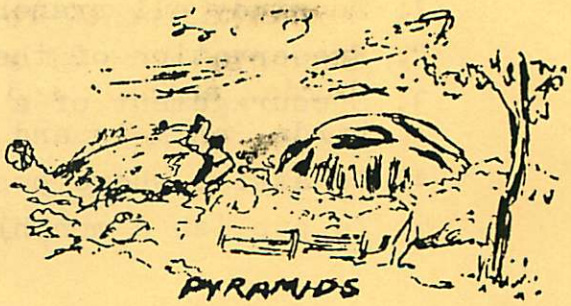
THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST

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.
SECRETARY	DOT ARCHER (811754)
TREASURER	JULIA BROWN
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	MILLIE MARSDEN
NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE	DORE MC COSKER AILSA WILKINSON FRANK WILKINSON
PUBLICITY OFFICER	TOM ARCHER
FLORA & FAUNA OFFICER	BRIAN MCDONAGH
GEOLOGY OFFICER	COL HOCKINGS
YOUTH OFFICER	ROBIN MC COSKER
BUSHWALKING OFFICER	ERROL WALKER
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 general meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club held in the QCWA rooms Victoria Street, Stanthorpe at 8pm on Wednesday 27 June 1990.

Present 15 Apologies 5

Opening In the absense of President Ray Marsden, vice-president Robin McCosker took the chair and declared the meeting open and welcomed all present with a special welcome to Ted Lockhurst - a visitor to Stanthorpe.

Minutes. It was moved by Errol Walker and seconded by Brian McDonagh that the minutes be taken as read in the June magazine and be accepted as a true record. Carried

Correspondence. Inward received from 1. Australia Post re approval for Newsletter registration. 2. Australia Post permission to post as usual till September 30th before having to put the surface mail indicators on the newsletter wrappers. 3. New South Wales Birdwatchers with Bird List and information pamphlet. 4. Conservation Foundation Report. 5. Dept. of Tourism, Sport and Racing Directory for Warwick and Stanthorpe. 6. Subs. from M. Sheahan, S. Spall and J. Tuck. Newsletters received from - 1. Darling Downs Naturalist, 2. Queensland Naturalist Club Inc. 3. May and June Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club. 4. Toowoomba Bushwalkers. Outward forwarded to - 1. Australia Post requeat for extent ion of time re surface mail indicator. 2. Nancy and Ron Gooding thanking them for leading the May outing. It was moved by Mary Walters seconded by Dore McCosker that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed. Carried.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Julia Brown read her report which showed credit balance as at May 23rd $302-54 receipts for month $34-80, payments $85-00 leaving a credit balance as at June 27 of $252-34. Julia moved the report be received and the following accounts be passed for payment- room rent $8-00; July magazine postage $22-00; June Magazine duplication $6-00. This was seconded by Tom Archer . Carried

Camp-out Report. Leader Errol Walker reported that 33 people attended the camp-out and the weather was kind for the three days. Bird life was excellent and a very comprehensive list will appear in the July newsletter compiled by Jean Harslett. All in all it was a very memorable long weekend.

July Outing The details for the outing for July 22 will be finalised and set out in the July Newsletter.

July Meeting. The meeting on July 25th will be the annual meeting and the programme will be "Remember Last Year". Members are asked to bring their slides for viewing, Rob McCosker will organise these for us. Members are also asked to bring a plate of food for it is usual to have a cuppa following the annual meeting.

Specimens. Rob McCosker spoke on a bee be had found. It was a carpenter bee, thus named because it burrows into the grass tree flower stems, makes rooms in which to lay eggs and store food for the young. It is a solitary bee - doesn't live in swarms.
Dore McCosker spoke on a crysalis found in a wattle tree in her garden. She put it in a bottle and a moth emerged and laid eggs while still in the bottle.
Also on display were some bloodwood tree seed pods found on the camp-out.

General Business. Tom Archer eported on a Club Incorporating meeting which he and Rob had attended in Warwick. He gave reasons why clubs should be incorporated, not much could be done at this meeting of the club but notice will appear in the next newsletter.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

After Meeting Program. Chairman Rob welcomed Desley McDonagh as the guest speaker. Desley is no stranger to members as she has been a member of the club for quite some time. She went to live in Melbourne and she shared the numerous places she had visited during her stay there, this was an interesting program and enjoyed by all present. Many Thanks Desley.

Dorothy Archer.
Hon. Sec.

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Camp-out to MacIntyre River Falls, Severn River Falls and Ashford Caves 9-10-11 June 1990.

By Leader Errol Walker.

The rain which threatened to disrupt yet another NATS outing, went out to sea leaving us with three glorious sunny days. The evenings were just cool enough to make campfires welcome. 33 people attended the camp-out

We thought something had to go wrong but the advertised itinery went like clockwork, with all objectives fulfilled.

It was good to see some new faces at the camp-out and we welcomed John Luck and his son Andrew from Warwick, John and Ruth Walters from Pittsworth, Neil and Helen McKilligan from Toowoomba and Roger and Denise Logan of Stanthorpe. Members Kris and Margaret Carnell were also attending their first NATS camp-out.

By 1.30pm on Saturday we had all set up camp in a very quiet forestry reserve about 30km from Ashford NSW. Thanks must go to Kris and Leila for their part in furnishing our 'necessarium'.

Saturday's walk downstream to the Severn River Falls and rapids was full of surprises - not the least of which were some encounters with tiger pear, which is capable of piercing leather shoes. When the prickles were removed from bare skin, flesh would come too. The eradication of this pear is high on the agenda of the NSW D.P.I.

The Severn River Falls consist of rapids and interesting water worn granite. A very spectacular natural granite 'spillway' is a feature of the falls area.

Camp-out Report(continued)

Below the falls, the river threads its way through boulders cradled by high cliffs of granite.

The bird watchers had a field day preparing an abservation list which will be included in the magazine.

Robin brought his canoe which was very popular on the huge waterhole adjacent to our camp. We did notice two catfish hanging in a tree beside the McCosker camp. A few other lines got wet but with little reward.

Firewood was plentiful so the community campfire was a popular venue for discussion and tale swapping.

Sunday dawned perfectly, while smoke from the campfires curled lazily to the new sun through a filigree of gum tree foliage.

A convey of nine cars drove the 76km to the MacIntyre Falls where most of us disappeared in and out of holes in the gorge above the huge swimming hole. After lunch it was only a short drive to the Ashford Caves. Tourist brochures claim 700m of caverns, a claim which I discounted until 'discovering' several new passages. One of these contained quite a substantial young bat colony. There was even an opportunity to study and photograph these cute little guys close-up.

A leisurely drive home to camp via Ashford where some stopped for fuel and an icecream. Others in the group visited Pindari Dam which was apparently quite spectacular with water over the spillway.

Monday morning was even more perfect; there was time to sleep in, fish birdwatch, canoe or photograph the falls in the morning light. Camp started to break up between 10am and 2pm when the last vehicle slowly bumped its way back to the road and home. Various routes home were chosen and I guess we will all have different stories to tell.

I wish to thank all the people attending the outing for making it a memorable weekend.

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Animals seen on the above camp-out- details supplied by Jean Harslett.

1. Water rats - at campsite and holes above campsite
2. Platypus - at waterhole above camp - very early morning and near big rocks.
3. Grey kangaroos
4. Red necked wallaby
5. Common wallaroo
6. Fox
7. White Billy goat on cliff
8. Bats at Ashford Caves - possibly Bent wing bat ???
9. Small bats in colony 'small bentwing bat.

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Outing for July 22, 1990.

As Val White is not able to lead the outing for Sunday July 22nd, alternate arrangements have been made. The outing will now proceed to the south end of Girraween Park to explore some relics of former habitation in the area.

Cars will leave Weeroona Park at 9.30am and regroup at Lions Park Wallangarra at 10am. Morning tea break will be called along the road in the park. Lunch will be at the cars so there will be no need to carry anything. There will be some walking involved but this will be of the easy variety, through interesting rock formations.

BIRD LIST.

Severn River Falls - NSW. Stanthorpe Field Naturalist's Camp-out June 9-6-1990 to 11-6-1990

(Records are from MacIntyre River Falls and Severn River Falls areas - which are quite close 'as the crow flies' camped at Severn River Falls day trip to MacIntyre Falls.)

The following lists have been supplied by Jean Harslett.

1. Magpie Lark
2. Apostle Bird
3. Grey Crowned Babbler(one group at nest)
4. White Winged Chough
5. Splendid Wren
6. Striated Thornbill
7. Rose Robin(seen by Toowoomba couple)
8. Speckled Warbler
9. Weebill
10. Yellow Robin
11. Pied Robin
12. Grey Fantail
13. Willie Wagtail
14. Brown Flycatcher
15. Eastern Shrike(early morning)
16. Striated Pardalote
17. Spotted Pardalote
18. Mistletoe Bird
19. Noisy Miner
20. White Plumed Honeyeater
21. Fuscous Honeyeater
22. Yellow Faced Honeyeater
23. White Eared Honeyeater
24. Brown Headed Honeyeater
25. Singing Honeyeater
26. Striped Honeyeater
27. Spiney Cheeked Honeyeater
28. Silvereye
29. Noisy Friar Bird
30. Little Friar Bird
31. Doublebar Finch
32. Zebra Finch
33. Dusky Wood Swallow
34. Black Backed Magpie
35. Pied Butcher Bird
36. Grey Butcher Bird
37. Pied Currawong
38. Wonga Pigeon
39. Bronze Wing Pigeon
40. Crested Pigeon
41. Bar Shouldered Dove
42. Peaceful Dove
43. Rainbow Lorikeet(eucalypt blossom)
44. Little Lorikeet
45. Red Rumped Parrot
46. Red Wing
47. 3 flocks Cockatiel
48. Pale Headed Rosella
49. Eastern Rosella
50. Galahs
51. Sulphur Crested Cockatoos
52. Fantailed Cuckoo
53. Wedge Tail Eagle
54. Brown Falcon(pai at waterhole)
55. Perefrine Falcon
56. Black Shouldered Kite
57. Nankeen Kestrel
58. Kookooburra
59. Azure Kingfisher
60. Welcome Swallow
61. White Backed Swallow
62. Fairy Martin
63. Australian Pipit
64. Brown Quail
65. Brown Treecreeper
66. Brown Songlark
67. Australian Pipit
68. Emu(seen there on previous visits)
69. Crow
70. Spurwinged Plover
71. Maned Geese
72. Pied Cormorant
73. Starlings
74. Black Faced Shrike
75. Darter
76. Dusky Moorhen
77. Black Duck
78. White Eyed Duck
79. Little Grebe
80. White Faced Heron
81. Swamp Hen

All the water birds were seen on the trip to Pindari Dam - mostly feeding at the outlet channel and also near the bywash. Quite remarkably we only saw one pied shag and the azure kingfishers at the Severn River. Possibly because there is water everywhere and the river was quite high and flowing fast - probably not much good for browsing and feeding.

INCORPORATION

It has been suggested that the Stanthorpe Naturalist Club should investigate the pros and cons of becoming incorporated. It is certainly the flavour of the year with sporting clubs and other bodies.

Incorporation means that the club should be organised as required by the act and legally registered. This gives it a sort of birth certificate.

The Club can then -
Hold property in its own name, there being no need for trustees.
Contract for specific purposes and can (maybe) obtain credit.
It has then the right to be sued or to sue if the need arises.

The last is probably the only one that interests us. There is always the possibility that someone out on an outing might injure themselves. So far we have been lucky.
At present the executive of the club, if they have been negligent or anyone else in the club for that matter, can be sued for damages etc. and for large amounts.

For us the main advantage of becoming incorporated is that then we could take out a public risk insurance policy - then if we are sued the Insurance Company would use experienced lawyers to defend the case or pay up.

The positive side is that should a member be hurt due to the club's negligence and be up for large medical expenses these could be paid by the Insurance Company.

At present we do not hear of many of these claims, people participate at their own risk but with the proliferation of insurance policies, no doubt it will become more common.
Clubs can do the job of incorporation for themselves, a lawyer could cost $500 more or less. If we decided to become incorporated, a standard constitution is available which the club has to conform to - basically it is not much different to our present constitution. Our aims and objects might have to be modified to fit.
The initial cost would be a bit over $100. and the yearly insurance about $150. Special meetings would have to be held. The minutes and financial statements for some meetings at least would have to be more formal and there would be the usual yearly forms to fill in.

Tom Archer.