



MARCH 1999  
Vol 307



# 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.



## CLUB OFFICE BEARERS 1998 - 99

President	Roger Logan	46 812493
Vice-Presidents	Desley McDonagh	46 813074
	Millie Marsden	46 811593
Secretary	Liz Bourne	46 836374
Treasurer	Julia Brown	46 814540
Newsletter Editor	Robin McCosker	46 835371
Magazine Committee	Wendy & Neil Donges, Julie Beddow	
Publicity Officer	Patience James	46 811853
Learning For Pleasure	Mary Walters	46 835306
Librarian	Trish McCosker	46 835371
Management Committee	President , Vice-Presidents , Secretary , Treasurer	

### COMING UP

Next Outing March 20<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> Campout at "Bellbrae" Hodgson Vale. Leader Millie Marsden. Meet at Weeroona Park at 8.30am on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>.

Next Meeting March 24<sup>th</sup> Slide Program - Vanuatu - by David Wilson. 8.00pm at the QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe.

### DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

13th April 1999

Send contributions to The Newsletter Editor, P O Box 24, Severnlea Q4352  
or leave with Mrs Dore McCosker, 58 Railway St., Stanthorpe.

### 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 sections common, with steps.
- 7 Cross country, some hills, some thick undergrowth.
- 8 Cross country, steep sections with scrambles over rocks etc., and 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.



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC.**  
**held in Q.C.W.A. Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on 24th February, 1999**

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 8.10pm with President, Roger Logan, welcoming members and visitors, including Geoff and Margaret Meredith and Steve Bellert from Greening Australia.

**Attendance:** There were 21 present at the meeting and 11 apologies as per the attendance book.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 25th November, 1998 were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Patience James, seconded by Millie Marsden. Carried.

**Correspondence:**

**Inwards:**

1. Dept. of Environment - Annual Report
2. Toowoomba Field Naturalists - *Darling Downs Naturalist* - Dec. '98, Feb. '99
3. Directory of Aust. Associations - updated listing
4. Vic Torrens, Stanthorpe Ambulance - request to speak at meeting
5. Border Rivers Catchment Management Association - Dec. '98 and Feb '99 newsletters
6. Peter Haselgrove - threatened plants in Stanthorpe Shire
7. CGU Insurance - public liability insurance
8. Senator Lyn Allison - env. issues associated with tax package
9. Euro-Asia Legends Hotel - information on conference facilities
10. Senator Lyn Allison - info. on responsibilities of Aust. Democrat politicians
11. State Library of Qld. - receipt for newsletter
12. Qld Naturalist Club - *QNC News* - Jan-Feb '99
13. Chinchilla Field Nats. - *Urimbirra* - Jan '99
14. Binna Burra Lodge - Ecology weekend on 5 -7 Feb.
15. Lady Elliot Island Resort - Bird Week - 2 - 7 Feb.
16. Granite Belt Informer - invitation to be listed
17. Samson Total Technology - invoices for \$31.80, \$1.50 and \$20.80
18. Conference Consultants - information on their company
19. Toowoomba Bushwalkers - *Footprint* - Jan. '99, Feb. '99
20. InterNationalpark Tours - newsletter
21. Gold Coast International Hotel - special conference offer
22. QCWA - Border Division - proposed Friendship Days activities to celebrate International Year of the Older Person

**Outwards:**

1. Community service announcements for outing and meeting

This correspondence was received on the motion of Kris Carnell, seconded by Patience James. Carried.

**Business Arising from the Correspondence:**

1. Letter from Vic Torrens - Stanthorpe Ambulance Service

It was agreed to invite Vic to address a future meeting of the club on the issues he wished to inform us about.

2. Letter from Peter Haselgrove

It was agreed to incorporate the information from Peter's letter in a future newsletter to better inform members about threatened plants in the Shire.

3. Letter from QCWA

Information on the proposed Friendship Days will be included in future newsletters.

**Financial Statement for the period 25/11/98 to 24/2/99:**

Balance as at 25/11/98

\$ 939.62

**Receipts:**

Subscriptions	53.00
Room rent collection	7.30
Change from magazine post	1.30
	<u>\$61.60</u>

\$ 1,001.22

**Expenditure:**

Room rent	10.00
Magazine postage	37.00
Samson Total Technology	43.65

Julia Brown - receipt book	3.20	
Commercial Union Insurance	168.18	
State Govt. tax - Dec '98	1.50	
- Feb '99	<u>.70</u>	
	<u>\$264.23</u>	<u>264.23</u>
		\$ 736.99

Balance as at 24/2/99 is \$ 736.99

Accounts for payment:

Room rent	10.00
Magazine postage	37.00
Samson Total Technology	52.60
Liz Bourne - petty cash	10.00

This report was received and adopted on the motion of Rob McCosker, seconded by Jean Harslett. Carried.  
The accounts were passed for payment on the motion of Millie Marsden, seconded by Patience James. Carried.

**Outing Report:**

Rob McCosker reported on the trip to the Boston Cliffs area on the 21st February which was attended by 55 people. Jean Harslett said she had photos taken on the trip of what might be a new species of *Macrozamia* and will be sending these to the National herbarium for identification.

**Specimens:**

1. Brian McDonagh had a piece of irrigation pipe with holes in it that he thought might possibly have been damaged by crickets
2. Brian also had a piece of *Tweedia* - a shrub with a sky blue flower
3. Margaret Carnell reported on an *Alyxia* or chain fruit that was found on the Boston Cliffs outing and said she and Kris had observed Venus and Jupiter close together as they came to the meeting that night.
4. Jean Harslett had a copy of *A Field Guide to Butterflies* as Carol Sticker was asking about a particular butterfly on the last outing.
5. Roger Logan had survey forms for Birds Australia's bird atlas project and a copy of the latest newsletter to do with this.

**General Business:**

1. Millie Marsden inquired about what had happened to the Club's former sponsorship of "The Best Native Bloom" at the Stanthorpe Show. The general feeling of those at the meeting was that this must have ceased at least five years ago but it would be good to see it reinstated. A motion to this effect was moved by Millie Marsden, seconded by Mavis Bott. Carried.
2. Pest Committee  
Brian McDonagh reported that he and Kris Carnell were on the Council's Pest Committee which is looking at listing pest weed species in the Shire and strategies to control them and suggested that any members with information should contact Kris.
3. Meeting in January  
The Andrewarths asked why there was not a meeting usually held in January. Roger explained that it was felt in the past that it would not have been well patronised because of the school holidays and the lead up to the Stanthorpe Show. He asked for a show of hands of those for and against having a meeting in January and as this produced a split vote he determined that there was not enough support to have a meeting then.
4. Purchase of Global Positioning System by the Club  
Roger suggested that the Club consider purchasing a GPS as it could be useful in conducting the bird atlas survey, for pre-outing planning and on outings. Birds Australia was advertising one for \$299 and the general consensus was that this was a good, reliable brand. However, as few members had had any experience in using one, Kris Carnell suggested that we borrow one and try it out on a future trip to see how useful it might be. Roger agreed to pursue this.
5. New Club Letterhead  
Liz Bourne said that the Club's existing letterhead needed modernising and asked for members with artistic or design skills to contribute their ideas

Meeting closed at 9pm.

**Presentation:**

Steve Bellert from Greening Australia gave a brief presentation of his work as a nature conservation extension officer for Greening Australia. Steve is based in Goondiwindi and is assisting landholders to conserve remnant vegetation on their land. Funding is available from the Natural Heritage Trust for assistance to landholders for activities such as fencing, revegetation, weed control and the provision of alternative watering points to protect riverine vegetation. He will try and provide information about the program for a future newsletter.

Millie Marsden then gave a very interesting slide presentation covering various trips she had undertaken to South West Queensland to a number of national parks and other private properties.

### **QCWA Friendship Days**

The Stanthorpe Branch of the QCWA is staging a series of Friendship Days combined with talks by various community based services as part of their contribution to the International Year of the Older Person.

The next of these programmes will take place on Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at 1.30pm at the QCWA Rooms in Victoria Street and will feature the Queensland Ambulance Service with information on changes to that service. Admission is free and afternoon tea will be served - all welcome!

### **Report on the Outing to " Boston Cliffs" 21<sup>st</sup> February 1999**

The outing proved very popular, with about 55 people attending. After meeting at Weeroona Park at 9.00am we drove to Liston where we were joined by Mrs Irma Rickard and her son and daughter-in law, George and Fay, owners of the property " Boston Cliffs ". We drove on, to the Maryland River bridge for morning tea, to find that there were already another four car loads of people waiting for us. Unfortunately the grassy banks I had envisioned were covered with weeds, mostly perennial ragweed, so we had to make do with the sand banks and little shade. The river is delightful here with a clear stream flowing briskly over clean sand, beneath shady oak trees. The water proved irresistible for some, both young and old, to take the opportunity for a paddle.

Our convoy of some 22 vehicles then continued for a short distance before turning into the property "Windaroo" and several gates later arrived at "The Swans" boundary gate, where we left the cars and continued in 4WD vehicles. When George and I did the pre-outing a couple of weeks ago, we were in his Daihatsu 4WD, and cleared a track for it by pulling up regrowth and cutting down a few small trees. This made for some challenging driving for the owners of the larger 4WD vehicles on the outing, as they maneuvered around some trees with less than inches to spare. Upon reaching our destination, and finding room to park the vehicles, George read out a brief history of the property prepared by his mother (included as a separate article in this newsletter). We then walked the short distance to the edge of the cliff to take in the views of the Maryland River so far below, and the surrounding rugged country. Some people took a little convincing which way the water was flowing as the angle of the waterhole gave an optical illusion that the river was flowing uphill.

We returned to the cars for lunch and a look at a map and some historic photos including some of the original hut and home built on the property. Also, we were able to watch three Wedge-tailed eagles soaring over the gully and rocky peak to the east. After lunch George led the more energetic, about 26 people, down to the creek at the bottom of the gully. Here we saw a profusion of orchids and staghorns growing on the trees and rocks around a small rock pool in the creek - a welcome rest stop on a hot summer day. We continued on until we reached near the top of the rocky hill, and briefly had a closer view of one of the eagles perched in a tree. The few people who climbed to the top of the rock enjoyed more spectacular views across the Maryland River gorge. We returned to the vehicles via a different route through mostly open forest, and sighted a large goanna sunbaking on a tree. There were few wildflowers to be seen but in one spot a bright blue dampiera made a splash of colour. We had afternoon tea at the vehicles at about 4.00pm before heading home. Many thanks to the Rickard family for organizing a very enjoyable outing.

Rob McCosker.



## "Boston Cliffs"

I do not know exactly when my father took up this property. He built a slab and bark hut opposite Chinaman's Camp. (Origin of this name is unknown to me.) There he had his few fruit trees and gardens. (Some of which are still growing today-some 100years later. Editor) His horse paddock went from the river to the top of the mountain, but at 6' 2 1/2" he had long legs, and walking to catch his horse was no problem. He resided there, with visits to his home base at "Milford", till he married in 1912 and had a house built here on the upper level. I have a letter he wrote to mother before they were married telling of his choice of a house-site - "Because it had a good outlook and was close to neighbours." After living where he had for so long this probably seemed like the metropolis to him - Fox's "Overcliff" just across the river and his brothers' "Lincoln Hills" a little further down with a river and gorge between. The only vehicle access was through "Winderoo" and the intervening properties. If time permitted I could tell you many stories.

To mother, born in what is now very much an inner city suburb of Sydney, working for years in the heart of the city and spending her young adult years still in the city area (Hunters Hill), this must have seemed like the back of beyond. She said she was never lonely but after I (a not very robust baby) arrived in 1914, she probably had some anxious moments - so far from medical help. There may have been a phone at the Wylie Creek Post Office; there was certainly none nearer. Provisions and mail came from Legume, a half-day job with the slow old mare father drove. Strong but a jib and if she jibbed on a slope she would let the weight of the sulky drag her back. Mother was terrified of the Maryland River cutting for that reason. I came here at 6 weeks of age and left at 6 months when father bought "Undercliff" and we moved to the old Cullen's station homestead. That is another story.

All carting in the area was done by Mr George Goodyear with his two-horse dray. Father had bought all the furniture off a family on a block on "Winderoo" and it was carted from here to "Undercliff" via "Lincoln Hills" then up Murdocks track. Incredibly there doesn't seem to have been any breakages. I have a beautiful and most unusual bedroom set which was bought at Jenner's Store, in Legume. The house here was all iron with ordinary corrugate on the outside and ripple iron lining. Two rooms were left for father to use when working the place, with tank and fireplace. When father became too ill to manage the place he sold to a neighbour, who built another house and lived here with his family for some time. Sadly this man was not a good manager and when he died (in a shed he had behind where the house had been), the property reverted to father's estate. From then for some years it was just leased out and became horribly neglected. The lower portion of the property is in good condition now with good stockyards, fencing etc. and a comfortable hut. The place is still difficult to access though there are now 4WD roads into it and many tracks around the paddocks. The old wagon road from Rivertree to Koreelah passes through the lower portion, across St. Mary's Bridge and up through Davidsons Gap to meet the Vinegar Hill road. The second house on "Boston Cliffs" is now situated in Liston.

As there was no road to the Chinamen's Camp area father made a big wooden barrow and with a leather strap around his shoulders to act as a brake down the steep hills he carted his fencing wire from "Milford" down the Sixteen Mile to do the initial fencing. He bred Devon cattle - not known for their quietness! From his pre marriage hut at Chinamans Camp he used to ride over to Hurley Davidsons and sometimes Pattersons over on the Koreelah side for a visit. There was, and really still is only one way from the bottom to the top levels. It is now clogged with lantana and too steep for anything but horses and perhaps motorbikes. I have several stories to tell of that track! Now power comes as close as Chris Graysons feedlot "The Swans" and there are phones there, at "Overcliff", and "Lincoln Hills" so the place is quite civilized.

Irma Rickard.

## **March Outing - Campout to "Bellbrae" Hodgson Vale**

Recently Rob McCosker led an outing to the Toowoomba area travelling along the lesser-known roads to the east of the highway. I propose to take you on an historic preamble using roads to the west of the main highway and so have a leisurely trip to the overnight venue at Hodgson Vale.

Those intending to make the 'journey' are invited to meet at Weeroona Park at 8.30am on Saturday March 20<sup>th</sup>. We will travel to Warwick; turn left at the lights and then turn right into Sandy Creek road. We will pause to see Sandy Creek - Darling Downs Hotel and the Allies Hall before going on through Wheatvale to the morning tea - comfort stop at Cunningham. Here we will see two cairns - one erected during the Queensland Centenary 10-12-1959 in honour of Patrick Leslie who took up Toolburra Station in 1840, and the other erected in 1978 honouring the pioneering families of the local area. In this park area there are also a number of tokens which honour soldiers of both wars - 32 in total.

Next stop will be to view the Bi-Centennial Plaque in the old gold mining town of Pratten. Leyburn is the next port of call where we will see a series of 'old' buildings and sites from an old grave from 1854, school bell 1882, shingle roofed church 1871 and Royal Hotel built in 1863, among other attractions.

We will travel on through Clifton to the lunch stop at Nobby. Here you may picnic in the park or sample the fare at the historic Rudd's Pub. We had an excellent lunch of Fish and Chips there for the princely sum of \$4. We will inspect the Sister Elizabeth Kenny Memorial building (gold coin admission) and the gardens. On then through Greenmount and rejoin the highway. We will turn right into the Toowoomba approach via Hodgson Vale, then right again into Hodgson Vale Road, down over the bridge, follow the bitumen which veers right then turn left into Meyninks Road at the Telstra building. "Bellbrae" is the second gateway on the right. This was around the 200km mark from leaving Stanthorpe.

Here we will be camping in the grounds of the home of Penny and David Marsden who have graciously made their facilities of their unit with shower, toilet and electricity available to us. Cooking will be only by gas gear or electricity - no fires. We will probably arrange a short slide show in the outdoors in lieu of the usual campfire chat.

On Sunday morning we will leave "Bellbrae" before 7.30am to proceed to Gorman's Cairn and leave on the walk of 6km by 8.00am. Those wishing to come for just the Sunday outing will need to be at "Bellbrae" before 7.30am or join us at the Cairn at 8.00am. This can be reached by taking the right hand turn into Preston Road closer in to Toowoomba, then left into Preston - Boundary Road and sharp left into the Cairn signed road.

Gorman's Gap. The first wagon route up the Great Dividing Range near Toowoomba was pioneered in 1840 by a party led by Lt. Gorman from the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement. This route, now called Gorman's Gap ascends a long ridge from the valley of Flagstone Creek to the top of the escarpment in the Preston area south of Toowoomba. Clearing for some farms has, in places, created a more open landscape and provides the walker with wide vistas, especially east and southeast to the Little Liverpool Range and Mount Mistake. Roger and I took 2 1/2 hours to do this walk, but with a larger group of people it would certainly take longer. The track is well defined and in most cases, easy to handle. The Camel's Hump is quite steep but we will be going down and so should not have any worries. Our bird tally was 15, there were a few native flowers and we passed through an indecent amount of lantana and lots of privet. The walk provided us with "enchanted vistas" (Rogers description) rather than panoramic views and was very worthwhile even though the day was hot, hot, hot. Make sure there is plenty of water in your backpack and a smoke stop will be held along the way. We plan to be back at the cars for a lunch. The 6km walk I would class as moderate, it certainly is not difficult and there is no 'bush bashing' as it is all along tracks. I'm sure that having done this circuit track, the more active of our members will have the incentive to do the through walk at some future time. Those not wishing to do the walk could relax at the starting point and take in the lovely views on display.

Please contact me on 46811593 if you are intending to join any part of the proposed outing and then we will be sure not to miss anyone.

My thanks to Roger, Denise and Peter Logan for supporting me on the pre-outing preamble.

Millie Marsden.

## **Changes to 1998-99 Program**

Would members please ammend their Program published on the back page of the October 1998 Newsletter by swapping the May meeting - slide program by Jean Harslett, with the September meeting program - Quiz by Desley McDonagh, as Jean will be away in May.

## **Coming Attractions**

MARCH      20/21<sup>st</sup> Campout at Hodgsonvale - Leader Millie Marsden  
              24<sup>th</sup> Meeting program - Vanuatu with David Wilson

APRIL        26<sup>th</sup> Day Outing to Tooloom - Leader Helen Hartman  
              28<sup>th</sup> Meeting program - Slides by Errol Walker showing Landscapes  
of the Australian Great Artesian Basin - Lake Eyre, Dig Tree, Innaminka, Cameron Cnr. etc

## **Forthcoming Activities planned by Reciprocal Clubs**

SGAP Warwick	Meeting 12 <sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm at Willi St Council Office - Speaker - Peter Warhurst DPI Apiary Extension Officer on Plant identification Outing 20 <sup>th</sup> March Graham & Beth McDonald's Toona Rainforest Garden Contact Darell 46648218
Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club	March 13-14 <sup>th</sup> McIntyre Falls Outing, April 2-5 <sup>th</sup> Guy Fawkes NP Easter Campout, April 25 <sup>th</sup> Crows Nest Falls Day Trip. Contact Garron 4633 2013
Chinchilla Field Nats	March 27 <sup>th</sup> Outing to 'Nederlands' Tea-tree oil plantation, Easter Camp to a property on the Don River and fossicking at Aradon. Contact Joan 46627335

## **Vale Zaidee Newman**

Sadly the Field Nats have lost one its long standing members with the recent passing of Zaidee Newman. Zaidee and Wilf regularly attended meetings and outings from the Clubs' first inception until their retirement to Bribie Island. Zaidee maintained the Club membership while away and after her eventual return to Ballandean after Wilf passed away. The study of birds was a great interest for her and her knowledge of birds was an asset on club outings. Zaidee became involved in the original bird atlas project and also made a study of bird calls, spending many enjoyable trips armed with a portable tape recorder with friend and neighbour Mrs Chubb Smith. By providing feed dishes at the windows of her house, Zaidee was able to encourage many small birds. A cheese dish on one side of the kitchen for the wrens and a fine bird seed dish on the other side for the finches which she was able to call up at any time of the day. When she took up embroidery she incorporated the fauna and flora in her designs. A most fitting decoration to her funeral service sheet was the reproduction of the Superb blue wren.

