

HIGH PLAINS PLANT HOUNDS
28th December 1944 - 9th January 1945.

bonvoyed by Mr. Fitzgerald from Glenmore Vale. Chief occupation - wandering over the High Plains more or less on hands and knees examining the flora. Have almost worn a track over to the plot fenced in by the S.E.C. Here, much to the amusement of the fencing gang, we laboured hard. Are now familiar with sphagnum beds, drifts, and very, very conscious of soil erosion! The Scout Hut, with its many home comforts has been much appreciated, although botanists sharp wits have proved no match for blunt axes! Although the interior has at times resembled the early seed stages of a forest complex, our specimens are now safely pressed, packed and ready for transport to the University of Melbourne. Climatic conditions have favoured out door work, but nights have taxed our entire ^{over baggage} wardrobe. Between intensive plant tracking, have visited Pretty Valley, Mt. Bope, Rocky Valley, Mount Helson, and (almost) Spion Kop. Views from here superb, but as yet no member of the party has risen simultaneously with

the sun on top. Dinner on New Year's Day was something to remember, and the age of our bread has been camouflaged by Mrs. Trimbles marvellous blackberry jam. Have not yet been reduced to living off the land, although eggs of *Aesopae rubra* flourish outside the back entrance, and mint bush only awaits the sauce. Hope to visit our plots again next year. Many thanks for the use of the hut - has proved ideal for eccentric ecologists.

Everett Wykes.

Ken Matheson.

Valerie Hartung.

Denise Hebbard.

M. Fawcett Omeo

alias Miss Washaway

alias The Erosion Girl.

[CHIEF TRACKER DOWN]

HIGH PLAINS HOUNDS AGAIN
January 9 - January 25. 1946

Reinforcements arrived on 9th January to assist Miss Fawcett on the experimental 19 acres fenced in by the S.E.C. last year, and to make a preliminary ecological survey of parts of the Bogong High Plains. Fifteen assorted botanists, ^{zoologists} geologists, soil experts, + much assorted baggage, travelled from Wanganella to Bogong township, where we were fed by the S.E.C., hence by the prison van to the track above the Scout Hut. After dragging ourselves + baggage through the bogs, moss beds and rocks in the dark, we were met by Miss Fawcett (Miss Washaway) and Dr. Andrew and family, who had prepared the hut for us.

Once again weird scenes occurred on the experimental plot, with several teams random sampling the vegetation by a new method, the Levy point. Soils were sampled, while Mr. Willis combed the High Plains for new or depauperate species,

Vast stores of food arrived regularly from the S.E.C. Bogong, while Mrs. Simpson

was cook-in-chief for the sickener.

Our picnic tea-supper in the moonlight at Wallace's hut foreshadowed a grim night, half of our camp being smitten by a dire disease, cause unknown, suggestions varying from tinned sausages, antimony poisoning, flies, sun stroke, polluted water. After three days only 2 of our company remained untouched, while 3 had left to resume other work in Melbourne. Gladly and queer were the victims, and sleeping arrangements were greatly altered. Under Mrs. Trimbles direction, we gradually got to our feet again, to continue work on the plot, in wet, cool weather, a contrast to the first hot week.

Trips made by members varied according to personal energy - Mt Bogong, Big River, Timm's Lookout, Ropertree, Hulse, Prette, Rocky Valleys, Lope, and, for the whole 16, to the plot, many many times, seldom by the same route.

Mrs. Thompson and the Thomas, members of the Soil Conservation Board, + Geoff Thompson, arrived for the conference of cattlemen the evening before the bulk of the party left.

The conference of the S.C.B. + Cattlemen took place on the plot on 24th January, proving of great interest to both parties.

This area is now minus many plant species, zoological specimens, rocks, soil samples, destined for the University of Melbourne.

Thanks again for the use of the hut - and to the S.E.C. for our adequate supplies and transport arrangements.

Personnel

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---|---|
| Missing friends | L. T. Patton | { | departed 16 th January transported by S.E.C. arrived 25 th January. |
| | G. W. Keppen | | |
| | J. A. Willis | | |
| | J. S. Turner | | |
| | E. J. McFerran | | |
| | M. J. Mathieson | | |
| | J. Anderson | | |
| | V. F. Hanly | | |
| | S. B. Dicker | | |
| | P. Brohn | | |
| | F. Simpson | | |
| | G. R. Wykes. | | |
| | H. Morris | | |
| | A. V. Kennedy. | | |
| | L. O. White. | | Maurie Fawcett, (Florence Nightshade) |
| | R. G. Thomas. | | |
| | G. J. Thompson. | | |
| | S. J. Thompson. | | |

Jan 10 - 30th 1947.

Melbourne University Botany School

For the third year in succession the Scouts have been good enough to allow us the use of their fine hut. This time a party of 21 - 9 men and 12 women arrived by laboratory truck and S.E.C. blitz-buggies for three weeks work on behalf of the Soil Conservation Board and the S.E.C. We have had 3 weeks magnificent weather and the flies this year have been almost non-existent. We offer our best thanks to Mr & Mrs Trimble and Mr Tom Jones for their friendly cooperation, to the S.E.C. for frequent & regular supplies by jeep and to the Rovers for the use of the finest hostel in Victoria.

L

J. Turner.

F. Simpson

M. Simpson.

M. Fawcett.

B. V. Tennessy.

L. C. Tucker.

K. Cowan

A. Weatherhead

Lilian White

N. Millis

J. Mathieson

G. Wykes

Departed Jan 20.

K. M. Turner

J. H. Willis

Departed Jan 24.

B. Overall

J. Anderson

J. S. Anderson

F. McDonald

T. Detham

D. Caine

A. Costen (N.S.W.).

Visitors from Soil Cons. Bd. + Water Commission 20 - 22nd Jan.
R. G. Thomas and I. Forbes

Jan 12th - 28th 1948

Melbourne University Botany School

Our fourth visit (see back) began in wintry weather. For the first 3½ days we had rain, snow, hail and fog and we even had to light the small stoves to keep warm. A 3 weeks' store of wood was laid in and a record rubbish hole was dug. The weather then improved rapidly and for the rest of our stay it was perfect. Work on the plots kept us fully occupied and the longest trip was to Fainter. Some of us saw the sunrise from Mt Cope (Jack). We all missed the Trimble family and "Jonesy". There were a few visitors from Cope and Wallaces and the S.E.C. Camps and the mystery of the missing baby (Cope Hut) was not solved.

Left Thursday 22nd (with Mr G.T. Thompson & Mr B.G. Thomas, Soil Cons. Board. who stayed 2 days with us).

N.F. Millis

P. Bibby (Nat. Herbarium)

D. Stewart (London)

Left Monday 26th

M. Simpson (Ag. School)

T. Denham (")

C. S. Elliot (Hobart)

D. Elwood (B. School).

Left 16th for Bogong Sled Bay

F.M. Burnet

Left Wed. 28th

John S Turner. D.M.C. Donald

H. Lawar. S. W. L. Drury.

B. J. Fennelly. T. Blayford.

A. H. Weatherhead

Iona MacLennan

J. P. Dicker.

B. K. Barnardiston. (Herefordshire.

M. Fawcett. England)

L. D. White. E. Langonet Steiner

Jan 18th - Feb 5th 1949

Melbourne University Bush School

Our fifth visit has been as pleasant as all the others, in spite of regular thunderstorms, mostly at 3 pm we have had little rain. An advance party of five arrived on Jan 18th, the main party came late on Jan 22nd; later Mr Thompson of the Soil Conservation Board joined us, with 3 more members of the party. The work on the plots was varied by one two-day walk to Fainter and another to Bogong. Most of the party also attended a Cattlemen's Field day organised by the S.E.B., attended by about 50 people. Our only visitors were Mr Bill Faupel and Mr Jack Greenwood, who later demonstrated "Salting" and acted in the Western Chow moire produced and photographed by Mr Power of the State Film Centre.

Rates = poor season - singularly few plants in full flower. Several species new to the High Plains discovered - the total for the district now being 263.

We again express our very great gratitude to the Rotarians for the use of their excellent hotel.

| | | | |
|--|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| T.S.Turner. | David G. Weeks | Judith Mackay. | In absentia |
| Mr. Fawcett (Owner), Bertha Barnardston. | | Iona MacLennan | Flora MacDonald |
| John H. Chinnar. | Charles Ethelio B. | H. Weatherhead | Margaret Storer |
| J.R. Hennessy | J.H. Willis | Dorothy Ellwood. | Ringsley Rowan |
| R.E. Winkworth | J. Clifford. | David Ashton. | G.T. Thompson |
| Donald Woodall | | | A.R. Power. |

P.S

5th Feb:

Apologete to the next visitors to the hut for the condition of the fire place and the floor. The main party went off leaving me with no broom & no fire shovel to do the final tidying up. — Sorry

W. Fawcett

Tue 17th - Feb 8th. 1950.

Melbourne University Botany School.

Our sixth visit was spoilt only by one weeks rain and mist at the end of the trip. A rear party had to remain to get the truck up the hill. After a difficult start, superb driving by Stagan Weatherhead blazed a new trail to Wadaces!

The main party which left on Tuesday 17th consisted of:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Mr S.H. Fawcett | Mr Leslie |
| Dr. Dr. Goodall | Mr Clifford |
| Miss. Dicker | |
| Miss Macrae | |
| .. Macleman | |
| .. Duigan | |
| .. Jones | |
| .. Russell | |
| The rear party: | |
| Mr Weatherhead | |
| Mr Mundworrn | |
| Mr Rowan | |

Again would like to thank Lovett for use of the Hotel

Melbourne University Botany School. Jan 15th - 30th 1951

Most of the Botany School party, accompanied by sundry Zoological specimens, arrived on January 15th, and were joined next day by 5 members of the hierarchy who had walked up via Mt. Bogong. Seventeen people comprised the original establishment, the 9 members of which were confined to the lower storey at night. Two of them, who were deprived of bunks, served as experimental trampling plots in the mornings. A high culinary standard was maintained by Mr Schuster, whose olfactory examination of all items of diet precluded any possibility of internal incident. Additional excitement in the kitchen was produced by the attempted preparation of a vat of custard by a member of the party who, in her own interests, will remain anonymous.

Injuries were at a minimum, the only serious casualty ~~being~~ being incurred as a result of an injudicious visit to a section of the swimming pool ~~sightfully~~ belonging to the bull ants.

Highlight of the ~~cultural~~ world was the boma grown by Dr Watt, the claims of literature being satisfied by a series of memorable Professorial Bulls. The tame artist of the party created cartoons dramatising all events of social & political importance.

In spite of the entertainment provided by bull ant bitten botanists, custard-curdling contests and soup-sniffing seances, work at the plots was not neglected. Promptly at 12 o'clock, sun-burnt bodies in ancient attire could be seen facing the East, hawing three times, and, led by the Great White Queen, reciting "px, px, px, pi, ki, k2 tog." in unison. These mystic utterances were engraved by the Recorders, carried home, & in the evenings used as a basis for the great Telephone Book Game, upon

which, however, no betting was permitted (in accordance with the S.E.C. rules governing conduct in the area.)

Suzanne L. Dugan
Lona MacLean
Helen Purnell
Jan Matheson
Sophie Drucker.

David Ashton.
David Weeks.
D. A. Schuster.
Pvt. Michael
dyer B. Thrower
W. G. Peter

Mairie Fawcett

Left for Melbourne ~~26~~ 1.51

J. S Turner
A S Watt (Cambridge)
C L Birch (Sydney)
J W Goodall
A G. Willis

Jan 16th - 31st 1952

Melbourne University Bdary School party.

8th Annual Visit A small party this year.

Generally fine warm weather throughout except for one wet day (mainly fog) and a wet afternoon. Meanwhile Melbourne reached 110°.

For the first 3 days we were accompanied by Dr Linnon Ellison of the U.S.D.A. forestry service, whose ^{experience} note of erosion in sub alpine grassland in Utah was of great value.

Mr & Mrs Kay from S.E.C. also spent a day with us. A party of 4 made the only expedition - to the Bucketby Plain.

Our best thanks to the Rovers for the use of the Chalet once again.

John S. Turner.

Ch. T. T. T. T. T.

David Ashford

Helen Penell

Tom Skewes. [Cook per excellence!] even tho' she made a det!!

Barbara Penwell?

E. G. Ristainy