

October 81

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST  
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB

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

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1981 - 1982

PRESIDENT	John O'Donnell
VICE-PRESIDENTS	Robin McCosker Frank Wilkinson
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BUSHWALKING OFFICER	Ray Marsden
<u>COMMITTEE</u>	Colin Hockings David Pfrunder Tom Archer Ailsa Wilkinson Lyle Thompson Jean Harslett

MEETINGS - 4th WEDNESDAY of each MONTH at C.W.A. ROOMS at 8p.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 NEWSPAPER.

GENERAL MEETING OF THE STANTHORPE AND DISTRICT FIELD  
NATURALISTS CLUB, HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23rd. SEPTEMBER AT THE  
Q.C.W.A. ROOMS at 8 pm.

PRESENT:- The attendance book shows that 17 attended the meeting and that there were 9 apologies.

The President welcomed all to the meeting.

MINUTES:- That the minutes be taken as read was moved by Mr. Lyle Thompson and seconded by Mr. D. Pfrunder and Carried.

BUSINESS FROM MINUTES:- Thanks were extended to D. Mc. Cosker and M. Marsden for their efforts in gathering 40 species of wildflowers for the Brookvale Park Heritage Festival, and for delivering them out there. No flowers were dispatched to the S.G.A.P Display in Brisbane.

CORRESPONDENCE:-

- INWARD:-
1. Sub. and letter from Mr. Roy Wheeler.
  2. Brookvale Park, thanks for the flowers.
  3. Penguin Books re new book, "A Man of Edge"
  4. Moreton Island report.
  5. Tasmanian Wilderness Soc. (Vic.) requesting support.
  6. Press Statements from the Dept. National Parks Spotr and Art.
  7. N.P.A. News, Vol 51 No 6. Sept 1981.
  8. Darling Downs Naturalist, Vol 4 No. 2 Sept. 1981.
  9. Contact Vol. 9 No. 3 Sept. 1981.

OUTWARD:-

1. 4QS re outings and meetings.

Moved that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed, by Mrs. A. Wilkinson and seconded by Mr. R. Mc. Cosker..... Carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT:-

August 26th 1981..... Bank Balance..... \$104.01

Receipts:-

Aug. 1981	Subs.....	\$92.00	
Aug. 1981	Room Rent Coll.	\$ 9.50	
Sept, 1981	Subs.....	\$ 6.00	\$107.50

\$211.51

Payments:-

Aug 26th 1981	Room rent...	\$6.00	
Aug. Mag.	Duplicating....	\$5.00	
Aug. Magazine	Postage...	\$5.68	
Petty Cash	(secretary)	\$10.00	
Duplicating	Paper....	\$82.60	
Rubber Stamp	(new postage no. #4.25.....)		\$113.43
	Balance.....		<u>\$98.08.</u>

This statement was prepared to Aug. 26th, owing to the fact that our treasurer would be in West Australia at the time of the meeting, and we thank her for preparing this at the last moment.

FINANCIAL REPORT Cont:-

It was moved by Mrs. Joan Stevenson and seconded by Mrs. J. Harslett that Mrs. D. Archer's be adopted, and the following accounts be passed for payment.

Q.C.W.A. Room rent..... \$6.00  
 Rover Scouts, Sept. Magazine Dup. \$5.00  
 Janet Hockings, Sept. Mag. Postage \$6.58.

Carried.

OUTING REPORT:- BLUE MOUNTAIN OUTING.

Mrs. D. McCosker reported on this outing and the abundance of wild flowers in the area, and good prospects for plants yet to flower.

MOUNT NORMAN OUTING. by Robin Mc. Cosker

Only a very small attendance, but once again the quality and quantity of flowers was in evidence. This area will be revisited on some future occasion to probe further into its potential.

NEXT OUTING E. Walker will be leader for an outing to be held at LEE'S HILL on October 25th. leaving Weeroona Park at 9.30.am.

NEXT MEETING. Mr. Keith Fraser from Passchendaele Forestry has indicated his willingness to be guest speaker at the meeting to be held on Wednesday October 28th.

SPECIMENS:- John O'Donnell, brought a dead branch from a eucalypt which had been killed by the action of a longicorn beetle, first ringbarking the branch. R. McCosker stated he had found a snake skin in tact and was endeavouring to identify the snake by its scale count.

GENERAL BUSINESS:-

It was decided that no club action be taken on the Tasmanian issue (wilderness) at present. There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.pm.

GUEST SPEAKERS:- The Guest Speakers for the evening Ailsa and Frank Wilkinson and they gave a very informative and personal talk on Norfolk Island, showing the beauty and isolation of this small island.

REPORT ON THE OUTING TO MOUNT NORMAN AREA by the LEADER of J.E. STEVENSON, Hon Sec.  
OUTING, ROBIN Mc. COSKER, on 20th. SEPTEMBER.

A small party of eleven members enjoyed perfect weather on our last outing. I had been warned that the road to the Mount Norman area was rough and we certainly had to take care. Presumably the road is not being maintained, to deter all but the enthusiastic naturalists such as ourselves. Quite the reverse was found at the new Picnic area, however where National Park officers have provided a toilet, numerous fire places and an enlarged parking area.

We followed the walking track to the top of the first ridge, then, as it was not our intention to climb Mount Norman, we headed west to explore the vast areas of open granite, which interspersed with dense scrubby gullies. Of particular interest to this area are the massive dykes in the granite formation. Starting with small ones, only 30 cms. wide, but

OUTING TO THE MOUNT NORMAN by ROBIN Mc.COSKER Cont.

running perhaps 100 metres in an almost North-South direction, they appear at every 3-5 metres apart, culminating in a line of boulders, ranging in size from the tiny to that of a small house. With their surfaces intricately sculptured, by the elements, to me they looked like a row of prehistoric creatures, lumbering away into the distance.

A little further on we reached a stand of those rather unique Eucalyptus codonocarpa, with their many slender trunks and umbrella canopy of foliage, and also a very picturesque specimen of Eucalyptus scoparia, with white spreading branches and long, slender, drooping leaves. Both of these species are fairly rare as they only grow at high altitude. I had been a little disappointed with the wild flowers to until we reached the top, where we were met with a profusion of flowering species. Most prominent was the Pomaderris, making a spectacular splash of yellow and for contrast there were Boronias, Hoveas and an occasional Mirbelia.

We had our lunch, with some of us in the bush, some with a view to the north towards Ballandean and some with a view and a lovely purple iris for table decoration, to boot!

As we started back to our cars the sky became more cloudy with a storm brewing in the South-East, creating some wonderful lighting effects, on the vistas to Mount Norman and towards South Bald Rock area too. The storm held off for us, although I'm sure it would've dampened our spirits, after such an enjoyable outing.

Robin Mc.Cosker.

NORFOLK ISLAND PROGRAMME.

Norfolk Island a la Frank and Ailsa is how we enjoyed this programme. In their mode of humour, and their descriptions of the island way of life, we flowed along feeling quite a part of their story as it unfolded, substantiated by pictures. Frank

and Ailsa have had the opportunity to live with friends and extend their stay, over and above that of a normal tourist, who is very strictly limited to a specific time. They became a part of the community life, went to local functions and met local people, and even took part in some jobs. The islanders work for a fortnight each year in lieu of taxes, for various utilities usually carried out by Councils or Governments. If unable physically to carry out these commissions, then a nominated payment has to be made. For instance Frank turned up with his host, the day after arrival to dig a grave. Someone had died and each person dwelling on the island takes it in turn to provide a dug grave, and it had come to their turn.

Frank was briefly involved in some of his own trade and art in stone work, using old bricks and stone, which in themselves could tell a very special story of convict prisoners and mutiny. Norfolk is an island of extreme isolation (in sailing ship days) an island nearly as high as it is around

NORFOLK ISLAND Cont.

providing formidable cliffs to the sea 600 feet high. Thus it was favoured as an area to send some of the worst convict criminals. In their lovely island scenery, if not by way of life, they cultivated 400 acres for agriculture, and ironically provided food for convicts and settlers at Sydney Cove who may have otherwise died of starvation. Needless to say some of the prisoners of Norfolk may have been happy to die, so dreadful was their confinement.

Ailsa favoured us with a few short extracts from her diary, which gave us glimpses of their pleasure of the moment of actually enjoying it. She provided us with a good story about electric fences, with a happy ending!!

Jean Harslett.

NOTES ON A FEW OF THE PLANTS OF MOUNT NORMAN OUTING.

Gold was the colour, and probably, 'The Flower of the Month' Pomaderris in the plural. Plural not only because we saw three species, but in such profusion of them and particularly the most showy of the genus Pomaderris queenslandicus, in all its golden glory. A very pale relation was present but easily overlooked, because of the dominance of the other, was P. elliptica.

P. lanigera (meaning woolly ref. to woolly brown under the leaf) was present and the flower not so golden.

From the lower levels to the high there was a predominant plant of the pea family, showing great potential in bud for later flowering. For one of the 'Pea clan' it is a surprisingly tall shrub, thus its botanical name throws some light on it (Oxylobium arborescens) from arbor - a tree, referring to its tree-like habit. The golden Phebalium is one of the less common ones and is P. stenophyllum. The Boronia Robin eluded to was B. amabilis (the later meaning 'the beautiful'). There too was a shy tiny wattle, with pale flowers and tight, tight little buds Acacia myrtifolia. How I enjoyed my little walk around the many stemmed mallees at the top of the mountain. This species Euc. codoncarpa, has so many attributes for its special habitat. Many Stemmed, for strength in its windy home, having many 'legs' and not too much resistance, a slender and graceful canopy, & really thick leathery leaves to withstand constant play with winds in its elevated home. It chooses to grow only at elevations between 4,000 and 5,000 ft. Its worth the day for me, alone to see such superb modification for a very special spot.

No wonder I got left behind here!!! Finally I think I should mention the 'Mouse Plant' we all smelt at least. This plant we have been looking at for years and calling it either Homoranthus variegatus or H. flavescens (both names supplied).

Only very recently has it been found to be a special one all of its own, and given a name, Homoranthus papillatus, with Mount Norman, Girraween National Park as its only known habitat at the moment. For this information I quote the latest issue of 'Austrobaileya' Vol. 1 No 4. The name refers to the minute 'nipple-like projections on the epidermis of the leaves, only

PLANTS AT MOUNT NORMAN Cont.

visible with a lens, but so consistant that the plant is readily determined even when sterile. Mr. N.B. Byrnes who describes it, makes another interesting comment, "The genus Homoranthus is a not a clearly defined natural group, but is more a genus of convenience, intermediate between Darwinia and Verticordia". However he does go on to confirm its use. Thus it is interesting that we have had a Darwinia recorded in earlier days from this region, which is almost certainly the plant under discussion. Great to see the experts get confused too !!

Jean Harslett.

NEXT OUTING. To Lee's Hill

DATE. 25th. OCTOBER 1981

LEADER:- Errol Walker.

DEPARTURE TIME: 1pm. PLEASE NOTE TIME ( Not as suggested in Minutes)

MEETING VENUE: Errol Walker's Home, Hale Haven Drive. Directions, take the Sugarloaf, cross the railway, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  km, turn right into road leading to either the Carnell Raceway or the new Town Dump, then take first turn to the right, which is Hale Haven Drive. Errol's home is third on the right set well back, caravan in front, hopefully a 'Nats' sign.

The cars will be left there and the walk will proceed from there and return to there, all walking, but all easy and not very far.

The Hill takes its name from the Hon. Charles A. Lee, who came to Tenterfield in 1869, and became a very well known resident there, representing them for 35 years in Parliament. When tin mining commenced in Stanthorpe in 1872, Mr. Lee was quick to be "in the game". with claims in the Stanthorpe fields and over the border too. Much later he gave his name, too, to an "up and coming" town in the new irrigation areas, namely 'Leeton'

SEE YOU AT LEE'S HILL...REMEMBER THE STARTING TIME

NEXT PROGRAMME:- At the time of going to print, it is anticipated that Mr. Keith Fraser will be speaker. The subject one of interest to many of us, the State Forestry in this area.

An article from the Courier Mail, written by the late Mrs. E.E. Harslett, hoping to promote some interest in the project, and which appeared in Aug. 1927, fifty-four years ago, may be of interest. Brief extracts tell us that, the Deciduous Section of the Fruit Industry, is facing a serious shortage of case timber, and the cost of cases is increasing every year. With a view to supplying this deficiency, in years to come, the Forestry Board in 1925 acquired 4,020 acres of land at Passchendaele, six miles from Amiens, for £1,600. An experimental nursery was laid down by Mr. M.A. Cameron, officer-in-charge. Wattles were experimented with, for the possibility of establishing a tan bark industry.

Queensland has amongst its forest flora, three species which produce essential oils, chemically correct for the manufacture of lemon essence, lemon scented ti-tree, lemon scented ironbark, and veberna scented carrol, and they are being tested at Passchendaele". (these are just a few notes of a very interesting article.