

THE NATURALIST IN BENDIGO

A History of the
Bendigo Field Naturalists Club
1945-1985

Ray Wallace

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By

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Preface by Professor R.W. Home

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1986

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For Kaye

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The story of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club could only be written with the help of Club members. Official Club Minute Books were the primary sources consulted.

Peter Ellis, chronicler extraordinary, faithfully preserved the Club's archival material over many years and the stories of the preservation of Boyd Street, now Salomon's Gully Reserve, and the Whipstick forest are really his chronicles retold.

Another fine secretary Jack Ipsen, evolved a useful method of filing correspondence which was much appreciated.

Leon Ruedin, Tom Patullo, Peter Ellis, Bill Perry, Bob Allen, Jack Ipsen, John Lindner and Alex Stone all lent valuable photographs. Tom Patullo helped greatly with photographic reproduction.

John Berry gave invaluable help by locating much old and interesting reference material from many different sources.

R.W.

1954

A GALAXY OF GUEST SPEAKERS

The Club in 1954 was addressed by many fine speakers. Charles Brazenor, the mammalogist at the National Museum of Victoria and Deputy Director, spoke on Central Australia. A large number of visitors attended, as they did to hear the visiting American naturalist, Dr. Bailey. The Mayor of Bendigo, Cr. F.W. Clayton, afforded Dr. Bailey a Civic Reception. Dr. Bailey was from the Denver Museum in Colorado and was a guest of the National Museum of Victoria which was celebrating it's centenary. As with most field naturalists functions it was held at the School of Mines, this time in conjunction with the Faraday Club. Mr. A. Baker of the F.N.C.V. spoke to the Club on the theme "How old is Australia?" and Roy Cooper of the Bird Observers Club on birds and wildflowers.

Mr. F. Chambers of the Mines Department gave a Geiger Counter demonstration using radio-active ore and told of the prospecting methods used to find this "valuable" mineral.

The Club had lost its Editor, as Mrs. Penna had shifted to South Australia, and honored Ralph Fields who received an "Award of Merit" certificate for services rendered. The Australian Natural History Medallion nomination was again Ray Littlejohns. Charles Barrett was the recipient the year before. The Club rarely backed a winner.

A Club member, Mr. Knight, expressed a wish to revive the now defunct museum formerly attached to the School of Mines. He stressed its educational value and enquired where the exhibits were dispersed. Nobody knew.

The Bird Observers Club visited the Bendigo district for a day in late August, travelling to Diamond Hill by Souter's bus. The F.N.C.V. visited in mid-October. The Club joined with Ararat on an excursion to Clunes. Ararat's Secretary at the time was Miss Banfield, a relative of "The Beachcomber" E.J. Banfield, whose family lived in Ararat after arriving from England.

The Club ventured to Eaglehawk, Mt. Camel, Meadow Park, Heathcote, Bald Hill, Maryborough and Melvilles Caves amongst other places, in the pursuit of natural history, throughout the year.

The Club's first decade was over. The name had changed stealthily but unofficially, to the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, the new name being used as early as September 1947. Already men such as Jack Kellam, Mr. James, Marc Cohn, Bill Perry, Hugh Milne, Bill Alexander, Frank Robbins, Ralph Fields, Bob Allen, Arthur Ebdon, and Jack Ipsen, and women such as "Peggy" Penna, Elsie Flanagan, Jean Ipsen and Mrs. McMaster had given much. Many were to live on and give half a lifetime of devotion to what must have been a great love. The endeavour did not lessen under Bob Allen's leadership for the year.

1955

A QUIET YEAR

This year proved to be quiet under the leadership of Frank Robbins. The Club again combined with the F.N.C.V. and the B.O.C., a phase of Club activity which has seemingly almost disappeared. A quiet year, the great tussles were yet to come.

THE AUTHOR

Ray Wallace has lived in Eaglehawk all his life, and is a well-known historian, book collector and naturalist.

Ray is a past-President of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club and also held the same position with the Bendigo Native Plant Group and the Bendigo Branch of the Fellowship of Australian Writers. A long time member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, he is also President of the Eaglehawk Tree Lovers' Society. Presently he is the President of the Eaglehawk Branch of the Australian Labor Party.

Ray is an Honours Graduate in History at the University of Melbourne, and is author of the books; Eaglehawk: Sketchbook of a Golden Past, The Centre of a Community, and Sydney Flat Gold to Woodvale Green.

Currently he is involved in post-graduate research, on the history of the dichotomy between the amateur and professional naturalist in Australia, in the University of Melbourne's History and Philosophy of Science Department.

PREFACE TO "THE NATURALIST IN BENDIGO"

Only in relatively recent times have white Australians come to appreciate the beauty, and also the fragility, of the Australian bush. Through unfamiliarity and ignorance, much has been lost forever.

At first, those who studied Australia's fauna and flora were concerned simply to collect specimens and send them to the experts in Europe who would describe and classify them. The setting in which the colonists found themselves was to them an alien one, to be understood by relating the elements of which it was composed to the relevant European forms. It was a long time before significant numbers of white Australians came to take the Australian environment as their point of reference for what was natural and familiar. Even in the 1930s, when a child was given a nature book for Christmas or birthday, this was much more likely to describe the inhabitants of British woods and hedgerows than it was Australian forms.

By contrast, what brings the members of a district field naturalists' club together is a shared love for their local environment for its own sake, and a desire to know it better. The formation of clubs such as the Bendigo Field Naturalists' Club, whose history is set out in the following pages, is thus part and parcel of a new consciousness among Australians that they are in fact Australians and not transplanted Europeans. To those who joined such clubs, the Australian countryside was no longer a mere pale reflection of a more familiar European scene, but had itself come to be seen as home.

And what a beautiful home it is! Yet all too often that beauty is extremely susceptible to destruction. The efforts of members of the Bendigo Club to protect the more vulnerable parts of their local environment provide a running thread in the club's history, and for this we all owe them a great deal. Fortunately, more often than not they have succeeded in their efforts.

We are all likewise indebted to Ray Wallace, who has brought the Club's history to life in the pages that follow, for thus making known to a wider public this noteworthy slice of Bendigo history.

R.W. Home
University of Melbourne
June 1985

A PREAMBLE

The quiet bush was disturbed by the soft ululations of the laughter of the women of the Jajawerong people as they went about the business of collecting the vegetable food which made up a large part of their diet. They would have collected a number of different plant fruits, these first botanists, whose botanical skills had been honed over many millenia. They, both the men and women, were compiling orally their medicinal herbals and lists of edible plants. Perhaps for far longer than the Greeks and Romans. Some of the earliest, such as the Greek Theophrastus, were botanising for three centuries before the birth of Christ. The fruits of the Cherry Ballart, Sweet Quandong, Leafless Currant-bush, and the sporocarps of Nardoo would have been utilized by the Jajawerong. Probably the men hunted the larger game species, for example the Black Wallaby. One could have heard the wild harsh music made by the Red Wattlebirds as they feasted in the blossoming Ironbarks. The music is still with us today, but gone are the Jajawerong people, for ever into their Dreaming.

In faraway England the Society of Apothecaries of the City of London held their first Simpling Day some time in May 1620, the year the "Mayflower" made her fateful voyage to America. The first Simpling Day commenced at 5 a.m. The Society's function was to exercise control over the practice of what we would recognise now as the professions of Medicine and Pharmacy. The drug plants or Simples were the raw material of those professions and the apprentices had to learn them thoroughly. The organised excursions, which continued for many years, were primarily to instruct the apprentices in botany.

Two centuries later local Field Naturalist Clubs were founded in most of the leading English towns and cities. Their expenses were high, their transactions were expensive to print, the cost of hire for commodious and comfortable halls was also high. The high subscription led to a form of exclusivity. Simultaneously societies with the same aims, but a very different social structure, sprang up in the blackest manufacturing districts. It was their custom to meet in public houses to exchange botanical specimens and pool their slender resources to buy some of the latest natural history publications. The bodies these meetings of the mill-workers formed often bore quite bizarre names. The Independent Oddfellows Arms Botanical Society and the Black Cow Botanical Society were named after the hotels their respective members met in. The Ashmolean Natural History Society of Oxfordshire dates from 1828. Still flourishing, it is the oldest surviving local natural history society.

As part of the Empire on which the sun never set, the state of Victoria followed many Victorian English traditions and values. By 1880 the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria was formed. It was followed a couple of months later by the Geelong Field Naturalists Club.

The discovery of gold in 1851 in Bendigo was an obvious stimulus for the geological study of the district. A. Selwyn was writing of the geology and mineralogy of Mount Alexander and its surrounding district by 1853. The geologist Brodie was doing work here in 1859 and E.J. Dunn wrote of the geology of Wild Duck Creek in 1892.

Other fields of natural history besides geology were receiving attention. The local naturalist W.K. Bissill of Ravenswood was writing of spring wildflowers in The Colonial Monthly during 1867. Walter Bissill, who lived at the well known property "Belvoir Park", was a very competent botanist indeed. In The Bendigo Advertiser of Thursday, January 23, 1868, appeared a botanical article of great expertise entitled "Wild Plants Noticed Near Ravenswood, Lockwood and Mandurang".

Bissill used many interesting vernacular names. *Leptospermum myrsinoides* known to us as Silky Tea Tree was known by Bissill as Maid Marion. Bissill is buried in the Kangaroo Flat Cemetery. Walter Froggatt spent his boyhood in California Gully, where his father managed the Nelson mine. In The Victorian Naturalist he remembered the Bendigo Whipstick of his boyhood in the 1870's, in an article entitled "The Whipstick Scrub 65 Years Ago". Froggatt was the Government Entomologist for a long period and wrote a number of works on the subject including some for beginners.

Mr. Nancarrow of Neilborough was contributing articles to the early numbers of The Victorian Naturalist. H.W. Ford of Kangaroo Flat had studied the birds of the Marong area and published "Bird Notes From Marong" in The Emu during 1908. F.L. Billingham wrote of the butterflies of the Castlemaine district in 1895 and the birds of that district in 1896, both papers appearing in The Victorian Naturalist. The Bendigo medico Paul Howard MacGillivray, a Scot from Aberdeen, had contributed a number of papers to the scientific journals of the day and was a highly regarded scientist. He was a friend of Darwin's protagonist, Professor Huxley, and was a member of both the Linnean and the Royal Society. Naturally enough MacGillivray, whose father once walked 800 miles to inspect the ornithological collection at the British Museum, was a prominent member of the Bendigo Science Society; indeed he was the founder. This Society had a natural history section. William MacGillivray, his father, became Professor of Zoology at the University of Aberdeen, his native city, and on field excursions was said to walk his students into a state of limp helplessness. As Curator of the Edinburgh Museum he befriended Charles Darwin during Darwin's student days. Such was the background of Paul Howard MacGillivray, who during the 1890's delivered a paper on the snakes of Bendigo.

Tom Tregellas of Epsom became well known for his studies of the Superb Lyrebird in Sherbrooke Forest and the Tregellas tree, a huge, old fallen, hollow specimen, became his home in the 1920's and 30's at Kallista in the Dandenong Ranges. The "Tregellas Tree" was eventually named "Menura". Tom Tregellas, who died in Melbourne, aged 74, in October 1938, was involved in the Australian Broadcasting Commission's national broadcast of the Superb Lyrebird's song. The broadcast from a living bird, direct, in its natural surroundings was the first ever made. "Menura" was eventually proclaimed an historic site by the Forests Commission of Victoria. This act commemorated the work of a lifetime making a study of the Superb Lyrebird.

William MacGillivray (no relation to P.H.), the Broken Hill naturalist, had studied the Bendigo avifauna in the years 1892-93. Some thirty years later, the Bendigo pharmacist, D.J. Paton, whose pharmacy was situated at the corner of McCrae and Bull Streets, was making a detailed study of the Whipstick flora. "The Plants of the Whipstick Scrub, Bendigo" was read before the F.N.C.V. on the 8th October, 1923, and appeared in The Victorian Naturalist of February 1924. An article of great charm and depth, it was obviously a solid base for the later botanists to build upon. Paton said of the Whipstick flora; "Its study has been to me a source of great pleasure - - -". Many later Field Naturalists would echo such sentiments. Another fine botanist who worked in the Whipstick Scrub was the Melbourne based Mr. Tadgell of the F.N.C.V. He would catch the early Sunday morning train from Melbourne and walk from Bendigo Railway Station to the Whipstick where he spent the day botanising before walking back to the station in the evening. He was then a very old man, but in the 1930's he met the then young Bill Perry, who transported the old gentleman to the Whipstick on the pillion seat of his motorcycle. What a boon this must have been for the old botanist.

By the 1920's Marc Cohn was contributing to The Emu. Present day members, Jack Ipsen and Hugh Milne, were also contributing to the same journal during the 30's. Bill Perry, a Life Member of the Club, was contributing papers to The Victorian Naturalist by the 1940's, on many topics, in particular the wattles of North-central Victoria which he specialised in. Hugh Stewart of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria, after spending many hours in the bush with these men, was a persistent advocate for the formation of a local club.

The renowned naturalist, Phillip Crosbie Morrison, gave an effervescent, influential lecture in the Little A.N.A. Hall during World War II. This public lecture had a profound influence on many people, including those men who met by chance in the Whipstick Scrub whilst pursuing their study of natural history during the 30's and 40's. They included Jack Ipsen, Hugh Milne, Jack Kellam, Bill Perry, Marc Cohn, Mr. James and Hec Cahill amongst others. There was no organised study of natural history in Bendigo. Crosbie Morrison pointed out that, maybe, now the time was ripe.

BE FAVORABLE TO BOLD BEGINNINGS (VIRGIL)

The small, scattered group of individuals who met, often by chance, in the Whipstick Scrub had made the decision to form a cohesive, organised club. This club was to be known as the Field Naturalists Club of Bendigo. The brilliant lectures by Phillip Crosbie Morrison on natural history were now making their effect felt.

On August 13, 1945, Marc Cohn invited those interested in the study of natural history to meet at his home in Hope Street to test the feelings regarding the formation of a local natural history club. All who were present were in favor of a club being formed. Marc Cohn was elected as the Club's first President. Mr. Hugh Milne was Senior Vice-President and Mr. Jack Ipsen was elected Junior Vice-President and Secretary. Other officials elected were; Mr. H. Stirton, Treasurer, Mr. P. Richardson, Assistant Secretary, Mr. W. Perry, Librarian, Mr. A. Ebdon, Assistant Librarian, Mr. H. Milne, Editor of Journal. Two Committee men were also elected; Mr. R.J. Eddy and Mr. W. Alexander. There being no other members present, the committee was three members short. This shortfall was filled at the September meeting when Messrs J. Kellam, L. Elvey and H.E. James were elected to the Committee.

At the Temperance Hall, where the club held its early meetings, the following people were elected as members; Miss E.S. Mason, Mrs. P. Richardson, Miss N. Ebdon, Mr. A.M. Sullivan, Mr. W. Jeffrey, Dr. Sharland.

The Editor of the Journal, Hugh Milne, was quickly into stride, for Vol. 1 Part 1. of The Bendigo Naturalist appeared on the 10th September, 1945. It was a single type-written sheet. The first part of The Bendigo Naturalist was devoted to a report of the Club's first field excursion to Lockwood on the Crusoe Road. Hugh Milne wrote of the birds observed, which included a record of swarming Dusk Woodswallows in a cavity in a large roadside tree. Bill Perry and Marc Cohn furnished a botanical list for the excursion.

Another excursion took place in the first year to Harveys Hill, west of the Eaglehawk Rifle Range. Whip Hill and Diamond Hill were also visited. Diamond Hill was a bus excursion. Occasionally informal outings to the Whipstick were by bicycle. Excursions were held on the first and third Saturdays of each month.

The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria visited the Whipstick and Diamond Hill for the last weekend of October. Both Painted Honeyeaters and Black Honeyeaters were recorded for the weekend. At a public meeting that weekend Ray Littlejohns showed his famed Lyrebird films and Ina Watson of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union took part in discussions.

The specimen table, that peculiar Field Naturalists phenomenon was evident at the Club's second meeting. Jack Kellam displayed Blue-beard Orchid (*Caladenia deformis*), Narrow-leaf Logania (*Logania floribunda*) and Hairy Stylewort (*Levenhookia dubia*). Fungi were shown by Arthur Ebdon. Mr. James displayed pressed wildflowers under cellophane and a specimen of Desert Boronia (*Boronia inornata*). Red Azolla (*Azolla filiculoides*) was displayed by Jack Ipsen.

The second Wednesday of the month has been meeting night of the Club from its inception. Many wonderful speakers have informed and delighted members through the years. The first lecture to the Club was delivered by Hugh Milne.

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His topic was "Birds of the Bendigo District". The November meeting heard Bill Perry speak on the Whipstick flora. He also covered the eucalyptus industry and Whipstick history.

By mid-November 1945 the Club had a Credit Balance of £8.5.0 and had opened an account with the State Savings Bank. The Library, under the charge of Mr. Perry, consisted of a single volume on Australian butterflies donated by Marc Cohn, who also donated the first twelve months' rental for the Temperance Hall, where the Club held its meetings. At 1945's conclusion Arthur Ebdon was appointed Press Correspondent. It was a bold beginning.

1946

THE HORIZON WIDENS

The Club's first meeting for 1946 was graced with a lecture on bees by Jack Ipsen who was to be the Club's second President. Meetings and speakers were advertised in the Bendigo Advertiser. Other speakers for 1946 included Mr. C. White, whose topic was "Geology of the Bendigo District" and Mr. Frank Robbins "An Introduction to Botany". To round the year's speakers off, A. Dunbavin Butcher, biologist of the then Fisheries and Game Department, addressed the Club at the December meeting, which was thrown open to the public. Dunbavin Butcher was later to be Director of his department. Question nights were also a feature of early Club activities.

A theme familiar to those who have served on syllabus committees was already making itself felt. Where to go and who to hear caused much discussion. At all events they found plenty of places to visit in 1946. Their January excursion was to Crusoe Reservoir. Bill Perry led an excursion to Lightning Hill to study spiders. Jack Kellam led an outing to Flora Hill where the members made a study of minerals. Other outings took place to Meadow Park, Eaglehawk Creek, Peiper's Hill, Flagstaff Hill, Diamond Hill and Mount Alexander Koala Sanctuary. The March excursion was an ambitious one indeed. Spiders were studied at Lightning Hill, then the group went birding at Sedgwick and concluded at the Botanical Gardens, White Hills. An important innovation was made in July 1946 when occasional full-day Sunday outings were introduced. By October the Club had adopted a scale of donations to the Club for outings. The levy was to be one halfpenny per mile, with a minimum of sixpence.

By September another important change took place. The meetings were now held at the School of Mines in McCrae Street. This was to be the Club's home for many years. After twelve months' existence, the body could boast 29 full members and 18 associate members. The finances stood at £14.4.3.

The Club was involved in discussions on formation of the new library in Bendigo. Marc Cohn represented the B.F.N.C. In September 1946, the Club's library was merged with the Civic Library.

At the July meeting it was moved that Common Heath (*Epacris impressa*) be recommended as Victoria's floral emblem and that Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) be the State tree emblem. The Secretary, Mr. H. Stirton, was instructed to inform Mr. Jessop of the National Herbarium of the choices made.

The Club's contacts outside the district were widening. In 1946 the Club's botanical correspondent, Frank Robbins, was writing on behalf of the Club, to Mr. Alf Swaby of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria on botanical matters. Both bodies undoubtedly gained much from this exercise. Alf Swaby, incidentally, was founder of another group which was later to have much beneficial influence - the Society for Growing Australian Plants.

1947

THE DAWNING OF THE CONSERVATION MOVEMENT

The Club in this year had a number of exciting visiting speakers including that expert on the native bee fauna, Tarlton Rayment, a practising apiarist. His topic was "The Rise of the Social State in the Insect World". John Bechervaise, author, explorer, historian and naturalist spoke of Rodondo Island in October of that year. The ties with the F.N.C.V. were proving productive in providing excellent speakers for the Bendigo Club. They joined with the F.N.C.V.'s October outing to the Whipstick and participated in a joint excursion to Inglewood with the Bird Observers Club.

Other external activities included a two guinea donation to the Mount Alexander Koala Park. The Club also sent warm congratulations to the Ballarat Field Naturalists Club upon their formation in 1947.

On an internal plane the exhibits on the specimen table were still an important feature of Club activity. Early in the year it was graced with two lively young brown snakes. Gentler things appeared upon it in gentler seasons. In Autumn, Autumn Greenhoods (*Pterostylis revoluta*), Hairy Flower Wasps, eggs of Water and Orchid Spiders, along with two Jewel Beetles, were displayed at one meeting.

Excursions took place to Laanecoorie and Flagstaff Hill amongst other places.

Under the leadership of Bill Perry, with John Kellam Secretary, the Club's membership had climbed to seventy-five. Much more importantly, however, the Club was becoming involved in its first conservation issue. Illegal picking of *Boronia anemonifolia* at Diamond Hill was of great concern to the Club. Action was taken by drawing the attention of the Forests Commission of Victoria to the fact. Even stronger action was to be taken. By December 1947 the Club offered the services of eight Honorary Rangers to the Forests Commission of Victoria to assist in policing the Wildflowers and Native Plants Protection Act. The offer was accepted and the Rangers duly appointed. The Bendigo Naturalist, still a one page sheet, had lived on into 1947.

1948

THE INVOLVEMENT DEEPENS

The concern of the Club for conservation issues increased notably. (This seems to reflect the fact that field naturalist activities and conservation are symbiotic. This relationship has continued right up to the present.)

A discussion took place in May regarding certain areas of bushland adjacent to Bendigo being declared sanctuaries. The following month saw a sub-committee formed and by August it had recommended that Diamond Hill be declared a sanctuary under the control of the Fisheries and Game Department, which was duly contacted. Events moved quickly, if negatively, for by September, the Club received a letter from the Department declining to proclaim Diamond Hill a sanctuary. Extremely disappointed, the Club wrote to the Department expressing its regret and asked that the decision be reconsidered. The Club suggested that Redvers Eddy be an honorary inspector. This suggestion was duly acted upon and Eddy was appointed in October, but Diamond Hill was still not declared a sanctuary.

Redvers Eddy was a delightful character with a store of home-spun bush philosophy and humor. He built up a marvellous reputation as an ornithologist and was also a surprisingly good botanist. Much of his work was achieved around his beloved Diamond Hill, where he lived in his humble home as a genial recluse. His series of photographs of the Mistletoe bird is probably still unsurpassed. He had an uncanny empathy with birds and the wildings would often perch on his fingers. He combined too with Frank Cusack to produce a recording of Australian bird calls. His working life was spent in the Chemistry Department of the then Bendigo School of Mines and Industries. As a corollary to this he also spent some time teaching science at the Bendigo Junior Technical School. This writer was one of his students there and was often asked; "did he practise the art of writing with the rough end of a pineapple". One subtle hint that you might not have been the science student you should, led to you being told that he would enquire of Toma (the eucalyptus distiller), over the weekend, if there were any vacancies at all for a cutter. Known to most Field Nats as "Red", to generations of Junior Tech boys he was known affectionately as "Strappo". The Redvers J. Eddy Memorial Trophy presented for the best bird slide in the "Photoflora" competition was a worthy tribute to a fine naturalist.

The Club received a circular regarding a conference in Melbourne on National Reserves from the F.N.C.V. Heavy emphasis was placed on the Bendigo Whipstick.

The Club, in this year, also actively opposed the use of live birds at gun-club shoots. The Chief Secretary, Mr. Dodshun, was informed by the Club of its opposition.

This year had many fine speakers. They included A. Dunbavin Butcher, F.P. Morris, who spoke on sharks, marine fish and crustaceans, Marc Cohn, who spoke on the butterflies of Bendigo, and Hector Cahill, who lectured on Australian Aborigines, displaying many artifacts from his own extensive private collection. Hector Cahill was a fine botanist and his garden was probably the first in Bendigo to be devoted entirely to native plants. The specimen of Bendigo Waxflower (double form) growing in his garden was considered by many to be the finest growing anywhere. In sporting circles, as a youth, Hector Cahill was considered to be at least as good a long distance cyclist as Sir Hubert Opperman. Hector Cahill also made known the occurrence of Sticky Boronia (*Boronia anemonifolia*) and Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) at Jackass Flat. This was to be of use later, in the Dai Gum San/Sydenham Gardens dispute.

The Club supplied Bendigo wildflowers for nature displays held by the Barrier F.N.C. (Broken Hill), Ararat F.N.C. and the F.N.C.V., respectively.

In November the Club decided that its emblem would be either the Black (Kamarooka to us) Mallee (*Eucalyptus froggattii*) or the Yellowtufted Honeyeater. The Club emblem is still officially undecided though the Bendigo Waxflower is regarded by many as the district's, if not the Club's, floral emblem.

1949

CONSERVATION AND FIELD NATTING - ONE

Forty-four members faced 1949 under the leadership of John Kellam. The financial situation at the close of 1949 saw the Club with a credit balance of £43.18.11 on its Bank Statement.

The Illawarra Naturalists Society sent the Club a complimentary copy of Ellis McNamara's Birds of the Illawarra District. Very useful and friendly co-operation existed between the Club and that excellent magazine Wildlife, edited by Crosbie Morrison. In the Club's early years the magazine faithfully published details of Club outings in its pages.

Mr. H. Stewart was acting on behalf of the B.F.N.C. on the National Reserves and National Monuments deputation to the Premier, Thomas Luke Hollway. The local M.L.A., Bill Galvin, later to be Chief Secretary in the ALP State Government, pledged support for the protection of wildflower areas of significance. This was becoming a key issue with the Club.

Jack Kellam and Frank Robbins were appointed by the Club to define the extent of the occurrence of Club-leaf Phebalium (*Phebalium obcordatum*) at Flagstaff Hill and assess the likelihood of any danger to the plant's continued existence. Diamond Hill was again being evaluated, as were areas such as the hill near the wireless beacon at Maiden Gully, and the area east of the racecourse at Epsom. A part of the North Bendigo area was also considered an important wildflower area worthy of further study. On a practical level members were erecting signs in bushland areas which proclaimed that all wildflowers were protected by law. The signs were supplied by the Forests Commission of Victoria.

The Elegant Parrot, a very rare species for this district, was reported from North Bendigo at the October meeting, whilst Jack Ryan was corresponding with the Club seeking information on the Chestnut-tailed Heath Wren. The botanists had two fine discoveries during their excursion at Bonemills Road (now Olympic Parade) in September where they found the Hairy Geebung (*Persea rigida*) and Sweet Quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*) growing.

Apparently the proposed adoption of the Yellow-tufted Honeyeater as the Club's emblem had fallen flat. By September 1949 the Club had made a request to the F.N.C.V. to use that body's emblem Common Correa (*Correa reflexa*).

The Ararat F.N.C. nature show, for which the Bendigo Club had undertaken to supply wildflowers was cancelled due to the outbreak of Poliomyelitis.

This dread disease also inhibited the Club's efforts to further interest the Gould League in this area, as it felt it inadvisable and undesirable to congregate children in large numbers whilst the polio epidemic threat hung over the heads of all.

Hec Cahill's lecture on the Australian Aborigines the previous year was apparently very successful and a repeat was requested and given. Mr. Cahill spoke on their way of life, displaying many weapons and implements and gave an exhibition of fire-making, twirling a fire-stick which by friction created heat, and hopefully a spark. The minutes remain silent on this point.

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1950

A TENTATIVE FIRST NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

The Club conducted a survey in this year to establish whether or not three bird species were truly migratory. The surveyed species were the Rainbowbird, Pallid Cuckoo and Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike.

The Club was to be concerned yet again, and indeed right through the years to the present, with the battle for the retention of habitat and the preservation of indigenous flora. The Forests Commission was requested to fence off a small area of Boronia at Diamond Hill. This proposal was supported by the local Labour member Bill Galvin M.L.A. and Miss W. Waddell of the Native Plants Preservation Society in Melbourne. Winifred Waddell was contacted to instigate police enquiries regarding the illegal sales of Bendigo Wax Flower at the Melbourne Market and to achieve maximum press coverage pertaining to this illegal practice.

The members in 1950 had many visions of things they wanted done. They wanted the Diamond Hill and Spring Gully Reservoir areas to be declared wildlife sanctuaries. They also wished for prohibition of the sale of wildflowers in Victoria. They wanted the Boronia patch and its surrounding areas at Mandurang, and the Phebalium patch at Flagstaff Hill, fenced and set aside as wildflower reserves. Existing reserves, such as that at North Bendigo, were to be extended. The bushland areas south of Quarry Hill, Spring Gully Reservoir and Diamond Hill were to be retained as green belts within the city. The Club was also concerned that the control of the granting of leases, e.g. grazing, in State Forests and Crown Land was not strict enough and often given without consideration to environmental impact and other public interests. This problem is still present today. Less pleasing was the Club's willingness to experiment with the growing of Ovens Wattle (*Acacia pravissima*) in the Whipstick, however little ever came of the scheme.

The B.F.N.C. again had its own library. Apparently the ties with the Municipal Library were severed. The Club also discussed the celebration of Arbor Day and the role it would play on this day in 1951, the year Bendigo would celebrate its Centenary.

Many excursions were enjoyed by members this year. The following lists the venue, leader and topic: Mt. Herbert, Mr. Eddy, General; Lightning Hill, Mr. Perry, Geology; Sugarloaf - Axedale, Mr. Kellam, Exploratory; Marshalls Swamp, Tandarra, Mr. Milne, Birds; Diamond Hill, Mr. Eddy, Birds; Whipstick, Mr. Kellam, Hakea Wattle and Birds; Break O' Day - Crusoe Reservoir, Mr. Ebdon, Exploratory; Wedderburn, Mr. Ipsen, Botany; Sandy Creek, Mr. Cohn, General; Turpins Falls, Mr. Alexander, General; Huntly Road, Mr. McMaster, Botany; and to round the year off on Saturday in the second week of December under the leadership of Mr. Robbins, the Club visited Rosalind Park and Lake Weeroona on a botany excursion. This excursion, and the interest it created, led to the eventual labelling of the trees in Rosalind Park. In the first half of the year excursions were also held at Cherry Tree, Emu Creek, Kennington, Derrinal and Meadow Park.

Speakers and topics were; Mr. Robbins - "The Development of Life - The Animal Kingdom", Mr. Alexander - "Queensland Plant Life", Mr. Kellam - "Astronomy", Mr. Eddy - "Hylacolas", Mr. Perry - "Golden Web Spiders", Mrs. Penna - "Fairly Wrens", Miss Ina Watson C.S.I.R.O. - "Birds". A Question Night was also held, something the present syllabus could well cater for. Mr. Jack Kellam in his Presidential Address urged the Club to support the National Parks and Monuments Committee and spoke of the duty of members to help preserve native fauna and flora. He advocated the formation of a Junior F.N.C. in a vision of the years to come.

1951

TWO FIRSTS - A LADY PRESIDENT AND A NATURE SHOW

The Club, with its strong core of foundation members from the North Bendigo Railway Workshops, elected Mrs. M.J. Penna as President for the year 1950/51. She was the first of the Club's two lady presidents, despite many talented women, such as Evelyn Leamon, Gwen Marrows, Glenise Moors and many others having been long standing Club members over the years. Elsie Flanagan was elected President in 1957. Female members have been poorly represented.

Mrs. Penna, an Eaglehawk woman, mastered more than one metier. She was a capable ornithologist with a particular predilection for the beautiful little Fairy Wrens. In later years she has lived in South Australia where she has become a well known writer of science-fiction novels.

The Scotswoman, Margaret Kennedy, found the first payable gold on Bendigo along the creek of the Bendigo Valley in 1851. The word "Gold" rang throughout the world. Bendigo was born. To celebrate its birth a century before, in 1951 the City of Bendigo plunged into a week of functions and nostalgia. As part of the celebrations the B.F.N.C. staged a Nature Show and conducted a Nature Trail. The Show was held at the Memorial Hall on Monday and Tuesday the 8th and 9th of October 1951. The function was opened by Sir George Lansell. The weekend prior had been spent by members collecting wildflower specimens from surrounding bushland. Permission for this activity had been given by the Forests Commission of Victoria. The Commission, through two of its staff members Messrs Incoll and Ure, put on a fine display of various Eucalyptus as part of the show. The Ararat F.N.C. also kindly provided a selection of Grampians wildflowers. Co-operation between the B.F.N.C. and Ararat had been cordial and mutually beneficial over many years.

Phillip Crosbie Morrison gave a public lecture as part of the Club's contribution to the celebrations. The Nature Trail and excursion were held the following Sunday.

Hector Cahill displayed his renowned fine collection of Aboriginal artifacts and gave a demonstration using an Aboriginal fire stick at the show. The public could examine a display of local birds' nests collected by Redvers Eddy, or a display of spiders arranged by Bill Perry, and enjoy a demonstration in the use of the microscope under the tutelage of Bill Perry and Bob Allen. There were also arrays of annual wildflowers and nature drawings and a series of bird skins from the then National Museum of Victoria by the courtesy of the Curator of Birds, Mr. Warren Hitchcock. The masterly bird photographer, Marc Cohn, also had an exhibition of ornithological photographs. On the Monday night nature films were shown. One could enjoy all of this for one shilling if an adult or for only sixpence if a child.

The invaluable Ralph Fields supplied many of the wildflowers and the Bendigo Horticultural Society loaned the Club its tables for display purposes. Publicity was obtained from the local radio station and the press and circulars were sent to all local schools. One need only say it was a success.

The Club had, up to date, no success regarding the Bendigo Whipstick. The Forests Commission had still failed to fence off an area of Club-leaf Phebalium (Phebalium obcordatum), one of Victoria's rarer plants. The Whipstick story continues to the present day, with notably more success.

Two great naturalists were honoured by the Club in this year. Firstly Keith McKeown, the Australian authority on spiders, was the Club's nomination for the Australian Natural History Medallion, which was subsequently awarded to the native bee expert, Tarlton Rayment. Secondly Mr. Harold Stewart of the F.N.C.V. was awarded an Honorary Membership of the Bendigo Club in recognition of his services to the Club as a spokesperson to the National Parks and Monuments Committee. Mr. Stewart also represented Field Naturalists' interests when he appeared before the Parliamentary State Development Committee.

During the year excursions were held to Lightning Hill, Tandarra Swamp, North Huntly, Kangaroo Flat, Kennington Reservoir, Spring Gully, Maldon, Costerfield, Melvilles Caves and Jobs Gully. Lectures on white ants and bees gave the Club an entomological flavor for the year. A White Goshawk had been shot in Bendigo during May, a rare species in the district. It was acquired by Mr. Eddy and forwarded to the Museum.

1952

BONDS STRENGTHENED WITH FORESTS COMMISSION

Although the Forests Commission had still failed to fence the wildflower areas at Diamond Hill and Flagstaff Hill, an event took place strengthening the ties with the Club and the Forests Commission. The Club was greatly concerned at the destruction of flora and wildlife occasioned by the cutting of firewood in bushland at Spring Gully. A letter of protest was sent to the Minister of Forests, Mr. A.E. Lind, who was a member of the John Cain Sen.'s Labor Government. The cutting of timber was immediately stopped and Mr. Lind further said that if, in the future, further problems arose he would gladly discuss them with the Club. The Club received valued support on this issue from the Bendigo Fly Fishing Club.

The R.A.O.U.'s bird observation project involving the Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike, Rainbowbird and Pallid Cuckoo had now drawn to a close at the end of the year. Jack Wheeler of Ballarat was supplied with information of Club activities.

Still on the conservation front, the Club sent a letter to both the Police and the Education Department regarding the prevalence of shanghai usage around Bendigo and asked if a shanghai was an offensive weapon under the Crimes Act. The Education Department took strong action but apparently the Police showed little interest. All district schools were sent copies of a pamphlet produced by the Native Plant Preservation Society urging appreciation of native flora. Prickly Pear was spreading in the Parish of Whirrakee: this was quickly checked by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey. The Club had also become affiliated with the Victorian National Parks Association and the Native Plant Preservation Society. The National Parks and National Monuments "Standing Committee" which had asked for financial support, was given £2.2.0 from the Club funds. Mr. Hugh Stewart was again the Club's delegate on the committee.

John Ipsen in his Presidential Address stressed the need for grazing licences to be revoked in Crown Lands and State Forests.

Two men who were to become well known to the B.F.N.C. made first acquaintance in 1951. Jim Willis and Crosbie Morrison have probably done more than anyone to lessen the gulf between the professional and amateur naturalist in Victoria. Jim Willis has been a friend of long standing to the B.F.N.C. In 1952 he led a joint excursion of the Maryborough and Bendigo Clubs.

As spring in the year 1952 drew to a close Dr. R. Melville of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, visited Bendigo, when he explored Sedgwick and the Whipstick Mallee. His remarks were used almost 20 years later as part of the Club's submission to have the Whipstick's great significance recognised.

Mr. Bill Alexander, who was responsible for the Club meeting at the School of Mines and Industry, died in 1952. He was a foundation member. Mr. Keith McKeown, who was the Club's nomination for the Australian Natural History Medallion, also passed on during 1952.

Mr. Jack Ryan, who had spoken to the Club on honeyeaters, noted that during March and April of 1952 he had found 26 honeyeaters' nests in use. Large flocks of White-browed Woodswallows were noted at Jackass Flat Reservoir and White Hills in mid-winter.

1953

THE VISIT OF PROFESSOR HARTSHORNE

A third famed naturalist became involved with the Club in 1953. This was the renowned ornithologist Charles Hartshorne. Hartshorne was Professor of Philosophy at Emory University and was a double Fulbright Scholar. His chief ornithological interest was the songbirds of the world. Like Melville, his opinions also played an important part in the Club's submissions of 1957 and 1971 to have the Bendigo Whipstick preserved as an area of great biological and aesthetic value. Hartshorne rated two of the Whipstick's songbirds amongst the world's best: they were the Crested Bellbird and the Grey Shrike-thrush. He was escorted through the Whipstick and Sedgwick by Redvers Eddy.

Apart from Hartshorne's visit, this year, under the presidency of Bert Henkel, was a quiet one. Mrs. Penna was now the Editor of The Bendigo Naturalist. There was concern over illegal shooting at May Swamp. The Police proved co-operative when contacted and it was suggested to the Chief Secretary that members of the Club be appointed Honorary Rangers. Present day members will know this as a recurring problem.

Jack Ipsen led an excursion to May Swamp where members observed many migratory waders. In very recent years there has been an upsurge of interest in the Club of this fascinating group.

The local Labor Party M.L.A., Bill Galvin, was commended by the Club on his stand preventing the destruction of native fauna in the Grampians. Galvin had been a consistent advocate for the cause of conservation, and a letter to him from the Club expressed its appreciation.

The Club continued to be involved with other groups. They supplied the F.N.C.V. with wildflowers from the Bendigo district for their show. They were also now acting as agents for the Victorian National Parks Association. The Club also hosted 60 members of the Society of German Speaking Migrants who visited Bendigo.

Ray Littlejohns, of Superb Lyrebird fame, was the Club's nomination for the Australian Natural History Medallion. Seed distribution, astronomy, and Western Australian wildflowers were some of the topics spoken on.

1954

A GALAXY OF GUEST SPEAKERS

The Club in 1954 was addressed by many fine speakers. Charles Brazenor, the mammalogist at the National Museum of Victoria and Deputy Director, spoke on Central Australia. A large number of visitors attended, as they did to hear the visiting American naturalist, Dr. Bailey. The Mayor of Bendigo, Cr. F.W. Clayton, afforded Dr. Bailey a Civic Reception. Dr. Bailey was from the Denver Museum in Colorado and was a guest of the National Museum of Victoria which was celebrating it's centenary. As with most field naturalists functions it was held at the School of Mines, this time in conjunction with the Faraday Club. Mr. A. Baker of the F.N.C.V. spoke to the Club on the theme "How old is Australia?" and Roy Cooper of the Bird Observers Club on birds and wildflowers.

Mr. F. Chambers of the Mines Department gave a Geiger Counter demonstration using radio-active ore and told of the prospecting methods used to find this "valuable" mineral.

The Club had lost its Editor, as Mrs. Penna had shifted to South Australia, and honored Ralph Fields who received an "Award of Merit" certificate for services rendered. The Australian Natural History Medallion nomination was again Ray Littlejohns. Charles Barrett was the recipient the year before. The Club rarely backed a winner.

A Club member, Mr. Knight, expressed a wish to revive the now defunct museum formerly attached to the School of Mines. He stressed its educational value and enquired where the exhibits were dispersed. Nobody knew.

The Bird Observers Club visited the Bendigo district for a day in late August, travelling to Diamond Hill by Souter's bus. The F.N.C.V. visited in mid-October. The Club joined with Ararat on an excursion to Clunes. Ararat's Secretary at the time was Miss Banfield, a relative of "The Beachcomber" E.J. Banfield, whose family lived in Ararat after arriving from England.

The Club ventured to Eaglehawk, Mt. Camel, Meadow Park, Heathcote, Bald Hill, Maryborough and Melvilles Caves amongst other places, in the pursuit of natural history, throughout the year.

The Club's first decade was over. The name had changed stealthily but unofficially, to the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, the new name being used as early as September 1947. Already men such as Jack Kellam, Mr. James, Marc Cohn, Bill Perry, Hugh Milne, Bill Alexander, Frank Robbins, Ralph Fields, Bob Allen, Arthur Ebdon, and Jack Ipsen, and women such as "Peggy" Penna, Elsie Flanagan, Jean Ipsen and Mrs. McMaster had given much. Many were to live on and give half a lifetime of devotion to what must have been a great love. The endeavour did not lessen under Bob Allen's leadership for the year.

1955

A QUIET YEAR

This year proved to be quiet under the leadership of Frank Robbins. The Club again combined with the F.N.C.V. and the B.O.C., a phase of Club activity which has seemingly almost disappeared. A quiet year, the great tussles were yet to come.

At last the reserves at Diamond Hill and the Whipstick were fenced, and as Mr. Kellam stated; "reasonably manproof". A letter of appreciation was sent to the Forests Commission. Mr. Newman of the Forests Commission of Victoria spoke on "The Indirect Value of Forests to Man" referring particularly to water and soil conservation and climate.

Bill Perry spoke on the history of the Whipstick: already the great accumulation of knowledge had begun. His book, Tales of the Whipstick, was still twenty years away.

Another excellent speaker procured by the Club was the Palaeontologist Edmund D. Gill, at this period Curator of Fossils at the National Museum of Victoria. He was later Deputy Director. Gill's topic was entitled "Search for Prehistoric Aborigines" and through the medium of film featured the archaeologically significant Keilor Skull's discovery. Gill later dated the Keilor Skull at c. 15,000 years old.

A feature of the Club in its early years was the fact it often attracted talented young people, only to lose them after a period, when they were forced to leave the district to further their education or seek a career. Adrian McKinlay was a typical case in point, joining the Club as a junior and then leaving the district to successfully pursue university studies.

The Club expressed its ire and concern when a senseless killing spree was indulged in by R.G. Casey, later the Right Hon. Lord Casey, in Queensland, where a Wedge-tailed Eagle shoot was organised.

Frank Robbins in his Presidential Address, like Jack Kellam a few years previously, spoke on the need to foster young naturalists and record the known natural history data of the Bendigo district so that it could be handed on to those to come. How admirably he achieved this in later years with his botanical survey maps of the Bendigo Whipstick.

1956

THE FIGHT FOR THE FORESTS BEGINS

The Club was heavily involved in 1956 in the establishment of a Victorian National Parks Authority. It had written to the Bolte Liberal Government, and Mr. A.J. Fraser, the Minister for Lands, urging such a Bill be implemented. A sub-committee of the Club put their case to the local M.L.A.'s; Messrs Stoneham and Stanistreet, and M.L.C.'s; Messrs Grigg and Smith. The Authority was set up under the National Parks Bill.

Another sub-committee was set up to frame policy for the creation of two areas in this district as National Parks. The first was to be in the Mandurang-Diamond Hill area which consisted of forest, scrub and hilly country. The second area was to embrace four square miles centred around the Skylark Road/Flagstaff Hill area towards the northern end of the Whipstick. The Marong Shire made strong objections to this 4 square miles park. The sub-committee which defined the area were Bill Perry, Jack Kellam and Frank Robbins. The Club sought support from the Country Womens' Association, Professional Womens' Association, Faraday Club, Teachers' Union, Boy Scouts' Association, A.N.A., F.N.C.V., B.O.C., and the local shire councils. The then Fisheries and Game Department also supported a National Park in the region.

The friendship and co-operation between the Club and the B.O.C. and the F.N.C.V. was still self evident, with these organisations visiting the area again throughout the year. The well-known naturalist and writer Donald McDonald visited the Club, and S.R. Mitchell of Frankston, winner of the Australian Natural History Medallion, spoke to the Club on "The Stone Tools and Artefacts of the Aborigines". He compared Australian relics with those of other countries. Another excellent speaker was Alex Burns, of the National Museum of Victoria, who spoke on the butterflies of North Queensland. Mr. A. Ebdon thanked him on behalf of the Club, and the many visitors from the School of Mines, the Faraday Club and various schools. Many Club members were, of course, speakers. Mr. Eddy, for example, spoke on birds, which he illustrated with coloured slides. Mr. Eddy was the first owner of a colour camera in the Club.

The President, Mr. R. Holmes, gave a Presidential Address on the subject of the Great Barrier Reef. The Club's Treasurer, John Ipsen, reported that the Club ran at a loss for the year, and suggested economisation of expenditure.

1957

THOUGHTS OF NATIONAL PARKS

The Whipstick, to the north of Bendigo, supports Mallee vegetation on Ordovician clay. In its southern extremities there are areas of Red Ironbark forest and in the far northern sections at Kamarooka are areas of Box forest.

It is a unique area, of the utmost importance for conservation, and is of national significance, being the largest area of mallee vegetation growing on Ordovician clays, pockets of which occur in several scattered islands throughout North-Central Victoria. These pockets are seen as residual vestiges of a more ancient extensive vegetational cover that may have existed over much of the state. This diverse flora and avifauna has come under the notice of world experts.

By 1957 it was becoming obvious that the Whipstick was little suited for agricultural pursuits. The Club applied to the newly formed National Parks Authority, through the Director, Phillip Crosbie Morrison, for a Whipstick National Park, in four square miles of state forest. The sub-committee of Kellam, Perry and Robbins used their own and other members extensive knowledge of the area, as well as the comments of Professor Hartshorne and Dr. Melville, in presenting their submission. Redvers Eddy drew the plans showing the areas the Club wanted set aside at Diamond Hill/Mandurang and the Whipstick. A timely article by Mr. McNeil, of The Bendigo Advertiser staff, also won the Club's aims a good deal of sympathy.

Under the Presidency of Elsie Flanagan the Club cleared and burned debris around the Taradale plant sanctuary, and once again nominated Ray Littlejohns for the Australian Natural History Medallion.

The Club, over the years, had many travel talks. Geological, botanical and general excursions took place throughout the year. No outside speakers addressed the Club in this year.

1958

THE WATCHDOGS BARK

The Club's meetings in its early days were always very formal, not as in later years where administrative business was dealt with at committee meetings. During 1958 the starting time of meetings was put forward to 7.15 p.m. to better dispose of business.

During 1958 the country was saddened by the death of Crosbie Morrison. At its meeting the Club observed a minute's silence as tribute to its friend and mentor.

The watchdog still had to keep its ears pricked and bark where necessary. An example was the clay-pit, which appeared one bright day, in the proposed national park at Diamond Hill. This brought quick protest from the Club to the Bolte Liberal Government. The advantages of flora reserves were being spelt out practically when the condition of the flora within the fenced area was contrasted to the degraded flora without at Diamond Hill. It became apparent how important protection of some form or another was. The Club realised it only too well. The rare Prickly Wax Flower (*Eriostemon pungens*) was being endangered at Diamond Hill.

The National Parks Authority received the Club's submission in March. A minute of appreciation was moved by the Club to its Secretary, Arthur Ebdon, in recognition of his work with the National Parks submission.

Many local and state-wide organisations were behind the Club in their National Parks bid. So were most local councils. One exception was the Shire of Marong which was, at best, tardy in its support.

Bulldozing operations on private land, where a fine stand of Whipstick *Westringia* (*Westringia crassifolia*) existed, was causing the Club concern. One of the Whipstick's rarest plants, it was of prime importance that it be saved. The Club President, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Henkel approached the landowner, Mr. Hartland, to see if there was any possibility that the bulldozing in the area might be stopped. After amicable discussion Mr. Hartland readily agreed to preserve the area in question.

The Club made no nomination for the Australian Natural History Medallion for this year. Excursions were held amongst other places, at Mt. William, Mitchell's Falls, Lake Cooper, Lyall, Fosterville, Mt. Korong and Taradale.

1959

THE YEARS ROLL BY

Attendances at meetings in the Club's early years were small, generally below 20. At the February meeting 26 people attended and the Minutes made reference to this large attendance. The Club finances however, were giving the Treasurer, Jack Ipsen, some concern and an increase in membership fees was approved by the members. Membership was 15/-, Associate membership 5/-, and Junior membership 2/6. Jack Ipsen and Arthur Ebdon were long-serving as Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Bert Henkel of the Department of Crown Lands and Survey was President. Bert too, had had a couple of years with the Secretary's pen.

The Club was enthusiastically involved in the Crosbie Morrison Memorial fund organised by the National Museum. It donated £5.5.0 of its funds, and with public subscriptions was able to hand to the appeal committee a total of £13.1.6.

Jack Ipsen's talks on the R.A.O.U. campouts held throughout Australia, were always an enjoyable Club activity and were always illustrated with slides of nests, birds and plants. Prickly Wax Flower (*Eriostemon pungens*) at Diamond Hill was being almost eaten out by rabbits. The area was fenced by the Club, which sought permission to fence the area after the fence was already erected.

1960

THE OLD GUARD CARRY ON

The Victorian National Parks Association was now actively pushing for national parks and had a delegation to meet the Premier, Henry Bolte. Mr. Hugh Stewart was the B.F.N.C. delegate. Concern was expressed by the Club that land was still being taken up in the Whipstick whilst it was under consideration as a national park. The Forests Commission and Lands Department made comforting noises and said further alienation was unlikely. Dr. Len Smith, the Director of the National Parks Authority, visited Bendigo to examine the proposed national parks areas at Diamond Hill and the Whipstick. Seemingly, little came of the visit.

The Club protested at the Bendigo City Council's proposal to cut down trees in Rosalind Park, so nothing is new. The street trees debate of 1985 has its precedent. The Bendigo Advertiser was still publishing natural history articles, articles by members, and the proceedings of the Club's meetings, often under the auspices of Stan McNeil, whom a former Editor, Cyril Michelsen, regarded as probably one of the most brilliant journalists ever employed by the paper.

A former President and Secretary, Bert Henkel, had died. A memorial scholarship was instituted in his honour by the Bendigo Technical College. Arthur Ebdon had just completed a six years term as Secretary. The President, Bert McMaster, had been Treasurer for 14 consecutive years. Jack Ipsen had served as Treasurer for some years and took over as Secretary in 1960/61.

The Club nominated an old friend, Jim Willis, for the Australian Natural History Medallion for 1960.

Outings were held to Lyall Glen, Harcourt, Heathcote, Maiden Gully, The Organ Pipes, Tooborac and Meadow Park, where earlier in the year a pure white Welcome Swallow was recorded by Jack Ipsen.

1961

STILL QUIETLY FLOW THE YEARS

The debate with the Bendigo City Council over street tree maintenance continued into 1961. The Bendigo Tree Preservation Society was formed and warmly supported by the B.F.N.C. Many Field Naturalists were members of the new Society. Both bodies saw a planned, integrated tree planting policy as vital. The botanist, Frank Robbins, had sent specimens of a small plant with gay yellow flowers to the National Herbarium. Collected at North Huntly, it proved to be a species of introduced Iris, *Galaxia fugacissima*, and was previously unrecorded for Australia. Robbins had first noted the plant in 1955.

Hugh Stewart of the F.N.C.V. wrote excitedly to inform the Club that Leadbeater's Possum, long presumed extinct, had been rediscovered by a young naturalist near Marysville. The young naturalist was Eric Wilkinson, later to become a Club member and eventually President and Editor of Whirrakee.

Redvers Eddy was busy studying the Mallee Fowl nesting mounds at Wychitella. He was engaged also, with Frank Cusack, in the recording of Australian bird calls which were eventually produced in 1964 as a 12 inch Long Playing Record. Using the best electronic equipment then available, Cusack and Eddy's record was among the first to be made commercially available in 1966. They had been inspired by the visit of Professor Hartshorne, the bird song expert, some years previously. Hartshorne later gave them much invaluable advice regarding the choice of equipment and recording techniques. Bill Flentje and Noel Ruedin are two Club members who have continued this interest in recording bird calls.

Mrs. Henkel was awarded life membership of the B.F.N.C. in recognition of the work performed for the Club by her husband, the late Bert Henkel.

Dr. Thomas of the Mines Department gave a lecture on the geology of the Heathcote district and Jack Ipsen occasionally used skins belonging to the R.A.O.U. and the Museum, to inform members on identification of difficult bird families such as Thornbills and Warblers.

The Club was having some intercourse with the Society for Growing Australian Plants, but it was apparently an uneasy relationship for the Club was enquiring of the Native Plant Preservation Society what S.G.A.P.'s activities were.

Specific reasons were now given as to why Diamond Hill and Flagstaff Hill areas should be National Parks. The Diamond Hill area's reservation would protect the Crested Bellbird while Flagstaff Hill was notable for its flora and as a habitat area for the Shy Heath Wren. Efforts were also being made to have the "Stranger" rock at Derrinal preserved. Negotiations were successfully completed with the Water Commission. Bob Allen in his Presidential Address gave a lecture on geological terms. It seemed a long way from Interim Development Orders on the Whipstick and bitter clashes with the Quarry Hill Golf Club.

1962

A FIRST CAMP-OUT

During this period older members will remember meeting in the Anderson Theatre at the Bendigo Technical College, where each spring a pair of Laughing Kookaburras nested. Redvers Eddy conducted the ornithologist and historian, Alec Chisholm, through the Bendigo Whipstick during autumn. Later in the year, as a syllabus item, he displayed his tape-recording equipment and played a selection of bird calls recorded around Bendigo.

The Harold Hall Australian Ornithological Expedition, mounted by the British Museum (Natural History), commenced this year. It had Government support to collect specimens and permits were readily granted by all State wildlife authorities. The Club, at the request of the R.A.O.U., protested to the Bendigo Parliamentarians, Mr. Galvin M.L.A., Mr. Grigg M.L.C., and Mr. Beaton M.H.R., against what it called "unnecessary destruction". Little heed was paid to the numerous protests. The expedition collected many thousands of skins, and as some recompense discovered Hall's Babbler, named after the person who had financed the expedition.

The Government Tourist Bureau in Melbourne was organising natural history tours to various areas throughout the state and in October the Club hosted the Bendigo tour. Bill Perry led the Whipstick section and Jack Kellam and Redvers Eddy led the Diamond Hill section. On the Saturday evening the Club put on a slide show. The weekend was voted highly successful by the visitors.

A flora reserve had been gazetted at Diamond Hill at the request of the Strathfieldsaye Shire Council. The Club, under the Presidency of Athol Thomas, was also busily making arrangements for their first campout to be held at the Headwaters of the Loddon River near Blackwood. Excursions were held to the Terricks, Derrinal, Wychitella and regularly to the Whipstick.

1963

AQUILA AUDAX AGAIN

Needless destruction was epitomised by the Bendigo Advertiser one day during 1962 when a local publican, who had heroically shot a Wedge-tailed Eagle, had his photograph and a feature splashed on page one. The Club rightly registered its disgust at both the newspaper and the publican.

In unexpected places, however, a love of nature could manifest itself. At the Bendigo Training Prison a naturalists' group was formed under the guidance of one of the trade instructors, Club member Bill Perry.

Jack Ipsen and Jack Kellam spoke to the Club on bird-banding techniques and Mr. A. Court of the National Herbarium spoke to members in November.

Ties with the F.N.C.V. had been firmly maintained over the years. The Club joined them on an excursion to Werribee Gorge during 1963.

The Committee, under the leadership of Terry Walker, had now started the practice of meeting in members' homes. Prior to this it had always met at the Bendigo Technical College. Bill Perry, Graham Marshall, and Frank Robbins led eight excursions between them for the year. Excursions were held to Eppalock, Kingower and many other interesting local areas.

1964

THE WHIPSTICK THREAT NOW REALITY

The eucalyptus oil industry was languishing from the 1960's onwards. Rumour was rife that viability in the industry couldn't be maintained, mainly through competition from China. With improving agricultural methods and the increasing usage of fertilizers and trace elements the Whipstick was being assessed with speculative eyes and within a couple of years was in as much peril as the fragile Little Desert. The Club as a whole, was greatly disturbed. How uneasily must President Bill Perry have watched these developments. His local classic Tales of The Whipstick, published in 1975, was a love song written for a great and enduring love.

Frank Cusack and Redvers Eddy had been quietly working away on their record entitled Australian Bird Calls. It was to be released in a couple of years time, and quickly sold out and is now a collector's desideratum. The yearly round of excursions, meetings, went on peacefully, but the peace, like all peace, was soon to be shattered.

The President, Bill Perry, tendered his resignation from the Club much to the dismay of members. Val Wilkinson acted as President for the remainder of the term.

Botany was flourishing within the Club with members such as Kellam, Ipsen, Allen, Perry, Marshall, Robbins, and others, being involved in a census of the plants of the Bendigo district. A Club herbarium under the curatorship of Bob Allen was to be created. What a tragedy that this was never carried out. Bob Allen has created an extensive private herbarium however. Bob Allen had made the first Victorian record of Asterolinon (*Asterolinon linum-stellatum*) from Bendigo.

Another Club doyen, Arthur Ebdon, was awarded a well-earned life membership. A strong publicity drive relating to Club activities was undertaken this year and Photoflora '64 started off what was to be an event in which the Club's many fine natural history photographers participated.

1965

DISCOVERIES OLD AND NEW

The Age of the 9th August 1965 informs us that Prickly Tree Fern (*Cyathea leichhardtiana*) had just been discovered in Victoria: the discoverer was Frank Robbins. Finally the Whipstick Mystery Wattle was identified by Mr. Court at the Herbarium as *Acacia dicformis*. Photoflora '65 was shown in the district, this time with a much smaller profit.

The Club made the decision to run a public slide show of its own, entitled "Bendigo Bushland in Colour", featuring both flora and fauna of the Bendigo region. It was held in the spring of 1965 at MacGillivray Hall. So on top of Photoflora '65, it made for a busy year.

President Colin Bubb in his end of term address spoke on "Soil", a vital life element. Roy Wheeler took the Club "Birdwatching Around Australia" in one of his typically breezy, informative addresses, of which a large number of the public availed themselves in December.

Much more disturbing news was that the Shire of East Loddon were looking at Tang Tang Swamp as a possible tip site. On a brighter note was the joining of the Club by Fred Taylor, who with Bob Allen, Tom Patullo, and later Reg Smart, was to form a talented expert forum on the orchids of Bendigo, finding several new species for the area. Fred Taylor was also instrumental in the establishment of "Kaweka" flora reserve situated on the outskirts of Castlemaine. In Bennett's Road, Mandurang, Fred Taylor had found eleven plants of the double-flowered form of Bendigo Waxflower, away back in 1918. By the 1950's the number had dwindled. People dug them up. Eventually both the Double Wax plants and a number of rare Duck Orchids (*Paracaleana minor*) (also growing in the area) were lost. The Bendigo City Council removed 15 feet of gravel from the area. The gravel, of low quality, was later found to be of no use.

1966

MONEY MAKING - NOT ALL SUGAR AND SPICE

The Treasurer's report of February 1966 was an interesting one: £100.12.6, or \$201.25, stood to the Club's credit. Decimal currency was with us. Ian Maroski, who had done much early work on the Mallee Fowl at Wychitella, joined the Club. Sho Takasuka a Club member, spoke on Central Australia. In this year too, he was elected President of the Huntly Shire.

The Age, of the 30th May 1966, recalled that Frank Robbins had found a new species of Tongue Orchid (*Cryptostylis*) for Victoria in 1935 whilst stationed in a school at Orbost. After many years of hard and diligent work, Frank Cusack and Redvers Eddy's recording of Australian bird calls was available to the public.

Redvers Eddy, along with Foundation President Marc Cohn, was made a life member during the year. Earlier in the year Eddy had visited Geraldton where he was the guest of Bishop Thomas, a cleric formerly stationed in Bendigo. Bishop Thomas was a member of the R.A.O.U. and took Redvers Eddy to areas of ornithological significance around Geraldton.

Fins Fur and Feathers published by the then Fisheries and Wildlife Department, had reached its 100th issue under the editorship of Ina Watson, an old friend of the Club. The Club sent its warmest congratulations. Amongst other excursions, the Club visited the Forests Commission nursery at Mount Macedon, where the utmost hospitality was extended. Bob Allen spoke on the Wyperfeld camp-out as the theme of his Presidential Address.

Pressure for alienation of Crown allotments was increasing in the Whipstick. During this period, 1966/67, a Crown Land applicant had commenced large scale clearing of Whipstick scrub (freehold) in the Parish of Bagshot. Realistically the Club saw it for what it was, a tax dodge. The cleared land, of little value agriculturally, would then be sold to the unwary at a handsome profit.

The Club held a number of special committee meetings to deal with the threat and evolve some strategy in the Whipstick's defence. Frank Robbins at this stage spearheaded the Club's fight, collecting data and enlisting support from surprisingly diverse and numerous organisations, such as the B.O.C. and Young Farmers groups. Two leading naturalists connected with the Victorian National Parks Association, Ros Garnet and Judith Frankenburg, visited the Whipstick to personally assess the area's desirability as a national park. They were impressed, to say the least.

Alarmingly however, the Club's submission to have the Whipstick declared a national park in 1957 seemed to have disappeared into limbo or a sea of bureaucratic red tape. The Minister of Lands, Mr. McDonald, enquired of the Club as to whether they were still interested in a Whipstick national park. There seemed to be a communication breakdown somewhere.

The Club, rather desperately, replied they would settle for a national park or any other type of reservation. The Club received detailed information from Ros Garnet on the various forms of reserves under which the Whipstick could be protected.

1967

THE BIRTH OF THE BENDIGO NATURALIST

At the May meeting Arthur Ebdon moved that a Club Journal be discussed at the next committee meeting. This was done and Tom Patullo outlined the proposal. The committee quickly gave its approval to proceed and the original proposed name of the Journal was Bendigo Nature Magazine, a title which met with little enthusiasm. At a general Club meeting Ted Thompson proposed that the Journal be known as The Bendigo Naturalist. This proposal was unanimously carried. The first part of volume 1 was aimed at a September release and was to sell at 40 cents per copy. One hundred copies was to be the print run. The deadline was met and the Journal was available for distribution to members after the Annual Meeting in September. The estimate of sales were well astray as 170 copies were sold and another 100 extra copies were printed.

Frank Robbins was appointed Editor with editorial assistance from Jack Kellam, Bob Allen and Peter Ellis. The Club President, Tom Patullo, was appointed Production Manager and produced the magazine at cost price. Bruce Broadway typed the copy.

The Club now boasted a membership of 83, but was saddened at the death of its founding President Marc Cohn. At the meeting following his death the Club paid tribute to a great bird photographer, one of the State's pioneers. He was, besides being an expert ornithologist, also a capable entomologist with a love of butterflies.

Frank Robbins commenced his survey of the Whipstick flora and fauna during 1967. The survey included private land, not necessarily that being cleared (but including it) as a future scientific reference to what once occurred in the greater Whipstick. This coincided with the large scale clearing at Bagshot.

Crown Land was under threat of alienation, as it was known that the Minister for Lands, Mr. McDonald, had intentions to throw the Whipstick open in the same manner as the Little Desert. The survey took until 1972 to reach completion. There were also preliminary discussions with the National Parks Authority regarding the feasibility of the re-introduction of Mallee Fowl into the Whipstick.

Efforts were also being made to preserve a glacial pavement at Derrinal known as Kellam's Rock. The Club was also involved in the establishment of Kaweka Bushland Reserve on the outskirts of Castlemaine.

The Club activities and interests were often reflected by the specimen table, which in this period always seemed interestingly and heavily laden. Colin Bubb addressed members on Fungi, which was later to be the specialist area of Reg Smart. Victour was still conducting nature tours to Bendigo. They were of weekend duration and the Club provided leaders as well as putting on a Saturday evening nature slide show. Tom Patullo's Presidential Address was on gemstones of the Wangaratta area. The Club was also still trying to streamline its meetings, this having been a recurring problem throughout its existence.

Known originally as the Field Naturalists Club of Bendigo, imperceptably the name had changed, unofficially, over the years to the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club. This name was officially adopted in 1967. Frank Robbins also proposed a revision of the Club's constitution.

Two Club members were honoured during 1967. The Native Plants Preservation Society invited Redvers Eddy to act as one of the judges of Photoflora '68. The Club later made available the Redvers J. Eddy Memorial Trophy to be presented to the winner of the section for the best bird photograph.

During this year also a Japanese film unit was making a human relations documentary featuring Club member Sho Takasuka's association with Bendigo. The film featured a Club meeting, at which Frank Robbins brought a live Echidna in a bag.

1968

DEATH OF REDVERS EDDY

Foundation member of the Club, Redvers Eddy, died during the year. An ornithologist of wide renown, Eddy introduced colour-photography into the Club. This tradition has been carried on by many fine photographers, Jack Kellam, Jack Ipsen, Bill Flentje, Rob Watkins, Peter Ellis, Reg Smart, the Ruedins, Tom Patullo, Aub Muir, Chris Spiker, and John Robinson, amongst many others. Eddy's own series of photographs of the Mistletoe Bird remain unmatched.

The circulation of The Bendigo Naturalist had levelled out to 275 copies per part. The Club Constitution was changed under the guidance of Frank Robbins, who, through the years had often been the syllabus speaker on geology. Foundation member, Hugh Milne, looked back over the years when he addressed the Club, entitling his lecture "Fifty Years a Naturalist".

Photoflora '68 was held at MacGillivray Hall where 213 people bought tickets to enjoy the show. The Club sent its congratulations to the newly formed Mid Murray Field Naturalists Trust. It was tentatively thinking of buying a projector. Discretion had the better part of valour however, and it was decided such a purchase would be "unwise" at present. The Victorian Eucalyptus Distillers Association's Inglewood members sought the Club's support and advice when the alienation of Mallee country was contemplated by the Shire of Korong. The Whipstick issue was setting precedents. Peter Ellis's Presidential Address was a resume' of Club activities throughout his term. Mr. Robbins spoke on the geology of Broken Hill and Leon Ruedin spoke on Western Australian Wildflowers. When speakers were scarce film nights and lecturettes were arranged.

1969

A LANDMARK IN "THE MOVEMENT"

The Club in an effort to ascertain members preferences of activities, conducted an interesting poll in which 37 members voted. Botany was the favourite topic with 35%, followed by birds 25%, nature photography 21%, geology 11%, and insects 8%. Speakers such as Mr. A.J. Holt of the National Parks Authority spoke on National Parks of other countries including Scotland, America, Ireland, England, Wales and South Africa. Ken Simpson of the Museum of Victoria spoke on the aboriginal archaeology of Chowilla dam area, Lake Victoria, Red Cliffs and areas of the Riverina. Ken Simpson mentioned the many middens examined. A number of skeletons were also discovered by Simpson's party.

The Bendigo City Council proposed to alienate parkland adjacent to the City Hall for new civic offices. The Club pointed out the value of city parklands to the Council. The protest was ultimately needless as the scheme came to nothing.

The Bolte Government, with Sir William McDonald as Minister for Lands, was pressing ahead with its proposal to throw the Little Desert open for agriculture. Time proved this event to be a watershed for the conservation movement in Victoria. So unpopular was the proposal McDonald lost his seat at the next state elections. This made the Bolte Government sit up and subsequently, to some extent at least, lessened the pressure of clearance of public lands in the Whipstick.

The Club now getting down to tin tacks, was considering alternative methods of future Whipstick management. The options included a National Park which could only be created by an Act of Parliament, the Club having no say in the management. It could also be administered as a Forest Park by the Forests Commission of Victoria. Alternatively it could be administered as a fisheries and wildlife reserve or a Lands Department permanent reserve run by a committee of management but with no funds made available.

Mr. Ollie Hartland, had given the Club permission to fence an outstanding stand of Peach Heath. Leon Ruedin was largely responsible for the success of this project. The Whipstick campaign received a fillip when Jim Willis spoke highly of the diversity of the Whipstick flora after a visit to the area.

The Club was also trying to increase the area reserved at One Tree Hill. The concept of a reserve at Diamond Hill had by now apparently faded into oblivion.

Congratulations were sent to the newly formed Shepparton Field Naturalists Club. The members could still not see sufficient benefits in affiliating with the Western Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs Association. They felt the Club was already affiliated to too many societies.

Bruce Broadway spoke on opals as the topic for his Presidential Address.

1970

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY

The Club by now favoured the declaration of the present Whipstick crown lands as a national park, provided the present status of the eucalyptus distillers and apiarists was maintained. A Whipstick seminar, organised jointly by the Club and the Bendigo Jaycees, was attended by local Shire Councils, conservationists from all over Victoria, Bendigo Service Clubs and Whipstick landowners. The feeling of the seminar was that the Whipstick should be declared a National Park. Dr. Len Smith of the National Parks Authority thought that the Whipstick, Wellsford, Rushworth, Wychitella and Kingower should all be declared National Parks. Jack Kellam, Frank Robbins, Leon Ruedin and Bert McMaster, in harness with the Forests Commission, were appointed to the Club's Whipstick Place Names Committee. The Victorian Branch of the National Trust were also conducted through the Whipstick by Club members.

The Club was in the process of purchasing an electric typewriter for the production of the magazine. Two hundred dollars was donated by an anonymous source.

Again too the Club had celebration and sorrow. It celebrated its 25th Birthday with a Nature Show held in the Memorial Hall in October. Fare:- Adults 20¢, Children 10¢. It also participated in the Service club's Hobbies Exhibition, and on their own behalf again ran "Bendigo Bushland In Colour" at a small profit. The deaths of Mrs. Grylls, following that of her husband a couple of years earlier, and Gwen Marrows, left a void in the Club. They gave greatly.

Miss Bennett's fine botanical work continued. She constantly found rare species and species new to the district.

Continued co-operation with outside clubs was still in effect. Both the Geelong and Victorian Clubs visited the district during the year.

Outside contacts manifested themselves to the Club's advantage too. Ken Simpson, now of the Zoology Department of Monash University, spoke on the birds of Bass Strait, subject of his later book. Alan West of the Museum spoke on the aboriginal remains from Leitchville. These skeletal remains were of great significance with their prognathous jaw-bones and were considered to be a new sub-species of man. Dr. Brian Smith, Curator of Invertebrates at the National Museum of Victoria, was seeking assistance from Club members in the study of non-marine molluscs.

Average Club meeting attendance was now in the mid-forties. A change in the Club's Constitution was sought to enable people to serve successive terms as President. Prior to 1970 this was not permissible. President Ted Thompson's end of term address was taped and delivered in his absence. His topic was "Travels in Queensland".

1971

TO BE - OR NOT TO BE - FOREST PARK OR NATIONAL PARK

Frank Halloran and Bill Flentje, of the Forests Commission of Victoria, addressed the committee on the feasibility of having the Whipstick Crown Lands converted into a Forest Park. Their case was apparently a good one, for in April the Club had made application to the Forests Commission to convert all Whipstick state forest to the status of a Forest Park, and applied to the Lands Department to have all crown lands converted to state forest, and thence attached to the Forest Park. The two foresters, Flentje and Halloran, were strongly opposed to the National Park concept. By September the Club had not drawn a line between a Forest Park or a National Park on crown lands, and in the now completed Whipstick Submission, stated this decision would be made by the newly formed Land Conservation Council of Victoria. Concern was also being expressed that many of the old Mallee Fowl nesting mounds were being removed by local shires as a source of gravel.

Jack Ipsen completed a seven year stint as Secretary, and after much prevarication, the Club finally joined the Western Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs' Association. A new natural history body was formed in 1971, this was the Bendigo Museum Society (Natural History). It was short-lived.

Rudd Campbell, the famed ranger at Wyperfeld National Park, had died amidst his beloved sand dune country. An appeal was launched for a memorial. The Club donated \$5 to the memory of an old friend.

Moves were set afoot by the Club to have the bushland area near Boyd Street and adjacent to the Bendigo Cemetery gazetted as a public park. The natural history of Cape Schanck was the topic of Bob Allen's Presidential Address.

1972

THE WHIPSTICK AND BOYD STREET

One of the key privately owned Whipstick blocks had been sold and the clearing of it for a pig farm had commenced by September. Delay by Parliament was inviting fragmentation of the proposed Forest Park. Politician Fred Grimwade sought answers from the Premier and suggested the Club ask the Shires of Marong and Huntly to impose Interim Development Orders on the privately owned land in question.

On November 30th an official Press Release announced that the state forest of the Bendigo Whipstick was now declared a Forest Park. Private land in the Parish of Nerring was being offered for sale at \$30 per acre. The area, of high priority, was bound by state forest and crown land. Huntly Shire were approached for support on the addition of crown lands to the Forest Park and the adoption of a suitable I.D.O., to retain the present usage of Whipstick private land and thus discourage developers, and others, after a quick dollar. Favourable support was given.

The Bendigo City Council had set aside an area at Boyd Street for a wildflower reserve, mainly to preserve an outstanding area of Bendigo Waxflower. The Club was greatly annoyed at damage done to the area. October 1972 saw the start of the long-running, and often bitter, duel between our Club and the Quarry Hill Golf Club. Our Club held a working bee to clearly define the Waxflower area. Peter Ellis, the driving force behind the reserve, produced a comprehensive submission to the Bendigo City Council.

The Club also approached the Waranga Shire to have the Aboriginal Canoe Tree at Barnadown fenced off. Frank Robbins was also writing to the Geological Survey of Victoria, attempting to secure preservation of "Kellam's Rock", the glacial pavement at Derrinal. The Club was also involved in the enlargement proposals for Kalimna Park at Castlemaine.

Frank Robbins and Bill Perry were honoured with Life Membership of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria. Both Robbins and Perry were to have Life Membership of their home Club bestowed upon them during the Annual Meeting of 1972. At the same meeting Jack Ipsen and Jack Kellam received similar recognition.

The Victorian Field Naturalists Club Association was formed after a preliminary meeting of representatives from all Victorian Clubs was held at Bendigo. The Club also hosted the W.V.F.N.C.A. meeting during June.

The Bendigo Naturalist now had a circulation of 350 copies. Not quite so successful were the Quality of Life Group based at the Bendigo Institute of Technology. Extremely active, their life tenure was a short one. During their short life they actively supported the Club on conservation issues.

Photoflora '72 was held at Bendigo and Eaglehawk and finally, after many years, a section for birds and habitat photography was to be included in the future, which would carry the "Redvers J. Eddy Memorial Trophy" donated by the B.F.N.C. The Nature Show, held in conjunction with the Eaglehawk Dahlia and Arts Festival, was very successful.

The Club was saddened by the death of Sho Takasuka and Club members attended a tree-planting day in his honour at Goornong, which followed a memorial service. The Club now holds his photographic collection which is housed in a cabinet made by Reg Smart.

Some years ago, Mr. V.J. Dixon found in his quarry near Spring Gully, a large unusual fossil. Jack Kellam found another specimen at a later date. Frank Robbins suspected it to be something new and, after much frustration, a specimen was sent to Dr. D.E. Thomas and Dr. Bulman in Great Britain. They immediately declared it a new genus and species of graptolite and named it *Orthodichograptus robbinsi*, in honour of Frank Robbins in 1972. The two world experts published their type description in Great Britain in The Geological Magazine Vol. 109, No. 6, 1973.

Dr. R. Foster spoke in Bendigo on flora dispersal in reference to the theory of Continental Drift. Bob Allen, the first President to serve consecutive terms, in his Presidential Address spoke on Central Australia with his usual ease of manner and humour.

1973

THE PROBLEM CHILD AND NEW ADDITIONS

In February, 1973, the Club made a deputation to the Premier of the Liberal Government, Mr. R.J. Hamer, regarding the protection of the Bendigo Whipstick. The deputation, made up of Rob Moors, Peter Ellis, Jack Kellam, Frank Robbins and Ken Read, was sympathetically received.

By now both the Marong and Huntly Shires supported the Whipstick I.D.O.'s. By April, after a landholder's deputation, the Shire of Marong had rescinded its I.D.O. motion. The Club released a complete statement on proposals for the Whipstick. This was published in the Bendigo Advertiser on April 26th. Important private blocks had been recently sold in the Parish of Nerring. The Club was still receiving fine support from Mr. Fred Grimwade, M.L.C., who had discussed the future of the Whipstick with Mr. Borthwick, Minister for Conservation and Lands. Mr. Borthwick was asked to specifically refer the matter of Whipstick proposals to the L.C.C. Mr. Allan Malone of Kilsyth was another tireless worker on the Club's behalf concerning the Whipstick.

The Minister for Local Government was also supporting the Club's viewpoint, and the issue of I.D.O.'s etc., was now being raised with the Town and Country Planning Board which later informed Marong and Huntly Shires of the need for planned control of the Whipstick. Clearing was still proceeding apace and the Club saw this as a mere ruse for taxation dodgers. High priority areas of ecological significance were still being sold. The Victorian Government was unable or unwilling to purchase them. The Club, pressing for a Whipstick Planning Control, was informed that the Whipstick was listed as second priority for Victoria on the National Estate register.

So ludicrous had the situation become a significant Mallee Fowl's nest and outstanding areas of Heath Daisy-bush (*Olearia floribunda*), on Mr. Wellstead's land, could only be viewed by the Club for an annual fee of \$700. The Club politely declined. It could play Cat and Mouse too.

Whirrakee Wattle, a Whipstick glory, was now officially known as *Acacia williamsonii*. The Whipstick submission had had many reprints, whilst the Club gave its approval of the Bendigo City Council's new plant for the Quarry Hill Golf Club exteriors and the new wildflower park. The Club had consistently sought the co-operation of the Golf Club, with sadly negative results. Our Club was seeking finance from the Federal Government, and the Winifred Waddell Memorial Trust, for the costs of the fencing of the Boyd Street reserve. It eventually received a substantial amount from the Winifred Waddell Memorial Trust.

During the 1970's one of the features of the Club's activities was the organisation of Nature Trails. These were held mainly at One Tree Hill under the auspices of Tom Patullo and Bob Allen. On one occasion at One Tree Hill 350 people attended. Occasionally too, they were held at Boyd Street.

Club interest was high, and attendances sometimes topped 70. To foster further interest, John Berry was appointed Press Correspondent.

Beside reiterating its policy on the One Tree Hill Public Park, the Club was also actively involved in the flora and fauna survey at Kalimna Park, Castlemaine. Similar work was being undertaken by Jack Kellam and Frank Robbins for the proposed flora park at the Inglewood Rifle Range.

The Club was against the Federal Government handing back, to the native people, the area embracing Ayers Rock and The Olgas. They concluded the Aborigines would do more environmental damage than the Europeans. One can only ponder then, as to how they managed the area successfully for 40,000 years without any environmental damage. They did it without the aid of a luxurious motel, and never felt the compulsion to daub their names on the rock for posterity.

This year witnessed the birth of the Wychitella Forest Preservation League. Perhaps less importantly, the beginning of the "Social Evenings" also. The Mammal Survey Group within the Club also formed during the year. By October it had received permission, from the relevant authorities, to carry out trapping programs. Equipment was purchased with money provided from the Ingram Trust. Shortly afterwards the Bendigo Bird Observers Group was formed on the motion of Rob Watkins at the November meeting. This followed a suggestion from the Bird Observers Club that a regional group of that body be formed in Bendigo. Both groups are subsidiary to the B.F.N.C. The Bendigo Bird Observers Group held their first meeting at the home of Rob Watkins in December, when 27 people attended. The Botany Group, which was also proposed, was only inducing early labour pains, and had to wait for a number of years before it saw the light of day.

The Club was experiencing the need for its own clubrooms, and half-hearted attempts were to be made in this direction in time to come. President Rob Moors spoke on Club activities as the theme of his Presidential Address.

THE WHIPSTICK STILL A DOMINATING THEME

The Whipstick Planning Control was now operative by order of the Minister for Local Government. Further, the Club's deputation to the Minister for Conservation, Mr. Borthwick, was highly satisfying. All the Club wished for, L.C.C. support, the Premier's personal interest, and the acknowledgement of the Whipstick's value were all achieved. Graham Hill, Peter Ellis and Malcolm Hopkins represented the Club.

On April 3rd a public meeting was called by the Town and Country Planning Board to explain the reasons for imposing the I.D.O. and its workings.irate Whipstick landowners walked out of the meeting at the Bendigo Town Hall. Articles in The Bendigo Advertiser and Truth, clearly spelt out that opposition to land control and purchase was strong, and pressure would be applied to lift the I.D.O.

The Club restated to the Town and Country Planning Board the I.D.O.'s purpose of holding all public lands and key blocks until assessed by the Lands Conservation Council.

During April a letter was received from Mr. Wellstead protesting at the I.D.O. implementation and suggested that if the Club could get the I.D.O. lifted, then certain items of interest on his land could be made available for a monetary return.

The Club's Whipstick re-submission was adopted on June 20th, but the Australian Biological Studies grant application proved abortive. During October the Whipstick re-submissions were sent to State and Federal Government Departments respectively, conservation clubs in Victoria, and selected individuals. A new Whipstick Place-Names Committee was appointed, consisting of Bill Perry, Bob Allen, Eric Wilkinson and Bill Flentje.

The Club was far from pleased with the Photoflora committee which had reproduced members slides without permission. The Shire of Korong showed neither courtesy nor interest in the proposed wildflower reserve at Inglewood Rifle Range; eventually they obtained the land themselves. On a happier note the Club's Conservation Committee was still active and a number of Club members were successful in a profitable Photoflora '74. Berry Vardy was the new Press Correspondent, and a proposal (not realised to date) was afoot to publish a natural history of Bendigo.

The guest speaker for March, Jim Willis, spoke on the flora of the Arctic, and later in the year was awarded the Australian Natural History Medallion. The Winifred Waddell Estate supplied \$1,000 for the purpose of protecting the wildflower reserve at Boyd Street.

The Club was also involved in the conservation of wet lands. They had also compiled a submission for the L.C.C. on the Ridge Road/Glenluce area. The North Central Study Area had been defined and this gave the Club an enormous task compiling L.C.C. submissions. During the year too, a Bendigo branch of the Society for Growing Australian Plants was formed.

After a survey of the proposed site for the Dai Gum San Chinese Village at Jackass Flat the Club decided to oppose construction on that site, as the southern and northern floras of the Bendigo district merge here.

Life Memberships were awarded to Bob Allen, Tom Patullo and Bert McMaster. Occasionally over 80 members attended General Meetings, but the Club, with concern, noted the rapidly declining excursion numbers. Of course people do not always wish to be organised. Maybe cats and dogs made a contribution to excursion numbers, anyway during the year they were banned from Club outings, so logically - - .

On a more serious note the litter of a large provincial city was starting to choke its surrounding bushland. Rob Watkins made local councils aware of the problem, and achieved a positive response. Field Naturalists throughout Victoria were affected by the National Herbarium's decision to charge \$1.70 per plant for identification. Malcolm Hopkins closed his term as President by giving an address on Club activities.

1975

THIRTIETH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED

Still little was being done to purchase important freehold areas in the Whipstick. A deputation was made to the Minister for Forests, Mr. Granter, requesting that the Forests Commission of Victoria purchase freehold lots in the Eaglehawk Forests Park section. It was also pointed out that fragile areas at Neilborough and Bagshot were under threat from subdivision. The Club suggested these areas be immediately bought, along with further ecologically valuable areas on the Tennyson Road. The Victorian Conservation Trust informed the Club that funds were not available for Whipstick land purchase from the National Estate in May, 1975. However, the Club wrote to the National Estate again in August asking it to reconsider Whipstick funding during the next financial period.

The Minister for Conservation, Mr. Borthwick, was taken on a tour of the Whipstick by the Club early in September. Later in the month the Secretary of the Ministry for Conservation met with Club members to announce a National Estate allocation for the Whipstick. A list of areas, rating their importance and priority, was to be furnished to the Government, who would then proceed with purchase. During the year two eminent naturalists, Dr. Dorward and Dr. Cullen, were escorted through the Whipstick by Jack Kellam. The late Douglas Dorward will be best remembered through his television series "Wild Australia".

Shirley Mainstone, Secretary of the Save Our Bushland group, had contacted the Club asking for support to preserve an area of bushland at Jackass Flat, which was earmarked as the site for the grandiose Dai Gum San Chinese Village tourist attraction and convention centre. Miss Mainstone, with strong support from the Club, jousted with the Bendigo Council and the Bendigo Trust and soundly defeated both.

The Club's argument was forthrightly put to a largely hostile public meeting at the City Hall. The Club and the Save Our Bushland Group had achieved success with their Sydenham Gardens/Jackass Flat campaign. The Club's submission received the City Council's support. They had held a number of working bees at the Jackass Flat flora reserve, mainly removing rubbish.

The Club was concerned that there was no Fisheries and Wildlife Inspector attached to the Bendigo area. Destruction of roadside verges in the Shires of Huntly and Marong was worrying members. The rubbish clean-up, run in conjunction with the Jaycees, removed hundreds of tonnes of rubbish from Bendigo bushlands. It was a worthwhile enterprise. The boundaries of the Boyd Street reserve were still undecided. This saga was to drag on for another year.

The Club was saddened too, to learn of the death of George Walker, a long-serving and popular member. On a happier note, the Club was runner-up in the Victorian Conservation Prize for 1975.

To mark 30 years since formation, the Club held a Nature Show at MacGillivray Hall during the first week of September. The show was opened by Mr. Borthwick, Minister for Conservation. The popular Nature Trails conducted by Bob Allen and Tom Patullo were also a feature of the celebrations. Profits were in excess of \$500.

This year also witnessed the formation of another active conservation group; the Bendigo Regional Environment Council. Like so many other conservation groups in Bendigo, it eventually faded away through lack of support.

President Bob Allen, in his end of term address, gave an intriguing account of insect life entitled; "Survival In The Insect World". It was right up to Bob's usual high standard.

1976

DEATHS, BIRTHS AND STILLBORN

The Bendigo Naturalist died in June 1976. The death was sadly lamented, the diagnosis was financial stress. After 20 issues the fine little journal had passed on.

Other proposed Club publications never breathed the air of life into their lungs. Frank Robbins' Whipstick Surveys and Sebastian Goldfields articles were to be published as a small book, but did eventually get printed in Club publications. A special Whipstick edition of The Bendigo Naturalist or alternatively a booklet encompassing Whipstick Prehistory, geology, habitat, flora, birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, insects and history was also to be published. After conception both were stillborn. Another which met the same fate was Berry Vardy's excellent small work Field Guide to Small Terrestrial Mammals of Victoria.

However, March 1976 saw the birth of a fine, lusty infant, the Club's Newsletter, first edited by Berry Vardy and later by Ian Fenselau and Bill Holsworth, and then Eric Wilkinson. They were ably assisted by Evelyn Leamon. After a trial period of six months the Newsletter survived until the end of 1979, when it was replaced by an upgraded version, Whirrakee. The Bird Observers Club published The Birds of the Bendigo District, which was compiled by the Club's Bird Observers Group. Bill Perry's Tales of The Whipstick, was launched at a function at Dudley House, home of the Bendigo Branch of the Royal Historical Society Victoria.

The Club had many sub-committees during 1976. The L.C.C. sub-committee was co-ordinating the compilation of submissions to the L.C.C. Other sub-committees dealt with respectively; Nature Show and club rooms, syllabus, Whipstick place names, magazine, and fund-raising.

Fund-raising was achieved by the running of dances. They proved to be quite profitably. Funds were being raised with a view to eventually obtaining the Club's own rooms. The Club saw many advantages. They included the permanent display of natural history collections and the housing of archives and library. It was hoped too that the Club's own home would stabilise membership turnover. In its search for its own home the Club examined three church buildings (belonging to the Methodist Church) which had become vacant. This reflected the notable decline of Protestantism throughout the Bendigo district.

During the past two or three years general meeting attendances had often reached 70 to 80. With the establishment of specialist groups general meeting attendances had fallen to average from 30 to 40 people.

Finally the Boyd Street area was settled to the Club's satisfaction. The area was known officially later as the Salomons Gully Flora Reserve.

The Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club was formed during the year. The Bendigo Club hosted both the W.V.F.N.C.A. and V.F.N.C.A. during the year. The Western Victorian Association visited the Whipstick whilst the Victorian Association camped at Sedgwick. The members were considering a Junior Club. They had also refenced and extended the Double Waxflower enclosure at Sedgwick. The Club's letterhead now incorporated the Bendigo Waxflower.

The Northern and Central Victorian Branch of the National Trust supported the Club regarding a Whipstick landscape classification. The Club had also considered the re-introduction of the Mallee Fowl, Emu and Australian Bastard. This recommendation was passed on to the Whipstick Advisory Committee. The Club was concerned at the increase of feral animals. Vandalism and increased visitor pressure were also cause for concern. The Loddon-Campaspe Region Planning Authority received information regarding Jackass Flat, Mandurang, the Whipstick and Boyd Street, for a regional biological survey from the Club. It had been an extremely busy year for the Club under the leadership of Bob Allen.

1977

A NEW HOME AFTER THIRTY YEARS

The Club was, in its own words, becoming "desperate" for its own rooms. A spate of fund-raising activities took place; plant raffles, dances and book fairs, all raised some money, but the clubrooms remained an ephemeral dream.

An impressive project, conducted in conjunction with Bendigo Jaycees, was the mammoth rubbish cleanup. Dwarfing the previous cleanup, it involved local councils, service clubs and interested individuals. Two hundred and thirty people, including 33 Field Naturalists, participated. Using 17 trucks and 7 front-end loaders they shifted 767 cubic metres of rubbish which included 90 car bodies. Club members acted as area marshalls, and the whole was organised by Rob Watkins of the B.F.N.C. and Ron Gale of Bendigo Jaycees.

The Club also raised funds to contribute towards the publication costs of Cliff Beauglehole's series of books on Victoria's vascular flora. Bob Allen compiled a booklet on the Appin campout and the Club held an Old Time Ball. In all it raised \$200 for the appeal.

The geologists had been busy. Eric Wilkinson had found further significant glacial pavements at Eppalock, whilst Frank Robbins attended the Gondwanaland Symposium in India.

Two plus factors for the Club during the year were the great benefits bestowed by the Ingram Trust, with grants of \$600 to the Mammal and Bird groups inclusively, and the awarding to Jack Wheeler, a friend of many Club members, the Australian Natural History Medallion.

Two decided minuses were the backing down from the decision to reprint Vol. 1. No. 1. of The Bendigo Naturalist, and the change of meeting venue. For a period of over 30 years the Club had met at The Bendigo Institute of Technology at McCrae Street. In August 1977 it moved house, to an uncomfortable, hot, and dingy portable at Camp Hill State School. It was obvious that this would only be a temporary dwelling, not a home.

Again an area of the Whipstick was giving concern. At Bagshot 640 acres of virgin Kamarooka Mallee (*Eucalyptus froggattii*), and its associated flora was threatened. The Club was keen to see an enlargement of the reserved areas of the Whipstick, and proposed a deputation to both the Minister for Forests, Mr. F.J. Granter, and the Premier, Mr. R.J. Hamer, in the coming year. Jack Kellam and Graham Hill were appointed Club representatives on the Whipstick Advisory Committee for a further three years. The Whipstick also received a visit from the Victorian National Parks Association.

Barry Vardy delivered a superb Presidential Address on Australian frogs using both coloured slides and recordings of their calls. It was a fine introduction into a new realm of natural history for many people.

1978

SUBMISSION TO THE LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL

A deputation to Mr. F.J. Granter, Minister for Forests, was made pointing out that there were still no Government funds available for the purchase of vital allotments. A later deputation, on a similar theme, was made to the Premier, Mr. Hamer. Peter Ellis, Bob Allen and Rob Watkins drew attention to the Whipstick's future conservation, and requested urgent material action to ensure its consolidation.

The Shire of Marong denied any knowledge of a proposed piggery within its boundaries on private land in the Whipstick, even though permits had to be granted. The Bendigo Advertiser, 24th April, 1978, on this issue, published views most unsympathetic to conservation.

Worse was to follow. Peter Ellis and Ray Wallace represented the Club at an appeal before the Town and Country Planning Appeals Board regarding the clearing of important corridor areas of private land at Bagshot. The landholders appeal was quickly upheld by the Board. At this period appeals by conservationists from all over Victoria, to the Board, almost always lost.

Jeremy Challacombe of the Ministry of Conservation spoke to the Club on the various forms of management applicable to the Whipstick.

The Club, in a burst of optimism, saw a possibility of raising funds for the purchase of key Whipstick blocks. Something after the style of the Wombat Co-op schemes, which operated successfully in South Australia, was envisaged.

Most clubs in the North-Central Region were busy still with L.C.C. work. A general L.C.C. submission meeting was held in Bendigo. Creswick F.N.C., Maryborough F.N.C., Bendigo F.N.C. and the Wychitella Forest Preservation League attended this mutually helpful meeting.

By March the Club had found new meeting quarters. The Department of Agriculture made available comfortable rooms at its Diagnostic Centre in Epsom. The Club has used this facility up to the present day.

Photoflora '78 raised some money for the Club, as did Old Time Balls and conducting drink-stalls. The money raised, even if never used then, has given the Club some financial security in the present.

The Hamer Liberal Government proposed to use the Dargile Forest, near Heathcote, as the site for a toxic wastes dump. Local residents objected strongly, as did the Club, which protested to the Premier, the Land Conservation Council, local Shires, the media and the Australian Conservation Foundation. The proposal, after a lot of pressure was exerted, was abandoned.

Dr. Brian Coman spoke on feral cats, and Bill Perry gave an informative lecture on spiders using microscopic photography to great effect. Ken Hooper, of the Victorian Field and Game Association, showed a superb film made at Cullens Lake near Kerang. It showed the wildlife of the wetlands, and Ken Hooper stated the film had proven a very useful political lobby device.

A suggested excursion to Hanging Rock was shelved when concern was expressed that some members may disappear. Ray Wallace, in his Presidential Address, spoke on the honeyeaters of the Bendigo district.

1979

WHIRRakee AND THE JUNIORS BORN

The Land Conservation Council had received the Club's submission for our region. This was duly acknowledged. Alarming, the Shire of Huntly was extending road construction along land under Interim Development Orders. No thought, seemingly, was given to environmental consequences.

Objections to an application to clear a key conservation block in Section B of the Parish of Whirrakee were lodged by the Club to the Loddon-Campaspe Regional Planning Authority. If the Whipstick land purchase fund seemed somewhat chimerical, then at least members were not frightened to give a demonstration of faith. Peter Ellis donated \$100 to initiate the fund, and suggested how a funds appeal might be promoted. There was some uncertainty, in the Committee's mind, regarding legal aspects.

There was still uncertainty, too, about the current status of Boyd Street and Jackass Flat reserves. The Secretary of Lands was contacted seeking clarification.

Eric Wilkinson proposed that, in the absence of a magazine, the Newsletter be upgraded. By the August meeting a suggested name for the new publication, Whirrakee had been put forward. Graham Hill was to design the cover for the new publication, which would, hopefully, make its debut in September. The Editor, Eric Wilkinson, was allowed maximum production costs of \$50 per month.

The F.N.C.V. visited the controversial Dargile Forest under the leadership of Frank Robbins and Ray Wallace. A good attendance was recorded. This was just the opposite to Bendigo Club attendances for excursions, which were still very low.

Dr. Bill Holsworth had been instrumental in getting a junior club functioning during the year, and was also appointed to the Land Conservation Council. The Nature Trail was again held at One Tree Hill during the spring.

The Club enjoyed many excellent speakers through the year. Bill Gasking, former director of the Sir Colin Mackenzie Sanctuary at Healesville, spoke on "Marsupial Mammals". He concentrated largely on the reproductive biology of kangaroos, and also showed some excellent slides of American marsupials. The well-known organiser of naturalist safaris to inland Australia, Bill King, spoke on native gardens and native birds. Ralph and Daphne Keller showed a most enjoyable film on the wildlife of the Little Desert. The Australian expert on land molluscs, Dr. Brian Smith, Curator of Invertebrates at the Museum of Victoria, lectured on giant snails and other land molluscs. Rob Moors, in his Presidential Address gave a resume' of his round Australia trip.

1980

A PRODUCTIVE YEAR

A new coloured map of the Whipstick had just been published by the Forests Commission. A further submission was made, to the Minister for Conservation, for monies made available by the National Estate, to be used to purchase private land linking the northern and southern sections of the Whipstick. These areas were made a number one priority, but still were not bought at this stage. The Victorian Conservation Trust strongly endorsed the Club's proposals regarding Whipstick land purchase. A special meeting was called to consider the L.C.C.'s final recommendations for North Central Victoria. Not all was well, particularly regarding the Whipstick, and the Club's views were reiterated in a new submission.

If the Club was concerned over the Whipstick, then its reaction to the threat to the Franklin River in Tasmania was only lukewarm.

The Jackass Flat Flora and Fauna Reserve had been gazetted by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey. Shortly after, one body behind its formation, the Bendigo Save Our Bushland Group, disbanded. The Jobs Gully Bushland Reserve was also gazetted after a vigorous effort from the Eaglehawk Tree Lovers Society. A nature trail was to be made at the new reserve at Jackass Flat.

Attendances for Photoflora '80 were very poor. This was to be the final screening of Photoflora. It was a successful finale for Bendigo photographers. Cynthia Watkins won the Paul Fisch Trophy for the best orchid slide. Her husband, Rob, had seven slides accepted. Messrs; Flentje and Mewett, and Mrs. Somerville were other Bendigo photographers with work accepted.

The Junior section of the Club was thriving. Often over 30 children attended excursions. The Mammal Group were busily continuing their surveys and were rewarded with many new bat species records for the district. The M.A. Ingram Trust furnished a further \$500 for the purchase of mammal traps. The Bird Observers Group still continued to find excellent speakers, besides conducting their own excursions and campouts.

Club activities were featured on local television. Berry Vardy spoke on reptiles and Jack Kellam concentrated on birds. Thirdly, Dale Gibbons spoke on mammals. Filming was in situ in the bush. Frank Robbins had the honour of addressing the Fifth Gondwana Symposium at Wellington, New Zealand. He spoke on the Derrinal glaciations. By 1980 the Club's library consisted of 70 books and numerous periodicals, many in substantial runs.

Fred Taylor's death saddened the Club. It seemed the only unhappy occurrence in an otherwise positive year. Robin Moors had served his second successive term as President.

1981

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE - A MIXED YEAR

The Club had become involved in the Bendigo City Council's Community Day, providing both audio-visual and static displays. The Club had similar involvement in Heritage Week, organised by the National Trust. The Mirridong Home for The Blind received a copy of Bill Flentje's bird calls tape with the Club's compliments.

Once again the members enjoyed a number of excellent guest speakers. They included: Dr. Jim Willis who spoke on seed dispersal, and Dr. Phillip Cadwallader of the Fisheries and Wildlife Department, who spoke on the Murray Cod breeding programme at Snobs Creek. Roy Wheeler of the Bird Observers Club and Geoff Sitch of the Castlemaine F.N.C. also appeared as visiting speakers. Chris Bunn gave a delightful Presidential Address on the flight of birds.

The Native Plant Preservation Society had decided that Photoflora, for a number of reasons, was no longer viable. With regret it was decided that no more screenings would be held.

The prime Whipstick blocks linking the northern and southern sections of the Whipstick came up for auction during the year. Peter Ellis, Chris Bunn and Ian McBean made a deputation, on behalf of the Club, to Mr. McClure, the local member, informing him of the impending auction. No money was available. Infuriatingly, for the Club, none of the blocks received a bid. Losing out yet again, the Club followed up the land-purchase question once more, with the Minister for Conservation and the Director of the National Parks Service.

The Land Conservation Council's final recommendations for North Central Victoria still gave no indication that the Whipstick be vested under the authority of one controlling body ensuring uniform management. The Club wanted both. One controlling authority - but whom? There were, within the Club, advocates for both the Forests Commission of Victoria and the National Parks Service. The sore had been festering for some months. It was scratched vigorously at the April general meeting. There a bitter debate took place, of seething virulence, that could have split the Club. Eventually a compromise was reached. This meant the Club merely reiterated its former statement - a single multi-purpose park under one management. The compromise seemed a bit tame after the debate. The Committee did not agree with the Club's decision on the single management issue. However, the Committee had received a rap over the knuckles for its handling of the issue previously, when it was stated it had acted against the expressed wishes of the Club as a whole. It somewhat reluctantly carried out the Club's directive and informed local M.P.'s of the Club's decision. The optimistic Whipstick land purchase fund was closed, with the one donor having his money returned to him. During July the Minister for Conservation, Mr. Houghton, paid a visit to the Whipstick.

Another acrimonious debate took place over, seemingly, trifling changes to the Constitution. Again the debate, on the result of voting, achieved little.

On a more positive note the Mammal Survey Group were engaged in the rediscovery, by Dale Gibbons, of the rare Squirrel Gliders on Crown Land at Colbinabbin. The Group had also received a further \$700 from the M.A. Ingram Trust for the purchase of equipment. An information pavilion was also in the pipeline for the Salomon's Gully Reserve, administered by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey.

1982

VIGILANCE MAINTAINED

Attendances at general meetings had revived, and were averaging from 60 to 80 people. Discussions also took place concerning the need of liability cover for participants in Club activities.

The draft for Eucalypts of The Bendigo District was finalised, and with little imagination, it was proposed that the work be a serialized supplement to Whirrakee. Fortunately it was later decided to publish it as a book. The Club was also toying with the idea of publishing a guide to the natural history of Bendigo.

The Club protested to the Bendigo City Council over the proposed shifting of the saleyards to Wellsford Forest. Letters were also sent to the Forests Commission, the Minister for Conservation and the Shire of Strathfieldsaye. The Club was also agitated over the new Mines Amendment Bill and the effect this would have on the environment. Local Member, David Kennedy, M.L.A., was asked where he stood in relation to the Bill and the environment.

Pressure was still being exerted on the Whipstick. Mr. Wellstead had made application to the Loddon Campaspe Regional Planning Authority to clear land covered by an I.D.O. On a happier note the Conservation Council of Victoria resubmitted the application for Whipstick land purchase monies from the National Estate. The Whipstick land purchase issue was the C.C.V.'s top priority.

Mr. Wilkes, the Minister for Conservation, visited Bendigo to meet Whipstick landowners. Leon Ruedin and Rob Watkins attended this fiery meeting on the Club's behalf.

The Bird Observers Club visited the Whipstick for a weekend in November, and were led by B.F.N.C. members Jack Ipsen and Ray Wallace. The National Trust of Victoria also visited the Whipstick through the year. The Club hosted the Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs Association's weekend during August. They visited the northern Whipstick on the Saturday, led by Elsie Flanagan and Frank Robbins. In the evening Bill Flentje presented an audio-visual display featuring the birds of the Whipstick. On the Sunday, the Association visited the Sewerage Farm, the southern Whipstick and Salomon's Gully.

Five working bees had been conducted by the members forming the nature trail at Salomon's Gully.

Trevor Prescott, President of the Geelong F.N.C., addressed the Club on the Otway Ranges. At another meeting Ian Weir of the National Parks Service spoke on his department's work and policies.

President Chris Bunn had completed his second term at the helm, perhaps, one feels, with a sigh of relief.

1983

A CONTENTIOUS, BUT PRODUCTIVE YEAR

The Conservation Council of Victoria, were approached by the Club to pressure the Government into making a final resolution on the Whipstick. The Government, however, stated that there would be no moves until the amalgamation between the Forests Commission and the Department of Crown Lands and Survey was effected. The National Parks Service, at this period, were not anxious to undertake new commitments. Their budget was fully committed.

A few months later, and new developments had taken place. The State Government had appointed a committee to evaluate the Land Conservation Council's recommendation for a reference area within the Whipstick, which was to be administered by the National Parks Service.

Further good news was that the Whipstick had received a landscape classification from the National Trust. Even more importantly, the Cain Government had purchased some of the blocks recommended by the Club, after the Liberal Party had made the initial moves.

The Bird Observers Group had been extremely busy. By September the bird hide was completed at May Swamp. This project occupied the Group for many months. The Group, through Don Franklin, Ray Wallace, and John Berry, conducted a course on bird-watching for Continuing Education, in the Spring. Keith Richards, master photographer, had also addressed the Group. The Shire of Strathfieldsaye had issued permits to shoot the rare Long-billed Corella, this brought a stinging public rebuke from the Bird Observers Group. This aroused a deal of public debate, and the Committee then decided all contentious letters from the sub-groups should first be vetted by it. The Birdos saw this directive as a threat to their autonomy and protested vehemently. The Committee then backed off, and told the Group to ensure they vetted their own letters. The Regent Honeyeater survey, in the meantime, continued on.

Another controversy erupted when the Club disassociated itself from the activities of any body engaged in political campaigning. This action was directed towards the Tasmanian Wilderness Society, but fortunately the Club's wisdom prevailed and a saner course was eventually traversed.

Working bees were held at the Mount Alexander Koala Park and Jackass Flat Flora Reserve (in conjunction with the Bendigo Native Plant Group). Both were very successful. The patch of the rare Red Swainson-pea (*Swainsona plagiotropis*), on the Railway Reserve at Hunter, was being carefully watched.

The archaeological survey to Melville's Caves over the Queen's Birthday Weekend, was extremely successful, with 30 new archaeological sites being recorded. The excursion was led by Rod Fyffe.

As yet, Alex Stone's Index to Whirrakee had not appeared. The excellent Club publication, Eucalypts of The Bendigo District compiled jointly by John Lindner, Don Franklin and John Robinson, appeared for sale during the year. The Club was making its first tentative steps towards Incorporation.

Frank Robbins was again accorded the honor of being the Club's nomination for the Australian Natural History Medallion. Leon Ruedin, Ted Thompson and Peter Ellis were the recipients of Club Life Memberships. Eric Wilkinson had served his first year in his dual roles of President and Editor of Whirrakee.

1984

ANOTHER ACTIVE YEAR

The Club continued its involvement in local and national conservation issues through 1984. The Bird Observers Group had made a submission to the Land Conservation Council emphasising the value of the Terricks native pine forest and its associated fauna and flora. Further working bees were held at the Jackass Flat Flora Reserve, and the Club also donated (and helped to plant), a number of native plants for the Department of Agriculture's Diagnostic Centre gardens. The Daintree Rainforest was under siege in Queensland. The Club added its voice to the protest. The Whipstick form of Creeping Boobialla had become extinct in the wild. Fortunately, Peter Ellis had propagated a number of plants, and after receiving permission from the Forests Commission, the Club was able to reintroduce the plant into its home range. The Botany and Conservation Groups were founded during the year. A Bendigo branch of the Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers was also formed, they provided labour for tree-planting schemes etc. By 1984 all the Whipstick blocks for which the Club had initially agitated had been bought.

The Club, again under the Presidency of Eric Wilkinson, was now definite in its move towards incorporation. The Index for Whirrakee was still being discussed, but not produced. Members combined with the Central Victorian Archaeological Society on a campout to Melville's Caves.

Surprisingly, the attendance for the May General Meeting was only 26 people, the lowest for many years. An important meeting took place during the year between the Ministry for Conservation, the C.C.V., the W.V.F.N.C.A. and the F.N.C.V. The proposal was to set up storage facilities for archival material.

1985

FORTY YEARS

The Club, under the leadership of Laurie Leeson, was making preliminary moves to nominate Jack Kellam for the Australian Natural History Medallion. It had also received official notification from the Australian Cultivar Registration Authority forwarding a certificate of Registration for *Eriostemon verrucosus* "J. Semmens". The Club had applied for registration of the plant some time back.

The Club found itself having to press for the retention of the Whipstick Interim Development Orders.

Frank Robbins, an esteemed member, passed on late in the year.

The Club published an important new submission during the early part of the year. The 1985 Revision, Whipstick Land Purchase Proposals listed, in order of priority, those areas of privately owned land thought to be highly significant ecologically. Copies were sent to the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, Whipstick Forest Park Advisory Committee, the local member for Bendigo East, the local Forests Commission office and the Loddon Campaspe Regional Planning Authority. Extremely thorough, it evaluates each block or allotment in the context of the Whipstick as a whole. Next is the long wait for the purchases to take place.

Forty years have come and gone in the pursuit of knowledge and beauty. May we revere both.

A SOLILOQUY: WE LOOK BACK - AT THE YEARS AND OURSELVES

The body of working men, from the North Bendigo Railways Workshops, plus a very small number of professional and business men, would have been pleased to see their child grow, both in strength, and wisdom. The wisdom was gained in a pure pursuit, seeking a knowledge of nature was ambrosia for the spirit of man and woman. The mill workers of Manchester and Liverpool found it so. In blossom or bird was the piercing shaft of beauty, embodying all of the poetry, music and beauty of all things. Since man has been aware of such things, through many millenia, he realises he is but part of a scheme.

The foundation members realised it. It is something ephemeral and above politics. And yet how political it all became. The Club was to preserve the Whipstick, Jackass Flat, Boyd Street, One Tree Hill and other areas, only through political action. Areas of bushland should be seen, not in terms of a quick dollar, or to be utilized, but as a heritage for our children's children, a thing of beauty, where we can leave the cares of day to day life behind for an hour - a week. It became political when the two ideologies clashed. Some fights were won, some lost.

The Great War, World War I, the war to end all wars, merely proved that battle is never finished, that what seemed decisive has to be re-decided.

Membership has steadily grown over the years from under a dozen to 235.

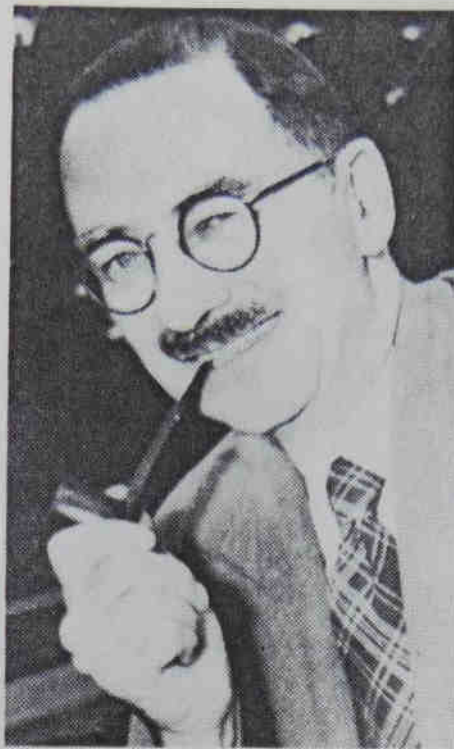
One of the debates within has been; Are we political or not? There seems little point in being an authority on Fairy Wrens and then becoming aware that their habitat has disappeared before realisation has dawned.

The Club can only ponder how others see it. Is it merely eccentric or a respected authority on the natural history of the district? Or something in between? The way it is seen by others is a factor vital for the conservation of local bushlands.

It has come a long way, many are experts in their respective fields, surveys and publications have been numerous.

And yet, fellowship can still be enjoyed, as it was in yesteryear. Common bonds still unite. The bonds have been strong enough to unite individuals into a Club for forty years. Four decades is a long time. Four decades is but spittle in an ocean. The future lies ahead. If the past illustrates the future we can quote Robert Burns:

"Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night - in darkness lost;
Hope not sunshine every hour,
Fear not clouds will always lour".



The renowned naturalist, Phillip Crosbie Morrison.



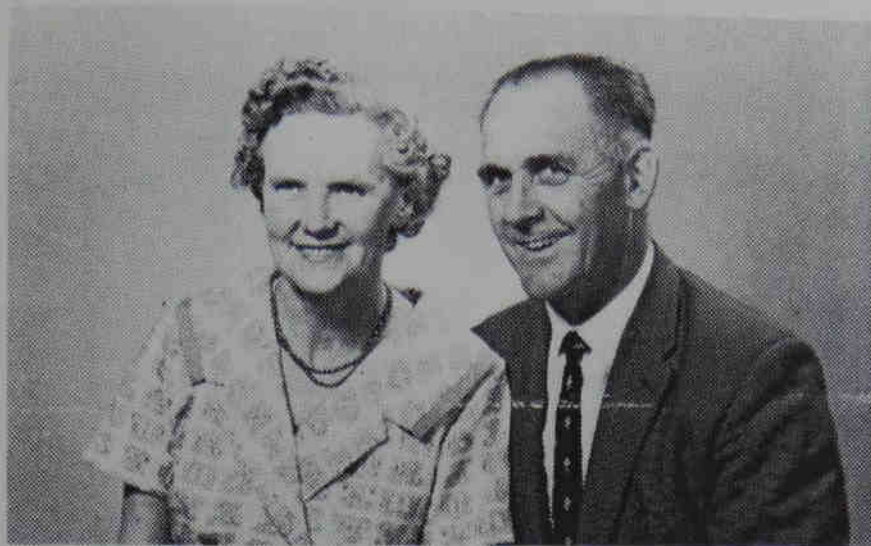
Standing L to R: Jack Ipsen, Bob Allen, - , Arthur Ebdon, Mr. Grylls, Mrs. Kellam, - Gill, Bert McMaster, Marc Cohn, - , Jack Kellam.
Seated L to R: Mrs. Ipsen, Mrs. Ebdon, Mrs. Grylls, Mrs. McMaster,
Front: Barry Kellam, Leanne Ipsen. C. 1958.



L to R: Mr. James, - , Mrs. M. Penna, Mr. C.E. Bryant, Mrs. J. Ipsen, Jack Ipsen, Jack Kellam, Mrs. C.E. Bryant, Bill Alexander.



An early excursion. L to R: Arthur Ebdon, Bill Perry, Bill Alexander, and Mr. James. Front: Raymond Walls.



Jack Ipsen, The Club's First Secretary, with his wife Jean.



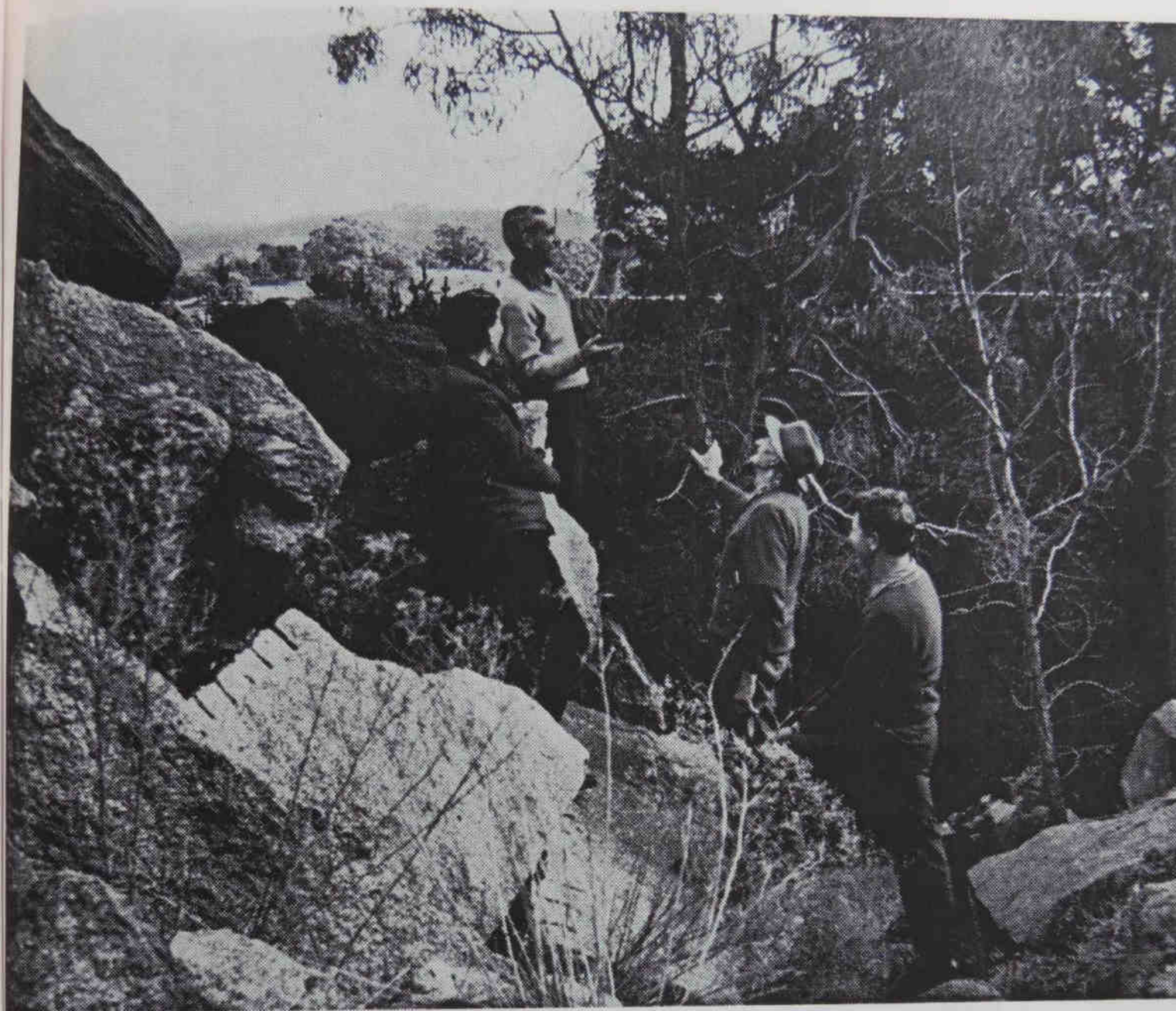
The ornithologist, Redvers Eddy.



A young Hugh Milne.



At the Canoe Tree Barnadown.
L to R: Bruce Broadway, George Walker, Bob Allen, Arthur Ebdon.



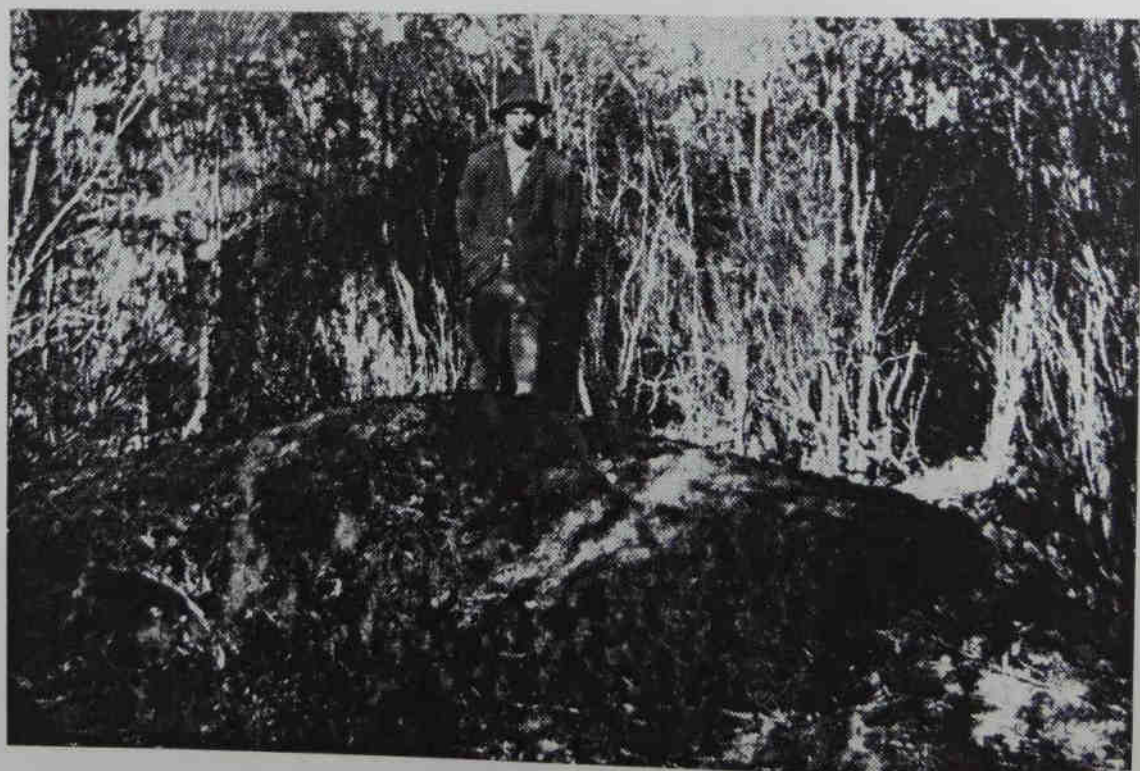
Mt. Alexander. L to R: Peter Ellis, Bob Allen, Arthur Ebdon, Colin Bubb.



L to R: Marc Cohn, Laurie Elvey, Jack Ipsen.



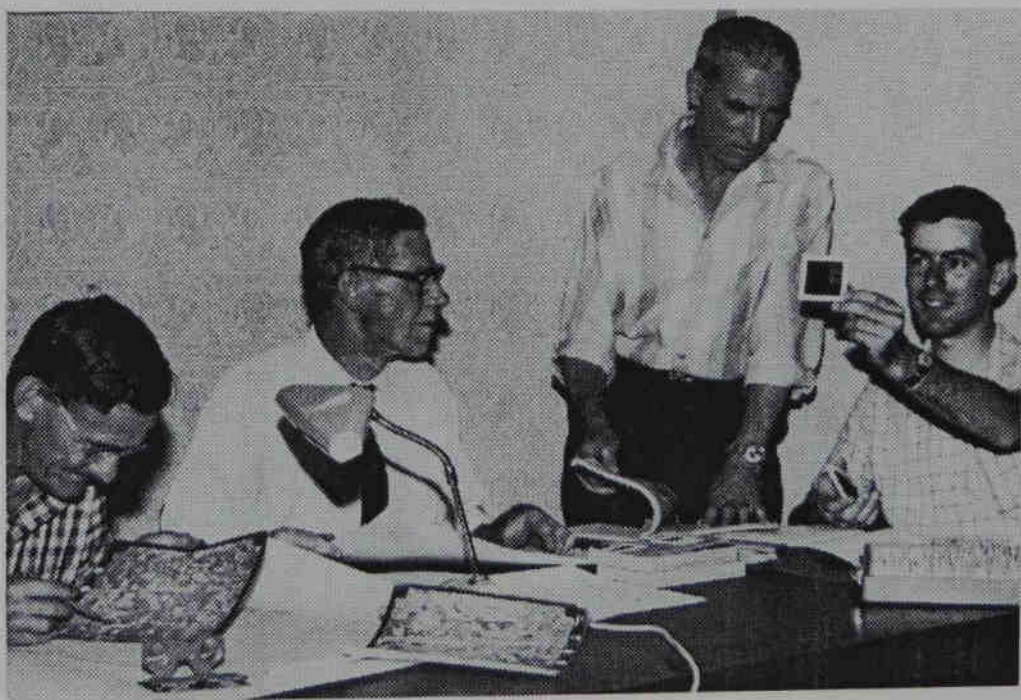
A picnic lunch, Grampians. L to R: Bob Allen, Colin Bubb, Peter Ellis, Mr. & Mrs. Handley and daughter.



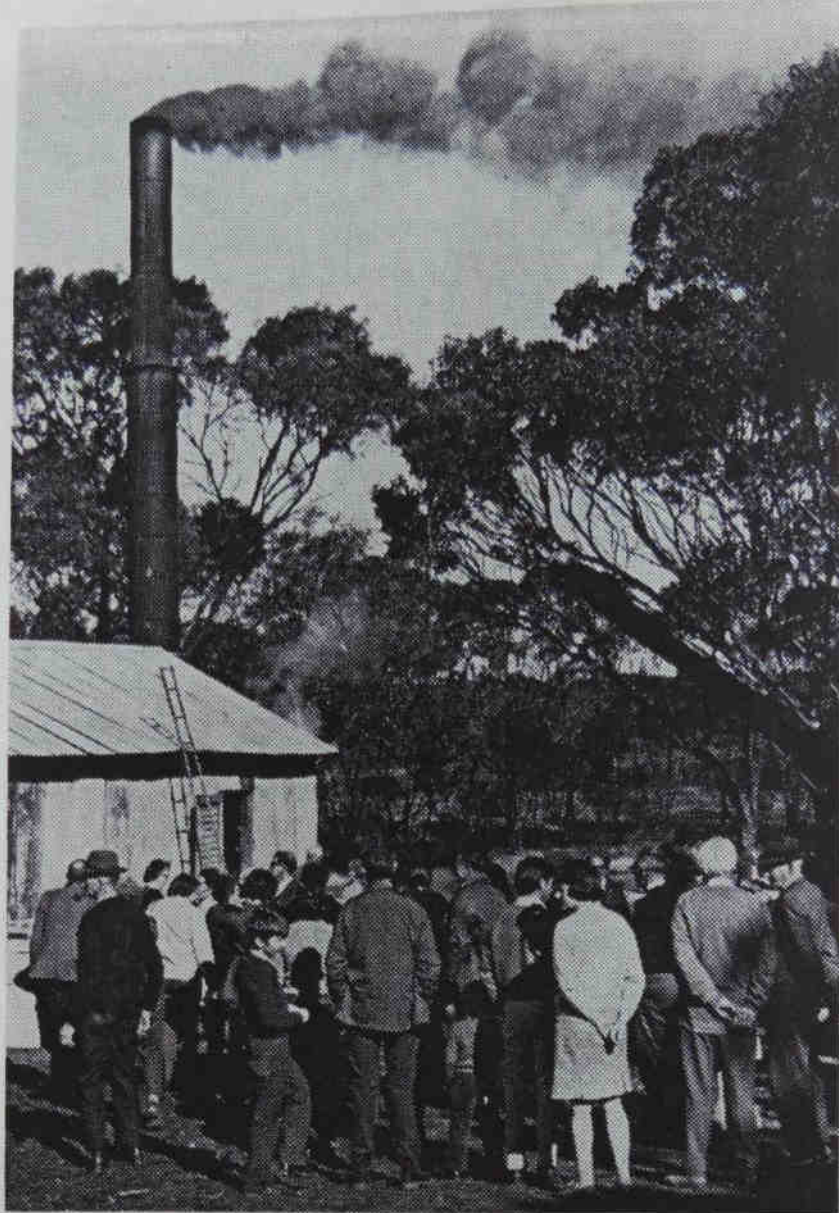
Active Mallee fowl's nest in the Whipstick Mallee, 1922.



Tom Patullo working on the production of The Bendigo Naturalist.



Editorial team of The Bendigo Naturalist.
L to R: Frank Robbins, Jack Kellam, Bob Allen, Peter Ellis.



A relic of an old industry, Ruedin's eucalyptus factory.



L to R: Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Henkel and Mrs. Kellam.



Fencing the Peach Heath at Hartland's in the Whipstick.



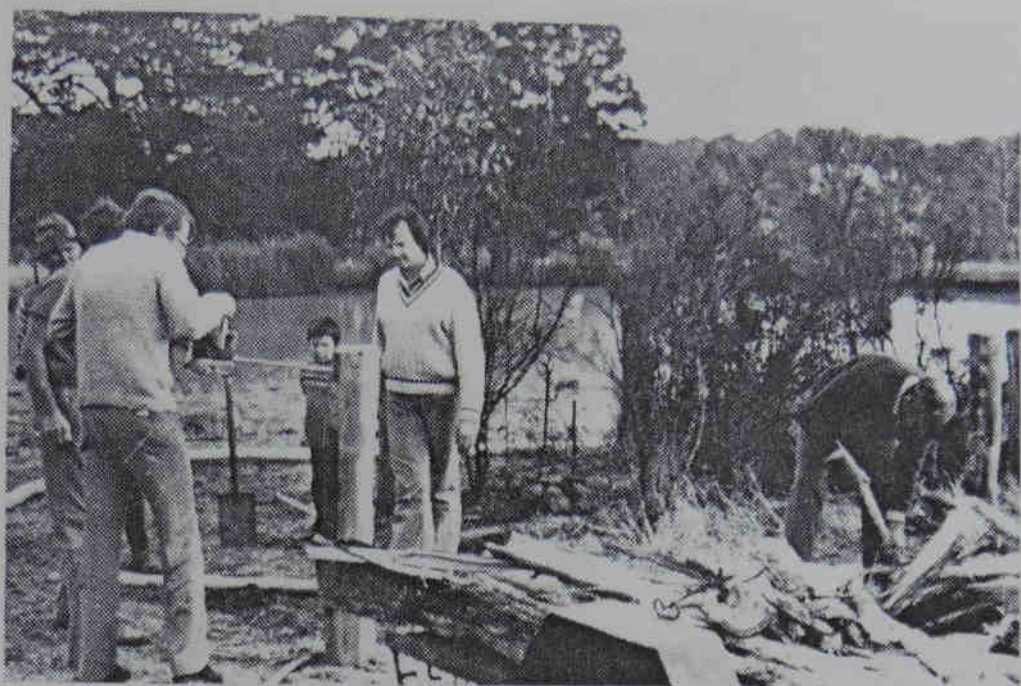
Victorian Field Naturalists and B.F.N.C. at Whipstick Mallee fowl nest.



The ornithologist at work: Dale Gibbons and Wedge-tailed Eagle.



Fossicking for Gold and Zircons at Glenluce.



Extending the protective fencing around the original plant of *Eriostemon verrucosus* var. "J. Semmen's" at Sedgwick.



L to R: Mr. & Mrs. Ipsen, Dawson Marrows, Frank Robbins, - ,
 Gwen Marrows, - Gill, Mrs. Read, Bill Read, Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Broadway,
 Mrs. and Dr. Ashburner, Mrs. Dawson Marrows, Mr. & Mrs. Ebdon,
 Mrs. & George Walker.
 Front L to R: Peter Ellis, Reg Smart.



Bob Trethewey, M.L.A., at Nature Show in Memorial Hall.



Bushland Cleanup at Jackass Flat Flora Reserve.



The Mammal Survey Group's first excursion to the Whipstick with F.N.C.V.
July 1973.



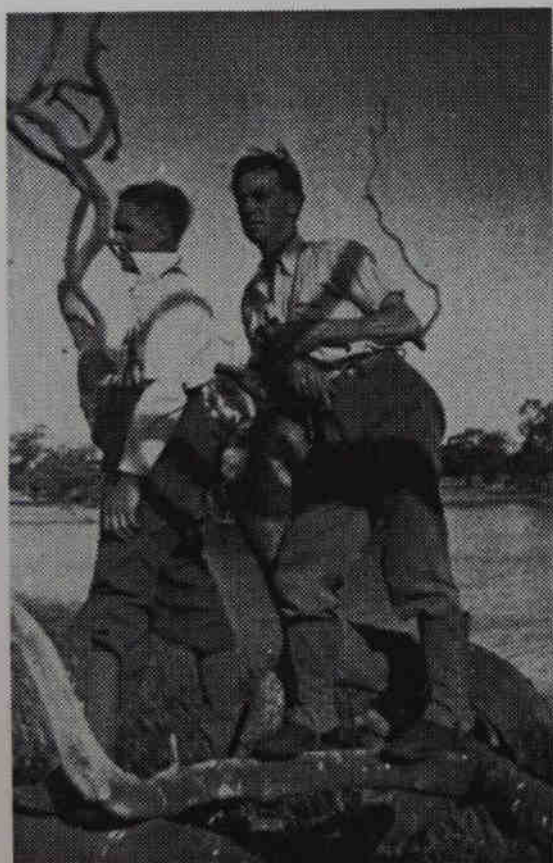
At Hattah, the old and the new.



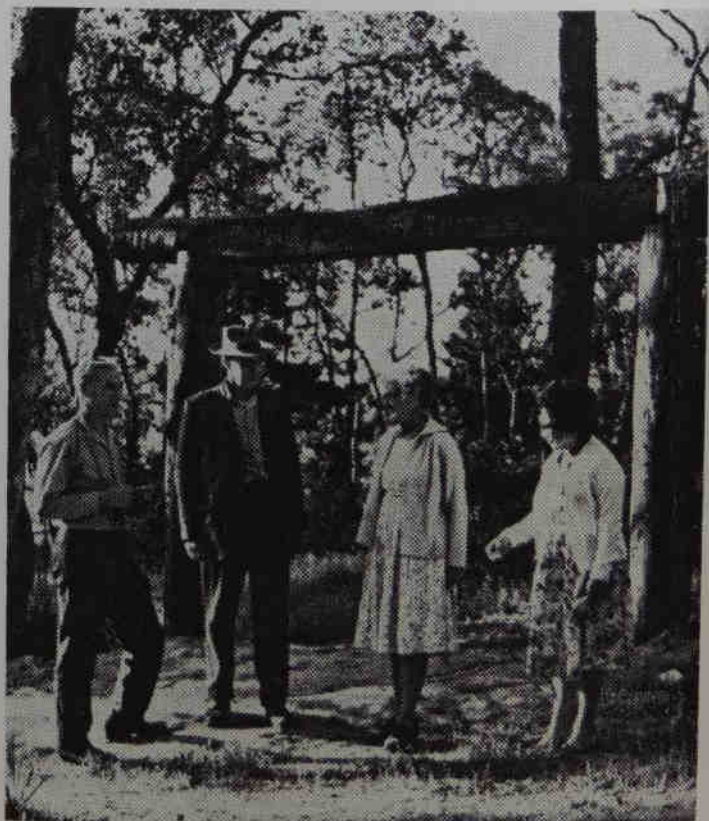
John Berry and Ray Wallace.



The Two Jacks. Jack Kellam and Jack Ipsen bird-banding.



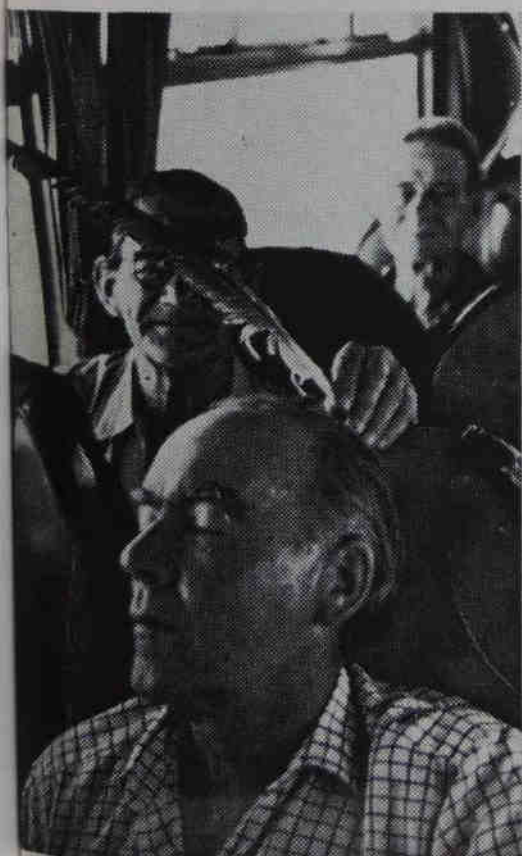
Jack Ipsen and Les Allen at Lake Wooroonook.



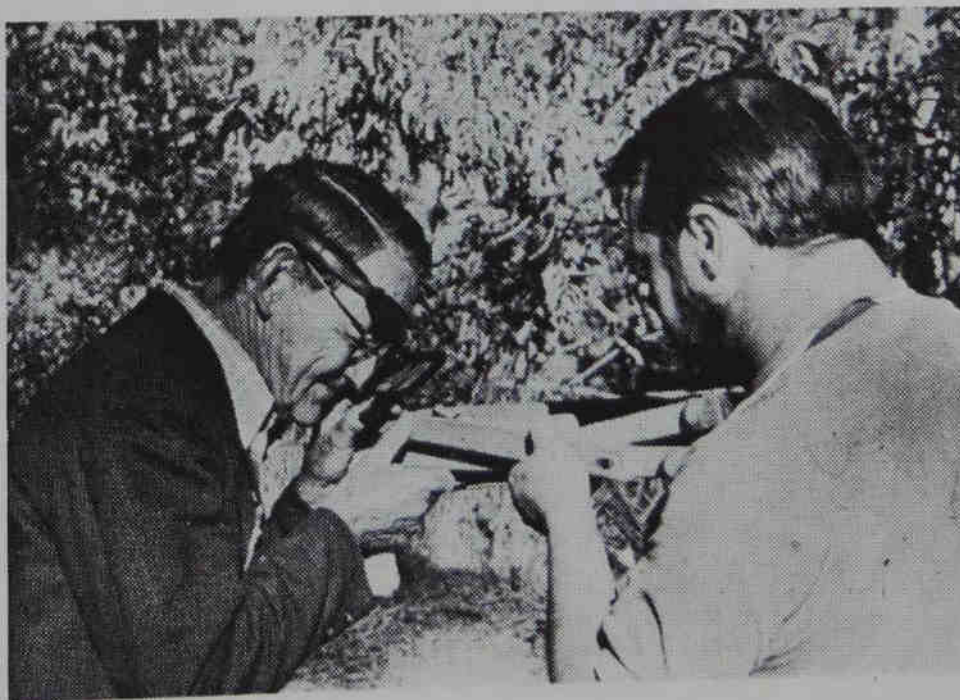
Bob Allen and Fred Taylor, and two ladies outside Kaweka Reserve.



The deputation to Mr. R.J. Hamer.
L to R: Jack Kellam, Frank Robbins, Peter Ellis, Rob Moors.



Another common Club activity
: playing the Fool.



Frank Robbins examines a moth.



B.F.N.C. Bird Hide, May Swamp, Epsom.



Recent excursion to Mt. Korong,
Hennie and Alan Spence and John Lindner.



Campout Kinchega National Park.

L to R: Chris Bunn, Mrs. G. Curr, George Curr, John Berry, Carol Lindner,
John Lindner, Marilyn Berry, Hennie Spence, John Curr, Alan Spence, and
Mrs. John Curr.



Easy days (for some). Phil Richardson prepares breakfast, Bill Read enjoys.



Nature Trail at One Tree Hill, Bob Allen and Tom Patullo.

