



friends of the flinders ranges national park

August – September, 2009

www.friendsofflindersranges.org.au

NEWSLETTER

MEETING – 14-15-16- 17- 18-19 August at Oraparinna

During Friday afternoon, Terrie and Trevor, on their way back from their interstate travels, Marge and Ron, Margaret and Frank, Barbara and Kevin, Athol, Peter and Tony glided into Oraparinna on the new bitumen road which makes that section of the road from Wilpena a very pleasant drive. We welcomed Marge and Ron back from their holiday in Darwin and Margaret and Frank back from the Baltic, the U.K, and Ireland. After our usual nibbles and drinks before dinner and after that meal we had our customary discussion of issues affecting the Park. This time the fate of walking trails took up much of the evening, with Tony reporting on the meeting and conference he had attended, before we turned into our new beds and mattresses after a walk on the newly painted bathroom floors. We had also noted and enjoyed the new lounges and superbly upgraded kitchen equipment.



From left Trevor and Ron are pugging, Frank is wetting the wall with Barbara's help, Tony and Margaret are wiring the wall at Guide Hut

Saturday watched enviously as most of us headed out to Guide Hut in perfect weather dodging kangaroos and emus for much of the way – at least Tony did in the lead car! Greg had come down from Blinman where he is pugging and generally restoring the old Williams home next to the School-Café. Athol drove back to Wilpena where pine logs had previously been cut by Parks staff. Using his natty device again he cut the rest of the timber needed for the doors on Guide Hut. Unfortunately for Terrie and Trevor, who had volunteered to go with Athol to help out and for safety reasons. Athol did not need any help so his "minders" had a pretty uninteresting day. Well, Terrie did get some knitting done! The puggers at the Hut cut more wire, hammered or stapled it in the gaps while the pug was mixed in a powered cement mixer which had been kindly brought out by Parks staff.



Peter, Barbara and Marge are cutting chicken wire for pugging Guide Hut

Thanks guys. Kevin and Greg did the mixing and much of the pugging until they were joined by Rangers Tom and Sarah. Sarah turned out to be a godsend as she is left handed and was able to tack the wire in on the right hand side of the gaps – more than a little awkward for right handers, particularly when wearing thick gardening gloves and trying to hold thin, small nails! For a number of reasons morning tea and lunch went down well. The trip back to Oraparinna was delightful as usual because the track winds its way through valleys and over low hills, often past stands of beautiful yellow flowering cassia bushes. Dinner was followed by a 30 minute business meeting and discussion as to where the Friends group was going after Guide Hut. Numerous suggestions were made including the Appealinna project and the data base which are already well under way of course. After the meeting Peter showed the group his computer version of the data base as it stands and all were impressed with the work he has done on it. Thankyou Peter. I am sure there was no connection between the day's work and the electrical storm which provided us with lots of thunder, some lightning but not a great deal of rain.

Sunday morning was approached with a little apprehension due to the probable effects on the Guide Hut road from the possible rain of the night before. "No worries" as they say – there were no bad creek crossings and only a few sections under water, the longest being at least 2 metres long! Activities mirrored those of Saturday except that we had the benefit of Terrie, Trevor and Athol in the wire cutting, pug mixing and the actual pugging of the front wall. Tom and Sarah also arrived to lend their hands. All day we were entertained by a gale force wind which reached its zenith at lunch time when it blew dust round and round inside the hut. It was rather fortunate that we had much of the walls pugged on the windward side otherwise we may have all ended up in Hawker. We all made it back to base safely some of us going the long way back via the Wilkawillina road to enjoy the scenery.



Rangers Tom and Sarah hard at work pugging the front wall

Monday morning saw us at Dingly Dell, actually at the back of the Perawurtina Aboriginal site, and over the creek, where we did the data base collection around the old buildings, the sheep yard and the water hole with its numerous springs. There was still water there while other such springs in the Park have not fared so well in the current drought. By 11.30 we were off to the Blinman Hotel for lunch on the front verandah which we all enjoyed. That was followed by an inspection of Greg's work on the old Williams' house next to the school. What a huge job he has there!!! A quick visit to the old hospital only served to show how much work there needs to be done on the old buildings for them to be shown at their best. The Captain's Cottage showed what could be done with the money, labour and incentive. An uneventful drive back into the Park found us at the "Trezona Creek Falls" – that is what we call it anyway! It is really quite an amazing site and would be fantastic if the creek was in flood. A quick but very careful drive past the huge old wire stockyards, along Etina Creek and over the hills opened the way for the work to be done there next time on Mogg's old cottage, well, garden and other buildings. We all thought it was great to be going to bed pretty early that night.

Tuesday shook its head in disbelief when it watched the cars head out to Guide Hut once again, this time to finish the pugging of all the outside walls. This was achieved with all the gang except Terrie and Trevor who had set off home towards Adelaide, and John Pennack, a Friend over many years and an inveterate walker through the Park, who joined us for the day. We had finished the pugging, wire cutting and affixing, cleaned up and driven down to Wood Duck Dam on the Wilpena to Blinman road by lunch time. We ate in comfort at tables and seats under the trees near the dam watching numerous emus arrive at the water hole to drink. While the chick-emus were cute, especially in the water with the ducks, the behaviour of the adult birds was worthy of a massive study on its own. The rest of the afternoon was beautiful but unsuccessful as we tried to find the elusive lead mine on the hills on the Jones' Camp track.

Even John, with his incredible memory and long legs could not solve the mystery. Maybe next time! He did give us some detailed information on other sites which we now have to go out and find.

We had all left Oraparinna by 9am on Wednesday, having cleaned up and left the quarters spick and span. All that was left of the programme was the morning tea at the Quondong Café in Quorn. Only four could attend.

The president wishes to thank all the Friends who attended this working bee for their tremendous effort under some appalling conditions, on Sunday especially. Guide Hut already looks like a place we and the Park can be proud of.

NEXT WEEK-END – 18-19-20-21 September – Oraparinna

Those who wish to attend, please advise Tony room requirements one week prior to event.

Programme, weather permitting

Friday – Meet for evening meal at Oraparinna followed by general discussion.

Saturday – 9.00am drive to Guide Hut, cut wire and affix it in the gaps in the

inside walls. (4 to 6 people) Rest of group drive to the Jones Camp track and search for the lead mine.

1.00pm whole group meet at Jones'Camp for lunch in the nearby creek.

2.00pm Group to Cadby's if possible to describe and measure the sites; find brush fence yard and huge gum tree.

6.00pm Dinner at Oraparinna followed by writing up the information collected during the day.

Sunday - 9.00am Guide Hut pugging/ Aroona data base collection/ Etina ditto, depending on the weather, the roads and Friends' choices.

6.00pm Dinner at Oraparinna followed by a review of the data base as it stands at that time.

Monday – 9.00am Having cleaned out the Quarters, head for home with morning tea at the Quondong Café in Quorn at 11.00am.

STOP PRESS

Helen and Vince have returned safely from their travels through outback Queensland.

Julie has largely recovered from the illness that kept her away from the August weekend.

Dean's heart problems have improved but Florence still has eye problems.

CONTACTS:

President:

Tony Bott

triciab@adam.com.au

Vice President:

Vince Monterola

vhmon@bigpond.com

Secretary:

Helen Monterola

vhmon@bigpond.com

Treasurer:

Tricia Bott

triciab@adam.com.au

PO Box 2032 South Plympton 5038

Liaison Ranger:

Nicola Beaton

beaton.nicola@saugov.sa.gov.au

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per family subscription for this year–

Feb.2009 to Jan.2010?