

MINUTES OF THE MAY MEETING OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALISTS
HELD IN THE QCWA ROOMS ON MAY 27th 1987.

Present 19

Apologies 7

OPENING.

President Jean welcomed all present on this very cold night and in particular Doug Watson from Warwick.

MINUTES.

Moved by Dore McCosker and seconded by Lyle Thompson that the minutes be taken as read in the May Newslatter and confirmed. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Inward. Received from Pam Harvey and Marion Carney and Newsletters from Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club, Richmond Valley Naturalist Club, Chinchilla Field Naturalist Club, Queensland Naturalist Club.
Outward: Kris Carnell thanking him for allowing us on his property and for leading the outing in April. 2. Darling Downs Institute Press with a copy of our review of the book "Bush Walks in the Toowoomba Region." 3. Mrs M. Carney 4. 4 QS re outing and meeting reports for May. Moved by Ray Marsden and seconded by Robin McCosker that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed. Carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT

In the absence of the Treasurer Joan, the secretary read the report and moved it be adopted and the accounts be passed for payment.

Balance as at 22.4.87

\$ 158.28 Cr.

Receipts

Subscription \$10.00

Room Rent 5.90

15.90
174.18

Expenses

Magazine Duplication 6.00

Magazine Postage 15.00

Room Rent 6.00

27.00

\$ 147.18

Accounts for payment

Room Rent 6.00

Magazine Postage 15.00

Magazine Duplication 6.00

Magazine Reg. Renewal 40.00

\$67.00

The motion was seconded by Colin Hockings and carried.

OUTING REPORT

Leader Jean Harslett reported on the outing on Sunday May 24th, which was very successful with perfect weather and 44 members present. A telephone message was received from Esme Lacey and Frank Wilkinson wishing us all a happy day.

Minutes(continued)

The main falls were visited and, after lunch, a walk to Koinas Tanks. Seven visitors were with us and we hope they will join us on future outings.

NEXT OUTING.

Under the leadership of Rob McCosker on Sunday June 21 to Arrow Rock. Cars to leave Weeroona Park at 9am, cars will leave Lions Park at Wallangarra at 9.30am and lunch is to be carried.

NEXT MEETING.

will be on Wednesday June 24 and Guest Speaker will be Colin Hockings with a "surprise" programme.

GENERAL BUSINESS.

It was suggested that a letter be written to Queensland Parks re the road into Nundubbermere Falls in the hope that it could be improved. Jean to give the secretary further particulars as to whom to write.

Ray, on behalf of members, wished Jean and Rob a happy trip overseas. Jean asked Vice Presidents to take over June and July meetings in her absence, she also thanked Tom Archer for the good job he was doing re publicity in the Border Post.

AFTER MEETING PROGRAMME

Jean introduced the guest speaker Roy Werner, who took us on an interesting and enjoyable trip to the Gulf Country. A vote of thanks by acclamation expressed our appreciation to Roy.

Dorothy Archer.
Hon. Sec.

MAY OUTING REPORT TO NUNDUBBERMERE FALLS AND LOWE'S WATERHOLES
by Leader Jean Harslett.

Outing day for May to Nundubbermere Falls dawned a perfect morning, with soft mists and warm autumn colours we associate with this time of the year. As we proceeded from points north, south, east and west to the central meeting place there were heavy mists and there were spider webs scintillating in the sunlight in dainty silhouette from every fence and bush.

The meeting venue was rather crowded owing to a conference being held at the Civic Centre, but we managed to martial, and visitors joining us included Elva Hallet, Henrietta Kita (with paint brushes), S Sybil Illic, Kris and Margaret Carnell, Lloyd and Beth Finlay, Betty Wylie and Peter Kerr (Warwick). Apologies from Peter Haselgrove, Ranger from Sundown National Park (having a few days break in Carnarvon Gorge) and other members who were involved in the "Fun Run".

Taking the Texas road, and then the Nundubbermere Road we descended through thick bushland to the "traprock". This last stretch of granite is clothed in thick forest, fine trees and a great variety of smaller plants. The Wallangarra Wattles (Acacia adunca) were even then showing a suggestion of yellow colouring. Some specially fine, very floriferous

May Outing(continued)

examples of *Banksia integrifolia*, were quite spectacular. This is a species of plant which has been long associated with this district, Alan Cunningham the explorer, seeing it here and recording and describing it, 160 years ago.

On arrival at the hill overlooking "Nundubbermere Homestead" all was bathed in golden sunlight, the last wisps of mist veiled the rich blue hills rising steeply from the valley of the Severn River. To complete the scene a group of white faced herefords galloped up to look us over. Cameras clicked in such a barrage, they could have been frightened away, but they stood their ground adding colour and the emphasis of Australia to an already beautiful scene. Stately Poplars (still with a sprinkling of golden leaves), other trees in rich autumnal colouring and a magnificent old magnolia are some of the trees gracing the garden, which we were privileged to view at closer quarters. Close to it passes the new Government built and regularly patrolled, Dingo Fence, which has also moved the old boundary gate a little closer to the homestead.

The leader thought it not only a good place in the warmth of the autumn sun and a fine view overlooking the valley and homestead, to have "smoko" and speak of some of the history of Nundubbermere, because throughout the day, we would be associated with it and it would give a better feeling of its historic rank. The first "Nundubbermere" homestead was on the banks of Monday Creek (which flows into the Severn River at the point of the falls, which we were to visit. A painting by the early Australian artist J.G. Sawkins, of this homestead is in "They Came to a Plateau". The difficulty of the name is shown in that the original sketch has "Numdubbermer" written upon it, "Mr. Gillespie's old station - now Mr. MacDougal's Nundubbermere Run". Already two different spellings of the present Nundubbermere, a property name long since associated with the Tulloch family.

After the owners of Gillespie and MacDougal, Thompson became the owner. William Thompson built a house on a high ridge with a beautiful view, in the wet season when plenty of water was about, but, by the time it was completed there was none, and the house consequently not lived in, but later pulled down and rebuilt at the new site for the head-station. The latter place became universally known as Thompson's Folly. One of his daughter's name - Emily - was given to Mount Emily in Sundown. As one might suspect, poor old Thompson went broke. The next owner of Nundubbermere was Mr. J. Clark and he lived there for a few years, then sold to Haumer of Talgai who appointed Mr. Jack Maggs as his manager until he sold to Mr. Tulloch and part of it has remained in the family since. A Nundubbermere home was built near the chimney stacks, near where we parked. The original home on that site was replaced by a second one, and after deciding it was rather open to the "easterlies" a new home was built in the valley, which we were viewing today.

No further stops were made, but Banded Plovers, Torquoise Parrots, and a Hooded Robin were spotted by birdlovers. Colin Hockings sighted three deer (excluding his own three dears!!!!). By the time we arrived at the falls, known both as Nundubbermere or Severn River Falls, all sign of mist had gone, it was crystal clear, the sky intense blue and the sort of day indelible in the hearts of Australians. It seemed a rather

May Outing(continued).

special moment to receive a message, telephoned through earlier in the morning from fellow members Esme Lacey, Ailsa and Frank Wilkinson, winging thoughts for a happy day for us from 10,000 miles away. What a lovely thought and appreciated by all.

Since we had looked at the brand new dingo fence 1986-87 style, it was interesting to look at the first dingo fence erected in this district. Quoting from information from the Ballandean History, the first one erected(I8ve been told it started about 1886) was erected to enclose the improved country east of the Sundown Ranges. It was lower and consisted of 12 wires laced at 12inch intervals with posts 15 feet apart with two battens between. The second fence constructed some years later(I think about 1897) started about a mile west of Ballandean, west through Sundown, along Razorback Spur to Mount Donaldson and up to the Border. This was made with wire damaged by sea water on the voyage from England and wire considerably cheaper. However, it still stands today so has seen the test of time. It was much higher than the first one, post were 24 feet apart with 3 battens and there were 14,15 or 16 wires according to the terrian. Lacings were at 12 inch intervals with a double hitch at every wire. The Bent family got the contract at a farthing a lacing, they cut wires far into the night, laced during the day and it is said it was a financial success!!!!

Before lunch, the majority of the party made the short though steep descent to the falls. Like a valley of solid rock Monday Creek makes its entrance, some clambered up it to come out of the gorge. The story was told that Mr. G. R. Koina Snr being a keen fisherman, had fashioned a ladder from wire and short strips of iron bark to make the descent and ascent easier, this was known as Koina's ladder, and the water holes further upstream are sometimes referred to as "Koina's Tanks"(he was a plumber too). They are widely known as Lowe's Waterholes now, he was a property owner in the early days there.

The falls provided a natural barrier to fish moving upstream, and various attempts were made to stock the river above the falls. Perhaps the most unusual suggestion, and fortunately for our enjoyment, did not occur because of lack of public support monetary-wise, was in 1892. Mr. A.H.E.Barton suggested dynamiting the two rock bars forming the falls at an estimated cost of £100. This would create a by-pass enabling fish to move upstream, or so he hoped. It lapsed for lack of support and the idea was finally abandoned.

To quote the Ballandean history again, "In August 1925 an Angling Club was formed. One of its objects being to stock the upper waters of the Severn River with fish known to exist below the falls, and the enterprise resulted in remarkable success. Records show that the venture was financed by public donations, in part and a grant of £50 made by the Stanthorpe Shire Council. Of the grant only £30 was used." The Council probably rarely gets such pleasant surprises today! !. Earlier Mr. Robert Hoggan with others had attempted to introduce trout. This was 1895, but it appears that the exercise was not a success. Nor have subsequent efforts to introduce trout borne fruit.

After lunch, most walked across the ridges upstream to Lowe's Waterholes. This is a very attractive area, and the large pot holes in the rock are quite fascinating. As you look down quite a depth you can see a stream of water passing through. The geological formation is quite

May Outing(continued)

interesting, illustrating clearly the dipping strata, typical of the area. It has been listed in the National Estate Report.

Only the very youngest ventured into the water, though one senior member seemed bent on getting wet, making two attempts!! Margaret showed good Australian initiative, making hat pins from bush materials for a restless hat.

Members were saddened to see the rubbish left at the picnic area, which is a pleasant little plateau, and a public area. Some were sorry they had not come armed with some bags to carry it away.

An unusual "living" fence post was made from a small *Notelaea longifolia*, no doubt the maker was aware of its longevity and durable nature. *Pimelea pauciflora* was discussed, and the string like quality of its peeling bark, a character of which the aborigines were aware using it for strings and nets. Lloyd added that it was stronger enough to hold a kangaroo, he could claim from personal experience. He also said the small prevalent grass fern was being investigated, and may prove detrimental to the growth size of sheep.

A pleasant day was had by the 44 present and the leader thanks all for such co-operation.

JUNE OUTING. Leader Rob McCosker is hoping for a repeat of weather pattern as for May outing. Cars will be leaving the Weeroona Park at 9am and will meet at the Lions Park in Wallangarra at 9.30am. Members from the southern end of the district may join the party there. Lunch is to be carried and good walking shoes will be needed, the climb is not long but is a trifle rough in places.

Rob looks forward to a good roll up of members and says the views are really quite good. See you at Weeroona Park 9am June 21st.

JUNE MEETING PROGRAMME. June 24th at the QCWA Rooms at 8pm. The programme will be a "surprise" presented by Colin Hockings.

Members join in wishing President Jean and her husband Rob a very happy overseas trip and a wonderful time with their daughter Susan and her husband Lars in Denmark. I understand that they will be having a tour in Britian and we wish the foursome good weather and many pleasant "discoveries". Cheers Jean and Rob.