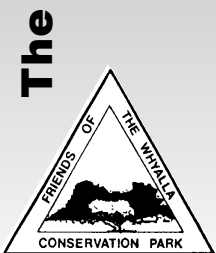




Newsletter of the
 Friends Of Whyalla Conservation Park
 PO Box 805 WHYALLA SA 5600
 Volunteers Working For Conservation

The Myall Post



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President's Message

I feel compelled as incoming president to acknowledge the value to this group of my predecessor. The welfare of the Whyalla Conservation Park has been a passionate concern of Clinton's over the last 12 years, the majority of which he has served as president of the friends group.

It will be a difficult act to follow, after a man whose contribution to the success of the group and the projects pursued has been so significant and varied. His knowledge and experience has been invaluable, and I hope that in whatever way he is able to do so in his very busy life, we will still be able to benefit from these attributes.

In his final president's message Clinton made reference to the collective efforts of many people past and present without whom the group could not have functioned so successfully.

While we all have our slightly different ways of looking at things and our pet projects, it is the ability to work together with our different skills and differing views that produces a combined effort finally culminating in successful results.

Whatever the amount or type of contribution you can make, it all helps. If you are unsure how you can join in, or need more information please ask. Participation is the key to not only protecting the park but also enjoying it.

Working Bees, for example, are an excellent way to contribute and also get to know other members. General meetings are usually blessed with interesting guest speakers, and special events provide opportunities not only to enjoy the particular activity but also to share your environmental interests with like-minded people.

Ella Smith

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Your Membership Fees Are Now Due

If the box is ticked, to the best of the Publicity Officer's knowledge you have not yet paid your membership fees for 1999/2000. If you have done so recently please ignore this message.



Recent Working Bees have seen the upper part of the walking trail transformed into a safe and attractive stone path. Have you been in the Park recently during these fine winter days?

Important Dates

Make sure that these dates are entered into your diary!

Friday 13th August – Sunday 15th August

Pinaroo
Annual Friends Forum

Saturday 21st August – Sunday 22nd August

Jubilee Park
Whyalla Show

Thursday 26th August @ 7:30pm
267a Landrace Rd
Committee Meeting

Saturday September 4th @ 9:00am

Wild Dog Hill
Working Bee

Sunday September 12th @ 2:00pm

Location To Be Advised
Public Guided Walk In The Park

Thursday September 23rd @ 7:30pm

267a Landrace Rd
Committee Meeting

Bin Roster

The following individuals or families have volunteered to empty the bins and check the Park on the weekends beginning:

13th August – Poyner / Sharp

20th August – Perc Prenzel

27th August – John Holds?

3rd September – *vacant*

10th September – Perc Prenzel

17th September – Vaughan Moldenhauer

24th September – *vacant*

Please remember to wear clothing which will identify you as a Friends member and NPWS volunteer if at all possible.

If you would like to volunteer for the roster, please call Denise Sharp on 8645-4442

1999 Whyalla Show

Volunteers Required!

The Friends of Whyalla Conservation Park will once again be attending the annual Whyalla Show on Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd August.

The group has the same site that we had last year, against the southern wall of the basketball stadium. The theme of this year's display will be 'weeds'.

As usual, the group will be conducting a raffle. There will be three prizes this year – all beautiful framed prints by Blyth artist Ian Roberts (see a portion of one print below right). Members may recall that one of his prints was raffled in 1997 and was very popular with ticket buyers. Ian has been very generous by donating one of the prints – please visit his gallery if you are in Blyth (on the way to Clare) anytime. Albert's Custom Framing in Playford Ave have also done a wonderful job of framing the prints for us.

A popular attraction with children has been our stall's colouring competition – which will also be held again. This year's prizes are some book vouchers from Foxy's Books in Darling Terrace.

Whyalla City Council's Eco-Trail is growing in popularity each year, and it attracts several hundred visitors to our stall. This year, the Friends are participating again – the 1st prize in this competition is two nights accommodation at Wilpena Pound for a family of four.

Of course the main benefit that the Friends receive from our presence at the Show is an increased public awareness of the group and our work.

For the stall to be a success however, we need your help. Please ring Denise on 8645-4442 and volunteer an hour or two of your time during the weekend. All that you need to do is talk to the public about the Friends group and the Park, sell raffle tickets, and stamp the Eco-Trail entry forms. Many hands make light work, so please find some time to help. If you were not planning on visiting the Show, but would like to volunteer to staff the stall, we can provide you with a Traders ticket to gain entry.

In addition to helping on our stall, staff from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs will be having their own stall with many different displays.

Right: One of the prizes in this year's raffle is Ian Roberts' "Purple Backed Wrens on Desert Rose"

Bird Of The Month



Blackeared Cuckoo

Recently in the park I came across a bird not often found there. I was drawn to it by its distinctive call. Probably it had not long arrived and was trying to attract a mate. It was a Blackeared Cuckoo.

This smallish (20cm) cuckoo is uncommon and inconspicuous. The female lays a single egg in the chosen host nest, preferring host birds with domed or enclosed nests and eggs of a similar colour to its own which is chocolate brown.

Of the birds in the park the Redthroat is likely to be its first choice host. Other birds which are in the park and have been recorded as hosts are White-winged Fairywren, Rufous Fieldwren, Yellow rumped Thornbill, Southern Whiteface, Redcapped Robin, and Whitebrowed Babbler.

Not a lot is known about this parasitic species, even its feeding habits are unclear although it is believed to be almost exclusively insectivorous.

If any members interested in birds are lucky enough to come across a Blackeared Cuckoo, please observe whatever you can and record date, time, place, and any relevant details.

Ella Smith



1999 AGM Report

This year's AGM was held at the Maritime Museum on Sunday 20th June. Around 15 members attended and heard a thoroughly entertaining talk from the guest speaker, Tony Flaherty.

The 1999/2000 Committee was elected unopposed.

President	Ella Smith
Minute Secretary	Pam Charlesworth
Correspondence Secretary	Denise Sharp
Treasurer	Lance Dean
Publicity Officer	David Poyner

Committee Members	Alvin Charlesworth
	Patrick Raets
	John Carter
	Meredith Scottney-Turbill

Prior to stepping down, Clinton gave his report as President, it is reproduced below.

This is the twelfth Annual President's report to an Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Whyalla Conservation Park. If my calculations are correct, it is ten years since I did this for the first time in 1989 and this is my ninth President's AGM report.

Since the formation of this group in 1987, it has been the case that the committee has consisted of a dedicated group of people who have diverse skills and interests. Committee meetings have provided stimulating discussions. Indeed, it is one of the few committees that I have worked on that laughs a lot as it goes about its work.

I would like to reiterate what I said in the most recent newsletter. I would like to pay tribute to all of those who have served on the committee this year:

- Denise Sharp - for her work as Correspondence Secretary/ organiser of guest speakers
 - Alvin and Pam Charlesworth - who beside their work for the Friends group are also our representatives on the Tanderra Committee
 - Lance Dean - for his work as treasurer. His thorough and prompt work in this area is invaluable.
 - David Poyner - for his work as publicity officer
 - Ella Smith - for her knowledge of the birds of the park and for her generous donation of space at her house where we can grow the plants for the plant sale..
 - John Carter - for his anthropological knowledge and reliability
 - Meredith Scotney Turbill - for her enthusiasm and willingness to take on a wide variety of tasks
- It has been a pleasure to have Albert Zepf as our

Ranger. We appreciate seeing him when he can get to Whyalla, but the size of our district means that this is an irregular event. The staffing of the National Park system is now of even greater concern to me than when the group was formed 12 years ago. Year by year, the government continues to under-fund the operational division of the Park Service and as a result, the few rangers who are left have to cover more and more area.

To all the members of the group who have made contributions, I say thank you. Whether you have made items for the group, attended working bees or meetings, taken part in trips or other activities, your contribution is valued. It is through these contributions, no matter how small, that the group achieves its goals.

Events of the 1998 -1999 Friends Year

During July 5th to 16th last year, 16 members drove from Whyalla to Oodnadatta - Dalhousie Springs across the Simpson Desert to Birdsville and then back home via the Birdsville track. This was a great experience for all involved and I am very appreciative of Alvin and Pam's work in organising the trip and for acting as tour leaders throughout. It was very useful to go to Dalhousie and see where our Ranger has to spend part of his working time. Whyalla is his southernmost Park and Witjara, his most northerly. The distance and the time needed to get there means that it is little wonder that we get to see so little of Albert.

In August, we held another successful stall at the Whyalla Show.- a stall which helped to raise the profile of the group in the public's mind as well as provide some fun. August was also the month that we agreed to take over the maintenance of the garden in front of the Whyalla Post office. Since that time, three of us have removed some of the poor soil in the garden, replaced it with good quality soil, mulched the area and planted a variety of plants. The result is a much more attractive frontage for one of our major public buildings.

In September, Margaret and I attended the 14th Forum of Friends Groups at Meningie. This was a good opportunity for us to meet with groups from across the state. Our Group was presented with 2 awards. One which recognised David Poyner's Myall Tree Brochure for its interpretive value and the other for the series of articles which we have published on the birds in the park. These articles have largely been written by Ella Smith and reflect her detailed knowledge of the birds of the area.

Also in September, we had a successful walk in the Middleback Ranges, in which 14 members took part. We were fortunate to have a fine spring day and the views were certainly worth the walk

In November we held the first of our film nights in the park. We were again fortunate to have a perfect evening for the event. It was calm and warm and all around the sky flickered with lightning. We had a hilarious time as some of the "camping" films were wildly out of date and recommended doing things which would have either killed the participants or resulted in the destruction of

several acres of forest.

In December and January we had a series of potting on days in preparation for the Plant Sale.

In late January, the Minister Dorothy Kotz, approved the draft Management plan, making the Whyalla Friends group the first in the state to write a management plan for a park.

In February, we had an second film night meeting in the park,. This attracted over 50 members of the public and Friends members. This time we were not so lucky with the weather, as gale force winds tried to topple the screen on several occasions.

The annual Clean Up Australia Day collected more rubbish on the Lincoln Highway than in the 1998 clean-up. Although the smaller items of rubbish such as packets and bottles were less in evidence, we had to deal with a number of large items such as truck tires and a hotwater service. The 15 members who took part in the cleanup did a great job.

The Plant Sale in March continues to be a major fund raiser for the group. This year, we sold over 1300 plants, with the result that Whyalla is a greener city for all. The wisdom of buying a good quality potting soil, rather than making our own was demonstrated by the fantastic growth rates and low die off rates of our plants this year. The Bain Marie which I converted into a propagating unit proved its worth completely as it gave a high success rate for our cuttings.

In May, 8 of us undertook fire training with the MFS, so that we know how to operate the fire equipment that we have. In late May, Margaret and I received the Rotary Award for the Volunteers in Parks for 1999. We were both delighted with this, but would like to re-iterate that we never went into our work for the Friends Group with the purpose of winning awards. However, if you look back over the 12 Years, this group has won a very large number of awards for its work. You are all responsible for that happening.

Meetings

Our General meetings have been attended by low numbers of people throughout the year. For me the most notable of these was the presentation from Greg Johnson on his work in the Negev desert in Israel.

In the Park

During the last year, we have continued to maintain the park for the use of the people of Whyalla and for the visitors who come to our park from beyond our city. Work has included

- Weed control
- The trimming of Southern boundary trees adjacent to the road
- On-going fumigation of rabbit burrows
- Repairs to the walking trail especially near the top of the main gully. The stonework on the upper section is not only decorative, but it also reduces the erosion of that section of the trail.

- Continuing fence repairs - for which we are grateful for John's skills
- the installation of the grid in the South West corner has been largely completed. This is something that we have waited 10 years for.
- We now have the tank, materials and all relevant approvals for the long awaited toilet.
- I look forward to seeing this installed in August September.

Although I am stepping down from the position of president, I will continue to grow plants for the group and to train another person to take on the role of Plant Sale Co-ordinator. My special thanks to Margaret for her on-going support, without our partnership, much less would be achieved for the group My thanks to you all for your help with supporting the Whyalla Conservation Park. I wish you well in the future and thank you all for your friendship and assistance over the years.

Clint Garrett

Rosters

We have had continuing good support for this. People should not under estimate the value of this work. It is a significant deterrent to some of our less public spirited members of the community. Thanks to Denise for managing this.

The Next Year

I hope that we will be able to commence installing the toilet in August. There is also work to be done at Tanderra to put shelving into the sheds and to improve the area around the sheds.

Rabbits have reduced in numbers and this spring would be an ideal time to make an effort to rip or blast burrows so as to prevent their re-establishment.

It is my strong belief that we need an increase in the number of members in the group, so as to spread the load across a greater number of people. There is a very real danger of people burning out through taking on a heavy load.

Communication with members and the public is vital. This is something which has been done well in the past and needs an on-going effort in order to keep people informed.

Scouts Lend A Hand

Scouts and Cubs from the 2nd & 4th Whyalla Scout Group have been helping with work in the Park recently as a way of earning their Environment Badge.

The scouts and cubs have attended two working bees so far, helping to put more gravel on the southern end of the walking trail. Moving gravel up the trail has always been a difficult task for our own members – yet these hard workers who are only one third our size, managed to resurface around 35 metres of the trail. (Admittedly, they did have a little bit of help from parents and leaders....)

They will be in the Park again next month, removing Onion Weed from the north east corner.

Friends Of The Whyalla Conservation Park

1999 / 2000 Membership Renewal / Application

I / We wish to join the Friends Of The Whyalla Conservation Park

Family Name:

Given Name/s

Address:

Phone: Home:

Work:

I / We are willing to help by:

Helping at Working Bees

Learning more about the plants and animals of the Park

Coming to meetings

Being rostered for Park duties

Delivering newsletters once a year

Serving on the Committee

I / We enclose \$20 for a family / household membership

I / We enclose \$25 for a group / organisation membership

I have the following skills that I could offer the group:

Give this form to a "Friend" or post to: Friends Of The Whyalla Conservation Park, PO Box 805 Whyalla SA 5600

Committee Report

The following is a summary of some of the items that were discussed at the last two Committee meetings.

- **Toilet development**

Work on the toilet continues with preparations being made for the hole to be dug including discussions being held with Mike Blythe, Whyalla City Council about the group getting assistance from the council in the form of machinery and persons to dig the hole. An outcome has not yet been reached but it is hoped that the hole will be dug by the end of August. Final measurements on the tank and its positioning have been completed.

- **1999/2000 Calendar**

This year's working bees, meetings and other events and activities were identified by the committee at the July meeting. These have been compiled into the attached calendar for members reference. A couple of changes include the change of day for the 2000 AGM to be held on a Thursday evening rather than a Saturday afternoon and at this stage there is no Mothers day walk scheduled.

- **Grid**

If you have been out to the Park in recent months you would have noticed that the grid on the south western corner has been installed. At the May working bee members installed the guard rails and at the July working bee warning signs were installed. At the last committee meeting it was decided that the committee seek advice from Albert Zepf's (Park Ranger) on the development – in particular the size and length of the drain line. An inspection date with Pt Augusta District Office is to be arranged.

- **Urn**

The committee has decided to purchase an urn for the group's use at general meetings and public events, as the group has previously relied on the generosity of the Garrett's with the use of their urn.

- **Tanderra landscaping**

Landscaping in front of the sheds at Tanderra is to go ahead with 20 cubic metres of soil needing to be purchased for landscaping the area. In addition to this an extra 3m needs to be cleared to accommodate larger vehicles in reversing into the shed. Clinton has indicated he is happy to do the work.

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