

## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

### Footsteps in the Flinders



Many of you will have read elsewhere or heard from colleagues about the recent successful Friends Forum in the Flinders. As usual it provided an excellent opportunity for old friends to meet up, share experiences and socialise amidst some wonderful natural scenery. My guess would be that there was a fair sprinkling of newcomers too who would have been impressed not only by the friendly nature of the occasion but also at the opportunity to commune with kindred spirits. The afternoon tours were informative and at times spectacular.

There was a significant contingent of DEH personnel in attendance, which provided an opportunity for some exchange of views between staff and volunteers. Staff made several presentations on a range of activities and projects and we heard from some of the locals about the history of the Flinders, early settlers and the challenges of the rugged landscape. Of special interest to many was the contribution made by our Aboriginal colleagues. The new Minister, Jay Weatherill MP, at relatively short notice was able to attend for part of the proceedings with his wife and young children and addressed the groups at the Forum dinner.

The success of the Forum was the result of many months of hard work by the organising committee. Thanks must go to the Friends of the Flinders Ranges under the leadership of Frank Williams for hosting the event. To Vince and Helen Monterola and all of the organising committee for their remarkable attention to detail we say thank you. Thanks also to local DEH staff for providing all sorts of logistical support and a special thank you to the organisations that sponsored the event with both financial and in-kind support. Last but by no means least the support of the wide range of delegates is greatly appreciated.

**David Mitchell**

**Chairman, Friends of Parks Inc. Board**