



The Granite Belt Naturalist



Mail Address: Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc, PO Box 154, Stanthorpe Qld. 4380

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



The Pyramids, Girraween National Park

The Club acknowledges the support of the Gambling Community Benefit Fund in the production of this Newsletter

- Meetings** 4th Wednesday of each month at QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe, at 7.30pm
- Outings:** The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday of each month (Friday outings as pre-arranged)
- Subs:** Single \$15.00, Family \$25.00 per annum, July to June

Mail contributions: The Newsletter Editor, PO Box 33, Severnlea Qld. 4352. Email: orana@halenet.com.au

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS - 2004/2005

President	Kris Carnell	46835268
Vice-presidents	Millie Marsden	46811593
	Col Hockings	46811978
Secretary	Liz Bourne	46836374
Treasurer	Dave Bright	46811034
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	46835268
Magazine Committee	Wendy & Neil Donges	46812913
Publicity Officer	Janet Hockings	46811978
Librarian	Trish McCosker	46835371
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 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



Deadline for next Newsletter:
9th May 2005

Coming Up

Outing Sunday 24th April: Braeside Gorge led by Dave Bright

Next Meeting Wednesday 27th April: Program by Jean Harslett

Friday Outing 6th May: Archie Cameron

Campout Saturday 30th April – Monday 2nd May: Kwiambal National Park (Ashford) led by Kris & Margaret Carnell

Report of outing to the Underground River and Dr Roberts Waterhole on Friday, 4th March

After the heat of previous days we found it pleasant to stroll along the tracks. To add to this pleasure we welcomed new folk of a Japanese couple from Ballandean, a German, a Victorian, a West Australian, along with the four regulars.

After the usual cuppa we went first to the Underground River. Wildflowers were very scarce but one Flannel Flower was admired. In all, the vegetation looked very refreshed from the recent rain. The rock formations were of great interest. It was good to see and hear the water running through the narrow rock crevices of the river. The upper section with its gouged course is always fascinating. The dyke on the south side raised many questions. Bird life was not plentiful, mainly for the time of day, but we were entertained by two small birds performing a musical duet.

A leisurely lunch was taken beside Dr Roberts Waterhole and all enjoyed the serenity of the area.

Many thanks to all who attended.

Joan Stevenson

Outing To Braeside Gorge (Middle Creek) on 24th April 2005

Leader Dave Bright

We will leave Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel north on the New England Highway and turn left into Crystal Mountain Road (approx 30km), drive in some 300 metres and assemble on the right just past Braeside homestead. Warwick members will join us here at 9.30. We will travel 10km on Crystal Mountain 'gravel' road. We can have an early smoko adjacent to the Crystal Mountain homestead (residence of Ross McCorqudale).

We then head north 8km on farm tracks. There are stony creeks to cross – conventional vehicles with high clearance probably okay, 4 or AWD if rain falls in preceding days.

At the gorge there are lookouts and a rough track down into the gorge. Time can be spent exploring the gorge and then we will return to the vehicles for lunch. Since our last visit a new track has been

graded, so there is the possibility of views and exploration some 2km further north. We can assess on the day or retrace our tracks to return home.

Minutes of Meeting of Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc. held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 23rd March 2005

Welcome: President Kris Carnell welcomed all members, particularly Margaret Compton who was attending her first meeting of the club.

Attendance: There were 24 present and 8 apologies as per attendance book.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd February were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of R McCosker, seconded P. Andrewartha. Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes:

1. We have gone no further with the name tags. It was felt we need a local photo for them.
2. Paul Donatui will speak to the meeting about the Wildflower Consortium book at a later date.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

1. State Library of Qld – acknowledgment of newsletters
2. Toowoomba Field Naturalist Club – *Darling Downs Naturalist* – February 2005
3. Australia Post – PO box renewal
4. International Parktours – *IPT Traveller*
5. Qld Naturalist Club – *QNC News* March-April
6. Chinchilla Field Naturalist Club – *Urimbirra* March 2005
7. Samson Total Technology – account for \$11.60
8. Murrumbidgee Field Naturalist Club – *Murrumbidgee Naturalist* March 2005
9. Fassifern Field Naturalist Club Inc. – Newsletter

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Margaret Carnell, seconded Esme Colley. Carried.

Financial Statement for the period 24/2/2005 to 23/3/2005

Cash book balance as at 23/2/2005	736.88
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Expenditure:

Magazine postage	100.00	
Magazine production	22.82	
Room Rent	30.00	
Govt Tax	1.30	\$154.12
Cash Book Balance as at 23/3/2005	582.76	

This agrees with the bank balance as at 18/3/2005

Accounts for payment:

PO Box rental	56.00
Samson Technology	11.60

This financial report was received on the motion of Dave Bright, seconded Col Hockings. Carried

Outing Reports:

1. Friday 4th March to Underground River and Dr Roberts Waterhole

This outing was led by Joan and Harry Stevenson and was a very pleasant excursion with a number of visitors.

2. Sunday 20th March to Condamine Gorge.

Kris reported that we met at Warwick and travelled along the Freestone Road to the back of Mt Sturt where we stopped to admire the view. We proceeded through Killarney to the second crossing where we had morning tea. Three members stopped there to do some birdwatching and met the Trickers who were on their way to Brisbane. They then proceed to Carrs Lookout and Queen Mary's Falls.

Robin reported that there was very little water through the gorge but members stopped at the Moss Gardens and Carrs Lookout to admire the view, then proceeded to Queen Mary's Falls for lunch. After lunch everyone went to the lookout and some walked the circuit. Dell found a bower of a Satin Bower Bird at the picnic area. They went home the back way via Liston and saw a painting of blue cows on a shed, and stopped at the old cheese factory at Legume

Pre-Outing Reports

1. Friday 1st April Historic Sites and Old Roads led by Mark McNichol

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and proceed to Maryland Station to visit the cemetery and museum, looking at old roads on the way. We will also look at an old coach crossing. Lunch and smoko will be at the cars.

2. Sunday 24th April – Braeside Gorge led by Dave Bright.

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and drive to Crystal Mountain Road where we will meet Warwick members. We will proceed to Ross McCorquada's property where we will have morning tea, then drive 8km to the top of the gorge. Lunch will be at the gorge.

3. Camp Out May 30th April to 2nd May to Kwiambal National Park near Ashford led by Kris and Margaret Carnell

Kris and Margaret will be doing the pre-outing at Easter. We hope to camp at Lemon Tree Flat. Details will be in the April magazine.

4. The program next month will be presented by Jean Harslett

Specimens

1. Millie Marsden had photos of the outing to Condamine Gorge.
2. Margaret Carnell had a rock with tourmaline crystals which was found at Severnlea.
3. Margaret Compton reported that she saw a Lyre Bird at Thunderbolt's Lookout.

General Business:

Peter Andrewartha asked if there was a camping fee at Lemon Tree Flat and was told camping is free.

The meeting closed and was followed by a very enjoyable slide program on Eulo and Yowah presented by Millie Marsden and Esme Colley.

Outing Report – Maryland and Old Roads 1st April 2005.

On a very pleasant morning 19 Nats met at Weeroona Park with Mark McNichol who was leading the outing, and looked at old maps showing some old roads and the telegraph line to the district. Mark kindly offered seats in his bus to anyone without a high clearance vehicle and we set off for our first stop at the golf course. Here we could see the faint depression from the old road built well over 100 years ago. We then drove to Applethorpe and crossed the railway line to see some more of the same road.

We travelled past Glen Niven Dam and headed out to the Maryland Gate and beyond, where we met Graham and Richard Greenup who guided us to the old Maryland Cemetery on their property. Before

looking at the graves we had morning tea, then Erin and Caitlin played on some fallen trees while the rest of us looked at the gravestones. Mark had details of people buried there and we noted that the Roman Catholics and Church of England section had gravestones still standing, whereas the Jews, Wesleyan, General and several others had not. Apparently those were less well to do.



Our next stop was the site of the Maryland village with its main street called Queen Street. There were noisy miners in their stick nests above our heads as we looked at the old maps and listened to Graham Greenup give us a history lesson about the area. The building of the railway to Stanthorpe was the beginning of the end for Maryland. The church is still standing and is now used as a hayshed. We were able to go inside and Graham told us how the minister used to come from Woodenbong to take services once a month. Two of his sisters were christened in the church.



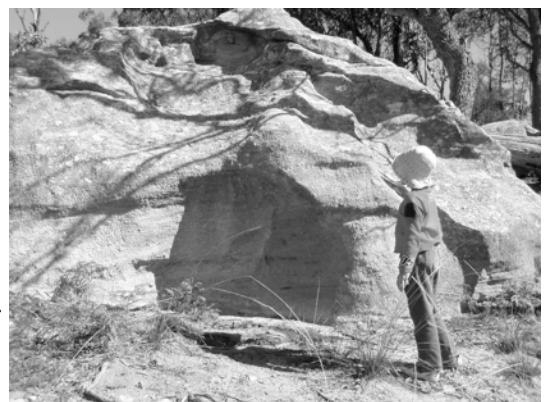
On the way to the church we passed the remains of an old coaching inn, just bricks on the ground. There are still some slab walls standing, which are all that is left of the inn. Graham did not know if they were part of the original inn or not. From there we walked to the site of the old Customs House which dated from the days when duty was paid on goods shifted from state to state. A few bricks nestled in the long grass was all that was left. In 1872 Clinton's Road was built entirely in Queensland, so that locals who had to cross from Queensland to New South Wales to collect their mail, could do so without incurring customs duty. The 14 miles of road was built at the rate of a mile a day.



From the Customs House site we drove up Queens Street to Maryland Station the home of the Greenups, and site of an excellent museum. We spent quite some time in the museum looking at such things as aboriginal relics, service uniforms, animal and reptile skins, kitchen paraphernalia, photos and old records, while an old cart stood forlornly in the back yard. We ate lunch in the yard in the shade of the trees, watching swallows or maybe martins, after which Desley and Patience turned for home. The rest of us headed for the border and rabbit fence, stopping to walk along part of the old road. We also had a detour to some

Osage Orange trees and gathered specimens to bring home. The fruit smells faintly of citrus and melon and perhaps cucumber when cut, and is inedible.

After passing through the border onto the old Rosenthal Run, we followed the old road over some rough terrain before heading for a sandstone outcrop. This is quite unusual in granite country and we were very interested to see it. We drove for some distance along the old coach road and stopped again to look at the old road. At one stage we passed a great heap of glass insulators from the old trunk line, and passed on to the site of some stone paving which has corduroy logs underneath. We were running short of time by this stage, so did not spend much time at each point of interest. We stopped at the site of The Gap Hotel and saw some old logs from a corduroy crossing lying in a paddock and the



Sandstone Outcrop Rosenthal

Mark called to see some people who showed us a photo of the site of an old inn, which had belonged to their family. There was nothing to be seen on the site, which is across the road from the house. We then we called at Aspinall's place to see a painting of The Old Coach Bridge on the old Stanthorpe

Road, painted by Mary Dau, after which we sallied forth to see the bridge itself. It has long since fallen into disrepair, but is still standing.



As it was now very late, we headed for home along the Cherry Gully Road and were fortunate to see a majestic wedgetail eagle rising from the roadside and flying slowly aloft. We stopped at the site of the Governor's summer residence, *Strathalbess* which had long since burnt down. We were told the Governor employed a man to open the gate when he was in residence.

We arrived home after dark with our minds full of the myriad things we had seen during the day. Many thanks to Mark McNichol for leading the outing and taking so much trouble in preparation of the maps and other information, and to Graham Greenup for guiding us on his property and telling us some of the history of Maryland. We had a very, very interesting outing and we saw quite a few birds even though the outing was mainly an historical one.

Bird List Outing to Maryland on 1st April 2005

Sulphur crested cockatoo, galah, crimson rosella, eastern rosella, white winged chough, apostle bird, black faced cuckoo shrike, masked lapwing (spurwing plover), willy wagtail, wood duck, noisy miners with nests, kookaburra, currawong, magpie, butcher bird, Richards pipit, crow, welcome swallows, martin?, pacific heron, flycatchers of some sort, wedgetail eagle.

Other things of interest: mobs of kangaroos, a large skink at the museum, peacocks with chicks at one of the houses we called at, termite mounds and corduroy logs from an old crossing.

Bird List Outing to Condamine Gorge 20th March 2005

White browed scrub wren	Grey fantail	Sulphur crested cockatoo
King parrot	Eastern spinebill	Eastern yellow robin
Weebill	Bell bird (call)	Galah
Spotted harrier	Grey butcherbird	Pied butcherbird
Apostle bird	Yellow tailed black cockatoo	Noisy miner
Peewee	Black faced cuckoo shrike	Crested pigeon
Eastern rosella	Ibis	Crow
White faced heron	White necked heron	Treecreeper
Superb blue wren	Double barred finch	Lorikeet (probably Little)
Crimson rosella	Bar shouldered dove (call)	Lewins Honeyeater
Dusky moor hen	Azure kingfisher	Kookaburra
Scissor grinder	Satin bowerbird (m & f)	currawong

Other items of interest: draught horses with a foal, molasses smell in Freestone Valley – probably being fed to stock, water dragon, wanderer butterfly.

Pre-Outing Report Camp Out to Kwiambal National Park – 30 April to 2nd May 2005

After some difficulties and hold ups we managed to do a pre-outing to Kwiambal National Park, which is about 30kms from Ashford in Northern New South Wales. To get there you can travel along the Pikedale Road or through Sunnyside. There's not much difference in distance. It's approximately 200kms from Stanthorpe. Fuel is available at Ashford at a considerably higher price than at Stanthorpe. The NRMA map of Central West, New England North West (northern section) shows the area. The best road to take on leaving Ashford is the Wallangra Road, which has fewer kilometres of dirt. Do check the mailboxes along here. I think the property owners are competing with each other for originality and impact.

We intend to camp at the Lemon Tree Flat camping area, which is free with no day use fee. There are toilets but no showers. When we called in at Easter, every man minus his dog was camped there. In the unfortunate event of the camping area being crowded we can camp at Ashford Caravan Park (plenty of room, hot showers, pets allowed under control). It cost us \$10.00 a car a night. We hope to go on Friday 29th, but the "official" part of the outing will start on Saturday afternoon when we will go to the McIntyre Falls area and after viewing the falls (dry at the moment), walk to The Plunge Pool and The Beach. If time permits we will take the Slippery Rock Walk to another section of the McIntyre River.

On Sunday we plan to take the 8km return Junction Walk from the camping area, leaving at 9.00am. We will carry morning tea and lunch. We will take the 1km side track to The Dungeon, a spectacular rocky gorge where we will have morning tea, then continue to The Junction for lunch. On The Dungeon walk you get good views of the Severn River Falls, according to the ranger. Later in the afternoon from the Lemon Tree Flat camping area you can explore a kilometre or two upstream or downstream, rockhopping (medium grades).

Monday morning will see us packing up after breakfast and heading to the limestone caves on the road back to Ashford. Bring a torch for this excursion. There are bats living in the caves and visitors are asked not to disturb them. There are no spectacular formations in these caves but they are interesting to explore.



On the way home there are a number of things we could do. If you don't mind dirt roads the return trip could be via Pindari Dam. The wall is 900 metres long and nice easy walking with views of the lake. The Mining Museum at Emmaville is well worth a look, but we have to check on the opening times. Entry is by a gold coin. From Emmaville it's less than 20kms to the Ottery Arsenic Mine site which is a very interesting place, with the remains of the ovens and old machinery.

If anyone wants to come and needs a tent or other equipment please ask at the next meeting, or ring Kris & Margaret on 46835268.

Outing Report to the Condamine Gorge – 20 March 2005

The outing to Condamine Gorge was a chance for many members to enjoy some of the spectacular scenery to Warwick's east. Around twenty or so Nats and associated friends met at Jackie Howe Park for this driving excursion.

An early diversion took us part of the way up the Freestone Valley to a high vantage point beside Mt Sturt. The view provides a panorama from the Main Range across to the Granite Belt. The dry landscape spread before us was a sobering reminder of the on-going dry spell. We were invited by Lance Clarson, a nearby landowner to enter his garden to gain a better view. His long family association with the property provided us with some interesting history of the local area.

Our next stop was south east of Emuvale at the site of the former Danderoo School where it is possible to still trace the path of the former Warwick-Killarney railway. From there, we headed to Killarney and into the Condamine Gorge. Our first stop was for our traditional cuppa at one of the first crossings of the Condamine. With a few parting company here, the rest of us headed into the gorge. The dry weather made the drive very easy. The Condamine had stopped flowing. With most of the crossings dry, 4WDs were insurance rather than a necessity.

The floor of the gorge is heavily timbered, but at numerous points, imposing bluffs can be glimpsed through the trees. We stopped to observe the remarkable formation of Dolly on the Rock, atop Blackfellow's Knob. At this point, Narelle provided some of the history of the gorge. The site of the Wynola School was pointed out to us.

Further into the gorge, we stopped at Flaggy Crossing. The river seems to have cut through a steeply inclined layer of columnar basalt. A wander through a nettle infested river bank allowed us access to this tessellated pavement. At the crossing, a superb view could be had of the tree-lined river with Blackfellow's Knob rising sharply from the gorge floor.



With a few more crossings to negotiate, we emerged into The Head Valley. Stops were made on two occasions to gain impressive views back to the gorge. At the Teviot Road intersection, we returned to civilisation and merged with the Sunday influx of Brisbane day-trippers. Brief stops were made to see the lichen-covered trees at the Moss Gardens, and then to enjoy the imposing view from Carr's Lookout.

The day concluded with lunch at an over-crowded Queen Mary Falls. Members drifted away at this time with some choosing to do the circuit of the falls while

others started the drive home.

David Wilson