



# **friends of the flinders ranges national park**

**April/May 2009**

[www.friendsofflindersranges.org.au](http://www.friendsofflindersranges.org.au)

## ***April Meeting Thursday 16-18/4 - Oraparinna***

Despite the different start to the weekend, Peter V, Kevin, Ron and Marge, Julie and Tony arrived safely at Oraparinna, our numbers depleted due to Helen and Vince, Margaret and Frank and Terry and Trevor all being interstate on holidays/tours. Athol was staying in the camp-ground at Wilpena as he was running his astronomy programme in the evenings.

Julie can continue the story – “As Tony was already staying in Port Augusta, looking after his son’s house, he offered to take me to Oraparinna to save fuel and make for more pleasant travelling. We called in at Wilpena to check arrangements with Darren and Lyn, have afternoon tea, look over the garden to check deaths, illnesses and those trees in good health, preparatory to finalising the programme for May, and then to collect extra supplies from the shop. The tone on Thursday evening was one of merriment, camaraderie and relaxation. We were pleased to welcome into our company, Gareth Telfer, who is on a contract to ride or walk over the Park noting wheel cactus plants. It is sad that he has seen so many of them, and also rabbits, in his explorations in the Park.”



‘Possum’ Packer working on the roof; Ron sweeping the ground; Marge saying, “Lift the flaming thing Julie. It’s not that heavy.”

Friday, at 9.00am, we fortunately met Stephen Jennings, the Park’s new maintenance man, on the road from Oraparinna so we could arrange what each was doing at Guide Hut. Julie, Peter and I had to go back to Wilpena to get the Friends’ tool box and first-aid kit, nobody having thought it wise to inform me that that was part of my new job! Anyway, it was a pleasant drive on the new bitumen and we arrived via a not so smooth dirt track at Guide Hut to find Kevin already working on the roof and Athol, Ron and Marge working around the Hut.

Marge, Ron, Tony and I ended up all sweaty, hot and thirsty again, as we did again on Saturday, tidying up the site, raking the ground clear of building debris, stones, numerous logs, bark and two dead trees which posed a threat to life and limb. As a good number of the logs from the original hut showed signs of white-ant infestation, many were collected and built into a massive funeral pyre to be lit by park staff when we camp out there later in the year. This labour intensive work was greatly assisted on Saturday by the efforts of Tammy, Beth and Declan Crawford who arrived at the site in the afternoon, complete with gloves and the desire to dirty their hands, which they certainly did. On Friday, Peter kept the workers on their toes photographing progress in his usual professional manner. No one wanted to be ‘snapped’ having a rest although to be ‘snapped’ while eating was quite permissible. (This task was taken over by Julie on Saturday as Peter was not well enough to go out to Guide Hut.)



Some of the hardworking Group on Saturday.

A Golden Orb spider very quietly but very regally oversaw the day's proceedings until knock-off time when, no doubt, it was happy to take over the Hut once more. *(Photographs on web-site)*

Returning from Guide Hut on Friday evening turned out to be a comedy of errors. Tony had driven out on the Wilkawillina Road in the morning as had the others. He had not driven back to Oraparinna from Guide Hut before without following a leader. So, despite the very best, and contradictory advice from his passengers he missed the turn-offs and so returned via the Wilkawillina Road, accompanied by squawks from the passengers. "(Julie's travel advice was to, "Turn right at the bush and Peter's, "Turn right at a stick"!!! I missed both. Strange that!)

Julie continues the story – " Friday night watched Kevin sleeping in his swag at Guide Hut where he wanted to experience sunset and sunrise and try his new camera. He thus missed all the goodies we enjoyed at Oraparinna, including a very edible chocolate 'brownie' made by Gareth. He's a young man of many talents, culinary skills amongst them. All retired early to recuperate from the rigours of the day's work, but we did manage a peek at the awesome night sky and spared a thought for Athol whose day was not yet over, as he had to conduct the star gazing at Rawsley Park that night".

Back to Julie – "Our small team of eager volunteers did an excellent job over the two days and can be very proud of their achievements. Kevin Packer, with his prior experience in roofing, tackled the final securing of the ridge-capping on the roof as well as the sealing of the numerous old nail holes in the iron. Ably assisted by Athol and Ron they made a superb job of it. Saturday was another perfect autumn day. The trip out to Guide Hut was a quick half hour on the back road accompanied by numerous red and grey kangaroos of all ages and sizes, along with a solitary emu. Along with the scenery they provided the perfect experience with nature. Back at the Hut the team again worked with purpose and vigour, laying out the larger unused logs around two sides of the Hut to form the basis of a courtyard perhaps; Athol, when not helping Stephen mix the mortar for the tankstand, played with the flutes on the roof, hammering down the ridge-capping."

On Saturday, Stephen, Athol and Tony drove along the nearby creek to collect larger rocks and returned to start on the construction of the tank stand, Stephen and Athol then getting somewhat exhausted mixing the mortar; Stephen showed us his expertise and patience as he built up the tank stand to its final height. The tank waited nearby, tied to a tree due to its being tubular and the wind strong. The rest of the group continued to sort, stack or re-locate the logs. At 4-00 p.m. 'stumps were drawn' and we returned to Oraparinna for a barbecue tea, joined by Darren, Tammy and children, along with Ian Dunk, head of The Geographic Information Service based in Port Augusta. After dinner Ian explained the Parks Data Base Programme for which the Friends have undertaken to provide the information – hence the work done at Appealinna during the March meeting. It was pleasing that the work already commenced dovetailed with Ian's plans for content and lay-out.

Sunday saw us leave early because of the Star Force booking of Oraparinna. Julie and Tony showed Ian around Appealinna to familiarise him with the heritage details of the site. This was followed by the drive back to Port Augusta (via Quandong Café at Quorn).

Thank you Julie for your contributions to this month's newsletter and to the Friends for their superb effort at Guide Hut over the two days.

The tank arrives to the satisfaction of Athol, Stephen and Ron.



.Stephen demonstrates his masonry skills as he builds the tank-stand,



Ian outlines the Data Base Project on the screen to the Friends group in the lounge after dinner on Saturday night.

## ***May Meeting – 15.17/5 Wilpena***

Programme:

Friday: Gather at Wilpena for shared dinner.

Saturday: 9-00 a.m. Discussion of the week-end's work with Park staff.

9-30 a.m. Homestead Garden for repairs, weeding of some trees, removal of dead trees and covering of those that could be affected by frost.

12 noon: Lunch at Wilpena

1-0 p.m. Drive to Trezona Camp Ground – tank stand and drippers to be installed;

5-0 p.m. Return to Wilpena for dinner and short Business Meeting. (please provide any further Agenda items to Tony by phone or email).

Sunday 9-00 a.m. drive to Trezona and continue installing drippers ready for tree planting by the Toyota Car Club in June.

12 – 12-30 p.m. Lunch.

Continue with drippers.

If time permits, some members may continue the Data-base collection at Youngoona and perhaps Etina.

5-00 p.m. – Return to Wilpena. Dinner

## ***June Meeting – 26-29/6 Oraparinna***

Programme:

Trezona Camp Ground – tree planting ?; Guide Hut, continuation of the restoration work with Stephen Jennings. Possible completion of the data base collection at Elatina etc. Rain (??) may curtail work there due to the possible state of the access track.

### **BOOKINGS:**

Please contact Tony Bott at (08) 8293-2286 or by email: [triciab@adam.com.au](mailto:triciab@adam.com.au) for your room reservations.

### **MEMBERSHIP FEES:**

\$20 per individual, family now due for 2009 year. (please complete form from web-site)

### **CONTACTS:**

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