



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter August 2012

Previous Sunday Meeting 15 July

It was sunny but cold as we assembled at Kathner Street. Gosta showed us the new Nature Trail marker, installed to clarify the direction of our trail where it diverges from the confusingly titled Nature FT (see below). Thanks to our PCL staff for this.

We found no Bathurst Burr this time. Malcolm removed *Pinus radiata* wildling No. 61. It was 2.2 m tall and non-reproductive. Proliferous Pink *Petrorhagia nanteuillii* is growing apace near the trail.



Photo: Doug Tinney

Future Programme

In the cooler months, we hold afternoon sessions.

Next meeting – Sunday 19th August
Group Area North – Chauvel. Park at Kathner Street entrance or on Chauvel Cct.

- 1.30 – 4 pm
- Plant ID; remove exotic growth.
- Wear long sleeves and trousers, enclosed shoes, hat and gloves. If wet, bring raincoat.
- BYO drink & snack.

Contact Arminel 6231 7392 if you need any gear or more info.

Insurance

President Anna attended the ParkCare / LandCare Coordinators Meeting on Tuesday 31 July. It was made clear that personal *property* of members is not covered but personal *injury* is. So, broken glasses and the like are not compensable through this channel.

ACT Insurance Authority (ACTIA) is the insurance company for the ACT Government, which covers ParkCarers insurance. ParkCare insurance is unique because we are not volunteering for ACT Government, we are volunteering to look after an ACT Govt *asset*. We work under our own direction, unsupervised by an ACT Govt employee.

The process for claims is fraught with legal difficulties. To ensure that any injured ParkCarer making a claim has the best chance of receiving the full amount of compensation, please first notify Anna.

Speaking in Tongues

Welcome to Pingwei, our newest volunteer! She attended our Waterwatch session on Friday 27 July, accompanied by Carrie. Carrie is an ActewAGL employee who speaks Mandarin. In a first for the Ridge, the mysteries of Waterwatching and Park Caring were explained through an interpreter!!

For the diary

Thurs 16 Aug 12.30 pm ANBG Bernard Fenessy Memorial Lecture by Dr Peter Kerr: *Rabbit Control: past, present and future.*

Sun 16 Sept Coleman Ridge Work Party on Cooleman Trig

Sat 20 Oct 8.30 am – 2 pm ANPS Spring Plant Sale at ANBG

Sat. 10 Nov at 8.30 am – 11.30 am
ANBG Growing Friends Plant Sale

Thurs 29 Nov 12.30 pm at ANBG. Local herpetologist Ross Bennett “Reptiles and Frogs of the ACT: how to stop worrying and love snakes!”

What's around

FASCIATION IN **PLANTAGO LANCEOLATA*

This is an example of “fasciation” in *Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* growing along the Cutoff Drain Firetrail. Fasciation refers to abnormal plant growth that occurs in a wide band rather than the usual cylindrical growth. In this Plantain, one stem has grown about 2cm wide before splitting off into a few flowers. The possible causes of fasciation are varied - from physical plant damage, to bacteria or viruses, or insect attack to name just a few. *Secretary Tammy*



Member Mike Johnson (Dip. Horticulture, volunteer Facilitator at the ANBG Botanical Resource Centre) comments –

Your photo shows a beautiful example of "fasciation", which I have encountered before, mostly in this species, most recently on our Ridge. We were taught it is almost certainly caused by a genetic abnormality, so not much can be done to treat it, except by pruning off affected parts if the plant has any economic value (cotoneaster daphne and roses are also, amongst others, susceptible). See Wikipedia, or better the "Plant Protection" 4 volume series by Kerruish et al. or McMaugh's "What Garden Pest or Disease is That" (both Australian).

Should you wish to check these latter references out, Mike has copies you can view - give him a ring 0427 523 618.

The name fasciation comes from the same root as fascist. The fascist symbol, the *fasces* (plural noun), was a bundle of sticks/rods/faggots and an axe, originally carried before Roman magistrates as a symbol of authority. The original, more plebian meaning for *fascis* (same noun, singular) was just a bundle, which appropriately describes the distorted growth in these plants. (ref any Latin-English dictionary, or

Obituary – Irena (Tina) Nevins 1932(?) -2012

The person we knew in the Park Care Group as Tina was a committed environmentalist with a passion for Cooleman Ridge. Her background, even her name, not to mention her age, was obscure. Few of us Park Carers knew she had a daughter and son - just another of the mysteries surrounding Tina.

Tina's family believes she was born in the Ukraine in March 1932 and was known as Irene Petova. She was sent to Munich during the war where she was brought up in an orphanage. As a displaced person, Tina came to Australia around 1950 and there is a record of her having married a Pole in Melbourne in May 1953. Her life following the break-up of that marriage included time searching for opals and moving around Queensland before arriving in Canberra. The surname by which we knew her came from a long-term relationship with Alfred Kenneth Nevins who passed away in the early 1990s. The death of her partner was long and difficult. Tina sought relief by escaping to Mt Arawang. It was around that time that she joined with the founder of Cooleman Ridge Park Care, Bess Sledge, and the late Pauline Lynga and others as inaugural members of the Group.

Park Care fitted well with Tina's practical approach to conservation. Hands-on was what she liked. But there was also a soaring concern about the Earth and the

effect on it of humanity that underlay her approach.

She lived the “Think globally – act locally” slogan.

As an apprentice Park Carer in 2001, Tina showed me the ropes. She taught me plant identification, how to remove thistles without being spiked, how to cut and dab and the most effective way of removing clumps of Phalaris. I know she's passed these skills on to others in the group.

Besides her environmental credentials, Tina had a good sense of humour. But always there seemed a tinge of regret – perhaps about her minimal schooling or the hand she'd been dealt in life. But her will to live was intense.

This desire was evident in the long decline in her health following a broken hip sustained in an Action bus when going to Cooleman Court about five years ago. Tina never really recovered from this accident and became increasingly frail. She didn't work on the Ridge after the broken hip but visited on a few occasions, the most recent being the twentieth anniversary of the Group in April last year.

Still living at home, her mobility was such that she couldn't leave the house. But, determined as always, she was planning on moving into assisted accommodation. The end came quicker than Tina or anybody else imagined. Farewell, friend, you will be missed.

Doug Tinney