



Friends  
of  
**Belair National Park**  
Volunteers working for Conservation  
Established 1985



Best Newsletter 1996 - Friends Group of the year 1998

## NEWSLETTER 2, JUNE 2010

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@tpg.com](mailto:cerchez@tpg.com).

**FRIENDS OF BELAIR NATIONAL PARK. ABN 38 093 387 757**

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Website: [www.communitywebs.org/friendsofbelairpark](http://www.communitywebs.org/friendsofbelairpark)

This newsletter is available by Email. If you prefer not to receive a printed copy please let a committee member know.

### IMPORTANT!

**When a meeting is scheduled on a day of a TOTAL FIRE BAN it will not go ahead.  
In the case of the AGM it will be rescheduled to occur with next month's general meeting**

## CALENDAR 2010

### REGULAR EVENTS

**General Meetings** on the first Saturday of the month.

1.00pm at the Volunteer Centre, Long Gully, Belair National Park. Visitors welcome.

**Barbecue** – 6th November meeting is at 12.30pm for a barbecue first.

Refer September newsletter for details.

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

8.30 am in the winter. (8.00 am daylight saving time) Enquiries Mike 8339 6801

For Sunday or Wednesday working bee telephone Ron on 8278 6593.

For Monday, telephone Vaike on 8277 9559.

**Guided Walks** are from April to December, on the 4th Tuesday afternoon.

Meet outside the Information Centre, Belair National Park at 1.45 pm. All welcome.

**Tuesday walk** The next one will be on 22nd June 2010.

**Seniors Step into Nature Walk** Wednesday 16th June 10.30am. Leaders and tailers required.

**Heart Foundation Walks.** Sunday 20th June. Leaders and tailers required.

September – Sunday 19th.

**Professor Cleland Memorial Walks.**

Starting from Dianella Precinct, tennis courts 14 & 15.. Meet there at 9.45 am or 1.45 pm. Enquiries Jenny 8278 8986

**SPECIAL EVENTS 2010**

**Annual Forum** of the Friends of Parks;- August 20th – 23rd. at Woomera.

Theme “Stony Deserts”

Accommodation is limited, so book as soon as possible through Friends of Parks.  
General enquiries can be directed to Dene Cordes, 121 Sheoak Road Belair, 5052.  
Telephone 8278 7668, or email dcordes6@bigpond.com.

**Birthdays** December – Sunday 19th..

Belair National Park 119th and Friends of Belair National Park 25<sup>th</sup>

**NO WORKING BEE IF IT IS TOO WET OR THERE IS A MOUNT LOFTY RANGES FIRE BAN OR IT IS DECIDED TEMPERATURES ARE GOING TO BE TOO HIGH**

**OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2010**

PRESIDENT	Mike Cerchez	8339 6801
VICE PRESIDENT	Jim Trueman	8278 9359
SECRETARY	Jill Salvi	8278 6736
	4 Colton Rd BLACKWOOD SA 5051	
TREASURER	Carol Parrott	8278 6783

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS.**

Delwyn Clark, Brian DuBois, Barry Palmer, Isabel Storer, Ron Tamblyn.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE BOOKINGS	Jill Salvi	8278 6736
GUIDED WALKS	Jenny Skinner	8278 8986
LIBRARIAN	Pam Tamblyn	8278 6593
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Mike Cerchez	8339 6801
WORKING BEES	Mike Cerchez	8339 6801
SIGNIFICANT TREES	Ron Tamblyn	8278 6593
WEB MASTER	Brian DuBois	8270 4215



**Congratulations** to Brian and Noeline DuBois. Brian was presented with a Life Membership of Friends of Park Incorporated for his long service to the Friends of Parks. Brian and Noelene were also presented with a Gold Pass entry to South Australian Parks.

## **The Formation and Early Years of the Friends of Belair National Park**

For many years Belair National Park was South Australia's only national park, declared as a public park on 19 December 1891, and it is fitting that, as the State's oldest park, it also has two of the oldest Friends of Parks groups. The Friends of Belair Park, formed in 1985, and the Friends of Old Government House, formed in 1983, both started life to support the conservation of a premier asset of the State. One group focuses on the conservation, rehabilitation and promotion of the natural and cultural heritage of the Park itself, and the other safeguards a significant part of South Australia's built heritage in our first vice-regal summer residence, situated in the heart of the Park.

The catalyst to instigate Friends groups in South Australia's parks and reserves arose when their viability was investigated by Dene and Dianne Cordes during Dene's Churchill Fellowship ground-breaking tour of the USA and Canada in the early 1980s, where he learnt of, experienced and explored the multitude of ways volunteers were used in the Parks systems of those countries. Dene then brought the ideas back to SA, where many have been incorporated into our parks (and further afield, also in other states of Australia).

Before the formal founding of the Friends of Belair National Park in 1985, a dedicated group of concerned local environmentalists held intermittent working bees in the Park, with the approval of the Park's management. In the early 1980s, this nucleus of informal "Friends", consisting of Lynda Knight, Linda Niemann, Pam Fiala, Monica Blake and Jeanette Lord, tackled the culling of introduced weeds.

In 1985 the inauguration was mooted of a formal "Friends of Belair Recreation Park" (re-assigned National in 1991) and on 16 September 1985 representatives from environmental and heritage groups were invited to discuss the matter. It was agreed that the purpose of the group was "to involve the community in supporting the Belair Park achieving its management aims" (Minutes of the inaugural meeting 16 September 1985). The move was likely to be successful because, as indicated by a statement by Dene Cordes in the invitation to the meeting, "Belair is a Park which has the interest of many South Australians". At a general meeting a month later, John Hunwick (also with the National Parks Association) became the first Chairman of the Friends of Belair Park and a program of meetings on topics including orchids and fire management was arranged, supplemented by regular walks in the Park and weeding working bees. Six of the initial twelve members are still in the group, with the redoubtable Lynda Knight still attending meetings - and she still can't resist pulling up the nearest wayward weed!

One of the first working bees was the most dramatic - a head-on attack on rampant Sollya which had escaped from the Nursery. Twelve Friends used the old-school method of dragging chains to demolish the huge bushes. Working bees have continued several times a week ever since. Many areas in the Park have been rehabilitated due to the group's efforts. In recent years volunteer hours have reached in excess of 4000 hours worked per year. Several projects on clearing creek lines of blackberry, olive, pine, pittosporum, broom and boneseed have been undertaken over the years, some funded at local and State Government level.

The first planting the Friends were involved in was of Eucalypts on the bare hillside behind court 37. However a few weeks later, all that was left of the exercise was a few dead sticks, 5 centimetres high. Seed was then collected and plants propagated (at first usually in old milk cartons) and the germinated native stock planted out, including large batches of Bursaria. There was follow-up watering by hand with some initial success, and this procedure has been pursued over the years to better effect.

Following a local outcry in 1988 against a Park blitz on the large Aleppo pines which had gone feral in the north-western section of the Park, the Friends of Belair, most of whom were dedicated to the removal of woody weeds, covertly cut down suitably sized pines to sell as Christmas trees on street stalls in Blackwood, eliminating the smaller, less obvious Aleppos, and thus keeping the objectors happy, and meantime netting about \$400 for the group. Monthly Saturday meetings were introduced in 1991 and numbers increased, both at meetings and other activities, which in the beginning included a weeding bee after the speaker and business each meeting.

A special all day walk around the Park was instigated in 1986, the Professor Cleland Walk. This walk is now a traditional feature held every year, open to Friends and the public, and commemorates the longest serving Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the National Park, Professor (later Sir) John Cleland. John Hunwick recounts:

"From 1936 to 1956 Cleland undertook the self-imposed task of inspecting Belair National Park on foot, during the period between Christmas and New Year's Day. It was his purpose to assess the management of the park, in relation to weeds, fire breaks, fencing and anything else that came to his attention, so that he could advise park staff more specifically as to how they could best discharge their duties. While regular park inspections with other Commissioners occurred within Belair, Cleland at this time set out to walk around its boundaries. It is this action of his that the Friends of Belair Park seek to commemorate." (J. Hunwick, 1988).

The walk does not now cover the boundaries of the Park in the summer, as in Professor Cleland's original, but the aim is now to follow different routes through the park in the Spring of each year, bringing attention to a magnificent array of wildflowers and orchids, natural and introduced shrubs and trees, heritage features

and sites. The 2010 walk is therefore a fitting feature of the 25th anniversary celebrations. Tuesday afternoon walks were popular from their inception in April 1988, with an innocuous public notice inviting all to Come and explore the Park with Lynda Knight and Ray Nash; outings which revealed many beautiful orchids and wildflowers, both common and rare. These walks still largely retain their original aim – a steady amble to look at seasonal vegetation and orchids, but now also to view items of cultural and historical interest.

The Friends of Belair continue to provide valuable assistance in the removal of feral plants, both large and small, and to be involved in native plant regeneration and propagation. The recording of the Park's long history and its heritage features, including its significant trees, has also been addressed. Belair National Park is currently undergoing extensive re-development in picnic and visitor facilities, complementing its unique natural environment and the Friends of Belair Park will continue their volunteer contribution to ensure the viable future of South Australia's first national park.

Pam Tamblyn June 2010, with thanks to Lynda Knight

### **FRIENDS OF BELAIR NATIONAL PARK OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SAFETY & WELFARE POLICY**

The most valuable asset of the Friends of Belair National Park is its members.

The Friends of Belair National Park shall manage its activities and functions in such a way as to take foremost account of:

- The health, safety and welfare of members and the public
- Protection of the environment
- Avoiding damage to property

All members of the group have responsibilities for OHS&W

The Committee:

- is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.
- must be positively committed to the consultation process.
- is responsible for ensuring adequate information, instruction, training and supervision for all the activities and functions involved with the running of the group.

Friends of Belair National Park members:

- Have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or failure to act concerning group activities and functions.
- Respond to reasonable instructions from DEH staff, members of FOBNP delegated with authority and written procedures affecting health, safety and welfare.

Members of the group shall be actively consulted about issues affecting their health, safety and welfare concerning group activities and functions. This will ensure the best resolution for those involved in group activities and functions

In all instances the Committee shall seek to implement best practice solutions for health, safety and welfare concerns and are committed to ensuring compliance with current legislation.

Through regular reviews of our systems and practices, the Committee shall endeavour to strive for continuous improvement to bring about safer conditions for those involved in group activities and functions which will ultimately improve the running of the group.

#### **President's Comments and Editorial**

We have been successful in receiving a grant from the Mitcham Council to buy a new slasher and associated safety equipment, so the ladies can have the use of a lighter more manageable slasher. Thanks go to Isabel Storer for great work in applying for grants and the Mitcham council for the Grant.

We had a very good representation at the annual general meeting of Friends of Parks Incorporated, at Blanchetown. The Friends of Belair were very proud to see Brian DuBois presented with a Life Membership for his outstanding efforts, with due acknowledgement to Noeline for her support. Congratulations to them both. Apart from the meeting we were treated to a very nice lunch and a tour of Lock 1 on the Murray. It was great to see water going over the weir, however the level below the weir was still 1.7 metres below the optimum level, and it is going to take a lot to fill the basin all the way to Goolwa.



**Breaking news** A new department will be established on July 1st called the Department of Environment and Natural Resources by including Natural Resources and State Floral in DEH. Does this really save money? A reorganisation costs money. Every sign and piece of stationery with DEH on it will have to be replaced. What has happened to Heritage? It would be great if money was spent on the ground and not on the bureaucracy.

Another big surprise in May was the release of a draft policy on the internet entitled; "Linking Adelaide with Nature". This 50 page draft is only available for submissions till 11th June, and yet is a major policy document on Trails. It makes statements like "environmental sustainability", "benefits to nature conservation through appropriate trail, location, design, use and management", ensuring all trail networks are planned managed and maintained in a way that assists and benefits biodiversity conservation". It covers Parks from Cobblers Creek to Hallett Cove. One of the statement mentions DEH has adopted a cycling policy in 2008 and is trying to meet the demand for "mountain biking in protected areas". It does mention the provision of amenities such as toilets at trail heads. It also mentions single use trails are preferred by walkers and cyclists. In the Action Plan Friends of Parks are not included in the Strategy section. However Goal 4, 14, 41. states "Expand and train the Friends of Parks with skills and knowledge in respect to best practice in trail managements and maintenance", and 42 "Work with volunteers and Friends of Parks to protect biodiversity assets." The policy is very light on the extra finance, staff, and facilities which need to be provided to make this policy fulfil its aims.

Michael Cerchez May 2010

GLOBAL WARMING IS A SERIOUS MATTER, HOWEVER:-

The benefits of Global warming will be:

- Winter will only last for one day.
- You won't have as far to drive to the coast.
- The hotter it gets the colder the beer will taste.
- It will take a lot less time to boil water.

What did one sceptic say to the other when they met?

"I can't believe you're here."

To which the other replied.

"I can't prove I am."

How many sceptics does it take to change a light globe?

None, because they won't believe it needs changing.

What did one light globe say to the other?

I feel hot. Do you think its global warming?



Low emission lawnmower,  
one man's solution to CO2 emissions.

Captain Sturt was probably about 200 years too early when he was looking for the great central sea.

Energy saving light globes don't work; I've still got to get up to turn them off.

I don't have a carbon foot print. I drive everywhere.

We don't have to worry about climate change because we've got air conditioners.

### **BIG TREE SEARCH**

A few years ago a guy called Derek McIntosh, who admits to having no botanical knowledge, decided to start up the National Register of Big Trees, with the aim of promoting "the preservation of big trees as impressive examples of tree growth, natural beauty, valuable genetic resources and inspiring symbols of conservation." He has enlisted the help of local experts to coordinate the project in each state. To nominate a big tree, participants need to accurately measure the height; circumference and crown spread and, using a given formula, calculate a number that gives a value to the tree which can then be compared to other trees. The idea is to locate and record the largest specimen of as many species as possible, both native and exotic, and so find a 'Champion Tree'.

Already two trees in Belair National Park have been nominated: one of the Californian redwoods and the giant sequoia both growing in the Joseph Fisher Picnic Ground but there are at least six other trees within the park that could be nominated for the register. If anyone would like to be involved in this nomination process, please give Jenny Skinner a call on 82788986 or email [jenke@slmember.on.net](mailto:jenke@slmember.on.net). The website address is [www.nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au](http://www.nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au). Here you will find all the nominated trees listed, with details of their location, size and a photo plus everything else you need to know about the project.



Bunja pine at Karka Pavilion  
A likely candidate for nomination

## **BLUE DEVILS**

“*Eryngium rostratum* is an herb to shin high and the leaves have sharp spines. Not a thistle but the spiny purplish-blue flowers clusters are thistle-like. Grows mostly on clay in woodlands and grasslands. Early summer.” (From Its Blue with Five Petals).



Tim Fuhlbohm, ranger, said that this year he observed 16 blue devils in the area on the corner of Gooch Road & Queen’s Jubilee Drive. In earlier days, Lynda Knight cared for this patch, and since then for many years Vaike Aldridge has worked there each season.

However, blue devils can more easily be observed towards the western end of Lodge Track, where they have a protecting fence, but they are only a few

## **COLOURED BROCHURE.**

In this, our 25th year, Friends of Belair are looking for more members. Carol Parrott, our treasurer, has designed and produced an eye-catching coloured brochure. If you would like some to distribute to your friends or local association or contact, just ask. We are hoping to generate a lot of interest in the Friends of Belair National Park and their work and get some more people to join us. Our grateful thanks to Andrew Southcott MP, Federal member for Boothby, who printed them and folded them for us.

## **BIODIVERSITY AND THE LAW**

I attended this one day seminar held by the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc. on Monday 3rd May and found it most interesting. It was supported by DEH, Dept. of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation, and Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board. Speakers were also from the Conservation Council of SA, Native Vegetation Council, Adelaide University, Flinders University, University of SA., and the Australian National University, also Mr. Mark Parnell, Greens member of the Legislative Council. There were questions and discussions after each segment and I learnt that although the Marine Parks Act (SA) 2007 was up with modern thought, being more to do with habitat and biodiversity than with individual species such as in the old National Parks and Wildlife Act (SA) 1972, legislation for protection nation-wide, and for the oceans would be desirable. The presentations are available to download from the Environmental Defenders Office website, [www.edo.org.au](http://www.edo.org.au).

## **MEETING WITH TONY ABBOTT**

On 6th May Heather Beckmann and Jill Salvi were among those Boothby residents who met Leader of the Federal Opposition, at the Belair Country Club, a meeting organised by Mr. Andrew Southcott MP. Mr. Abbott had come to discuss the removal of woody weeds such as blackberry and olives and he believes that we need more manpower.

Jill Salvi

## **INVITATION TO ATTEND TRAINING**

2010 Introductory Bush for Life  
Workshops - by Trees For Life

Further places are now available in the **Introductory Bush for Life Workshops** The one day workshop covers topics such as the values of and threats to remnant native vegetation, strategic approaches to bush restoration, maximising biodiversity outcomes, and practical minimal disturbance techniques.

Course dates and venues are as follows:

2010 One Day Workshops - 9 am – 4 pm classroom and field trip:

Belair - Saturday, 18 September

Stirling - Friday, 5 November

For more information on what these workshops cover and who they are targeted at, please see details on the Trees For Life website: [www.treesforlife.org.au](http://www.treesforlife.org.au) or call the Trees For Life office on 8406 0500.

The course is free to the participant, but your booking must be made via your Friends Group President or Secretary, to the Volunteer Support Unit.

**Guest Speaker**

Kosette Lambert was the May meeting’s guest speaker. She gave a very interesting illustrated talk on her 7 weeks as a Conservation Volunteer on the Kokoda Track at the midway village of Efogi. The task was to help the local people make the track more sustainable.

**Kosette Lambert** was manager of the DEH support unit for 5 years, but has now left to take up a position in the private sector. We wish her well and thank her for her work in the Volunteer Support Unit.



**Welcome new members  
Tony and Lois Rathjen.**



New barbecue in the Walnut Paddock Precinct.

Progress is being made on the new front entrance building. It should be finished by the end of June. The old building will then be demolished and the road can go through the area now occupied by the building.



The Walnut Paddock precinct is now complete and looking good. The Commissioner’s Lodge has been restored and looks good with its picket fence.

Last chance for this order for shirts and jumpers. The order will be going in early in July. Please contact me, Mike Cerchez, on 8396801 or email [cerchez@tpg.com.au](mailto:cerchez@tpg.com.au) if you require a shirt or jumper.

Photographs included in this newsletter were taken by Barry Palmer, Jenny Skinner and Michael Cerchez

**DISCLAIMER**

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