

Tony Zerella



The Friends of Belair Park

Volunteers working for Conservation
Established 1985
BEST NEWSLETTER 1996.

SEPTEMBER 1997

PRESIDENTS REPORT .

Dear Friends.

The last three months have been quite busy, commencing with the 9th June launch of D.E.N.R. Agenda in Belair National Park. Some of us were involved in this activity, and I thank all who attended. I must also thank members for assisting with the Friends of Parks A.G.M morning tea - they were grateful for our hospitality.

We had two tree-planting exercises in July - 17 members helped plant trees (raised by Brian DuBois) in the area west of Sir Edwin Smith Ave, and the second occasion was arranged by Ranger Stuart Paul, with Girl Guides and parents up on Melville Hill. Ten of our members assisted them.

We have had good attendances at our monthly meetings, when Stuart usually gives us a resume of work being planned or achieved. Darren Willis, Regional Manager, spoke in August about probable major changes to our caravan park and regional headquarters. Other interesting speakers have been Mr Graham Buckerfield - telling us of his rugged walking tours in Tasmania, and Peter Bird from Nature Conservation Society.

I should like to sincerely thank all members for their interest and co-operation. I must mention the gift of a clock from Doug Riley, fashioned from wood, which graces our Volunteer Centre. We are also grateful for the gift from Di and Keith Vickery of a firescreen and a basket for wood - both very welcome.

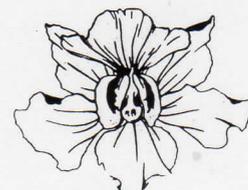
Lastly, I am deeply grateful for Beth's efficient secretarial services - we are inundated with a great deal of correspondence, and she helps me cope with it, - very cheerfully.

With find regards,
Lynda Knight.

MEMBERSHIP.

The following people have joined our ranks since the last newsletter. We welcome Brian and Joy Belling, Jim D'Angelis, John Durez, Guy Edwards and Ralph Foster.

We now have 62 financial members and two families.



TUESDAY WALKS.

We have had an average of about sixteen people attend our walks on the second and fourth Tuesdays each month. Since the winter rains have commenced (and we hope they continue) we have enjoyed the flowers of the native heaths, as well as admiring the Nodding Greenhood orchids. The Helmet orchids, the Gnat orchids and the striped "Robusta" have been viewed on our walks. The next few months should bring a greater variety of flora, for pleasurable viewing.

Lynda Knight.



FORUM.

The 13th Annual Friends of Parks Inc Forum will be held at Kingscote, Kangaroo Island from 10th - 12th October 1997. The theme is "Wilderness and Wildlife" and will be hosted by the Friends of Community Services.

Nine of our members will be attending. They are Lynda Knight, Joyce Underdown, Judith O'Hara, Doug and Ruth Riley, Ann and Gill Ross, Beth and Ron Pitman. They will be travelling over on the ferry "Valerie Jane" departing from Cape Jervis early am on Thursday 9th December. We are grateful to Ann and Gill Ross for arranging the hire of a 12 seater 4WD bus for our use over the weekend.

Liaison Ranger Sturt Paul and Camp Ground Hosts Phil and Rosilie Brown will be joining us for the main tour on Saturday.

170 people are expected to attend the Forum. The official opening will be by the Hon. David Wotton MP, Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources. Other V.I.P.'s will be Mr Allen Holmes, Director of Natural Resources Group and the newly appointed C.E.O. Mr John Scanlon.



PROFILE.

From time to time we have thought to give a profile of one of our members, today it is -

PRESIDENT LYNDIA KNIGHT. - nee LANYON.

I was born at Blyth, in the mid- north of S A during the 1920's, and attended the local primary school, followed by Balaklava High School. My youthful interests were reading, sport, Girl Guides and walks in the sparse areas of bushland, in a farming countryside.

In my teens I worked as a typist at Adelaide Art Engravers (a subsidiary of News Ltd.) and enjoyed the bustle of the newspaper world. At the beginning of 1942 I joined the Army as a V.A.D., having prepared for this since the beginning of the war. After three years in what had then been changed to A.A.M.W.S., I decided to do my nursing training at the Adelaide Children's Hospital - followed by some adult nursing experience.

In 1948 I met and married my husband Harry, and subsequently we had three children - Margaret and twins Stephen and Coralie.

In 1961 we built our home opposite Belair National Park (then unfenced), as I wanted my children to enjoy the pleasures of an "outdoor" life. They and their



friends, as well as our adult friends, enjoyed tennis, picnics, walks etc, and loved living near the trees and birds.

I undertook a very concentrated one year teaching course in 1961, and taught for many years at Rose Park and Blackwood Primary Schools. I particularly enjoyed bringing my class from Rose Park school up to Belair by train, alighting at Long Gully Station and walking slowly back to Belair, through the Park.

Since retiring I have been involved in many community activities, but have found Meals on Wheels and the activities of Friends of Old Government House and Friends of Belair Park most rewarding.

REPORT FROM LIAISON RANGER STUART PAUL.

I hear Doug and Eric are both having a few words in this newsletter so I'll keep it brief!

Well, its good and bad news because the orchids are on the way up but so are the weeds. It's that time of year again when we are planning this years contract weed control with even more to be done this year than last. This is a good thing, however, because this years budget allows us to tackle a few new areas and most importantly go back over last years work and follow up where necessary. As most of you know, Bridal Creeper is the first on the hit list and you may notice our contract weed sprayer, Brian Kell, out in the park in the next few weeks.

I also hope to keep rolling along with the project system in the next few months which has been very successful as we are now up to Project 8. This approach helps me clearly document our works and shows that we are tackling weed control with a strategic approach. I have a few new areas in mind which should keep us going through spring and into early summer. By the end of this time we will have tackled many priority 1 vegetation zones within the park.

Other News Flash item include:

Student working on *Pittosporum* research re: seed viability and effective eradication techniques.

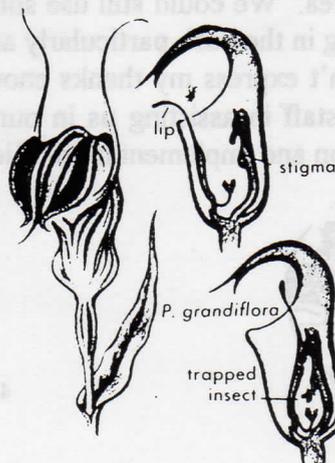
Plan for removal of mature *Pittosporum* from sensitive Saddle Hill area is currently being put together.

Training dates have been confirmed for Brushcutting and Pesticide Safety and Handling. I'll keep you posted as I lock in Chainsaw and First Aid dates.

I'll catch up with you at the next monthly meeting !

Stuart.

PTEROSTYLIS, with over 70 species, ranges from New Guinea to New Zealand and Australia. Its sensitive lip acts as a trapdoor. Gnats and mosquitoes, attracted by nectar at base of the lip, are trapped when the lip springs shut. Escaping through a tunnel, the insect picks up pollinia which it later carries to another flower. About 20 minutes later the trapdoor opens. *P. grandiflora*, most attractive of the Greenhoods, has a single 1½ in. flower on a leafy stem. It is from eastern Australia.



WORKING BEES



Friday Working Bees 9 am to 11 am.

We are still maintaining good attendance in spite of the cold wintry conditions which we sometimes experience. 125 person hours have been given by our volunteers on Fridays since the last Newsletter report. Project 6 is now finished and we have completed 75% of Project 7. These areas are bounded by Jubilee Drive, Sheoak Road Fence, Upper Waterfall and Waverley Lodge. The infestation was mainly Boneseed, Gorse, Acacia and Longifolia.

When Project 7 is completed we will turn our attention to the area between Upper Sturt Road and Sir Edwin Smith Ave, from the Western Entrance to Belair Railway Station. This needs follow-up maintenance, it has been weeded 3 times over the years, but the Boneseed and African Daisy still germinate, and the big Olives need eradication as they haven't been worked on in the past.

Have a walk through this area, it is really looking good. Hardenbergia is now in flower, young Eucalyptus trees and Casuarinas are growing well, in a few years the area will be transformed back to a natural bushland.

Sunday Working Bees.

These occur every third Sunday in each month. At present we are concentrating on the area between the Pines Oval Road and the Old Government House track. A lot of young Boneseed have germinated along here, and it is essential that these tiny plants are removed before they become large plants with flowers, and then drop their seeds. We must keep going back to these previously worked areas, until eventually Boneseed, Broom and African Daisy are eliminated.

We have now started a program of poisoning the Olives; this was not included in our weeding when we first started on these areas.

Tree Planting.

The July Working Bee was a concentrated effort of planting approximately 112 trees and shrubs in the Belair Station area. It was attended by 16 Friends and went like clockwork. With our recent rains they should do very well.

On the 27th July another planting day was organised by Stuart Paul. Nine Friends supervised about 30 Girl Guides and their parents in planting in Melville Gully. All these plant were propagated by Brian Du Bois.

Joyce Underdown and Ron Tamblyn work alone in their specific areas and work consistently with most of their hours unrecorded. Eric Cole will be reporting on his Working Bee area. We could still use some more helpers. Its hard to believe, but we really enjoy working in the bush particularly as we are now seeing encouraging results.

I can't express my thanks enough for the support of Darren Willis, Stuart Paul and the Park staff in assisting us in our endeavours, I have a lot of admiration for Darren and his vision and implementation of ideas for the ultimate good of our Park.

Doug Riley.



TREE PLANTING



Sunday 20th July.

I know the farmers and the gardens might need the rain, but the Friends appreciated the beautiful day. Fifteen Friends plus one Ranger turned up to plant trees.

On two Saturday mornings prior to the day Doug Riley, John Hemer and myself had done some preliminary work eg. site digging, pegging and tree guard distribution.

Three species were planted on the creek line in the Belair Station area. These were *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, *Acacia rotundifolia* and *Acacia melanoxylon*. A total of about thirty trees.

In addition to the above three species, *Allocasuarina verticillata* was also sown in the area south of the sugar gum plantation. *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* in the creek bed (it is fairly flat in this area), *Allocasuarina verticillata* up the top and the two *Acacias* intermixed between the two. Approximately eighty trees were planted in this area.

The work was comfortably completed within two hours allowing a relaxed 'cuppa' provided by our President, Lynda.

Sunday 27th July

For those who arrived early it was a major job to find the Park with the heavy mist which didn't clear until after 10 o'clock. The sun shone in patches and fortunately or unfortunately depending on your point of view there was no rain.

I didn't count heads, but of the smiling faces that I could remember, there were at least seven Friends and two Rangers. Although the Guides started off with more chiefs than Indians the chiefs were certainly outnumbered at the end.

Four varieties of trees were planted. These included *Eucalyptus leucoxylon*, *Eucalyptus obliqua*, *Eucalyptus viminalis* and *Acacia myrtifolia*. About eighty trees were planted.

The area planted was at the top end of Melville Gully. *Eucalyptus obliqua* and *Acacia myrtifolia* shared the high and middle ground with *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* and *viminalis* being planted along side the creek.

Some preliminary work was carried out by myself and Stuart Paul but the majority of this was done by Stuart as well as final work of extra tree guards and stakes.

The session was finished off with the usual 'cuppa', again provided by Lynda, at the Karka Pavilion.

Guess what! I have *Hakea rostrata* (Beaked Hakea), *Banksia marginata* (Silver Banksia), *Bursaria spinosa* (Christmas Bush) and *Callitris preissii* (Southern Cypress-pine) germinating. If all goes well we should have a nice lot of understorey plants for planting next year.

Thanks again to all who helped.

Brian DuBois

Trees Planted

Below is a list of the trees planted and some notes as to where they are likely to be found:

Eucalyptus viminalis (Manna Gum):-

Mostly on moist but well drained alluvial soils near watercourses, but also on drier sites of higher levels. Usually with other species.

Eucalyptus leucoxylon (S.A. Blue Gum)

Mostly in association with Pink Gum, Peppermint Box, Manna Gum and others in the Mount Lofty Ranges.

Eucalyptus obliqua (Messmate Stringybark):-

Common and widespread in moister open-forests of foothills and mountains (to about 1000 m) usually with other species.

Acacia myrtifolia (Myrtle Wattle):-

Very common and widespread, mostly on coastal side of Main Divide and in S.A. in heaths or scrubby understoreys of open-forests (especially stringy bark) usually in poorer sandy soil.

Eucalyptus camaldulensis (River Red Gum):-

Extensive throughout all mainland States (the most widespread eucalypt), commonly forming pure open-forests or woodlands, chiefly along inland rivers or dry watercourses and on floodplains, and preferring deep moist subsoils with clay content. Usually on fairly low elevation plain country, but reaches 350 m in the Mt. Lofty Ranges.

Acacia rotundifolia (Round-leaf Wattle):-

Common in open forests on drier shallow soils of hills.

Acacia melanoxylon (Blackwood):-

Very common on a variety of sites where annual rainfall exceeds 600 mm per annum. Best development on deep soils, especially in tall forests and 'jungle' pockets in mountain valleys.

Allocasuarina verticillata (Drooping She-oak) formerly *Casuarina stricta*:-

Common, especially in exposed situations on well drained soils of coastal cliffs, old dunes and inland rocky outcrops, below 800 m.

UNIVERSITY PADDOCK PROJECT.

To the North of Pines Oval lies an area of the Park which for reasons unknown was in the past called University Paddock. This area is about 600 metres in an east/west direction and 500 north to south. It is bounded by the Carawatha, Moorowie and Lodge Tracks. The understorey is quite dense in places and incorporates a wonderful variety of flora. It was identified as one of the most pristine areas of the Park, however weeds and exotics were beginning to make a significant impact and it was decided to tackle the problem..

The first task was to mark out the area using stakes placed at 100 metre intervals in accordance with the Australian Grid system. Initially, we identified a grid point to the south of the area using a Land Dept map. From this point, using a hand held compass, we struck a line due north and to the best of our ability measured off the 100 metre intervals. Each grid point we marked with a stake. It was difficult to be accurate as we could not walk in a straight line and the measurement was very much an estimate but with the aid of the map, we finished up with a very close approximation. Then we moved 100 metres to the east of the grid point and repeated the operation in a



northerly direction. This procedure was repeated until the whole area had been covered and altogether we finished up with 23 grid points.

Our next task was to produce a Vegetation Map. To do this we selected a grid point and identified all the plants and trees in the vicinity. We also made an estimate of the area covered by each species. This procedure was continued until all the grid points had been covered. The information collected was given to D.E.N.R. who in turn are going to produce a computer program detailing the type and density of weeds not only in this area but all over the Park. We were fortunate in having some very knowledgeable people helping to identify the flora. Having done this, we were able to assess the size of the problem of weed eradication and develop a procedure to deal with it.

Heavy infestation of Boneseed covered at least 50% of the boundary, although some of that on the northern side had been treated chemically. Despite this it was decided chemical treatment was not acceptable because of the damage it would do to the indigenous flora. Further heavy infestations of Boneseed were found along the creek lines and isolated small patches within the area. Olive was prominent along the creek lines with one heavy patch within the area and some on the northern border. Isolated Sollya plants were found over about 60% of the area and although not so apparent when we prepared the vegetation map, Bridal Creeper was found whilst weeding during the winter. On the north west corner there was a substantial area of mature Hakea Laurina.

To tackle the problem of weed eradication, we marked off an east/west line following the appropriate grid points dividing the area into halves and initially worked only on the northern half. Using hand held compass we traversed lines in a north/south direction at intervals of about 10 metres hand pulling weeds as we found them. Boneseed was left in neat piles to rot. Where there were larger areas of infestation we gave up traversing and dealt with that. We also followed the creek lines pulling Boneseed and cutting and swabbing Olive. The area of Hakea Laurina was cut down but finally all areas were traversed at the requisite intervals. In the centre we found a huge Pine which we ringed barked rather than cutting it down. We also pulled the dead Boneseed which had been chemically treated and this really improved the appearance of the area.

It is just twelve months since this project was started and we have only finished the northern half. Currently we are working the heavily infested creek line in the southern half and will finish this before commencing to traverse. A number of Friends have worked on this project either individually or in organised working groups and the latter have put in over 388 hours since it started. This does not include the assistance of the rangers who have helped us, especially during the marking and vegetation mapping.

When you see the area now and remember what it was like before we started, one can only realise it has been a well worthwhile project but there is still much to be done. Some members of the public walking the tracks have stopped to comment favourably on what we have achieved.

Looking to the future we will have to go over the area again in two years time. The Boneseed is known to have a ten year life and it would be tragic to allow it to again take a hold on this area. We will also have to tackle the Bridal Creeper which we know is there.

Eric Cole.



BELAIR MAZES.

As a result of a Friends of Belair Park Tuesday walk in July, interest was generated in the Belair maze. The following article gives some background to the mazes in Belair Park.

Some five years before the declaration of the National Park at Belair on December 19th 1891, the Woods and Forest Department took possession of 500 acres of the Government Farm as a Forest Reserve. Thirty-five acres adjoining the Belair Railway Station were, according to the Woods and Forest report for 1885-6, "being fenced, and said to be laid out as a park with paths and drives, and will be set apart for recreation purposes; and, from its vicinity to Adelaide and accessibility by rail, it will no doubt be largely availed of by the public for picnic and other parties".

A maze consisting of six concentric circles was planted on a knoll in this area. It was planted with the ordinary Quick or Hawthorn hedge, being based on a maze in Dean Forest in Gloucestershire, England and was possibly the first of its kind planted in the Australian colonies. It is one of only a few such nineteenth century mazes still in existence in the world. In the Woods and Forests report for 1888-9 the Belair maze was making "satisfactory progress", but it did not continue to thrive, and a second maze was planted in 1902, based on a similar plan. The site for this maze was about two hundred and fifty yards east of the Main Oval, currently the site of tennis courts 51-54. It was planted with over six hundred Kaffir apple plants raised in the Woods and Forests Nursery at Belair. This maze grew well, the hedges being trimmed to a height of four or five feet. Because of poor maintenance and reductions of staffing during World War II it deteriorated and was removed about 1950.

The first maze has been restored by the Australian Garden History Society, following grants from the Society in 1987 and a subsequent grant from the National Estate. The maze was opened in 1991, celebrating the Belair Park Centenary and coinciding with the Year of the Maze in England

Ron Tamblyn.

A DATE TO REMEMBER.

Friday 19th December ' Friends' Christmas - Birthday Tea.

Details in next Newsletter.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER.

FRIDAY 21st NOVEMBER.

