

## FEP Annual General Meeting

The FEP Annual General Meeting was held Saturday 15th August at Rangeville Scout Hall.

Michael Atzeni was the guest speaker from Toowoomba Bird Observers (TBO). Michael gave an interesting presentation on: "Birds of Murphys Creek District: Then and Now". Although there are some species not around now compared to the early 1900's records, all in all there appears to be a larger variety of species and in general more sightings. There are also more people watching out for and reporting the birds found in the area.

Cam MacKenzie, President, of Darling Downs Environmental Council briefly explained the operations of their organisation and how it could assist FEP.

Nat Parker from SEQ Catchments spoke for about his current role with SEQ Catchments.

In the President's report Hugh highlighted much of the volunteer work that has been carried out in the past year at the different parks under FEP guidance including the new reserve at Charmaine Court, Kleinton.

We also recently held a planting activity for the National Tree Day event at Duggan Park which went ahead despite damp conditions. The rain should be of great benefit for the new plants in the park.

During the year FEP have received helpful assistance of from a range of schools including Toowoomba Grammar School, Centenary Heights State High School, Toowoomba Christian School (Highfields), Church of Latter Day Saints, Clifford Park Special School and Fairholme College.

Results of the election of office bearers -

President: **Hugh Krenske**

Vice President: **Kay Krenske**

Secretary: **Bruce Titter**

Treasurer: **Ray Addison**

Other Member: **Eunice Addison**

On behalf of the active volunteers and other members, we would like to express our appreciation for the effort that our office bearers put into liaising (with council and other groups) as well as coordinating our activities in the bushland parks.

## Parkcare Groups

**Parkcare groups** are volunteers carrying out bush rehabilitation in our local bushland parks.



*Would you like to get involved?*

**Charmaine Ct, Kleinton (near Highfields)**  
**(1<sup>st</sup> Saturday each month from 9am - 12)**

(Contact Michael McGoldrick)  
(4635 7371 or 0417 802 817)

**Nielsen Park (Colman Drv off Mackenzie St)**  
**(1<sup>st</sup> Saturday each month from 9am - 12)**  
**(Plus 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month from 2pm)**

(Contact Rob Brodribb 0407 124 863)  
(rwbrodribb@ozemail.com.au)

**Jubilee Park (Coventry Court)**  
**(Northern end of Mackenzie Street, Mt Lofty)**  
**(1st Sunday of the month 8 - 9am)**

(Contact Geoff Sharp 0427 038 055)

**Redwood Park (Each Mon & Thu 8:30am)**  
**(Plus 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday each month)**  
**(Warrego Highway below the saddle)**

Access to the park is through the bottom car park on the down section of the Toowoomba range crossing, on the left just after the first 100km speed sign. 

(Contact Hugh Krenske [info@fep.org.au](mailto:info@fep.org.au))  
(or call Hugh 0418 748 282 or 07 4635 1758)

**Duggan Park**  
**(Each Thursday & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday from 8:30am)**  
**(Leslie & Collier Streets, Rangeville)**

(Contact Max Henderson 0427 866 091)

**Hartmann Bushland Reserve**  
**(Cnr Alderley St & Rowbotham St)**  
**(Wednesday from 8am each week)**  
**(Plus 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each month from 9am)**

(Contact Greg Lukes 0428 288 077)  
(glukes@bigpond.com)

**Panorama Crescent Park**  
**(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each month from 3pm)**  
(Kathy Gouldson [kathygouldson@bigpond.com](mailto:kathygouldson@bigpond.com))

**Echo Valley South Park (Ramsay St)**  
**(2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Saturday each month from 9am)**

This small group is active 2 or 3 Saturdays each month from 9am – 12 noon.

(Contact Greg Lukes 0428 288 077)  
(glukes@bigpond.com)

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## Friends of the Escarpment Parks Toowoomba Inc.

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Newsletter Editor **Greg Lukes**  
[newsletters@fep.org.au](mailto:newsletters@fep.org.au)  
0428 288 077



**Volunteers required to assist with conservation activities in bushland environments!!!**



Friends of the Escarpment Parks  
TOOWOOMBA INC.



The  
**Escarpment  
Park Friend**

**Sep – Oct 2015**

Hugh Krenske 4635 1758

[info@fep.org.au](mailto:info@fep.org.au)

[www.fep.org.au](http://www.fep.org.au)

*FEP, Caring for Toowoomba's Bushlands*

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**Charmaine Court Reserve**

This tiny reserve located in the middle of Charmaine Court, Kleinton is approx. 0.5 hectares and the perimeter is mowed so that access for viewing bird life, butterflies and plants is easily achievable.



**Photo by Dougal at the reserve**

We held a couple of bushcare activities in July and August removing climbing asparagus and other problem weeds.

A number of local residents have got together and will carry out further bush regeneration activities at the reserve the first Saturday each month from 9am till 12pm to help the environment recover.

**For more information please contact  
Michael McGoldrick (FEP)  
4635 7371 or 0417 802 817**

**Weed Watch**

**Spear Thistle**

*Cirsium vulgare*

*Cirsium vulgare* are a short-lived herbaceous plant usually growing 60 to 120 cm tall, but sometimes reaching up to 2 m in height.



It is a widely distributed weed species that has naturalised throughout the southern and eastern parts of Australia.

Native to Europe, northern Africa (i.e. Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), western Asia, Pakistan and China.

Spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) is regarded as an environmental weed in parts of south-eastern Australia.

The thistle-like flower-heads contain the seeds. These flower-heads consist of many small, purple or reddish-purple coloured, tubular florets.

Flowering occurs throughout most of the year, but is most common from spring through to autumn. After flowering they reproduce almost entirely by seeds that are equipped with a large 'parachute' of bristles and easily dispersed by wind.

<http://weeds.brisbane.qld.gov.au/weeds/spear-thistle>

## Eagle's Nest Camp Redwood Park

Excerpts from

### Toowoomba Escarpment and Foothills Mane Holland Heritage Research Services

The plight of the unemployed during the Depression inspired a group of public-spirited Toowoomba citizens to establish a rest camp in Redwood Park for spent and weary souls who passed that way. It became known as the Eagles Nest and was known Australia-wide. Here the unemployed and the destitute victims of the Depression were able to stay a while to rehabilitate. The main benefactors of the camp were Dr. Price and Mark Harrison.

***The following article by Hector Ferguson of Toowoomba was published fourteen months after the Eagle's Nest Camp began. The ethos and humour of the times is expressed in the following eye witness account when the camp operated:***

Midway up the mountains, sheltering on a ledge beneath the towering heights of the Toowoomba Range, just off the Toll Bar Road, is the swagmen's rest camp - **The Eagles Nest.**

Here the weary wayfarers of the roads find a haven of refuge, food, and lodging. Realisation also that here, at any rate, is tangible evidence that 'kindness is another's trouble' is not mere poetic fancy, but a concrete fact in daily demonstration.

Situated on the site of an old unused two-chain road which opens off the Toll Bar, The Eagle's Nest, with its buildings, gardens and grateful occupants, stands as a monument to the benevolence and good will of the generous-hearted individuals who conceived the idea of providing shelter and food to unfortunates who, by stress of circumstance, are compelled to go 'Waltzing Matilda' on the roads of Queensland.

All credit is due to Toowoomba's philanthropic hospital matron and medico who were responsible for the establishment of The Eagle's Nest a little over a year ago.

A sign on the Toll Bar Road invites the swagman to enter, and he is made welcome by the man in charge, Mr. Downs, a returned soldier, and the permanent camp commandant of the rest home.



*Eagle's Nest Camp in the early nineteen-thirties*

***No one is turned away*** if it is at all possible to accommodate him, and as many as 28 have been admitted at one time. At time of writing, there are 15 men in residence, and all are loud in their appreciation of the food and bunkhouse provided for them. In contrast to the weary weeks of roughing it on the wallaby track

The men are permitted to remain at the camp for from three to ten days but there is no hard-and-fast rule laid down in this respect. It depends on the circumstances. The only demands made on the guests are to conform to the rules promulgated by the swagmen themselves.

- 1. Men staying must abide by the man in charge.***
- 2. No intoxicants are allowed to be brought into camp.***
- 3. Be sanitary, and clean, and keep the camp tidy.***

The great majority realise the importance of these simple laws, and observe them to the letter.

The buildings, built by the men, consist of a bunk-house, where the arrangement of the placing of the portable mattresses are reminiscent of barrack life; a small library and gramophone; a cook's galley, which includes a stove; dining hut, with store rooms attached; fly-proof meat house; a bakehouse which is as novel in construction and operation as it is ingenious and efficient; shower and latrines, which bear the arresting notification that cleanliness is essential; cow shed (three cows are kept); fowl house and the very orderly 'orderly room' - the Commandant's dug-out, which as would be

expected from this disciple of sanitation is 'wondrous neat and clean'.

The garden, enclosed with netting, is about half an acre in area, and contains every kind of vegetable. Cabbages, potatoes, cauliflowers, pumpkins, beans, carrots, turnips, swedes, tomatoes and beetroot are being used at present, and with true professional touch the rotation of vegetable crops ensures a constant supply throughout the year.

The small water reservoir which supplies the garden, domestic needs, and ablutionary requirements is fed by a spring high up on the mountain side, and water is conveyed to the camp by a pipe line with taps in convenient places.

All bread used at the Eagle's Nest is baked by Mr. Downs, who also built the bakehouse, where only wheat meal is used. Wheat is gristed (separating grain from its chaff) privately in Toowoomba. The approximate cost of a 2 lb. loaf is 2 and 1/2 pence and it is good bread. Butter is also made at the camp.

Tea, sugar and meat are supplied by the generosity of the promoters, augmented by the business men and public of Toowoomba. The Matron of St. Andrew's Private Hospital receives and distributes gifts for the welfare of the inmates. Working trousers are always in demand, as the wardrobes of the swagmen are often scanty, particularly the nether garments.

The men who take advantage of the shelter offering are not compelled to work during their stay, but usually get firewood and do any necessary work of the camp.

An agricultural plot under maize, lucerne, oats and pumpkins is gradually being extended. Most of the guests prefer to help in some way to mark their gratitude and appreciation.

***Since the inception of The Eagle's Nest, 14 months ago, over 600 men have passed through the camp.*** They include university graduates, professional men, artisans, labourers, sailors, and some genuine dyed in the whiskers bagmen. The latter, true to their traditions, show neither appreciation, gratitude nor the desire to work.

**"We are all roads scholars from the school of adversity,"** wrote one traveller

as a description of the men on the track in the book supplied to the camp commandant for the purpose of recording the names and occupations of the patrons who register. The addresses left by the travellers range from Sydney to Perth and from Melbourne to Cairns.

**"The memory of the Eagle's Nest will ever remain in my mind as a bright light shining through a dark night of despair"** wrote one wayfarer, justly appreciative of the hospitality and treatment received.

"We get some odd ones here at times" said Mr. Downs, "and they provide us with plenty of fun while they remain." "That", pointing to a caption decorating the dining hut wall, "is the work of one of the last 'ones' we had." The slogan on the wall reads **'Don't be downhearted but eat like Helen B. Merry'**.

One guest - incidentally, a former master of languages of one of the English public schools - was enthusiastic regarding the laws of cleanliness, after reading the notice, that he promptly took a bath in the water trough, which is reserved for watering the cattle.

Visitors are welcome to inspect the Eagle's Nest at any time, and will recall and remember afterwards with a new significance that familiar line **'Kind hearts are more than coronets'**. (A coronet is a small crown consisting of ornaments fixed on a metal ring.)

Over the years the Eagle's Nest camp site became overgrown with lantana and privet and concealed beneath its mantle.

In **1994** the site of the camp became part of a special project to aid the unemployed. Twelve unemployed youth under the direction of archaeologist Dr. David Biernoff carefully & systematically cleared and unearthed the site. The camp layout and items found there were recorded. No structures remain. Nonetheless, the physical evidence of this place adds to the cultural significance of the Park.

[www.fep.org.au/fep-docs/redwoodhistory.PDF](http://www.fep.org.au/fep-docs/redwoodhistory.PDF)

Hugh and the Redwood group have also found the site and intend to clear it again.

An ecotourism historic walk of the escarpment, once established, could also include the Eagle's Nest Camp site.