



Kanawinka (*Land of Tomorrow*) 2014

Morris Lake and Neville Bonney.

The 2014 South Australian meeting provided a magnificent four day program for the 41 members from South and Western Australia, Victoria and Queensland. Brian and Lyn Fraser and their team kept us all fed entertained and contented the whole time and we thank them for all their hard work.

Thursday 23rd

Leaving Naracoorte on the bus for our first day's adventure, we travelled south towards Penola through the red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis* ssp. *camaldulensis*) farming land where most of the understory has been lost to grazing and cropping, but the red gums flourish and are supported by a permanent underground water table which flows through the limestone travelling from the east to the west and finally exiting into the Southern Ocean.

Once through Penola we continued on through small timber towns of Nangwarry and Tarpeena, where the soil type changes and vast forests of *Pinus radiata* form an intensive forestry industry, then onwards towards Mount Gambier the regional city of some 30.000 people.

From here we ventured to Mount Schanck with good examples of the rough barked manna gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis* ssp. *cygnetensis*), black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*), and some understory of *Leptospermum continentale*.

Keeping to the theme of Kanawinka (Land of tomorrow) and observing the areas Volcanic history, many took the opportunity to climb to the top of the ancient volcano and view inside the crater, while others went on to see some coastal landscapes and South Australia's largest Rock Lobster Port.

Of geological interest is the Otway Basin—as the area is termed. This was formed as Australia separated from Antarctica starting around 35 million years ago. As the two land masses separated, firstly sand and silt was deposited in swamps and alluvial floodplains in the area. This was followed by several occasions when the sea flooded the area and marine sediments containing the remains of fish, molluscs, and microscopic organisms were deposited in the limestone that was laid down on the sea floor—thus we have the limestone caves which we next visited later in the day.

We then travelled back to Mount Gambier where we visited a furniture making factory, then had lunch inside a Volcanic crater, the Valley Lake. From here we visited the Tantanoola Caves which although small, revealed many geological features of interest to IWCS members.

Then through more hills, viewing swamp gum (*Eucalyptus ovata*)—and a premature stop to look closer at some ground flora including the beautiful trigger plant (*Stylidium graminifoli*) in full flower, also (*Hibbertia prostrata*), and native iris (*Patersonia fragilis*). Also of interest were the tassel sedges (*Restio tetraphylus*) and (*Gahnia clakei*). We then journeyed from here onwards to Naracoorte, with floristic commentary from Neville Bonney to fill in the day's viewing.



Ron Allen inside the Tantanoola Caves.

Friday 24th

Again by bus, we travelled north east towards Frances, visiting the century old stock yards on Binham Station made from buloke (*Allocasuarina luehmannii*). and situated in a small reserve of old and young bulokes. The property was settled in 1908 and ran sheep, but now cattle. We were met by the owners Peter and Lynda Hannaford, who were kind enough to tell us of the local buloke history, and they also displayed early photographs of the area. Most of the buloke trees were infested with mistletoe which will eventually kill the buloke in this area. This may be due to some environmental factor which has weakened the buloke in that area.

The buloke has a symbiotic mycorrhiza root association which will assist the tree in taking up phosphate and water from the soil and in return the mycorrhiza received sugars and some vitamins from the tree. Buloke also has the hardest timber in the world, and has separate male and female trees. The leaves of the tree when they are shed also have an alleopathic effect whereby they release a chemical into the soil which inhibits the growth of nearby plants and so reduces competition. The alleopathic chemical could in fact be a terpene which are common to other Gymnosperms.

There was so much interest in the mistletoe attachments (*Lysiana* sp.) to the trees, that Peter raced home for his chain saw and a few members went home with 'mistletoe balls'. Thanks Peter.

The next stop was made at Mullinnger Swamp the land of the giant red gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), where the group photo of IWCS members was taken.

In the two days we observed a landscape of ever-changing tree species mainly due to soil changes and rainfall differences.

The tree species observed were as follows:

- red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis* ssp. *camaldulensis*)
- pink gum (*Eucalyptus fasciculosa*)
- grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*)
- brown stringybark (*Eucalyptus baxteri*)
- buloke (*Allocasuarina luehmannii*)
- golden wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*)
- silver banksia (*Banksia marginata*)
- desert banksia (*Banksia ornata*)
- black paperbark (*Melaleuca lanceolata*)

In the afternoon we visited David and Sandra Williamson wood work shop and cutting area where members cut slabs from pieces of south east timbers while others spent time in the Yulgibar Gallery on the property. David as usual was very generous in donating his time, use of machinery, and wood for IWCS members—and answered many questions and took part in many discussions.

Brian Davis and Harry Dennis
slabing a blackwood log.



Buloke (*Allocasuarina luehmannii*) tree, female cones and branchlets and mistletoe bole.



Saturday 25th

This was a business day with the Annual Meeting in the morning and the Wood Auction in the afternoon. A separate report is included.

Sunday 26th

On the bus bright and early we headed for Yallum Park, and on the way stopped to view the mountain ash carvings created by Kevin Gilders in memory of Father Julian Tenison Woods, the Catholic priest of the Penola parish in the 1860s, who with Mary Mackillop formed the Order of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.



This group carving—one of six—shows Father Woods preaching, and Mary Mackillop embracing a child.

It was then on to Yallum Park which—besides many other things historic—is home to a very significant and grand 100 ha arboretum containing exotic and Australian species. The significance of this arboretum is not to be discounted in any way because it contains some of the longest living Norfolk Is and bunya pines alive today—planted from the 1840s to the present—and yes, we were privileged to be invited to add 15 additional trees to this collection. These were donated by John Zwar, and were planted on the former tennis court area.

We were also privileged to be guided, firstly on a tour of the gardens, and then through Yallum House interior, by Andy Clifford the owner, and IWCS member. Thanks Andy it was our privilege.

The history of Yallum Park began in 1840 when Solomon, Josiah and Thomas Austin squatted on a lease of 109 square miles, and built the first house at Cupnum with paddock stone, and then another house at the Yallum Park site later that year. The lease was sold in 1851 to Thomas and Harry Wells who built the second house.



The magnanimous Yallum House, completed in 1880, and remarkably still mostly in original condition—inside and out.

A decade later this lease was passed on to John Riddoch who represented the District of Victoria in the House of Assembly between 1865 and 1873. He also built the third single story stone house in 1863. The building of the main two story house was begun in 1878 and completed in Jan 1880. All of the buildings still stand and are in use, and bear in mind, this is not just your ordinary house. In June 1881 Prince George and Prince Albert were entertained and stayed here and I have little doubt that many of that calibre have been entertained within its walls in the past 134 years.

In 1890, 1,147 acres were relinquished for closer settlement, including Coonawarra—now Wynns—which was split off and the first vines were planted there in 1891. Then in 1906 a further 17,182 acres were sold to the Government for closer settlement. John Riddoch died in 1901 and in Dec 1914 the final 2,258 acres were bought by William Clifford, grandfather of Andy Clifford who is the present owner and who uses the estate for breeding and finishing beef cattle. Thanks Andy for your hospitality.



Marcia Tommerup, David Greve, Brian Davis and Colin Martin plant a tree on behalf of the Queensland contingent.

