



THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



Monthly Newsletter of the
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club

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 it to members.

Meetings: 4th Wednesday of each Month at QCWA Rooms at 8.00pm.
Outings: The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday of each Month.
Subscriptions: Single \$8.00 Family \$15.00 per annum July to June.
Rent : Donation per family per meeting.
Address: Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc., P.O. Box 154, Stanthorpe Q 4380.

OFFICERS OF CLUB FOR 1992-93

President	Kris Carnell	835268
Vice-Presidents	Rob McCosker	835371
	Colin Hockings	811978
Secretary	Desley McDonagh	813074
Treasurer	Julia Brown	
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	835268
Newsletter Sub-Committee	Val White & Dore McCosker	
Publicity Officer	Tom Archer	811754
Librarian	Esme Colley	812927
Management Committee	President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer.	

SCALE OF DIFFICULTY FOR WALKS ON NATS OUTINGS

1. Flat walking road or track.
2. Road or track gentle hills.
3. Track some hilly sections
4. Track some steep sections
5. Cross country easy open forest, gentle slopes.
6. Track steep section common, with steps.
7. Cross country some hills, some thick undergrowth.
8. Cross country steep section with scrambles over rocks etc. Some thick undergrowth.
9. Cross country steep, hilly, rough, thick undergrowth.
- 10 Mountain climbing, hard going, higher level of fitness or plenty of time required.

CAMPFIRE

Gumleaves scent the firelight
Steak and onions too
Campers sitting talking
Of things they see and do
Children's happy laughter
Drifts among the trees
A mopoke calls the evening
To greet mist laden breeze.
A lonely dingo, howling
Serenades a rising moon
Sleepy eyes are closing
The hour coming soon
Fading embers glowing
Visions coming through
Ochred figures dancing
Droning didgeridoo
A boobook's quiet hooting
From dreamtime long ago
Chilly writhing mists
Give birth: A new born day
Steaming blackened billy
A cuppa coffee on the way.

OUTING REPORT ON CAMPING TRIP TO EMU CREEK 22-23 MAY 1993

Firstly many thanks to Peter Kerr, David Wilson and Narrelle Crawford for their assistance and company both on the pre-outing trip as well as the outing. Peter provided the contacts to obtain permission from Henry Watson, the lessee, to camp at Bretts Mill, and from the Queensland Forest Service to "traverse State Forest 661 Parish of Emu Vale for the purpose of sightseeing." David was a mine of information about the aircraft wreck.

In spite of the Grade 9 rating for the walk, to my surprise 23 people rolled up on Saturday. We regrouped at the Warwick Sale Yards for a cuppa before being led by Peter to a cleared ridge above Mt Colliery. After the drought and desolation around Stanthorpe the lush green clover and kikuyu pasture here was a welcome sight. The Nats had been to this spot once before but this time the view of Mt Superbus had more significance as the Lincoln wreck site was pointed out. We paused a little further along the road to view Hoffman's Falls, with just a trickle of water flowing, then again to admire a remarkable specimen of flooded gum, a solitary sentinel of what was probably once a forest. We drove on then into the Gumbubal State Forest passing Radiata pine plantations at all stages, including a large pile of recently cut logs. After leaving two low clearance vehicles at the turn off to Kellys Lookout we bumped and slithered on until stopping just before a locked gate where we had room to park off the track. A short walk then through rainforest brought us suddenly to the open expanse of Cons Plains or Bald Mountain - a naturally occurring treeless mountaintop. To the east was Mt. Superbus, now much closer with the Lincoln wreck visible through binoculars. Below us to the north was a spectacular view of the Steamers and above them the peaks of the Main Range stretched away to the north - Mt Steamer, Panorama Point, Mt Asplenium, Mt Huntley, Doubletop and Spicers Peak. I'm sure that a lunch spot with more splendid views would be rarely found.

An area enclosed with an electric fence contained a rain gauge and what was thought to be a fog or dew gauge. This proved to be correct as while we were there the person responsible, a Queensland Uni student, arrived and explained their purpose. She is conducting experiments as part of her course in microbiology to determine why Bald Mountain has its large treeless plain. She also pointed out a steel tower on the adjacent hillside where another student is carrying out hydrology experiments.

After lunch we returned to the cars then drove back to Tannymorel, turned right and drove to Emu Vale then right again to follow Emu Creek to the Campsite on Brett's Sawmill flat. I had been warned by the lessee that there were a couple of dead cows on the flat which we should camp well away from, but unfortunately in the rush to get tents up before dark I forgot this. Sure enough the first gentle breeze brought us that unmistakable aroma - we were camped down-wind of the rotting carcasses. To make matters worse, there was one in the creek and we were camped down-stream as well! Thank goodness we brought plenty of fresh water with us and it was a fairly calm night. After the Bar-B-Que plate was finished with we stoked up the camp fire to enjoy its warmth and light and the friendly atmosphere it provided.

The next morning, we were joined by some very early starters from Stanthorpe as well as the Warwickites who declined to camp with us, perhaps they knew about the dead cows.

Once again in fine weather, we set off at about 8.30am in high clearance vehicles for the 2.5km trip to the start of the Lincoln Wreck track. Only two people decided against the 9km hike and I am grateful to Peter Kerr for offering to escort them back along the creek to the campsite as an alternative. The remaining 31 made the distance although we missed Tom for a bit. He was keen to get ahead and not slow the party down but I forgot to tell him where the walking track left the vehicle track. After some cooe-e-ing and back-tracking he was soon back with us, though a little out of breath.

It is difficult to know how fast a group of people will travel and I was delighted when we reached the little stream and waterfall at about 10 o'clock. This was an ideal resting spot for smoko, with good drinking water and a typical rainforest setting - dappled sunlight filtering through to the mossy rocks and ferns below where we sat. The track levels off for the next 1km along the old logging road then follows a very steep, almost dry gully to the wreck site. This was the section which prompted the Grade 9 rating though I have heard since that others give it a grade 4! It then continues to a clearing on the plateau which is south of the peak of Mt. Superbus. We had lunch here and David Wilson gave us a most informative talk about what he knew of the actual aircraft and the crash in which an RAAF Lincoln Bomber on a mercy flight from Townsville to Brisbane hit the side of the mountain, killing all six on board. We spent some time after lunch studying the twisted wreckage, trying to identify pieces, and enjoyed the spectacular views to Bald Mountain, where we had been the day before, and the unmistakable Steamers. We set off then for the long downhill journey to the cars and camp, arriving in time for a well earned cuppa before packing to return home, as darkness fell.

Rob McCosker - Leader

NEXT OUTING - 20TH JUNE 1993

The outing on 20th June will be a clean-up at Nundubbenere Falls to celebrate World Environment Day. Cars will leave Weeroona Park at 9.00 a.m. The track from the road in is not suitable for conventional vehicles, so we will have to transfer to high clearance vehicles etc. at the gate.

Members are asked to bring gloves and Woolies bags. Larger containers and trailers will be supplied.

Peter Hazelgrove suggests that a lookout be kept for brush-tailed rock wallabies which are sometimes seen at the junction of Monday Creek and the Severn River.

People forget how fast you did a job - but they remember how well you did it.

Howard W. Newton

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC. HELD AT 8.00PM ON WEDNESDAY MAY 26TH 1993.

Opening:- Chairman Kris Carnell welcomed all present, with a special welcome for four visitors.

Present and Apologies:- as per attendance book.

Minutes:- Ray Marsden moved and Robin McCosker seconded the motion accepting the minutes as a correct record of the April Meeting. Carried.

Correspondence :- Inward

1. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Footprint May
2. Chinchilla Nats - Urimbirra - May.
3. Qld Nats Club - Natural History Award
4. QNC Newsletter - May June.
5. Australian Democrats - Environmental News
6. Matrix Office Systems Account for photocopying \$70.00
7. Richmond Valley Nats - Newsletter
8. Darling Downs Naturalist May 1993.
9. Richmond Valley Nats - 25th Birthday Celebrations 18th July 1993.

Outward

1. & 2. Broadcast notes to 4QS and 4WK for May.
3. George Bonner, & 4. Alan Robertson & 5. Noel Bonner - Thanks for their part in the successful outing to Half Moon and Lindesay View.
6. Letter of condolence to Ralph Fletcher on the death of his father. Moved Desley McDonagh seconded Frank Wilkinson that the inward correspondence be received and the outward adopted. Carried.

Treasurer's report

Balance as at 28/4/93 \$ 85.38c

Receipts

Subscriptions

Room Rent Collect	14.00	
Half P.O. Box rent	18.50	
Photocopying	5.00	
	<u>\$37.50</u>	<u>37.50</u>
		<u>122.88</u>

Expenditure

Room Rent	10.00	
Matrix Office Syst	70.00	
	<u>\$ 80.00</u>	<u>80.00</u>
		<u>42.88</u>

Balance as at 26/ 5/93 \$42.88

Julia Brown moved and Dore McCosker seconded the adoption of the Treasurer's report and the following accounts for payment - Room Rent \$12.50; Petty cash \$15.00. Carried.

General Business:- Kris reported that the management committee had agreed to enclose the reminder of subs to be paid with the June magazine, and that we would be, at the same time, asking people to suggest places for outings. He assured the members that they would not be committed to leading an outing if they suggested it.

Outing reports:- Rob McCosker gave a report of the weekend campout to Mt Superbus. It was a good camp. (except for the dead cows !!!!) Millie Marsden thanked Rob for the help he gave to those climbing the mountain. Those attending the outing agreed. Next outing will be a clean-up to Nundubemere Falls - details will be in the next magazine. Gloves, wollies bags etc will be needed for the clean up.

Next Meeting:- The programme will be given by Jean Harslett.

Members were reminded that the July meeting will be Remember Last year, and it was suggested that the outings begin from June last year.

Specimens:- Desley McDonagh had photos taken during the Ballandean - 3rd Crossing outing; Millie Marsden photos of the Lincoln Wreck outing; Dore McCosker several botanical specimens; Rob McCosker a feather which came from a kookaburra.

Programme:- It was good to see all the Hockings family at the meeting, and we enjoyed the excellent slides and commentary given by them. Thank you for taking us on such an interesting tour of Tasmania.

President Kris moved a vote of thanks to the Hockings for their programme, and, after this was carried with acclamation, the meeting closed.

SO WHAT IF I DIDN'T CLIMB MT SUPERBUS AND HAVE MY PHOTO TAKEN WITH THE OTHER WRECK?

I've conquered a few mountains of my own since I've been able to go on the Field Nats Outings. I would have loved to have climbed to the top of Mt Superbus, but had to accept reality and stay at the bottom, but I was reminded of what a very fortunate person I am.

Why this good fortune? Well, because I am a member of the Stanthorpe Field Nats and can enjoy, not only the wonderful places that we go, but getting there - either as a very welcome passenger in friends' vehicles, or, as on the last outing, discovering how well my "Jelly Bean" car coped with the driving excitement. I did wonder how surprised its manufacturers would be to see it being driven through those creek crossings and along that last stretch of deeply rutted road. (And by a lady driver?????!!)

While the mountaineers were climbing I enjoyed the ramble / scramble down the creek with Peter (thanks Peter) and Fred. It is a truly beautiful place and I had time to enjoy it at my leisure. After lunch we went up the road beyond the camp site in Fred's ute (thanks Fred). When we came around one corner, there, on the road in front of us was a golden horse with blonde mane and tail, his beauty highlighted by the sunlight, a magnificent creature. Did you have time to notice how shiny the coats of the black cattle were? Like ebony.

I'd been to Carr's Lookout just beyond Queen Mary's Falls about a week before the outing and viewed Mt Superbus from there, and to see it from Bald Mountain on Saturday as well enriched that experience. Condamine Gorge with the afternoon light on it gave me something else to admire and remember.

Were it not for the Field Nats, I would have missed out on all this pleasure. Not only that, but I would have also missed out on the fun and laughter that seems to 'belong' to Nats outings, particularly campouts.

My thanks to you, Nats members, for the friendship and support you give to me, and to others in the club. To belong to such a group of friendly, supportive people means a tremendous amount to me, and I am sure to others. May I, while saying "Thank You", encourage you friendly people in the Stanthorpe Field Nats to 'keep on keeping on'? Desley McDonagh

NEXT MEETING - 23RD JUNE 1993

The programme at the meeting on the 23rd June will be "Early Stanthorpe District Days" presented by Jean Harslett. Some of these will be black and white slides. The meeting commences at 8.00 p.m. in the C.W.A. rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe.

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

Monday 28th June 1993

at the Little Theatre at 2.30 p.m.

John Bourne: Touring Europe

Gordon Davis: Thailand

All welcome - Admission free

Another U3A Presentation

The secret of happiness is not in doing what one likes, but in liking what one does.

James M. Barrie