

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB

P.O. BOX 154,
STANTHORPE, Q., 4380.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1980 - 1981

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MEETINGS - 4th WEDNESDAY of each MONTH at C.W.A. ROOMS at 8 P.M.

OUTINGS - Each SUNDAY PRECEDING the FOURTH WEDNESDAY of the Month.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

SINGLE - \$ 4.00

FAMILY - \$ 6.00

AIMS OF THE CLUB

1. TO STUDY ALL BRANCHES OF NATURAL HISTORY.
2. PRESERVATION OF THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF QUEENSLAND.
3. ENCOURAGEMENT OF A SPIRIT OF PROTECTION TOWARDS NATIVE BIRDS, ANIMALS AND PLANTS.
4. TO ASSIST WHERE POSSIBLE IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.
5. TO PUBLISH A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING..WEDNESDAY 22nd.OCTOBER 1980.

PRESENT. 34, Apologies 5 as per attendance book(best attendance since 28.2.1979)

MOTION. Minutes of the previous meeting, Moved by Errol Walker and seconded by Martin Davis that the minutes "taken as read in the Newsletter" be confirmed..... Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE.

- INWARD:-
1. Two Press statements from the Minister of Culture, National Parks and Wildlife.
 2. Letter from National Parks and Wildlife concerning the management of, and plans for "Girraween".
 3. N.P.A. the news journal of National Parks in Queensland.
 4. Contact Vol. VIII. No. 3., the newsletter of the Conservation and the Bush Rescue Association of Queensland. This included a list of food trees of koalas and an article on them in Qld. habitats.
 5. News letter of the Richmond Valley Naturalist Club. In this was a report on their outing to Girraween on Oct. 4th.-5th.
 6. Warwick Walker, newsletter of the Warwick Bushwalker's Club.
 7. Letter from Peregrine expeditions with information about their trips to Bhutan in the Himalayas and to New Guinea.
 8. From the Australian Conservation Foundation:
 - a. Leaflets arguing against drilling for oil on the Great Barrier Reef.
 - b. A petition to be signed, concerning the above.
 - c. A sheet with information on the availability and sources of audio-visuals, films and printed material.

OUTWARD:-

1. A letter to radio station 4QS requesting broadcasting of meeting and outing times etc.

MOTION:- Moved Tom Archer seconded Mrs. Mc. Donald that the inward correspondence be received and the outward adopted... Carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE:- The meeting discussed the letter from National Parks and Wildlife service concerning management plans for Girraween. Mrs. Jean Harslett, Messrs R. Marsden and T. Archer expressed an interest in attending the all day workshop, to be held at Girraween sometime in the next four to six weeks. Jean Harslett suggested that David Pfrunder should be given first choice if numbers were to be limited, as he did a lot of the work on the submission from our club.

FINANCIAL REPORT:-

September 24th. Balance.....	\$190.04
Receipts September, Subs.	\$ 28.00
Rent Collection.....	\$ 3.69.
Donation.....	\$ 4.00
October.....	\$ 6.00.

\$41.69
 Total \$ 231.73.

FINANCIAL REPORT Cont:-

Payments September 24th. Room rent\$6.00
Magazine Postage for Sept.....\$5.65.
Duplication for magazine for Aug. and Sept..\$10.00
Total....\$21.65.

October 21st Credit Balance... \$210.08.

Accounts passed for payment,C.W.A. for room rent \$6.00 and magazine postage\$5.65.

Motion.Moved Mrs.D Archer seconded Mrs M.Prentice that the treasurers report be adopted and the accounts passed for payment.... Carried.

OUTING REPORT:- Mrs.Millie Marsden reported on the outing to the Mount Colliery area near Tannymoral. About thirty people travelled in eight cars and Mr.Guy of Yangan permitted us access to his property,the quarry being on land owned by him,and he spoke in an interesting manner on the history of the quarry. It was an excellent days outing.

NEXT OUTING:- Date 23rd.November 1980.

Leaders :- Mr.and Mrs.Colin Hockings.

Meeting Place:- To rendezvous at THE GAP MONUMENT CUNNINGHAM'S
GAP. TIME 10am.

Have a packed lunch,and a container of water will be required.

Afternoon tea back at the parked cars if wished. The out-
is timed to enjoy the giant red lilies(Doryanthes sp,)

NEXT MEETING Wednesday 26th Nov. 1980 at the C.W.A. Rooms

GUEST SPEAKER:- Will be Mr.Roy Wheeler M.B.E., well known
ornithologist from Victoria,member of the Gould League.

He will present a discourse "Bird Watching in Australia".

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm and was followed by a guest speaker.

Guest Speaker... Mrs.Jean Harslett.

We were treated to most informative and entertaining talk
on "Trekking in Kashmir", illustrated by a large number of really
magnificent colour slides. The latter included human interest stud-
-ies,floral closeups and awe-inspiring mountain scenery.The trek
led up steep slopes across ice bridges,fast flowing streams,rough
masses of broken rock,through fields of flowers to an altitude of
14,500 feet.

As well as the trek,Jean also spoke of the life of people in
India and the most remote Ladakh,the capital of which is Ley,
only in the last couple of years has road access been made,and
thus the opportunity for outsiders to visit this interesting
culture and harsh desert-like terrain.

Graham Greenup.

GREETINGS:-Treasurer Dot Archer has received letters with subs .
from passed members who particularly wished their greetings and good
wishes to be passed to their fellow club members and old friends
They are from Zaidee and Wilf Newman, who get much interest from
bird watching and sea life,especially fish,respectively. The other
greetings are from Aileen Mc.Allister,who also reported that it was
great to see those ten or so who turned up down at the "Stanthorpe
Reunion" down in Brisbane last month. Aileen it was just as good
to see your smiling face there.

RABBITS. It must always do an editors heart good, when something which is included in the bulletin brings forth a comment or better still an additional note. Mrs Goebel, was prompted to give me this little observation at the meeting after the last bulletin, thank you ,it is welcome.

The quote comes from Mrs.Beetons Book of Household Management, and perhapes as housewives are letting a good commodity pass unnoticed.

RABBITS

" The fruitfulness of this animal has been the subject of wonder to all naturalists. It breeds seven times a year, and generally begets seven or eight young ones at a time. If we suppose this to happen regularly for a period of four years, the progeny that would spring from a single pair would amount to more than a million..... Fortunately the rabbits have many enemies. " Thank you Mrs.Goebel for this note.

BIRD OF THE MONTH:

We have not had this section for a period, but several notes may be of interst. Since a pair of Dollar Birds (or Rollers as they are aptly called in Nuigini) have nested near the house for a number of years I have noted the date of their return. They have arrived religously on the 7th.October. This year with such wide-spread drought I had convinced myself that things would go astray. However, irrespective of what the countryside they traversed was like the 7th.Oct. they arrived. Surely when scientists really understand what triggers off such precision, it will reveal something rather marvellous, and it makes us realize how many things which they or we as human beings really don't fully understand.

On the October outing most members saw the lovely silver-grey black and tan Black-faced Flycatchers, both beautiful and new to most of us. Likewise the black mystery bird on the nest which Robin really endeavoured to get above for a clear view. It was almost certainly a crow. The most interesting thing was that the nest seemed to be entirely constructed of the intensely prickly Boxthorn, (It is hoped it was lined with a little more comfort for sitting).

At the Quarry on a stream bank we watched two pairs of Rainbow Bee-eaters and one Pardalote family nesting, all within range of the binoculars from one position.

Finally Mr.Peter Langdon reports something I feel is unusual. The wagtails have nested again in their garden, but alas! they have been in trouble, four "Mickies" descended upon the nest and Peter observed them eating the 4 eggs, which they followed by tearing the nest to pieces. We have all seen other birds do this, but it would be interesting to know if other observers have seen "Mickies" as the culprits. This is the first time it has been noted here. As insect hunters more than honeyters, one ponders as to whether something befell the eggs and they became blown or ant infested. But this is only an assumption and they certainly displayed their pugilistic habits by their attack of the nest.....Jean Harslett.

MOUNT COLLIER OUTING .. by Mrs. Ray Marsden.

The outing attracted some thirty people, who travelled in eight cars, the youngest member was under two and the eldest over ninety this proves that our club offers something to everyone.

The outing consisted of three main aspects, the quarry, timber and the coal mine site. On the way to the quarry we viewed the Hermitage State Farm, and also sighted the old "White Swan" Hotel, Yangan School of Arts and Masonic Temple, all of which are listed with National Trust.

The old quarry is situated on Mr. H. Guys property at Yangan and he paid a brief visit while we were there to give us details of the area. The stone was cut into slabs in the early times, but there was some evidence of powder and popping in later days. One slab was a load for a bullock team, which transported the stone to the rail head, on wagons with specially strengthened axles. Some of the buildings which incorporated the stone are St. Mary's Church Warwick, The Police Station and the Railway Goods shed in Warwick, The Treasury Building Brisbane & the Masonic Temple Brisbane. Mr. Joe McIvor provided many anecdotes on the area of the quarry and had a wealth of information to impart.

Our stop in the area was most popular because of the beauty & tranquillity. The small stream flowing very slowly, the steep banks of the creek, and the trees provided homes for a variety of birds. These provided our "birdos" with interest and even excitement.

We journeyed on, through the lovely downs scenery to Mt. Colliery & headed up hill to our chosen lunch venue, chosen because of superb views & a clump of trees with prolific bird life. It is known as Red Scrub & we lunched at the top of Murdering Pinch. The name is a relic of timber getting days, for obvious reasons. The view was really wonderful, Mt. Superbus & the forestry to the north-east, Acacia Plateau & the Condamine Valley to the east, & over lovely valleys of Emu Vale & Emu Creek to the West. The road had been used for many years by timber getters, first with wagons & then timber trucks, at one time seventeen trucks were operating in the area. Some timber was taken to the edge of the mountain steeply to a shute, bundled over the edge to be picked up by other teams at the bottom. One of these shutes is still visible, though barely recognisable. Many accidents were incurred in the area, & we heard of one of a horse & log going over the edge and indeed, ~~we~~ one whole bullock team is reported to have met a similar fate.

After lunch we wended our way down the mountain to the Mt. Colliery mine, though closed only twelve years ago, nature has almost taken over again, just a few cement slabs & the bridge structure left to mark the spot. A black bird sitting on its nest of boxthorn caused us spirited exchange of opinion. I wonder was it a crow?

At the Mt. Colliery Coal Mine operations commenced in 1882 with three gentlemen, namely Messrs. Roach, Lanigan & Milward & was known as the Tannymorel Coal Mining Company.

Mr. Roach was manager. Mr. Milward owned a small sawmill & built the houses for the miners, most of whom came from Scotland & England. Before the railway line was constructed from Tannymorel to the mine coal was conveyed to Tannymorel railway (approx. 3 miles) by bullock waggon, thence by rail to Warwick.

At the height of production 200 tons of coal left daily by 2 special coal trains, for Warwick, 80 men on the payroll & was boasting a 3 teacher school. Haulage of coal from the mine was by an endless

MT COLLIERY OUTING REPORT Cont:-

rope from the working face. Pit ponies were also used & later on two 30 horse-powered diesel locomotives. Tallow lamps gave way to carbide lights & finally by electric lights for safety sake and after battery lights were introduced it was forbidden to carry matches or naked lights in the mine. In the early days canaries were taken down the mine to detect foul air or gases, canaries being very sensitive. Mine safety lamps were used for the same purpose, these lamps used kerosene, and were filled & locked on the surface. A person holding a 3rd. class mine managers certificate inspected each working place in the mine at least 2 hrs before the miners descended. Working time of 8hrs. included $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs break for meals. Men worked in pairs on what was termed as a "bord". The bord was 6 yds. wide, one man working at the face "cutting" the coal & the other using a shovel, filled the coal into a skip which held approx. 12cwt. The skip was pushed by hand along a 2'. 10" gauge railway line to a loop-line one side holding empty skips & the other full ones. Full skips were conveyed to the pit bottom by the above mentioned transport, then hauled to the surface by a winch, sited on the surface. Reaching the top the skips were pushed by hand over a weigh-bridge & tipped in a tumbler onto a moving belt where two men were employed removing stones from the coal thence to a railway truck.

In 1896 at the age of 19 years, Mr. Roach commenced to mine coal. Mr. Roach was employed on "Canning Downs" & taught himself the first principals in Arithmetic & mining. He continued to study & was certificated in Engineering, Surveying & Mining. In 1896 being a minor, he took as a partner his friend William Lanigan. Coal was hauled by traction engine which pulled wagons in tandem from the mine to the Tannymorel Railway Station.

In 1907, Mr. M.E. Milward joined the company & the Tannymorel Coal Mining Co. was estbd. with Messrs. Roach, Lanigan & Milward & their wives as shareholders. The railway line from Tannymorel to the mine was completed in 1909, empty rail trucks hauled by traction engine to the mine, loaded trucks lowered to Tannymorel on their own brake power, there being a drop of 250 ft. between the mine & Tannymorel.

In 1913 railway engines were able to travel the tramway & transport problems were solved. Eleven tunnels & shafts were sunk.

A fire caused the sealing of NO. Four tunnel in 1921, this tunnel was opened some twelve years later.

Mrs. B. Roach, widow of the founder of the mine, is still living & has resided at AKOORAMAK for the past twelve months. She was married in 1907, celebrated her 99th birthday last June, and the mine was closed in 1968.

I would like to thank Mr. & Mrs. Andy Joyce, Mrs. Dulcie Bradford & Mr. & Mrs. Joe Mc. Ivor who came on the pre-outing trip & made the whole come alive for us, as it was in its hey day.... Millie Marsden.

Thank you Millie for such a full report & good record..... J.H.
GREETINGS AND GOOD WISHES To Jan Mc. Cosker who has accompanied us on a number of outings & Marc. Newman whose family have been such loyal supporters of our "Nats". The members join together in wishing you much happiness.

REMEMBER the MEETING when we have the honour of Mr. Roy Wheeler's visit. An M.B.E. has personally seen 600 species of Aust. Birds. A treat in store, share it with a friend.