



MAY 1995  
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# 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.

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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 THE CLUB FOR 1993-94**

President	Rob McCosker	83 5371
Vice-Presidents	Kris Carnell	83 5268
	Mary Walters	83 5306
Secretary	Margaret Carnell	83 5268
Treasurer	Roger Logan	81 2493
Newsletter Editor	Geoff Walker	81 2117
Newsletter Sub-Committee	Julie Beddow & Patience James	
Publicity Officer	Patience James	81 1853
Librarian	Trish McCosker	83 5371
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.

## **STATE FOREST CAMPING CODE**

Camping In State Forest Parks will be more enjoyable for you and other visitors if you observe this simple camping code.

- All plants and animals are protected - please don't disturb or damage them.
  - Keep your camp clean and tidy and respect your surroundings. At the end of your stay, make sure the site is tidy for those who follow.
  - Tables and fireplaces are for all to use - please don't monopolise them.
- Leave waterfront areas clear for everyone - pitch your tent well back from the creek bank.
- Light your fire only in the fireplaces provided. Use firewood sparingly.
- Be sure your fire is out before leaving.
- Avoid polluting creeks and lakes with soap, detergents or shampoo. Draw water in containers for washing purposes and dispose of used water well away from the stream.
  - Be aware of plants and creatures that might make your stay uncomfortable for example, leeches, ticks and nettle.
  - Don't leave clothing or footwear out on the ground overnight - biting insects, spiders or centipedes may crawl in. Always knock out your shoes before putting them on.
  - Take care when swimming in creeks and waterholes - before entering the water check for depth, snags or other obstructions.
  - If you go bushwalking, always let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
  - Camping is limited to two weeks. If you wish to stay for a longer period, please contact the local Forestry Office.

This code applies to most places where Nats. go on outings.

# OUTING REPORT 23/4/95

Forestry areas South-East of Tenterfield

A very pleasant autumn morning in Tenterfield saw the arrival of about ten well filled cars to begin our introductory outing to the State Forest areas south-east of the town. There was a distinctly international flavour to the gathering as one of our guests was Dirk Feldheim, an agricultural exchange student from (East) Germany and another was Shinichi Arai, a computer engineer who is in Tenterfield for the rest of this year participating in a Japanese language programme at the Primary and High Schools. Shinichi had been in Australia only a week and Frank James' knowledge of Japanese added greatly to his enjoyment of the day.

We also welcomed Mr Peter Grendan, formerly with the Forestry Commission in Tenterfield. Members found Peter an interesting and enlightening source of information and were soon discussing topics as diverse as tank traps and waste timbers. People soon got the message and stopped asking me first - it made for a more peaceful day (for me).

As outlined in the pre-outing report, we had five stops, but because of very dusty road conditions, we did not proceed beyond the site of the old Spirabo mill and so retraced our path to Tenterfield. The order of the stops was slightly rearranged because mutiny appeared imminent, prompted by rumbling stomachs so we went directly from Billirimba lookout to the old mill site (and site of future campout ?) for lunch. On the return journey we travelled down the Four Bull Road, but some cars omitted this side trip because of urgent commitments involving sheep, cows, rest or less dust.

I greatly enjoyed my first piece of organisation for the club and was delighted that people appeared to enjoy so much the environmental and social aspects of the trip - though if they hadn't been quite so social, we might have kept to the time table and they might have been allowed to have lunch before sunset!!

I still have a few sets of notes, which give more detail than this report. If you were not on the outing and would like to have a copy for your own excursion, please let me know. As you will see from this selection of member reactions, the stay had much to offer.

## *What struck their fancy:*

- the possibilities for further outings
- the extent, variety and richness of the forest
- the potential for exploration and botanising on some of the stony ridges
- the historical associations of some of the locations
- the photographic tree ferns and grass-trees and the view of the valley beyond
- the majesty of some of the forest trees, especially *E. deani*.
- the wonderful array of peeling bark, especially the striking cream and brown stripes on the round-leaved gum on Four Bull Road.
- the evidence of sugar glider activity on a silver-topped stringy bark
- extending the acquaintance with the eastern escarpment of the divide
- the orchids and ferns at the picnic area
- **Where are we now? Is this Lunch?**

Helen Hartman (067) 36 1423

**Minutes of Meeting of Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc. held in C.W.A  
Rooms, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 26th April 1995 at 8 p.m.**

**Opening:** President Rob McCosker opened the meeting and welcomed the guest speaker Bill Goebel.

**Attendance & Apologies;** as per attendance book.

**Minutes** of the previous meeting were accepted as a correct record on the motion of Frank Wilkinson, seconded Dianne Holley. Carried

**Correspondence:** The following inwards correspondence was received on the motion of Kris Carnell, seconded Frank Wilkinson. Carried.

Inwards. 1. Dept. of Sport Tourism & Racing - Newsletter March 1995;  
2. Directory of Aust. Associations - details current listing; 3. Bonnie Addison-Smith - subscription; 4. Toowoomba Field Naturalist Club - Newsletters March, April 1995; 5. Binna burra Lodge - details public seminar; 6. Qld Tourist & Travel Corporation - Newsletter March & Register of Associations; 7. Stanthorpe Camera Club - cheque for half share of P.O. box rental; 8. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - "Footprint" April 1995; 9 Dept. of Environment - "Biolinks"; Westpac Banking Corporation - Thank you for Clean-up Day; 11. Patience James - thank you card; 12. D.P.I. Forest Services - "Between the Leaves"; Chinchilla Field Nats - Newsletter.

Outwards 1. P. James - Get well card; 2. Round the Ridges - Outing details for April; 3 Community Billboard - Outing details April; 4. Binna Burra Lodge - Public Seminar.

**Finance;** As the treasurer was absent there was no financial report.

**Outing Report:** Kris Carnell read the outing report from Helen Hartman on a successful outing to the forests S.E. of Tenterfield.  
Patience James moved that letters of thanks be sent to Peter Overden, Bill Edwards and Mr & Mrs Ian Thompson. Seconded Tom Archer Carried.

**Pre-Outing Report:** Kris Carnell reported that the May outing on 21st will not be to Red Rock Gorge as planned, because the road is very rough, and difficult to walk on, and there are not enough 4 wheel drive vehicles available to drive in. Instead we will be going to Rhodes Falls, and Girard State Forest near Drake in northern New South Wales.  
Lincoln McPhee gave more information on the June camp-out to Minnie Waters.

**General Business:** It was suggested that the club purchase maps of adjoining areas for use on outings. The executive is to get details of prices and availability.

Brian McDonagh reported on a book at the Shire Library on N.E. dieback.

Members were reminded of the public seminar to be held by Binna Burra Lodge on Tuesday, 2nd May.

**Specimens:** Lincoln showed maps and pamphlets on Minnie Waters.

Lincoln produced a sample of beryl and mica from the Torrington area.

Tim Murray showed wool dyed with walnuts collect on the outing.

Desley McDonagh had photos of the outing to Bigriggen.

Frank Wilkinson showed two calendars produced by the Weather Bureau.

Jean Harslett had a Painted Quail which may have been killed buy a Currawong.

**Program:** Bill Goebel showed an excellent program of slides, mainly of Girraween National Park, taken when he was a ranger there.

**Vote of Thanks:** Jean Harslett moved a vote of thanks to Bill.

## **PRE-OUTING REPORT FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 1995**

Leaders : Kris & Margaret Carnell. Phone: (076) 835 268

The outing on May 21st will be to the Rhodes Falls, Macleods Creek Road in the Girard State Forest near Drake. We will leave Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel to the forestry picnic area, 40kms out of Tenterfield on the Casino Road. There will be a brief pick-up stop in Tenterfield at 9.45am at the same place as last month. After smoko and a look around at the picnic area we will travel through the forest to Macleod Creek. The falls are fairly close to the road and easy to get to.

After exploring the creek and lunch there are two options of time permits:

1. Walk down stream to Cattle Trap Falls, about half a kilometre below road crossing
2. Travel to Fire Tower - reportedly spectacular views but road rough.

On the return journey there are three possible routes:

1. back up the highway
2. via Boorook and Lindbrook Roads
3. back through the forestry to Timbarra Road.

If anyone is intending taking the last option please see Kris about the route.

## **BIRDS SEEN OF OUTING ON 23<sup>rd</sup> APRIL**

Black Swan	Wood Duck	Black Duck
Noisy Miner	Fire Tailed Finch	Welcome Swallow
Eastern Rosella	Pied Butcher Bird	Thornbill
Brown Goshawk or Falcon	Red Wattle Birds	Wrens
Kookaburra	Coot	Magpie
Nankeen Kestrel	Wedge-tailed Eagle	Crow
Crimson Rosella	Plover	Currawong
King Parrot	Grey Fantail	Willie Wagtail
Tree Creeper	Bell Bird (call)	Grey Shrike Thrush (call)

## **NEXT MEETING**

Programme for the next meeting of the Field Nats Club, to be held on the 24th of this month, is a presentation by David Wilson of Warwick on the Diamantina Lakes National Park.

## **UPCOMING ARTICLES**

Due to strong interest shown in various aspects of the Field Nats trip led by Helen Hartman to the forest areas South-east of Tenterfield, following publications of the magazine will, room permitting, feature stories on the history of certain areas seen on the trip as well as other possible trips that may be taken in the area.



# HISTORY OF SPIRABO MILL SITE

(This is the record of two interviews with Mr Bill Edwards whose father acquired the mill during the inter-war period; Bill worked in it as a young man during World War II.)

This mill was one of several in the area and there are probably many similarities, as well as those mentioned, in their history. It was first owned by Mr Mangelson who was evidently a man of some means, and certainly some ambition, as he built himself a fine house at the site. It had upwards of ten rooms and was built of timber milled on the site. Rosewood was used extensively in the interior.

After Mr Edwards acquired the mill, he owned at least six bullock teams (during the 30's) and had probably as many more on contract. These teams were used principally in forest to mill transport. Lorries for mill to railhead transport made their appearance in the thirties but were rare until the war. During the war, motor transport supplemented teams because timber supplies were much more urgently needed. Tractors made their appearance in the forest and at the mill in the early forties but teams also continued to be used for some years after that.

During the war, the mill was a dawn to dusk operation. The first assignment was the production of duck boards for tents in camps at Stony Creek (site of present mill on highway south of Tenterfield) and London Bridge (Mt Lindesay Rd - some remains can still be seen). The timber used was mostly stringy bark and blackbutt, but timber quality was less important than speed so the timber closest to the mill was used first.

After the camps were established, the major production was for rifle stocks and aircraft manufacture. The principal timber was coachwood. A piece 5' x 2' was required for one rifle. Because straight grain was essential in timber for aircraft, there was continual monitors of incoming timber. Suitable timber was set aside and dispatched when enough was stockpiled. There were large shipments of Jackwood to New Zealand. This was taken by road to the rail line at Sandy Flat.

During the war, there was generally a workforce of 10-12 men in the mill and 15 or more in the forest. Some of these were mill employees and some worked on contract, the latter being mostly owners of teams or machinery. Because the work was classified as essential, workers were not free to leave, but had to get permission from the Department of Employment if they wished to move.

During this time, about five families generally lived at the site. A teacher was employed and paid by contributors from families using the school. These families using the board for the teacher on a monthly rotation. Mill workers travelling to Tenterfield at weekends usually provided transport for the teacher as well. A similar education system operated at the Poverty Point Mill.

During the war years Mr. Edwards son managed the mill as well as being part owner, having disposed of a half share to Armstrong and Rand during the thirties.

Immediately after the war, the bulk of production, still softwood, went to Armidale area and was used for fruit cases. When cardboard began to replace wood for this, mill production switched to sleepers. The mill closed in the early fifties.