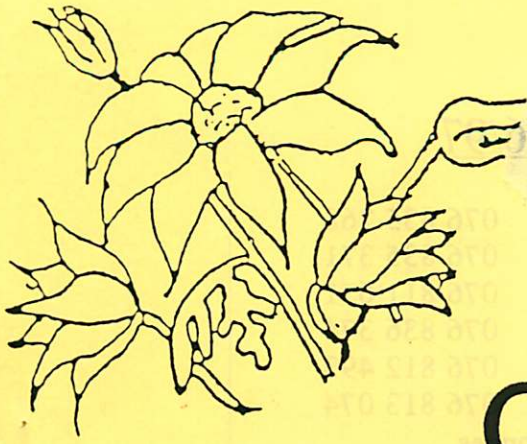


MARCH 1997

Vol 287



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.

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS 1996/97

President :	Kris Carnell	076 835 268
Vice-Presidents :	Rob McCosker	076 835 371
	Lincoln McPhee	076 811 651
Secretary :	Liz Bourne	076 836 374
Treasurer :	Roger Logan	076 812 493
Newsletter Editor :	Desley McDonagh	076 813 074
Magazine Committee :	Julie Beddow & Wendy Donges	
Publicity Officer :	Patience James	076 811 853
Librarian :	Trish McCosker	076 835 371
Management Committee :	President, Vice- Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer.	

ADDRESS CORRECTION NOTICE

Please check your address and advise of any change needed.

COMING UP

1. NEXT MEETING will be held on Wednesday, March 26th at the CWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe at 8.00 pm. Millie Marsden will be presenting a programme on the Northern Territory.

2. MARCH OUTING - CAMPOUT AT BOONOO BOONOO N.P. - at Cypress Rest Area. Led by Liz Bourne - Saturday 22 & Sunday 23 March. Further details inside.

PLEASE NOTE

1. DEADLINE DATE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER - Monday April 7th - early, but still the appropriate time before the outing to catch the mail for country members.

2. Please remember that, when the club is travelling as a convoy, (particularly in unfamiliar territory), each driver is expected to make sure that the next car is in their sight.

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.

CAMPOUT - BOONOO BOONOO NATIONAL PARK

22nd/23rd March

The 2692ha Boonoo Boonoo National Park lies just off the Mt Lindesay Highway about 22km north of Tenterfield. The main feature of the park, the Boonoo Boonoo River, flows north through undulating granite country until it reaches a spectacular set of falls which drop 210 metres to the gorge below. The vegetation of the park is predominantly open, eucalypt forest with an understorey of banksias, melaleucas, casuarinas and leptospermums. In the deeper, wetter gullies, rainforest can be found while on the exposed granite outcrops an extensive variety of heath plants occur.

To get to the park, head east from Stanthorpe along either Amosfield or Sugarloaf Roads until reaching the Mt Lindesay Highway where you turn south. The turnoff to the park is approximately 27km from the junction of the Amosfield Road and the Mt Lindesay Highway, shortly after the Highway crosses the Boonoo Boonoo River. The campsite for the outing will be the Cypress Rest Area located on the left beside the river, approximately 9km from where you leave the Highway. There are some good camping sites here amongst the trees with a few picnic tables and pit toilets provided. Bring your own firewood if you want a campfire at night so we don't denude the park of timber. The water in the river should be of reasonable quality but if you're worried about drinking it (it does flow through grazing land), perhaps bring your own.

Proposed Activities:

You may care to travel to the park on Friday night or drive over Saturday morning (it takes about 45 minutes from Stanthorpe). There is plenty to see and do in the park with excellent swimming in the river and lots of interesting plants and birds to observe. After setting up camp and having lunch on **Saturday**, it is proposed to leave the campsite about 2pm and travel by car a short distance eastwards within the adjoining Boonoo State Forest. We will then have a short walk of approximately 15 minutes through some open eucalypt forest and heath (Grade 5) to reach a flat granite outcrop with excellent views down over the eastern escarpment. The more energetic may care to walk back to the campsite from here as this will give you an opportunity to see more of the variety of vegetation.

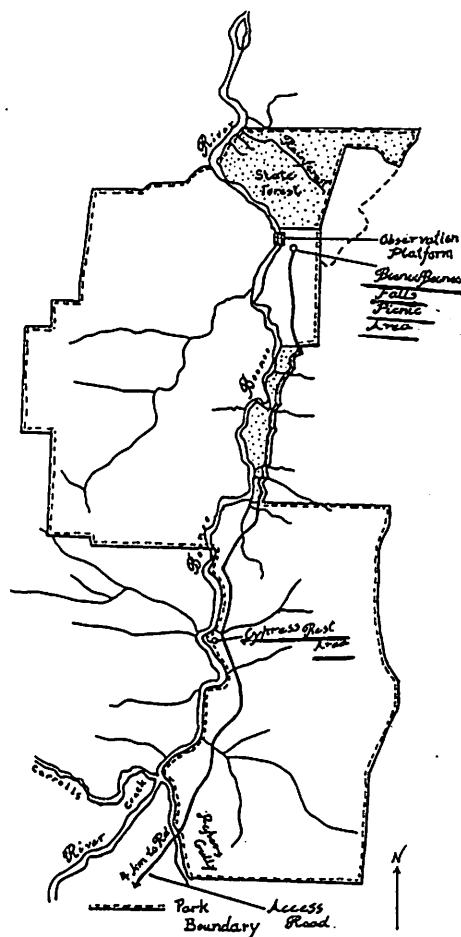
On **Sunday**, it is proposed to climb Mt Prentice, a 1078 metre high granite dome in the west of the park. We will leave the campsite at 9am and travel a short distance by car towards the Falls before leaving our cars and heading west across the river. Depending on how much rain has fallen, we may have to get our feet wet crossing the river. If there has been torrential rain, making this crossing unsafe, a point further upstream should allow us to get across the river but it will make for a longer trip to Mt Prentice. From the river, we should be able to comfortably get to the summit in 2 - 3 hours, including rest stops. Most of the vegetation is open eucalypt forest, although there are some limited sections of scratchy understorey shrubs. Getting closer to the summit, we will wind our way amongst granite boulders, bare slabs and heaths. On the top, there should be excellent views in all directions if the weather is fine. We will have lunch here and explore amongst the rocks and slabs before returning. I would rate the trip as a grade 8 although there are no excessively steep or dangerous sections.

I would suggest you carry at least 1 litre of water as it is quite a steady climb and it could be hot on top. We do cross a creek on the way that should have water in it.

For those of you who don't want to climb Mt Prentice, you could visit the Falls, swim in the river or have a look at the old gold mining sites around Morgan's Gully, just to the south of the campsite.

If you can't make it for the whole weekend, Boonoo Boonoo is close enough to Stanthorpe to just come over for the day. If you need a lift, please contact me and I'll see what I can arrange.

Liz Bourne
Ph 83 6374



. OUTING REPORT - WATERFALL CREEK FALLS .

23RD FEB 1997 ATTENDANCE 38

8.30am saw a convoy of cars and 4WDs leaving Weerona Park on what was going to be a warm day. Our club convoy procedure of always waiting for the vehicle behind you works well in the bush but it proved a problem in Sunday morning traffic. Our thoughts are that we could meet where we didn't have to convoy through town or re-group at a nominated point after establishing the number of participating vehicles.

We drove via Sugarloaf Rd to the Mt Lindesay Road then south to the Boonoo Forest turnoff.

Tenterfield members and friends joined the outing at the morning tea venue. Swamp plants in this area are always interesting and we had enjoyed many private visits in the course of preoutings for this trip.

A maze of forest roads led us along a ridge and over a few 'whoa-boys' which were modified by the lower cars. Stopping at a log dump, most of us chose to walk the 800m along a 4WD track to the waterfall viewing vantage point. Good rains a week beforehand ensured a strong water flow.

Some of us descended to the base of the falls while a few of us headed for the cool pools at the top of the falls.

Lunch at the vehicles, then a 1.30pm departure for more waterfalls and photography at Basket Swamp Creek. This area has been a popular one for Nats outings over the past couple of years. In many people's minds the falls on Basket Swamp Creek are amongst the best in the Border Granite Highlands.

A thank you to members and friends who come from as far as Tenterfield and Warwick to join the outings and meetings. The knowledge, expertise and friendship you bring to our club is really appreciated by many members.

Errol & Annette Walker.

The editor agrees wholeheartedly with the sentiments expressed in the last paragraph !

LEARNING FOR PLEASURE

The Learning for Pleasure group (LFP) continues to give pleasure to all its participants who meet once or twice a month in private homes. We have coffee, socialize and then learn or discuss the subject in question.

Last year we had only 3 study groups.

1. History. We thank Ailsa and Frank Wilkinson for making us feel very much at home in their sitting room with a fire roaring in winter. In the past we read then discussed such subjects in history as Ancient Egypt, the Phoenicians etc. On other occasions we viewed videos about the history of different civilizations, and recently about the origins of the Solar System.

2. Current Affairs. Again we are very grateful to Jean Chauvel for hosting us at her home and making us so welcome. This is a discussion group led by Mary Waters. The object is to discuss topics that are of significance in our lives, be they political, social or otherwise. Mary makes it more interesting by choosing a country, researching it and speaking about it. She follows that with an oral quiz. We then have a wide discussion exchanging our ideas and experiences.

3. French Conversation. In spite of difficult times, Jocelyn Bonner hosted this group in her home with pleasure. Many thanks to Jocelyn for her warm hospitality. This group now meets at Ailsa Wilkinson's home. Pat Whelan leads this group and makes learning French a lot of fun. It is elementary French, so don't be afraid of joining the group.

Other subjects 'studied' in the past were Biology, Music appreciation, Italian, Book repair, Experimental craft and Mah Jong.

This year there will be 2 other subjects.

4. Make up. Daniella Herremans is kind enough to offer to lead this group. She can provide the make up and demonstrate its application, or you can bring your own make up to Daniella's home 3 Minna Street, 812 472. Phone to arrange a convenient day for the group to meet.

5. Russian Conversation. This group is aimed at those who know some Russian and would like to practice it. Katerina who is of Russian origin has been good enough to accept leadership of this group. We are also fortunate in having Lena, a recently arrived Russian national, who will be glad to help.

We welcome new ideas and would invite anyone who is interested in starting a new group to do so.

The meetings at our homes are very warm social gatherings and we would like to continue in this way but space is a problem. Should the group increase in number we will eventually need a large and cosy room in which to meet. Suggestions are welcome. Nour Davis 836 294.

CONTACTS

History :	Ailsa & Frank Wilkinson	811 225
Current Affairs:	Mary Walters	835 306
French :	Pat Whelan	832 266
Make Up	Daniella Herremans	812 472
Russian	Katerina	852 480
Inquiries about LFP	Mary Walters	835 306

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MINUTES OF MEETING OF STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC.

held in Q.C.W.A. Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on 26th February, 1997.

Opening: The meeting opened at 8.07pm with President, Kris Carnell, welcoming members and visitors, including new members, Dulcie Robertson, Joce O'Reilly, Rose Gimm, Mel and Judith Jugensen and Lars Olaf Larsson.

Attendance: There were 43 present and 5 apologies as per the attendance book.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th November, 1996 were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Patience James, seconded by Margaret Carnell. Carried.

Correspondence:

Outwards: Notice of outing and meeting to *Round the Ridges* and *Community Billboard*.

Inwards:

1. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - *Footprint*, Dec 96, Jan 97, Feb 97
2. Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club - *Urimbirra*, Jan 97, Feb 97
3. Qld Naturalists Club - newsletter
4. Toowoomba Field Naturalists - newsletter
5. Reed Editions - information about new book on tree kangaroos
6. John Oxley Library - receipt of our newsletters
7. interNATIONAL PARKtours - offer to put information in newsletter or speak at meeting to advertise their trips
8. Binna Burra Mountain Lodge - information on their Ecology Week from 9 - 14 March.
9. R. Amos - membership renewal
10. Department of Environment - Annual Report
11. Matrix Office Systems - invoice for \$50 photocopying charges

This was received on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried.

Business Arising from the Correspondence:

1. interNATIONAL PARKtours

It was agreed to include information about their trips in the newsletter and to consider getting them to give a presentation to a meeting when the next year's program is being put together.

2. Ecology Week at Binna Burra

Leaflets advertising this week were distributed at the meeting.

Financial Statement for 27/11/96 to 26/2/97

In the absence of the Treasurer, Roger Logan, the statement was presented by Kris Carnell.

Balance as at 27/11/96 \$1129.97

Receipts:

Subscriptions	\$ 39.00
Room rent collection	\$ 13.50
Use of photocopier	\$ 14.00
Sub. carried forward from October	\$ 8.00
	<u>\$ 74.50</u>

\$1204.47

Expenditure:

Room rent	\$ 10.00
Magazine postage	\$ 30.65
Matrix Office Systems	\$100.00
Commercial Insurance	\$168.18
State Govt. tax - Dec	\$.60
- Jan	<u>\$ 1.00</u>
	<u>\$310.43</u>
	<u>(310.43)</u>
	<u>\$ 894.04</u>

Balance as at 26/2/97 is \$894.04

Accounts for payment:

Unbanked cash	\$14
QCWA - room rent	\$10

The financial statement was adopted on the motion of Kris Carnell, seconded by Patience James. Carried.

Outing Report:

Errol Walker reported on the trip he led to a waterfall on the eastern escarpment of Boonoo State Forest on 23rd February. 38 people attended and had a most enjoyable day. Millie Marsden reported that the club had last visited the area in 1973.

Next Outing:

Liz Bourne gave an outline of the proposed campout to Boonoo Boonoo National Park on the 22/23 March. It is proposed to camp beside the Boonoo Boonoo River at the Cypress Rest Area where there are basic camping facilities. There will be a short, easy walk on the Saturday afternoon out to a lookout on the eastern escarpment. On Sunday, there will be a walk to Mt Prentice, a granite dome in the western section of the park.

Next Meeting:

Millie Marsden will be speaking on the Northern Territory at the next meeting on 26 March.

Specimens:

1. Frank Wilkinson had figs and marigold plants to give away.
2. Errol Walker had a pair of walking boots to sell.
3. Frank James had an insect with bright orange markings.
4. Nor Davis had some bird nests - possibly finches?
5. Mario Pennisi had a box of animal skulls he was donating to the Stanthorpe Museum.
6. Karol Stica had a gum tree gall and a cocoon found on a wattle tree - identified by Jean Harslett as being that of a case moth.
7. Jean Harslett had had a letter from Jenny (?) concerning possible sightings of the nests of pebble mound mice in our district. She also had a branch of a tree eaten by Christmas beetles and a bottle containing 3 different types of March flies.

General Business:

An invitation was extended to join Desley McDonagh at her birthday celebrations on Saturday, 15 March at 8.30pm for supper at Jennifer and Russell Carnell's home at Back Creek Road, Severnlea.

Guest speaker:

Errol Walker gave a slide presentation of his trip around Tasmania including visits to various national parks, historical sites and other scenic attractions.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm.

MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club is fortunate that its members have a wide range of interests which means considerable scope for material for slide presentations at its monthly meetings. However, although the subject matter is always very good, its full value is sometimes not fully received as the presentation at times could be improved with a little thought and effort paying dividends. The following suggestions may be of assistance :-

1. Preparation. If twenty to thirty people are prepared to give up a night for this purpose, surely the presenter could spend some time and effort in preparing his or her programme.
2. Time. An hour is sufficient to keep your audience engrossed. This includes the talk plus question time. Longer than this can cause attentions to waver. Isn't it better to round off the night when the audience is looking for more rather than waiting for the talk to finish?
3. Slide numbers. Sixty to eighty with pertinent comments are usually enough.
4. Slide quality. Even the best photographers take poor slides at times. Keep them at home and do not burden the audience with poor, repetitive or out of focus slides. This means that all slides on your topic should be vetted at a rehearsal before they are presented to your audience.

A little prior effort by presenters would minimize these faults and assist in improving their image, the standard of the night's entertainment and the general status of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalists.

Brian Dodd.

DID YOU KNOW? from Gordon Davis

1. Most of the so-called "new" lands of our region such as New Zealand, New Caledonia, New Holland, are actually far older than their "old" name sakes.
2. It is estimated that there are over 25000 plant species native to Australia but only 18000 have been described and named.
3. Basic agricultural practices were developed in the highland valleys of New Guinea about 9000 years ago. Agriculture began in England about 5000 years ago.
4. Between 100000 and 40000 years ago 50 species of large herbivorous marsupial mammals (some weighing up to 2 tonnes) were made extinct. Human beings ate them.
5. The "English parkland" scenery described by early European explorers in Australia was created by Aboriginal "fire stick farming." The development of open scherophyl (fire tolerant) grassland at the expense of rainforest and dense bush facilitated hunting by humans.
6. In 1847 it was estimated that timbercutters would take 500 years to "clear" the NSW Big Scrub. By 1900 it was all gone.

If you already knew these things but would like to know a lot more about how this country came to be the way it is, and what it might be in future, please read Dr Tim Flannery's book "The Future Eaters". Dr Flannery works at the Australian Museum and his 1994 book is subtitled "An ecological history of the Australasian lands and people". It is a magnificent book covering the emergence of Australia from Gondwana 100 million years ago and the development of the continent's plant, animal and human communities over 40 million years of isolation.

Every one of its 31 chapters is a mine of information, the writing is entertaining and succinct. It's a book that should be required reading for all Australians.

INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS from the Editor

BIRDS : I was with friends out in the Perserverance Dam area recently and we noticed some fairy wrens. The interesting thing was that there was a family of redbacked wrens and one of variegated wrens in the same area. We noticed one male of each species as well as female and (probably) immature male wrens. Is this unusual? I am sure that I've never observed anything like that before.

PLANTS : We experimented with some seeds of *Acacia Pubifolia* (Wyberba wattle) recently. All were planted in potting mix with sand on top of them. Some were planted as they were, some were rubbed on sandpaper before being planted and some had a little fire built on top of them. All three pots were put in plastic bags and made into little hot houses. The most successful germination was of the seeds planted naturally and the least those under the fire. The small plants are certainly not all surviving, but I do hope to get a few to grow so that I can replace the tree in my yard that is 'past its use by date'.