



Newsletter of the
**Friends Of Whyalla Conservation
 Park**
 PO Box 806 WHYALLA SA 5600

The Myall Post



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President's Message



The AGM is a time when our group can look in two directions. To the past, to see where we have come from and to the future, to see where we want to go. It is also a time to recognise the contributions of our members to our group.

The Past:

The Friends group was formed in 1986 as a community response to the vandalism that was occurring in the park at that stage. The situation had become so bad, that the National Parks and Wildlife Service were actively considering the option of handing the park back to Roopena Station, from whence it had come in 1972.

In those days, vandalism and theft at the park were major problems. But by reconstructing facilities and raising the money to provide tables etc the group was able to encourage responsible members of our community to use the park. This had the added bonus of providing many more sets of eyes to watch over the welfare of the park.

An on going problem has been the lack of staffing to support the park. This is not due to any lack of effort on the part of the rangers who have worked with us. Our rangers have huge areas to care for and very limited resources. This the result of a lack of government funding, which has become progressively worse over time not better.

The Present

We are once again experiencing a significant level of vandalism and other damage to the park. The Whyalla Conservation Park is both a biological reserve to protect native species and a recreation area for people to enjoy and to appreciate our very special part of South Australia. When it is damaged, both nature and the community are being robbed. All of the money used in the park comes from the community. Most of it is Whyalla money raised by the efforts of our volunteers.

The Future

The May committee meeting identified a range of projects that need to be done in 2003/2004. These will need a mix of people power and money to complete. I look forward to the Friends Group achieving progress on many of these projects.

Thank You

Alvin and Pam Charlesworth are foundation members of our group. They have been active members of the committee for the last 17 years. Their efforts are a significant part of the success of the group. Both of them have given many hours to the community through the Friends group and retired at this AGM.

Ella Smith has taken on the role of President for the last 3 years and will continue as a committee member. I thank her for keeping the group going during that time.

To all our other members and supporters, thank you for your work and support in 2002/2003. I look forward to working with you in 2003/2004.

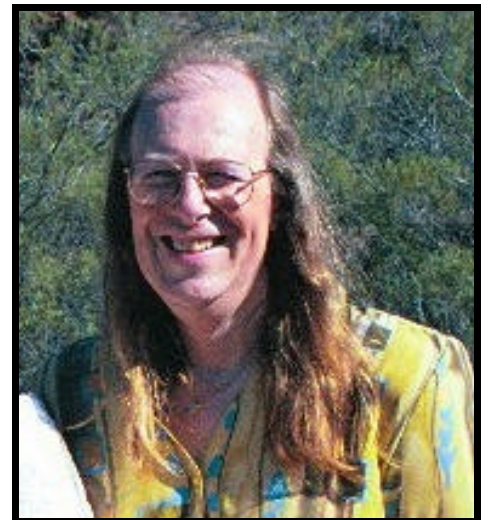
Clint Garrett

**JULY 14TH
 WORKING
 BEE**

**MEET AT WILD DOG HILL AT 9.00 AM
 DETAILS ON PAGE 6**

A POETIC PRESIDENT'S 2003 REPORT

To thank our members for the year is something I must do
Your dedicated efforts were there to see us through
The skills of our committee have kept me in much awe
And the efforts of other members have added in some more
From Mambray Creek the ranger staff have tried to do their best,
To help us do, what we must, with few resources blessed.
In August at the Show, we usually can be found,
This year it was to cost too much, for that way to be bound.
September walking in the park, Clint striding in the lead,
Into the new section we went, and found more dreaded weed.
Carrion Flower is it's name, colonisation is it's game.
Removing it next working bee was a task to do
Cake, cones, and drinks afterwards, and a visit to the loo.
November found us cleaning up the roadside near the park
Thirteen members worked very hard to really leave their mark.
Over eighty different kinds of birds are on our park bird list,
November brought us Fork-tailed Swifts, a species previously
missed.
Camps Australia-wide directed tourists to our park,
Sorry guys, you aren't allowed to camp there after dark.
Early in December we held our Xmas barbecue,
Food, drink, swapping tales, and fine weather too.
A Xmas present unwanted, we were to receive,
When uncaring vandals, our water tank did thief.
Mid-January in Westlands, we mounted a display,
To the population, we tried to point the way.
The end of January, brought a General Meeting,
Combined with a slide show, that would take some beating.
The February Working Bee, did see the water tank replaced,
We are blessed with our members skills, but our anger's not
erased.
At last in Mid-February, we received much wanted rain,
Causing change of venue of the Film Night from the plain.
The Poetry and Film Night went on at Eyre High,
Enjoyed by forty people, under shelter to keep dry.
In March roadside cleanup came around once again,
A lot of other people's rubbish, from we don't know when
Each March our Native Plant Sale, provides a funding source,
Needing months of preparation, and much hard work of course.
Many hands at different times, were needed for this task,
All who helped in this success, can in the thank you bask.
On May 11 Mothers Day, we had another walk,
Up Cheeseboard Hill we climbed, to see, and learn, and talk
Upon the hill the rain came down, to make us somewhat wet,
Back to Garrett's for scones and coffee, to Wild Dog Hill we did not get.
A regular activity, is the monthly working bee,
Repairs were made to fencing, and signs for you to see.
We identified and then removed, many a nasty weed,
We poisoned little rabbits, so that, they could not breed,
The toilet demanded attention with so much to repair,
We planted baby Myall trees to make the park less bare.



Ella Smith
Retiring President and poet

THE BAD NEWS AND THE GOOD NEWS

The June working bee saw members repairing the damage done to the barriers in the car park and cleaning up rubbish that had been dumped along the access road.

By lunchtime a lot of good work had been done by Lance Dean, John Carter, Ella Smith, David Poyner, Denise Sharp and Yvonne Ward. As a result the picnic area at Wild dog Hill is looking much more like it should.



Before: barriers stolen, allowing vehicles to drive right up to Wild Dog Hill. Uprights damaged during the theft needing to be replaced.



After: new uprights and barriers in place and branded with NPWS brand.

During the working bee, two areas of graffiti were found on the surface of Wild Dog Hill. The love-struck writer could have found many other ways of impressing his beloved, without creating work for others. We have found a cleaning agent that removes the paint and allows the rock to be returned to a reasonably natural state.

Des Dunstall used his Bobcat loader to remove piles of glass, bricks and other assorted rubbish from the edge of the central access road. Most of this material has been there for a very long time as was shown by some of the bottles that were unearthed.

Des's skill with the machine was impressive and meant that minimal damage was done to native vegetation while doing the job. The cleaned areas were lightly ripped to encourage re-vegetation.



One of the problems that we found during the cleanup was a large patch of Oxalis (soursob). Rubbish dumping in the park is one way that new weeds can be introduced. The infested area has been sprayed with herbicide and will be watched for regrowth over the next few months.

WINTER SOLSTICE – AGM

New Committee

The committee sees the departure of some long serving members and the election of some new people.

Clint Garrett was elected as President and Publicity officer,

Denise Sharp – Secretary.

Joan Nield – Minute Secretary

Lance Dean – Treasurer

John Carter	Committee
Paul Fennell	Committee
David Poyner	Committee
Hans Sipsma	Committee
Ella Smith	Committee

DIRTY STORIES

Whyalla City Council CEO, Jeff Wright, was the guest speaker at the AGM and told the members some truly amazing “dirty” stories.

Jeff began his career as an Environmental engineer in NSW and had a strong interest in water pollution, because of his surfing at Coogee beach. He was responsible for helping to draft the Clean Waters Act.

Jeff had some truly amazing slides of water pollution incidents that he had dealt with as part of his work. Can you imagine a creek that changed colour on a daily basis, depending on what colour cars were being sprayed with on the assembly line that day?

Would we tolerate millions of litres of raw sewage being discharged just metres offshore? Or would we allow a company to discharge copper chrome arsenic to the storm-water system, which in turn ended up in the local river and caused a huge fish kill?

We have to thank Jeff Wright and other Environment officers like him for putting legislation in place to protect us against these excesses.

MULGA PARROT

There are two predominantly green parrots resident in the park. The Mulga Parrot is much smaller than the larger Pt. Lincoln Parrot, being about one and a half times the size of a budgie.

The male is brilliant green, with the female a much duller brownish-green. Easily noticeable features are a red patch on the back of the head, and the shoulder patches of yellow on the male, and red on the female. The male also has a yellow forehead and a red and yellow belly.

Overall the male is sufficiently bright to have earned the species its old name of Many-coloured Parrot. The habitat of our park is typical of that favoured by the species. They like drier areas with a reliable water supply within reach. Normally Mulga parrots are seen in pairs or family parties as they feed on seeds lying on the ground. They are most easily seen when foraging in the early morning or late afternoon.

They nest in tree hollows in spring. The clutch of four to six white eggs takes about 20 days to hatch. The young fledge in about four weeks. Probably due to the drought this year Mulga Parrots have moved in close to housing on the outskirts of Whyalla. Nonetheless they appear to have bred successfully out in the scrub as I have noticed a number of young birds among them.

Ella Smith



FROM THE COMMITTEE

Healthy Finances

The group continues to have a healthy bank balance and will reinvest \$6150 in a term deposit account. This leaves us with a working capital of about \$2,500. Members are reminded that this will be Lance Dean's final year as treasurer.

BBQ needs a home

Our Barbeque needs someone to use it at home. Leaving it un-used for long periods in the Friends shed only encourages the plate to develop rust. If you enjoy BBQ food and can make use of the Friends BBQ, please let Denise or Clint know. The carer will be responsible for maintenance of the BBQ.

Plant Sale 2004

The date for our next plant sale will be the 27th of March. This is the last Saturday in March and coincides with a One Steel pay week. We aim to sell about 1200 water wise plants to the public. Water restrictions will be to our advantage as most of the plants that we sell need little water.

Eat in Style

The plates and cutlery that the Friends group provide for our various events will be upgraded. At this stage we use light weight plastic plates that are intended for single use, but we have re-used and re-used these.

Calendar Planning

There will be a planning day for the committee on Sunday July 13th at 2.00 pm at David and Denise's. Working bees will continue to be held on the second Saturday of each month. A range of public events will be scheduled. Members will receive a detailed calendar with the next newsletter.

NO Show Stall

The committee has decided that we will have two displays in the Westland Mall in preference to having a stall at the Whyalla Show.

2003 RIVERLAND FORUM September 19th - 21st

Each year Friends members from across the state get together at Forum.

This year, the Friends of Parks Forum will be in Berri and will be hosted by the Friends of Riverland Parks.

Included in the program are visits to Banrock Station and the RAMSAR wetlands at Calpernum, talks on River Murray issues and cruises on the River.

The Forum will be on the weekend of 19th, 20th & 21st of September.

Registration Forms are available from Denise Sharp.

MEMBERSHIP

I have included a copy of the membership form with this newsletter.

If your membership is not up-to-date, please fill it in and return it and the appropriate fee to PO BOX 805.

If you are a member, please pass this form on to somebody who you think would enjoy being a member of the Friends of Whyalla Conservation Park

Thank you

Mailing Label

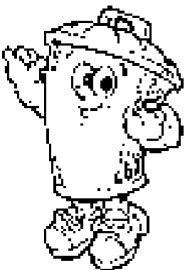


WORKING BEE JULY 12TH

The following tasks are scheduled for the July working bee.

- ◆ Do an inventory of the signs in the park
- ◆ Brand logs in car-park area
- ◆ Install traffic counter on Western boundary track
- ◆ Inspect for saffron thistle and other weeds
- ◆ Replace two fence posts damaged by vehicle accident
- ◆ Examine gates on eastern power track with view to replacement
- ◆ Install a replacement tap and piping in the toilet

BIN



ROSTER

On weekends, members of the Friends group volunteer to visit the park and record any offences, as well as checking the toilet and emptying the bins.

If you wish to be a roster volunteer, let Denise Sharp know . This months

volunteers are:

July 5/6th	Nields
12th July	Sharp/Poyner/Smith
19th July	Deans
26th July	Sipsma
2nd August	Garretts
9th August	Fennell

CALENDAR

July 12th	Working Bee
Jul 13th	Planning Session
July 24th	Committee Meeting
August 9th	Working Bee
August 28th	Committee Meeting

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