



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter February 2003

What a group – would do anything to keep the cattle off the Ridge! (joke.)

Previous Sunday meeting, January 19th

We had the foresight to cancel. ☼

Next Sunday meeting, February 16th

- 1.30 - 4 pm
- meet at Kathner Street
- bring hat, gloves, drink, snack

we've chosen Kathner Street because we know there is access and space to park. ☼

Future programme

March 23rd to be decided (note change from 3rd Sunday)

April 20th to be decided. ☼

So.....

A lot has happened since the last newsletter and my train of thought is still pretty fragile.

Our rangers, Vivien and Steve are now back in town. Steve sounds pretty flat having seen the ashes of every home he'd ever had and all the places he'd worked in. Anne (Mt Taylor) says Vivien is looking drained and exhausted. They'd switched from firefighting to caring for injured animals and now they sift through overflowing in-trays and relive weeks of accumulated horror.

Now for the good news.

I've had some long talks to **Bess** who wants to hear about you all and sends her love. As soon as things start greening she'll be coming to check up, and then we'll have a grand party.

There were reports of three **house losses** to our members along the Ridge, and they were all mistakes. As far as we know there was some damage but nothing more serious. Gösta and I couldn't get home so we were taken to the

safety of Doyle Terrace of all places. With a hose in one hand and a handbag in the other, while Gösta cleared the gutters of leaves; we watched as the Ridge burned.

Back home - our dear scavengers have retrieved the microscope stand, but the *Flora of NSW* is ash. The greatest challenge I now face is getting on the right bus going in the right direction. Stories – we've all got stories. Bring them, with your photos to the next get-together.

Steve is leaving things to our own judgement at the moment, but suggests we hold off doing anything – observe, take photos and **be patient**. Watch out for unstable trees, and hot spots.

There's a lot of **roofing iron** at the Arawang end that we may be able to help clear later.

David (Monkman St) reports the vegetation gone on Cooleman Trig but the pamphlet box still standing. And the return of a family of **tawny frogmouths**.

David (Lincoln Pl) may still have a copy of the **tree survey** but we haven't been in touch yet. Even if he does, all Tina and Meghan's work was entered too late. So much hard work, but we'll be able to rethink the project.

We've gained three **new members** and it will be great to meet them.

Some **gates** are sagging on burned posts, and I understand fencing is being attended to so that horses are kept under control.

A puzzling sight was the bright blue **ice cream** containers placed carefully on the cinders – one near Malcolm's, and another under the Yellow Box in the Olympic site. They're full of fresh water, and have carrot and celery pieces scattered near by. Thanks, someone. We saw a kangaroo.....

Judith, who was doing a vegetation survey of all the nature parks last year, plotting tree species on an aerial photo of the Ridge, is offering to help us get the **herbarium** going again, and even has some specimens she collected earlier.

What's around



Family: PAPAVERACEAE

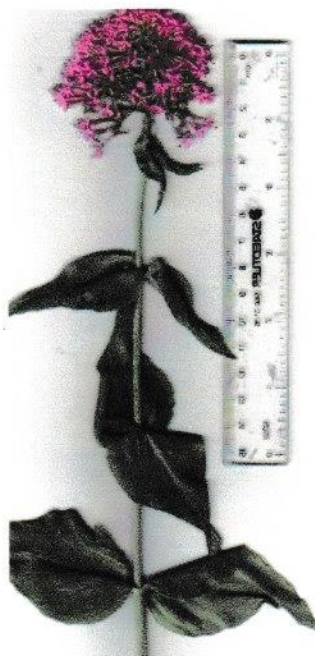
Papaver somniferum

Opium Poppy

papaver: L. poppy

Annual; pink petals with a purple spot at base

- from Asia, Europe



Family: VALERIANACEAE

Centranthus ruber

Kiss-me-quick

ruber: L. red

Perennial herb with pink to red flowers

- from Europe, Mediterranean

Web page

Karina has redesigned our web site. Do have a look. It has a much cleaner, brighter look, is easier to navigate, and clearly laid out. The photos of the Ridge before the fire are cheering to see: there are also a few taken after the fire for comparison. We look forward to seeing photos of future regeneration – they will no doubt be very inspiring. The address is www.webone.com.au/kpelling.

It has been suggested that it would be good to scan any available photographs of Cooleman Ridge, taken any year, and burn them to CD for archival purposes. This can be done over the next few weeks. Contact Karina at 62882097 or kpelling@webone.com.au if you have any photos to loan. You could request a CD for yourself to be done at the same time.

That's about it for now. ☺

You probably all know by now that Gosta and Pauline lost their house in the fire. The whole group joins in wishing them both all the best for the future. - Karina

Anne, from **Mt Taylor**, is keen to have the various Park Care groups working together on larger tasks when the time is right. They've documented the loss of lots of kangaroos. ☼