



The Friends of Belair Park

Volunteers working for Conservation
Established 1985
BEST NEWSLETTER 1996.

JUNE 1997

PRESIDENTS REPORT.

My Dear Friends,

As mid-year approaches, I would like to report that our Friend's group is growing slowly, and we are really becoming a truly friendly Friend's group.

We have enjoyed some very interesting talks at our monthly meetings, our working bees are very productive, and our Tuesday walks have resumed now that Autumn is here.

Our Committee members meet on a monthly basis, and since we have been "domiciled" at the Volunteer Centre, there seem to be more decisions to be made, and a few extra details to attend to. I should like to thank members who have donated articles for our kitchen, and also thank members for helping in so many ways to add to our comforts.

There is one very important event occurring on Monday 9th June, from 11 am - 3 pm, at the Main Oval Pavilion, Belair National Park. It is to be the public launch of the Parks Agenda, by Mr. David Wotton, Minister for the Environment, and we are urged to attend. I do hope many Friends of Belair Park will make the effort, to show the public that we are working for conservation.

Yours very sincerely,

Lynda Knight.



TUESDAY WALKS.

These walks on the second and fourth Tuesdays have been well attended. We were fortunate to see "Parsons Bands" in profusion in April, and now the Striped Greenhoods are coming into flower. Once the winter rains come, there will be more native orchids flowering.

If it is raining heavily or is very hot on the day of the walk, you can phone me at 1 pm to see if we will be going out.

Lynda Knight Ph.82782623.



REPORT ON WORKING BEES.



Every Friday now 9 am to 11 am.

In the last news letter I stated we were going through checking regrowth etc in the area north of the Western entrance adjacent to Upper Sturt Road.

On a suggestion from Stuart Paul, on the 28th of February we switched our hard working team to the area Stuart calls Project 5, classified by Tammy as Priority 2.

This area is near the north eastern border of the park, not far from Waverley Lodge, is an area of good native bushland (Stringy Bark and open forrest) and is being invaded by cotoneaster, pittosporum, erica, English broom and huge boneseed plants. On Friday 23rd May we hope to finish this area.

Up to Friday 16th May we have spent 144 person hours on this area with an average attendance of 5.6 people each Friday, not counting the help we get from Stuart and Tammy. The last two Fridays we have also been assisted by John Duruz from Cleland Friends.

Sunday Working Bees.

These have not been well attended, May's Sunday Working Bee was a wash out. Twenty two hours and an average of 5.5 people attended the March and April working bees.

We are presently concentrating on the area between Pines Oval Road and Government House walking track pulling mostly Boneseed plants.

Eric Cole is working in a very sensitive area north of Pines Oval and up to the Lodge Track. Good progress has been made with the cutting down of a large number of Hakea Laurena and removal of patches of Boneseed. Eric has been assisted by other members but often works alone.

Doug Riley.

MEMBERSHIP.

We are pleased to report quite a few new members have joined in 1997. We welcome Mary Cole, John Hefford, Al and Barbara Johnson, Mr and Mrs Allen McCann, Rebecca MacDonald, Claire Murray, Ruth and Barry Palmer, Bridget Pepper, Gill Ross, Ron Tamblyn, Ann Tregenza, Barbara Warburton, Betty Wise, Dianne and Paul Witt.

So far this year we have 57 financial members and two families.

REMINDER. If you have not renewed your membership for 1997, please can you do so by 30th June. Cheques can be sent to Eric Cole, Treasurer, Friends of Belair National Park, C/- Box 2, Belair, S.A. 5052.



ENTRY PERMITS.



Now we have the Volunteer Centre, located where the Kiosk used to be, members will need to enter the Park for meetings, working bees, and Tuesday walks or when on official 'Friends' business. For these purposes only, the D.E.N.R. have issued "Permits" which will give "FREE" access to the Park for members cars. If you are a financial member and have not received a permit, please contact Eric Cole, Treasurer. Ph. 82783816.

DIRECTORS GRANT PROJECTS.



As many of you will know from the May meeting, we intend to allocate the \$650 Directors Grant towards seed collection, plant propagation and revegetation work within the park. This will involve the establishment of a working group consisting of members interested in one or more of the above mentioned fields. I have already received registration of interest from a number of Friends which is great to see. If there are others of you who are willing to help please give Brian DuBois a call. He can fill you in with more detail and current progress.

I would like to also take the opportunity to thank you all for your dedication and commitment in recent months. I have often felt offering a "cuppa" to rain soaked working B members was the least I could do. We are making excellent progress with the working B's and I hear there are a few new members around the place. The more the merrier!!

I also thank Tammy for her input as she is always willing to help out when I am on days off or have other commitments. Her pest plant / native vegetation survey is rolling along nicely with her observations along the way providing us with valuable information on those areas requiring urgent attention.

See you all soon !!!

Stuart.

PEST PLANT ERADICATION - PART 2.

CONTRACT PEST PLANT WORKS: -

CREEK UPSTREAM UPPER WATERFALL. - The creek upstream of the upper waterfall is dominated by blackberry but only in a patchy distribution. Along side the creek and upper Yulti Wirra Track, Montpellier Broom also exists in patchy distribution. Prior to spraying chemical in the area a bandicoot survey was carried out by students from Flinders University. This supported assumptions that there were no bandicoots present in the creek-line



Chemical treatment was very effective killing both blackberry and broom. Other pest plants sprayed included gorse and boneseed. Very little off target damage was observed with native grasses and heath species being unaffected by treatment. Assessment of this area will take place in Sept/Oct 97 to check regrowth of blackberry.

CREEK NORTH OF PINES OVAL TO LODGE TRACK. - This area contains a block of native vegetation in excellent condition, although small amounts of boneseed and bridal creeper are present. Olives are present towards the lower reaches of the creek.

The bridal creeper treatment here has killed those plants sprayed. There were not many plants but due to the quality on native vegetation and potential for the species to spread it was important to kill these individuals. A few boneseed plants were also treated along the creek. Future assessment of this area will take place Aug. '97.

QUEENS JUBILEE DRIVE. - This zone of the park can be broadly classed as open woodland with both introduced and native grass understorey. For this reason it is highly prone to weed invasion as there is very little middle storey. Pockets of broom and blackberry here have the potential to spread rapidly through the area. A few gorse plant also exist. Treatment effective in killing target species. Regrowth to be assessed Aug. '97

WORKANDA TRACK CREEK-LINE. - The section of creek between the WORKANDA Track and the Upper Waterfall is very heavily weed infested and considered part of the long term weed control program for Belair. The first tributary of the main creek east of the Workanda Track contains some blackberry and broom but is other wise free. The section of main creek between the Lower Waterfall and the Workanda Track is very heavily infested with these species but access does allow for their removal.

The chemical has shown good results on both species. The tributary of the main creek to be assessed Aug. '97. The large area between the waterfall and Workanda Track will need a longer follow up work. A burn during May - July '97 will help germinate the seed bank which can then be sprayed again in Oct.

TILTI TRACT / YULTI WIRRA TRACK. - This area, similar to Queens Jubilee Track, is open woodland with grass understorey. Pockets of broom exist in areas and there are patches of bridal creeper east of the rail line near the Yulti Wirra Track.

Brushoff was not successful on bridal creeper in Aug. But Trounce used in Nov. worked well. Follow up may be necessary in Aug. '97

BLUE COTTAGE AREA. - Blackberry in the gully north of Blue Cottage is known to house the Melville Gully bandicoot population therefore no pest plant works were carried out here. Erica is the priority pest plant in this area as it is quite scarce elsewhere within the park. Other species treated included broom, gorse blackberry and watsonia.

The Erica will need follow up treatment also watsonia and blackberry but young gorse and broom plants can be removed by hand.



EASTERN LODGE AREA. - Blackberry exists in the head of the creek-line here. Downstream the creek is relatively blackberry free and many creek-line species occur.

Treatment here was very effective. Assessment of this area will take place in Sept/Oct.

BONESEED FOLLOW UP LODGE TRACT. - Spraying this area in '95 killed many boneseed plants. In '96 it was noted that many young plants have now germinated, therefore this years control was directed towards following up '95 spraying, while also treating plants another 20 metres in from the edge of the Lodge Track where growth is still thick. The creek-line here was a new area treated as well as being part of a F.O.B. project.

Treatment killed most boneseed plants. Assessment to take place in Sept '97.

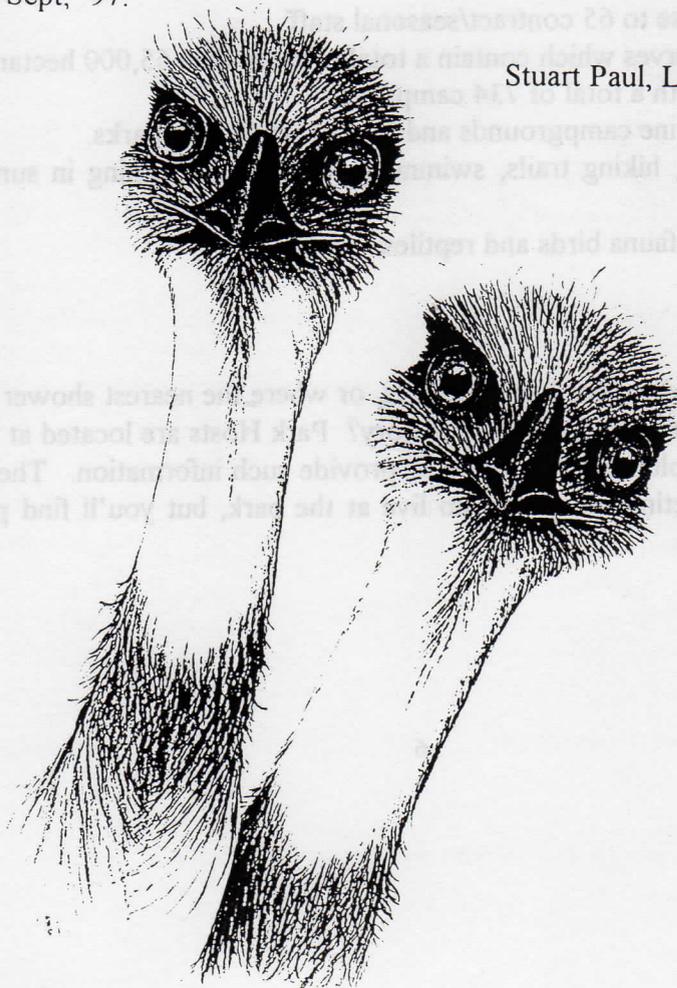
BROOM, SADDLE HILL ROAD. - This area has grassland understorey making the invasive potential of a large patch very high, especially in the event of a fire. As there is little broom elsewhere in the immediate area it was desirable that this patch be removed.

The treatment was very effective with results seen within a couple of weeks.

GORSE, BERRI WERRI TRACK. - Large patch of gorse invading the park from outside the park boundary. This area of the park contains open woodland with a mixture of grassland / heath understorey and is highly susceptible to invasion, especially in the event of a fire. Further down the Berri Werri Track the creek-line has few weeds with the exception of a few blackberry plants. The main gully through here however, is very heavily weed infested.

Treatment of gorse and blackberry was very effective, but erica will need to be sprayed in Sept, '97.

Stuart Paul, Liaison Ranger





BRITISH COLOMBIA'S PARKS. OKANAGAN/SIMILKAMEEN.

PARKS MESSAGE.

Of what value are parks? For SOCIETY, parks are a heritage, a way to share the finest natural environments today, then pass them on for posterity. For COMMUNITIES, parks mean employment, near-by recreation spots or distant vacations. For the INDIVIDUAL, parks may offer solitude, physical challenge, and spiritual renewal. Parks are selected and cherished for their natural beauty, and in British Columbia we are blessed with a variety of exquisite environments to choose from.

WELCOME TO THE OKANAGAN DISTRICT.

Located in the Southern Interior of British Columbia, the Okanagan District offers campers and visitors some of the most diverse park setting in Western Canada. The perfect spot for holidays in spring, summer, fall and winter, this beautiful area with its warm, dry climate is a favourite destination for campers, hikers, families and everyone who loves the outdoors.

Bounded by the Cascade Mountains to the west, and the Okanagan/Shuswap Highlands to the east, the District features a variety of beautiful spots. From the delicate beauty of Kalamalka Lake to the north, to the arid-desert parks to the south, visitors can enjoy a true variety of holiday experiences.

In the western area of the District you'll find small lakes set in Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir forests, while the cool lake and river waters throughout the District are perfect for swimming, fishing and nature study.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OKANAGAN DISTRICT INCLUDE:

- 14 full time staff and close to 65 contract/seasonal staff.
- 31 parks and 14 eco reserves which contain a total of more than 65,000 hectares.
- 14 auto campgrounds with a total of 734 campsites.
- 14 picnic grounds, 5 marine campgrounds and 3 large wilderness parks.
- Beautiful sandy beaches, hiking trails, swimming, boating and fishing in summer, skiing and ice fishing in winter.
- Rare and beautiful flora, fauna birds and reptiles.

PARK HOSTS

Wonder where the best fishing is, or where the nearest shower is? Do you want to know a little more about the local history? Park Hosts are located at a number of camp grounds. These volunteers are there to provide such information. The majority of campground hosts are retired couples who live at the park, but you'll find people of all ages around the province.





ABOUT THE OKANAGAN/SIMILKAMEEN.

If you love beautiful scenery, great swimming and fishing and a place where you can have fun all year round, you've come to the right place. The mountains and hillsides are perfect for hiking, backpacking and horse riding in the warmer months, with skiing in the winter.

The area also has a fascinating, cultural past. Interior Salish and Shuswap people were the first here, and left many legacies of their history, including pithouses and other archaeological finds. Later, miners came and evidence of their activities can be found all over with historic trails and old rail lines. You'll also find evidence of trappers, and fur traders.

Animals, plant life and birds are just part of the pleasures of the Okanagan/Similkameen. You'll be amazed at the variety of species, depending on the climate conditions. Rattlesnakes can be a common sight in the arid-desert like settings, while further back in the cool mountain parks you'll find deer, bear and beaver.

OKANAGAN LAKE

98 hectares, 24 km north of Penticton, Park Hosts.

Beautiful, sandy beaches surrounded by Ponderosa pine and sagebush make this park the perfect spot for swimming and water activities. But there is more to this large camp ground than meets the eye. Panoramic views, picnics sites and interpretive programs will add to your enjoyment. A cool, shady arboretum was created when more the 10,000 exotic trees, including Russian olive, Chinese elm, Norway maple, red ash and Lombardy poplar were added to the park. Across the lake, accessible by boat, are another 10,000 hectares of wilderness in Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park.

MABEL LAKE.

187 hectares, 76 km northeast of Vernon. Park Hosts.

Well off the beaten track, nestled in a beautiful mountain setting you'll find the uncrowded sandy beaches of Mabel Lake Provincial Park. Lush forests offer a pleasant retreat from the more crowded urban centres. The park's sandy shoreline is backed by a cool forest of hemlock, red cedar and birch, in sharp contrast to the drier Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir forests to the west. Squirrels often visit the campsites and painted turtles can be seen at Taylors Creek. Deer and black bear can be seen occasionally as well as a variety of birdlife and water fowl. Temperatures are warm in the summer but rarely extreme, making this a cooler locale than the Okanagan Valley. The natural setting and access to a 35 km long lake make this a popular destination for all ages.

Taken from information supplied by Doug and Ruth Riley about their trip to Canada last year.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER. 22nd AUGUST.1997.

