

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

P.O. BOX 154
STANTHORPE, Q., 4380.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1979-1980

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ERROL WALKER
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LYLE THOMPSON
JOHN O'DONNELL
FRANK WILKINSON

MEETINGS - 4th WEDNESDAY of each MONTH at C.W.A. ROOMS at 8 P.M.

OUTINGS - Each SUNDAY PRECEDING the FOURTH WEDNESDAY of the Month.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

SINGLE - \$4.00

FAMILY - \$6.00

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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February 1980.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATS.
HELD IN THE C.W.A. ROOMS WED. NOVEMBER 29th 1979.

Opening Time :- 8.20 pm.

Present:-

Apologies :- 5.

The President extended a welcome to all present, with a special welcome to the Guest Speaker for the evening, Mr. Mervyn Fletcher.

Motion:- Moved Mrs. J. Stevenson and seconded by Mrs. Mc. Donald that the apologies be accepted.... Carried.

Minutes:- That the Minutes of the General Meeting held Oct. 24th. 1979 be "Taken as Read" in the Newsletter. Moved by Mrs. M. Prentice and seconded by Mr. R. Mc. Cosker.... Carried.

Correspondence:

Inward:-

1. Letter from the Rotary Club of Stanthorpe re their tree planting project along the Southern approach to Stanthorpe from the by-pass.
2. Richmond Valley Naturalist Club.
3. Warwick Bushwalkers Club Newsletter.
4. National Parks Association of Queensland Bulletin.
5. Press Statements from the Minister for National Parks.
6. A Series of Leaflets from National Parks and Wild Life Service.

Outward:-

1. Letter to Mr Mervyn Fletcher thanking him for accepting our invitation to be Guest Speaker at our November meeting and advising him that we have arranged for a screen suitable projector and an operator for the evening.

2. Letter to Mr. Ray Morris thanking him and Mr. David Mc. Allister for their help in organizing the very successful outing to the Riverina.

3. Letter to Radio Station 4QS. for advertising our meeting and November outing.

Moved Mr. D. Pfrunder and seconded Mr. J. O'Donnell that the Inward Correspondence be received and the Outward be adopted.... Carried.

Business out of the Correspondence.

Moved Mrs. M. Marsden and seconded Mrs. J. Harslett that a letter of thanks be written to Rotary for their interest in our concern about clearing trees on the Southern approach to Stanthorpe..... Carried.

Treasurers Report:-

BALANCE Oct 4th 1979.

Income for month Subs....

Room Collection:

Total

\$154.44

\$34.00

\$3.25.

\$191.69.

Expenditure for the Month

Magazine Postage

Room

Magazine printing for July, Aug, Sept

and Oct

\$6.25

\$5.00

\$12.00

Treasurers Report Cont:-

Magazine Covers Printing.
Total Expenditure..

\$27.70.
- \$50.95.

BALANCE NOVEMBER 1979..... \$140.74.

Accounts to be passed for payment November Meeting Rent \$5.00
Mrs Janet Hockings Postage Nov. Bulletin \$7.30
Moved Mr. D. Pfrunder and seconded by Mr. B. McDonagh that the
treasurers report be accepted and accounts passed for pay-
ment..... Carried.

DECEMBER ACTIVITY :- Christmas Breakup Party.

DATE:- December 9th. 1979.

LOCATION:- Residence of Colin and Janet Hockings.

There will be no meeting during December and January.

NEXT OUTING:-

DATE FEB. 24th 1980.

LOCATION DALVEEN AREA.

LEADER Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL

DEPARTURE TIME:- 9 am Weeroona Park and 9.30 am. at 'Mountain
Park' gate

NEXT MEETING:- WEDNESDAY 27th Feb. 1980

C.W.A. ROOMS at 8pm.

After meeting Programme to be arranged. (see

MEETING PROGRAMME

It is now known that the Guest Speaker, Dr. Tony Ewart, whom we hoped to have is unable to come owing to an overseas commitment. However he has expressed a willingness to come later in the year.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Archer are going to fill the breach and provide us with an illustrated programme which will include something of their recent visit to Tasmania.

We do, I believe, owe a debt of gratitude to our members and other local people, who at very short notice provide us with interest and pleasure.

Report on the Outing. To Eight Mile Creek and Donnybrook. This outing was enjoyed by 30 adults and 9 children. The party transferred to 4WD vehicles for the outing. The developed country on the properties of Mr. Jim McMeniman, the Saxby Bros and Mr. Leo McMeniman through which the party traversed was looking really excellent after rain and applications of Superphosphate in August. There was an abundance of Blue-bells and Chocolate flowers on much of this country. The 21 mile excursion which led through a range of developed country to inhospitable terrain included a 3 1/2 km return walk to Donnybrook Falls, and a short stop at the Eight Mile Creek Falls on Washpool Ck. This outing was particularly rewarding for our bird watching enthusiasts. Leader of the outing Mr. Cec Curr expressed appreciation to Mr. Noel Barker, for his help on the outing and to those who supplied 4WD vehicles, Mr. Roger Newman, Mr. Keith Mungall, Mr. Laurie Passmore and Mr. Alex Harslett. Also thanks and appreciation to the landholders who allowed us on their properties Mr. J. and Mrs. Leo McMeniman and the Saxby Bros.

David Pfrunder.

MINUTES CONT:-

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

The after meeting programme was Guest Speaker Mr. Mervyn Fletcher, who presented an outstanding illustrated lecture entitled "Local Bird Life and Its Environment". Our congratulations to Mr. Fletcher on his infinite patience and immaculate detail, portrayed in his slides.

David Pfrunder Hon. Secretary,

BIRD LIFE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT.

It was a great pity that member numbers were down for Mr. M. Fletcher's presentation, "Bird Life and its Environment". It was an outstanding programme, depicting local species and including some rare local species and unusual visiting birds, recorded pictorially. The quality of the pictures was superb. Many hours of careful

observations, combined with technical excellence provided pictures which were not only so beautiful aesthetically, but also depicted very characteristic behaviour patterns and attitudes, highly descriptive of each species. Mr. Fletcher accompanied his magnificent pictures, with a commentary of splendid value. Members are privileged to share some of his years of patient observations, recorded with such precision. These observations were coupled with some astute and perceptive thinking by Mr. Fletcher, and gave real food for thought to some of us. Mr. Fletcher's family has been resident in this district for several generations and they have always been keenly interested in the area and its history. Mr. Fletcher was a co-researcher in the Ballandean history, which is very well regarded publication. He gave the same meticulous care to this job as he has to his bird observations and bird photography.

Jean Harslett.

MEMBERS NEWS.

The President and members were delighted to learn of the engagement of Mr. David Pfrunder and Judith Sweet and wish them all the best for the future.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Some attractive books for Nats have been published recently and include:-

1. A new addition of Alec Chisholm's, "Land of Wonder" is an anthology of selected short nature writings in Australia. This new addition by Angus & Robertson publishers is attractively illustrated.
2. "Birds for Beginners" by J. D. Macdonald (Reed. Pub.) is a joy for any degree of interest in birds and tells of fascinating habits.
3. Native Plants of Qld Vol 1. by Keith Williams has many hundreds of Qld wildflowers illustrated with his beautiful photographs. He could not get a publisher and made a very courageous bid and printed 2,000 copies himself. He had a rewarding win and sold them, and I believe they are now almost collectors items.
4. The Scenic Rim by Tony Groom and Of dreams and Discoveries by poet Heather Farmer and Steve Parish, are both publications of delight and by people dedicated to National Parks and Nature.

LEEDS CASTLE BIRD SANCTUARY by Mr.BILL BARKER.

Visitors to England, especially if they are interested in birds, would be well advised to put a visit to Leeds Castle, high on their priority list as a place well worth seeing. Leeds Castle, strangely enough, is nowhere near Leeds but is situated very handy to London, near Maidstone in Kent. It is one of the oldest of England's stately homes and was first built in the reign on William the Conqueror's son, Henry I, by a Norman Baron nearly nine hundred years ago. It came into the possession of the Royal Family some hundred and fifty years later on the accession of Edward I. It became the Royal home of Edward I and his Queen, Eleanor of Castile. This was the Queen who died in the English countryside north of London & on the journey to Westminster Abbey where she is buried. Edward had raised at each place the coffin rested a cross in her memory. Some of these crosses, known as Eleanor Crosses, still survive, the final one being the well known Charing Cross in London.

Leeds Castle remained the property of the Royal Family until the reign of Henry VIII. He was having serious problems in Ireland (has a familiar sound) and after Sir Anthony St. Ledger rendered great service to the Crown there, he was rewarded by being granted ownership of Leeds Castle. After three hundred years of Royal ownership, during which it was part of the very history of England seeing the birth of the Tudor Dynasty itself, it passed out of Royal ownership.

The Castle passed through the hands of various great families until 1926 when it was bought by Lady Ballie, daughter of Almeric Paget, Lord Queensborough, who was a grandson of Field Marshal Henry William Paget, Marquis of Anglesea who commanded the British Cavalry at Waterloo. Lady Baillie completely restored the Castle and she lived there longer than any owner in all its recorded history. On her death the Castle was requested, at her request, to the nation for public benefit in perpetuity. To-day it is open to the public and its great conference room is used for research seminars and recently was the setting for a top conference of nations trying to solve the Israel, Egyptian problems.

*That is a brief resume of Leeds Castle historically and now a little bit about the Castle itself. It is built on two small islands on the Len River and the river and lake forms a complete moat, one of the few left in the British Isles. The grounds are extensive and wooded. The sides of the river have been landscaped and have waterfalls to add to their attraction. It has been called the loveliest castle in the world. It will be autumn in England now and this place with trees in autumnal tints would be one of the glories of the world.

Lady Baillie was a bird lover and she brought rare birds from all over the world for the gardens and lakes. The water bird collection has to be seen to be believed, all roaming free and visitors can walk around amongst them. Flocks of Canada geese are grazing in the grounds also White Swans, our Australian

LEEDS CASTLE BIRD SANCTUARY by MR. BILL BARKER. Cont:-

Black Swans with healthy youngsters, Siberian Geese, Snow Geese, Chinese Ducks and Geese, and even our familiar Maned Geese and Chestnut Teal are swimming around as if they had never known any other place to live. Probably they were born and bred at Leeds so really did not know any other home.

Lady Baillie was also a parrot lover and had very extensive ranges of parrot breeding aviaries erected. Her collection included many Australian parrots including Princess Alexandras and Scarlet Breasts. She also had commissioned an artist to paint studies of the birds for her and these are hung in the extensive hallways in the Castle.

There are also many varieties of Pheasants and amongst the smaller birds are Weavers and Whydahs. All in all this Castle is a delight to visit and being such a short beautiful drive from London should be a must for any visitors to England.

Bill Barker.

Thank you Bill for widening our field of interest. Both you and Zaid. e. ewman have recently given us food for thought and provided us with a media of international understanding that common interests in the field of nature studies provide for us.

Ed.

STOP PRESS!!FEB. OUTING

Details for this outing from John, today as are below:-
Depart "Weeroona Park " 9am (NOTE TIME) arrive "Mountain Park" gate on the (Old Dalveen - Warwick Road) which goes between the railway and the Dalveen P.O. Arrive Mountain Park Gate 9.30pm. proceed down the Warwick road with John about 1½ miles where cars will be parked. Quite a nice area to browse if walk too long, near Wallaby Rocks & the Gorge. Here the cars will be left, and the walk of 6-7 miles will commence, with a packed lunch carried. The walk will traverse three distinct geological types which will, of course, display different kinds of small plants and trees, a fragment of "gallery" or "riverine scrub" and an old sand-stone quarry. Bird life is reported as good. It will be a circular route, to provide greatest variety.

Perhaps one of the most important aims of the day for concerned Naturalists point of view, will be provided by the thoughts, observations and experiments which will be provided by our Leader John O'Donnell. John holds a degree in Agriculture from the Qld. Uni. and as an agritologist he received an appointment with the D.P.I. at Charleville for several years. John on his property "Mountain Park" is putting personal theories to work. We will see the effects of regeneration, also a fenced off area (hitherto stocked) and other land usage. John has been breaking new ground in these fields (regrettably he adds, that it has not been done long since) John's philosophy is a compromise with grazing and the protection of wild-life and the habitat plus the care of the soil. Bold and constructive thought, and the results of which should be very pertinent to all members.

See you there.... Yours in Nats. Jean.