

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

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

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1983-1984

PRESIDENT	John O'Donnell (852 344)
VICE-PRESIDENTS	Frank Wilkinson Robin McCosker
SECRETARY	Joan Stevenson (811 009)
TREASURER	Dot Archer (811 754)
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Youth Officer	Errol Walker
BUSHWALKING OFFICER	Ray Marsden
<u>COMMITTEE</u>	Colin Hockings David Pfrunder Tom Archer Ailsa Wilkinson Lyle Thompson Roy Werner Gabriele Brown Mrs. Joan Ferris
AUDITOR	

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- \$5.00 Mag. Only Sub \$5.00 Family - \$8.00

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.

MAY 1984.

THE MINUTES OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB HELD AT THE
Q.C.W.A. ROOMS ON WEDNESDAY 25th. APRIL 1984 AT 8pm.

PRESENT 14..... APOLOGIES 7.

The President welcomed all to the meeting, with a special welcome to Bob and Esme Lacey and R. and Lyn Boggon.

MINUTES:- That the minutes be taken as read was moved by Peter Langdon seconded by Lyle Thompson..... Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

INWARD was received from:-

1. Australia Post reminder re account for P.O.Box.
2. Ten Press Statements from National Parks and Wildlife.
3. Govt. in Focus.. Federal Gov. activities.
4. Qld Nats. Club Magazine April-May 1984. No 138.
5. Darling Downs Naturalist No 359 April 1984.
6. Richmond Valley Newsletter Apr. 1984
7. Terry Rayner re Guest Speaker for May meeting.
8. re Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo Survey, sighting details needed

OUTWARD

1. Terry Rayner re Guest Speaker for May.
2. 4QS. re outing and meeting.

Moved by Robin Mc.Cosker and seconded by Ray Marsden and carried that the inward be received and the outward endorsed.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Acting treasurer Jean Harslett moved that the credit for \$70.20 be received and the following accounts be passed for payment. Carried. Seconded by Lyle Thompson and Carried.

OUTING REPORT. Millie Marsden reported on a successful outing to "Brooklands" Cherry Gully district with 30 people attending.

After the rain of the previous day the outing was more than enhanced by bright sunshine. Rosenthall Creek was flowing strongly and was quite an attraction for both young and old. Walks were taken to different areas and all enjoyed.

NEXT OUTING This is to be arranged and announced before next meeting. (See Stop Press)

NEXT MEETING: It is hoped that Mr. Terry Rayner will be present and will speak on West Australia.

SPECIMENS Mr. Ray Marsden brought black and white photographs taken on the last outing

BUSINESS Millie Marsden requested that a letter of thanks be sent to Mick Aspinall for allowing access to his property "Brooklands" for the April outing.

Condolances are to be sent to Neta Woakes on the passing of her husband and fellow member - Bert.

Jean Harslett read a letter from Mr. Bill Barker re expressing deep concern over the deaths of birds in his area presumably from poisoning.

Secretary to contact Show Society offering the prize money for the "Best Australian Native Bloom" at the next show. Prize to match other sections in the show horticulture area.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Members were then entertained by Robin Mc.Cosker, showing both aerial and ground shots of the Mount Barney and Glasshouse mountain areas. Joan Stevenson showed slides of Mootwingie and the Arkaroolas, Jean Harslett showed the thru walk from Eukey to Girraween and others of interest, and Ray Marsden showed some campouts and outing points of interest,

Joan Stevenson

Hon. Secretary.

The programmes spontaneously presented by four members was an interesting mixed bowl of thoughts, and enjoyed by all. Robin's portrayal of Mount Barney - with flash-backs to his early bush walking days - provided an interesting window on Barney's east and west peaks - and its moods and changes, finishing with a touch of humour, the wedding on top of Mount Barney, in heavy low cloud - rather than on "cloud nine".

Joan took us to interesting not oft visited places, with fascinating names of Mootwingie and Arkaroola, which whetted our interest before she began, and conjured places of interest. Arkaroola the great legendary dreamtime snake drank up Lake Frome, its said before commencing upon creating the Arkaroolas which Joan took us to. Both terrains were harsh and rugged, yet with a special beauty, of the type which stirs Australian blood.

Jean Harslett amongst other things proved that hail stones increase in size with each telling.

Ray Marsden depicted some great camping sites, and with all their experience with camping, there were some special ones as well as some beautiful scenes. All in all a very bright and varied spot of entertainment for our after meeting activity.

FAREWELL ! BERT NOAKES.

We were, indeed, saddened to learn of the passing of one of our members, Bert Noakes on Easter Sunday and to his wife Neta, son Peter and daughter Jillian, the members sympathy and thoughts are extended.

Bert and Neta have joined us on many of our outings since the inception of our Society - quite an effort as they came 60kms from Warwick to join us - and we have always enjoyed their company - and been grateful for their friendship. Bert's thoughts about nature and the environment and the past, were sincere and deep and the very essence of what our societies ideals are about. Bert saw beauty of nature as a window through which the world sees the splendours of creation, and was a worthy steward in trying to protect the environment.

Bert's parents were residents of Stanthorpe, over 60 years ago and his father Sargeant Noakes was very well respected as Sargeant of Police in Stanthorpe. Bert after education at Toowoomba Grammar came to Stanthorpe in his early working life to the

BERT NOAKES CONT.

Stanthorpe Powerhouse, and lived here for a number of years. Neta did some of her nurses' training in Stanthorpe and son Peter was Headteacher at Wyberba School for the period 1967-1968 and is now very active in the "Special Education" sphere. Thus the family have had a long and special associations with our district, and have old and dear friends here. Bert was dedicated to quality of work in his chosen vocation, and a sincere friend to many. Our Society will miss his presence on our outings.

Editor.

Misc-

Millie Marsden was able to say to the meeting, that there was an apology from Frank and Ailsa Wilkinson from England per telephone via a friend, this very morning. Never have we had an apology registered, same day, at our meeting and from 10,000 miles away !! They had a wonderful flight over to London, and we hope they are having a tremendous trip.

ANOTHER DIMENSION

Maurice D. Passmore has taken up the challenge, and has replied to John O'Donnell's, "New Dimensions for Naturalists". John had hoped that it might bring forth some discussion, and we are grateful to you Maurice for preparing this article for the magazine.

Ed.

"ANOTHER DIMENSION" by MAURICE D. PASSMORE.

Kindling discussion is obviously one of our worthy President's objectives with his "New Dimensions" articles. These ideas follow the Indian philosophy, but do we really consider such propositions in our understanding of nature? Perhaps the Indians are correct when they propose that dreams are actual experiences, and indeed, it is difficult to refute the proposition that objects are only there because we think they are. Try proving that a tree is there without using our senses, i.e. sight, touch etc. However nature isn't quite like that.

To the religious (of all creeds) the concept of God is basic in such arguments, but that is not a line I propose to follow, so I'll just examine the proposition that it is not necessary to evoke external power in any way at all. In other words the question is not about nature of the Grand Design, but rather do we really need one? After all nature cannot be wrong as she makes no statement. Contrast this with our position in which we can never rest assured that we have not committed an error.

The founders of geology Hutton and Lyell, on the basis of sustained observation, explained it thus - "Amid all the revolutions the economy of Nature has been uniform, and her laws are the only things that have resisted the general movement. The rivers and the rocks, the seas and the continents, have been changed in all their parts; but the laws which direct those changes and the rules to which they are subject have remained invariably the same"

This concept of basic laws requires that man be only an observer. After all who was around in the time of the dinosaurs?

MAY 1984.

ANOTHER DIMENSION CONT.

Nevertheless the idea of inflexible laws poses some problems until we introduce the element of chance, which introduces an element of uncertainty. It was Heisenberg who introduced the uncertainty principle to atomic physics, but the idea is relevant to all science. Perhaps it might be illustrated by seeking to understand why a young person should die, and it becomes obvious that indeed there is no reason. The only certainty is that all living creatures die, but the timing is quite uncertain.

For those of us who are concerned about conservation there is another feature of Nature we must consider, and that is that competition in Nature knows no restraint. Surely man is no different despite the species conservative desire to prop up unworkable ideas (Consider England's obsession with the Gold Standard).

Darwin's first proposition followed the Malthusian that the capacity to breed always exceeds the capacity of the environment to support that species. Observe today's Africa and it would seem that we are all destined to be fossils. However, the inquirers must always see themselves as part of the world which is always stretching beyond their ken, otherwise there is no point in pursuing anything.

If there is to be a long term future for man, then it is necessary for political wisdom to catch up with technical progress and that the Socratic view that those that hurt society will in the end be hurt themselves, is acknowledged. Thus the laissez-faire approach becomes unacceptable as it allows one to impair others in their pursuit of personal goals, and, in the extreme, condemn them to a state of poverty.

If we need experience of Nature as a guide to our personal understanding of the world no one (including the developers) has the right to deny us, and this also applies to the birds and the trees. Man is but a small part of this earth, and if in the end we destroy the surface of the earth, quite possibly there will still be blowflies.

Maurice .D. Passmore.

STOP PRESS

May outing will be to an area not previously visited, but seen from a distance on Jack McBeth's outing in the Nundubbermere area. It is known as Nine Mile Rocks or very locally as Plum Pudding Mountain, but the former is its official name. Brian

McDonagh has volunteered to lead the party.

DATE. SUNDAY 20th. MAY 1984.

TIME. WEEROONA PARK 9am. thence along Nundubbermere Road.

INSTRUCTIONS. Walking (about) 3 miles return, reasonably arduous, no track, maybe thickish undergrowth. Take a "carry" lunch and water or drink. Good walking shoes, its trap rock. Brian hopes to do a pre-outing, and it should be an interesting outing. The description is

LEADER Brian Mc. Donagh.

not meant to deter you there will be plenty of time to cover the distance, so not done under any pressure.

NEXT MEETING

We hope to have Terry and Thelma Rayner from Dalby for the next programme, which will be illustrated by slides and of Western Australia. They are both well known photographers with some top Australian awards to their credit. Thelma took out the Pictorial Award in the recent Salon of Photography, and with a variety of interests, a good programme is assured. We hope there is a good Club response, to make them feel the trip all the way from Dalby was worthwhile?

BIRD PROBLEMS AND CONCERN

The Society was alerted per medium of letter to the fact that that a number of dead birds were being found in gardens in a fairly limited area of the town. Much distress was felt by some of these people who have a general love of their bird life. Seven town gardens have now found to have had deaths.

The Club Members were equally distressed, particularly at the variety of birds found, and the list stands (at present) at numbers of peewees, magpies, currawongs, black faced cockatoo shrikes and one of each of eastern rosella, crimson rosella, wattle bird, olive backed oriole (uncommon here) a dove and a crested pigeon. The symptoms the birds just drop out of a tree, some showed slight froth at the bill, and die very quickly afterwards. This list is bad enough, but certainly we would have only seen a portion of them, or heard about it. Such a wide variety of feeding habits make the reason for death even more of a puzzle. Positive action has been taken to try and get to the root of the problem. It is also sad that there are residents within this area who actually grow things to encourage bird life, and these chaps may be even more vulnerable.

The question was asked if the town area is a Sanctuary. The answer is that it is not. Shire Chairman Neil Sullivan went to a deal of trouble to trace back for me, when it came up, and the reasons against it, at the time, were fair enough, but reasons for both sides could easily be provided.

Jean Harslett.

A couple of thoughts to fill this tiny space.

"In nature there are neither rewards nor punishments, only consequences"

"Experience" is what men call their mistakes...don't worry if you stumble - only worms can't fall down."

"The exercised and developed ~~into~~ and highest intellects like the tops of mountains, are the first to catch and reflect the dawn."

May 1984

The April outing was held in the Dalveen area on the property of Mr. Mick Aspinall "Brooklands", and was attended by 30 members and friends. The meeting place was the site of the original Aspinall homestead, this homestead was built in the early 1860s. It was a changing station for Cobb & Co. and the stone work of the creek crossing is still visible in Rosenthal Creek. The heavy rain on Saturday benefited the outing in two ways firstly, in giving everyone the urge for an outdoor activity on Sunday after being confined indoors on Saturday and secondly, by providing a great volume of water in the creek. The creek is usually a placid stream with the water wending its way between the rocks of the granite strewn creek bed but had been changed to a raging torrent, flowing over the rocks and providing falls, cascades and sudden upsurges of water. The group followed the Rosenthal upstream for a considerable distance, stopping to inspect each item of interest. Many insects were seen - saw fly caterpillars, ladybirds, jewel spiders, wasps and water insects.

Several new members were welcomed including the Boggen family from Glen Aplin, members of the Passmore family and Lig Deagin was welcomed back - fresh from a stay in hospital. He showed us some algae and types of mosses and various ferns. Ten birds were identified by sight and many more by their calls. The red callistemon was scarce in the lower reaches of the creek but there were quite a few blooms in the upper reaches. This splash of colour was appreciated by the walkers, several other flowers were blooming along the banks of the creek. The fruit of the wild passionfruit was picked and found to be heavily infested with fruit fly.

The group lunched in the shade of the gleditsia trees at the homestead site and, in the afternoon walked downstream to see granite outcrops seen on an earlier outing. The outcrop consists of four great boulders stacked one on top of the other, from the top of the third level most of the party looked down on the Rosenthal Creek far below. Only the young and very adventurous members of the party made it to the fourth level. A tributary joined the Rosenthal here and members descended to enjoy the rush of water and the falling water from the banks. Small groups congregated to enjoy each others company and to take photographs while the nine children in the party explored the tributary creek. This was sandy bottomed and the flow of water was much slower, it made the perfect paddling and play area. Dams were constructed by McCosker and Langdon Company with the engineer being Mr. Danny McCosker. The outing was relaxed and the weather was perfect for a day in the bush. Thanks to everyone who contributed to a beautiful Easter Sunday.