazy evening as we head around Stanwell Park then through Bald Hill tunnel and on toward Otford. …

Train drivers, their steering and traffic monitoring automated, are far more able than car drivers to be in tune with the movements of the rest of the world. And, of course, train drivers need to be always alert to these movements because there is the ever-present possibility that something or someone could be on or crossing the track – a car stuck at a level crossing, a vehicle on a farm track, a cow on the line, not to mention wildlife. Much of what Sean records in his diary is spectacle and movement of all kinds. In the words of Ingold (2007:116) ‘the tangle of the world[s]’ ‘ever-evolving weave’.  

The rhythms of passing the familiar

Secondly, Edensor (2010) points to how, for the traveller, regular train journeys result in a linear apprehension of landscape. In Edensor’s (2010:6) words, ‘the speed, pace and periodicity of a habitual journey produces a stretched out, linear apprehension of place shaped by the form of a railway or road, and the qualities of the vehicle’ Sheller and Urry (2006) argue that regular rhythms of mobility, such as commuting, produces what they term a ‘dwelling-in-motion’ (Sheller and Urry, 2006). Several authors have attributed dwelling-in-motion to ‘the predictable passing of familiar fixtures’, that contribute to a sense of ‘comforting reliability and mobile homeliness’ (Merriman, 2004, Jiron, 2010 quoted in Edensor, 2010:6). For Sean, the concepts of linear apprehension and dwelling-in-motion are helpful to understand why he enjoys the repetition of track features, views, spectacles and sightings under the differing conditions and moods of the particular work shift. Sean imposes his own rhythms on the journey, for instance, through watching for particular sights, especially for wildlife. At times the diary entries seem like a linear apprehension of animals as wildlife, especially on the Moss Vale line. Flowering plants and animals become points of difference that stand out. Sean’s accounts teem with animal sightings: eagles, owls, wallabies, kangaroos, deer, wombats, foxes, birds, snakes and echidnas. Animal sightings make a journey
distinctive – chance encounters that stand out in relief from the repetitiveness of a rail route. For Sean, animal sighting are a personal interest that is a recurring refrain or ritual, so much so that when they are absent Sean often records in his diary: ‘No animals’. He frequently interrupts a description of an unrelated incident to insert the when and where of an animal or plant sighting. For example, when the waratah were in bloom it was not just the sighting of a red flower here and there but the whole extent of that year’s flowering along a precisely identified 13 kms of the track. This springtime upsurge of life prompted Sean’s most enthusiastic entry:

...there are heaps of waratahs in flower. The best show in 4 years of me running the mountain. Wildlife galore with lyrebirds, more wallabies and even an echidna. On the return leg we see a large eagle flying just ahead of us keeping pace. Huge wingspan and an awesome sight.

Dwelling-in-motion is, as Edensor (2010: 6) suggests, transient and fleeting. However, the linear apprehension of a familiar journey as Merriman (2004:146) argues is also associated with ‘prolonged or repeated movements, fixities, relations and dwellings’. As illustrated by Sean, his understanding of the Illawarra landscapes is not a static, one-off fleeting impression, but an ongoing and relational. His relationship with Illawarra escarpment as a train driver is a composite of many viewings that enables him to notice differences, whilst moving as part of the flux of the world.

_The rhythms of the vehicle’s interior_

Thirdly, an integral part of the self-world tensions that are the landscape of train driving are the rhythms in the driver’s loco-cab. The effort involved in submitting to the bodily discipline required by the rhythms of travelling is ameliorated by Sean introducing some of his own rhythms into the cab. Edensor (2010:11) reminds us that: ‘The temporal parameters established by institutions and workplaces, ... are especially tightly managed ...where scope for laying one’s own beat on official rhythms is more severely circumscribed’. This could certainly be said of working in the railway system. However, the interior space of the loco cab is a chance for Sean to insert his own rhythms. His diary records how both the experience of time, and the mood within the cab can by modified not only by the interior of the cab being equipped to supply bodily comforts but also through individual practices such as, in Sean’s case, playing music, and requesting to be rostered whenever possible with a particular co-driver to ensure ‘good conversation’ and laughter. These factors provide rhythms more in tune with the bodily rhythms of the drivers. Driving a freight train exemplifies ‘dwelling-in-motion’, a sensuous and reflective engagement of self and world.
6.4 Entrainment

I turn next to the concept of entrainment to shed light on the processes of attunement required to master train-driving skills. Helpful here is the work of Evans and Franklin (2010). They introduce the concept of entrainment to help analyse the process of attunement for Equestrian Dressage. They argue that through rhythmic training two separate entities, horse and rider become one entity. Two bodily rhythms are ‘entrained’ to conform to meet the requirements of the human-designed dressage course. Evans and Franklin (2010) define entrainment as

...a term used in neurology and psychoacoustics to describe the way the rate of brain waves, breaths or heartbeats vary from one speed to another through exposure to an external rhythm. Entrainment is thus the mechanism by which two independent organisms internally synchronise with each other rhythmically... Their rhythms are synchronised not only as an act of conscious intent but, through entrainment, as a subconscious effect of neurological organization. This produces measurable changes in the organism as evidenced by entrained breathing or locomotor activity.

Hence, here I understand ‘entrainment’, as the synchronising of rhythms through a training of incremental, iterative practice (or dressage, the generic French term for this type of training that Lefebvre uses in his work Rhythmanalysis (2004)).

Similarly, I argue that learning to drive a freight train is another example of entrainment or repetition-based training as practiced (see also DeLyser (2010:147-148) for a discussion of the training of aeroplane pilots). As Edensor (2010:15) notes: ‘The productiveness of repetition is exemplified by the gaining of expertise so that practice becomes automatic and easy, or allows moments of eurythmy to emerge’. Ingold (1999:435-437) throws more light on this relationship between automatic actions and heightened attunement or awareness. He disagrees with both Connerton’s (1989:94) remark that when bodily execution becomes increasingly automatic ‘awareness retreats [and] the movement flows involuntarily’, and Leroi-Gourhan’s view ‘that routine technical operations take place in a twilight of consciousness and are thus devoid of intelligence’ (p 437). Ingold argues to the contrary that awareness increases:

...that the skilled bodily practices entailed in ‘handling’ are anything but automatic, but rather continually responsive to ever-changing environmental conditions. ...that in this responsivenes lies a form of awareness that does not so much retreat as grow in intensity with the fluency of action, and that in this respect there is no opposition between technicity and intelligence. (p 437)

What Ingold seems to be saying is that when the body is ‘virtually on autopilot’ (p 435) attention is freed up for a heightened form of attunement to, and awareness of, variations in materials and environmental conditions.
As Ingold (ibid. p 436) explained earlier:

…it is not the gesture itself but in the tuning of one's gestures to an emergent task, whose surrounding conditions are never precisely the same from one moment to the next, that the essence of dexterity resides (Bernstein, 1996, p 23).

Ingold (ibid. p. 439) concludes this line of argument by stating:

The rhythmic repetitions of gesture entailed in handling tools and materials are not, however, of a mechanical kind, like the oscillations of the pendulum or metronome. For they are set up through the continual sensory attunement of the practitioner’s movements to the inherent rhythmicity of those components of the environment with which he or she is engaged.

Freight train drivers are ‘entrained’ both because their bodily rhythms are entrained to the rhythms of diesel engines, coupled freight and track. Their bodies conform to the discipline of driving the train. The training and on-going practice of train drivers can be thought of as a process of entrainment to the rhythms of the diesel engines moving along a particular section of track, in particular weather conditions, hauling a particular load. Training is incremental and on-going, initially with the addition of each new driving operation and responsibility and then with the addition of each new route and the on-going maintaining and refining of driving strategies. In the case of Evans and Franklin’s (2010) horse and rider, the horse has a will of its own, can be unpredictable and may not co-operate with the rider on occasions. In the case of the train it seems to be a straightforward imposing driver’s agency on the coupled locomotives and freight. But this overlooks the agency of a particular combination of locomotives, freight and track. Factors and conditions may combine to produce unpredictable mechanical behaviour that is experienced as uncooperative by the driver who is endeavouring to ‘make things go right’. Like any other entity, animate or inanimate, freight trains have their own agency.

6.5 The multiple attunements of entrainment on the railway track

In this section I explore how the concept of entrainment may further help understand how people express particular values about the Illawarra Escarpment through the process of self-world attunement. Self-world attunements are underpinned by relational back and forth movements between human and non-human bodies. They involve varying degrees and combinations of unconscious bodily changes as well as the conscious effort involved in the activity or training. In previous chapters I argued that valuing can be conceived in terms of self-world attunement, that is an outcome of both sensuous and reflective knowledge. I argued that the disengagement of absence
provides opportunities for an interplay between sensuous and reflective knowledge through:

1) the recollections and reflections of memory-proper (rather than habit- or body-memory), and;
2) the role of emotions in sorting and remembering of sensuous moments.

I now consider how the example of train driving may further elucidate self-world attunement.

Evans and Franklin (2004:179) point out that ‘motion and emotion are linked recursively’. They go on to argue that:

motion and emotion is constituted out of rhythms’ – the rhythms of the bodies of the partners; the rhythmic training in which they partake, and… the… union they achieve when, through the practice of their embodied rhythmic strategies, they achieve the syncretic leap which takes them beyond their individual selves. (ibid, 180)

This suggests that entrainment is an integral component of the process of self-world attunement. In what follows, I discuss three dimensions of the process of entrainment in relationship to train driving: movement and rhythm; coming and going; and middles, flows and moments.

6.5.1 Movement and rhythm
As outlined in the discussion of entrainment, rail freight transport is a mobility that is the very essence of repetition and rhythm, and doubly so. Repetition sustains the flow of goods/resources to and from industry, ports and markets. Repetitions and rhythms abound in Sean’s diary and are especially noticeable in his work roster (see Appendix H). His shifts are interspersed with rostered-days-off and leisure car trips away. His diary also reveals the many repeated usual occurrences of train driving. For example, stoppages due to traffic at daily peak passenger train times, waiting to use the single track through the Clifton tunnel, successions of yellow signals when following another heavy freight train, the almost inevitable stop at the North Gong signal. And, of course, there are the repetitions of the familiar features along the well-known rail routes.

Although Sean’s working life has many instances of repetition there are also variations in driving conditions and type of train, in work schedules, weight of the freight and changes of route due to larger scale events such as drought, economic variations in production, and track repairs. There are many interacting counter rhythms such as train traffic and track maintenance along with the cyclical rhythms of the seasons and
weather patterns, and the impact of state, national and global rhythms that play out to comprise the ‘local’ (Edensor 2010:3-4). There are differences in personal comfort and enjoyment due to the company of the particular co-driver, the occurrence of technical difficulties with the signalling system or radio, and what is witnessed on each journey. Sean’s diary entries are themselves a record of variations – what makes a trip different, how it can be differentiated from the one before and the one after. Sean’s diary demonstrates, and Edensor (2010:2) reminds us, what Lefebvre in *Rhythmanalysis* is insistent about, that ‘there is no identical absolute repetition indefinitely…there is always something new and unforeseen that introduces itself into the repetitive (2004:6’).

6.5.2 Comings and goings: the motions and emotions of attunement

Edensor (2010:1-2) in commenting on Hagerstrand’s time-geography notes:

that individuals ‘repeatedly couple and uncouple their paths with other people’s paths, institutions, technologies and physical surroundings’ (Mels, 2004:16) through which they become grounded in time-space and place.

And as Edensor (2010:8-9) also notes ‘most of us spend much of each day orchestrating continual movement in relation to others… (Jarvis, 2005:137)’. At the heart of Sean’s working life are repeated everyday couplings and uncouplings (Edensor 2010:1-2), ‘regular attunements with the familiar’ (Edensor 2008:14), or routine sensuous dialogue (identified in both Amanda’s and John’s everyday lives). The freight can be conceptualised as being moved through Sean’s multiple couplings and attunements - with co-driver, the coupled locomotives, the intricacies of the particular track and terrain, and the railway system. Repeated coupling and uncoupling (or decoupling as Sean refers to it) is basic to railway operations in the linking and unlinking of locomotives and wagons but also applies to ‘connections between individuals and the social’ (Edensor 2010:2): ‘other people’s paths, institutions, technologies and physical surroundings’ (as listed in the quotation above).

These everyday couplings and uncouplings, departures and arrivals, are prominent in Sean’s diary. They shed light on self-world tensions that is landscape through illustrating the contrasting moods and emotions of leaving on a trip and coming home. For Sean these alternating refrains of setting out or coming home, of driving towards and driving back, reveal a tension between opposite states of being: responsibility for the train and the relief of going off duty (termed ‘relief’ in railway jargon), of work and leisure, of discipline and relaxation, of entrainment and freedom to revert to one’s own rhythms. It is a reverse image of Amanda’s tension between home and an elsewhere.
that is not workaday, discussed in Chapter 4. For Amanda, home equated to responsibility, and ‘elsewhere’ to the relief of being free to walk in the forest. In Sean’s diary this effect is made more obvious because the escarpment sections of his shifts happen to be at the beginnings and endings of his journeys. This tension or alternating between poles of feeling is also a mapping of Sean’s working relationship with the trains. Sean’s metaphor for setting off on a trip - ‘we set sail’ - seems to indicate a sense of momentum, expectation, hope, buoyancy and pleasurable anticipation. As previously noted these emotions were very evident when leaving the Port Kembla rail terminal on the day of my participant observation trip. But the metaphor also suggests contingency and negotiation of the terrain, tracks and conditions (like dealing with the vagaries of the wind, waves, tides and currents when sailing). A sense of immediacy, of the anticipation of the unfolding journey, of possible incidents, events, discoveries, of looking forward rather than looking back – a difference of perspective. As Sheller (2004:224) quotes in her paper ‘Automotive emotions’:

Whilst I am driving, I am nearly always happy. Driving towards virtually anywhere makes me excited, expectant: full of hope. (Pearce, 2000: 163)

In contrast, on the way home, what is novel or different to be discovered, enjoyed, experienced has been almost completely accessed, squeezed, used up - the ‘foraging’ is not as fresh. At the end of a journey there are also pleasures and satisfactions. Nevertheless, no matter how good the day has been Sean is always happy to be heading home and ‘off the locos’ to rest and relax. On one return trip he wrote: ‘Burst out of Bald Hill tunnel. I get the same feeling every time (nearly home)’. The prospect of ‘relief’ looms large and is always welcome. Staying entrained to the rhythms of train driving is exhausting. This is the type of tiredness that is the result of travelling or submitting oneself to a confined situation, or a responsibility with the need for concentration for a number of hours. In terms of bodily rhythms, the entraining of one’s rhythm to the rhythms of others, ‘institutions, technologies or physical surroundings’ (Edensor 2010:2) can only be sustained for a certain time, and then fatigue sets in. In railway culture this is called ‘driver fatigue’. Regulations ensure that a driver is ‘entrained’ for a maximum of 11 hours. Sean never writes at the conclusion of a trip that he is tired. He is more likely to say something like: ‘Been a good trip away but am happy to be off it’. In both the diary and in conversation he has often expressed frustration at the almost inevitable wait at the North Gong signal so close to home after a long trip back from Newcastle.

Interestingly DeLyser (2010:152) in relation to flying draws attention to the often overlooked fact that mobility is not all movement and action – the static is also involved
with much effort invested in waiting. Sean’s diary indicates that waiting is a significant part of train driving. DeLyser (2010:152) notes that ‘scholars of mobilities have tended to privilege movement and action over stasis and waiting, even though all forms of mobility can be mingled with practices of waiting – the body in motion may also be the body in waiting’. Quoting David Bissell (2007:285) she explains:

Waiting itself, is a particular kind of ‘suspense’ where ‘the performance of waiting…heralds a heightened sensual attentiveness to the immediate spatiality’. And…it ‘does take effort and therefore some form of intentional action to wait’; waiting does not always simply happen, rather it must sometimes be wilfully engaged and endured.

Waiting is referenced at least 18 times in Sean’s diary. Much train driving is vigilance, watching and waiting in a state of alertness. As well as being watchful for any dangers, there is, as DeLyser’s diarist shows, ‘also the long process of waiting for the flight to be over’ (2010:154). As Sean says when coming home from Newcastle: ‘Pretty quiet in the cab as shift has drawn on and out’. Maintaining vigilance in readiness to act is an active and embodied process that contributes to driver fatigue. Similarly, some attunements are difficult to achieve and consequently more wearing than others. Normally, Sean has a regular co-driver mate who is rostered with him whenever possible. The synchronising of the two rhythms is more practiced and harmony more easily achieved rather than the dissonance described in the following entry:

Been a long slow trip home. I’m just about over the trip and the guy I’m with. His arrogance and cowboy driving style wore a bit thin at Waterfall so with a few words to him I’m now enjoying a quiet trip while he sulks.

Sean reserved his most emphatic comment on arriving back at Port Kembla after the shift with this uncongenial co-driver: ‘We have our usual spell at North Gong and then head for Cringila and relief, thank goodness!’

6.5.3 Middles, flows and moments – the emotions of moving with

During attunement emotions are also generated by the movement with other rhythms or entities through flowing along and/or continuing. Journeys, as well as having beginnings and endings, like stories, have middles, too. The middle section of a familiar journey is a time between – a suspended period between the push to go and the pull of coming back, between the realities of leaving and arriving. It lies in the middle of the see-saw between the two moving tipping points where one’s orientation changes towards going away or returning – from outwards to inwards or vice versa. There is a suspension point between the pull of opposite poles.
The ‘suspended’ middle part of the journey may be experienced by travellers in many different ways in different situations. It may be experienced as ‘time out’ for the self, like Jiron’s (2010:136) commuter on the Santiago Metro ‘…I use that time to think, it’s time for me. …I kind of renovate myself, I start rewinding the film’. Or as a ‘holiday’ from the self, of being taken ‘out’ of domestic or work responsibilities (as Amanda experiences) or by the sociality of conversation inside the vehicle. For others, the middle can be a time of waiting for the journey to be over (DeLyser, 2010:154), a time of forced inactivity and perhaps boredom.

In Sean’s diary there are not many descriptions of the middle sections of journeys. One occurs when Sean and co-driver are themselves sent by road to ‘relieve’ a train. This is a shorter train trip and the only one that begins at Moss Vale. We see the route from a different direction and more of the level ‘middle’ part is revealed in the flowing rhythm, lighthearted tone and mood:

…then set sail down the coast. Through the farm areas to Robbo [Robertson] and sights of cows, wombats and what looked to be a wild pig. Wombats galore this side of Robbo but we don’t run any over. Heavy train so check the brakes from Mt Murray down to the tank then down from the Tank with a fair bit of dyno brake punctuated with frequent applications of the air brake to control the train. A few wallabies and more deer with the lights of Port [Port Kembla] getting closer – been a good day.

For Sean, in this journey individual rhythms seem to disappear, by flowing with the freight train. Evans and Franklin (2010:183) describes such flows between rider and horse as ‘moments of floating harmony’. Hensley in Edensor (2010:5) discusses how moments of flow become ‘second nature’ through the prolonged practice (and ‘the rhythms of the self flow with other rhythms on the journey’ (Edensor 2010:69). This effect is illustrated in the following diary entry in which the urban everyday constitutes a different kind of social spectacle. The tone and mood of the writing is particularly calm and peaceful with a smoothly flowing rhythm. The entry stands out as very different from other homecoming entries especially as the trip has been slow:

Early wee hours – we are later than normal due to track work up north. This is my last shift before holidays. Pretty quiet in cab as shift has drawn on and out. A couple of deer about and a big owl near Otford. A kilometre of train heads down through Stanwell Park. It is the time of the freighters and there are a few about. People/voters are mostly asleep. We are following a 4500 t. coal train so are on yellow signals as we both head down the coast. All’s quiet through the northern suburbs. After the usual spell at North Gong, through the Gong and on to Cringila to give the steelworks some empty wagons to be reloaded for another trip to Newcastle, Brisbane, Melbourne or Perth. Start 4 weeks holidays at 0340.
Sean normally regards night shifts as what he most dislikes about his work. This particular entry contrasts to other night shift descriptions, such as ‘...just the backyards of northern suburbs and then the track and bush at the end of the headlight’. As discussed under ‘entrainment’, ‘waiting itself, is a particular kind of ‘suspense’ where ‘the performance of waiting...heralds a heightened sensual attentiveness to the immediate spatiality’ (my italics) (DeLyser, 2010:152). Sean is ‘waiting’ to get home late ‘in the early wee hours’ to start four weeks holiday after a long trip that has ‘drawn on and out’. These circumstances seem to have brought about a heightened awareness. Sean represents the peaceful night time scene in which it is his train that is creating the only movement and spectacle. Sean writes: ‘A kilometre of train heads down through Stanwell Park’. This is the only diary entry in which the train is referred to in this way. The entry is far more reflective in character and mood than any other. Sean, in the moving train is part of the moving scene, but at the same time detached or apart from it. He seems to be positioning the train as part of a large social spectacle – a spectacle that he is helping to create and is part of. He is not just looking out but taking a mental step back and observing the whole including himself. It is not just a straightforward observation of objects and happenings but like a movie in which he is taking part, or like a dream in which he is watching himself as part of the action. The effect is as if Sean experienced a moment in which he felt ‘at one with the world’, or ‘a moment of floating harmony which takes him outside a ground-bound existence’ (Evans and Franklin, 2010:176-8). The diary records a number of emotional moments, some singular, and some recurring, but no others quite like this one in which ‘the rhythms of the self seem to flow with other rhythms during the journey’ (Edensor 2010:69).

There are other hints in Sean’s accounts of his driving strategy that also suggest moments of flow. Evident in the following extracts are moments of personal satisfaction in his performance or enjoyment and pride in his work – the results of his achievements through entrainment:

We set sail – I’m driving. ...Then set sail into Clifton tunnel and a 40 km board at the Sydney end. I hold train back in dynamic braking till just past the platform at Coalcliff. Then slowly come out and let 3400 t. of train push us down a dip onto a 60 km board and the hill resumes stealing speed as we hit the viaduct right on its 40 km board. (italics added)

...40 through Clifton tunnel then 60-65 from the other side (south) of Scarborough down to Coledale then 70 km to Bulli then get up to 75 km and train will roll you all the way home. Momentum is a good thing.

Heavy train so check the brakes from Mt Murray down to the Tank then down from the Tank with a fair bit of dyno brake punctuated with frequent applications
of the air brake to control the train. A few wallabies and more deer with the lights of Port getting closer – *been a good day.* (italics added)

From 105 [board] all the way to Mount Murray 118 [board] there are heaps of waratahs in flower. The best show in *4 years of me running the mountain.* (italics added)

On these few occasions when Sean refers to the actual driving, the tone of the writing indicates feelings of competence and confidence, of satisfaction and self-esteem in mastering the required skills and developing his own driving strategies. And scattered throughout the diary there are indications of enjoyment and pleasure in his work that was also evident during my participant observation trip with him up the escarpment and in other conversations. These results confirm Evans and Franklin discussion of emotions engendered by achievement of rhythmic harmony in dressage. Evans and Franklin argue these emotional experiences act as both the reward and the motivation for persisting with the great investment in training and practice. For example, ‘...when everything goes right ...they achieve a special state of both heightened movement and heightened awareness’; of ‘weightlessness, floating, power’ (175-6). Evans and Franklin sum up: ‘...the disappearance of the rhythms in their momentary conjunction is one of pleasure, excitement and strong emotion” (178).

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the self-world tensions that are the landscape of a freight train driver. I have argued that the process of valuing is not a layering of meaning over the landscape. Rather I have conceptualised the process of valuing as performative and interactive and involving embodied knowledge, engagement and sensuous dialogue that in effect gives agency to the landscape. As argued by Wylie (2007) agency not only resides in the human presence but in the presence of the landscape itself. As Wylie (2007:176) puts it:

> The eyes of the gazing subject are not an exercise of judgement or a bestowal of meaning upon a passive and neutral scene. Instead these eyes arise and look through a tension with the world, with visibilities, sonorities and tangibilities, an unfolding tension that, as Lingis says, ‘organises as it proceeds’ (1998:31).

The chapter began by introducing the reader to the regulations, teaching and learning practices of freight train driving. Next the chapter outlined the various methods deployed to gather insights into the lived experiences of train driving. Attention was drawn to the importance of remaining alert to how emotion and mood can be communicated through the structure and flow of writing, alongside participant
observation. The interpretation offered in this chapter, of how valuing and performing landscape can be conceptualised as self-world tensions, built upon the concept introduced in Chapters 4 and 5, namely that of attunement. Valuing landscape is understood as a cumulative and spatial process involving the interplay of sensuous and reflective knowledge. In this chapter I argued that the acquiring and maintenance of train-driving skills further highlighted the embodied qualities of self-world attunement during engagement, and the important role of the absences of disengagement in the attunement process.

Unique to this chapter is my focus on rhythms and entrainment to better understand the process of valuing as embodied and relational. I argued that freight train driving is a process of entrainment in which the bodily rhythms of the drivers are synchronised to conform to the multiple rhythms of the railway system, the rhythms of the particular track, and the coupled locomotive power and freight. The process of entrainment that involves changes in actual bodily rhythms such as heart rate and breathing is only different in scale and degree, not in principle, from John’s and Amanda’s walks. The kinetic and sensuous rhythms of the body are affected by the topography, as well as by those people or machines with whom we are coupled and other non-human life forms encountered as part of the landscape. I argued that Sean is caught up in the flux or movement between the formal rhythms of the railway system and the independence or freedom of his individual rhythms. I suggest that the demands on the body of synchronising multiple rhythms - to effect both train mobility and the vigilant waiting involved in this kind of entrainment - can only be supported for a limited time. Sean’s diary highlights the continual alternating movement between the emotional states of responsibility and relief, work and leisure, discipline and relaxation. In addition, I argued that when the rhythms of the bodies of the train and the driver flow together this produces a eurhythmic moment often expressed as ‘harmony’, ‘being-in-the-flow’. This I argued provides a heightened sense of awareness or attunement – providing sensuous knowledge that is stored through image and sensation in the imagination.

The next and final empirical chapter, Chapter 7, is based on an autobiographic narrative of past bushwalking engagements that relates reflective attunements to the stories and sensuous moments of the virtual landscapes of memory.
I went for a walk with my daughter around Mt Kembla a few weeks from the north side below the cemetery then up the summit track past seven with a little drifting mist and a few raindrops. We walked fairly slowly and warmed up as the sun was rising and still under the cloud horizon. We startled a pair of wallabies who bounded off, releasing fat wet drops and all of a sudden we were surrounded by noise as the leaves were hit by the water and dozens of galahs took off. It was only a few minutes before sunset, we walked the lane from the water tank and the lake. The wallabies, the trees and fellows didn’t seem to care for any interregnum I didn’t feel the foraging was not for some kind.

When we got back I made a bivouac at my place and it was especially during the lunch hour coming back. It was the first time coming back. It was the first time coming back. When I was in the main weeks of arriving I went down to East Corrimal and despite being a strong beach that’s more I wasn’t having a good time. Large lawn, path from Corrimal Dharm, I walked mostly to and from the path up Broker’s Nose. I followed the country, transport, or places that I could walk to from East Dharn and the Royal (Heathcote plus Breezily) especially those pursued in an ad hoc fashion from Udena to Minnamurra. At that time I was spending Saturdays mowing my grandmother’s lawn and keeping be near the bike. The
Chapter 7

Finding your way, sustaining self:
landscape in long perspective and measured against the self

It is undoubtedly true that we all constantly tell ourselves stories to remind ourselves who we are, how we got to be that person, and what we want to become. The same is true not just of individuals but of communities and societies: we use our histories to remember ourselves… (Cronon, 1992:1369)

This chapter explores one story, a personal story, in the words of environmental historian William Cronon, like we tell ourselves ‘to remind ourselves who we are’. The diarist, Steve, did not write journal-style entries or accounts of his journeys, he wrote a short single story about how he came to be who he is today. Steve’s straightforward ‘reflections’ as he called them are more about memory and ‘the past’ than the other diaries. Instead of being about the present or the very recent past, it is about his memories from the more distant past of his engagements with the escarpment as a younger man. And yet, at the centre of the story is the role of the bodily sensuous experience of his walking engagements with the Illawarra Escarpment. Steve’s diary is a one-off piece of writing, a classic, structured story with a beginning, a middle with pivot point, and transition to a conclusion. His reflections are the diary entries of memory that provide insights to landscape in long perspective measured against the self. These entries highlighted the autobiographic diary as an opportunity for reflection, creativity, absorption, moments of learning and accomplishment. In doing so he provides insights into how and why he has come to value the escarpment through the ongoing folding between the self and the world.

In examining the contribution of autobiography to exploring valuing as an ongoing unfolding relational process between self and the world the chapter is structured as follows. I firstly examine the where, when and who of the writing; the writing style, structure, momentum and flow. I then consider the type of mobility involved in Steve’s engagements with the Illawarra Escarpment, the practice of bushwalking, through an examination of (1) the affordances offered by the materiality of the escarpment, and (2) bushwalking as a collecting practice, whereby recollections of bodily knowledge from bushwalking help make sense of self and the escarpment. The next section examines the possibilities of rethinking valuing as landscapes in the long term measured against the self. This discussion is in two sections. In the first section I conceptualise recollections as attunements to the virtual landscapes of memory. To do so I consider
examples of (1) attunements to memorable sensuous moments, and (2) storying as the movement of the comings and goings between the past and the present. In the second section I examine mechanisms of change. I pay close attention to (1) the movement-between or oscillation enabled by gaps, intervals or absences, and (2) the movement-with: the flows and synchronisations that result in the transitions and reorientations of change.

### 7.1 An autobiographic diary

From the beginning of accepting the invitation to be a diarist Steve rejected the idea of a handwritten notebook preferring the option of a keyboard for diary entries. Following a number of reminders, Steve asked if he could write some ‘reflections’ on the escarpment instead of regular journal style entries as these had not proved viable for him. Steve wrote on his computer at lunch times at work, probably the only way of obtaining the required time. Steve’s three pages of closely written, single spaced typescript consists almost entirely of reflections, authorial comment and opinion. The use of the computer allowed unlimited, invisible editing resulting in a more crafted type of writing with a preconceived plot, a conventional storyline and a conclusion positing meaning and value. It is not a series of small discrete stories but an integrated, interpreted, explicit story that spans the course of his life to the present time. The genre in which Steve wrote is at the opposite end of the writing spectrum to John’s present tense in-the-moment walks discussed in Chapter 5.

Cronon (1992:1349) argues that: ‘narrative is the chief literary form that tries to find meaning in an overwhelmingly crowded and disordered chronological reality’. In Steve’s case, he wrote a frank, down-to-earth story structured around his transition to adulthood. He writes in an easy, colloquial but expressive way. A particular feature of Steve’s writing about himself is his ability to economically but pithily depict his youthful dramas in a self-reflexive way leavened with dry humour. He clearly presents his orientation and focus in life at particular times, pinpointing the turning points that led to change, in a succinct and vivid way rather like a series of cartoon drawings:

His nostalgic but brief flirtation with surfing:

> Within weeks of arriving [in Wollongong] I bought a surfboard and one of those carry racks for my bike. I diligently went down to East Corrimal beach and tried my hardest to be a surfer dude. It was not to be, despite being a strong swimmer and more than able in the water I wasn’t any good at it, and what’s more I wasn’t having much fun trying.

His first surprise reorientation away from the beach:

> …I was told that the son of a friend had walked up to Broker’s Nose. Momentarily astonished I turned and looked at the rock face, and it felt as if it was the first time I had looked inland since I had arrived.
His feelings about leaving home to attend university:

I was pleased to be out on my own, away from the narratives of stoic, laconic and tough men. I wanted the vigorous cosmopolitan urbanity of anywhere not brown flat dusty and underpopulated. … I pursued the aspects of urbanity I was interested in (let’s call them what they are: music, sex, intoxicants) with some dedication and continue to do so but I was aware that it was not equal to expectations and I was not satisfied. It was not sustaining.

Steve is adept at sketching out the way of life where he grew up in underpopulated, flat western New South Wales, contrasting it to the beaches, mountains and cities of the eastern seaboard where he now lives. He also managed to capture the realities and emotions of childhood and youth with their anticipations and aspirations, desires, ambitions and disillusionments, fun seeking and boredom, explorations and adventuring.

We learn much about Steve from the telling of his story. He now lives in the Illawarra suburb of Thirroul, on the narrow strip of land between the escarpment and the sea, with his partner and three young daughters, the youngest only 18 months old at the time the diary was written. He had lived in the Illawarra for more than 15 years and worked as an administrator at the University of Wollongong. When I first met Steve for coffee and a chat in his backyard with the escarpment towering above, he was enthusiastic about the fact that he and a friend had recently completed what he referred to as a ‘project’: a second and more comprehensive set of weekend walking explorations of the escarpment, ranging from the Royal National Park in the north to the Budawang Range in the south, carried out over three years. He said that it was because the escarpment was still in the forefront of his mind that he responded to my survey questionnaire. In this conversation it became apparent that he saw his current interactions with the escarpment greatly curtailed by work and family commitments. He positioned his major interactions and possible contribution to the project as being about a previous period of his life. When telling me about his background, he started to tell me something of his story – about his failure to master surfing and break into the surfing culture and his turning to the escarpment as an alternative source of interest and recreation, climbing up Broker’s Nose with a friend and camping there. But at the time with his youngest daughter requiring attention there was not the time to do justice to this personal story that day. It was clear that this was a story that he wanted to tell as he saw it as crucial to the way that he values the escarpment. I am grateful that he took the time to write his ‘reflections on the escarpment’ as his diary contribution.
I went for a walk with my daughter around Mt Kembla a few weeks ago a gentle trundle around from the north side below the cemetery then up the summit trail. It was early morning about twenty past seven with a little drifting mist and a few raindrops. We walked fairly slowly and warmed up as the sun was rising and still under the cloud horizon. We startled a pair of wallabies who bounded off, releasing fat wet drops and all of a sudden we were surrounded by noise as the leaves were hit by the water and dozens of galahs took off. It was only a few minutes before silence returned but in those few moments so much was revealed. The wallabies, the trees and ferns, the birds, and the water: all alive, all related, all together. In this tiny interregnum I didn’t feel at all like an invader, I was just another animal moving about foraging. The foraging was not for food or water or shelter but nevertheless I was seeking sustenance of some kind.

When I came to Wollongong in the summer of 1991-1992 my first instinct was to go to the beach. In many respects this was an old instinct, my grandmother lived near East Corrimal beach and for almost all of my childhood Christmas-New Year holidays my family would bivouac at my grandmother’s house and we would go to the beach, mostly everyday (especially during the lunch and tea breaks in the cricket and straight after stumps). For small children from the country nothing can equal the novelty of this, it was the attraction of Wollongong. The Beach completely overshadowed Christmas, it was why we came, it was why we kept on coming back. It was the deep pleasure associated with Wollongong and the Beach that prompted my coming to Wollongong after school was done with, even then it was nostalgia. Within weeks of arriving I bought a surfboard and one of those carry racks for my bike. I diligently went down to East Corrimal beach and tried my hardest to be a surfer dude. It was not to be, despite being a strong swimmer and more than able in the water I wasn’t any good at it, and what’s more I wasn’t having much fun trying. Perhaps this was a chicken and egg moment, was I no good because I wasn’t having any fun or not having any fun because I was no good? I couldn’t say and so I sold the board and took the rack off my bike, leaving it in the garage (and somewhere in the maze of my garage it is there today).

A bit later, somewhere in the winter I was told that the son of friend had walked up to Broker’s Nose. Momentarily astonished I turned and looked at the rock face, and it felt as if it was the first time I had looked inland since I had arrived. My childhood had been a road atlas of little moves from little town to little town, following the employment of my parents around the far nooks and crannies of the NSW Dept of Education. Reflecting on the time, it was neither a grand adventure nor regrettable torture. It was a childhood, and as always a mixed blessing. The western plains are not, broadly speaking, broken up by large rock faces, nor even by moderately sized hills. They are flat and it is especially in memory, rather difficult to differentiate one place from another: brown, flat, one tree plains, hot and dusty, except when they’re sodden and muddy. I was pleased to be out on my own, away from the narratives of stoic, laconic and tough men. I wanted the vigorous cosmopolitan urbanity of anywhere not brown flat dusty and underpopulated. Wollongong, already invested with nostalgia, would do. Besides I could stay with my grandmother, this made Wollongong a very cheap option and I took it. I pursued the aspects of urbanity I was interested in (let’s call them what they are: music, sex, intoxicants) with some dedication and continue to do so but I was aware that it was not equal to expectations and I was not satisfied. It was not sustaining.

Largely because I was overweight and bored with spending Saturdays mowing my grandmother’s lawn I sought out my friend’s son and he directed me to the path up Broker’s Nose. I followed the path and began walking on the escarpment. I was not blessed with a car so I walked mostly to and from places with some kind of access to public transport, or places that I could walk to from East Corrimal. This limited me for some years to the escarpment and the Royal (Heathcote plus Dharawal also). Always drawn to systematic plans (especially those pursued in an ad hoc fashion) I followed ridge lines and gullies and trails from Bundeena to Minnamurra. At that time I was keeping notes of the explorations I made and I would come back to odd little spots that seemed to be new directions to head in. I remember following the gully (it is now an erosion soiled series of bike descents) from Stafford’s Farm down to Mount Nebo, completely leech ridden and being lost. The sweaty disorientation of descending provoked a
series of practices that later I realised come directly from my time at Narromine Boy Scouts: always carry a compass, always have an extra water bottle, bring your map with you, tell someone where you’re going, all the stuff that the most basic novice is aware of. I began to feel competent, not just whilst walking but in life. The more adept I became wandering about on Saturdays and Sundays the more I had confidence in myself.

When I got a car I began to take longer trips, especially before my children arrived on the scene. I sought out the usual bushwalking haunts; Mittagong to Katoomba, Kosciusko, Blue Gum forest, Patonga, Wollemi, Barrington Tops, and Kanangra (my favourite and longest walking trip was a nightmare seven nights trying to get to and ascend Mt …(?)). They were all great fun, hungry and dirty trips. When my kids arrived I again had to stick closer to home, initially making forays south: Morton NP, Jervis Bay, and then the Budawangs. But alas the bigger my brood the smaller my trips. Then a student of my partner’s expressed a wish to walk around what was the Farm near Dunmore bends (and look at the development now, Shellcove? Hellcove!). We wandered around for a bit and formed a plan to walk in the Royal the following weekend. From there we followed a pattern of walking locally every second weekend, starting at Jibbon Head and moving south until, over three years later, we hit the Kings Highway. (We did go further afield at different times: walking the Six Foot track, ascending Mt Imlay and exploring the coastline around the southern side of Twofold Bay, Kosciusko, Mt. Warning and Mt. Barney, as well as a failed attempt on Mt. Lindesay, when he moved to Brisbane). Acting as a guide and generally being the responsible party in our two-man troop during this long walk consolidated the confidence I had developed by walking. When I stand in my backyard and look up at Sherbrooke Trig the escarpment is an enormous mnemonic device, reminding me of my competence, my safety, and my duty of care. I take my daughters around the trails occasionally, though they couldn’t be less interested in walking for miles, and it is always abundantly clear what the escarpment stimulates in me: wonder and awe at the place itself but centrally my responsibility to it.

The lantana does not bother me so much. I know it is not native, nor it is helpful to plant species that are and neither is it able to be consumed by any animal that I can see nor does it make decent kindling. It is quite pretty, but mostly I only see it in the marginal spaces close to people, roads, and stormwater drains. Sadly where there is lots of it on the eastern face of the escarpment and it does make walking less pleasurable but realistically the east face is so compromised by mining, agriculture, residences, domesticated animals and general recreational uses I just can’t get upset about lantana. Walking through it is shithouse, just horrible: somehow more awful than horizontal or briar bush.

I do worry about recreational uses, especially mountain and trail bikes. I can see the appeal of descending down the escarpment going fast, navigating only in the five metres ahead of you and concentrating really hard but it just does so much damage. The erosion that follows a bike trail is just so horrendous that in combination with all the subsidence issues that go with one hundred and fifty years of shaft mining I can’t help but feel when the big water comes down the mountain (I think the record is about 300 mm in a day) the risk of losing not just top soil but whole sections of mountainside is real and appreciable. I don’t want to disrespect the riders, they are clearly very skilled in what they do but I cannot see any relationship between minimal impact practices and mountain bike descents. I have found a lot more evidence of horse riding in recent years, even in the past two months on Rixon’s Pass. While not one to subscribe to the class prejudices that cling to horsey types and the landed gentry I do find it pretty galling that horse and rider make use of the escarpment trails. Horses’ erosion impact is just as significant as bikes but usually pushed aside because they are much quieter and less frequent. Deer are also becoming more of an issue, their pads have a habit of wrecking the undergrowth on the forest floor (but never, it seems, lantana).

I so love the mornings, especially when it has rained a little in the night and the sun catches the wet rocks making them sparkle yellow. It makes it worthwhile to get up and watch the sun’s upward rays strike. It reminds me of smuggler’s lights, the refraction of a single beam. The beauty of that moment is so extraordinary. It has bothered me over the years, how little care is given to the escarpment. This has become more acute as development has crept up (Edgewood is a glaring example) and the beauty of the escarpment is used as a selling feature, making me wonder how beautiful it is when there’s a neat little lawn built to replace it. Also I find
the technological uses of the escarpment less than restive. While I acknowledge the utility of mobile phone towers and the tv transmission sites I can’t help but feel that once those structures are put in place no other use of that space is possible, they exclude. Surrounding the mobile phone tower, two hundred vertical metres above the Bulli Showground, is a compound protected by razor wire, cordoning off an area of maybe one hundred square metres. This is not huge but the clearing required to build it does put a hole in the pleasure gained from engaging with that fire trail and its surrounds.

The deep romance of the escarpment does not lie in beauty for me. It is in the spaces that others have occupied but left for me to occupy without subtracting from the space. This is such a gift. Sometimes when off trail I find a marking, or footprint, a small stone circle, or (in that classic tracker trope) a snapped branch and I am always uplifted by the thought that even though I am alone (or with a walking partner) I am sharing this space, and sharing without claiming a pre-eminence or use dominance. Most acutely I think about this in the context of Aboriginal Australia. Rixon’s Pass is a good example of this: it has so clearly existed for thousands and thousands of years that whenever I climb the hairpin I am quietly stunned that this curve, this interstice in the ridge has been utilised for human comings and goings without preventing or limiting the possibilities of other comings and goings, similarly the trail from Saddleback to Barren Grounds. Those passes are not the construction of some road building multinational or the result of a grand plan to globalise transport systems: they are just there and we use them just as they have been used for ages.

The intensity of the feeling of being given a gift is directly related to the competence and confidence I have derived from walking. The escarpment does not simply sustain me, being part of a long history that does not end, that also enables a future similarly blessed, has a value I cannot quite find the words to describe. It feels like a blessing, and as a blessing it is a means of building hope for the future. The escarpment offers not only sustenance, but it is sustaining – forever if we’re lucky – a gift that keeps on giving.

7.1.1 Steve’s story

The introduction to Steve’s story is a recent escarpment anecdote that sets the scene of his present settled adult life, enjoying an early morning walk in the escarpment forest with his eldest daughter. (For the full text of Steve’s story see Text Box 4. The full text is also provided as Appendix F along with the other diaries). The introduction provides an example of the type of experiences that he enjoys by walking on the escarpment, a ‘feeling of being related to it, part of it’ as he said to me in conversation. The introduction also introduces the main theme that he pursues in his story: of endeavouring to understand and express the feeling that in walking in the escarpment forest he is ‘seeking sustenance of some kind’. The story is structured by being divided into two halves. The first half describes his past memories of the role of the escarpment in his life after leaving his childhood home to attend university until the present when he has settled close to the escarpment with his own family. The formative events of early youth led to widening new horizons, new discoveries about the world and about himself – a whole new era of experience and the acquisition of skills in the rugged, thickly-clad, endless ranges and gorges of south-eastern Australia, much of it trackless, and some of it so difficult to access on foot that it would be only visited by very intrepid walkers and climbers. The Illawarra Escarpment is part of this large region, if a more
accessible part, close to human habitation, more endowed with tracks and fire trails and within sight of the ocean, an aid to easier orientation and navigation. The escarpment was the ‘nursery’ in which Steve acquired his bushwalking skills and still offers opportunities to roam and explore. In the second half of the story Steve writes about his current thoughts on the escarpment as a major influence on his life, and about his feelings of responsibility for its care and his worries about what he positions as changes, encroachments and damage, and its ultimate sustainability. Finally he tries to express more clearly the meaning and value of the escarpment as shared or public space and consequently what this means socially for people. In the conclusion he struggles to find words to describe the intensity of his personal connection with the escarpment, resorting to words more often heard in a religious context: gift, blessing, hope.

At age 17, at a loss when surfing proved to be a personal disappointment, with little money and no car, ‘overweight and bored with mowing his grandmother’s lawn on Sundays’ Steve followed the path [up Broker’s Nose] and started walking on the escarpment at weekends ‘following ridge lines, gullies and trails from Bundeena in the north to Minnamurra in the south’ – the full length of the Illawarra Escarpment. To feel at home, familiar, on top of things, part of the world, is a strong motivation and comfort in the existential crises of youth that can occur in the space between leaving school and home and starting work and becoming at least economically independent. The escarpment became a kind of young man’s adventure playground in which he could explore both the world and himself. He says

_I began to feel competent, not just whilst walking but in life. The more adept I became wandering about [the escarpment] on Saturdays and Sundays the more I had confidence in myself._

Of his second, 3-year long weekend explorations of the escarpment with a friend Steve says, ‘acting as guide and responsible party on this long walk consolidated the confidence I had developed by walking’. In conclusion Steve writes that ‘the intensity of the feeling of being given a gift is directly related to the competence and confidence I have derived from walking’. This reiterated claim is at the heart of Steve’s story. So what are these actual experiences or processes that led to Steve’s growing competence and confidence in exploring and inhabiting the forest-covered escarpment, the acquiring of personal qualities that transferred to other aspects of his life, and affected the trajectory of his development as a person? They are alluded to but not really described in the diary. As Edensor (2008:138) has argued and as discussed in
Chapter 4, the story-telling narrative mode does not lend itself to this type of description as

... to privilege the narration of walking is to consign its immanent, embodied, sensual characteristics to secondary importance, for the story effaces the physical interaction with space and its sense-making techniques are usually mobilized only in a post-hoc, reflexive conceptualisation. ... Tell stories we may do... but we should be aware of their partiality and their peculiar tendency to underestimate temporal, spatial and somatic experience.

7.1.2 Writing momentum

Unlike those diarists endeavouring to write weekly journal entries, Steve had the forward writing momentum of his own life story. As he sees the story as integral to how he values the escarpment now, it also provided some of the momentum for his current reflections on the use of the escarpment and in endeavouring to express its meaning and value for him. But the story is also propelled forward by the emotions of a series of memorable sensuous moments that enliven the text: the unusual moment of insight into a different perception of himself-in-the-world in the ‘tiny interregnum’ during a recent forest walk; the moment of astonishment when he ‘saw’ the escarpment rock face for the first time since arriving to live in Wollongong; the walking moment of being completely leech ridden and being lost; and the surfing ‘chicken and egg’ moment of disappointment and perplexity. There are also descriptions of four recurring sensuous moments in the second half of the story that provide illustrations and emotional momentum that carry the story along.

However, Steve’s writing challenge was not lack of experience but rather having too much and needing to summarise and economise on the details of his life in order to keep the story short and moving along. Much of this sorting would have been done by Steve’s selecting what he considered the important detail from the unimportant. But some of this condensing of detail takes place through a collapsing of different but recurring times into one generic ‘time’. For example all the Christmas holidays of his childhood spent at the beach at East Corrimal ran together to form one typical Christmas and so becoming a ‘moment’ in a longer timespan. In a succession of similar Christmases we can sometimes remember a particular Christmas because something unusual happened but more often the details of regularly recurring similar events run together and become as one in memory. In a similar way a succession of small western towns of Steve’s childhood in the ‘far nooks and crannies of the NSW Dept. of Education’ become generic in memory as: ‘brown, flat, one tree plains, hot and dusty, except when they’re sodden and muddy’. All of his longer trips to the ‘usual bushwalking haunts’ are compressed into being remembered as ‘all great fun, hungry and dirty trips’ as if they have become one trip.
Steve’s excursion into the past has an alternating pattern of these different types of ‘moments’ in time.

Therefore, the structure and momentum of the story demonstrates Grosz’s (2005) argument about the elastic quality of memory. Drawing on Bergson, Grosz (2005:102) ‘thinks of memory as fundamentally elastic: it is capable of existing in a more or less contracted or dilated state’. It consists of a series of alternations between memories in which time is contracted, and dilated ones, usually sensuous moments or ‘embodied memories’ as Lorimer and Lund (2008:192) call them, like ‘still’ moments that seem to exist outside of the unfolding of time. These compressed recurring moments or one-off sensuous moments in time are held together by the linear thread of the story that makes a track through the ‘maze’ of the past. Steve says of the surfboard rack that he took off his bike, leaving it in the garage: ‘…and somewhere in the maze of my garage it is there today’. To find the rack now would require the making of an exploratory track through the maze.

7.2 Bushwalking

In this section I explore the practice of bushwalking. I first explore what clues Steve gives to the sensing and moving of his bushwalking practice. Here, I introduce Edensor’s (2008) concept of ‘disarrayed affordances’. Next, drawing on Lorimer and Lund’s (2008) concept of ‘collected landscapes’ I explore the clues Steve gives to memory and formation of the self through the practice of bushwalking through the Illawarra Escarpment.

7.2.1 ‘disarrayed affordances’

Firstly, what kind of walking is Steve writing about in the thickly-forested, mountainous stretches of eastern Australia? It is not the short daily-routine kind of escarpment walking along well-used tracks described in previous chapters by John and Amanda. The colloquial term in Australia for Steve’s kind of walking is ‘bushwalking’ which can range from walking on well-maintained, special tracks built for the purpose to more exploratory walking where the visibility of tracks cannot be relied upon, signposting is non-existent and a compass (or these days a GPS) is essential. Bushwalking is often longer day, weekend or longer walks well away from human habitation, where the track marked on the map may be partially overgrown through lack of use to the point of disappearing or there may be sections with no track. Bushwalking often involves a lot of walking off-trail, what is commonly called ‘bush-bashing’ and often results in
considerable scratching of any exposed limbs. This kind of walking is more like scrambling about in very rugged places in order to find a way through rather than walking along a path. Indeed, Steve’s walking routes were in part led by the topography itself, as well as being led on by curiosity, interest, challenge and adventure: ‘I followed ridgelines and gullies and trails… I was keeping notes of the explorations I made and I would come back to odd little spots that seemed to be new directions to head in’. He learned by the experience of ‘the sweaty disorientation of descending a gully completely leech-ridden and being lost’. This taught him early to be better equipped, and follow basic safety procedures.

Bushwalking requires a wide range of bodily movement that would not be fully understood even amongst non-bushwalking people in Australia. From reading the Ingold & Vergunst’s *Ways of walking*, one is alerted that, as a type of walking, ‘bushwalking’ would not be understood due to a lack of experience of the types of terrain involved. The best description in the geographic literature of the bodily experience of Steve’s kind of bushwalking is Tim Edensor’s detailed chapter on walking in industrial ruins in England. I am struck that most of his excellent descriptions of walking in industrial ruins, can be applied, strangely and unexpectedly, to bushwalking. This is partly because Edensor intended his analysis of his walking in extravagantly different terrain to be applied to walking experiences more broadly. But it is also because, in general, all landscape is in a continual process of ‘ruin’ and regeneration, on-going change and decay. Large parts of the Australian bush afford much the same type of experiences as Edensor’s industrial ruins. These huge uncultivated worlds are the ‘ruins’ of longer time, the results of slow decay, erosion and weathering; of the cumulative lives and deaths of aeons of countless organisms. The enormous jumbled rocks from the slowly disintegrating mountains; steep descents and climbs on the unstable stone rubble of slippery scree slopes of ‘collapsed masonry’; the protruding roots and decayed fallen logs all contribute to slippery and unstable surfaces that are tricky to negotiate; thick thorny bushes encroaching on the track and changing it to a dark tunnel with no visibility; or slippery fallen eucalypt leaves; muddy, slippery tracks; creek crossings that require a delicate balancing act on a fallen log or wobbly stepping stones, or a wading through fast flowing, feet-numbing water on slippery rocks, a backpack altering normal balance.

The parallels being drawn here between walking in ruins and walking off-track through the Illawarra Escarpment and similar landscapes are based on how this terrain is part of a thickly-vegetated dissected sandstone plateau formed by deep weathered gorges,
water-cut over millennia (and difficult to cross) and slowly crumbling sandstone cliffs. Equally, the fire resistance and fast growth habits of the widespread, dominant eucalypt vegetation provides conditions with parallels to built ‘ruins’. The often thick understorey of vegetation in a eucalypt forest together with the sheer ‘clutter’ and disorderliness of piles of sticks, branches and bark surrounding huge eucalypts (not unlike piles of loose off-cuts or other industrial waste). In a trackless forest of tall timber where visibility is limited, the only promising ‘pathway’ may be a creek line but again the haphazard piling of fallen rocks (sometimes the size of small houses), fallen logs, and flood debris caught in thick bushes and tangled vines can make progress very slow and difficult. These are just a few examples from a great variety of decaying, recycling and regenerating processes that comprise landscapes such as the Illawarra Escarpment. The dominant impression of bushwalking may well be one of beauty and fascination due to the unique topography, the colours and the abundant life of plants and animals, but the underlying elements of ‘ruin’: decay, collapse, disorder, haphazardness and happenstance (to use Edensor’s (2008:127) term) are also to be found. This makes the delightful discoveries of exploring bushland on foot such as fern fringed sections of creek with pools and cascades of crystal water over mossy rocks, or hidden, sheltered flower-filled valleys even more enchanting and valued. Amongst the chaotic ‘debris’ there are to be found ever-regenerative life forms and a different kind of ‘order’ in the seeming ‘disorder’. One organism’s ruin can be another’s ‘home’ and ‘colonisation’ occurs, as Edensor (2008:129) notes in industrial ruins, when plants and animals ‘invade’ interior spaces.

I quote the following passage from Edensor to further illustrate the bushland/industrial ruin parallel. Here he writes about improvisation in walking and ‘impediments to linear passage’. (I have taken the liberty of putting his references to ruins in square brackets so that the reader can imaginatively substitute ‘bushland or forest’.)

Under conditions of continuous decay, material structures and routeways are not distributed according to an ordering scheme but emerge according to happenstance. …those present [in ruins] tend to walk contingently and improvisationally, their multiple manoeuvres, moods, gestures and rhythms belying any sense of walking as a singular practice. With the erasure or blockage of…sequential routes, …[large ruins] often resemble labyrinths in which path-making is arbitrary and open to multiple options. Decisions about which directions to follow are taken according to chance, intuition and whim… Unforeseen openings may emerge – sometimes into previously inaccessible spaces – and conversely, apparently self-evident paths are blocked by a pile of insurmountable rubble or terminate in a vertical descent. …A path evolves as the walker is called forth by curiosities, potential channels of movement, tempting surfaces and gradients, and peculiar impulses. (Edensor (2008:127)
Edensor goes on to introduce the concept of disarrayed affordances to emphasise the arrhythmic qualities:

…the disarrayed affordances of [the ruin] prompt the body to stoop, crouch, climb, slither, leap, swerve and pick its way to avoid lurking hazards. Walking cannot follow a regular rhythmic gait because of the variability of the surface underfoot and the uneven textures that force high and either small or extended steps. …numerous obstacles from fallen masonry…to debris of all descriptions must be manoeuvred around, jumped over, avoided or balanced upon. (ibid, 127)

This is an excellent description of how the affordances of walking off-track set up arrhythmic movements rather than the usually rhythmic movements of walking.

With the acquisition of a car, Steve set himself more difficult challenges further afield in some more ‘remote’ and ‘wilder’ areas than the Illawarra, some of which are well-known for their impenetrability, such as Wollemi and Kanangra. At this time it seems from what Steve writes that the challenges and the hardships were a major part of the enjoyment:

I sought out the usual bushwalking haunts; Mittagong to Katoomba, Kosciusko, Blue Gum forest, Patonga, Wollemi, Barrington Tops, and Kanangra (my favourite and longest walking trip was a nightmare seven nights trying to get to and ascend Mt Colong). They were all great fun, hungry and dirty trips.

As Edensor (2008:129) writes: ‘These material contingencies demand unfamiliar movements in unfamiliar spaces, provoking an awareness of the effects of the body’s movements…and a sense of its unpractised capabilities’.

Bound up with challenges to the body/mind are increased sensual stimulation made possible by ‘space replete with rich and unfamiliar affordances’ (Edensor, 2008:132). For example, Steve described the feelings and insights that flowed from a sudden brief eruption of unexpected sound and movement in the forest caused by their presence disturbing the animals, droplets of water, the vegetation, the birds (related in his introductory paragraph). This incident illustrates what Edensor (2008: 133) termed a ‘sensual affordance’ made possible by ‘unfamiliar materialities’. The body becomes ‘skilfully habituated to sensations, dangers and attractions, and develops alternative ways of thinking, sensing and moving’. Or as Thrift says, ‘through constant interaction thinks existence’ (2004:90). The effect on the body/mind ‘is deepened by experience over time’ (Edensor, 2008:133) so that the world becomes an extension and development of the self or as Wylie (2005:240) puts it, through walking ‘self and world overlap in a ductile and incessant enfolding and unfolding’.
The opening paragraph of Steve’s diary is also an apt illustration of what Edensor (2008:133) describes as ‘unfolding moments of varying intensity, which bring into relation walkers, objects and non-human life forms’.

I went for a walk with my daughter around Mt Kembla … We walked fairly slowly and warmed up as the sun was rising and still under the cloud horizon. We startled a pair of wallabies who bounded off, releasing fat wet drops and all of a sudden we were surrounded by noise as the leaves were hit by the water and dozens of galahs took off. It was only a few minutes before silence returned but in those few moments so much was revealed. The wallabies, the trees and ferns, the birds, and the water: all alive, all related, all together. In this tiny interregnum I didn’t feel at all like an invader, I was just another animal moving about foraging. The foraging was not for food or water or shelter but nevertheless I was seeking sustenance of some kind.

This passage conveys a sense of wholeness: ‘The wallabies, the trees and ferns, the birds, and the water: all alive, all related, all together’. Steve extends this to include himself in the wholeness: ‘I didn’t feel at all like an invader, I was just another animal moving about foraging’. Later in conversation Steve described this experience as ‘a feeling of being related to it and part of it’. Engagement and intimate knowledge engenders a feeling of connection to the land, a sense of belonging: ‘…pride in belonging is expressed in terms of the sensations of closeness and familiarity, where feet most meaningfully embody a felt connection to land’ (Lorimer and Lund 2008:194).

This discussion of the somatic, sensuous processes involved in Steve’s bushwalking experiences have relied heavily on insights from Tim Edensor’s essay, Walking in ruins (2008). This may seem at first an unconventional way of looking at walking in Australian bushland. However, Edensor himself compares aspects of his experiences whilst walking in Scotland with those of walking in industrial ruins:

For me, familiarity with ruins fosters a heightened sensitivity towards matter and space comparable to sensations apprehended during a long distance walk through Scotland. After a few days, a deeper, non-cognitive, sensual form of appreciation developed for the terrain traversed, experienced through the feet and legs, promoting an adaptation to the environment through a heightened sense of corporeal balance. Similarly in the ruin, an awareness of physical dangers develops a more sensually attuned body which takes account of, and learns how to negotiate, risky space. (ibid. p 132)

In his introduction he sums up his aims thus:

Accordingly, I will highlight how travelling by foot through an industrial ruin or derelict site opens up walking to critical speculation and offers a diversity of distinct experiences which defamiliarize the encounter between feet and world. (ibid. p 123)

And finally, and tellingly, he says in relation to the parallels I have drawn:
Though the experiential modalities of walking through a ruin are peculiarly varied and contingent, they also mirror the broader experience of walking. (ibid. p 132)

From my own bushwalking experiences Edensor’s descriptions certainly mirror varied and contingent aspects of Australian bushwalking environments that may differ greatly from those found in other countries and help to explain the types of terrain and therefore the types of walking experiences being referred to in Steve’s diary. Integral to the terrain’s stretching of the body’s capacity for movement is the terrain’s stimulation of the senses providing raw material for the mind, which brings to mind ‘the sustenance of some kind’ that Steve becomes aware of seeking. The attractions of bushwalking are varied, obvious to some people in the fascination of experiencing the particular topography and non-human life forms. They are related to the bodily movement and stimulation of the senses and the mind - the wholeness of the walking experience in which ‘the mind, the body, and the world are aligned… three notes suddenly making a chord’ (Solnit, 2000:5).

7.2.2 Collecting landscape - ‘embodied memories and biographical stories’

The work of Lorimer and Lund (2008) provides a helpful starting point to explore the role of ‘the embodied memories and biographical stories’ of the Illawarra Escarpment in Steve’s life. An interesting feature of Steve’s bushwalking is his systematic exploration of the Illawarra escarpment – what Lorimer and Lund (2008:186) term ‘collecting as a topographical tradition’. Steve’s initial plans were to explore where he could get to on foot or that could be accessed by train or bus, that is, the whole length of the Illawarra Escarpment. When he owned a car more ambitious plans were formulated to ‘do’ the more physically challenging bushwalks and mountain climbing. Then, not able to travel too far because of his growing family, the closer national parks just to the south were tackled. Finally ‘as guide and responsible party’ a second and more comprehensive weekend walking project of the whole escarpment was undertaken. The list Steve provides of bushwalking areas gives a sense of achievements being ‘ticked off’. Taken together these plans and achievements mirror Lorimer and Lund’s (2008) discussion of collecting landscape. Echoing Lorimer and Lund’s (2008) findings about the ‘collecting’ of the 284 highest peaks in Scotland, known as ‘the Munros’, for Steve’s narrative suggests his escarpment walks become less obsessive as he matures in age. In Lorimer and Lund’s (2008: 193) words:

Among walkers there is common satisfaction to be had from steady passage leading towards a goal of comprehensive coverage. ... Many walkers continue to express great enjoyment in climbing mountains, but find their urge to collect to have waned.
As previously noted Steve now only walks the escarpment occasionally whereas over the previous twelve or so years of his life walking the escarpment was more driven.

Lorimer and Lund (2008:192) draw attention to the importance of recollection in the pursuit of a collection. In their words, it is important:

... to consider the ways that one person’s collection niggles away as a private exercise in accumulation, and can be differently rehearsed during moments of introspection. To recognize this is to re-visit the common observation that ‘when we collect, we collect ourselves’ and to acknowledge the twist of perspective necessary for a narrative of collecting to be internalised. For the walker in meditative mood, or alone on a summit, the uninterrupted or unexpected view is a chance to remember their collection into being. ... On such occasions, the landscape can be seen in long perspective and measured against the self. ... What can be seen, and thereby recalled, are versions of walks in the past. Here, ‘storying’ with events can render landscape memorable.

For Steve the diary is one such opportunity as Lorimer and Lund’s (2008:192) say of ‘walkers in meditative mood’: ‘a chance to remember their collection into being’. Importantly, recollection of a collection facilitates an understanding of the landscape in relations to the self. For Steve self-reliance, the acquiring through experience of the necessary walking and bush survival skills, were an important part of the formation of his identity, sense of security and self determination as an autonomous adult, able to function in the wider world with competence and confidence.

Lorimer and Lund coined the term ‘walking-collecting as a hobby’ to draw attention to the fact that we all ‘collect’ landscapes, people and social situations throughout our lives. Collecting itself is an expression of value: to collect things, experiences, is to value them. ‘Collecting Munros’ is a metaphor for a life process of recollecting, reflecting and valuing. Like the Scottish Munros, the Illawarra Escarpment is valued for how it triggers memories, that help people organise and reorganise particular biographical stories. As Steve expresses:

When I stand in my backyard and look up ...the escarpment is an enormous mnemonic device, reminding me of my competence, my safety, and my duty of care.

7.3 (Re)collections: attunements to virtual landscapes

I now discuss attunements to virtual landscapes of memory that occur in Steve’s diary. Steve’s crafted, more fully developed life story reflects past scenes and events, but is, more than anything else about memory: a thorough ‘reflecting on’ events. His diary is a search to explicitly identify, express and more fully understand his own meanings and
values. Steve coined his own expression for the valuing and meaning-making process – ‘seeking sustenance’ or ‘foraging’ – that parallels the ones that my reflections on Amanda’s and John’s diaries labelled as ‘seeking elsewhere’ and ‘patrolling and monitoring the home territory’. Steve’s story is about remembering, and reflecting on, past sensuous and reflective experience.

7.3.1 Attunements to memorable sensuous moments

Although much of Steve’s meaning making occurs via reflections and storying with the past, moments of insight that arise during action and engagement are also part of the story, as discussed above in Section 7.1.2. The most vivid example is the unusual moment that occurs during the walk with his daughter around Mt Kembla. The normal early morning quiet of the forest and the slow rhythm of the walk is suddenly changed by a brief moment of unexpected movement and noise - the bounding wallabies, the droplets of water hitting the leaves and the galahs taking flight. The consequence was a moment of intense awareness in which time itself appeared to stand still. The break or gap in the flow of time enabled Steve to momentarily apprehend the world and himself differently. He did not ‘feel like an invader, I was just another animal moving about foraging… I was seeking sustenance of some kind’. There was a sense of belonging, a momentary ‘feeling of being related to it, part of it’.

Three other moments of engaged insight or memorable feeling are related in the second half of the story. They are described not as one-off moments but as recurring moments in familiar situations that inscribe themselves more indelibly because they are a repetition or a refrain. One is the moment of extraordinary beauty when the upward rays of the rising sun strike the wet rocks of the escarpment cliff face and ‘sparkle yellow’. Steve says: ‘It makes it worthwhile to get up…’ as if these early mornings are an irregular rhythm in his life. In the second example he describes how sometimes when he is walking off trail he feels ‘uplifted’ when he finds evidence that others have occupied the space but ‘left it for him to occupy without subtracting from the space’. And in expanding this idea of shared space he goes on to speak of being often ‘quietly stunned’ when ‘most acutely I think about this in the context of Aboriginal Australia. Rixon’s Pass is a good example…’:

…it has so clearly existed for thousands and thousands of years that whenever I climb the hairpin I am quietly stunned that this curve, this interstice in the ridge has been utilised for human comings and goings without preventing or limiting the possibilities of other comings and goings, similarly the trail from Saddleback to Barren Grounds.
The second half of Steve’s story is mostly made up of condensed reflections on events. However he also relates single moments of attunement, insight and meaning that occur spontaneously by chance during moments of action and engagement. I argue that these are made memorable, becoming available for later re-attunement and reflection because of their felt intensity.

Steve’s writing particularly demonstrates the reflective attunements to the virtual landscapes of memory. Just as the escarpment looms large for people living in the Illawarra, landscapes loom large in memory. All of the diaries illustrate this but particularly Amanda’s and Steve’s diaries with their alternations and comparisons between the landscapes of the present and the past. As well as sensuous attunements, humans have the added advantage of virtual attunements in absence through memory.

7.3.2 Storying: the comings and goings between past and present

The repetitive comings and goings, a feature of the other three diaries, are also present in Steve’s diary especially in the escarpment walks that occurred every second weekend over a three-year period. The metaphors that Steve uses: ‘seeking sustenance of some kind’ and ‘foraging’ also suggest continual to-ings and fro-ings. Steve extends the idea back thousands of years when he writes that the ‘interstice in the ridge’ at Rixon’s Pass has been used for human comings and goings without preventing or limiting the possibilities of other comings and goings’. Further, Steve’s story is not a straightforward chronological unfolding in the way that John’s walks are. It is a shuttling movement back and forth between the present and different periods of the past. The story begins with an anecdote from his present life and then takes a leap back into the past to the time when he finished school and arrived to live in Wollongong. It then goes even further back into his childhood and then shuttles back and forth between adolescence and childhood before settling into his university and working years and making steady progress through his bushwalking practices towards the present. The second half of the story is set in his present life but returns to times in the past to include memories of three recurring sensuous moments before concluding with his present feelings about the escarpment and a final orientation towards the future. The structure and momentum of the story imparts a sense of the different, elastic flow of time in memory (as outlined in Section 7.1.2 on writing momentum). For example, the speeding up of successive Christmases into a kind of composite moment in contrast to being brought up sharp or given pause by the still, single moment of astonishment of Steve’s ‘noticing’ the escarpment for the first time since his former nostalgic focus on the beach. This memorable sensuous moment also had the capacity to trigger an opening out of a constellation of associated memories that allowed
Steve to see where he was as a person then, how he felt, acted and why. The theme of the continual alternations or going between different states that emerged in the other diaries occurs in Steve’s story in the form of the alternations between the contractions and dilations of time in memory. As Grosz (2005:102) says in interpreting Bergson:

Perception can never be free of memory, and is thus never completely embedded in the present but always straddles elements of the past. This movement from the multiple circles of memory must occur if a productive circuit between perception and memory, where each qualifies the other, is to occur, that is, if there is to be the possibility of a reflective perception or a directed recollection. Bergson thinks of this circuit in terms of a return movement from the object to recollection, in increasingly concentrated or dilated circles.

And further, it is the present that is continually triggering particular memories:

...To move from one circuit [of memory] to the next cannot be accomplished directly, for each time one must return to the present to be able to leap once again into the medium of the past (ibid.)

Consciousness, it would seem, is a continual shuttling back and forth between past and present.

Performance and memory ‘working in tandem’ (Lorimer and Lund 1992:192) forge consciousness and both are extended, maintained, sustained by engagement, renewal, use, both on the ground and in memory. They create, and are further facilitated both by tracks through the terrain and stories through the past. Remembering is aided by the habitual use of familiar stories – the stories that make pathways and connections in ‘an overwhelmingly crowded and disordered chronological reality’ (Cronon 1992:1349) – a zig-zagging track with many detours back to the present. Steve is finding his way through the virtual landscapes of memory just as much as he had to find his way through ‘the bush’. He has found his own way by forming narratives that replace ‘the narratives of stoic, laconic and tough men’ of his childhood. Other people’s stories only have meaning when they connect and reverberate with our own real life experiences (Bruner (1984:73) – when the ‘embodied memories’ have been incorporated into the ‘biographical stories’ (Lorimer and Lund, 2008:192).

7.4 The mechanisms of change

As was discussed in Chapter 6 different types of movement enable change to occur. Two types of movement emerge from Steve’s diary. First, the movement-between or oscillations caused by the gaps, intervals or absences between engagements. Change is possible through the rhythmic movement or alternations between places and states
of being. Second, the movement-with or flow caused by the synchronisation of rhythms. Movement-with can lead to moments of increased awareness, extended sensibilities, transcendences, realisations, transitions and reorientations.

### 7.4.1 Gaps, breaks, intervals - the movement-between

Steve comments on the pleasures derived from the contradictory qualities of his bushwalking plans as: ‘always drawn to systematic plans (especially those pursued in an ad hoc fashion)’. Lorimer and Lund (2008:192) also discuss this ‘happy combination’ of opposites – the planned (the reflective, the virtual) and the chance (the performative, the actual):

> When walking and collecting happen in happy combination, a spatiality of practice emerges through circumstantial factors, finds its openings in the chance occurrence and is simultaneously propelled by the most careful and choreographic of designs.

For both the sensuous and reflective processes of attunement to occur there has to be the kind of wholeness that is a combination or containment of opposites. Movement is always between two opposite places or states such as home and elsewhere, presence and absence, engagement and disengagement, movement and stillness, responsibility and relief, the planned and the chance. The movement back and forth is not fixed, but enables re-evaluation and feedback. Thus, the movement-between (as argued in the conclusion to Chapter 6) can produce change, becoming, new attunements.

Two words used by Steve, ‘interregnum’ and ‘interstice’, both carry meanings relating to a break or gap. In the case of the interstice Steve is writing about a gap in the a ridge that provides a pass or way through the escarpment. This gap, as Steve pointed out, has been used as a way through the escarpment for human comings and goings for thousands of years. The escarpment itself is a discontinuity or break in the surface of the plateau dropping sharply to the coastal plain below. This break in the ground that we call the escarpment causes a higher rainfall and therefore allows the growth of different vegetation that in turn has many further effects. It forms a boundary or barrier that prevents some things but allows others. These material gaps are discontinuities. Like the absences between attunements, material gaps also prevent or delay but allow time for reflection and the coming together of sensuous and reflective knowledge. To refer back to the theoretical framing of perception, action and memory in Section 2.3.1, mind and life are characterised for Bergson by ‘the brain’ inserting:

> a gap or delay between stimulus and response which enables but does not necessitate a direct connection between perception and action … enabling it to bring memory to bear on perception, widening the circle of perception’s relevance. (Grosz, 2005:99)
As Bergson says:

…perception always inclines us to the future; it is only in the delay or rift between perception and its future in action that this orientation to the past, and the free circulation of undirected memory, is possible. Movement and action drives the memory image away; repose and a disconnection from the pressures of action enable memory images to flood consciousness. (Ibid., p 101)

Wylie (2009:278) argues that this material spacing or distancing is the ‘absence at the heart of the point of view’. Material gaps are one mechanism that prevents the total coincidence of self and world (and thereby maintains the creative tension), but allows the coming together of sensuous and reflective knowledge. Consequently, each form of knowledge is qualified by the other, thus bringing to bear both kinds of knowledge of the past on present and future action.

7.4.2 Transitions, re-orientations – the movement-with

As explored in Chapter 6, the process of attunement/entrainment has the ability to synchronise the rhythms of entities that gives rise to a movement-with or flow that can result in heightened awareness and a transcendence of the self through the acquiring of skills, competences, increased sensibility and expanded consciousness. Here ‘transcendence’ is being used in its most basic literal sense: ‘a going beyond the limits of, or powers of’.

Steve is aware of the reciprocal relationship between himself and the escarpment effected through bushwalking. Through the on-going processes of the self-world tension that is landscape he can continue a sensuous dialogue, (re)collect and reflect on the virtual landscapes of his past and tell stories about himself. Liberation from concern with the self (due to the ‘competence and confidence’ Steve derived from walking) allows a re-direction of focus. As Lorimer and Lund’s (2008:187) study of mountain walking found: ‘Commonly a narrative emerges of initial youthful urgency to build up a collection that gradually dissipates into a ‘more mature’ form of conduct…’.

Having gained a stronger sense of self in his on-going relationship to the escarpment, Steve re-orientates his focus outwards to what he has come to value through this reciprocal relationship. He introduces the idea of ‘my duty of care’. The ‘movement of care’ (Rose, 2006) requires an awareness of, interest in and a taking account of, the rhythms of other presences that comprise landscape. Steve concludes the first half of his story with the words:
It is always abundantly clear what the escarpment stimulates in me: wonder and awe at the place itself but centrally my responsibility to it.

The second half of the story is a meditation on matters relating to care. Steve outlines what he regards as damage to the escarpment caused by ‘weeds’ and ‘feral animals’, certain recreational uses, housing development and technological installations. Steve writes: ‘It has bothered me over the years, how little care is given to the escarpment’. In conversation, Steve talked about having joined the National Parks Association as a way of caring for publicly-owned sections through land management. However, he was not enthusiastic about the effectiveness of such activities as practices of care, including management of ‘weeds’. Steve’s reflections on the problems of management as a practice of care illustrate ‘the social and ecological complexity in which we must act’ (Clark, 1997:221).

In the conclusion of his story Steve’s reflections on valuing and caring for the escarpment finds ‘new directions to head in’. Steve, with a sense of self derived from moving-with the coming and goings of the escarpment, its pasts and present, turns to the idea of shared space. He writes: ‘This [sharing of the escarpment] is such a gift. …I am sharing this space, and sharing without subtracting from the space’ or ‘without claiming a pre-eminence or use dominance’, and, in particular, sharing the old tracks and ways through, the passes ‘utilised for human comings and goings without preventing or limiting the possibilities of other comings and goings…’. One could say the same thing about old stories when they ‘connect and reverberate’ (Bruner, 1984:73) with an individual’s ‘embodied memories and biographical stories’ (Lorimer and Lund, 2008:192).

In his final paragraph Steve’s struggling to express his value for the escarpment illustrates that the valuing process derived from the ongoing self-world tension that is landscape is often beyond language. In his words: ‘a value that I cannot quite find the words to describe’. He points to ‘the intensity of the feeling of being given a gift is directly related to the competence and confidence I have derived from walking’. He concludes that the pleasure experienced through how the escarpment is folded into the self is a blessing – hope for the future – ‘a gift that keeps on giving’. For Steve, the escarpment remains, in long perspective, a continuous living link between the past, the present and the future, connecting people with themselves and with others, ‘forever if we are lucky’. 
As well as the very small-scale oscillations and flows of the contractions and dilations of memory, Steve’s diary particularly illustrates a change to, or transcendence of, the self that can take place over a life course. This is an example of the larger scale, gradual, almost imperceptible changes effected over a longer timespan. This change is illustrated by the pivot point of the plot taking the second half of the story in a different direction towards its conclusion. The focus changes from Steve and his life journey, to the escarpment itself. He has shifted his orientation from a major focus on himself to a focus on the escarpment, from an inward-looking journey into the past to a focus on the present and future. This change of orientation demonstrates changes that have occurred in Steve in the course of his life journey and constitutes a gradual transcendence of self brought about by multiple synchronisations of rhythms over time during bushwalking: ‘the sustenance of some kind’ that he became aware that he was seeking. The self-world tensions of life of ‘belonging to but not quite fitting’ (Grosz, 2005:128) give rise to the growing ‘into its fabric’ and contributing to ‘its ever-evolving weave’ (Ingold, 2007:116).

In earlier sections I have argued that transformations occur on the one hand through the self-world tensions arising from the constant oscillating movement between opposite places, states and qualities, and on the other hand from habitual encounters with the flowing movement of the rhythms of other presences that may result in either rhythmic synchronisations and attunement or arrhythmia. In this section I have argued that transformations occur over a life course through not only memories, but also unconscious bodily rememberings that give rise to realisations, as illustrated by Steve’s concluding reflections, of how the escarpment becomes enfolded into the self.

7.5 Conclusion
The first aim of this chapter was to outline the attributes of an autobiographical diary. Steve’s diary/story demonstrates how stories act as a meaning-making and valuing process, making zig-zagging tracks through the maze of virtual landscapes in memory.

The second aim of this chapter was to explore the affordances of the Illawarra Escarpment for bushwalking, and bushwalking as a collecting practice. I used Edensor’s (2010) descriptions of ‘walking through ruins’, that he applied to the experience of walking more broadly, to provide a depiction of the types of sensuous experiences and therefore the embodied memories that were collected by Steve. Collecting is central to Steve’s story. Conceptually his diary illustrates these cumulative
effects of the collection and (re)collection of virtual landscapes in memory and how they interact with the actual landscapes of the present and future.

The third aim - and theoretical contribution of this chapter - focussed on recollections as attunements to the virtual landscapes of memory. What Steve’s story reveals is a glimpse into how reflection and storying operate in the process of attunement to the virtualities of memory; how the memories of sensuous moments are sorted and made memorable through emotion and therefore made accessible to conscious reflection. The spaces, breaks or absences between attunements provide a mechanism through which the non-cognitive realm of bodily experience connects with cognitive processes. The reflective dialogue is enlivened through insights from sensuous dialogue provided by the emotions of attunement during engagement. Steve’s journey/story back into the past, back to the present and with a perspective towards the future is a microcosm of consciousness through action and memory. As well as this it also enters the unconscious realm through the intensities of previous sensuous experience being brought to bear on present action and future possibilities.

Valuing may be conceptualised as an outcome of ongoing self-world relations that rely on practices, reflection in memory and embodied knowledge enabled by both the spaces or absences of disengagement and the flows of sensuous and reflective engagement.
Chapter 8

The tensions, flows and dislocations of self-world relations

‘…what do all these unravelling tensions of presence/absence add up to?’ (Wylie, 2009:282)

The starting point of this project was Wylie's (2007:1) idea that 'landscape is tension'. His question is also my question in drawing together the four results chapters. To answer this question this chapter summarises, collates and discusses the findings. The chapter is structured in three parts. The first addresses the conceptual advances of this thesis examining landscape as performance under the headings: the dialogues of self-world relations; the tensions and attunements of dwelling; and the circuit of performing and valuing. The second section highlights the methodological contribution closely aligned to these conceptual issues: writing as performance and the role of narrative as a performative research tool. I conclude with a brief third section that starts to address an argument regarding the relationship between landscape and text. I begin by returning to what we can learn about ‘valuing’ when landscape is conceptualised as an unfolding tension between self and world.

8.1 Landscape as performance: conceptual contribution

8.1.1 The dialogues of self-world relations

In Chapters 4 and 5 the participants demonstrated what I identified as two kinds of self-world interaction or dialogue. First, Amanda’s retrospective reflective dialogue with the escarpment, other landscapes visited, and landscapes from her past. Second, John’s recording of his in-the-moment sensuous dialogue with the escarpment. I named these two types of interaction, ‘reflective dialogue’ (the interaction of the body/mind with virtual entities in memory in absence) and ‘sensuous dialogue’ (the interaction of the body/mind with actual material entities whilst present). Most self-world interaction is the sensuous dialogue of bodily movement; the senses responding to stimulation. As Thrift (2004:90) argues much of this sensuous dialogue is non-cognitive and below the level of language; only a relatively small amount is cognitive and conscious. This thesis argues that (1) these constant interactions that comprise landscape are not monologues, but dialogues between two presences, the human
presence or self and the other human and non-human presences, and (2) that agency is intrinsic to non-human life forms and forces, as well as to humans.

**The entwining of sensuous and reflective dialogues**

Sensuous and reflective dialogues could be equated with action and reflection (thought). However, in necessarily studying different genres and styles of writing about the escarpment I argue that action and reflection are always entangled within a text, in the same way that writing itself is both an embodied and a reflective act. Action and reflection occur simultaneously in most situations but there are times when they exclude each other, either through all-engrossing action or intense reflection. Sometimes a task requires all our attention and sometimes we need the space to reflect. Landscape, as Wylie (2005:245) says:

> might best be defined in terms of the entwined materialities and sensibilities with which we act and sense.

Wylie conceptualises the materialities and sensibilities of landscapes as always entwined. And, as he explains further (in Merriman et al 2008:203):

> The whole value of the concept of landscape for me is the precise manner in which it demands that we produce accounts which dapple between interiority and exteriority, perception and materiality.

In other words, engagement with landscape demands conceptual and methodological tools that enable the continuous movement between reflection and action, or to use Henri Bergson’s terms, between ‘the virtual’ (of memory, the past) and ‘the actual’ (of the material, the present) (Grosz, 2005:105-110), between absence and presence. Actions and reflections were present in all participants’ diaries. But, nevertheless, particular kinds of writing emphasised one attribute more than the other, revealing glimpses of the different ways in which mind and matter, memory and materiality mix or are folded into each other – how the ‘outer’ becomes the ‘inner’ (Clark, 2001) and vice versa. As Amanda writes in her diary: ‘I love the fact that this topography gets so ingrained into you…’ Further, not only do action and reflection mostly occur simultaneously but the boundaries between the two categories ‘action’ and ‘thought’ become blurred during performance – ‘the division between thought and action fragments once we recognize that real-world actions often play... functional roles’ (Clark, 1996:221). That is, ‘thought’ itself is regarded as performative and not separate from the operational, consisting of sensations and not just language, and difficult to represent. As Thrift (2004:91) expresses it:

> Thought is a kind of performative material intervention. ...thinking is a set of geographies of the sensible, a set of spaces of various kinds of sensation, which resist enclosure in representation because they cannot be codified.
Landscape or self-world interactions can be conceptualised in terms of the interplay of sensuous and reflective dialogues.

The operational tensions and flows of dialogue

Tensions are inherent in all types of dialogue: the tensions of question and answer, response and feedback, sensuous and reflective, present and past. For example, the improvisations of John’s practiced walking movements on an escarpment track adjusting to a variety of conditions and surfaces, and Sean’s applications of the two braking systems on the descent of the escarpment driving a heavy steel train. But as well as the creative tensions of trial and error, response and feedback, there are flows. Ingold (1999:440) makes this important point in relation to the operations of a manual craft as well as to navigating a landscape. He writes,

…the making of anything is a dialogue between the maker and the material employed’ (Leroi-Gourhan, 1993:306). This dialogue is like a question and answer session in which every gesture aims to elicit a response from the material which will help lead the craftsman towards his goal. The final form, far from having been known to him all along and forced upon the material, is only fully revealed once the work is finished. Here the processes of design and execution, of deliberation and realisation, are one and the same. As in navigating through a landscape, you have found your way only when you have reached your destination.

In action, oppositions come together and the particular performance evolves, for example, the ‘design and execution’, ‘deliberation and realisation’ of the above quotation. The choreographed and the improvised, the planned and the chance, thought and action, can flow together and become one in the performance of an individual. This project confirms Gerber’s (1997:14) conclusions that the oppositions or dualisms that most Western people may make during reflections, such as nature and culture, mind and matter, action and reflection, only exist separately at the abstract level. At the concrete level of performance they dissolve.

8.1.2 The tensions and attunements of dwelling

If sensuous dialogues become repetitive they allow bodily rhythms to become attuned to other rhythms that comprise the landscape. Attunements differ from dialogues in that they incorporate a ‘becoming accustomed to’ through the rhythm of repetitive routines becoming inscribed on the body. How participants provide insights into the processes of attunement is a key conceptual contribution of this thesis. I argue that self-world relations - performing and valuing landscape - are made possible by the process of bodily rhythms and the senses attuning to the rhythms and stimuli of other entities and
presences. The processes of attunement are mechanisms by which we are able to perform and value. Attunement is integral to the ongoing tensions between self and the world by offering possibilities for engagement and performance.

I will now enlarge upon three dimensions of the concept of attunement: the rhythms of attunement; sensuous and reflective attunement; and attunements, mobility and dwelling.

**The rhythms of attunement**

As an inevitable consequence of engagement in the everyday world, the rhythms of a person’s body come into contact with the ‘network of rhythms’ (Thrift, 2004:99) that comprise landscape: those of other people, animals, plants, machines, institutions, organizations, systems, terrains, weather and seasons (Edensor, 2010:2). Like the rhythms of the human body and of human dwelling these other entities, presences and assemblages have their own rhythms: the rhythms of your car or the flow of traffic in town; the up, along and down of John’s escarpment walking circuit; the freight rail system that can be at odds with the bodily rhythms of drivers; the fluctuations in the life cycles of leeches caused by the rhythmic cycles of the seasons and the weather. Where there is movement there is repetition and rhythm: ebbs and flows, beats and holds, all manner of alternations and oscillations. We are so attuned to many of these familiar rhythms they become ‘invisible’. As Ingold (1999:439) writes

> In the attunement of the individual’s motor responses to these multiple external rhythms, …lies the work of perception (Leroi-Gourhan, 1993:282). …the perceptual tuning of action to the conditions of an ever-moving environment is of the essence of dexterity.

The rhythmic movements back and forth between opposite places (home and elsewhere, intimacy and environment, sleep and waking) and states (responsibility and relief, entrained and free, the choreographed and the improvised) are a pervasive feature of dwelling. Each engagement is followed by the gap of a disengagement when the heat of the moment has passed and there is time for reflection. These alternations form a rhythm that imparts an everyday sense of time passing. Rhythmic movements allow us to fashion, maintain, combine and encompass what are understood as opposite kinds of places (home and away) and states (responsibility and relief) in our everyday lives. The containment of opposites through rhythmic movements offered by different forms of mobility (bushwalking, train or car driving) is crucial for understanding unfolding self-world tensions.
**Attunements: sensuous and reflective**

We become so attuned to the everyday synchronisations that comprise landscape, inscribed over long periods, that they become ‘habits’. Participants revealed their bodily habits through their everyday rhythms: Amanda’s domestic work, John’s routine morning walking and cycling, and Sean’s work of freight train driving. Again, as Ingold (1999:436) expressed:

> Like habits, skills are properties of living organisms, …they consist of postures and gestures which, through repetitive exercise, ‘become sedimented in bodily conformation’ (Connerton, 1989:94). They are difficult or impossible to put into words, and do not depend on linguistic codification for their establishment in successive generations.

These attunements are kinetic and sensuous, habitual, and unconscious. They become ‘second nature’ because they are temporary and repetitive and become embodied through the senses. Landscapes become familiar through how a person becomes attuned to the iterative and incremental feel, look, smell and sounds of a constellation of rhythmic assemblages, an individual’s ‘resonance to’ the world (Ingold, 2000:200).

The concept of entrainment was applied to train driving to illustrate and explicate the mechanisms of attunement. Entrainment is based on the synchronising of bodily rhythms through training. Entrainment is conceived largely as a kinetic and sensuous learning process that involves repetition. But entrainment is also a reflective and incremental learning process made possible by the gaps and absences of disengagement. Evans and Franklin (2010:180) writing on equestrian dressage identify two categories of learning tasks that I illustrate here by drawing on train driving:

1. **Conceptual learning** that enables the development and adjustment of strategies and tactics some of which were described in Sean’s diary: learning to recognise and understand railway vocabulary, the operation of the railway system especially the signal system, the particular features of each track, varying environmental conditions and how to respond to them; and

2. **Communication** which involves learning the ‘language’ of recognising and understanding the signs of train driving performance and how to best respond to maximise that performance: the interpretation of the locomotive’s monitoring instruments on the particular track combined with the sensuous language of the sound and smell of the locomotives as well as the feel of the speed and motion of the train as described by Sean in conversation and experienced during participant observation.
The spaces, or absences, between engagements allow this incremental learning to occur, and the time for a reflective 'taking stock', for images, feelings and ideas to circulate in the mind and for connections to be made. The individual is able to evaluate and re-evaluate – to get a 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1990:11), gradually refining, both unconsciously and consciously, their performance. Breaks between training sessions exist, of course, because of the limitations of living organisms to be constantly entrained to extraneous rhythms, but these breaks also make learning possible and improvement and change possible. Train drivers, for example, are able to reflect on the last training session and slightly adjust their practices accordingly. Likewise, one could argue that Amanda’s bodily rhythms were entrained to those of her baby and constantly refined and adjusted as he grew and his needs changed. ‘Relief’ from this entrainment, as Amanda records in her diary, came in the form of frequent walks in the escarpment forest, her baby being carried on his father’s back.

The virtual landscapes of memory can be conceived as a sensuous attunement through the process of reflection. Reflective attunements are also temporary and rhythmically repetitive. These are the constant comings and goings or oscillations between past and present, the many re-memberings and re-collections inscribing them more deeply in memory and ensuring the numerous connections that stories make through the disordered detritus of the past. Steve’s diary illustrated how reflective attunements can be conceived as making sense of self and the escarpment through a shuttling between the past and the present. The haunting, shadowy virtual landscapes of memory, though different in kind to the actual, still have a form of reality (Bergson in Grosz 2005:107). Deleuze reiterates that the virtual must be conceived as: ‘Real without being actual, ideal without being abstract’ (ibid. p 108). The hauntings experienced in particular places may be as emotionally and physically fatiguing as the material attributes of landscapes can be. This is the reason why the work of grief (which could be described as a type of entrainment), or other types of dilemmas causing reflective conflict, can be exhausting. Consequently, the relief of frequent ‘holidays from oneself’ are required in order to sustain the journey of working through to acceptance, resolution or decision.

Attunements, mobility and dwelling

Dialogues and attunements are inherent in the mobilities of self-world engagements. This project foregrounded mobility in order to explore everyday self-world relations. During my attention to different kinds of mobility a strong motif of ‘dwelling’ emerged. This result underscores the importance of mobility in the making sense of, and
sustaining landscapes. Dwelling became evident with Amanda’s decision to write more broadly about living on the escarpment rather than just about her walking practices. Dwelling is implicit in John’s regular patrolling and monitoring of his home territory. Dwelling also emerged as part of the reason why it proved not entirely appropriate for John to use his usual mode of travel diary writing for relating his routine home-making walk. This is because writing momentum is more difficult to sustain for the sensuously known routine landscapes of home than for new landscapes. Paradoxically, returning home after an extended holiday produced the prose poem that provided an excellent impressionistic insight into the embodied experience of walking. Steve’s life journey via bushwalking could be interpreted as a youthful way of learning how to dwell. The mobilities of train driving illustrated the dwelling-in-motion on the familiar tracks and the mobile homeliness of the locomotive cab. The diarists’ daily lives indicate that dwelling is invariably made up of to-ings and fro-ings, comings and goings, sleep and waking, stillness and movement, freshness and fatigue, that maintains a tension between home and elsewhere, self and world. The mobile homeliness, or dwelling-in-motion, that is part of most routine modes of mobility is not just applicable to the inside of a vehicle but is also an apt metaphor for how we actually dwell or inhabit any place – a constant repetitive circuit of self/world relations. These rhythmic comings and goings or movements-between help to sustain varying geographical scales or ever-widening circles, between house and backyard, neighbourhood, known territory and adjacent regions, country and overseas.

The empirical material suggests that dwelling and mobility are not oppositional ideas equated to rootedness and travel. Instead, mobility is an inherent part of dwelling, the way that humans inhabit the world. This continual oscillating movement of shuttling back and forth (Martin, 2010:201), between ‘here’ and ‘elsewhere’ to sustain understandings of home is particularly evident in Amanda’s and Sean’s diaries. Dwelling, therefore, may be understood as a movement or tension between the states of responsibility and relief; of constantly moving between being entrained to other rhythms and being able to revert to one’s own rhythm. The movement of Sean from the responsibility of being on duty at work driving trains through the escarpment to the relief of going home is reversed in Amanda’s case where the home was the site of responsibility and walking in the escarpment forest the site of relief. But, of course, at other times in the rhythmic cycles of dwelling, these temporary orientations to home and elsewhere are reversed.
The ‘non-coincidence of self and world’

Following Crouch (2000:65), landscape as dwelling is conceived in this project as both a bounding and an opening, as a simultaneously apprehended proximity and distance. Evident in all four diaries is this restless, incessant push and pull of dwelling: seeking elsewhere, exploration, engagement, mobility, dispersal; as opposed to withdrawal, gathering, intimacy, stillness. These findings echo Paul Harrison’s (2007:642) critique of Heidegger’s concept of dwelling, following the more recent work of Levinas. Harrison states as part of his conclusion:

…for Levinas it is the constitutive openness or unfinished nature of the event of space which gives dwelling its orientation. … It is as if Levinas understands dwelling…to be composed not through its internal coherence or dynamism…but rather through its openness to what exceeds its grasp. To be closed by relation to what escapes and exceeds it; for Levinas dwelling takes-place as this openness.

Dwelling is characterised by the circular movement-between. There is always the need both to advance and retreat, the attraction/compulsion outward and the return movement inward. This constant circular movement-between on the ground mirrors the oscillations between reflection and action, absence and presence, the constantly occurring circuit between the virtual of memory and the actual, between past and present. This is also the ‘creative tension’ that is landscape (Wylie, 2007:217). Wylie (2009:282), in similar vein to Harrison above, poses the question quoted as the epigraph to this chapter: ‘…what do all these unravelling tensions of presence and absence add up to? He replies:

…there is a necessary failure to coincide. There is here no full coincidence or copresence of self and landscape, no fulsome being-in-the-world. … The field of vision is instead constituted and traversed in its entirety by absences, blind spots, lost horizons.

Grosz (2005:128) expresses the same idea well in her interpretation of Merleau-Ponty’s thought:

What Merleau-Ponty grasped toward, …was a way of understanding our relation to the world, not as one of merger or oneness or of control and mastery, but as a relation of belonging to and of not quite fitting, a never-easy kinship, a given tension that makes our relations to the world hungry, avid, desiring, needy, that makes us need a world as well as desire to make one, that makes us riven through with the very nature, materiality, worldliness that our conception of ourselves as pure consciousness, as a for-itself, daily belies.

Harrison (2007:643) concludes his critique on concepts of dwelling with the words:

…the defining aspect or trait of the concept of dwelling: the issue of the relation, or rather, of the spacing of relation. This is what I take to be the legacy of the concept: the issue of how we are to try to bring to thought – to say, to reckon, to understand, to conceptualise, and to represent – the space between us.
Both Merleau-Ponty’s ‘...a relation of belonging but of not quite fitting, a never easy kinship, a given tension...’ (Grosz, above), and Harrison’s ‘the issue...of the spacing of relation’, express Wylie’s ‘non-coincidence of self and world’. Further, Wylie (as quoted above) puts it even more emphatically ‘...there is a necessary failure to coincide’ (my italics) or there would not be any creative tensions. Wylie’s argument is that in ‘current forms of landscape phenomenology and cognate studies of materiality and memory’ there is a tendency ‘to valorise presence... without attentiveness to the constitutive aspects of absence, dislocation and distancing’ (2009:287). He is arguing that the significance of disengagement in the spaces and absences in-between the engagements has not been sufficiently acknowledged.

Embracing these ideas, I argue that the ‘genius’, the creativity, lies in the ‘spacing of relation’, the ‘non-coincidence of self and world’. The gap or delay between stimulus and response in living creatures and what it particularly enables in humans: the free circulation of undirected memory (Bergson in Grosz 2005:98-101) is mirrored in the gaps and spaces, absences in between engagements. These breaks may prevent or interrupt, ensure the ‘non-coincidence’ of self and world but also allow reflection and therefore the possibility of change and difference in the next attunement. For example, Amanda’s daily engagement with the escarpment was often interrupted by trips away in which engagement with other landscapes gave her ‘new lenses’ to ‘see’ her familiar home landscape anew. In Sean’s repeated work shift engagements with the familiar railway track, the alternating between the states of responsibility and relief allowed adjustments in skills to be applied in his next entrainment to the rhythms of freight train driving.

8.1.3 The circuit of performing and valuing landscape

Having established that landscape may be conceptualised as comprised of sensuous and reflective dialogues and attunements of self and world, I now turn to further elaborate three dimensions, first the processes of performing and valuing landscape as a circuit of self-world relations, second the gaps and connections between sensuous and reflective knowledges, and, third the role of disengagement or detachment as temporary liberation or relief from lived experience.

The four empirical chapters demonstrate how performing and valuing may be conceptualised as a circuit of self-world relations. This is because valuing is linked to
the motor and sensuous responses of the body that can be either pre-discursive or cognitive. Valuing processes cannot simply be conceived as social, but include the automatic bodily responses to stimuli. As Grosz argues, in humans the biologically innate and the social are folded together by the ability of the brain to interpose ‘a gap or delay between stimulus and response which enables but does not necessitate a direct connection between perception and action … enabling it to bring memory to bear on perception, widening the circle of perception’s relevance (Grosz 2005:98). Thus, reflection is enabled and brought to bear in making judgements, choices, discriminations, evaluations and these in turn impact future performances.

As the four diarists demonstrate, valuing is embedded in different forms of mobility that help sustain routine practices and performances. A spatial understanding of landscape helps explain how the routines of walking, through a process of collecting and recollecting things and experiences, helps to maintain places to call home, ‘far-away’ places, ‘local’ places, as well as individual and collective identities. As Lorimer and Lund (2008) argue, to collect is to value and to (re)collect can be to re-inscribe in memory what is valued, or to re-value. Aesthetic values, for instance, are particularly individual, bound up with the body and the senses and feelings of pleasure and harmony. Like most of us, Amanda generally did not question her own aesthetic values, for example her liking for trees, except to note that they were not always shared by others. Valuing and meaning-making are embedded in the learning process. This was demonstrated in the on-going reflective, evaluative dialogue recorded in Amanda’s diary; in a sensuous and reflective monitoring of their home territory in John’s and Sean’s diaries; in collecting and recollecting landscape evident in Steve’s diary; in the names we give things; and in the stories we tell (Cronon 1992:1375-76). Steve’s autobiographical story is all about remembering and reflecting on past performances in order to better understand and express how he values the escarpment, a personal journey which leads to a re-orientation, and ‘new directions to head in’ regarding questions of ethics, care and a longer term perspective of broader human value. As Cronon (1992:1376) says:

    To try to escape the value judgments that accompany storytelling is to miss the point of history itself, for the stories we tell, like the questions we ask, are all finally about value.

If performing and valuing are a circuit as argued above, then the sensuous and the reflective come together in the process of valuing.
The gaps and connections between sensuous and reflective knowledges

At the beginning of this thesis I introduced the Illawarra Escarpment as the edge of a plateau, a sudden disjunction in the height of the earth above sea level with an impact that, for example, prevents easy access but enables increased rainfall. This physical attribute resonates with a pervasive emergent theme: the frequent occurrence of breaks, gaps, delays, fractures, disjunctions, disengagements, detachments, absences, interregnums and interstices. In summary, the categories of gaps or breaks identified in the results chapters were as follows:

1. The most basic is the delay or gap described in Grosz (2005) – Bergson’s mechanism of the delay between stimulus and response that enables but does not necessitate an alternative response.

2. A group of related gaps or breaks seem to flow from, or mirror, this delay: the gap or break between the engagements and detachments of self-world attunement such as between training sessions during the process of entrainment, between the presences and absences of the oscillating movements of dwelling.

3. There is also the possible gap at the reflective level between sensuous and reflective knowledges, between unconscious bodily knowledge and conscious knowledge; the gap between experience and its representation in narrative or other forms of art and craft.

4. The final type of gap or interregnum identified emerges from flows and synchronisations that have the effect of disrupting the individual’s perception of the relative flow of time. Alterations in the perception of time passing causes gaps or suspensions in the flow of time that is arresting: stillnesses, ‘a riding with rather than a dealing with’ (Bissell and Fuller, 2011) that enables reflections, heightened awareness, a different sense of reality, realisations, harmonies and epiphanies.

What can be said about these emergent patterns? Gaps can either break or allow a flow, and flows can allow some things or themselves interrupt to form a break. These physical structures and mechanisms of the world - the movements of life on earth - hold true in the movements, tensions and mechanisms of human dwelling and landscape.

As already discussed two kinds of knowledge are involved in performing and valuing: sensuous and reflective. Thrift (2004:90) in his essay Summoning Life states that he wants

...to problematize what cognitive thought might consist of, to radically extend what thinking might be by extending intelligibility out into the world, and to look more carefully at what the connections between the cognitive and the non-cognitive might be.
Thrift’s ‘cognitive and non-cognitive’ equate to what I have labelled ‘reflective’ and ‘sensuous’. To restate Thrift’s question: In what ways do sensuous knowledge and reflective knowledge connect? I have argued that reflective processes play a vital role in the gaps between sensuous attunements. But as Thrift (ibid.) also says:

...most thinking is still done in the now. ...still the world has to be lived as a clamour of competing priorities which cannot be postponed and must be acted out.

There are two different situations or levels in which sensuous and reflective knowledge mix. The ‘now’ or operational level of action during performance and the ‘after now’ of the reflective level – the ‘molten lava’ of events as they happen’ before ‘the magma of such experience cools, hardening into igneous theories, or accounts of what has happened (Holquist, 1993:x, on Bakhtin quoted in Gardiner, 2000:46-47).

- at the operational level – skills and flows: the movement-with

As well as the constant movements-between there are the movements-with, of flows, suspensions, times in-between the responsibility and relief of our dwelling, times of brief respite from the push and pull, comings and goings of engrossing action, ‘a riding with rather than a dealing with’ (Bissell and Fuller 2011:12). As argued by Bissell and Fuller (2011:3) in the introduction to their edited text Stillness in a mobile world, ‘stillness punctuates the flow of all things’. This was illustrated by the vigilant waiting involved in train driving. The successful synchronisation of rhythms where time is experienced differently (Evans and Franklin, 2010) was evident in most of the diaries. This flowing-with can be ‘time out’ or the feeling that time has ‘stood still’ from the usual comings and goings of life. One example is the ‘tiny interregnum’ or gap in the flow of time experienced by Steve while walking in the escarpment forest that could be described as an epiphany – a sudden leap of understanding caused by an ordinary but striking occurrence. Time is experienced differently, there can be a change in emotional state, a heightened awareness may be experienced that enlarges sensibility and consciousness.

As argued in the introduction to this chapter, at this operational kinetic and sensuous level, action and thought come together and are indistinguishable. Performance is shaped in the heat of the moment: body memory combines with any changes in situation or strategy reflected upon since the last iteration. The body/mind interfaces with the world – ‘the whole environment acts as a ‘processual subjectivity’ (Guattari, 1996) – as ‘wideware’ in Clark’s (2000) felicitous phrase – which, through constant
interaction, thinks existence’ (Thrift 2004:90). As argued in Chapter 6, during performances the rhythms of various material assemblages may synchronise and flow together smoothly through continually adjusted attunements. For example, Sean’s entrainment to train-driving heightened his awareness of the constant variations in topography, conditions and trains. Ingold (1999:437) makes the crucial point that habit and repetition do not reduce awareness but make an increased awareness possible. He says:

I have argued...that the skilled bodily practices entailed in ‘handling’ are anything but automatic, but rather continually responsive to ever-changing environmental conditions. ...in this responsiveness lies a form of awareness that does not so much retreat as grow in intensity with the fluency of action...

This can be applied, for example as DeLyser (2010:151) suggests, to aero plane pilots as well as to train drivers. At the operational level of performing and valuing, therefore, sensuous and reflective knowledge combines.

- at the reflective level – gaps and breaks: the movement-between

However, at the reflective level there is much habitual sensuous information below conscious awareness. There is a gap in awareness between what the body knows and what is available to conscious memory and reflection. In examining John’s and Amanda’s diaries much incoming sensuous data forms a background of normality and sensations are not brought to the forefront of consciousness unless sufficiently different. Without this automatic monitoring and screening mechanism ‘economising on life’ (Edensor, 2010:14) we would be impossibly bombarded by stimuli – the excess of the world. The bulk of everyday sensuous information that is inscribed into the body, retained in body-memory and automatically applied in the next engagement is not available for the processes of reflection. It is screened out of consciousness in order not to clog the system or cause information overload. This gap - between automatic reflex information stored in the body ready for the next engagement, and conscious knowledge available in memory for reflection - safeguards the priority of operations ensuring the fast reflex action of automatic responses that bypass conscious reflection.

Therefore at the reflective level reflective and sensuous knowledge may not combine unless there is a richness of sensuous moments felt, sorted and remembered via emotion. In other words, during action body-memory or sensuous knowledge as well as reflective knowledge is involved but during reflection body-memory may remain below conscious awareness unless the emotion of previous sensuous experiences have brought it into memory-proper (Bergson in Grosz, 2005).
In thinking about the ways that the sensuous and reflective combine, what I am arguing is that the reflective processes may fail to take account of sensuous knowledge that has not been brought into consciousness. I have argued that a mechanism the diary texts suggest is the remembering of sensuous moments through emotions. The finding confirms the work of Evans and Franklin (2010) and Thrift (2001). Also Sheller (2004:226) points to ‘the crucial conjunction between motion and emotion, movement and feeling’ quoting Thrift (2000:37) that ‘emotions are a key means the body has of sorting the non-cognitive realm’, and thus making the significantly different available to the reflective processes during the absences of disengagement. It would seem, though, that there is a possibility, through lack of sensuous knowledge, that the quality and comprehensiveness of reflective thought could be impoverished. Reflective thought may not have the benefit of ‘an imagination disciplined by its external practice’ (Dennett, 1997:145). This could occur if there is not a richness of sensuous moments bequeathed to memory by the landscape and sorted and remembered via emotion. We are ‘moved’ to become aware of and remember the unusual and the different.

**Detachment and valuing: temporary liberation or relief from lived experience**

Reflective valuing was particularly illustrated in Steve’s life story in the pivotal transition from a focus on himself to a focus on the escarpment: concern about its care and his search to more fully understand and express his value for the landscape. In the conclusion to Steve’s story a certain detachment from both the self and the landscape is required to allow value and meaning to be projected into the future. As Ingold (1999:426) writes:

> The special capacity that humans have of being able to distance themselves from the conditions of their life in the environment, manifested in the detachment both of the tool from the hand that holds it and of words from the objects to which they refer, also marks the distance between society and species.

This capacity to detach is also illustrated in Sean’s diary in the one entry in which he wrote from the perspective of distancing and observing both himself and his moving train, and reflecting on the cyclical rhythms of society.

The breaks, gaps, fractures of the tensions of dwelling are part of the ‘spacing of the relation’ (Harrison, 2007:643), the ‘non-coincidence’ (Wylie, 2009:282) of self and world, or ‘of belonging to [the world] but not quite fitting’ (Grosz, 2005:128). They prevent ‘full coincidence or co-presence of self and landscape’ (Wylie, ibid.). But, at the same time, gaps are a creative mechanism harbouring possibilities: starting points as well as end points, an open-endedness as memory, reflection and consciousness are
nurtured in temporary detachments from lived experience. Detachment is a necessary
relief from the actual engagement of lived experience, a temporary escape into the
virtual, respite from the exigencies of the actual. Conversely, at times, the actual may
be a welcome relief from the worries and conflicts of the virtual.

A feature of this detachment during reflective attunements to the virtual landscapes of
memory is the liberation from the tyranny of time in lived experience. As illustrated in
Steve’s story the flowing or unfolding of time in the present is overcome in memory
where a particular experience is ‘frozen’, and, similar recurring events are compressed
or contracted. Sensuous moments can be dilated or opened out to supply
constellations of associated details emotionally inscribed in memory. The constant
comings and goings between present and past results in some memories being more
deply inscribed because they are part of a well-worn track; and therefore more easily
accessed and frequently remembered. The diaries illustrate how the senses work
together, resonating through and touching the whole body, rather than just the ear,
eye, taste buds or nose. A particular tune or smell that is evocative of particular
sensations or emotions, for example, has the ability to resonate and set associated
images and memories ‘vibrating’. Many details are forgotten and lost but many others
are remembered. What is remembered seems to depend on the inscribing of memory
by the indelible-ness of certain emotions. As demonstrated in Steve’s stories from his
youth, virtual landscapes of memory gather around them whole swathes of details that
tell him where he was as person then, how he felt, what he thought, decided and why,
and how he acted. This is essential information for how he understands himself now,
and is able to move on in the development of self-knowledge and an expanding
consciousness.

8.1.4 The processes and mechanisms of self-world tensions

To conclude, this discussion of the conceptual aspects of the thesis has collated and
discussed three aspects of self-world tensions: (1) sensuous and reflective dialogues;
(2) ‘actual’ and ‘virtual attunements’, and (3) the circuits of performing and valuing
landscapes. What the participants revealed about how the escarpment was performed
kinetically and sensuously provided glimpses of how the rhythms of the self become
attuned to the rhythms of other entities and presences in the landscape. Endeavouring
to identify these usually pre-linguistic, difficult-to-describe and often unconscious
sensuous dialogues and attunements had the additional effect of highlighting the
entanglement of reflective dialogue and reflective attunements to the virtual landscapes of
memory. The interaction of these sensuous and reflective attunements, mechanisms and processes of dwelling, enables the performing and valuing of landscape through the alternations of engagement and detachment, each providing temporary liberation and relief from the other.

The basis of life is in everyday sensuous performance in which memory, reflection and consciousness have essential roles to play. Following Ingold (1999:429) life starts with landscape at the ‘confluence of the individual’s internal biological environment and the exterior’. Individual selves evolve through engagement with the landscapes they inhabit. Landscape is primary – it is the source, the sustenance and maintenance of our memory and imagination but alternated by the underlying ‘non-coincidence of self and world’ (Wylie, 2009:279) – of ‘belonging but not quite fitting’ (Grosz, 2005:128) - that enables our ability to detach or distance ourselves from lived experience. I have aimed to amplify, demonstrate and illustrate the creative tensions, mechanisms and processes of performing and valuing landscape. These attunements are not possible without the key human attributes of memory and the reflective detachment of consciousness that enables the temporary relief and liberation from lived experience (Ingold, 1999:448).

8.2 Writing as performance: methodological aspects
So far, I have discussed the conceptual contribution of the thesis. I turn now to the methodological contribution. The conceptual and methodological are closely aligned in this thesis. This is because landscape and writing are both being conceptualised and analysed as performative. Firstly, I examine writing as a form of communication. Secondly, I explore writing as performative, particularly in regard to how writing momentum is generated. Thirdly, I reflect on the performative dimensions of research writing.

8.2.1 Writing as both communication and skilled performance
Gesture and speech as part of operational flow
Sensuous communication lies in movement and rhythm – the direct connection of the body with the world through the senses, something that can occur independently of language. On the other hand, social communication relies to a large extent on language and cognition. Human social communication is an intrinsic part of most human performance. For example, gestures are required for the exercise of a manual
skill but are also a basic form of communication. Gestures therefore are an intrinsic part of all performance (Ingold, 1999). Oral communication combining speech and gesture (as well as facial expression and body language) not only enables many operations but the co-operation of others and the operations of the social group. The face and hand are “…complementary foci of the anterior field ‘…tools for the hand and language for the face are twin poles of the same apparatus’” (Ingold, 1999:417 quoting Leroi-Gourhan, 1993:19-20). Speech brings the mouth and the hand together in sound and gesture.

The detachment required for writing operations

In the act of making something (a craft), in exercising the required skills for locomotion, or simply communicating instructions or directions to others, the gesture is both technically and perceptually effective (Ingold, ibid). Writing, on the other hand, is both a form of communication and an exercise of manual skill. Hand, eye (and, latently, mouth) combine with words (symbols) and come together in writing, ideas are honed, organised and made concrete: the act of writing crystallises ideas, makes thoughts ‘work’ when concretely expressed in the manual act of creating a text, of exercising a craft. The virtual is brought into the light of day by being incorporated into a text, an artefact, the virtual made concrete and therefore part of the actual.

In contrast to speech that is part of the operational flow, writing normally requires substantial detachment from engagement or involvement with normal tasks, a writing-time-space. This was demonstrated by how each diarist found the required detachment. Amanda found moments when Gabriel was playing or sleeping; Sean, when co-driving, waiting at signals, or when ‘unwinding’ at home after a work shift; Steve used his lunch breaks at work. But for John writing on the track, the immediate sensuous and cognitive awareness of the world had to be largely blocked out for a short time in order to record his brief reflections on his perceptions of the immediate past segment of the walk. Of course, there is a background unconscious monitoring perception still operating so that an unusual sound, smell or feeling may penetrate and interrupt the detachment. Without the inherent non-coincidence of self and world that ensures the temporary release or liberation from lived experience’ (Ingold, 1999:448), the necessary detachment would not be possible. The non-coincidence of self and world is the price paid for consciousness.

Recording details by writing may also be an essential part of some operations but whereas speech can often occur as part of operations without interrupting their flow,
writing interrupts operations as it is itself a performance requiring manual skill. This was illustrated by John’s trip diary that recorded progress and experiences on the walking track. However, during the manual craft of writing, immediate perception is largely blocked out in order to make the gestures of writing reflectively effective instead of perceptually effective. Writing is a craft with a difference that expresses the virtual world, that is, the subject’s imaged reflection of the actual world. With John’s writing the actual and the virtual are closer together in time. They almost coincide but the act of writing interrupts perception.

Further, writing as a craft involves a craft’s dialogue of question and answer, response and feedback, the choreographed and the improvised, the planned and the chance, of flow and editing – ‘the processes of design and execution, of deliberation and realisation are one and the same’ (Ingold, 1999:417), an evolving process. You have found your way in writing something only when the reflective material and concrete expression have at least partially approached satisfaction – to have, at least to some degree, coincided.

But never completely. Again we are confronted with a gap – the inevitable gap between performance or ‘lived experience’ and its expression and long term storage, in memory, on paper or electronically. This is the gap between perception and reflection, the actual and the virtual which are both real but different in kind (Bergson, in Grosz, 2005). Bodily memory is a better medium for doing justice to the sensuous than symbols on paper or in electronic form, and hence the existence of other forms of communication such as music, dance, drama and film. However, there is an inevitable gap between the expression and representation of experience and the experience itself. This is the gap that prevents the total coincidence of representation and experience but also allows the possibility of the new, the recombinations or foldings of the virtual into the actual, the past into the present. It is the ultimate creative tension. In representations such as writing we can only try to narrow the gap in some way as John does, and indeed as all the diarists tried to do in their own ways. And as many other forms of art and craft attempt to do in many different ways.

8.2.2 Writing as performative – access and momentum

Tracks and stories: lines of communication

How we access and understand both ourselves, and the landscapes we inhabit has much to do with ‘ways through’, both tracks and stories. The emphasis on stories and
narrative throughout this thesis has been, of course, inevitable, as journeys, conversations and diaries are all forms of narrative and their analysis is a major aspect of the mixed methodologies used. In addition, as the researcher, I am writing my stories, my interpretations of the data. The project data contains many kinds of stories: stories of home and elsewhere, stories of walks and journeys, life stories. Stories make a track through the chaotic detail of everyday life as well as the ‘detritus’ of memory thereby providing easier access and inscribing experience more deeply in memory through repetition. We tell ourselves stories to remind ourselves of who we are (Cronon, 1992:1369) and when we tell others a story we are also telling it to ourselves (Lund, 2008:94). Stories are a way of accessing, ordering and giving meaning and value to the bewildering complexity of both the actual and the virtual.

*Momentum for writing narrative*

Just as momentum and inertia were illustrated by the negotiating of the escarpment railway track by a freight train, this thesis in analysing writing as performative has highlighted that to propel the pen across the page, or characters across a screen, requires a combination of motivation (emotive force), physical leverage and momentum. How writing momentum was generated in each diary is a major focus of the analytical methodology for this project. For all four participants, stories and their associated emotions were found to be involved in generating sufficient momentum to write. For Amanda, small stories provided momentum. Her initial finding of improved writing momentum came with the telling of stories about home. In the first of these stories impetus was provided by the tension and emotion of the dilemma caused by her conflict over the removal of a tree on her property to make way for an extension to her balcony. The need for family living space was ‘at war’ with Amanda’s aesthetic and environmental values.

The role of stories in providing momentum varied with the writing genre being used. In the case of John’s more closely aligned walking and writing, the journey was the story. The walking provided the forward momentum for the writing but the writing intermittently impeded the walking. Fragments of stories embedded in the landscape also assisted John’s writing momentum. For John the escarpment told many historical and personal stories but he aimed to refrain from digressing into overt reflections. Like Amanda, Sean’s writing momentum depended on being able to tell small stories about the events and experiences of his working trips. Steve had the least trouble with writing momentum because he was telling one larger story that is well known to him but embedded in a wealth of detail. He had to select and condense the detail in order to
keep the story short and moving along. Journeying through the landscape is closely linked to storying. They are both concerned with finding your way through a complex mass of detail. This is not achieved entirely alone but with the help of numerous others, both those present and the absent ones who have gone before. Finding your way involves using tracks and stories, following in the footsteps of others and in social communication of all kinds.

The preventing and enabling qualities of narrative

In the four results chapters I have evaluated each diary text in the light of Edensor’s (2008:136-138) argument using the example of walking, that narrative is inadequate to represent the embodied sensual experience of walking. There is a necessary gap between experience and its representation in writing. I agree with Edensor’s argument in the case of each diary writing genre except, as discussed in Chapter 5, the in-the-moment style of writing used by John that limits reflections and records a succession of sensuous moments, and manages to reveal some of the sensations, rhythms and attunements of his sensuous resonance to the escarpment. Edensor (ibid., 137) makes a valid point especially in relation to retrospective writing with conventional story structure which in his words:

…cannot effectively capture the momentary impressions confronted, the peculiar evanescent atmospheres, the rhythms, immanent sensations and physical effects of walking.

But as I have argued John’s writing is minimally retrospective – the time between the experience and the writing is greatly reduced and the narrative structure is not that of a conventional story structure in which the ending is not ‘everywhere the chief thing’ (Aristotle quoted in Cronon, 1992:1367). There are genres of narrative writing more amenable to at least impressionistically portraying the kinetic and sensuous and closer to its unfolding movement in real time. As Bruner (1984:73) says, as previously quoted in Chapter 5:

We do not view stories as monologic entities reducible to a basic formula, as do some structuralists, but we see narration as ever changing, without edge or boundary.

It is a case, though, of narrowing rather than removing the inevitable gap between experience and its representation as narrative.

8.2.3 The performative dimensions of research writing

Writing as a performance is another instance of ‘the creative tensions of self and world’: the embodied, skilled performance of the reflective self interacting with the
concrete but limited world of writing materials. As noted above cognitive awareness of the landscape is largely blocked out in order to make the gestures of writing reflectively effective in attuning to the virtual landscapes of memory instead of perceptually effective in attuning to the actual landscape. Writing is a craft with a difference, one that has its own sensuousness, but is least sensuously connected to the actual. As part of my research performance - ‘the now of the research’ (Pratt 2000) - insights into writing operations not only came from the diarists’ writings but also from the struggles of my own writing performance in endeavouring to write this thesis. As a writing performance this thesis is therefore relevant to these reflections on ‘writing as performance’ within the mixed methodologies of this project.

This thesis as a piece of writing is an extended exercise in reflection, and the synthesis of many types of information and data from a variety of sources. It is an exercise in the craft of writing involving a great deal of editing and re-structuring. In terms of the writing genres identified for this project, it is most similar to the crafted type of analytical reflections illustrated by Steve’s biographical story (Chapter 7) but although it has a beginning, a middle and an end, it is far more formal in structure and expression. The analytical, retrospective genre of narrative employed enabled reflection on the data but was a difficult, unsuitable medium when endeavouring to conceptualise, describe and discuss unfolding kinetic and sensuous experience (Edensor, 2010:69). To adequately express sensuous dialogue using the retrospective, reflective mode of this thesis has been a major challenge. How does one write effectively about self-world dialogues and attunements that do not involve language?

Nevertheless, the thesis is my story or way through – an interpretation of what seemed to be an overwhelmingly complex body of data. This writing has been more like scrambling about in very rugged places or bush-bashing - blundering with limited vision through thick vegetation - in order to find a way through, than walking along a path in orderly fashion. This ‘story’ makes a track through the complex details of a varied landscape, data supplied by 483 survey respondents, 183 volunteers to be further involved, 18 participants in go-alongs and conversations, 12 diaries analysed, four of which were analysed in more depth and written up as chapters. In addition there is the complexity of a wealth of academic literature in many relevant related fields, as well as the technical aspects of walking and train driving. Of course, the metaphor of finding a pathway resonates for the writing of all theses.
For me, writing momentum was intermittent and fuelled by various emotions. It was powered firstly by the inspiration of my own long-term experience of the Illawarra Escarpment, and secondly by the personalities of the participants, in getting to know them through sharing and enjoying their activities and conversations, and gaining glimpses into their lives. As well as the embodied experience of shared activities, what people said in conversations and wrote in survey responses and diaries, writing momentum also came from being inspired by other researchers and writers, their insights and turns of phrase resonating with my data. This includes the encouragement and suggestions of my supervisor. Apart from the sense of writing momentum as inspiration, motivation and emotional leverage, there is another sense that is linked to complexity and the formal writing genre being used. That is, I found that writing did not flow without a structure for the discussion of data and interpretation. These tentative and adjustable frameworks for the development of ideas and arguments act in lieu of the chronological development of a story. This is the reverse process of what I discovered in analysing diaries: that clues about sources of writing momentum can be accessed by closely examining the structure, flow and direction of the piece of writing as a whole – by closely following the track made by the ‘footsteps’ of the writer.

The experience of writing this thesis demonstrated how ‘ideas are honed, organised, and made concrete’, how the act of writing crystallises ideas and determines whether or not thoughts ‘work’ when concretely expressed in the manual act of creating a text, of exercising a craft. The virtual is incorporated into a text, an artefact. The virtual is made concrete and therefore part of the actual. It also became clear that the tensions of the dialogue of trial and error, response and feedback, flow and editing confirm Ingold’s (1999:417) argument that – ‘the processes of design and execution, of deliberation and realisation are one and the same’ during the operations of engagement - an evolving process in which you have found your way in writing something only when the reflective material and concrete expression have at least partially approached satisfaction – to have, at least to some degree, coincided.

8.3 Bringing together landscape and text: the empirical, theoretical and methodological

To return to the question posed at the beginning of section 8.2: To what extent do the conceptual and the methodological coincide in this thesis? How do landscape and text come together? Writing and reading are part of the reflections that take place during the gaps and spaces of disengagement. We have to read directions before engaging
and may interrupt operations to re-read. One everyday example that comes to mind is the cooking of food using a recipe. The performance has to be interrupted to check the recipe and therefore the flow and speed of the performance are broken. Similarly, we are often reluctant to read the directions for an unfamiliar operation and only do so if forced to because of lack of success. Writing to communicate or record is an essential part of some performances. Both the writing and the reading has to take place in the gaps of disengagement as they interrupt the flow of performance. Like other kinds of performances, writing and reading result from the creative tensions of self and world but rather than being directly perceptual they are engaged with the virtual and the reflective. Some acts or performances produce happenings, effects, and some also produce things, artefacts. A text is an artefact, a record of the reflective, an embodiment of the virtual.

In a research performance using qualitative methodology, the methodology is the communication between participants and researcher, and between researcher and reader, and the ways in which that communication is approached and interpreted. The methodology employed for this research has endeavoured to access and take account of three forms of communication: the movement and rhythm of the kinetic and sensuous; the sound, gesture and body language of speech; and the sensuous performance of reflection that is writing. This has extended and maximised the communication between participant and researcher and widened the breadth and wholeness of the research. But full co-incidence of experience and representation will never be possible. There will be the inevitable gap – the gap that ensures the open-endedness of the going-onwards of the world.

Examining relationships between self and world also clarified the relationship between text and landscape, a relationship that was of particular concern at the beginning of this project. In conclusion what can be said about this relationship? Landscapes and texts are both concrete embodiments of on-going processes. Writing embodies glimpses of the sensuous and reflective movements of the body/mind, whereas landscape embodies the movements of life, glimpses of which are sensuously and reflectively apprehended by numerous selves. The landscape occupies the central position, people and texts being understood as parts of the landscape’s processes. This helps to balance a too-human-centred world view.

This thesis probes, illustrates and articulates the creative tensions that are landscape by investigating the generic processes that make performing and valuing possible, and
self and world co-constitutive in the sense of the ‘outer becoming the inner’ (Clark, 2001) and, vice versa. However, this research highlights that self and world are not neatly and completely co-constitutive. The human relation to the world of our dwelling is one of ‘belonging to and of not quite fitting’ (Grosz, 2005:128). Such ‘gaps’ or dislocation give rise to the creative tensions of self-world relations that help drive the on-going becoming of the world and the becoming of its inhabitants. The generic processes and mechanisms of dwelling that I identify and illustrate may be summarised as

- The sensuous and reflective dialogues or interactions between self and world involved in the everyday movements of dwelling (illustrated by John’s and Amanda’s diaries)
- The repetitive attunement of the rhythms of the embodied self to the rhythms of external entities and presences both actual and virtual that enable performing and valuing (illustrated in John’s walking practices and Sean’s entrainment as a freight train driver).
- The mechanisms of the circuit of performing and valuing involving the differing effects of flows and gaps, caused by the movement-between places and states and the movement-with (illustrated by Sean’s and Steve’s diaries).

These mechanisms and processes are driven by the basic self-world tensions of dwelling that shape the process of valuing in everyday life and are amply illustrated by the four diarists. These embodied qualities of valuing are universally human. Alongside the social norms that shape how and what people value, also at play are non-cognitive, embodied processes. I argue that these non-cognitive, embodied processes are universally human, transcending social and cultural difference. Particular individuals and social groups may well have learnt to value people, places and things differently, yet, I argue, that embodied processes of valuing are universal. This study has sought insights into generic processes alongside highlighting individual values. While acknowledging the importance of social norms to the process of valuing, I have tried to reach beyond individual and cultural differences to demonstrate the essential role that the self-world tensions that are landscape play in the generation of all human performance, identity and consciousness.

Following this collating, summarising and discussion of results, an overall conclusion to the thesis addressing the aims set out in the Chapter 1 is provided in the final chapter, Chapter 9 - Conclusion.
The aim of the conclusion is to outline how the thesis met the project aims and to chart future research agendas. I restate the aims as set out in Chapter 1.

The thesis aims are threefold:

(1) to engage in the discussion of the rethinking of landscape by gaining insights into valuing processes through the everyday mobility practices of four participants.
(2) to contribute to theoretical discussions on landscape conceived as creative self-world tensions;
(3) to contribute to methodological discussions that are re-examining texts as more-than-representational data sources; and

The chapter is structured in four parts. The first aim of the thesis has largely been met by the four empirical chapters followed by the collation and discussion of these results in Chapter 8. Firstly, therefore, I briefly conclude the empirical findings by highlighting some overall themes that have emerged from this study concerning the materiality and agency of the escarpment. Secondly I outline the theoretical contributions of the thesis, and thirdly the methodological advances. Finally, I chart future research agendas.

9.1 The materiality and agency of the Illawarra Escarpment

In Chapter 1, by way of introduction to the case study landscape, some of the attributes and affordances of the Illawarra Escarpment were outlined. As the four participants demonstrated, the escarpment is valued in many specific ways. Nevertheless some common themes emerged from all four diaries and participant involvement. In conclusion I highlight three themes that to varying degrees are common to all self-world engagements:

- Structure and relief, movement and rhythm
- Generation and regeneration: sustenance and maintenance of the body/mind
- Shared space and social memory
9.1.1  *Structure and relief, movement and rhythm*

Firstly the escarpment is a geological structure shown to have impact and agency. In a purely structural sense it is a topography that provides relief and momentum, connection and disconnection, focus, orientation and perspective. It both blocks the western horizon and allows views of the ocean, city and coastline to the north and south. Although the escarpment incorporates much that is human, it also has in abundance the non-human that provides contrasts to the city and ocean: a varied topography of shapes, textures, colours; of cliffs, forest, a diverse plant and animal life that exploits its varied ecological niches. The escarpment encompasses many kinds of opposites: for example, home and elsewhere, proximity and distance, intimacy and environment, the planned and the chance, responsibility and relief. It is the different, opposite qualities that attract and inspire. As all the diaries revealed, but especially Amanda’s, the escarpment can act as a counterpoint that provides relief from the planned and the routine of the urban and domestic realm – the non-human, even anti-human qualities of wildness: steepness and ruggedness with precipices and dense vegetation. It is a realm of experimentation where life happens without the need for human agency. Conversely, Sean's responsibility was his entrainment to train and escarpment track whereas relief came with going home to revert to his own rhythms. The same could be said about structure and relief, movement and rhythm of a different kind of landscape, say, for example, a major river system flowing across the plains. These movements, rhythms, tensions, and containments of opposite kinds of places and states ensure the movements-between (oscillations) and the movements-with (flows) that are the creative tensions or sources of energy that drive the mechanisms for the sensuous attunements to landscape that allow performing and valuing to occur.

9.1.2  *Generation, regeneration: sustenance and maintenance of the body/mind*

John’s in-the-moment descriptions bring his escarpment most vividly to life. His walks demonstrate a landscape that encompasses views of ocean and city, scarp, sandstone cliffs and forest, flora and fauna, cars and people, houses, roads, railway, reserves, cricket ground, beach and rock pool: a textured, tactile landscape evocative of its history. It is a richly varied landscape that encompasses a whole way of life. The escarpment is varied enough to be a microcosm of the whole world for the people living on or near it, the world that they inhabit. The escarpment topography weaves together mountain, forest, ocean and city, and a variety of life forms through both close encounter and distant spectacles of both the non-human and social elements of the landscape. It is not an impoverished landscape of sensory deprivation caused by the dominance of any one element but a richly varied and textured world encompassing
wildness, enchantment and mystery as well as the complex social worlds of dwelling and making a living. As Rose and Wylie (2006:477) wrote, the concept of landscape ‘reintroduces perspective and contour; texture and feeling; perception and imagination’.

In John’s regular monitoring of his home territory he made observations on how the world ‘works’, the water levels, creek flows, changes due to lack of water, and the frequent noting of the fast regeneration of vegetation after clearing or fires. For Steve the escarpment was an accessible training ground for bushwalking that was close to home. Like John who was interested in finding new routes and making tracks, Steve was led on by the topography rather than keeping to existing tracks. For him the escarpment provided an arena for exploration, discovery and learning that led to the formation of identity and personal autonomy. Amanda’s diary demonstrated the role that a home landscape plays in exploring the world. In the experiencing of other landscapes one’s home surroundings are a baseline for perceiving other landscapes, the similarities and contrasts of each landscape being a catalyst for the extension of knowledges, sensibilities and consciousness. Going elsewhere provides ‘new lenses’ to experience the familiar anew. Landscape is revealed as a learning medium. All four participants experienced the escarpment as space for exploration and discovery – a different world to test oneself against physically, sensuously and conceptually. The escarpment provides a wealth of resources to better move, sense and think with – exercise and sensuous stimulation for the body/mind and an environmental scaffolding or framework to aid conceptual and cognitive processes. In these interactions of body and world is the forging, or generating as well as the on-going sustenance and maintenance of bodily capacities and competences, sensibilities and an expanding consciousness – the creative tensions that are landscape at work.

9.1.3 Shared space and social memory

This thesis has necessarily been examining the self-world engagements of a small number of individuals and is less about how these coalesce socially. But some references to the broader social fabric arose from the four diaries. Steve, in exploring his feelings of value for the escarpment, concluded that they lie chiefly in the escarpment as shared space ‘without claiming a pre-eminence or use dominance’. He described this public or common space as a blessing, a hope for the future, a ‘gift that keeps on giving’. Steve highlighted the escarpment as common experience, a connection and continuity not only between people and themselves, and with other people but also between the generations of people who have gone before, those living now and future generations. During his walks, John also noticed, and reflected on,
remnants in the landscape that provide clues to the lives of those now absent that tell of different ways of life. Both Steve and John realised that the escarpment is not only a carrier of personal memories – ‘a huge mnemonic device’ (Steve) – but a carrier of social memory, of history and heritage, and therefore essential in the expansion of both individual and collective consciousness.

Through examining how four individuals perform and value the Illawarra Escarpment this thesis has attempted to identify, demonstrate and illustrate some of the tensions and mechanisms of self-world relations that is landscape, and examine why they may be creative. In doing so it is hoped to help extend and articulate recent concepts of landscape and inform planners why they should be alive to how recent debates have revitalised the concept of landscape.

9.2 Probing the creative tensions of self and world – theoretical contributions

As outlined in Chapter 2, this thesis is anchored in the recent upsurge in attention to the concept of landscape in geography, resulting from the convergence of landscape phenomenology with ‘the performative turn’. Rather than conceptualising self and landscape as mutually exclusive, this thesis has examined the tensions and mechanisms of self-world engagements and how they may be creative. I have argued that how people value landscapes can be better understood through probing self-world relations by examining performing and valuing processes, rather than by categorising individual values. I have presented an alternative way of conceptualising social value, by examining four participants’ everyday engagements with the Illawarra Escarpment.

Each of the four participants provided different but complex and rich tapestries of how they lived with the escarpment and what the escarpment was for. As discussed in Chapter 8 the diary texts provided insights into how the sensuous and the reflective were entwined or folded together in different ways. Nevertheless, because of ways of writing each participant exemplified particular ways of living with the escarpment more vividly than others. Through these four very different lifestyles, personalities, and performances of mobility, place and writing, generic tensions and mechanisms were identified, and different kinds of self-world dialogues and attunements thrown into relief. How these entwine, flow together or become separated was glimpsed.
The analyses of the four styles of writing revealed insights into how people value the Illawarra Escarpment through self-world dialogues or interactions, both sensuous and reflective, and self-world attunements. Attunements to other presences in the landscape are made possible, accomplished and maintained through the alternating rhythms of engagement and detachment that are inherent in dwelling-in-the-world. Further, it is the underlying ‘non-coincidence’ of self and world, the ‘necessary failure to coincide’ (Wylie, 2009) – the ‘belonging to and of not quite fitting’ (Grosz, 2005:128) - that makes detachment and adjustment possible. The circuit of engagement and detachment, sensuous action and reflection, is envisaged to enable the constant adjustment of responses that is attunement to the ever-changing materialities of the world.

This thesis demonstrates through paying attention to everyday encounters and mobility, the generic valuing processes that are driven by self-world tensions. Chapter 8 collated these findings under the headings of (1) the dialogues of self-world relations; (2) the tensions and attunements of dwelling; and (3) the circuit of performing and valuing. Both how this research illustrated and supported previous research and contributed new insights into the performing and valuing of landscape was discussed in Chapter 8. In conclusion I now summarise the new theoretical insights contributed by this thesis.

Key theoretical contributions:

1. **Insights into the processes and mechanisms of attunement**

In examining more closely the process of attunement I concluded this is largely a kinetic and sensuous process that is dependent on repetition for bodily inscription. Using the example of the attunements required for the skill of train driving, I argued that the rhythms of the body become entrained to, or synchronised with, multiple other rhythms. Examining the process of entrainment revealed the essential role of the gaps between engagements in the iterative and incremental process of conceptual and tacit learning. Reflection and past experience is brought to bear on the next engagement in order to refine and progressively attune performance. I argue that the tensions of dialogue and dwelling – the alternating needs for relief, difference, contrast, response and feedback - drive the constantly adjusting attunements to other presences that enables performance. It was found that in a parallel fashion bodies are also reflectively attuned to the virtual landscapes of memory.
In explicating the processes of attunement I extended the concept of entrainment from the synchronisation of the rhythms of two organisms (as in equestrian dressage) to the attuning of human rhythms with the non-human, for example, the attuning through entrainment of Sean's bodily rhythms to those of the assemblage that is a freight train. This example demonstrates the agency of non-human entities.

2. The essential role of breaks, gaps and disengagement in the creativity of self-world tensions

The circuit of performing and valuing is made possible by the alternations of engagement and detachment. Each sustains the other by providing temporary liberation and relief from either engagement/entrainment or the inactivity of extended reflection. The break of detachment is balanced against the flow of engagement, the two contained within the oscillating system of dwelling. Dwelling I have argued is always a tension between opposites that allows the acquiring of skills through the process of attunement/entrainment. The quality of the reflective detachment of consciousness depends on how well the world has been embodied – on ‘an imagination disciplined by its external practice’ (Dennett, 1997:145), and, vice versa, the foldings-in of the reflections of an expanded consciousness make possible an improved apprehension of the presence re-engaged with in the next encounter. This is the on-going circuit of becoming, the performing and valuing of landscape. This is the ‘incessant movement of enfolding and unfolding, openness and enclosing, in which the two implicate (fold with) and include each other. …the self includes the landscape and vice versa’ (Wylie, 2006:531). The foldings of the past into the present and the present into the past ensures change and the possibility of the new – the disruption of rhythms that alters repetitions and changes habits.

I have embraced the ideas of a number of theorists and philosophers (as discussed in Chapter 8) who point to the underlying reality of self-world relations as a ‘relation of belonging to and of not quite fitting, a never easy kinship, a given tension…’ (Grosz, 2005:128). This idea matches Wylie’s ‘non-coincidence of self and world’. Wylie (2009:287) argues that the significance of disengagement in the spaces and absences in-between engagements has not been sufficiently acknowledged. I argue further that the creative ‘genius’ of self-world tensions resides in the gaps and spaces of self-world relations. These breaks may prevent or interrupt, ensure the usually uncomfortable ‘non-coincidence’ of self and world but also allow reflection and therefore the possibility of change and difference in the next attunement.
During the writing of this thesis I have been struck by the proliferation of electrical terminology used as metaphors in the imagery of the recent landscape literature, some of which have been employed in this thesis. Examples are: alternating, oscillations, circuits, connections, tensions, current, cabling, conduits, and leaps. Wylie (2009:287) even used the word ‘sparks’ in endeavouring to balance what he calls valorising presence ‘via tropes of immersion, engagement, coincidence and excavation’ without ‘attentiveness to the constituent aspects of absence, dislocation and distancing’.

‘Sparks’ can be thought of in the sense of an electrical leap, making a connection, a way of bridging gaps. It is in the fashioning of the subject that the gap or ‘non-coincidence’ of self and world, past and present might be bridged ‘in the relation I forge between them in all the singularity of my unique place in existence’ (Gardiner on Bakhtin, 2000:46-47). In the sphere of the operational, at the concrete level, oppositions coincide or dissolve; gaps are bridged; the inner and the outer, self and world flow together during the rhythmically synchronised attunements of performance.

These ideas also play out in the self-world tensions of academic landscapes. In the slow, iterative and incremental progressions of drafting and editing, for example, when one’s bodily rhythms are ‘entrained’ to a reflective dialogue, one is sometimes rewarded by a spark – a leap that makes a sudden new connection. I found that these types of connections usually take place during the detachments between writing engagements – in the spaces between when events, ideas and information have had time to circulate in the mind. Sparks do make leaps that connect and ignite spontaneously but suitable material and conditions have to be in place for the spark to successfully connect. In other words, for humans to be creative in the broadest sense – for individuals and societies to exist and be part of the becoming-of-the-world - the sensuous and the reflective need each other. Their interaction is the creative system of self and world that is landscape.

4. Generic valuing processes and the social value of landscape
I have argued that valuing processes are embedded in the sensuous and reflective attunements of performance. The cumulative and continually adjusting experience of automatic bodily responses to stimuli are folded with the social conditioning of the individual (Grosz, 2005). In the gap or delay between stimulus and response reflection and memory is enabled and brought to bear in making judgements, choices, discriminations, evaluations and these in turn impact future performances. I termed this the circuit of performing and valuing. This is envisaged as a sensuous and reflective
learning process in which particular values, meanings or understandings are generated, sustained due to on-going similar experiences or challenged and adjusted due to different experiences. The sensuous and reflective knowledges produced through the alternating engagements and detachments of performance come together in the processes of valuing.

The major theoretical contribution of this thesis is this rethinking the concept of value solely in terms of social and cultural norms that are learnt. My strategy in addressing the question of how landscapes are valued is to endeavour to identify the social, cultural and embodied processes and mechanisms of self-world relations. I have endeavoured to uncover and illustrate mechanisms involved in the sensuous and reflective attunement of individual human presences to both human and non-human presences that are both actual and virtual, material and representational. I argue in Chapter 8 that human performance and dwelling-in-the-world are universally human valuing processes. Listed, these include, for example, sensuous and reflective dialogues of dwelling and learning, repetitive kinetic and sensuous attunements of the body, entrainment of bodily rhythms, the operation of the gaps and flows in the circuit of performing and valuing. Within a sample of 18 people I have necessarily examined in greater detail the process of valuing through the unfolding self-world relationships of dwelling-in-the-world for four participants who, while sharing a connection with the Illawarra escarpment, were differentiated by age, occupation, place of birth and gender. The overall conclusion being drawn from this research is that the creative self-world tensions that are landscape, both their material and immaterial (affective and atmospheric) qualities and their sensuous and reflective, non-cognitive and cognitive aspects, are basic to the formation, maintenance and growth of human individuality and consciousness.

How should the findings of this thesis be applied to the problems of assessing social value? What are the implications of these findings for land use and resources management? This study has shown that landscape qualities and features are important for people in basic, underlying ways that are often not fully understood, widely acknowledged or articulated, and therefore not taken into consideration when decisions on land use are being made. This study has shown that landscape is deeply implicated in more than people’s health and well-being. It is essential for the formation of their identities and the optimal operation of their senses, faculties, competences and intellects. Landscape should not be dismissed as merely window dressing, as something separate and external, but as something powerful and encompassing that is
folded into human selfhood from the beginning. As Wylie (2009:279) wrote: ‘the looming presence of landscape in memory and hence within senses of self, identity, community and belonging’. Landscape is the medium in which individual selves (their capacities to move, sense and think) are generated, sustained and extended, and in which common understandings are generated and social cohesion takes place.

In assessing the social values of a landscape such as the Illawarra Escarpment, planners need to be aware of the real (both actual and virtual) value of the landscapes in which people dwell. Landscapes are not separate, detached, or mutually exclusive, that we can take or leave according to whim, but form and sustain our competences, sensibilities and intellects and ultimately our level of consciousness. Limiting the attributes and affordances of rich and varied landscapes and our interactions with them means limiting ourselves. This is not an argument for more walking or travelling or for endless experience of different landscapes. Rather I am saying, as Lorimer (2008:196) says of Richard Mabey: ‘Being attuned to the most local of conditions offers him unlikely resource to make claims for a universally applicable form of awareness’. Everything we are, both sensuously and reflectively, comes from the landscapes we inhabit, and, of course, from the other people in our lives, who are also inhabited by the landscapes we share.

The implications of this for the management of landscapes is that land use decisions should not just be based on economic arguments about global resources or about the conservation of biodiversity. The diversity and variations within landscapes – differences, contrasts, the presence of both the human and the non-human, the wild and the built, the old and the new – are crucial in forging and maintaining the diversity of present and future selves and societies. Human individual and social reasons for retaining the diverse qualities of landscapes should be articulated and taken into consideration when land use decisions are being made. The findings of this project have highlighted that mechanisms and processes producing human selfhood, learning, becoming, consciousness, identity, community and belonging are based on the qualities of difference, contrast, relief, variation and inclusiveness being present in the landscapes of our dwelling. These qualities, of prime importance to human understanding and competences, would be greatly reduced where there is too great a use-dominance or in mono-cultural landscapes of sensory deprivation.
9.3 Exploring the use of mixed methodologies

The second aim of this thesis is to contribute to methodological discussions in geography in the wake of reconceptualising landscape as self-world tension. From the outset the project was not designed to measure attitudes to or values for the Illawarra Escarpment. Instead, my interest was how individuals understood what the Illawarra Escarpment was for, and how it was incorporated into everyday routines. This necessitated the study of a small number of subjects from representative households over a longer time period thus providing vertical depth into performing and valuing over time rather than horizontal, demographic breadth. This resulted in a progressive narrowing of analytical focus from the postal survey, to 18 participants who all took part in diaries, mobile methods and follow-up conversations, to the four participants’ stories analysed in the thesis. The 18 participants were selected to represent as wide a range of lifestyles and mobilities as possible (given the small sample). The mixed qualitative methodology selected consisted of go-alongs, and conversations - the nurturing of an on-going relationship with participants in which more informed questions could be asked as the fieldwork progressed – and solicited diaries in which participants recorded their engagements with the escarpment over time. For a project foregrounding action, mobility and engagement, the longitudinal dimensions supplied by diary entries written over time – how these change, evolve or alternate – proved to be an essential feature of the types of representations employed for this project. I found that some content was written that would not have been expressed in a conversation and, vice versa. Both spoken and written communication interacted and contributed key information for the interpretation of data for this project.

Key methodological contributions:

1. Identification of different diary writing genres that provided different insights into self-world tensions

The key methodological contribution is centred on how different writing genres provided different insights to the self-world tension that is landscape. An unexpected feature of the solicited diaries was the different types of writing. Although initially an analytical problem, this range of writing proved to be a strong feature of the project. The four participants in the results chapter are representative of each of the four genre categories identified from those received for the project. This selection process based on different ways of writing facilitated a contribution that was alert to the different perspectives caused by variations in the time and place of writing, that is, the distance from the action, event or experience. For example, John’s almost direct impressions of
a sensuous dialogue with the escarpment as compared to Amanda’s retrospective reflective account; or Sean’s daily recording of the everyday emotions of each work shift as against Steve’s long-term selective reflections on remembered emotions.

2. An innovative approach to textual analysis that is centred on writing as performative and embodied

A second methodological contribution is the development of a different approach to diary analysis that positions writing itself as performative and embodied. The use of written representations as a major source of data in a discipline that has strongly critiqued the use of representations to capture the performative reality of embodied experience necessitated an alternative approach to text. In this thesis representations ‘are apprehended as performative in themselves; as doings’ (Dewsbury et al, 2002:438). Consequently, analysis is directed towards the performative aspects of the writing rather than the posited meaning. The when, where and how of the writing, and more specifically, how writing momentum was generated and sustained through interest or emotion, is closely examined. Specific attention was drawn to how each writing genre facilitated or rendered invisible particular experiences. This focus on the mechanics of writing revealed how particular diaries illustrate different kinds of self-world relations. Whilst remaining aware of the limitations of particular diary writing genres, results chapters were then aligned with individual participants to reveal something of the operational mechanisms of self-world relations in individual lives.

9.4 Future research

This research has provided some insights into how landscapes are valued through the creative tensions of self and world. However it raises many more questions about landscape than it is able to answer. Some of these questions are:

• What is memory and how does it operate?

• In what ways do the sensuous and the reflective interact and what are the implications for the formation of an imagination ‘disciplined by its external practice’ (Dennett, 144-145)?

• What different types of self-world attunement, awareness and consciousness exist?

• In what other ways do habit and routine operate as a creative force?

• How does habit enable rather than prevent social change? (Bissell, 2012, in seminar)
In what other ways can the tensions of self and world be investigated?

In relation to this last question the performances involved in the crafting of objects from materials, as suggested by the work of Ingold (1999), may be a fertile way of extending investigations into self and world tensions.

What other possibilities are there for using writing as a research tool? Perhaps there are many texts that have already been written (as suggested by Lorimer 2008, Matless 2008, Rose 2006) and many that could be written that would help to answer some of these questions. As demonstrated by DeLyser (2010) letters and diaries from the past can be successfully accessed for performative research. Perhaps there are other forms of literature that could be researched performatively.

This project has demonstrated that diaries (or other kinds of private writing) have an important role to play in performative research. I found that volunteers were more amenable to the idea of writing a diary than I expected. Of course, although willing to try, some found it more difficult than others for a variety of reasons. Not all undertakings resulted in a completed diary. Perhaps referring to such writings as ‘diaries’ tends to give them a somewhat old-fashioned aura as the term is no longer in frequent common use. How can more modern forms of written expression than diaries be harnessed as research tools, and perhaps combined with other kinds of representation, to answer these questions? In spite of the pervasiveness of electronic media, people still use writing in many different ways: personal journals or jottings at particular stages of life, research notes, notes to record details and ideas, trip or travel notes, emails or letters to distant friends or family, text messages, blogs, Facebook.

Many forms of the performing arts, such as drama, film and dance, require designing and writing before they can be performed. Writing records, supplements memory, aids thinking and can be therapeutic. Writing, as well as being a communication expressed as an artefact that to some extent overcomes the tyrannies of time and place, is valuable as a performance for both the writer and the reader. The act of writing itself can help inscribe events and experiences more deeply in memory. Having written something down seems to make the experience less fleeting, more concrete, aids reflecting and often leads to other realisations. At a meeting at his home John showed me a cardboard box packed full of a lifetime of trip-diary notebooks that he admitted he seldom consults. For John, the act of writing travel diaries helped crystallise, appreciate and remember the experiences. In this case, for the writer the performance itself proved more useful than the produced artefact. As a research tool private writing could
be combined with other forms of expression and performance such as photographs, moving film (impromptu and easier capturing of action now made possible by use of a mobile phone), drawing, music, dance, sport, mobilities, the performance of an art or craft.

Bachelard G (1994[1969]) The Poetics of Space, Beacon Press, Boston, MA


Clark A (1997) Being there: putting brain, body, and world together again, The MIT Press, USA

Clark A 2001 Mindware: an introduction to the philosophy of cognitive science, Oxford University Press, New York


Crang M (2005) ‘Qualitative methods: there is nothing outside the text?’, Progress in Human Geography, 29(2), pp 225-233


Glacken C (1967) *Traces on the Rhodian shore: nature and culture in Western thought from ancient times to the end of the eighteenth century*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles


Mitchell D (1996) *The Lie of the Land: Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis


Rolt L T C (1968) Railway Engineering, Macmillan, London, Melbourne, Toronto


*Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 18, pp 411-432


Wollongong City Council (2006) *Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan*


Appendix A

Escarpment Survey form
Tell us what you think about the Escarpment

Age | 18-30 | 31-45 | 46-60 | 60+ | Gender | M | F
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---

Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin? | Yes | No

Parents' countries of birth

1. How long have you lived at your current address?
2. How long have you lived in the Wollongong area?

3. Please quickly sketch a rough map of the Wollongong area in the box, as if you were describing the place to someone who has never been here.

4. How close to the Escarpment do you live?

5. Do you use the Escarpment in the course of your work-related activities?
   Yes | No

   If “Yes”, please indicate the industry or activity by ticking a box, or if ‘other’, please indicate.

   Farming | Mining | Essential Services | Hospitality or Tourism | Conservation | Home Duties | Education | Local Government
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---

   Other:

   Yes | No

   Car? | Rail?

6. Are you a regular traveller up and down the Escarpment?

   Please indicate the reason for the travel: and destination:
7. Do you use the Escarpment for leisure?  
Please tick activities listed, if relevant to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walking/hiking</th>
<th>Jogging</th>
<th>Cycling</th>
<th>Horse riding</th>
<th>Mountain bike riding</th>
<th>Rock climbing &amp; abseiling</th>
<th>Hang gliding</th>
<th>4-wheel driving</th>
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Hunting Archery Drives Picnics Lookouts Restaurants Observing flora & fauna Scouts or Guides

If other, please state:

8. In your opinion which of the following factors are the greatest threats to the Escarpment.  
Please rank (1-3) in order of importance, 1 being the greatest threat.

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<tr>
<th>Sporting uses</th>
<th>Feral animals</th>
<th>Fire Management</th>
<th>New housing or buildings</th>
<th>Water Management</th>
<th>Mining</th>
<th>Weeds</th>
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If you consider other factors important as threats, please state:

9. Please write as much as you can in answer to the following questions:

What do you like most about the Escarpment from the house or suburb where you live?

What do you like most about the Escarpment as a feature of the Wollongong area?

What do you like most about the Escarpment as a place for leisure and recreation?

What do you like most about the Escarpment when travelling in or out of the area?

What do you like most about the Escarpment as a workplace (if applicable to you)?

10. What do you dislike most about the Escarpment?

11. In your opinion, what are the 3 most important issues in managing the Escarpment?

1. .......................................................................................................................................................... 
2. ..........................................................................................................................................................
3. ..........................................................................................................................................................

12. Finally, this questionnaire is the first stage in a social research project on how the Escarpment is valued by the people of Wollongong. The second stage involves in-depth interviews. If you would be happy to be interviewed for this project, please indicate, and fill in the enclosed form and return with your questionnaire.

Please post the completed questionnaire in the prepaid envelope provided BY 29 SEPT. Thanks for your assistance.
Appendix B

Guidelines for writing a diary for the Escarpment research project

Thank you for agreeing to write this diary for my research. This may seem an unusual method of research but it is found to be helpful in providing insights to people’s everyday lives. Diaries add an extra dimension to information gained from surveys, participant observation and interviews.

My research is investigating how people value the Illawarra Escarpment: What roles does it play in their everyday lives? As you already know, as well as listening to what people say, I am also interested in participating in what they enjoy doing. In this way I gain insights into how the Escarpment is woven into their lives. Much of everyday activity is so routine and customary that people are often hardly conscious of it. Recording daily experiences in a diary may bring more of this activity into awareness and provide a chance to reflect a little more on it.

I would like you to feel free about what you write in this diary. I am interested in your ordinary, everyday experiences as you go about your normal routine. What you write about may simply be what you observe from the window above your sink or from your backyard, whilst driving around the Illawarra or experience during your daily walk. I do not wish you to specially undertake any activities that are not normally part of your life.

I would be grateful if you would keep in mind that I am particularly interested in

- where
- what or whom you encountered
- how you experienced: sight, sound, smell or touch
- what feelings you had
- what thoughts and memory associations this led to

Everyone has busy lives and writing a diary takes time and effort. I do not expect you to write it every day. Some days you might write a lot and other days you might just write a few words or nothing at all. I would like you to write the diary for a period of one month, aiming to write at least three entries each week. I will provide you with the writing materials. However, if you are a keyboard person you may wish to use a computer or send your entries via email which is fine. Also if you wish to include photos to illustrate what you are saying, these can be attached. Or I am happy to supply a disposable camera for a photo-diary instead.

The information you provide will remain confidential and anonymous to anyone apart from myself.

Thank you. I hope it is an enjoyable experience for you.

Don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Pat Macquarie
15 September
Walked from Sylvan Way towards Austinmer then turned uphill and walked along 4WD track to power line lookout (as we call it).

It was our first walk in the rainforest for some time, maybe a week or 10 days, as there had been a lot of rain and we don’t walk in there when there are too many leeches. I hate leeches and they cause problems for the dogs. I like it that the rainforest has its own built in mechanism for having a rest from people.

We encountered…
- Fantastic whip birds
- A catbird – the first one I’d heard for the Spring
- Pam and her cattle dog
- A trail bike ride – most unfortunate as I hate them as much as leeches!

We definitely experienced through sound on this walk, from the noisy trail bike that roared past us, to the lovely birdcalls.

It felt great to be back in the forest after we had left it to the leeches for a while. I was suffering from a toothache and being in the forest eased the pain, partly because it’s a calming place to be, and also because there are other things to notice, think about, smell and see.

16 September
What a treat! A walk in the rainforest two days in a row. We walked from Sylvan Way along a number of single tracks. Then turned uphill to our power line lookout.

We encountered:
- no other humans – yippee!
- lots of bird calls
- some rustling in the bushes as the forest critters scurried away.

Sight was a noticeable sense this time, as the light was highlighting tree trunks and plants we don’t normally notice.

As I was about to start on our slow hill climb up to the power line lookout, I looked up to the top of the escarpment. The topography, rock formations, cliffs and vegetation all combine to create a totally unique and inspiring view. I feel very lucky to be able to live so close to this view.

I also looked along the track we were going to walk up and saw from a distance the stand of tree ferns we often admire when we walk past. From further away they made a wavy blanket of soft fern leaves and look stunning, all stepping down the steep hillside.

We got back to the car with two leeches on one dog, but just in her fur. It was a great walk.
At home in the rainforest…

18 September
We live in Armagh Parade, Thirroul. It’s almost one of the highest places in Thirroul. The escarpment is at the end of our street, to the north and also to our west behind the houses. I feel like we live in the rainforest and we have lots of large trees around our house. We look southeast, through some large gum trees on our property, across Leishman Park which has some fantastic trees, over Thirroul to the sea. The sea and sky provide a lovely blue backdrop for the green canopy. It’s not how most people see our view. They think the trees block our view of the water but I don’t agree. I think the trees are the view.

I am struggling through 10 tonnes of paperwork and bureaucratic regulation trying to get the deck extended. I have been noticing the fine line between wanting to keep the “green” feeling of the area by retaining the trees and vegetation, and the planning convenience of getting trees cut down before starting even such a small project. Council would like any building work to be 8m from our tree. The tree is currently 5m from our house, so it just won’t work! And then there’s the bushfire regulations. I’m sure they won’t like development closer to the tree.

As a planner, it’s interesting being on the other side of the counter. But only for a short time, as I lose interest, snowed under by that 10 tonnes of paperwork. Just to extend our deck 3 m, we have to get plans drawn up, a bushfire report, an arborist report and an engineer’s geotechnical report. Phew, the cost of all these experts will almost be the same as the builder’s quote to do the job.

Anyway, this exercise has had me thinking over how best to retain the greenness of our area without getting carried away. I don’t think we have the best system in place yet as I think the regulations are too onerous on small jobs like this, but let illegal land clearing go un-prosecuted. If they are going to be so stringent on the requirements to extend a deck 3m, then why not devote the same rigour and energy to those who break the rules.

Today we had a family of king parrots land on our deck. They were extremely healthy with two juveniles. It was fantastic for Gabriel to see them. He was captivated for a good while. I think they like the water in our gutters and then there’s the dog water bowl, too.

19 September
Walked from Sylvan Way to Scout Camp and back.

Came across fresh horse hoof tracks and horse poo. What a great place to ride a horse.

26 September
We haven’t walked in the rainforest for a few days. We were away on the weekend, visiting the Blue Mountains. It was a spectacular place, lots of cliffs, gorges and valleys, trees and tree farms. We visited quite a few places and did some great walks.

The trip home was quite long and it is always such a relief to turn onto Bulli Pass and see Wollongong spread out below. We check the surf at Sandon Point first, then open our windows to get some sea air into the car. I love that the escarpment provides such a distinct homecoming. It really provides a dramatic break from the climate, roads and landscape up the top, to the sea air made cooler by the rainforest, and the narrow, winding roads. And while it’s not as expansive or large as the Blue Mountains, it is still an impressive geographic feature that gives a distinct identity to the region and towns. I like the combination of the escarpment and the ocean. The Blue Mountains didn’t have a great deal of water, and it took a slight mental adjustment on my part to
stand and look at a view and not see water. It’s funny how things in your everyday life become so normal, then looking at some other view or place makes you think again about what you see everyday.

We had our Mum’s group at Thirroul Park today. I was lying on the grass, soaking up the sun and looking back to the escarpment. It was a very warm moment, partly from the sun, but also a feeling of contentment, being enclosed to the west by the escarpment. It felt reassuring, or something. Maybe it’s like a gateway.

29 September
Today we walked from Sylvan Way towards Austinmer and turned up at the power lines. It was around 4 or 5 pm and the birds were very loud and very numerous. Two whip birds “went off” very close to us on the track and left my ears ringing. We could hear whip birds for the whole walk, there and back.

We saw two boys on bikes a fair way along the track. They were probably 12 and 10. What a fantastic place for kids to play. It would be a real adventure land to play in and explore. I hope Gabriel is able to when he grows up.

30 September
We did our usual walk with the dogs. Today I noticed a lot more little birds were singing along with us. Little finches and wrens were hopping through the bush.

We had some friends over for Gabriel’s birthday lunch today. He turns one on Tuesday 2 October. It was lovely to leave the clearing up and house activity and go for a walk.

After our walk, we got chatting to the man who lives in the house next to where we park our car each time we walk in the rainforest. He is a very friendly man with a little dog called Buddy. We said it must be lovely to live so close to the rainforest, and he said he walks there every morning. That would be a great way to start the day. Although my favourite place was Hyam’s Beach. Living there were the best mornings of anywhere I’ve lived. I would walk the dogs along the beach as the sun came up over Beecroft Peninsula, and around two mornings a week, a school of dolphins would swim by. It was a fantastic start to the day and I felt really privileged to be able to do it.

For us, we walk the dogs of an afternoon in the rainforest, so we don’t see him – the man who lives next to the rainforest.

1 October
Today is a public holiday. We drove to Stanwell Park and met some friends for a surf and then breakfast. After my surf, I was sitting on the sand warming up in the sun. I saw seven pelicans flying high in the sky and three black cockatoos. I love seeing black cockatoos, I feel like they are a good luck symbol for me. I also think kookaburras are pretty special and I like seeing them, too.

I saw plenty of black cockatoos when we lived at Hyam’s Beach. Most mornings I’d see at least two flying over the bushland between Hyam’s Beach and Vincentia.

Stanwell Park is a nice place. It has great views to the north, both along the coast and up toward Otford. It is quite contained by the two hills to the north and south.

We did our usual walk – that’s three days in a row. It was good to see the rainforest. Hadn’t suffered much at all after the big windstorm last night. There were a lot of sizeable branches down
around the streets but not in the rainforest. I suppose that’s because all the trees standing together work to keep the wind in the canopy and buffer each other.

A windstorm is quite spectacular at our house as the wind in the trees is very visible. I’m not much for wind at all, so I go to bed and hope nothing makes me get up again. It’s the same for one of our dogs. She hates the wind, too, and insists on sitting on my feet. Gabriel didn’t seem to mind the windstorm and slept through the night.

4 November
We had a lovely holiday in the Cook Islands. We had two weeks of holiday time, enjoying the beach, local culture and beautiful scenery.

The island – we stayed on the main island of Rarotonga – has a dramatic interior of rugged rocky mountain peaks and steep hillsides covered in rainforest. It looks quite impenetrable and imposing. A lot of the time we were there, there was cloud below the mountain peaks which added to the mystery of the island. Below the mountains are farms, houses, shops and roads etc. to the beach. From the beach, a ring of coral protects the island from the surf, and depending on the distance out to the surf, there are many sheltered places to swim and snorkel.

It was a great contrast to Thirroul/northern Wollongong, with ocean surf beaches. In particular, what really struck me when we got home was how linear the escarpment is. We had just spent two weeks on a small island – the whole island is 31 km around – where the view inland was impressive. It was quite a contrast coming home and looking north up to Stanwell Park and beyond, at just how long the escarpment is. The green headlands marking distance along the coast was quite striking after our holiday away.

We had a great walk in the rainforest today. It was wet underfoot, but not soaking wet. The birds were very active, especially the whip birds. I also noticed a lot more spring flowers since our last walk. I think I spotted a few tiny orchids, but with two border collies pulling me along, I didn’t get much time to stop and look.

6 November
It’s been raining an awful lot so we haven’t ventured into the rainforest to do our usual walk. But that’s okay, we’ll appreciate it all the more once it’s dry enough to return.

The clouds have been quite low with the rain and a few times they have come down lower than our house. It’s quite atmospheric and a nice change. It’s also good looking up at the escarpment from below to see the clouds lower than the top of the escarpment.

I have been thinking about the environment we are bringing Gabriel up in, and the escarpment is a major part of that for me and him. It’s partly the environmental benefits the escarpment creates such as clean air, habitat for birds and animals, water quality etc. But its also the imprint it will have on him mentally and as a person. It is so precious being able to walk with Gabriel in the rainforest where he sees trees and birds and takes in the calmness of his surrounds. It will also be part of what he considers home. Quentin and I have a friend who has grown up and lived all her life in the Wollongong region. She loves it here and has no intention to live anywhere else. She said to us that when she travels she feels a bit open or exposed without the escarpment running along the west. I love the fact that this topography gets so ingrained into you and I think its great that Gabriel will have that too. Mind you, I don’t think you need to grow up and live here your whole life to develop that notion.
From home today I saw/heard:
   Kookaburras
   Cockatoos
   Rainbow parrots
   Catbirds

I’ve also heard an owl several nights running. I love the soft “hoot hoot” as a background noise at night time. It’s often been a comforting noise I have heard returning to bed after Gabriel’s late night/early morning wake-ups.

11 November
Today we went to Austinmer – Moore St Café – and sat on the footpath looking up to the escarpment. It was a beautiful sunny day and the green trees on the escarpment looked great against a blue springtime sky.

There seems to be more rock cliffs in the escarpment at Austin than at Thirroul. It felt a bit more dramatic.

We saw a flock of pelicans fly overhead in a V formation.

13 November
We went for a big long ramble in the rainforest today. The dogs are exhausted. We always walk them on lead in the rainforest, but when we get to certain places we let them off for a game of stick throwing. One place is the Scout Camp/meadow as the clearing is a great spot for them to run. The other is a clearing along a power line that has dense bush on the sides. We stand on top of a cleared knoll and the dogs run down hill to get the sticks. We get to stand and look over Thirroul beach.

Dog walking seems very responsibly managed by dog owners in this part of the escarpment. We have never come across dogs out of their owner’s control. Some walk their’s off lead but are always quick to put them on lead when they see other dogs coming. The off-lead dogs – I’ve never seen them running through the bush – just walking on the track with their owners.

17 November
We have a friend staying with us. He is from Victoria, but has recently moved to America. He is very into the outdoors and works in Outdoor Education for school kids. He was very impressed with our escarpment backdrop and it was lovely to have a visitor who appreciated the value of what living next to the escarpment means for us:
   - lovely bushland
   - habitat for animals
   - outdoor activities, etc.
   - environmental quality
   - views and climate.

I’m sure some of our relatives think we are living in an uncivilised jungle! But they’re probably the ones who need to walk in the escarpment the most.

24 November
We went to the NSW Art Gallery on the weekend and saw the exhibition of Sidney Nolan paintings. His paintings of the Victorian landscape were impressive, from the flat wheat fields of Mount Arapiles, to the dusty eucalypt forests of the Ned Kelly paintings, to the impressive Riverbend
series. While not all the same, he really captured the feeling of the landscapes. Pretty flat, sandy, red-coloured, open woodland.

To come home to our home in the rainforest in Thirroul was a great contrast and made me think again about the escarpment. It is so very green, lots of different colours of green. And very close – the rainforest is very dense vegetation and I certainly feel that living close to the rainforest. It probably felt closer on our return home because it was 100% humidity, with showers on and off. The air felt very dense, whereas the Sidney Nolan paintings depicted that openness from a dry heat. In most of the Ned Kelly paintings the vegetation was of tall eucalypts that you could readily walk through (unless Ned Kelly pulled you up). I couldn’t see myself walking beyond the end of our street as the vines and undergrowth are so thick. And of course the topography was quite a contrast from the flat Victorian plains to the steep escarpment.

I was walking the dogs on a street below us and got a fantastic view of the clouds moving along below the top of the escarpment. I love it when this happens, it looks fantastic and feels closed in and cosy. It also changes the colour of the escarpment vegetation from its luminous green under sunlight to a darker, moodier green.

I’m not saying one landscape is better than the other. But having lived 25 years in Victoria, I’m enjoying the beauty and contrast that the escarpment gives to this region. The Sidney Nolan pictures showed a familiar landscape and reminded me of places I’ve previously lived in and visited. They contrasted starkly to the escarpment and gave me some new lenses to look at it again. It’s a beautiful and unique place, I feel privileged to live amongst it and, at the very least, have it as the backdrop to my everyday life.
It’s a grey overcast sky, evenly-coated. It’s early – the garbage man has not come. I head out the back lane and look up. It’s still there towering above the silent house top. Quickly over the railway and beside bushland. Note the bush regeneration in Felix Ryan Park. A kookaburra on the overhead wires quietly looking and waiting. The cool crisp air makes for easy going up Hill Street. Early workers cars with one person hurrying down to work. Look back for a glimpse of sun-streaked ocean. I am higher now and distant views south along the coast open up. The whole day unfolds. A sea of roof tops down at Thirroul. Fingers of land out into the ocean. The distant finger “stack” at Port Kembla and the high-rise skyline of Wollongong city, in haze. Surf noise in the background. A currawong warbles in tall trees. The road levels. A bower bird calls to a mate in the forest. The last of the houses. The escarpment looms behind them.

I’m heading to the fire trail gate past the unregistered vehicles that have been here for years. After 10 minutes I am in the bush. Vandalised National Park sign no longer legible. Powerline easement starting to grow over again. All still, quiet and green.

Flanagan’s Creek still bubbling along despite the drought. Cool and clean from the escarpment. Complete tree canopy overhead. Speckled sunlight coming through on the leaf-covered coalwash road. I leave this and head up the old incline track. Hard-packed stonework in places. Now only a track wide. Must have been from the mining pit prop days. Temperate rainforest already but the ground is bone dry and dirty. The leaf cover crackles underfoot.

Out into the “Scout Camp” clearing bursting with sunlight and green grass – an oasis in the escarpment slopes. Glimpses of cliff tops way above the treetops.

Back into the shade of the Gibson Track. Doug Gibson, a gentleman birder with an encyclopaedic knowledge of the natural world. The NP track barriers are still in place after 3 years. Past a grove of cedars. Then cross Flanagan’s Creek again. This time in quality rainforest gully. Pause for a drink of hand scooped water. The track winds pleasantly along the level bench through tall regrowth – the original forest was heavily logged in the early days of Illawarra settlement and again later for mine pit props and boiler firewood. Mountain bike ramp over fallen trees cross the track. I brush against ferns and cabbage tree palms as they try to reclaim the track. Dry shady gullies crowded with palms. Tree trunks silhouetted against the ocean light to the east. A remnant massive tree stump from the days of the old growth forest - complete with slot for the plank step. A small weed-choked region opens to the left and allows a glimpse of massive grey cliffs towering above. My favourite rock lookout in the centrepiece. The swamp is ringed with cabbage palms. A low-flying jet breaks the silence.

The water level is lower than usual. These small hollows are often formed along the bench levels. A labelled Livistonia palm from the old days of the Bulli Park Trust. A raised wooden walkway across the outlet for the swamp. Hasn’t flowed for many years. The young cabbage palm fronds are fluttering in the early morning air movement. Should have brought a camera to capture the new shoots in many tones of green. Always amazed to see the dense regrowth from the fires of 2003.
Still no action on the Sublime Point Track reconstruction. Head north through more open fern groves. Sun emerging and creating a stunning backlit forest of bright green and black. More old tree stumps. Governor Macquarie said they were the biggest trees in the colony in 1820. Not any more. They have totally disappeared.

A whipbird cracks beside the track. I pause but cannot see it in the undergrowth. Date palm seeds like ball bearings underfoot. Down we go – glimpses of the blue ocean behind the forest. No people. Cockies screeching as we drop down to the road at the Austinmer Fire Station. Past a giant lonely termite mound - a rare sight. Exit onto the road down a steep dirt chute – a snigging route from the logging days. A giant grove of Casurinas beside the road. Houses and parked cars but no people. I look back. The cliffs are visible soaring away above and dramatically sunlit. Small puffs of white cloud.

In Buttenshaw Close “Tommy’s Tree Care” is noisily reducing an old eucalypt to sawdust. Quickly down the worn forest access tracks through Allen Park and leave the houses behind. The ocean noise dominates the hillside. I enjoy the dance down the rough rocky track. Past the immaculate green tranquillity of the Austinmer Cricket Ground. More tall bush down to Railway underpass, past 6 houses on the right side set in trees. The underpass was originally a coal railway leading to a jetty at Brickyard Point. I turn into Austinmer Street with its track-like footpath lined with date palms and old high hedges.

It’s a grey morning. Stop for a rest at the south viewpoint on Hill Street. No wind, 16 degrees C, slight air movement. Steelworks smoke blowing to the west. Blue sky over the scarp. Dark and clear from yesterday’s fog and rain. All quiet at 7.00 am. Too wet to go bush this morning. Too many leeches and ticks this time of the year. Road walk along Foothills Road. Passed the track start – too damp. On the Buttenshaw lonely King parrot on the wires. Flock of noisy white cockatoos.

Feeling good – decide to go on to Cater Street. Rich damp bush on the left. Yellow ginger plant (wild) in flower. Ocean bathed in silver light through the trees. A grove of tall cabbage palms in a small gully. Past the possible west trackhead spur. Should establish a route. Whip birds – sky rapidly clearing. Can’t do it without a hat or sunnies. Decide to turn back and hike down through the “common title” land and much degraded bush and nasty rough access roads. Over the muddy flowing creek. Track almost overgrown on the approach. Going gets more pleasant towards Clowes Park. Fire trail a sight. Recent tree pruning. Relax now. The grass has been mowed in immaculate concentric circles. Very attractive bush setting. Check for leeches then out onto Railway Street. Say hallo to black dog and give him a scratch. Turn into Park Street and under the railway bridge. Only passed one person so far. New Oscar 4 car glides silently along the rails heading south. Down the railway lane and quietly on to the newsagent for a paper. Across to the pool. Raging sea washing over the pool wall. Four heads bobbing up and down. The cyclists from Wollongong.

A change today. Still, sunny morning. Decide to take the road bike and ride the cycleway. Easy fast clip down to Thirroul. Lots of early morning people out walking themselves and the dog. Other riders. Stop to greet an old customer. Leo, ex steelworker, walking from Towradgi to Thirroul. Lots of cars at Sandon Point. Dramatic view north along McCauley’s Beach. Always stop to take it in. Scarp looking bright and healthy standby guardian.
A welcome drink at the Woniora Point bubbler in trackside park. Powered on to Bellambi pool. Devoid of people. Surfers out the back. Another drink then back I go. Excited stop to see two yellow-tailed black cockatoos each feeding on a low casuarina behind the Aboriginal camp. Struggle up McCauley’s hill and another final big struggle up Kirton Road.

Change into togs and down to the pool for an 8 o’clock swim. Lots of people out (sunny morning). Rough turbulent high tide over the wall. 20 degrees in and slightly dirty after recent rains. Always good nevertheless. Great to stand back and look up at the scarp with only the waterfront shops in sight below it.

Notes on early morning walk. Big puffy cloud hovering over Wollongong city in an otherwise clear blue still day. Feeling ancient as I push and pant up Hill Street. The cool of the forest is delicious. Drink at Flanagan’s Creek (upstream of the crossing). Little used and overgrowing. Have passed through a dozen or so leeches. Stunning light in the trees. Still no action on Sublime Point track. First one through for the day as have to break all the spider webs across the track. Whip birds, kookaburra and parrots. Bush still damp with dark pools lying about in natural hollows.

Down to Buttenshaw Close and get a quick glimpse of a wallaby near the track to Clowes Park. World’s most attractive oval has a gathering of white clad boys getting reading for Saturday cricket. Lots of Dads, their cars standing by. Down to a very busy beach scene as Australia Day begins. Full house at change room seating. Bike boys up from Wollongong. Great to look back at the sun-drenched wall of the Scarp. Late home at 9.00 for breakfast.

Late start. Off at 7.00 am into a light misty grey morning. Dead still. Dripping rain on the hill. Small squashed snake on the road. A red-bellied black. Nobody stirring on such a damp morning. High luminous slow drifting mist along the scarp edges. Too damp for the forest track – would be crowded with eager leeches. Stick to the road today. Yellow fire hose hanging out to dry at the Fire Station. Down through the Buttenshaw Close right of way. Picked a large light pink flower for Marie. Wonder if it will last the distance. Bracken regrowth is intensive this time of the year. Slowly down, picking my way from rock to rock. Playing field is empty. No black dog. Wet footprints on the road. Someone walking home from the beach? Heavy overnight dew on the mowed grass. Top up with two litres of milk at the paper shop. Note the new grass is coming along nicely at the beach. Little toadstools popping up and deep trenches from Council vehicles. Why not use the new culvert?

Raining – will I have a swim? Have to use the big pool. Too much surface flocculent on the little pool. Too deep and wavy to do anything. Do not stay long. Say hello to lots of people then back home for breakfast and the paper. Geoff out walking Casey the dog – does not like to go far from home. Big crashing surf. Large dumpers but plenty of surfers way out. No wind.

Out on the bike for an early morning ride. Have to try out the new steering stem which raised the bar and brought it back towards me. Plus the new rear view mirror. All works well – feels vastly more comfortable and ergonomically correct.
Crystal clear day after two days of steady rain. Slight SW breeze. Water still streaming out of a slit on the top of the scarp just north of Sublime Point. Looked very impressive two days ago during the rain and must have been up to two metres wide and spouting out free of the wall. Fed by a small swampy patch of heath probably not more than 300 metres long. Yesterday, atmospherics along the scarp were extremely dramatic. The heavy fog curling the edge was rolling down in streams like slow motion waterfalls. Looked as if the rain was breaking it up into ribbons.

Stopped above McCauley’s Beach to gaze north over that marvellous view of ocean and escarpment. Drink at Bulli, then back. Took about 3/4 hour. Still find it hard work pushing up Tasman hill and exhausting on the final push up Kirton Road. Better to get off and walk. Always a shock when younger people go streaking by. All my muscle tone seems to be disappearing. Ho hum! That’s life!

Triathalon today – walk-swim-ride!

Dark overcast sky. Sun slightly visible. Coolish breeze from SW. Headed up Hill Street to get the heart started. Great views over the Gong and out to sea. No forest - too many leeches after another very wet night. Empty roads along to Butttenshaw Close. Down through the easement to Clowes Park. Water running down the sodden track. Park flooded in places. Upended garbage over the road. Dogs probably. On down for the paper and a swim. Ocean still turbulent and crashing over the pool. Just wallowed in the waves – 4 laps. Very few people about. Sky slowly lifting but looked stormy to the south.

Marie said she would try a bike ride. Recently got “Blaze” finely tuned and running well. Off we went at 10.30. Minor seat adjustment along the way. Easily down to the cycle track. Not so many people. Breeze from the SW. Riding into it – not unpleasant. Marie going extremely well. First time in a couple of years. On to “…Park” for coffee and cake. Debbie working away out the back. Glaring light but thunder and dark clouds heading up from the south. Lovely tail wind. Easy going on the return. Good run to Kirton Road. Walked up the hill. All great. Just started to rain as we unpacked at home. Only a very short, still shower. Dramatic views out to sea along the way.

Great morning. Sun still low on the horizon and not warmed up. Still, crystal sky. Slowly up Hill Street. Keen to look back over the ocean and check the sea condition. Son Kelvin is driving his 50-year-old Halvorsen wooden boat down from Broken Bay for presentation at the wooden boat show at Darling Harbour next weekend. Hope it goes well. Sea looks okay to me.

Take to the bush after a long break. Sick of numerous leeches. I find that now it is officially autumn they have retreated to where? Only one small one.

Lots of shade this morning – very low sun angle. Lots of residual water lying on the track. Damp fresh bush. Pushing through small spider webs. Admire the one near the Sublime Point track junction.

Threatening contractor signs at bottom of the SP track. PAC Civil removing rocks above the ladders. Jack hammer going this morning. Note the kids’ tree swing is missing (a long length of
old fire hose). Large eucalypt has been lopped beside the fire station. Looks like it may have fallen across the track.

Met someone actually using the easement track down from Buttenshaw Close to Clowes Park. The oval has been recently mowed and looks perfect.

“Black dog” on the road eagerly awaiting a scratch.
Appendix E

Sean’s Train Driving Diary – full text of typescript

14-8-07
Very heavy train, light rain, greasy rail, down to 30 km through Wombarra and 15 km through Stanwell Park. City lights of the Gong receding as another trip away begins. No wildlife to be seen but plenty of planes overhead. Dries up a bit by Helensburgh.

16-8-07
Coming home no animals from Helensburgh to Otford. Burst out of Bald Hill tunnel. I get the same feeling every time (nearly home). We have a manager riding along with us to Port Kembla from Newcastle so explain topography and the coast. He is from Adelaide and on first train trip down the coast but has been to the Gong before. See a deer and wallaby at Seabank near Coalcliff. Coming out of Clifton tunnel can see Wollongong and Port Kembla lights. More so after Scarborough. Explain about Coledale slip to him and what things are like when heavy rain plays havoc on the coast. Long evening in office.

22-8-07
Light train – plenty of horsepower – night shift – feeling OK. Talking in cab and listening to radio music. No animals, just the backyards of northern suburbs and then the track and bush at the end of the headlight.

23-8-07
Coming home, heavy train grinding down hill through the National Park in dyno to Port Hacking River then full power up into Otford shutting off at the 54 km post. Down hill through Bald Hill tunnel. Brake for 60 board, hold for 40 over the viaduct. Hold 40 through Coalcliff. A couple of wallabies at Seabank. 40 through Clifton tunnel then 60-65 from the other side (south) of Scarborough down to Coledale then 70 km to Bulli then get up to 75 km and train will roll you all the way home. Momentum is a good thing. Not tonight – a red signal stops us at North Gong as usual. Nearly home – up over the Gong, down through steelworks into Port Kembla, relief, then home. Long trip and am happy to be off it and off for 5 days.

30-8-07
Off to Newcastle. Days are getting longer – twilight lingers on escarpment as we leave – another heavy steel train with three locos. No problems through Wollongong and up the northern suburbs. As people are having dinner, our day at work starts. Greens up to Scarborough. Cross a pass then through Clifton tunnel. Passenger trains are common at the tail end of the arvo peak. Could see planes overhead and ships out to sea lit up on the black sea. I saw a deer at Otford and that was it.

1-9-07
Early wee hours – we are later than normal due to track work up north. This is my last shift before holidays. Pretty quiet in cab as shift has drawn on and out. A couple of deer about and a big owl near Otford. A kilometre of train heads down through Stanwell Park. It is the time of the freighters and there are a few about. People/voters are mostly asleep. We are following a 4500 t. coal train so are on yellow signals as we both head down the coast. All’s quiet through the northern suburbs after the usual spell at North Gong. Through the Gong and on to Cringila to give the steelworks some empty wagons to be reloaded for another trip to Newcastle, Brisbane, Melbourne or Perth. Start 4 weeks holidays at 0340.
30-9-07
Back to work on the bankers. Push a heavy steel train up to Summit Tank. Very windy up top when cutting rear locos off so take it easy keeping an eye out for trees. See wallabies, wombats, deer and goats. Get back, fuel the engines, then go home.

1-10-07
Another day on the bankers. We sign on and jump straight on the back of another heavy steel train. The goods line in Sydney is closed for track work so trains are going up mountain then via Mossvale and Campbelltown for the run into Sydney. We push train through to Summit Tank then cut off returning to Port Kembla. We have a quick cuppa and bite to eat before jumping into a car to head to Mossvale to relieve another train and bring that train back to Port Kembla. The trip up the Pass sees two wallabies and a wombat near Robbo. Then a fox near Calwalla. We jump on the train after being told of radio problems with the lead unit. We sort that out by polite reporting and diplomacy to save having to do a loco remarshal, then set sail down the coast. Through the farm areas to Robbo and sights of cows, wombats and what looked to be a wild pig. Wombats galore this side of Robbo but we don’t run any over. Heavy train so check the brakes from Mt Murray down to the Tank then down from the Tank with a fair bit of dyno brake punctuated with frequent applications of the air brake to control the train. A few wallabies and more deer with the lights of Port getting closer – been a good day.

12-10-07
0540 hrs on for 9227 limestone. We leave Port for another run up Illawarra Mountain. We get to Dombarton after seeing a wallaby quite close to Farmborough Heights. Red Signal and a call on the radio tells us that there are signal problems at Dombarton with the electrician on his way. We wait 25 mins for him to do his repair then away we go. From 105 all the way to Mount Murray 118 there are heaps of waratahs in flower. The best show in 4 years of me running the mountain. Wildlife galore with lyrebirds, more wallabies and even an echidna. On the return leg we see a large eagle flying just ahead of us keeping pace. Huge wingspan and an awesome sight. More flowers and wildlife to be seen then unfortunately more signal problems, this time at Summit Tank. This sees my mate on the ground clipping points then getting a written authority to enable us to proceed down to Dombarton. It has been a long day and we pull up at Unanderra 11 hours on with a relief crew on their way. Happy to be off the train and headed for home.

20-10-07
9227/2928 limestone. Another trip on the limestone. The weather OK – plenty of wildlife again but no eagle or echidna this time. Waratah still in bloom and as always plenty to see.

21-10-07
9227/2928 limestone. Another good day on the mountain with something to see, good conversation, music and no incidents.

22-10-07
9227/2928 limestone. Famine or a feast – 3 in a row and the third 0430 start was a tough one. Plenty of conversation and laughter in cab while deer, goats and a couple of wallabies watched our progress. We saw my first snake for the season on our way back quickly exiting his sunny location between the two rails. Parrots and kookaburras about and a lyrebird near 100 k crossing. Good day again but the sleep in will be great.

3-11-07
By car - cloudy day with rain about as I head away for a short recharge break. Clouds heavy on escarpment and up Macquarie Pass I go following a Linfox truck up mountain. He must be empty as he is flying up the Pass. Taking it easy as there is a bit of tree debris and the road if wet. No animals to be seen and the fog closes in up top. Off to Wagga I go.
6-11-07
Busy on the Pass with wet and foggy conditions. Bloke behind me is in a hurry. I don’t see the point. Nearly home and not going to do anything stupid as there are cars and trucks ahead. We get to the bottom of the Pass and this guy takes his chance and decides to overtake 6 cars and trucks in one hit. Car comes from other way. Me and guy in front back off. Overtaking car loses control and ends up through an Armco barrier and in a culvert. We all park and go head to lend assistance. Bloke climbs out of passenger side window, his 4WD ute a write-off. He is uninjured. Some people stay – I’ve seen enough and head for home, a little shook up but glad not to be directly involved. Good break away but night shift beckons.

12-11-07
9227/2928 limestone. Good day for a train ride – glorious cool, clear morning. We set sail at 0605. Finally got Pat on for a train ride. All good on departure roll B7. Report departure to Parramatta, check radio system is functioning OK with calls to Wollongong Complex and log on to Train Control in Junee then settle in for the ride. Following some trains on to the main at Unanderra North then up the mountain we go. We see deer at Farmborough Heights. Explaining the sights and line ahead. We see more deer just above Dombarton and go through the “snowshute” (No. 1 Illawarra Range rock shed) and past a lovely waterfall and into No. 1 Illawarra Range tunnel. We climb alongside slide fences which are connected to the signal system. If a rock fall occurs it breaks the circuit putting signals back to red. Just before the look post we leave the face of the escarpment. Turning inland we pass through the gap entering Flying Fox Creek and Sydney Catchment Authority land. We follow Flying Fox Creek up grade to Illawarra Range No. 2 Tunnel (long tunnel). Exiting it is only a short distance to a white-knuckle moment as we cross the viaduct with awesome views down the Avon River valley. A couple more corners take us to a speed restriction where we pass close to a crumbling cliff face and another slide fence. Our speed pegged down to 20 km we traverse this area and are soon up to 40 km, our track speed for this segment of line. So far we have seen deer and a few wallabies along with heaps of parrots and a couple of kookaburras. The land levels out a little, the line straightens and we approach Summit Tank. Green signals beckon us onward and we pass through the Tank on the mainline. The line gently climbs from here to the 110 km post then drops down to cross Calderwood Creek at a point only about 30 m from the edge of the escarpment. On exiting a cutting we see a large roo rolling around on the ground. We ponder what he is up to but continue on. At 112 km the climb resumes. We enter more rugged country again with views of the upper reaches of the Avon Dam though never see the water. The waratah are just about finished for the season. However, there are still a number that still look good. We come out of the rugged area and before too long cross Molly Morgan swamp. Before long we are back into the bush. We see another wallaby and a lyrebird just as we near Mount Murray loop. More green lights keep us going. We have now left SCA land and enter farmland with scattered pockets of bush. We pass under the Tourist Road then the coast is again in view. The railway location is aptly named Oceanview. We approach another slip area. This one has a digitised voice telling that the slip site is clear and we are OK to continue. If we don’t hear it that means that there is maybe a problem and we stop the train and walk into a box to check if 3 green lights are illuminated. If so we go, if not we stay until track inspector certifies the line OK.

We continue away from the coast for good this time and head inland past the Boy’s Bridge where two drivers lost their lives needlessly through someone’s negligence. An old bridge abutment collapsed in heavy rain. A train hit it derailing the lead loco before striking the abutment of the new bridge. The cab of the loco was destroyed sealing their fate. We pass the back of the famous Robertson Pie Shop and continue on toward Ranelagh House. We see another wallaby and the valley where Babe was filmed. We pass the platform which is at the summit of the line then drop in
toward Robertson with more green lights and plenty of whistle for the crossings. We drop down away from Robbo and into the fog passing the upper reaches of Wingecaribee Swamp. We pause at Burrawang to bid farewell to Pat and continue on to Mossvale and Medway Quarry at South Marulen. On the way back we see the usual amounts of animals including unfortunately that big kangaroo now without his head after being struck by a train. Was he sick or injured (snakebite?). We are following a coal train so have a spell at both Mt Murray and Summit Tank pulling up at the platform for a look from the lookout.

On the way down we get relieved at the 100 km. Exiting by road vehicle we take our time as Jay had never been up here and it had been 12 years since I had been up here. The road is awesome and just as I remembered. We see deer and wallabies and birdlife galore. We pull up at a lookout above Dombarton for photos and a look see. We both straight away think of Pat who had missed out on this (sorry!). Along the road some more we are on a ridge with the coast on one side and bush and a reservoir o the other. Before long we are at the big banged up SCA gate which we lock up again. Pass around the back of Mount Kembla before heading down through Mount Kembla and back to Port Kembla and the end of a big work day.

16-11-07
6WB3 to Newcastle. Gotta love daylight saving. We leave Port at 1740 and straight away are on the tail of another train as the peak hots up. We wait between Lysaghts and Coniston for a train to follow off the coast line. We follow him all the way to Thirroul. Yellow lights, level crossings and concentration are the order of the day as always. He gets away a bit but catch him by Coledale. Its good to see the coast in daylight up here – it has been a while. No animals to be seen – just people out and about in backyards, winding down in the evening. We have a breather at Clifton to wait for a pass to come off the single track through Clifton tunnel. Then its our turn. We follow a slow, loaded grain train. Due to the drought grain is being imported through the Inner Harbour. This one is going to Inghams at Berrima via Sydney and the lesser grades than the mountain though a longer route. More yellow lights and slow speed. It is quite a hazy evening as we head around Stanwell Park then through Bald Hill tunnel and on toward Otford. They have done some clearing along the hillside and very noticeably above Helensburgh. They are putting vehicular access on the down side of the line, removing cuttings and the like as they go. Better access was one of the recommendations out of the Waterfall accident inquiry. They are still doing it with a while to go yet till finished. It does not look nice. However, they now also have quite a firebreak, too.

17-11-07
Been a long slow trip home. I’m just about over the trip and the guy I’m with. His arrogance and cowboy driving style wore a bit thin at Waterfall so with a few words to him I’m now enjoying a quiet trip while he sulks. We are following a passenger train so am taking my time. Midnight has not long passed and all is very quiet out and about. We startle a deer near Otford. Not much else around though. Being Saturday night, am keeping an eye out for ratbags. They enjoy throwing stuff at trains. None of that tonight. We have our usual spell at North Gong then head for Cringila and relief, thank goodness!

26-11-07
2WB3 to Newcastle. On the road again. Cloudy evening with rain threatening. Heavy train but not too slow as conversation, laughs, cross calling of signals see us up the northern suburbs and climbing up the escarpment. Plenty of the usual sights to be seen but no animals except a couple walking their dog between Wombarra and Scarborough. Nothing out of the ordinary on another trip up the coast and into the National Park land.

27-11-07
Coming home on a long 1200 m train about on time, maybe a bit early. The occasional yellow signal tells that we are not alone and take our time. Nothing fauna-wise save an owl again at Otford. I have been seeing/being scared by this guy for 8 years. One time I remember it literally filling up the whole windscreen. Luckily we did not hit him but it was close that time. This time he had plenty of space from us. The train ahead has picked up pace and we see green lights as we head down to our usual (so close but so far) stop at North Gong while the passenger trains do their thing in town. Then on to Cringila and a bit of shunting for an hour or so then off the locos and home.

4-12-07
Another trip up Ousley for a shopping trip to Sydney – nice and green. On the return the weather has changed and a storm has blown in. Steady on the road and a safe trip back home, with goodies bought.

5-12-07
4WB3 Steel train. Heavy train light on horsepower = slow trip. We set sail – I’m driving. Green lights all the way to Scarborough where we wait for a passenger. Then set sail into Clifton tunnel and a 40 km board at the Sydney end. I hold train back in dynamic braking till just past the platform at Coallcliff. Then slowly come out and let 3400 t. of train push us down a dip onto a 60 km board and the hill resumes stealing speed as we hit the viaduct right on its 40 km board. By then we are nearly back into full power as we climb through Stanwell Park and into Otford. No animals to be seen – just the usual urban sights giving way to awesome coastal scenery once again.

6-12-07
4BW4 empty steel wagons. We are early. We only have a small (550 m) train. We have waited at Helensburgh for a coal train to go in clear at Metropolitan Colliery. Then get green lights all the way to Cringila. Catch the eyes of a couple of deer at Otford and no others animals except a dog we just miss at Woonona. It has been a good trip away but am still feeling crook from a few days previous though a lot better than on the way up. Looking forward to getting home but the night shift crew are just signing on so we shunt the train away at Cringila then get relieved when we get back into Port Kembla south yard. Been a good trip away but am happy to be off it.
This will cover some of the same territory as our discussions in my backyard earlier this year; I hope that this is acceptable.

I went for a walk with my daughter around Mt Kembla a few weeks ago a gentle trundle around from the north side below the cemetery then up the summit trail. It was early morning about twenty past seven with a little drifting mist and a few raindrops. We walked fairly slowly and warmed up as the sun was rising and still under the cloud horizon. We startled a pair of wallabies who bounded off, releasing fat wet drops and all of a sudden we were surrounded by noise as the leaves were hit by the water and dozens of galahs took off. It was only a few minutes before silence returned but in those few moments so much was revealed. The wallabies, the trees and ferns, the birds, and the water: all alive, all related, all together. In this tiny interregnum I didn’t feel at all like an invader, I was just another animal moving about foraging. The foraging was not for food or water or shelter but nevertheless I was seeking sustenance of some kind.

When I came to Wollongong in the summer of 1991-1992 my first instinct was to go to the beach. In many respects this was an old instinct, my grandmother lived near East Corrimal beach and for almost all of my childhood Christmas-New Year holidays my family would bivouac at my grandmother’s house and we would go to the beach, mostly everyday (especially during the lunch and tea breaks in the cricket and straight after stumps). For small children from the country nothing can equal the novelty of this, it was the attraction of Wollongong. The Beach completely overshadowed Christmas, it was why we came, it was why we kept on coming back. It was the deep pleasure associated with Wollongong and the Beach that prompted my coming to Wollongong after school was done with, even then it was nostalgia. Within weeks of arriving I bought a surfboard and one of those carry racks for my bike. I diligently went down to East Corrimal beach and tried my hardest to be a surfer dude. It was not to be, despite being a strong swimmer and more than able in the water I wasn’t any good, and what’s more I wasn’t having much fun trying. Perhaps this was a chicken and egg moment, was I no good because I wasn’t having any fun or not having any fun because I was no good? I couldn’t say and so I sold the board and took the rack off my bike, leaving it in the garage (and somewhere in the maze of my garage it is there today).

A bit later, somewhere in the winter I was told that the son of friend had walked up to Broker’s Nose. Momentarily astonished I turned and looked at the rock face, and it felt as if it was the first time I had looked inland since I had arrived. My childhood had been a road atlas of little moves from little town to little town, following the employment of my parents around the far nooks and crannies of the NSW Dept of Education. Reflecting on the time, it was neither a grand adventure nor regrettable torture. It was a childhood, and as always a mixed blessing. The western plains are not, broadly speaking, broken up by large rock faces, nor even by moderately sized hills. They are flat and it is especially in memory, rather difficult to differentiate one place from another: brown, flat, one tree plains, hot and dusty, except when they’re sodden and muddy. I was pleased to be out on my own, away from the narratives of stoic, laconic and tough men. I wanted the vigorous cosmopolitan urbanity of anywhere not brown flat dusty and underpopulated. Wollongong, already invested with nostalgia, would do. Besides I could stay with my grandmother, this made Wollongong a very cheap option and I took it. I pursued the aspects of urbanity I was interested in (let’s call them what they are: music, sex, intoxicants) with some dedication and continue to do so but I was aware that it was not equal to expectations and I was not satisfied. It was not sustaining.

Largely because I was overweight and bored with spending Saturdays mowing my grandmother’s lawn I sought out my friend’s son and he directed me to the path up Broker’s Nose. I followed the path and began walking on the escarpment. I was not blessed with a car so I walked mostly to and from places with some kind of access to public transport, or places that I could walk to from East Corrimal. This limited me for some years to the escarpment and the Royal (Heathcote plus Dharawal also). Always drawn to systematic plans (especially those pursued in an ad hoc fashion) I followed ridge lines and gullies and trails from Bundeena to Minnamurra. At that time I was keeping notes of the explorations I made and I would come back to odd little
spots that seemed to be new directions to head in. I remember following the gully (it is now an erosion soiled series of bike descents) from Stafford’s Farm down to Mount Nebo, completely leech ridden and being lost. The sweaty disorientation of descending provoked a series of practices that later I realised come directly from my time at Narromine Boy Scouts: always carry a compass, always have an extra water bottle, bring your map with you, tell someone where you’re going, all the stuff that the most basic novice is aware of. I began to feel competent, not just whilst walking but in life. The more adept I became wandering about on Saturdays and Sundays the more I had confidence in myself.

When I got a car I began to take longer trips, especially before my children arrived on the scene. I sought out the usual bushwalking haunts; Mittagong to Katoomba, Kosciusko, Blue Gum forest, Patonga, Wollomi, Barrington Tops, and Kanangra (my favourite and longest walking trip was a nightmare seven nights trying to get to and ascend Mt …(?)). They were all great fun, hungry and dirty trips. When my kids arrived I again had to stick closer to home, initially making forays south: Morton NP, Jervis Bay, and then the Budawangs. But alas the bigger my brood the smaller my trips. Then a student of my partner’s expressed a wish to walk around what was the Farm near Dunmore bends (and look at the development now, Shellcove? Hellcove!). We wandered around for a bit and formed a plan to walk in the Royal the following weekend. From there we followed a pattern of walking locally every second weekend, starting at Jibbon Head and moving south until, over three years later, we hit the Kings Highway. (We did go further afield at different times: walking the Six Foot track, ascending Mt Imlay and exploring the coastline around the southern side of Twofold Bay, Kosciusko, Mt. Warning and Mt. Barney, as well as a failed attempt on Mt. Lindesay, when he moved to Brisbane). Acting as a guide and generally being the responsible party in our two-man troop during this long walk consolidated the confidence I had developed by walking. When I stand in my backyard and look up at Sherbrooke Trig the escarpment is an enormous mnemonic device, reminding me of my competence, my safety, and my duty of care. I take my daughters around the trails occasionally, though they couldn’t be less interested in walking for miles, and it is always abundantly clear what the escarpment stimulates in me: wonder and awe at the place itself but centrally my responsibility to it.

The lantana does not bother me so much. I know it is not native, nor it is helpful to plant species that are and neither is it able to be consumed by any animal that I can see nor does it make decent kindling. It is quite pretty, but mostly I only see it in the marginal spaces close to people, roads, and stormwater drains. Sadly where is lots of it on the eastern face of the escarpment and it does make walking less pleasurable but realistically the east face is so compromised by mining, agriculture, residences, domesticated animals and general recreational uses I just can’t get upset about lantana. Walking through it is shithouse, just horrible: somehow more awful than horizontal or briarbush.

I do worry about recreational uses, especially mountain and trail bikes. I can see the appeal of descending down the escarpment going fast, navigating only in the five metres ahead of you and concentrating really hard but it just does so much damage. The erosion that follows a bike trail is just so horrendous that in combination with all the subsidence issues that go with one hundred and fifty years of shaft mining I can’t help but feel when the big water comes down the mountain (I think the record is about 300 mm in a day) the risk of losing not just top soil but whole sections of mountainside is real and appreciable. I don’t want to disrespect the riders, they are clearly very skilled in what they do but I cannot see any relationship between minimal impact practices and mountain bike descents. I have found a lot more evidence of horse riding in recent years, even in the past two months on Rixon’s Pass. While not one to subscribe to the class prejudices that cling to horsey types and the landed gentry I do find it pretty galling that horse and rider make use of the escarpment trails. Horses’ erosion impact is just as significant as bikes but usually pushed aside because they are much quieter and less frequent. Deer are also becoming more of an issue, their pads have a habit of wrecking the undergrowth on the forest floor (but never, it seems, lantana).

I so love the mornings, especially when it has rained a little in the night and the sun catches the wet rocks making them sparkle yellow. It makes it worthwhile to get up and watch the sun’s upward rays strike. It reminds me of smuggler’s lights, the refraction of a single beam. The beauty of that moment is so extraordinary. It has bothered me over the years, how little care is given to the escarpment. This has become more acute as development has crept up (Edgewood is a glaring example) and the beauty of the escarpment is used as a selling feature, making me wonder how beautiful it is when there’s a neat little lawn built to replace it. Also I find the technological uses of the escarpment less than restive. While I acknowledge the utility of
mobile phone towers and the tv transmission sites I can’t help but feel that once those structures are put in place no other use of that space is possible, they exclude. Surrounding the mobile phone tower, two hundred vertical metres above the Bulli Showground, is a compound protected by razor wire, cordonning off an area of maybe one hundred square metres. This is not huge but the clearing required to build it does put a hole in the pleasure gained from engaging with that fire trail and its surrounds.

The deep romance of the escarpment does not lie in beauty for me. It is in the spaces that others have occupied but left for me to occupy without subtracting from the space. This is such a gift. Sometimes when off trail I find a marking, or footprint, a small stone circle, or (in that classic tracker trope) a snapped branch and I am always uplifted by the thought that even though I am alone (or with a walking partner) I am sharing this space, and sharing without claiming a pre-eminence or use dominance. Most acutely I think about this in the context of Aboriginal Australia. Rixon’s Pass is a good example of this: it has so clearly existed for thousands and thousands of years that whenever I climb the hairpin I am quietly stunned that this curve, this interstice in the ridge has been utilised for human comings and goings without preventing or limiting the possibilities of other comings and goings, similarly the trail from Saddleback to Barren Grounds. Those passes are not the construction of some road building multinational or the result of a grand plan to globalise transport systems: they are just there and we use them just as they have been used for ages.

The intensity of the feeling of being given a gift is directly related to the competence and confidence I have derived from walking. The escarpment does not simply sustain me, being part of a long history that does not end, that also enables a future similarly blessed, has a value I cannot quite find the words to describe. It feels like a blessing, and as a blessing it is a means of building hope for the future. The escarpment offers not only sustenance, but it is sustaining – forever if we’re lucky – a gift that keeps on giving.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Past tense writing</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amanda</strong>&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30+ Town planner/HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Walk on forest track with baby son (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit (1) - diary in progress</td>
<td>Home visit to collect diary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glen</strong></td>
<td>70+ Surveyor/retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Walk on usual forest track(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit (1.75) after receiving diary</td>
<td>Letters about diary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tim</strong></td>
<td>46+ English Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Home visit including backyard (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting at my home to discuss diary + 29 photos and 2 poems</td>
<td>Emails about poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lois</strong></td>
<td>60+ Drafts-person/retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Walk on usual road route followed by home visit (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk on road route; observing care routines for orphan animals (2.5)</td>
<td>Home visit to collect diary + two drawings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Julie</strong></td>
<td>40+ Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Home visit including backyard (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk on a favourite escarpment track (3)</td>
<td>New baby in family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Helen B</strong></td>
<td>50+Teacher/Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Home visit and walk in usual reserve (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting at my home to deliver diary (1)</td>
<td>Phone calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kevin C</strong></td>
<td>66+ Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Home visit – conversation with husband and wife (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk across farmland with Kevin plus oral biography and history (2)</td>
<td>Not able to write diary due to medical condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Helen C</strong></td>
<td>66+ Retired</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home visit whilst caring for 18 months old daughter (1.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit to discuss diary (1 hr)</td>
<td>Meeting on campus to discuss diary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steve</strong>&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30+ University Admin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Home visit and walk in forest fringe (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy to write diary instead</td>
<td><strong>Journal-style</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jamie</strong></td>
<td>26+ Mining Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Home visit (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive by car on usual route to workplace at coal mine (1)</td>
<td>Phone calls and letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Terry</strong></td>
<td>46+ Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Home visit to discuss diary (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit and walk on local roads (1.5)</td>
<td><strong>Journal-style</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elizabeth</strong></td>
<td>30+ Student/HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Home visit and walk on forest tracks (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother of three plus University studies</strong></td>
<td>Too busy to write diary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mike</strong></td>
<td>40+ Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Meeting on University campus (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit and walk of local area (2.5)</td>
<td>Declined after consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catherine</strong></td>
<td>30+ HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Home visit (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit and walk in usual reserve (2)</td>
<td><strong>Journal-style</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Present tense writing</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>John</strong>&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>70+ Pharmacist/Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Walk on usual track + home visit (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk along top of escarpment (2) + home visit to pick up diary (2)</td>
<td>Home visit to discuss diary Social events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sean</strong>&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30+ Train Driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Home visit (1) + walk in local reserve (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freight train ride in locomotive (3)</td>
<td>Meeting on train trip (2) Social events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jules</strong></td>
<td>30+ HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Home visit (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit (1)</td>
<td>Expecting third child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dallas</strong></td>
<td>50+ Carpenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Lunch at local café, drive to visit home (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk in local area + home visit (3)</td>
<td>Not able to write diary for health reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roberta</strong></td>
<td>46+ HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Home visit and walk on local roads (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diary thrown out with recycling</td>
<td>Diary not received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elizabeth</strong></td>
<td>30+ Student/HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Home visit and walk on forest tracks (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother of three plus University studies</strong></td>
<td>Too busy to write diary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mike</strong></td>
<td>40+ Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Meeting on University campus (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit and walk of local area (2.5)</td>
<td>Declined after consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catherine</strong></td>
<td>30+ HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Home visit (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visit and walk of local area</td>
<td><strong>Diary not received</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Route</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-21</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>24-29</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-29</td>
<td>9</td>
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**Middle section: Moss Vale line**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>How shifts varied – circumstances, features, events, moods</th>
<th>No. lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Steel train: Drove the two extra locos at rear to push heavy steel train to top of escarpment, decoupling and returning with the locos.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Two Steel trains: A similar but more eventful day with heavy steel trains including steep descent with much concentration on braking.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No entries – days off and/or night shifts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Limestone run: Enthusiastic description of springtime on the escarpment with waratahs and wildlife but signal problems make it a long day.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No entries – night shifts and days off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Limestone run: Again plenty of wildlife and waratahs and ‘as always plenty to see’.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Limestone run: ‘Another good day on the mountain with something to see, good conversation, music and no incidents.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Limestone run: ‘Famine or feast – 3 in a row’ but third 4.30 an start was hard. Another good day with plenty to see but sleep in will be great.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-10</td>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Nights shifts and days off including two longer car entries on Macquarie Pass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Limestone run: Long length of entry due to full description of route and events of the day due to participant observation. Also crew relieved early and had an interesting drive home.</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Night shifts and days off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Final section: Newcastle steel run again**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>How shifts varied – circumstances, features, events, moods</th>
<th>No. lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Leaving PK: Back to other route but now daylight saving makes it possible to see the coastal scenery after a long break. Changes to the route adds two anecdotes.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Coming home: Long slow night trip exacerbated by uncongenial co-driver.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Days off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Leaving PK: ‘On the road again’ with good company in the cab and all the usual sights but nothing out of the ordinary.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Coming home: Story of owl being seen at Otford for 8 years. ‘One time… literally filling up the whole windscreen’.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-4</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Days off including car entry to Sydney and back</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Leaving PK: Account of driving strategy for heavy train through grades and tunnels of the rugged coastal stretch into Royal National Park.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Coming home: ‘Been a good trip away but am happy to be off it’.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>