

THE MINUTES OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB MEETING HELD AT  
THE C.W.A. ROOMS ON WEDNESDAY, 27th MARCH, 1985 at 8pm.

Present 14 .....Apologies 8

The President welcomed all to the meeting and extended a special welcome to John Walter from the Toowoomba Nats.

MINUTES - That the minutes be taken as read was moved by R.Marsden  
sec. C.Hockings. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

INWARD was received from

1. Aust. Post A/C for Post Box \$21
2. Inter. Colour Productions - A/C for Mag. Wrappers
3. Q.N.C. News - No 143 Apr/May
4. Richmond Valley Nats Newsletter - March
5. Down Under - Vol 23 No4 Dec '84
6. D.Downs Naturalist - No 369 March
7. Contact & Gen. Report - Vol 8 No 1
8. N.P.W.S. - 7 Press Statements

OUTWARD was sent to

1. 4QS re outing/meeting

That the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed was moved by F.Wilkinson sec. J.O'Donnell. Carried.

FINANCIAL

February, 1985 Balance \$197.28

Receipts

Feb. 27	Room Rent Collection	6.50	
	Bring & Buy	7.30	
Mar.	Refund from P.O.	52	
			<u>14.32</u>
			211.60

Payments

Feb. 27	Feb. Room Rent	6.00	
	Feb. Mag. Duplication	7.00	
	Feb. Mag. Postage	11.52	
			<u>24.52</u>
March 1985	Credit Balance		<u>\$187.08</u>

D.Archer moved that a credit of \$187.08 be received and accounts for Room Rent \$6, Mag. Dup \$7, Mag. Postage \$13, Bulletin Wraps \$34.80, P.O. Box Renewal \$21 be passed for payment. Sec A.Wilkinson Carried.

OUTING REPORT

In the absence of Geoffrey Walker, leader, M.Marsden gave a report on the outing to Bluff River. The 28 adults and 20 children who attended, agreed on the beautiful setting of the area. A good flow of fairly shallow water was an enticement for the young at heart. Water worn rocks were of special interest with unique straight lines indicating faults. There were pinkish lines through some while others were like straight sided patches set as a design. Interest in a red net fungus was shown while others were fortunate to see a confrontation between a water dragon and a red belly black snake. The snake gave in. Later in another spot, a similar snake was seen swimming across the stream. Thankyou Geoffrey for leading us to this area and we hope you will be successful in gaining your badge through this effort.

MINUTES CONT.NEXT OUTING

This will be a repeat to Lookout Mountain with hopes of going through the gorge. The leader will be Robin McCosker. Cars will meet on Sunday, 21st April at 9am. at the Lions Park at the north end of Wallongarra. Bring a packed lunch.

NEXT GUEST SPEAKER

We will be privileged to have Ruth and John Walter from Pittsworth to take us to Tasmania and to show and tell us what they saw. This will be Wednesday, 24th April.

SPECIMENS

B. McDonagh found an injured azure Kingfisher near his home and looked for its nest. He found it in a pile of sand on level country and the nest resembled a bull ants nest.

BUSINESS

Secretary to write letters of thanks to Brian Dodd and to the owners of the property at Bluff River.

As the Treasurer will be absent for April and May, Millie Marsden volunteered to take over.

Trial of Bring and Buy will be discussed at the Annual Meeting in July.

Notice to members that May, 18/19th are proposed for the Campout to Texas. Marsdens will lead.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

John O'Donnell gave a most interesting talk on the O'Donnell's visit to India. Though he only visited a small area, we were able to share his impressions and he gave us a lot to think about. His introduction was one we will try to follow up in that he gave the exports from India in the 1880's. How different are they now?

Thank you John for sharing your experiences.

Joan Stevenson. Hon. Sec.

(Millie Marsden sent us a poem, composed by an old identity of North Eastern N.S.W. Ed.)

MT. WARNING by Fred Simpson

Where the peak of old Mt. Warning  
Takes gold from the Eastern sky,  
A sentinel there in the morning  
stands guard as the ships go by.  
'Twas a welcoming sight to a stranger  
In the sailing days of yore,  
It warned of a lurking danger  
Of a reef and a rocky shore,  
Where a resting place for a weary cloud  
Is a silent gully and deep,  
There's a place away from the madding crowd  
Where Nature goes to sleep.  
'Tis there where the birth of a river  
Brings joy to the Mother of all  
And a promise of life forever  
Is the sound of a waterfall.

MARCH MEETING ADDRESS by J.O'Donnell

INDIA and MALAYSIA (usually without a camera).

Since we had few slides, I decided to give a little talk on India, firstly with facts gleaned from an old (1880) Encyclopaedia.

I mentioned a bit of history - eg. that the Aryan races displaced the Dravidian races after 1500 BC. The latter are found now mainly in the southern areas. The Aryans brought religious knowledge with them, eg. a faith in the immortality of the spirit of man. Millennia later, about 1800, the British arrived.

To help with the climate of India, imagine the map upside down and superimposed over a map of Australia, the southern tip of India over Cape York. Ladakh in the Himalayas is on a similar latitude to Canberra. Add in the tremendous height of the Himalayas and one can see there are all climates represented. The main wet season is the summer monsoon, (June to November). Extremely hot weather is experienced in many areas before the monsoon breaks.

The vegetation again would have covered most types before man and animals modified it over the millennia. Around Bangalore (900 mm mean annual rainfall) it is described as "xerophytic savannah woodland and grassland". There isn't now too much woodland, except where Eucalypts and Casuarinas have been planted. Last century, hill tribes in the Western Ghats practised 'slash and burn' agriculture. The tribe worked hard to fell and burn an area of forest before the monsoon, and plant seeds of rice, sorghum and corn in the ash and humus. The first crop would usually be bountiful. After one or two more crops the tribe would move on and repeat the process. Sometimes their fires got out of control increasing the damage. By 1800 the British were realising that dwindling Indian forests needed management. It was interesting to read that in Europe there was awareness of the changes in climate there, following clearing!

In 1800 there were 200 million people in India rising 20% by 1880. Contrast this modest rise with that of 1950 to 1975 of 75% to 750 million! Part of India is semi desert, but the overall density of just over a person to each hectare is comparable with Germany, and a little less than England. One of the many perils of everyday life in India last century were tigers. During 1877, about 800 people and 16,000 cattle were killed. In return, 1500 tigers were put down by people. The British, with their love of sport, were welcome in this area.

The exports of India in 1877/8 made interesting reading. The full list is rather long but includes the figures that nearly a million tonnes of wheat and rice were sent to the U.K! Other exports from the poor country were 22 million hides, 56,000 tonnes of teak, 9,000 tonnes of raw wool and 200,000 tonnes of jute, not to mention large quantities of sugar, tea, coffee, cotton, saltpetre, linseed, opium, silk, tobacco and cinchona bark.

The imports were interesting too, the main ones being 6 megalitres of beer, 3 megalitres of spirits and 2 megalitres of wine, all for the thirsty British. It sounds as though the new arrivals had to harvest all the crops themselves, in the hot sun! Joan wondered what the import/export position was this century. The only note I could find was that by 1960 the main imports were wheat and rice. Exports were mainly tea and jute.

MARCH MEETING ADDRESS CONT.

We felt that generally the Indian people seem to understand that physical life is only a small part of the development of the soul however we saw that Western problems of affluence were making inroads.

I then showed some slides we had taken in and around Bangalore. Once one relaxes in the traffic there, and simply observes what is happening, one has the feeling that God is looking after all as pedestrians, bullock carts, rickshaws, motor bikes, cars, overloaded buses, trucks, goats and horses weave along the roads together in a maze of honking and exhaust fumes. Seldom did we see impatience in the drivers, the main feature noted was their excellent judgement.

The main purpose of our visit was to stay at Sai Baba's Ashram, and to celebrate there the Christian Christmas which proved to be a wonderful experience. After spending three weeks at Prasanthi Nilayam, we coached and jetted to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. A couple of slides were shown of visits while travelling in that country.

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NEXT OUTING - TO LOOKOUT MTN. with leader Robin McCosker.

Cars to meet SUNDAY, 21st APRIL at 9am  
at the LIONS PARK at the north end of  
WALLANGARRA.

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