

# Friends of Brisbane Ranges

Incorporated

Reg. No. A0032647M ABN 30 120 139 564

Postal Address:  
c/- Post Office  
Anakie VIC 3221  
Web site: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~fobr/>



October  
2008

*Grevillea  
steiglitziana*

## Next Meeting

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October**

### Meet at;

10am at Fridays Picnic  
Ground

### Activities;

Nature Watch Phytophthora  
Monitoring

### What to bring;

Appropriate clothing,  
remember it is spring so  
anything could happen, even  
dare I say it .. RAIN. Lunch  
water and anything else you  
may need to sustain you for  
the day. And of course  
enthusiasm, sense of  
humour and .....

## Next Month

November; Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>

Koala Monitoring

## In this Issue

- Last Month's Activity
- In and Around the Park

## Up Coming Events

**Sunday October 26<sup>th</sup>;**

Back to Steiglitz Festival

## Last Month

**Peter Stokie**

On an extremely windy day, a small but enthusiastic group of Friends met at the Steiglitz Court House car park with high expectations of being entertained and instructed in Steiglitz's gold history in our "Stroll with Col".

On arrival most of us were dismayed to find Col surrounded by 15 or so extremely fit people with backpacks, water bottles, compasses and Birkenstocks. "Some stroll" one was heard to say; "New members" said Judy; "I'm getting back in the car" said Peter. Much to all of our relief, except for Judy who was disappointed these were not new members, the group of Melbourne Bushwalkers headed off leaving us with our trusted guide, although we were already tired just thinking about their journey. Col immediately went up in our estimation when he suggested we DRIVE up to Friday's Picnic Ground to conduct our SHORT walk to some of the historic gold mining locations within the vicinity of the picnic ground. To the strains of three rousing cheers, we headed to our cars to start our history tour.

The morning walk took us through Friday's looking at signs of past buildings, and then through the bush until we arrived at an area that was mined during the 30's depression by the Fridays and others. Col was at his informative best, and we were taken back in time to get a real understanding of what the area was like – home sites, mine shafts, rubbish tips – sorry (historical artefacts like shoe leather, broken crockery, stove parts etc), waterholes, toilet pits. Most interesting was the stories of how these highly impoverished people lived in meagre times.

No walk in the Brisbane Ranges is complete without stunning wildflowers, and orchids were in abundance. A few magnificent Leopard Orchids stood out, as well as great examples of Peach Heath and vivid blue Asperula.

The Nature Watch Phytophthora Cinnamoni volunteer research group joined us for lunch from their overnight camping and data gathering at Old Mill Camp, and after introductions all round by coordinator Caitlin, a merry and boisterous talk fest followed, only to be quietened by Colin reading some very emotional diary extracts from the surviving relatives of the Friday family outlining the tribulations of growing up as children in this isolated area.

The whole group then continued our guided tour to the more industrial and expansive mining sites of the variously named Albion mines established from the 1850's through to the early 1900's. Along the road we met the Bushwalkers coming towards us. With nary a nod, and hardly a slowing of the gait, they passed us and as we looked back they has already disappeared over the hill and around the corner. A great history lesson was in store for us, so we just let them go on their way.

Gold mining was continuous for nearly sixty years on this ridge above Steiglitz, but mining was rarely profitable. The last mine, United Albion or New Albion, was the most successful, but only for a few years around 1900, and all mining ceased by 1910. We learned that the area was not so isolated in the early days with a veritable township complete with schools, pubs, shops and houses to support the pioneering mining ventures. We clamoured over mullock heaps, reflected on where the seams ran, inspected the various locations of the major mine shafts and tunnels, cyanide tanks and water channels. We tried to help Colin solve some of the mysteries of the mining operations, but could not add to his incredible knowledge.

The Friends of the Brisbane Ranges and the Nature Watch group thank Colin Smithyman for his expert guidance and the invaluable insight he has given to us of the cultural and industrial history of this part of the Brisbane Ranges.

### President

Colin Cook

[Colin.Cook@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:Colin.Cook@dpi.vic.gov.au) Ph 52 861 252

### Secretary

Helena Lindorff

[hlindorff@people.net.au](mailto:hlindorff@people.net.au)

### Newsletter

Peter Box

[pbox@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:pbox@parks.vic.gov.au) Ph 53 660 055

## “Stroll With Col” cont.



Hey Col, is that an old mine shaft?.... WHERE???

## “In and Around” the Park

Whats happening or more to the point what has been happening? Well it seems spring or the thought of spring has started the mating season not only for the various inhabitants of our park but also with the people associated with it. Firstly Ranger Joe Stewart walks down the aisle this Saturday to join Ranger Tamara Karner in marital bliss??? Then there is FSO Scott Nicholson who came back from an overseas holiday engaged to Kelly Snell who works with DPI in Geelong. The love bug has also infiltrated the friends group with one of our newer members walking somewhat lopsided due to the weight of a large rock on her left hand, yes Sami and Lucas the word is out!!!

Then there is the plant life that seems to amaze every year with its amazing variety of colour and intricate form. The ranges have again come to life so get out there and enjoy, take a walk and see for yourself why the area is so special and don't forget the camera.



No no no, I am telling you the cars are this way!

### President

Colin Cook

[Colin.Cook@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:Colin.Cook@dpi.vic.gov.au) Ph 52 861 252

### Secretary

Helena Lindorff

[hlindorff@people.net.au](mailto:hlindorff@people.net.au)

### Newsletter

Peter Box

[pbox@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:pbox@parks.vic.gov.au) Ph 53 660 055