

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST CLUB.
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB.

P.O.BOX. 154.

STANTHORPE. QLD. 4380.

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MEETINGS 4th. WEDNESDAY of each MONTH at the C.W.A. ROOMS.

AT 8p.m.

OUTINGS Each SUNDAY PRECEDING the FOURTH WEDNESDAY.

SINGLE. \$2.00. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS. FAMILY. \$3.00.

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.

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MAY 1978MAY OUTING. Bald Rock Creek Walk.DATE. 21st.May. Departure WEEROONA PARK 9.30 am (Sharp).LEADER. Mr.Robin McCosker..assisted by Mr.Brian McDonagh.MAY OUTING..... BALD ROCK CREEK.

Bald Rock Creek is the major watercourse draining the Girraween National Park area. Its headwaters are the typical swampy gullies of the western fall of the ranges around Bald Rock and South Bald Rock. Named tributaries include Racecourse and Paling Yard Creeks, which start in the Bald Rock and South Bald Rock area, Pyramid Creek rising to the north of the Park, Ramsey's Creek which starts north of Wallangarra and Doctor's Creek which commences in the high region between Eukey and Ballandean.

Our outing for those of us who feel up to it, will be a walk down Bald Rock Creek from the junction of Ramsay Creek with Bald Rock Creek, known officially as "The Junction", to the junction of Doctor's Creek which is on Mr. Brian Mc. Donagh's property at Lyra. This winding torturous course is interspersed with small waterfalls, noisy cascades and large placid pools. In places the stream disappears completely under eroded rock falls. This walk will require a fair amount of rock hopping and 'leg stretching' so those people who are not quite so energetic can drive to Brian Mc. Donagh's property and walk upstream, under Brian's guidance, to meet the other party for lunch.

I anticipate a 9.30 a.m. start from Weeroona Park, and to travel via Storm King Dam and Eukey to Wyberba and to stop at the "Junction" picnic area. The energetic walkers will set off from here, while the remainder will arrange their transport, or more particularly the walkers transport, because there will not be sufficient time to walk to and from, suggested areas. Some cars may have to be left at Wyberba end, with drivers taxied back to pick them up after the walk. I am sure that if all concerned know what is involved arrangements can be made prior to the outing. Late comers or those only wishing to go to the other end could proceed south along the highway south through Ballandean and immediately prior to crossing Accommodation Creek turn left cross under the railway bridge and shortly afterwards take the righthand side of the "Y" in the road and follow this to the end and Mc. Donagh's home. The creek will be parallel on your right most of the way. If at all in doubt please contact me. Remember ...stout shoes are required for rock-hopping and lunch will be carried to have with the joint lunch break.

Robin Mc.Cosker

Severnlea.

Phone 835217.

May Programme. Fri. 26th MayC.W.A. Rooms.

(FRI DAY 26th. May)

Speaker. Mr. David Hockings.Subject. The Tropical North'. Members who will remember

Mr. David Hockings when resident here, will be assured of an excellent programme.

HAVE YOU NOTICED MEETING AND SPEAKER FRIDAY 26 th.MAY.??PLEASE NOTE.

MINUTES of the MONTHLY MEETING held WEDNESDAY 26th. APRIL 1978.

Present 15, Apologies 1. Due to the absence of the President, Vice-President Colin Hockings welcomed all present.

Minutes. Moved Ian Jackson, seconded Joan Stevenson that the minutes as per April magazine be taken as read..... Carried.

Correspondence Inward. Received from Nat. Park & Wildlife Ser. 6 Press statements, & Annual report 1976-77, Information leaflets on Lamington, Carnarvon Ra, Bunya Mts. & D'Aguilar National Parks. Hunter Publications (Billions more to Feed) Mr. D. Veron, Mr. F. D. Hockings, Minister for Culture Nat. Parks & Recreation (Desert foxes as guides to Army) Magazines: Down Nat. Apr. Warwick Walker Mar. Outward. Mr. Christopher Cameron, Min. for Lands, Forestry, National Parks & Wildlife Ser. Mr. J. Corbett M.P. Mrs. Wiseman and 4 Qs. Moved by J. Harslett, seconded by Dore Mc. Cosker that the inward be adopted & the outward endorsed..... Carried.

Financial Report. Mar. 22nd. Bank Bal. \$90.57, Cash on hand \$2.60, total \$93.17. Receipts Mar. 22nd. E. Verri Sub 2.00, Room Col. \$3.75 -- \$5.75. Total \$98.92. Debits. C.W.A. \$4.00, Postage Apr. Mag. \$5.43, P.O. Box rental \$15.00. Accounts passed for payment total \$24.76. Bank Bal \$74.16.

OUTING REPORT. Mr. Don Lightfoot gave a brief account of the very interesting outing to Pikedale. A more detailed was to be sent to the Editor

NEXT OUTING. Bald Rock Creek, Sunday 21st. May. Leader Mr. R. Mc. Cosker.

NEXT MEETING. Guest speaker Mr. David Hockings, slide programme on "The Tropical North" PLEASE NOTE FRIDAY 26th. May (not Wednesday)

GENERAL BUSINESS. Moved by Dot Archer & seconded by Dore Mc. Cosker that as requested by the guest speaker, the meeting night be changed to 26th. May..... Carried.

Moved J. Harslett and seconded Don Lightfoot, the club purchase the publication recommended, "Millions more to Feed"..... Carried.

Jean Harslett expressed thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Cathcart, who so willingly at short notice, stapled, addressed and posted the April Magazine. She also moved that a box of stencil papers for publication of the Magazine & purchased be passed for payment, seconded Ian Jackson.. Carried. On behalf of the President Tom Archer (absent) and those members who attended the Pikedale outing, Jean Harslett expressed thanks to Don Lightfoot, who was once a member of staff of Pikedale, for the interest and sincerity with which he led the outing. Thanks was returned to Jean for her research on the history of the area.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45 p.m. to be followed by a most interesting & well illustrated programme entitled "Outback Trip" presented by Mr. Ian Jackson. Hon. Sec. Janet Hockings

CAMP JUNE WEEKEND, DALRYMPLE CREEK. JUNE 3rd. to 5th. 1978.

DIRECTIONS. Take the road via Warwick to Cunningham's Gap turn-off. Then 9.1 km. along the Toowoomba road, turn RIGHT onto bitumen road sign-posted "GOOMBURRA". At 10 km intersection with little wooden church on right, take bitumen road signposted "INVERAMSALE" 13. Keep on this bitumen road and pass WANDAVALE STUD on right, 16 km from intersection. Continue on gravel road across two grids, through three gates (carefully closing them afterwards of course.) and two stony creek crossings. The landholder Ian Gordon, owns the house on the left just past the 2nd. gate. Camp on left just before reaching the blue Forestry huts & the 3rd. creek crossing. The area is open eucalypt country & dry sclerophyll across the creek with some rain-forest. Two forestry roads lead up into the area, providing ample interest. Dalrymple Creek is pretty, running and stony bedded. Rain before the outing may occasion a problem re- creek crossings and a patch of black soil. All members intending to go therefore must notify the President. Mr. Tom Archer (Ph. 3111) DOGS PLEASE.

A list of the plants in the garden at the old and historic property is furnished with some notes by Mrs.Dore Mc.Cosker.

Pikedale with its 3 acres of garden ,parkland,deer park and aviary area still shows signs of passed glory even though the homestead was lost in 1963.

Many of the plants struggling bravely on,bear witness to the beauty of the gardens of the gardens surrounding the "Pikedale" homestead,and when tended and cared for must have given pleasure to all who were priveleged to live or visit there.

The driveway approaching the homestead passes through an avenue of osage orange trees (*Maclura aurantiaca*) It is the only species in the genus,but not far removed from a Mulberry family. The trees are deciduous ,dense and prickly and good for high hedge purposes. In this way they were used a good deal on the early established properties in Australia, thus you see them growing on 'Pikedale'and 'Maryland'here. As a single specimen it has a pleasing pyramidal shape and most interesting large orange shaped fruit of chartreuse green,and densely pitted exterior.The fruit is not edible.The yellow flexible timber was sought after by American Indians for bow making and from this it gets its name from the Osage tribe of Indians who originally came from the Osage River area where this tree is also at home. Intermingled on the drive were also pepperinas which were amongst the hardiest and most popular trees planted by the early settlers.

Single or specimen plantings included, Crepe Myrtle(*Lagerstromia*) Holly,various palms, Tamarix,Deodar,Cedar, Pomegranate (large and dwarf species) various Firs, Cotoneasters and Crataegus species.

Creepers around the tennis court and numerous trellises were ornamental grape vines,wistaria,Virginia creeper, Bignonia,Tecoma and scented Jasmine. While Hawthorns,Pyrocanthas, Broom,Elms,Poplars and others planted in groups or hedges would have provided colour throughout the year.

Stone fruits and citrus trees provided fresh fruit.Some plum trees were experiencing a false spring after recent rains broke the summer drought.They sported quite a crop of fruit and flowers. Similarly a pomegranite was in full bloom and sprays of flowers could be seen on many others,which simplified identification. Hardy bulbs have survived and one species was sporting numerous dainty sweet scented flowers,growing through the natural grass of the lawns. The whole area was terraced and the use of iron bark for edging garden beds and arches was noted. Indeed,looked at in awe for its careful selection,perfectly fitting the situation. One can only picture now the time involved in going out and making these selections.

Thank you Dore for these notes. Dore also proved her mechanical prowess, by doing her own 'repairs' after some solmen pronouncements had been made,and various people had lain under the car to listen to what appeared to be a repetitive and serious mechanical noise. What is the latest radio report Dore ? !!!

THANKS. Owing to the tremendous amount of work entailed with tabulating of slides entered in the S.E.Q.Salon,and the fact that entry closing coincided with the publishing of the bulletin, Mrs. Aileen McAllister was relieved of the job of stapling and wrapping and posting. Everything was dropped in the laps of Wally and Ness

Cathcart and in their ever pleasant, willing and gracious manner they accepted the job, without even raising an eyelid. Thank to you both.

MEETING PROGRAMME. Member Ian Jackson is to be complimented on the excellent programme he delivered to the club, depicting a trip to the Barossa Valley Flinders Ranges, Central Australia, Darwin and home through Queensland to Stanthorpe. The slides were of excellent clarity and artistic quality. The commentary very interesting with special accent on features of interest to naturalist club members, complete with a well chosen musical background. For various reasons a good many members were missing and I feel sorry that they missed the programme. Those who were present wish to thank you most heartily for a job well done Ian. In the absence of our president Tom Archer, vice-president Colin Hockings kindly took the meeting and also moved a brief vote of thanks to our guest speaker. Perhaps after seeing the programme we will appreciate why Ian received a couple of 'Acceptances' in the recent Salon.

ODDS and ENDS. Congratulations are in order to Naturalist club members who were successful in the recent Salon of Photography held in Stanthorpe, and it is interesting to note that the successful competitors from Stanthorpe are almost exclusively members of this club. It would be nice to feel that perhaps this club has provided inspiration and subject matter in this sphere of activity. If my figures are correct ten or eleven of the thirteen successful competitors are members.

The 'new -look ' magazine, well not very new look, but a few changes are made to expedientially do typing and copying, and reduce cost slightly by not using a new stencil for every month for the first page, which is always basically the same. Included on the first page are the club aims, which are worthy of thinking about more frequently. I believe there are members who would not be aware of what are the club 'Aims'. For the issue number, date (an obligation for postal rates) and next outing and meeting notices you will have to turn over, please.

April Outing to Pikedale Station Don Lightfoot as leader provided us with an excellent outing for April. His careful planning and effort for detail was greatly appreciated and this is what really made the outing such a splendid success. The mood of the past and in particular the past glory of the homestead, parklands and property, which is so much of our history and heritage, was really brought to life for us by Don. It was a splendid example of the bonus members can have by having a leader well versed in the specific aspects, and who is able also to provide an 'Open Sesame' for us, which is not always available. Don some years ago worked for a lengthy period on Pikedale, hence has a good running knowledge of the area, and a great respect for what has been achieved.. It is a far cry from the days when, "The drone of corroborees, the jabbering of Chinese and the clang of fossickers shovels, resounding above the baaing of sheep and the slow creaking of bullock waggons, all formed a background to Pikedale Stanthorpe, which was basically founded on the 'trap' rock of the Granite Belt. Yet somehow as Don showed us old maps of Pikedale in its original size and glory, and we read the old paddock names or

Pikedale Cont. had our heads turned in the direction of old bullock waggon routes, much came to mind, and we felt part of it all. We were shown the 'old and the new' in shearing sheds. The new with some of the latest facilities and where expense did not have to be spared, the old where its spaciousness had rung to the sound of large gangs of shearers, the hiss of steam engines, and the ingenious invention of the late Mr. John Rogerson for lifting bales of wool on to the teamsters loads. The out buildings still holding many of the tools of trade from earliest days of horse travel to cars of top prestige, told most significant stories

Jean Harslett.

Don Lightfoot's report on the Pikedale Outing.

Twenty-seven people made the trip in 9 cars, the first stop was a high hill in the Five-Mile paddock on the eastern boundary of 'Pikedale', so named because it was five miles from the homestead. From the summit one could see for miles south to Ballandean hills and much of Pikedale. Just below is South Pikedale homestead occupied by the present manager. The party drove down the hill to the woolshed. One lass hoped to see a sheep shorn and another said the shed was large enough for a dance. The shed was built in 1951, complete with yards, shower-dip electric light and septic. The shearers quarters were brought in from the west to complete the complex. There are 8 stands and accommodation for twenty odd. Next stop was the old shed 100 years old. At one time 100,000 sheep passed through the shed a year. Then the shearing was done with blade shears and there were 16 stands, requiring about forty men, to keep full flow going. Later overhead gear came into use thus doing away with blade shearing. It was powered by steam engine, power also driving the loading gear for bales of wool. This loading system consisted of a sturdy platform about 15ft. high, with a ramp leading up to it. The bales were pulled up the ramp by way of a series of pullies and wire ropes. Once on the platform it was quite easy to roll the bales over the side, on to the horse-drawn waggons below. These were then taken to the railhead at Stanthorpe and Adam Bott's name is recalled in this sphere.

We didn't have a hay ride, but a hay walk was staged in the old wool room, which now houses hay. By this time all were getting a bit hungry so we drove up the once beautiful drive towards the old homestead site and down to the bottom of the terraced gardens. Here overlooking the junction of the two creeks a lovely spot was found for lunch. After lunch all viewed some old photographs of the homestead before and after the fire. (the fire was in August 1963). Also pictures of various owners over the years and some of the employees. Then the next three hours were taken up walking through the ruins of the hundred year old homestead, and around the property. While we looked around I explained briefly the layout of the homestead as I remembered it in its glory. Some of the out buildings also proved very interesting, and their contents displaying from early times such things as old harness, saddlery, halters, floors with upright wooden poles, the 110 volt electric light system, with numerous batteries, to the old forge in the blacksmiths shop, complete with the tools of the day. Time was running out so the planned deer stalk was called off, but without a doubt this could be arranged at some later date. The lovely day came to an end around 4.30p.m., when we started to make tracks homeward bound.

Yours in NATS. Don Lightfoot.