

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



Monthly Newsletter of the
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club

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

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OFFICERS OF CLUB FOR 1990 - 91

PRESIDENT	Kris Carnell	835268
VICE-PRESIDENTS	Ray Marsden	811593
	Jean Harslett B.E.M.	833185
SECRETARY	Desley McDonagh	813074
Treasurer	Julia Brown	
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	835268
Newsletter Sub-Committee	Val White & Dore McCosker	
Publicity Officer	Tom Archer	811754
Flora & Fauna Officer	Brian McDonagh	841284
Geology Officer	Colin Hockings	811978
Youth Officer	Robin McCosker	835371
Bushwalking Officer	Errol Walker	812008
Librarian	Esme Colley	812927
Committee	Nominated Officials with Power to co opt	

Meetings: 4th Wednesday of each Month at Q.C.W.A. Rooms at 8pm.

Outings: The Sunday PRECEDING the 4th Wednesday of each Month.

Annual Subscriptions: Single \$8.00 Family \$15.00 per annum

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 and post to members.

ADDRESS CHECK

Could all members please check that their address is correct, and if not notify the secretary immediately.

COPY FOR NEWSLETTER

Could all contributors to the newsletter please have their copy, in the hands of the editor by the second Sunday of the month if at all possible. Copy may be sent to P.O.Box 33, Severnlea 4352 or left with Sylvia Murphy at Chelsea House & Garden at the Stanthorpe Plaza.

MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INCORPORATED
HELD IN THE C.W.A. ROOMS STANTHORPE AT 8PM ON 27/3/91.

The President, Kris Carnell opened the meeting and welcomed Doug and Janette Rigden, members who were at the meeting for the first time and Rod Hutchin as a visitor.

Attendance and Apologies as per attendance book.

The Minutes of the February meeting were adopted on the motion of Lyle Thompson, seconded by Dot Archer and carried.

Correspondence:

- Inward:
1. Q.N.C. Newsletter.
 2. Invitation to meeting at High School - Human Relations Course details.
 3. Account Australia Post - Post Office Box Account.
 4. Advert for presentation plaques.
 5. 2 x Senator John Coulter - Democrat Spokesman for Environment - Environmental matters.
 6. Footprint - Toowoomba Bushwalkers club.
 7. Subscription - Susan Spall
 8. "Urimbirra" Chinchilla Nats magazine.
 9. Darling Downs Naturalist.
 10. Chinchilla Field Nats. re camp-out at Girraween in September.

Outward: 1. 4QS "Round the Ridges".

Moved Desley McDonagh, seconded Patience James that the Inward Correspondence be received and the outward adopted. Carried.

Treasurers Report

Statement for 27/2/91 to 27/3/91

Bank Balance as at 27/2/91		320.20
Subscriptions	17.00	
Room Rent Collection	12.50	
Change Postage	1.04	30.54
		350.74

Expenditure:

Room Rent	10.00	
Magazine duplicating	6.00	
Magazine postage	25.00	41.00

Bank balance as at 27/3/91 \$309.74

Accounts to be passed for payment: Room Rent \$10.00; magazine duplication \$6.00 Magazine postage \$25.00; Post Box Australia Post \$35.00/
 Desley McDonagh moved and Val White seconded the adoption of the Financial Report and the accounts for payment. Carried.

Outing Report: Camp-out at Killarney.

This was a resounding success: 18 on Friday, 30 on Saturday and 64 on Sunday. Kris paid tribute to Jean Harslett who organized the outing, and unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting due to another commitment. Letters are to be sent to Robert and Nancy Stevens in appreciation of their arrangement of this outing.

Next Outing will be to Wyle Creek - "Rocklea". Leila Hermansson will arrange - Leave Stanthorpe 9am on 21st April.

General Business:

Letter from Chinchilla Nats. The Secretary will write advising that we will be happy to join them. Some 3 or 4 families will join the camp and others will visit. The outing will be on 22nd September and could be part of the joint activity.

General Business contd.

It was moved Patience James, seconded Frank Wilkinson and carried that we send a letter of thanks and a new visitors' book to Mr Eric Reis. President Kris will follow this up.

Discussion was held about the length of time that the magazines from other clubs should be kept. It was suggested that this be discussed with Jean Harslett, and Dot Archer moved, Joan Stevenson seconded the motion that we offer the magazines older than 5 years to Jean Harslett. Carried.

There was some discussion about badges and name tags, and enquiries are to be made about this matter.

Next Meeting: Dawn Sullivan will speak at the next meeting about her visit to Nepal.

Specimens: Noor Davis had a very comprehensive Lichen exhibit. Colin Hockings had information on ticks, and their treatment. There can be severe allergic reactions to ticks. Desley McDonagh had a helichrysum flower (everlasting daisy) grown from seed which closes when the garden hose is put on it, and open again when it dries out.

Programme: Gordon Davis presented an excellent programme "Around the World in 40 Minutes." Thank you Gordon, for taking us to those wonderful places in such an interesting way.

Desley McDonagh
Hon. Secretary

OUTING FOR 21ST APRIL

Leader: Leila Hermansson

The April outing is to Wylie Creek on Lorraine Kelly's property "Rocklea, and her neighbour's property (with permission).

Cars will depart from Weeroona Park at 9am, then proceed to Liston where I will join the party and continue to the property, where we will have morning tea.

We will then walk up Wylie Creek to a waterfall which is dry at the moment, so we hope for rain in the interim. We'll need to carry lunch, and wear water-proof boots or shoes as we cross the creek a few times. The walk is fairly easy.

NEXT MEETING

Dawn Sullivan will be our guest at the meeting on 24th April. She will talk about her visit to Nepal, when she hiked from Katmandu to the mountains.

Dawn will have colour prints of her trip on display.

Nature's laws affirm instead of prohibit. If you violate her laws you are your own prosecuting attorney, judge, jury, and hangman.

Luther Burbank (1849-1926)

It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles; the less they have in them, the more noise they make in pouring it out.

Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

CAMP OUT TO THE KILLARNEY DISTRICT 22nd.23rd.24th.MARCH 1991 Leader Jean Harslett
Assisted by Robert and Nancy Stevens of Killarney

At the suggestion of Robert & Nancy Stevens we decided to use the facilities of "Kinkuna" - the old Queen Mary Falls School which has been refashioned by the Warwick Girl Guide Assoc. Its now a delightful area to camp, with full facilities to either use the provided bunks, cooking facilities etc. or camping in the grounds. This proved to be a splendid arrangement for our purposes. The facilities were great, the weather superb, and the welcome was there for us when we arrived on Friday, provided by a bag of potatoes, onions and some pumpkins on the door step and a load of wood for our fires, all provided generously by Robert & Nancy; the wood Robert cut into neat sizes after work. We do not usually enjoy such luxury, but such generosity & thoughtfulness warmed all our hearts and made a great start to a memorable weekend.

After settling in a few of us drove up to Carr's Lookout to watch the sun go down. Cat birds mewed in the nearby forest, cattle were lowing, the sky coloured and the stark dead trees were lit in gold and etched against the deep shadows of the high mountains. Wilson's Peak received the last light on its tops, and finally settled into the hush of deep shadow. A wallaby or two also quietly waited including one Pretty Face wallaby. We gathered a few colourful sprays of berries to decorate the tables "botanically". Eighteen people arrived for the Friday night, those in tents coming in for a chat after tea with those housed in 'Kinkuna'. There were 28 campers on the Saturday night, and 64 people for the Sunday day outing.

Saturday morning commenced with a few walking to nearby heights to view the sunrise and early morning lights. Given permission by the owners we walked through cattle pastures, of outstanding quality. From the tops and clarity of early morning we could readily pick out points on the Granite Belt plateau, towards the horizon. Bald Rock, Mount Norman, the towers at Passchendaele and Dalveen & Mt. Janet readily seen. The neat squares of ploughed fields and tree wind breaks in the valley and opposite hill-side, occasioned the Danish landscape gardener in our party (who has been visiting the more arid areas in Australia) to say, "How completely unexpected to find a little piece of rather typical European scenery in Australia !"

Robert, Nancy and son Jason arrived at 9.30am. with a 4WD vehicle, and slipped back for some bales of hay (Comfort for those riding in the back, to sit on. They endeavoured to think of everything for us, and they certainly did. For this we all thank them, & I as leader feel a special warmth of appreciation.

WE all set off to Queen Mary's Falls, this arrangement decided upon to allow any late comers to be able to find us and catch up, before we moved to more distant fields. All walked the Falls circuit. Narelle who regularly checks out the ground orchids in the area showed us some shyly hidden ones on the way along which included the green-hoods Pterostylis reflexa or P. revoluta and Pterostylis obtusa. We also saw Acianthus with their distinctive purple under leaf, and in similar habitat Corybas plants, but

none of the quaint large hooded, short stalked flowers. She slipped behind a rock to show us a Bulbophyllum exiguum patch in massed flower, which we certainly would not have seen by ourselves. A massed group of this tiny orchard about of a metre in diameter, it was simply covered with equally diminutive flowers. None of us had seen them in flower before. From the Lookout we remarked on a pipe line conspicuous in colour, which we assumed was for water pumping, and thought it unusual for National Parks to have an eyesore. However, we learnt it was temporary and really to provide sand & gravel to construct tracks at the bottom of the valley. As one of our quick witted members ^{said} after they had carried a couple of plastic bags of sand from the top to the bottom, they said to themselves, "There has to be a better way !!".

From here we went to Daggs Falls for a quick look from the viewing point. A chap with a camera also visiting turned out to be member Frank Wilkinson's nephew, and an unexpected meeting. A short stop at Legume then up to the southern end of Acacia Plateau enjoying the views. A quick look at potato harvesting and a potato harvest-machine, with a description from Robert, then to the top of the rise in private property with great views especially towards Mount Lindsay. A water tank with a ladder provided an even higher 'bird's eye view' for those who wished to climb up the steep little steps. Robert gave the children present a quick lesson on how to "bandicoot" for potatoes (on his property of course) and they proudly left the paddock with their "booty" and a better understanding of where potatoes come from. To little "appleiters" this was interesting. This area was once all under scrub, & was cleared many years ago for dairy farming country. When the industry fell apart cattle & potato crops took over, the rich soil well drained of cold air in winter is ideally suited to them.

Further along another high point (also on Wickham properties) & adjacent to the Qld.-N.S.W. border was chosen for our lunch spot. Some old fence posts with hand made nails, proved that long ago someone had pushed out into the scrubs & over rugged hills to carve out a living and establish a home.

After lunch we drove through State Forestry areas, planted in scrub lands. Firstly through exotic pines then to a plantation of Hoop Pine, followed by an excellent stand of Bunya Pine planted in 1954. It was probably one of the best stands of the latter most of us have seen. The fallen fruits also provided a lot of interest. Here there were also some excellent very tall Tree Ferns. Colin showed us that the bright red and decorative fruits of the Walking-Stick Palms were quite suitable to eat. After following along the border & crossing through it we emerged below Carr's Lookout to open country just when lighting was perfect and the photographers really enjoyed themselves. Robert showed us that the old logs were really Rose Mahogany and they and stumps retained some of their special aroma.

In the evening and after the luxury of hot showers we all gathered around the provided fireplace in the shed & a member from Brisbane Margaret Compton (whose late parents are well remembered in relation to the Anglican Church in Stanthorpe) gave us a most unexpected treat. She read some extracts from her great grand —

-grandmothers diary, written when she was a girl of 14 years of age. They had just had a long voyage from Brisbane, and her father was appointed as the first Head Teacher to the tiny Killarney school in 1874, one hundred and seventeen years before our visit. It was beautifully written & descriptive diary for one so young, and we were all imbued with some of the excitement of the adventure she was experiencing and explained so graphically. It told of many things. To be read aloud to us by Margaret around our camp fire, in this beautiful area, cradled in the mountains of Killarney seemed so perfect & so special. It took 3 weeks to come from Brisbane in a bullock waggon with their possessions, then when provisions etc were required from Killarney it was also a weeks undertaking for the bullock waggon. Their home small and very modest of log construction close to the banks of the Condamine River. Of things most pertinent to a Naturalist Club, she spoke of the animals and birds. That scrub came almost to the house, and also floods. There were geckos, centipedes, scorpions. Strange "whip-cracking" birds, scrub turkeys and 'cat' birds and many others. Her comment about the emus found around the lake on a nearby station property, where an effort was made to "protect" them was an interesting & thought provoking comment. Were people in Killarney thinking of conservation 117 years ago? "there were plenty of fish we could catch brim, catfish & salmon. (What were salmon? Ed.)

Robert & Nancy joined us for the evening & Robert outlined plans for Sunday & gave us some background information, and answered some questions about the area. A cup of tea and some chatting, and so to bed after a very satisfying day.

On Sunday we assembled at the Killarney Post Office at 8.30am, & the park seemed full of people & cars. Our 28 camping party was augmented by 36 who came for the day only. Finally we had the whole 64 loaded into the available 4WD vehicles & set off up the gorge. Robert & Nancy had brought along Mr. Eric Reis a pioneer of the valley where his parents & grandparents had had properties. He commenced working life with a bullock team at the tender age of 12 years, with his father. He provided a feast of stories, anecdotes both amusing and poignant. He knew the valley like the back of his hand, every yard (metre) had a story, though we did not stop as often as that, we did pause numerous times to try and pass some of it on to others. After 12 or 13 crossings of the Condamine River, & lunch on its banks where Cucumber orchids (Dendrobium cucumerinum) were growing on the horizontal branches of the sheoaks, and the delight of some, in full flower, and the Hocking family found old walnut trees & showed us all, & a few had a swim, it was time to move on. Walnut trees like oaks you plant for your grandchildren - or at least did before new quicker bearing varieties were evolved. I'm sure the Condamine walnuts could tell a tale or two. It was "whip cracking time again, & time to move. Mr. Reis gave us so many demonstrations & gave both children & adults the opportunity to try this long whip, but all needed his guiding hands to get a result. Incidentally speaking of whip cracking, "The Boss Lady!! would to thank everybody over the entire weekend for complete co-operation, which makes it smooth for everybody. Always on time even for early starts, ~~everything~~ made

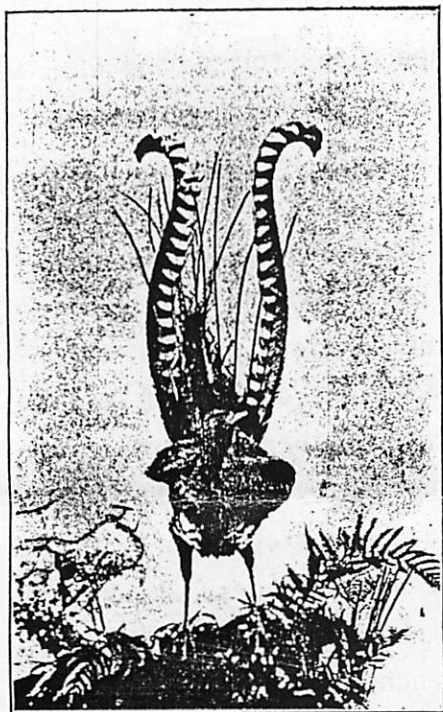
tidy before departure, sweeping, out cleaning shower & toilet block, mopping floor before final departure, grounds tidy, and always pleasant. Thank you.

After we left the valley we returned to near base, and then saw Mr. Reis in his "true colours." The yoking of his bullocks, how they responded to all his commands & walk-into position, log pulling, a ride on a bullock waggon for all, how he controlled his bullocks to round the whole party into a tight circle. His quiet & complete control and understanding of each beast, was magic to most of us, even to those who have seen others in action, but never to this degree of skill.

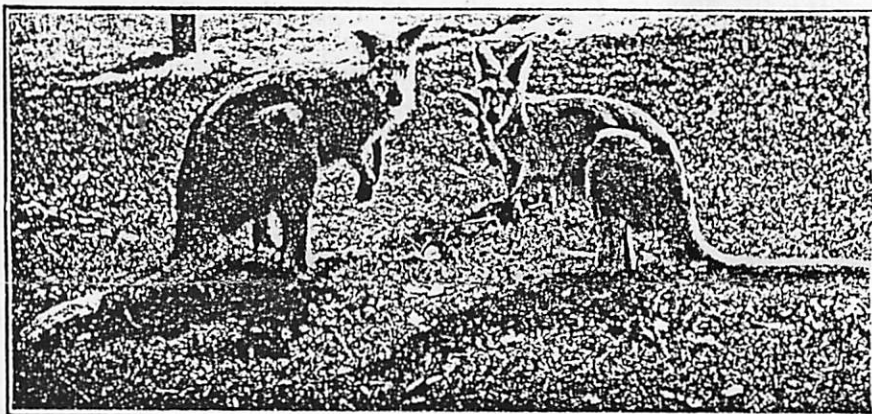
Finally to the hilltops along Bowley Rd. which bears the name of that fine pioneer lady of dingo trapping fame, in her ninties, a pioneer lady of the calibre of which we ^{NOT OFTEN} can still have the privelege of meeting these days. We were late arriving, so she finished off a 'spot of milking' before showing us some dingo pelts and chatting to many. Here we shared a watermelon Robert claims he swapped for a lettuce!! (obviously he is a good business man, to manage such a good exchange.) Well done Robert & Nancy for that and the weekend.

Jean Harslett.

Member Leila Hermansson has an old brochure of the Newcastle Dist. at the beginning of 1900, when Cessnock had only a few shops and houses and one horse & cart in its main street, and its local nature looked like this.



AUSTRALIAN LYRE BIRD.



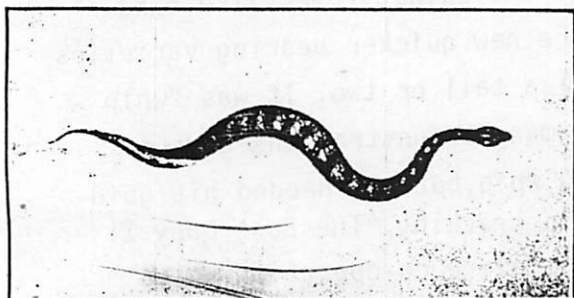
AUSTRALIAN KANGAROOS.

SCENE.—LONDON ZOO.

First Cockney: "Siy Bill, come over 'ere and see can yer give it a nime. When it runs it jumps and when it stands up it's sittin down."

Second Cockney, viewing the Kangaroo: "Garn yer bloomin' idiot, that thing's a Horstralian Native."

Irishman, standing near: "Eh, What! Australian Native did ye say? Is that an Australian Native? Well, Well, my poor brother Mike in Australia's married one of them."



DEATH ADDER.

Guess who the lucky one was ?

