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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST  
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF  
THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB P.O. Box 154  
Stanthorpe, Q., 4380.

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE 1975/1976

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Mr. John Stevenson  
Mr. R. McCosker  
Mrs. Jean Harslett  
Mr. Errol Walker

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ACTIVITIES

MEETINGS - 4th Wednesday of each Month in C.W.A. Rooms at 8 p.m.

OUTINGS - Each Sunday preceeding the 4th Wednesday.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Single - \$1.50

Family - \$2.00

PROGRAMME

FIELD OUTING - April 25th, 1976 -

Place - Donnelly's Castle & Jolly's Falls - Leader - Tom Archer

This is to be a  $\frac{1}{2}$  day outing as it is Anzac Day.

Meet at Weeroona Park at 1 p.m. and going to Donnelly's Castle first.

Those wishing to have lunch out of town we will meet you at Donnelly's Castle.

May Field Outing - To Tenterfield Area - Leader Philip Ingram

June Field Outing - Goldmines - Dalveen Warwick Area - Noel Butler Leader.

July - CAMPOUT to Dalby - Lake Broadwater.

NEXT MEETING -

Wednesday, April 28, 1976 - in the C.W.A. Rooms 8 p.m.

Guest Speaker - Dr. T.H. Kirkpatrick of Hermitage Research Station

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MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING -

March 24, 1976.

Present 21 - Apologies 6.

The President welcomed all present.



April, 1976

MINUTES CONTINUED -

Minutes - That the minutes as published in the Newsletter be accepted was moved by E. Walker and seconded by F. Wilkinson. CARRIED.

Correspondence - Outward correspondence was sent to:-

Adult Education returns  
C.S. Burton  
Adult Education re speakers fee.  
Dr. Kirkpatrick  
Pierpoint & Sons  
Central Motors  
4 QS

Inward was received from:-  
Adult Education  
National Library of Australia  
Warwick Walker (Feb.)  
Q'ld. Nats No. 82  
Australian Conservation  
Mail Box Account

Moved by Mrs. Harslett and seconded by D. Pfrunder that the Inward be accepted and the outward endorsed. CARRIED

Financial - Mrs. D. Archer moved and Mrs. F. Wilkinson seconded that the credit balance of \$84.93 be received and A/cs for P.O. Box \$15.00, Lees \$7.95, Postage \$5.43 be passed for payment. CARRIED

Outing Report - Errol Walker reported on the Saturday Section of the Campout to Girraween. There were 10 campers and 3 day visitors who started off in doubtful weather with a short walk to Junction in anticipation of weather improvement. Early lunch and then 11 members ventured into the hills behind the Pyramids to the Rock faces in that area. While on exposed area heavy rain dampened the party but this was forgotten by watching the mist rising and falling on the Pyramids and surrounding areas. In the evening members were entertained by Park Ranger Paul Grimshaw and Bill Goebel who shows slides of most aspects of life of the park. On the Sunday we were very pleased to see some of these "passed over" specimens of orchids etc. which were brought to our notice that evening.

Robin McCosker reported Sundays outing which was undertaken by 8 members. We followed the Junction track for a distance and then branched north to a ridge then into a gorge and up the next ridge to the Cathedral Rocks. We found many orchids on the way - some quite out of season. Return was by the Pyramid base.

Other members stayed at "base" and went on further walks to the junction and noticed the difference in the water level of the creek after the torrential rain of the Sat. Night.

For this campout we were delighted to have the company of Mrs. Ena McCullough from Brisbane who is a member of the Q'ld. Nats Club. We will be looking forward to having her company on our next campout and/or outing she can attend.

That a letter of thanks be sent to Paul & Bill for their most informative and interesting slide show was moved by E. Walker and seconded by T. Archer. CARRIED.



April 1976.

MINUTES CONTINUED -

Next Outing - As Anzac Day, April 25th, is our next outing we propose to make it a half day one leaving the Park at 1 p.m. for Donnelly's Castle and Jolly's Falls. Members desirous of having lunch out of town will be met at Donnelly's Castle.

Guest Speaker - Next meeting is on April 28 when we are looking forward to a visit from Dr. T.H. Kirkpatrick of Hermitage Research Station via Warwick. Dr. Kirkpatrick is to be congratulated on his recent appointment as Chief Research Officer of the National Wildlife for Q'ld.

Business - Thanks were extended to members who set up the Club Display in Central Motors window for the Apple & Grape Festival. There was a tree with the club ideals and with numerous specimens of Moths and rocks to offset the tree.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9 p.m. Members then spoke on the specimens they brought to the meeting and this proved most interesting.

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CAMPOUT REPORT - GIRRAWEE NATIONAL PARK - March 20th & 21st, 1976.

Errol Walker's caravan was first to arrive at Girrawee National Park, at 6.30 p.m. on Friday. He was welcomed by Paul Grimshaw, the Ranger, who suggested the area for the Club to camp. Within two hours other campers arrived, Mrs. Jean Harslett and the Archers and there was much discussion about who decided that this was voting weekend. A fourth camper we were to meet in the morning, Mrs. E. McCulloch of the Q'ld Nats. Club, also arrived on Friday night, all the way from Brisbane.

The weather was pleasant but during the night rain developed and the following morning when the rest of the campers arrived it was fairly pouring down. 10.30 a.m. saw the decision to don rain coats and make the leisurely walk to the Junction while the weather made up its mind. The light rain, as it now was, enhanced the walk as the moisture laden tea tree bowed heavily and glistened as did the Gum trees with the water magnifying trunk colours where old bark had peeled off. Diamond headed slugs attracted attention after a closer examination of the tree trunks. Half way to the Junction several members were interested in an unusual circular hole in the granite resembling a wash basin where stones had been washed in endless circles to form this perfect example of natural carving. Black Mountain Trout were attracted to meat on a string and to the delight of all present quite a few were landed in this way only to be handed back to the "Bald Rock Creek" after a quick inspection. The sun was starting to come out at 11.30 a.m. so the party returned to the camp where after an early lunch most of them headed off in two cars to Hock Goebel's property from where good access was available to the high ridge north-east of the Pyramids. Heavy rain storms were seen approaching and very soon the party was split in two with each finding shelter under rocks to a varying degree of success. One party even managed to get a billy boiling during the down pour much to the dismay of smoke sensitive eyes. As one of the party put it, "A once in a lifetime view" when the mists started rising around the Pyramids. The granite was wet but not dangerous as the high slopes were explored. A wonderful fault line or 'volcanic Dyke' was inspected at the summit of the ridge and the delightful granite



April 1976.

CAMPOUT REPORTS CONTINUED -

gardens containing many different species of wildflowers and shrubs held attention for quite awhile. Not many flowers were evident, but many of the plants were identified and noted for a future visit. With the rain holding off the party made its way back down the ridge. This was uneventful except for Mrs. McCulloch of Brisbane taking a bad fall near the end of the walk. She was not seriously hurt and was able to take part in the rest of the days activities which consisted of a most interesting evening of coloured slides of the National Park & surrounding area. These were from a collection made by Mr. Paul Grimshaw and Mr. Bill Goebel over many years. It thundered and rained all through this programme and water had run through the camp while the slides were being shown. This did not dampen the enthusiasm of those who braved the campout conditions for the day had been rewarding in so many other ways.

Robin McCosker continues our campout report with Sunday's activities.

Sunday dawned with the promise of a fine day, and the early risers set about preparing the breakfast fires, after a quick look at Bald Rock Creek, swollen and running at quite a torrent over its rocky course. Later, as we set off on our walk we saw several people taking advantage of this extra flow of water, riding the cascades on their inflatable mattresses. Our eight intrepid hikers set off at about 9 o'clock, a little later than scheduled, to allow the sun to clear the morning fog and dry out the thick undergrowth a little. We went down the Junction Track and turned off just past the 1/2 mile post, to climb the gentle ridge to the north. From a vantage point we could see the main features of the Park to the South and East, and our objective 'Cathedral Rock' to the north. After a pause to view the scenery, and photograph an interesting rock formation, we set off again down the steep and much dryer northern slopes of the ridge. The small creek at the bottom, hidden by dense vegetation, was running quite strongly, and provided a refreshing pause before the steep climb ahead. We finally reached Cathedral Rock at about 1 o'clock, and had our lunch at the base of its massive towers, with a splendid view of the park.

Our return journey took a different direction, to the southeast, to cross a saddle in the ridge behind the Pyramids. From here we turned southwest, then crossed the creek behind the Pyramids and clambered around the rugged skirt of the first Pyramid to the graded track and an easy walk back to camp.

We were greeted by our President who very thoughtfully gave a vote of thanks to those responsible for what turned out to be a most enjoyable weekend, in spite of the weather. Unfortunately Noel could not join in because of his farming activities, and we also missed the company of Paul Grimshaw and Bill Goebel, who were taking part in a Mountain Rescue exercise. The Mountain Rescue Team provided those who stayed at the camp with quite a spectacle as they lowered a "casualty" down a sheer slope at the first Pyramid and transported him all the way back in a stretcher, much to the dismay of those who were unaware that it was only a training exercise.

Ed Note - Jean Harslett provided me with the following information on some of the flora seen on the Sunday outing.

- Acacia hispidula - one of the few that flower at this time of the year. It has a pale cream ball with a pink centre. It has very stiff hairs on the leaf - hence the meaning of hispidula - - - leaf rigid.
- Dipodium punctatum - late flowering Hyacinth orchids in extremely spotted forms.



Flora notes continued -

*Acianthus excitus* - numbers of the mosquito orchids.

*Thiloglottis reflexa* - ant orchid

*Pterostylis revoluta* - handsome Autumn green hoods also only autumn flowering.

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Just an added note from 'one who stayed near camp' - I had the good luck to see the Mountain Rescue Exercise through the glasses as they reached their 'casualty' and lowered him from the top of the Pyramid down the steep slope. It was quite breathtaking to watch and how good to know that there are people in our district willing to be trained in this work - just in case they might be needed. A bus load of folk from Brisbane didn't know it was just an exercise and when the 'casualty' arrived back in camp they were quite disturbed until we assured them it was just a 'practise run'.

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MOLE RIVER ARSENIC WORKS contributed by Frank Wilkinson.

A planned Club outing to Jibbenbar Arsenic Mine (which was abandoned because of the wet weather) called to mind the Mole River Arsenic Works where I spent some weeks in the early thirties. I went there to build a gas producer, a brick structure about 6 feet square and about 16 feet high. Later my mate arrived and we did considerable repairs to the furnace nearby.

The gas was conveyed from the Producer to the Furnace by means of a pipeline of welded 44 gallon drums, first having the tops and bottoms removed.

The furnace resembled a very large bakers oven. Over the arched crown was an arrangement of gear wheels and shafting which were connected to vertical shafts which penetrated the crown had "paddles" at their lower ends and rotated in such a way as to move the ore slowly from one end of the furnace to the other. The ore was mined nearby, crushed to about 2" diameter and screened with an ear shattering noise in a contraption which shook and shuddered and cast dust everywhere. As the ore passed through the furnace it gave off fumes which were led into a tunnel. This was a concrete structure, a great long thing about five or six feet wide if I remember rightly, a floor about 3 ft. above ground level and the top was 3 or 4 ft. above the floor. This tunnel terminated in a large chimney stack, the fumes from which had killed the grass and trees for a considerable distance around.

The tunnel had a large number of baffles causing the fumes to zig zag when journeying to the stack. At each baffle was a door and a projecting apron. A tramway was laid on both sides of the tunnel and carried skips, which were progressively positioned under the aprons, the doors opened and the precipitated arsenic powder which had formed in heaps at each baffle was scraped into the skips.

A cut down old Colonial Boiler was in use when I was there in which arsenic and Sulphuric Acid was boiled, the mixture kept stirred until it formed into pellets, these were put into heavy gauge tins and soldered. This was Arsenic Pentoxide, a sure killer of Prickly Pear, a knife cut in the stem of the pear plant and the insertion of a pellet or two caused its demise, but I think Cactoblastis had already started its clean-up campaign.

An American Chemical Engineer, O.C. Roberts, was the Boss man, he drove a powerful Willys Knight Single seater car (rumour had it that it had a Rolls Royce Engine) and was killed one day while travelling between the Mole and Tenterfield.



Frank continues -

as also were two passengers, one being the person who carried me to the Mole in the first place in his truck. There was a bit of electricity in the camp, the wires passed over the tent where I was camped and they put a light in for me, the only tent having one! The generator was driven by an ancient diesel tractor, a ritual for starting was to warm it up first with a blow-lamp, a time consuming job. A "Ranch" provided meals at \$2.25 (22/6<sup>p</sup>) per week, huge plainly cooked helpings at each sitting, and the smallest man in camp ate the most, where he put it all was a mystery. The men were obliged to keep themselves well washed and showered - the arsenic penetrated clothing and caused rashes of pimples, which caused a lot of discomfort to say the least. It got under fingernails, causing the nails to curl, the flesh to fester. These rough tough characters used to wear Milanese bloomers with elastic at the top and at each leg!

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### Embedding Specimens in Clear Plastic Blocks

"The process described here enables specimens to be embedded in clear plastic blocks, thus allowing good visibility, even with the use of a microscope, while the specimen is protected from damage. Delicate specimens can be handled in comparative safety in embeddings that will last indefinitely." The above is part of the introduction to "Embedding Insects and other specimens in Clear Plastic" by M.S. Moulds, who incidentally is a member of our club. This small book, printed by Australian Entomological Press gives a wealth of information on embedding many things including Beetles, Butterflies, Larvae & Pupae, Reptiles, Frogs, Crabs, Shells, Coins, Birds, Fish, Flowers etc. The reader is given General Hints, Preparation of Wet and Dry Specimens; Labelling Making of Moulds, Polishing of completed Blocks, Tables of Temperatures, Hardener/Resin Ratios etc., illustrated with a number of photographs and some drawings. The Index at the back should prove helpful, as also the Bibliography for those who may need to delve further. A Publication to be recommended, the price is \$2.00 per copy plus 30c postage. Copies may be purchased from Australian Entomological Press, 14 Chisholm Street, Greenwich, N.S.W. 2065

(contributed by Frank Wilkinson)

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### MAKE A RAINBOW

If your world looks gloomy and you're feeling grim and glum  
Make a rainbow for yourself, don't wait for one to come.  
Don't sit watching at the window for the clouds to part.  
There'll soon be a rainbow if you start one in your heart.

Take some lovely thought out of a poem or a prayer.  
Turn it over in your mind and let it linger there.  
Keep out every memory that dims the light within ---  
And hold on to the magic word that lets the brightness in.

Work your own small miracle and make the dull days glow.  
Put some sunshine into life and let the glory show.  
Make a rainbow for yourself with colours brave and gay ---  
And underneath its golden arch your cares will fade away.

From "Light for Today" by Patience Strong.  
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DON'T FORGET THE JULY CAMPOUT TO DALBY - LAKE BROADWATER - MORE ON THIS LATER!!!