

DLC



# THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



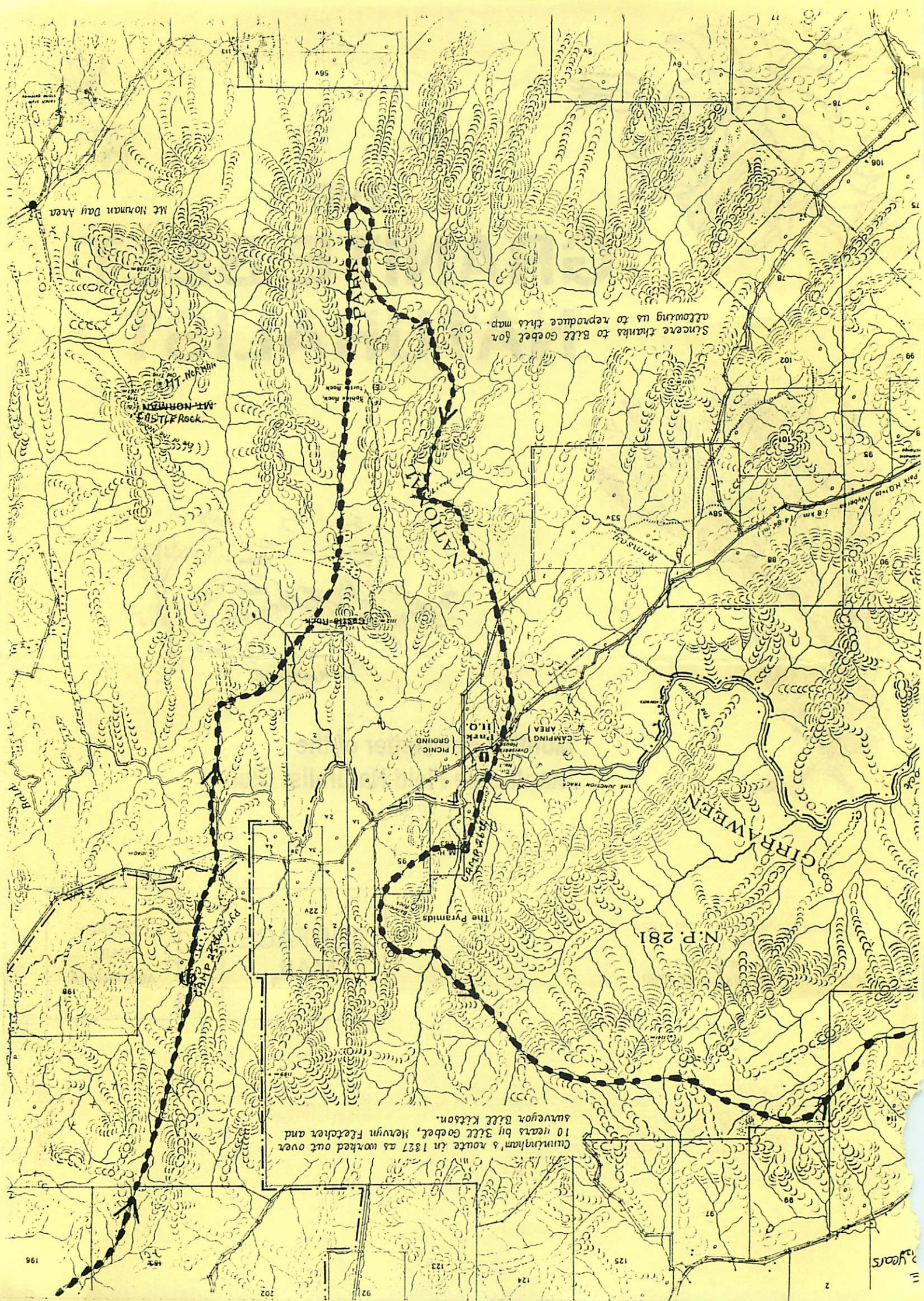
Monthly Newsletter of the  
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club

Registered Publication No. QBH 1824  
Category B  
If not claimed please return to  
P.O. Box 154, Stanthorpe, Q. 4380

**SURFACE  
MAIL**

POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTRALIA





Sincere thanks to Bill Goebel for allowing us to reproduce this map.

Quinnham's route in 1827 as worked out over 10 years by Bill Goebel, Nevyn Fletcher and surveyor Bill Kittson.

2 years



STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB - OUTING REPORT FOR 24.11.1991

The outing to the rocky area known locally as "Mallee Ridge", and in the vicinity of Mount Norman was attended by 40 people including 6 from Toowoomba and 4 from Warwick. Bill Goebel came along and with his extensive knowledge of the area was a great asset. Indeed, he led us to all the points of interest and I was dubbed to be like the general who led his army from the rear !

Liesurely progress was made up along the ridges, and although we walked most of the day we were hardly ever off rocks, which made for easy walking. There were only small scrubby areas traversed. Not often could a whole day be spent, only, amongst such variety of rock shapes. They proved attractive in varied ways, scenically, geologically and photographically.

Out in the field, we agreed that none of us were quite sure what the difference was between dykes and sills, so jokingly they were referred to as "dills". Referring to my "friendly" geology book, I quote, "Dykes are wall-like verticle fissures, the name derived from the Scottish word 'dyke', a dry stone wall, whilst the horizontal forms are sills. Just to confuse me...and you !...it goes on to say magma according to the situation in which it is cooled and has consolidated, maybe an intrusive dyke, sill or boss.

We proceeded to the mallee gum area, very beautiful with their slender, parallel stems, creating a misty effect on the view seen through them. At this point, the ever thoughtful President caught us up, after doing his good deed for the day. We crossed on to a rocky platform, where some shade was found and we had lunch. Fortified by our lunch, Bill managed to get even the most timid up a steep little piece of rock, to an elevation from which we got a splendid view. He pointed out each of the more definite landmarks, with some information about each. where the original 'trig' point was erected, which on recent maps is being shown as "Mount Norman" and the second more inaccessible and higher "trig" point erected by the Army in 1942 and eluded to as Castle Rock on some maps. This Castle Rock is not to be confused with the Castle Rock nearer to the Girraween headquarters, by which name we have known it for a long time. After lunch two of our party left to cross on foot to the Girraween headquarters and picnic area, and later two young gentlemen who had walked from Girraween, and we had spotted on Mount Norman, joined us, one a nephew of the Frank Wilkinsons, the other from U.S.A (Ohio). Both boys have been doing work experience with the National Park, locally. Noela Dodd was able to return them to Girraween and at the same time pick up Brian & Helen.

From this vantage point Bill was also able to give us a very good picture of the area explorer Allan Cunningham passed through 164 years previously. Noting the places he camped and described, and the extremely difficult terrain he, his men, and horses fought to get through. Quoting from his diary (yes we felt in tune with him) "East of us upon the ridge is a very large surface of

## REPORT CONTINUED ..24.11.1991

naked granite, which being fringed with green vegetation, had a very striking effect. These bare granite elevated points in the group of lofty ranges, east, of us afforded me interesting points of bearing, easily again to be recognized" (Cunningham's description) As we gazed across to this area you can see why we found them so recognizable, and had a feeling of being 'in tune'. Another quote from his diary, "Scarcely had we completed ere <sup>one mile</sup> we arrived at the verge of a most wild and frightful country. Large masses of granite rock towering over each other, and standing in such singularly tottering positions, that one might suppose them to be so placed, by the hand of man.. were it possible for human strength to lift bodies of rounded rocks, many tons each in weight." Bill Goebel and the late Mervyn Fletcher, with the aid at times of a surveyor (To check latitude, longitude and heights, as nominated in Cunningham's Day Books and Field notes) spent ten years trying to pin point, routes and camp sites. Both these references & his diary are difficult through age to decipher. and this was also very time consuming. Then the stepping out in rugged terrain and infinite detail, the movements of the party. (See Map)

The area of our outing is usually wonderful for wildflowers, but because of the severe drought conditions the only species flowering with any enthusiasm were the handsome mauve Mint Bushes, Prostanthera lasianthos, which were covered in a profusion of flowers (where was their vigour coming from?) Amongst them were a few of a whitish flowering Mint Bush Prostanthera prunelloides with broader very dentate foliage, and much rarer. Gums were flowering quite well in the gullies. The Mouse Plant, Homoranthus papillatus, was very apparent by its aroma. We felt perhaps more mouse smelling, when dry than wet. This species was for a long time believed to be Homoranthus virgatus but in a recent review of the genera, it has been named a separate species, specially belonging to our area. The Flying Duck orchids caused some excitement. Narelle and David first seeing them along the track close to the picnic area. These were Caleana major, a warm red-brown & green colour. The much less frequently seen, Caleana minor, much greener, smaller and with a rough tongue, whilst the former has a smooth tongue, were considerably higher up, in a very dry gravelly area, and brave to be flowering. Both species are mischievous little flowers, and when an insect visits the flower the labellum suddenly shuts down on it, and to escape requires a struggle, and the resulting covering with pollen, which is transported per insect 'conveyance' to another flower. Patches of moss which are usually cushions of vivid green were reduced by drought to small 'black pads'

Thanks to Bill Goebel for spontaneously coming along and sharing his knowledge, the day was made much more interesting, by him.

Jean Harslett (Leader)

Perhaps, because of the very severe dry conditions a list of the species of wild flowers seen would be interesting. Mount Norman 24.11 1991.

Caleana major (Two species of Flying Duck Orchids)

Caleana minor. " " " "

Boronia microphylla.

Eriostemon glasshousensis.

Kunzea bracteolata (Green kunzea.)

Dampiera stricta (Blue Dampiera)

Dodonaea hirsuta.

Stylidium graminifolium (Trigger Plant)

Stypantra grandis (large blue Nodding lily)

Hibbertia acicularis

Conospermum taxifolium

Comesperma retusm (purple Matchheads)

Billardiera scandans (Wild Peach)

Leptospermum lanigerum.

Leptospermum liversidgii

Leptospermumflavesens

( var. grandiflorum)

Actinotis helianthi (flannel  
flowers)

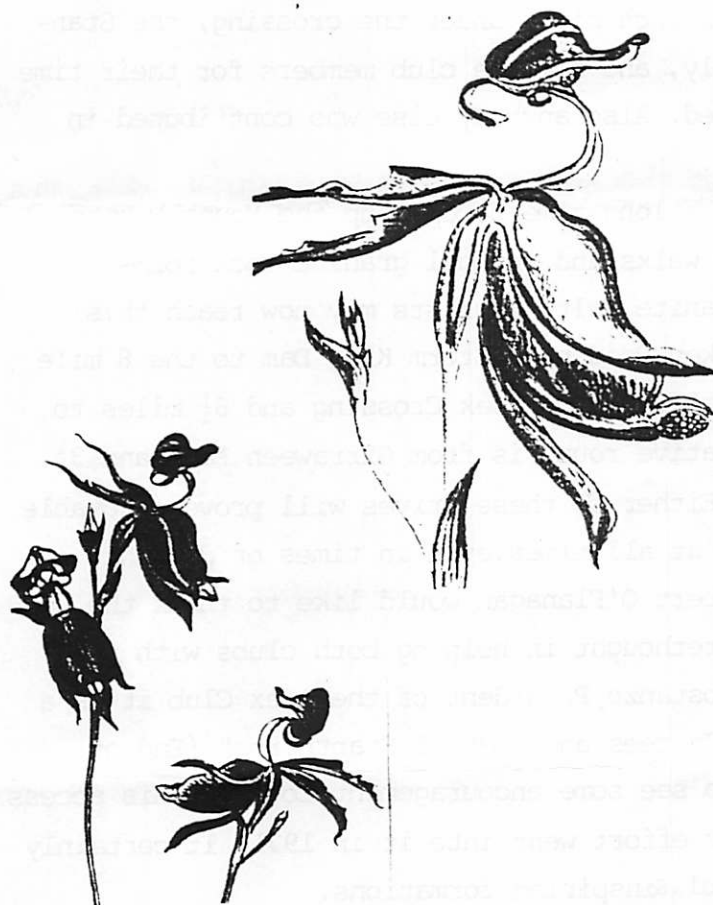
Xanthosia diffusa

Banksia collina

Homoranthis papillata (Mouse  
Bush)

Banksia collina ( Hairpin  
Banksia)

Eucalypt sp.



### The Meaning of Christmas

Christmas should mean kind thinking, forgiveness, forgetting old cares, old grievances, fears. It should be a time for carving ideals and dreams; an hour for weaving the golden threads of past blessings into a mantle of daily thanksgiving.

Christmas is a gift transcending human understanding; an angel choir echoing the Song of Songs; imperishable glory from the very heart of Heaven to the farther most part of the earth.

Christmas is a boundless love melting all grief, all heartache; hope, serene and beautiful, lighting all darkness.

CHRISTMAS IS PEACE.

Loretta Baouer  
Buckley

### To Own a Dream

If you can see it  
You can touch it

If you can touch it  
You can grasp it

If you can grasp it  
You can hold it

If you can hold it  
It is yours.

Bore: a man who deprives  
you of solitude without  
providing you with company.

Gian Vincenz Gravine

John M O'Donohue

A small historical note from a Stanthorpe Border Post just exactly 20 years ago, 25.11.1971 from the time we were on the Mount Norman outing. The road was in very good order for a granite track, and no doubt aided by the "pseudo" speed bumps, which direct water, and prevent washouts. To-day it is difficult to proceed beyond the picnic area, which seems a pity, since so much voluntary effort made it possible 20 years ago.

Quote;- "Two Service Clubs, Jaycees and Apex combined together in making the Mount Norman Road complete, and the crossing over Paling Yard Creek. This project would not have got off the ground without the help of many others, and donations from the public and business houses of the town.

On behalf of both clubs we would like to thank the Stanthorpe Shire Council, for their co-operation with the project, graders etc, and some materials for the crossing. Mr. Jack Armstrong for his time advice, effort, and his equipment. Mr. George Hendry for his time and advice, Mr. George Hendry Jnr., Mr. L.E. Eldridge for his truck and gravel delivered which he kindly delivered to the site. The Rocla Pipe Co. for the 12 inch pipes under the crossing, the Stanthorpe Shire Engineer Mr. Bill Reilly, and all the club members for their time and the use of their equipment loaned. Also anybody else who contributed in any way to the Mount Norman project.

The crossing has been needed for a long time to open up the Mount Norman area, which is noted for its lovely walks and unusual granite rock formations, which highlight the name "Granite Belt". Tourists may now reach this area by a scenic drive along the Eukey Road past Storm King Dam to the 8 mile turnoff. It is then 3 miles to the Paling Yard Creek Crossing and  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles to Mount Norman picnic area. An alternative route is from Girraween Park and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the Mount Norman turnoff. Either of these drives will prove enjoyable. Paling Yard Creek has running water at all times, even in times of drought.

The President of Jaycees, Mr. Robert O'Flanagan would like to thank the people who had the foresight and forethought in helping both clubs with this worthwhile project. With Mr. Vince Costanzo, President of the Apex Club it is a combined project and effort of the Jaycees and Apex of Stanthorpe" (End of quote.) Perhaps it would be nice to see some encouragement to have this access available again, since so much public effort went into it in 1971. It certainly does provide access to many beautiful, inspiring formations.

Jean Harslett.

\*\*\*\*\*

*I would like to thank Jean Harslett for producing almost all the copy for this "Christmas Edition" of the magazine. As there was so much interesting information at hand, already typed, the temptation to use it was too strong to resist.*

*Kris and I would like to wish you all a Happy and Holy Christmas.*

Margaret Carnell

Editor