



THE  
**GRANITE BELT  
NATURALIST**



Monthly Newsletter of the  
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club



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

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

OFFICERS OF CLUB FOR 1988 - 1989

PRESIDENT	RAY MARSDEN (811 593)
VICE-PRESIDENTS	ROBIN MC COSKER JEAN HARSLETT B.E.M. DORE MC COSKER
SECRETARY	DOT ARCHER (811754)
TREASURER	JULIA BROWN
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	MILLIE MARSDEN
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YOUTH OFFICER	ROBIN MC COSKER
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LIBRARIAN	VAL WHITE
HON. AUDITOR	JOAN FERRIS

MEETINGS - 4th WEDNESDAY of each month in the Q.C.W.A. Rooms  
at 8 p.m.

OUTINGS - The Sunday PRECEDING the 4th Wednesday of the month

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Single \$6.00                      Family \$10.00

Rent donation per family per meeting

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 Monthly Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club held in the Q.C.W.A. rooms Victoria Street Stanthorpe on  
Wednesday June 28, 1989 at 8pm.

Present 12

Apologies 9

Opening. President Ray Marsden opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

Minutes. Moved by Esme Lacey that the minutes of May 24 meeting as printed in the June Newsletter be taken as read and confirmed. Seconded by Tom Archer. Carried

Correspondence. Inward received from - 1. Shire Council re Flag Raising Ceremony on Queensland Day June 6.  
2. Receipt from Australia Post re Newsletter Renewal.  
3. Australia Post re new charges and conditions.  
4. Apple and Grape Harvest Festival Committee re 1990 asking for ideas and asking if the club will be participating.  
5. Contact re recycled paper for sale.  
Publications were received from 1. Darling Downs Nats. Club 2. Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club Inc. 3. Toowoomba Bush Walkers 4. Richmond Valley Naturalist Club.  
Outward forwarded to 1. Letters of thanks to Noel Collins-Rubie, Tony Kaiser and Rod Reeves re May outing 2. 4QS Radio station re June outing and meeting notices.  
The secretary passed on a verbal greeting from Roy and Val Hando of Chinchilla.  
Moved by Ailsa Wilkinson and seconded by Jean Harslett that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed. Carried.

Treasurer's Report. In the absence of the treasurer Julia Brown, the statement was read by Dot Archer. Report showed credit balance as at May 24 \$225.47, receipts for the month \$19.20 payments for the month \$190.45 leaving a credit balance as at 28.6.89 of \$54.22.  
It was moved by Dot Archer that the report be received and accounts passed for payment of magazine postage \$18, room rent \$8, magazine duplication \$6, M. Marsden for photocopying \$8. This was seconded by Jean Harslett. Carried.

June Outing Report. Leader Ray Marsden reported on the June 25th outing to Mt. Mitchell. 15 turned up to take part in a very pleasant climb up Mt. Mitchell - blackboys were in bloom in large numbers. It proved to be a popular spot as numerous other groups visited the area and it was quite crowded on the spur where lunch was eaten. Views were excellent. There was still some deep pockets of sleet on the southern side - a reminder of the cold day on the Saturday. Weather on the Sunday was fine and sunny.

July Outing Notes. Full details as supplied by leader Robin McCosker were printed in the June Newsletter to enable more time to prepare for the camp out to Mt. Maroon on July 22-23. Reminder will be printed in the July Newsletter.

July Meeting Program. The annual meeting will be held on July 26 when the program will be "Remember last year." Members are asked to bring along their slides for this program. Supper will be served following the meeting and members are asked to please bring a plate of eats. The list of outings is listed to help you with the times of the outings.

July 1988	The Leyburn Heritage Trail
August 21	Amiens Wild Flowers
September 25	Lyra Wild Flowers
October 23	Racecourse Creek Area
November 19-20	Camp out to the Forgotten Country
December 4	Christmas Party at Harsletts
January 22, 1989	Brittania Street to Petrie Crossing
February 19	Beehive Dam Valley
March outing was postponed	owing to rain.
April 23	The Haven
May 21	Sugarloaf
June 25	Mt. Mitchell

General Business. Discussion took place about the outing for August. Mary Walters suggested that the venue be Bald Rock to follow the new route to the top.

The new cover suggestion, as seen in the June magazine, was discussed. A decision re same will be made at the annual meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.35pm.

After meeting program. As the guest speaker Brett Roberts was not present, there was no after meeting program.

Dot. Archer.  
Hon. Ccs.

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### Outing to Mt. Mitchell.

By leader Ray Marsden.

Though Sunday June 25 dawned bright and sunny, it was not surprising that only 15 people assembled for the outing to Mt. Mitchell. Saturday had been an absolute "shocker" with wind, rain and sleet.

On arrival at the car park at Cunninghams Gap we visited the Cunningham Memorial Cairn and had a talk about how the area would have looked when first viewed by the explorer.

While we were having a cuppa prior to the 10.2k return walk on Mt. Mitchell, Ailsa Wilkinson produced a birthday cake complete with candles. It was Frank's 80th birthday. All endeavours to light the candles failed because of the persistent wind. We all wished Frank well (and hoped that when we celebrate our 80th birthday we can do the thing Frank does) had a piece of birthday cake and started off on our walk.



## June Outing Report(continued).

After such a lot of wet weather, ever since Easter, we expected the track to be very wet and the leeches to be out in force. We were pleasantly surprised, the track was very good on the whole and only in short patches did it concerne us. No one even saw a leech or tick though some did find evidence of scrub mite bites. The rainforest was luxuriant and such a change from the open forest vegetation which we see around here.

The views of the surrounding country were quite superb, Mt. Cordeaux was viewed from a number of angles. The "blackboys" or grass trees were numerous and quite magnificent. Many were in full bloom and attracted attention from bees and honeyeaters alike. Nearing the top of the mountain, about noonday, on the southern side we found many pockets of sleet and quite a patch of ground covered in sleet, this was a reminder that we were lucky not to have been there the day before or we would have felt the full force of the wind and sleet. We took our time getting to the top, spending time to admire the views search out the birds, identify the flowers and ferns.

As we sat on the spur in the brilliant sunshine admiring the views on all sides, we had lots of company, space seemed to be at a premium. A group of young people joined us in singing happy birthday to Frank. They were impressed that a person of such tender years should be happy in climbing mountains. Ailsa was a bit pceved that Frank(owing to his age) was getting so much attention. Asking, as only Ailsa could "Do they think I was a child bride? He is not much older than I am and nobody says they think it is wonderful that I have climbed to the top". (We all think they are a wonderful couple.)

Care was needed on the rock steps on the way down as so many wet feet had left them a bit slippery. On nearing the end of the trail, four of the group followed a track along a creek to come out on a high point above the Gap road. The highway was almost directly below and we marvelled at the amount of traffic and wondered what Cunningham would have thought of the sight before us. A delightful waterfall was seen and a small cave examined before retracing footsteps to join the rest of the party.

After a quick cuppa some of the group left for home while others led by Peter Kerr, took the turnoff to South Branch and traversed a delightful valley before joining the highway at Maryvale. Several stops along the way gave great views of the spur where we had lunched as well as the other mountains in the area. Thanks to Peter for this added dimension to the day. Our group returned to Warwick through the Freestone Valley arriving home just as the ligh faded. It was a lovely day, full of friendship and history. We were joined by members from Yangan and Warwick.

A bit of history which we gleaned about Cunningham and the area surrounding the Gap.

Allan Cunningham was assistant to the manager of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew England in 1816 when he set sail for Australia. He arrived in Sydney at the age of 25 as His Majesty's Botanical Collector.

Primarily a botanist, he turned his attention to exploring and led an expedition from Bathurst to Liverpool Plains in 1823. In 1827 he led an expedition to South Queensland and discovered the Darling Downs(along Glengallan Creek) in June 1827. He examined a gap in the in the ranges and his men thought it would be possible to construct a road through it.

Notes on Cunninghamham.

He retraced his footsteps to Sydney. He returned to Queensland in 1828 coming to Brisbane by boat. He then set out to find the pass through the mountains which he had viewed from the other side during his trip the previous year. It seems that there was confusion between what is now termed Cunninghams Gap and Spicers Gap. The thought is that the pass viewed on the expedition of 1827 was Spicers Gap and the one seen in 1828 was Cunninghams Gap. However the other pass was then located and a road was constructed through Spicers Gap from the Darling Downs to the Brisbane port was built about 1855.

Mt. Mitchell, climbed by Allan Cunninghams party in August 1828, is 4100 feet above sea level on his map.

In 1831 he returned to Kew and returned to Australia in 1837 as The Colonial Botanist of New South Wales. Following a visit to New Zealand, he died at the age of 48 years in 1839.

Mt. Mitchell was named after the Surveyor General and Mt. Cordeaux after a person in the Surveyor Generals department.

The road through Cunninghams Gap, follows the old Goolman (Boonah) Shire road built in 1927. With the remarkable modern engineering, the road is now carrying traffic which people of 100 years ago would have been unable to comprehend. Until 1973, Spicers Gap road carried the main telegraph link between Brisbane and New South Wales.

Allan Cunningham was responsible for recording and sending many botany samples to Kew, his name will live on in the Australian flora as many specimens bear his name. It gives one a great feeling of elation to walk the paths which this great man walked in bygone days.

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July Outing Notes

By leader Rob McCosker.

The campsite, for the July 22/23 camp out to Mt. Maroon, is a Queensland Government Reserve held for the Education Department and used by numerous school groups. It has a large flat area beside a small creek and numerous shade trees.

The climb to the top of Mt. Maroon is quite hard, I would rate it at 8 out of 10, with about five hours return. I plan to leave the campsite at 9.30am so this would mean a 7am start from Stanthorpe. Some may like to set up camp on the Friday.

Road directions to campsite - refer to RACQ Gold Coast Northern Rivers map. Take the Cunningham Highway to Aratula, 5km past Aratula turn right onto Boonah road. At Boonah turn right onto the Boonah-Rathdowney road for 24km, turn right onto Burnett Creek road. Follow for 3km, turn left onto Newman Road, take the right fork before the house and continue to campsite on right before the third creek crossing (there are two gates and two creek crossings.)

Anyone wishing to meet at the start of the walk track on Saturday morning should continue past the Burnett Creek turn-off, through the Maroon township and turn right at the Cotswold signpost - the last turn before the gravel road - and follow this road to the end.

There are no facilities at the campsite and the creek water should be boiled before drinking, or bring your own. Lunch and water will have to be carried on the walk up Mt. Maroon, as well as camera and binoculars. Nothing is planned for Sunday. Return home through the scenic route via the Burnett, White Swamp and Mt. Lindsay roads.

Recently , in talking about schooldays'as they used to be', it was mentioned that Wattle Day was always celebrated. I was recently given some old newspapers(from under someone's lino, of course) and read with interest this poem. The paper was The Sydney Mail of Wednesday August 2 , 1916. To put the poem in context it must be remembered that these were the years of the 1914-18 war. Ed.

Red Wattle by Roderic Quinn  
Red Wattle - Wattle Day Tuesday August 1, 1916.

Spring is flingin' far and wide  
 Azure lights on bay and sea,  
 And the Bush is like a bride,  
 Dressed in bridal finery.

Frost and fret are left behind,  
 there is song on every hand,  
 And with kisses steals the wind,  
 Velvet soft across the land.

Subtle scents and rich perfumes,  
 From the clustered garlands fall,  
 Birds are donning lustrous plumes,  
 For the shining festival.

There is radiance everywhere,  
 There is mirth without alloy,  
 Though the drowsy noontide air  
 Rings the clarion Voice of Joy.

Tossing leaves and rippling streams  
 Flash their lustre far and near;  
 And each pendant drop that gleams  
 Seems a pearl and not a tear.

Hark the bee, on plunder bent,  
 Questing on from flower to flower,  
 In his note of full content,  
 Dwells the spirit of the hour.

In the glow of hill and plain,  
 In the gleam of bud and leaf,  
 There is ne'er a shade of pain,  
 Ne'er a sign of woodland grief.

Yet there were dear springs of old,  
 When a richer joy was shed,  
 Where the wattle once was gold,  
 There is wattle stained with red.

As we celebrate Wattle Day again on Tuesday August 1, we should count our blessings. Ed.

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Congratulations are extended to Judith McDonagh on being award the Queen Guide Award. More hours of dedicated work has gone into working for this award. Good luck Judith.