



Friends of Belair National Park

Volunteers working for Conservation

Established 1985
Friends group of the decade 2004



Best Newsletter 1996 - Friends Group of the year 1998

NEWLETTER 2, JUNE 2008

Please note this is a quarterly newsletter. 4 per year. March, June, Sept and Dec.

Deadlines are the 3rd Monday of the month preceding its issue.

Contributions can be Emailed to Michael Cerchez at cerchez@chariot.net.au

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OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2008

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS. Eric Cole, Brian DuBois, Barry Palmer, Isabel Storer, Ron Tamblyn.

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Jill Salvi 8278 6736
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Mike Cerchez 8339 6801
WORKING BEES
Eric Cole 8278 3816
SIGNIFICANT TREES
Ron Tamblyn 8278 6593

WORKING IN BELAIR NATIONAL PARK.

Would you like to work in the Park but you are employed or study during the week, or have children to get off to school, or find 8.30 am is too early? Some years ago we met on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 10.00 am to work for 2 hours on projects, weeding, planting, or as required. If you are interested in joining a group at a time different from our current working bees, please telephone the secretary, Jill, on 8278 6736 with your ideas.

OTHER WORKERS IN BELAIR NATIONAL PARK

Some of the other groups working in the Park recently are:
DCS (Correctional Services) Team (fire team) working along Queen Jubilee Drive and Nookoo and Kaloola tracks.
YCC have done track clearance along Workanda Creek and Echo Tunnel tracks.
Also the seasonal fire crew did some work on blackberry along Minno Creek.
Weed Warriors have been leading local schools in weeding and spreading spider mite on gorse, and rust on bridal creeper, for biological control.
Threatened Plant Action Group have been working in the areas of Leafy Greenhoods. (Pterostylis cucullata).

Volunteering SA E-Bulletin 7th May 2008

Would you like to join our pool of volunteers in assisting people with an intellectual disability to experience the excitement and personal growth that travel can bring? We need more volunteers willing to provide assistance and guidance for our Tourists on a range of holidays. There are day trips, weekend getaways and tours up to 12 days to locations all over Australia.

No qualifications are required: applicants must be over 20 years of age, and be able to make a commitment to be involved for at least a year. Successful applicants will be required to attend an interview and undergo police and reference checks, Training and orientation is provided to become a 'Tour Guide'. Ongoing support and personal/professional development is also a part of this role, as is disability awareness training.

Interested? Contact: Gill Richardson 8331 2399 or email:

volunteering@holidayexplorers.com.au

Finally after years of negotiation the men's working bee finally crossed onto railway land on Friday 2nd May and started weeding.

We have to abide by the following rules: -

- 1. Copy of the Licence agreement to be carried on site.**
- 2. Must not cross track.**
- 3. Must not approach within 4 metres of the outer track.**
- 4. Must wear personal protective equipment and ORANGE safety vest.**
- 5. Must notify ARTC Train Control South 8217 4453 on day and prior to commencement.**

PLEASE NOTE WE CAN ONLY WORK ON RAILWAY LAND ON ORGANISED WORKING BEES.

Rotary Club of Glen Osmond Ranger of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year.

This award night was held on Monday 5th May at the Belair Country Club. Eric and Mary Cole were runners up for the award, which was won by Beverley and Dean Overton, Friends of Cape Gantheaume Conservation Park.



Eric receiving a certificate from Bob Cooper, President of Glen Osmond Rotary Club. (Mary was absent still recuperating at home.) Other runners up were Kathryn Saddler, Cleland Wildlife Volunteers, Gordon and Margaret White, friends of Innes National Park, Trevor Pitt, Friends of Anstey Hill Recreation Park, Trudi Jaques and Tony Lewis, Volunteers at Yorke District. Craig Nixon, District Ranger, West Region was awarded Ranger of the Year.

CALENDAR 2008

REGULAR EVENTS

General Meetings on the first Saturday of the month. 1.00pm at the Volunteer Centre, Long Gully, Belair National Park. Visitors welcome.

Barbecues – Meetings of 5th April and 1st November are at 12.30pm for a barbecue.

Please bring plate of salad or sweet slice to share, and \$2.50 donation for meat.

Working Bees on Tuesdays and Fridays, meet outside the Information Centre, Belair National Park

Before 8.00 am Daylight Saving Time, or 8.30 am in the winter.

NO WORKING BEE IF THERE IS A TOTAL FIRE BAN.

Enquiries Eric 8278 3816

Guided Walks are from April to December, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday afternoons. Meet outside the Information Centre, Belair National Park at 2.00 pm. All welcome. The first Tuesday walk for 2008 will be on 8th April. (No walk if forecast temperature is over 32 degrees)

Enquiries Shirley 8278 1525.

SPECIAL EVENTS

August –FOOTSTEPS IN THE FLINDERS. The 24th Annual Forum of Friends of Parks

Friday 15th to Sunday 17th – At Old Wilpena Station, Flinders Ranges National Park. Hosted by Friends of Flinders Ranges National Park. Early bird registrations, before 30th June, save \$20. Friends of Belair have information on the notice board, or telephone Margaret Williams, registration officer on 8268 2712 or by email:frankwil@adam.com.au.

December -Friday 19th Belair Park 117th Birthday and Friends 23rd Birthday.

FROM THE PRESIDENT. (And editor)

Hope you survived our March heat wave! It's amazing how quickly the weather changes. In March, there was a record heat

wave. In April and May we're back to "Brass Monkey" weather. Lack of knowledge often leads us to jump to conclusions. For instance it was necessary to keep a good supply of cannon balls next to the cannons on war ships. The only problem was they're round, and they roll about. The best storage method devised was to stack them as a square based pyramid with one on top resting on 4, resting on 9, resting on 16. This enabled 30 cannon balls to be stacked in a small area next to the cannon. There was only one problem, how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding. The solution was a metal plate with round indentations. This was called a Monkey. This plate had to be made of Brass to stop it rusting. The only problem now was that brass contracts much faster than iron when chilled. Consequently when the temperature dropped too far the indentation in the Brass Monkey would shrink so much that the iron cannon balls would come right off the monkey. Hence the expression cold enough to "Freeze the Balls off a Brass Monkey", and you thought it was a vulgar expression. This leads me in a round about way to Ross Handsaker's article on Climate Change. Ross Handsaker is one our most dedicated weeders, and has been so for more than 10 years. Ross is a climate change sceptic, a position he has come to after reading a vast amount of information on the topic. I asked him to contribute an article to this newsletter because it is extra knowledge on a topic that can help our understanding of it. It is an interesting article and has been included for the sake of increasing our knowledge and not to reflect our views.

It's great to see all the work that is going on in the Park. The picnic area for the playground is nearing completion. The workshop has gone. Work on the Dianella precinct is about to start. Unfortunately the new front entrance building and road plans are not ready yet for public consultation. Because of the nature of Government funding only one project at a time can be financed, and so we will have put up with the Park looking like a construction site for a number



of years yet. Remember the old sayings; “ You can’t make an omelette without breaking the eggs, ” and “ Rome wasn’t built in a day”. This year’s autumn fuel reduction burn in the Park looks a bit devastating in places but brings to mind the above omelette saying. Hopefully the natural vegetation will come back in abundance. We will certainly have to monitor this area.

Man-made Global Warming and some of the Myths

The following comments reflect the views of the writer and are contrary to alarmist opinion.

Very briefly an increase in man-made carbon dioxide (CO₂) is thought to cause an energy imbalance. More CO₂ absorbs more infra red heat thereby increasing the greenhouse effect. The theory proposes that the lower atmosphere temperatures should rise faster than surface temperatures but readings from weather satellites and balloons do not support this. Moreover, the rise in CO₂ cannot of itself explain the increased temperatures in the 20th century. The theory is dependent on a positive feedback from an increase in the main greenhouse gas, water vapour, which incidentally, absorbs heat in the same wavelengths as CO₂. (Water vapour and clouds contribute around 90% of the greenhouse effect).

Computer models forecasting future temperatures rely on this amplification, or positive feedback. Recent research by Dr Roy Spencer, Principal Research Scientist at University of Alabama, using information from NASA aqua satellites, found that rapidly warming air over the tropics caused a surprising reduction in cirrus cloud which allowed an acceleration of heat escaping into space, ie. a negative feedback!

Some myths about global warming.

By the way, have you noticed it is now called "climate change" - if the climate gets hotter, colder, drier or wetter it is human induced.

Consensus

Manhattan International Conference in March 2008 was attended by more than 200 scientists and other experts on climate change, who oppose the current theory. Al Gore and James Hansen were invited to speak at the conference, with all costs paid, including Gore’s \$200,000 usual fee, but they declined.

In 2007 some 400 scientists cast doubt on man-made global warming in a minority US Senate Report.

CO₂ is a pollutant

Carbon dioxide is a colourless, odourless gas which is essential to both plant and animal life (stimulates breathing in humans), and is used as a fertiliser in agricultural greenhouses. It is estimated that only around 3.4% of CO₂ emitted each year into the atmosphere is from human activities, the rest is natural (see IPCC report).

20th Century temperatures were unprecedented

There is evidence from palaeontology, oceanography, geology and biology research that temperatures since the last ice age were warmer than today during the Middle Holocene, Roman Empire and Medieval Warm Period.

Computer models predict a gradual warming in temperatures as CO₂ levels rise but, there has been no upward trend over recent years and temperatures actually fell during the latter part of 2007.

Rising sea levels

It has been predicted that low-lying areas such as the Maldives would be submerged by rising sea levels due to global warming. Research by Dr Nils Morner (a sea level expert of 30 years experience) found that the sea level at the Maldives has been stable for the past 35 years!

Unless the land-based ice (not sea ice) melts on Greenland and/or Antarctica there is little likelihood of any significant raise in sea levels. While we are often told of the melting in Greenland west and the peninsular in

Antarctica, it is usually overlooked that ice in east Greenland and the main body of Antarctica are growing! Anecdotal reports of rising sea levels are due to natural subsidence or erosion.

CO2 is the driving force for climate change

Ice core readings from Greenland and Antarctica show that rises in CO2 occur many hundreds of years after increases in temperatures. During a previous ice age CO2 levels were higher than today!

Some people have suggested that we should reduce CO2 emissions even if the science is wrong. Given that science cannot, as yet determine, what is natural and what is human induced. (It is estimated that half of human emissions fail to accumulate in the atmosphere - disappearing into unknown "sinks") and that temperatures rose by only 1 degree C over the past 100 years, would we notice any difference?

In the USA, surveys have found that the more people learn about the CO2 theory and climate change, the less concerned they become.

In my opinion we are being hoodwinked. If the science is settled why is there still a debate, albeit often stifled? Why the huge variations in IPCC climate predictions if the computer models are reliable? Why should we accept long-term computer model forecasts of climate when their accuracy in predicting weather beyond 10 days is zero? Why the difficulty for sceptics to have their research papers published? Why the denigration of the persons rather than rebuttal of their research? Why the exaggerations - each unusual but not unprecedented weather condition, is blamed on global warming (even earthquakes and tsunamis!)? Why the fraud of the "hockey stick" record of historical temperatures (IPCC even claimed it represented the global picture rather than just the Northern Hemisphere as published by Mann)? Why the tampering by NASA of USA temperature records which tried to show 2005, rather than 1934 as the hottest year on

record? Why did recent SA Motor magazine article on climate change fail to mention water vapour as even one of the six main greenhouse gases?

Ross Handsaker

Rust fungus to tear backbone out of boneseed.

CSIRO's newly refurbished containment facility for exotic insects and plant pathogens in Canberra is hosting a species of rust fungus, which shows promise as a biocontrol agent for the highly invasive plant pest, boneseed.

Named as one of Australia's 20 Weeds of National Significance, boneseed is a threat to native bushland in south-eastern Australia where it forms dense, evergreen monocultures that prevent the growth and regeneration of native plants.

Boneseed has been the target of collaboration between CSIRO and the Plant Protection Research Institute in Stellenbosch, South Africa, to investigate the possible use of the rust species *Endophyllum osteospermi* as a biocontrol agent.

"In its home range in southern Africa, boneseed is attacked by a naturally occurring species of rust fungus," says Dr Louise Morin from CSIRO Entomology and the CRC for Australian Weed Management.

"Boneseed rust is highly promising as a biocontrol agent for boneseed because it reduces growth and reproduction of the plants, deforming infected branches into 'witches' brooms'."

Initial host specificity testing was done in South Africa and the rust is now in quarantine in Canberra for the final testing that is required before an application to release can be made.

Boneseed is currently confined to the south-east of Australia, in particular the Mornington Peninsula and the You Yangs in Victoria, and the Mount Lofty Ranges in South Australia. Other small, scattered infestations occur throughout Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. The plant has the potential to invade much of southern Australia, endangering native flora and fauna wherever it establishes.

This research is funded by the Research & Development component of the Australian Government's Defeating the Weed Menace Program, which is administered by Land & Water Australia.

Source: CSIRO Newsflash, 29 January 07 (edited)
Reprinted from The Link.

We'll soon be out a job. We wish!

Some information from 2 seminars held at Norton Summit NRM recently:

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES

A sustainable landscape is a healthy and resilient landscape that will endure over the long term without the need for the high input of scarce resources such as water. The natural functions and processes of the landscape are able to maintain themselves into the future. Our South Australian urban landscapes are sustainable when they are in harmony with local environmental conditions.

A sustainable park or garden:

- Is well designed to suit local environmental conditions.
- Contains carefully selected water-wise plants.
- Contains plants that will not become environmental weeds.
- Conserves water by using mulch, efficient irrigation, watering only when necessary and grouping plants with similar water needs together.

- Provides habitat for local native fauna such as small birds, butterflies, bats, lizards and frogs.
- Avoids use of pesticides and other chemicals that could harm the natural insect populations and other beneficial organisms.
- Consumes minimal non-renewable energy in construction and maintenance.
- Uses sustainable and locally sourced materials and products, including recycled materials.

Is Belair national Park a sustainable landscape?

KOALAS, LOVABLE ICONS OR LOCAL PESTS.

Though not native to the Mount Lofty ranges, Koalas have been established locally and are increasing in number. Recently, more and more seem to be on the move and coming into contact with people. They generally do not need rescuing and are best left alone. No one knows what the actual koala population is in the Mount Lofty Ranges or whether this population has reached a sustainable level. *Has the koala population in Belair National Park reached a critical level?*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to extend a warm welcome to new members joining the group this year. Corey Stevens, Trish McFarlane Caitlin & Alex Merlin, Katelyn Shannon, James Nicholson, Alexandra & Gerhard Schurer, Rose Counsell, and Eleanor Button. We hope that you will enjoy being a part of the group and participating in the many and various activities on our calendar.

We also welcome Karen to our working bees.

We wish all of our Friends who have been put out of action by illness or accident a speedy recovery.

MACKERETH'S TRIANGLE

A recent query from a member of the public was passed on by the Belair Park Information Centre to Friends of Belair and may be of interest to our members. Information was sought about the memorial at the road triangle at the start of Valley Road, about 500 metres east of the Information Centre. The plaque reads:

THIS PLAQUE WAS PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICES SOCIAL CLUB TO PERPETUATE THE MEMORY OF THE LATE RANGER BRIAN MACKERETH (BROWNIE) WHO LOST HIS LIFE WHILST ON DUTY IN THIS PARK ON 25TH DECEMBER 1974.



Brian (Brownie) Mackereth was the equivalent of today's District Ranger at Belair from the late 1950s and lived in the Curator's Cottage. He had rescued a local orphaned parrot and had it at home until it escaped. On Christmas Day 1974 he located the parrot in a nearby tree and Brownie climbed the tree to rescue it, but he fell and later died. Because of its history, I hope that people will be encouraged to use the name Mackereth's Triangle for this location.

Ron Tamblyn



Friends of Parks Inc

Volunteers
working for
conservation

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Patrons: Mr. C. Warren Bonython, A.O.; Dr. Barbara Hardy, A.O.; Mr. Verne M'Laren, A.M.; Hon. David Wotton

9 May 2008
Friends

As the newly elected President of Friends of Parks Inc this is the first of what I hope will be a fairly regular series of personal notes to you the members about my aspirations and ambitions for the organisation and most importantly for you the members. I must stress at the outset that they will be my personal views only but I would like to think that over time we will be able to develop a meaningful dialogue about ways Friends of Parks Inc can improve things for member groups. Neither is it my intention that these random notes will replace the E-Newsletter.

Attached you will find the text of my "acceptance" speech at the Farrell Flat AGM. It covers most of what I have to say at the

moment except that I want to stress that the board members of Friends of Parks Inc are your elected representatives. Friends of Parks Inc is an incorporated association, separate from the Department for Environment and Heritage and although committed to working in close cooperation with the department we have our own constitution which governs our activities. As an umbrella organisation we are well placed to advocate the environment, heritage and volunteering causes to government, the department and the community at large.

Early issues for discussion with the department will I am sure be health and safety, basic skills and competencies training, heritage asset maintenance and the continued erosion of agency funding in the State budget process. None of this is new and in some instances, health and safety for example, some excellent things are already happening. My aim is to work with the department as collaboratively as possible but where shortcomings exist to point them out and attempt to negotiate solutions. We will not always agree but I don't intend to die wondering.

Regards



President

Friends of Parks Inc
Annual General Meeting 2008

Firstly my thanks to Friends of Parks for entrusting me with the Presidency of this large and multi-faceted organisation. I hope that I can repay your confidence and look forward to working with you and for you.

Those that know me will know that I believe strongly in the need for continuous improvement. That inevitably means change but not so much in the things we do but how we go about doing them. The various member groups are huge contributors to the environmental and heritage fabric of South Australia. Without the wonderful contribution of our volunteers it's certain that the system would collapse. This, I believe, puts us in a strong negotiating position on a number of fronts.

Friends of Parks Incorporated as the umbrella organisation has a serious role to play in advocating the volunteer cause, ensuring by a range of strategies that resource levels are improved and guaranteeing a fair deal for all member groups. It is our responsibility to provide strong leadership in negotiating such outcomes with the government, DEH and other relevant bodies. All this needs to be done with integrity & professionalism and consistent with sound governance principles.

Recently the Board has been working hard to improve our governance principles and our working relationship with DEH. In my view we have made great strides. Great credit in this regard goes to Brian DuBois as President. Under his leadership we have negotiated some difficult issues and implemented a number of changes. His period as President has spanned "interesting times" and his decision to continue as a member of the Board indicates his level of commitment.

Brian has paid tribute to retiring Treasurer, Lesley Hunkin and adds my own personal note of gratitude. I would also like to thank retiring Vice President Graham Henley for his service to the organisation and his impish sense of humour. And to complete the thanks I wish to record our gratitude for the contribution made, particularly on behalf of built heritage, by Annette McLean.

Brian and Graham have agreed to continue to serve and with some new faces we have the makings of a strong and effective team. Today some new arrangements come into effect within DEH and I have already been in communication with John Schutz, Executive Director and Trevor Naismith, Director (Operations) of Regional

Conservation Delivery Division to ensure that we lay the groundwork for a strong and productive partnership. Trevor Naismith is here today, which is a great show of support and augurs well for the future.

Finally I'd like to convey my confidence in our ability to work cooperatively with all our partners. We receive great support from the Volunteers Support Unit and from Kosette Lambert and Pam Smith in particular. I am committed to developing a true partnership with DEH; a partnership that recognises the value that member groups and individual volunteers represent, that is mature enough to withstand rigorous debate and even disagreement and that works collaboratively to achieve positive outcomes for the State's environmental and heritage assets.



David Mitchell
5 May 2008



The Board, Friends of Parks Inc -
5/5/2008

Back: Andrew Winkler, Vince Monterola, Kevin Osborn, Charles Connelly, Brian DuBois, John Fuller
 Front: David Mitchell, Cathy Potts, Mandy Carter
 Absent: Dr Geoffrey Bishop, Graham Henley

DISCLAIMER

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors of the articles and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of the Friends of Belair National Park.

Want to join Friends of Belair National Park

Just fill out the form below and send it to: -

The Treasurer
 Friends of Belair National Park
 P.O. Box 2
 Belair 5052

I/We enclose my/our membership fee of \$10 single/ \$15 Family or Group.

Name(s):

.....

Address:

.....

Telephone:

Email