



friends of the flinders ranges national park

www.friendsofflindersranges.org.au

NEWSLETTER

MARCH - APRIL 2011

Hi Friends,

Friday 18th March finished with most of the members able to attend, firmly settled in their rooms and in the dining room. There they were able to give a very warm welcome to two new members, Cathy and Andrew Ray. Unfortunately the president was unable to be there due to getting his car back from servicing at 3.30pm on Friday and not Thursday! The treasurer wisely suggested that he drive only as far as Hawker and stay there overnight. He was not enthralled with having to drive from Snowtown to Hawker in the rain and then to have to paddle around the motel in heavy rain. Well done Hawker! That was really something. President arrived at Oraparinna just after 9am to find that Vice Vince had marshalled the troops and got the day's activities arranged. Thanks Vince.

Steven, with Friends' help, brought up to Oraparinna our equipment to store in the meat house which had just been cleaned out by Michael, Bounce-Back Ranger based at Oraparinna. Thanks Michael, a tremendous job! This equipment had been in the Battery Room at Wilpena Homestead but that is now being targeted as a power generation museum.

After lunch at Oraparinna we headed out to Guide Hut, ostensibly to see how much water is still flowing down Moodlatanna Creek and particularly to ascertain whether we could negotiate the crossing of said creek so as to get to Guide Hut on the morrow. Amazingly the creek is still flowing in narrow channels as it has been for many months – a beautiful sight. We drove over the eastern crossing without misfortune after a close look at the older western crossing. Too much water, mud, saturated sand and a very steep bank on the northern side makes this one impassable. A visit to Guide Hut was followed by the return trip to check out the chimney of one of the other huts which we found to be leaning precariously. It should be repointed but at what cost? We missed the turn-off to another hut off the Wirrealpa Road but arrived back safely at Oraparinna where we soon enjoyed our usual Saturday BBQ. The highlight of the meeting which followed was the report from District Ranger Darren on activities in the Park and future developments. Of particular interest was the news about the upgrading of the Information Centre at Wilpena. The first stage is completed and looks great. Hopes were entertained that the completion of Stage 2 and the grand opening of Guide Hut could coincide and be organised for the September Friends weekend. Thanks Darren for your input and thanks also for bringing wife Tammy and kids, Beth and Declan. It was a pleasure seeing them again.

Sunday watched appreciatively as we all set out for Guide Hut at 9am and then with an amazing burst of energy worked like the proverbial dogs until 3pm when the strength and will to keep going suddenly faded. At first Steven and team drove down to the creek and piled sand into the trailer only to unload it by the mixer and then mix the grout. That hive of activity was complemented by Steven, Cathy and Tony playing in the dirt alongside the hut while laying the pavers. They were joined at various times by Vince, Malcolm and Andrew so that between us we managed to complete the path around two thirds of the hut. Meanwhile, in the hut, Vince was doing a great job flicking all the sand out from between the paving stones and preparing the floor for grouting. The sand had blown in under the door since last November and virtually covered the entire floor. In the other room, Athol and Trevor knelt for hours on the hard stones squeezing in the grout and smoothing it all off. The completed sections look really good. Well done you three. Meanwhile Helen, Terrie and Julie virtually ran back and forth with buckets weeding the area and then shifting all the greenery and later, the debris from the building site, and dumping it down near the creek. As a result of their great efforts Guide Hut and surrounds look quite something. See Web-site for pictures of same. Back at Oraparinna later Tony thanked everyone for the great effort all had made during the day.

We returned to the main road via the northern section of the Pantapinna Track which was less affected by floods and then followed the bitumen to the Brachina turn-off. By then it was raining gently. We had intended going out to Aroona to look over the area we will be working on later in the year at the

Aroona turn-off however we decided that it would be more sensible to go on to Brachina to see any flood damage remaining and the water situation. Our return trip was made on an increasingly slippery road and we were all happy to be back on the bitumen. The rain continued.

Happy hour was extended on our return to base and then we all enjoyed our dinner after a very satisfying day's work.

Monday morning was clean up time followed by everyone going their separate ways except for Peter and Tony who were more than happy to introduce Cathy and Andrew to the culinary delight of quandong pie in Quorn. We were obviously extremely lucky to have good weather for most of Saturday and Sunday where we were because of all the rain in much of the Flinders. – Tony Bott

Programme for April 15th – 17th - Oraparinna

Friday evening – arrive at Oraparinna for tea followed by discussion time on projects for the weekend..

Saturday – 9am Activity 1 – drive out to Guide Hut and work on the floors and outside paving
9am Activity 2 –work on the meat house at Oraparinna; and furniture for Guide Hut
6pm barbecue at Oraparinna

7.30 pm review data base material and draw up lists of future sites to be covered

Sunday 9am – Guide Hut and meat house and furniture making continued.

3pm drive to Aroona to check what will be needed for the tree planting etc in June

6pm shared tea and happy hours.

Monday - Clean up and drive to Quorn for quandong pie et al.

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Friends intending to attend April week-end please reserve your room by phone or email Tony Bott by Monday 11th April

Reminders:

Annual subscriptions for the year 2011 are due - **\$20 per family. Please advise any update to your email address.**

Copies of the booklets “*Exploring the Flinders – Flinders Ranges National Park Tours*” and “*Diary of an Artist*” are now available for distribution and sale to/by members for \$10 per copy.

Friends of Flinders Ranges **Badges** are now available for purchase from the Treasurer- \$10 each.