
❖ WALKING SA News ❖

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Summer 2011



Newsletter of the
Walking Federation of
South Australia Inc
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Office Hours

Tuesday & Thursday
9am- 3pm

*Uniting all
people actively
concerned with
bushwalking for
the protection &
advancement of
their mutual
interests*

Walking SA is
supported through the
Office for
Recreation & Sport
and the Government
of South Australia



Walkers enjoy one of the ridge top trails of Saunders Gorge Sanctuary

Featured in this edition of Walking SA News :

- ◇ President's Words
- ◇ Trails update
- ◇ Trails Technical Unit explained
- ◇ Walking Access Committee
- ◇ Bushwalking Australia

and more ..



Government of South Australia
Office for Recreation and Sport

be active.

Walking SA Exec. Committee

President	Bill Gehling (Adelaide Bushwalkers)
Vice President	Ron Jackson (Keep Walking)
Hon. Secretary	
Hon. Treasurer	Jayne Jennifer (Women in the Bush)
Principal IT	Chrisqrjgt Moad (Chris's Walking Group)
Principal WAC	
Principal TTU	John Eaton (Retired Teachers Wlknng Grp)
C'ttee Member	Fran Lucas (WEA Ramblers)
C'ttee Member	Peter Larsen (Friends of Heysen Trail)
C'ttee Member	Dallas Clark (Friends of Heysen Trail)

Walking Access Committee

John Eaton	(Retired Teachers Wlknng Grp)
Mary Denton	(WEA Ramblers)
Arthur Ward	(Adelaide Bushwalkers)
Alan Bundy	(Keep Walking)
Thelma Anderson	(Noarlunga Bushwalkers)

Trails Technical Unit

John Eaton	(Retired Teachers Wlknng Grp)
Secondees on call...	

Administration Officer

Brian Goodhind

Next General Meeting

Tuesday 15 November
7pm for 7-30pm

Office of Walking SA
Greening Australia building
5 Fitzgerald Rd Pasadena

Our Guest Speaker is Wendy Keech from the Heart Foundation who has just returned from the Walk21 Conference in Vancouver and will share with us various walk-related ideas and initiatives on the international scene. A 'must hear' for those looking to see how our experiences *on the track* may be enhanced.

Pre-meeting coffee / tea and nibbles will be available at 7pm and Wendy will commence her presentation shortly after the meeting starts at 7-30pm.

- All welcome -

AGM August 2011

Around seventy walkers from a number of our clubs attended the last AGM at which Tom Kenyon, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing was the guest speaker.

The quality information provided by Tom and the direct manner in which he answered the many questions posed, demonstrated to the audience that he was aware of the problems facing the walking community and would provide appropriate support as able.

Of particular note was his statement to the effect that he looked forward to addressing all matters involving recreational walking through the appropriate peak body: Walking SA.

We look forward to again meeting and working with Tom in the near future.

Newsletter advertising 2011**Rates (incl. GST)**

1/8 Page Vertical	\$33
1/4 Page	\$55
1/3 Page Vertical	\$66
1/2 Page	\$99
Full Page	\$154

Flyer (plus printing and insertion costs p/a) - \$176

Editorial deadlines

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Winter 1 May

All enquiries to Walking SA 8276 5090

office@walkingsa.org.au

From the President

With this edition of “Walking SA News” we are focussing on the important role of local councils in walking. And by walking I mean the full range of walking experiences from the local park, to a walk along the length of the Heysen Trail, or even a simple walk to the local shops. Walkability is the responsibility of every council, whether in the country or the city.

A walkable community is a healthy community, but a place where nobody walks is usually a dying one. It’s probably full of car traffic, where people insist on driving and parking right at the door because they simply can’t bear to walk there. These are the places where there is “traffic chaos” and a constant scream for “more parking”. If walking were more pleasant, people would happily walk an extra few minutes to their car. To use a phrase from the internationally famous walking advocate Rodney Tolley: *Walkers are the indicator species for the quality of life.*

Councils all over SA bear much of the responsibility for maintaining the “public realm” which along with National Parks and Forest Reserves, includes most of the places where the public is free to walk. Footpaths, parks and local trails are important pieces of infrastructure that bind communities together. The presence of them makes a community liveable, adds value to real-estate and contributes to the viability of business. We can’t all live surrounded by pristine wilderness, but we could do a lot to make our urban and suburban areas much more walkable than they are.

Some people in the planning profession seem to regard bushwalkers as a totally different species from the ordinary people who populate our cities and suburbs. Perhaps they don’t realise that most bushwalkers actually live in cities and suburbs. My question to those planners is “*If bushwalkers aren’t prepared to walk there; who is?*” Bushwalkers, like everyone else won’t walk if it is too unpleasant or too impractical to do so.

Most people (whether or not they regard themselves as bushwalkers) enjoy walking in a natural environment, but not in one they find alien and threatening. Children love the outdoors, but very few these days are allowed to enjoy it. These children are now having children of their own, and a whole new generation of parents and kids are growing up, scared not only of cars and traffic, but of open space itself.

Health experts tell us that we all need at least 30 minutes of brisk walking a day, and children need 60 minutes. If we are to get people in our community walking as much as they should, then Recreational Walking (what many call Bushwalking) is the way to do it. Walking in a pleasant environment with a club or just a group of friends makes that time pass quickly. Once people realise through walking that they can get their exercise, mental relaxation, and get from A to B at the same time, they’ll see that walking is actually a good use of their time. To take a lesson from cycling, it’s hard to imagine the present resurgence in commuter cycling, without new riders first gaining confidence through organised recreational rides and bike paths.

For rural councils, their role in recreational walking is perhaps less obvious because rural people tend to walk less than their city cousins, and walking is not on their agenda. But it’s for that reason many country people have poorer health. Towns that aren’t attractive to walkers don’t do well in the tourism stakes either, because only when you can entice people out of their cars will they spend money. Yet rural councils usually have under their control many pockets of public land like undeveloped road reserves, and small sections of public land that could be used to enhance the walkability of their area. In the past, councils have often seen these as a drain on their resources, or as an asset to be sold off to adjacent landholders. In some cases these road reserves have remained undeveloped because they contain a natural barrier such as a creek or very steep slope that can be negotiated by walkers but not vehicles. In other cases, they became redundant as properties amalgamated. Whatever the reason, many have potential for walking trails and should be retained in public ownership.

Bill Gehling

TRAILS UPDATE

Kelly's Road Trail Link

Onkaparinga Council has recently resolved to proceed with a proposed Kelly's Road Trail link between Wilfred Taylor Reserve, Morphett Vale; and Piggott Range Road, Onkaparinga Hills.

The project will proceed subject to certain conditions which include the erection of traffic management signs, native vegetation protection, adherence to recommendations made in an independent environmental report and application of the restrictive closure of the unmade section of the road reserve of Kelly's Road.

Pioneer Women's Trail

A grant application by Walking SA for a feasibility study re a shared use river crossing over the Onkaparinga River to complete the trail was lodged on 24 October. It was channelled through the Community Recreation and Sport Facilities Programme (Facilities Development).

The design of such a crossing will need to comply with national, state and local standards and be of a height sufficient to allow flood debris to pass beneath without impeding water flow and damaging the structural integrity of the bridge.

To date, the trail has remained incomplete due to the lack of a safe pedestrian crossing over the river along its route.

Further advice in due course.

Walk the Yorke

Tom Fitzgerald has reported that 25 members of ARPA recently travelled to the Yorke Peninsula and walked the first stage of proposed Walk The Yorke route.

The walk was enjoyed by all, the scenery was great and the hospitality of the locals was superb. As there were effectively no hills, 20kms per day were comfortably achieved, however daily distances may be adjusted by changing route access points as appropriate.

At this stage of trail planning / development, some excessive road walking was experienced due to issues involving local land owners. Council is working to resolve these matters.

It is considered that May / June or July / August may be the most appropriate time to walk the track because of accommodation issues. School holidays, long weekends and the crabbing season should be avoided.

The presence of the walkers in the area was reported in the local newspaper and it is felt that this will give a positive start to acceptance of the project.

No formal route maps are available at this time, however this will be resolved as the process proceeds.

Coast to Vines Rail Trail—detour

Seaford rail extension project works has created a detour to this trail. From the south, the detour necessitates crossing Griffiths Dve and Linton Tce, then travelling 200m north before turning right then left into Farrow Cct. Then almost immediately continue on Farrow Cct to the right to Eric Rd and turn left. To complete the detour, turn right at Seaford Rd, left at McMillan, then left at Railway Rd and back onto the trail. Further information at <http://www.railtrails.org.au/news/news.php3?news&354&%2F>

Southern Flinders Rail Trail

Advice on extensions to this trail from the north end of Laura to Stone Hut (7.8km) and the opening of a 22km section between Melrose and Wilmington, were pleasing to hear. Further information at <http://www.railtrails.org.au/states/trails.php3?action=trail&trail=98>

Morialta

Not exactly trail news, but those who use the park may consider 'putting back in' and assisting the Friends of Black Hill & Morialta with their 4th Creek weed eradication on Sunday 20 November.

Meet 10am at the Resource Centre car park on Morialta Falls Rd. Free sausage sizzle follows.



Trails Technical Unit (TTU)
(*a functional body of Walking SA*)

Many members are unaware of the function of this unit which acts in support of the walking fraternity, so this brief outline provides an insight into its operation.

As the title infers, the unit handles technical matters relating to walking trails. Field-work involves walking along trails and in areas where trails may be formed, noting, photographing and way pointing issues such as soil erosion, walking hazards and loss of amenity, together with environmental issues such as invasive feral plant infestations in conservation areas. It also advises on remedies to correct poor trail design, including (as a last resort) trail closure and re-routing.

Other trail issues include over-growth of vegetation, and locating trail obstacles and hazards such as fallen trees, rock falls and earth slumps caused by unstable slopes. Instability occurs whenever the natural drainage is altered by human activities such as vegetation clearance, road construction and diverting water runoff from residential areas into public reserves and creeks. Such problems are commonly found in conservation parks and reserves located near urban areas.

The unit also reports on the provision and quality of signage along walking trails and at trailheads, including interpretation signage and places of historical or environmental interest. We are sometimes asked to evaluate amenity standards in parks and reserves, such as the provision of shelters and toilets and evidence of vandalism, such as amenity damage, graffiti- and defacement

Like the Walking Access Committee, the Trails Technical Unit works with managers employed by Department for the Environment & Natural Resources (DENR), Forestry SA, SA Water and local government agencies on trails located in their parks and reserves. It also works with the Walking Access Committee on trails or road reserves threatened with closure, especially where the reasons for closure include trail technical issues such as trail sustainability.

The unit maintains a comprehensive database which includes:—

- ◇ **historical** data (time and location-referenced, digital imaging);
- ◇ **environmental** data - especially invasive plants from adjacent urban areas;
- ◇ **spatial** data (3 dimensional, GPS data used in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) such as *ArcInfo*);
- ◇ **traker** (traffic) data (*trakers* are body heat-sensitive counters deployed along trails in rugged, unobtrusive, vandal-resistant pipe housings- to monitor trail-usage by walkers, cyclists, and horse riders;

and this data is used for consultancy, advocacy, trail monitoring and trail management purposes. It also enables us to respond to trail issues and park management plans / policies that are likely to impact on the future of walking in South Australia.

The TTU reports once a month to the Executive Committee of the Walking Federation.

If you are interested in *observant* walking along walking trails, and trying to puzzle out *what* is happening to a track, *why* it's happening, and (with the aid of a map) *where* it's happening, then you are encouraged to take a copy of one of our *Trail Report Cards* with you on your next walk (cards sent by email & hard copy to your walking club: also obtainable via the office). There's a spot to record the waypoint coordinates of the issue to be reported. This will help us to locate the issue and add it to our database.

....And if you use a GPS – you can also email to me your track points and waypoints (saved as .txt or .csv) for storage on our database and for sharing with other walkers. Perhaps you might even like to join the Walking Federation's TTU. Our meetings are never held at night - only "*along a track somewhere*"

John Eaton

joneaton@bigpond.net.au

CFS fire alerts

As part of a broader plan to increase access to SA Country Fire Service (CFS) alerts and other important information, the CFS is in the process of re-launching their email subscription service.

This improved email service will be used to provide information on bushfires and other incidents CFS are attending, as well as other useful CFS information and diary dates.

Visit the CFS website at www.cfs.sa.gov.au to check the new features being launched and subscription procedures.

SALE — Walking publications

A recent stock audit of our of walking books has indicated that it's time to move some out to replenish.

Various publications covering both metropolitan and country areas will be on display at the AGM on Tuesday 15 November. Prices will be advised upon request and be significantly below retail.

Subsequent to the meeting, Brian at the office will respond to further enquiries on remaining books.



Snakes

Warmer weather brings out our snakes & some 3,000 bites occur each year in Australia. Take care, and check out a University of Adelaide site on the topic at <http://www.toxinology.com/fusebox.cfm?staticaction=snakes/ns-sntreat03.htm>

Attention Walk Leaders

Forestry SA Rangers request that clubs continue to provide prior notification of all planned walks in forest areas, with number of participants and details of the proposed walk route. This applies to all walks throughout the year.

Walk leaders are also encouraged to check with staff in the relevant forestry area immediately prior to commencing a walk.

Contacts:

Mt Crawford Forest Phone (08) 8521 1700

Kuitpo Forest Phone (08) 8391 8800

A leader who doesn't stop!



Sunday and Tuesday leader with *KEEP WALKING*, Ted Chessman, turned 80 in late September 2011. On returning from a Tuesday walk at that time, he found a surprise party awaiting — at least it was a surprise to him, as his wife Val and the rest of the walking group + others very well knew all about it.

One of Nature's true gentlemen, Ted commenced as a walk leader in 1989 with the then SA Govt's Keep Fit SA campaign, having already bushwalked for a number of years. When the campaign closed in 1998, Ted with other leaders started the *KEEP WALKING* group and since then has, on a four term basis, led walkers two days every week. That's around 22 years as a leader and still going. Great work Ted and we hope that your story will be an inspiration to others to keep fit and keep walking.

Equipment up for grabs

Walking SA has two items office items which are now superfluous to needs:-

- ~ Office desk - Timber, central kneehole, four drawers either side, size 120cms x 60cms
- ~ Toshiba 1560 photocopier. Copies up to A3. In working order but not serviced recently

If you feel one or both items fulfils a need, and you are the first to express interest, you may come to the office asap and take possession.

Opening of the Walking Season 2012

Preliminary notice is given that this event is planned for Sunday 1 April 2012 at Truro.

We are pleased that SA Recreation Trails Inc are able to co-host the event and celebrate extensions to the Lavender Federation Trail. More later!

Walking Access Committee (WAC)

The Walking Access Committee is responsible for monitoring walking access to unmade (unused) road reserves that remain in public ownership, as well as the *sale of* or *right to walk on* public, private and leasehold land that is seen as strategic for existing trail networks. This involves investigating all proposed road and road reserve closures for their impact on the South Australian walking trails network.

The most common reason for selling off public (unmade) road reserves is that councils would like to reduce the management costs associated with poisoning noxious exotic weeds and make some money on the sale of the land, usually to an adjacent land-owner or farmer. Once sold, the land is generally lost to the walkers of SA.

A walker's right to walk on land in public ownership is protected under two pieces of legislation relevant to the closure of public roads and road reserves:-

- ◇ **The Recreational Greenways Act 2000** provides for the - "*establishment and maintenance of trails for recreational, walking cycling, horse riding, skating or other similar purpose*";
- ◇ **The Roads (Opening and Closing) Act 1991** provides - "*for the opening and closing of public roads*". It requires a notice of closure to be published in the Government Gazette- to allow sufficient time for objections to the closure.

Committee monitors these gazetted closures for their strategic importance to the SA walking trails network, either to retain as existing trails or for future use as trails. Also in the absence of any nearby trails, or to retain for their conservation value if the reserve is found to contain rare and endangered flora or is a fauna corridor or refuge. Members often decide to visit the site of the proposed closure to form a better idea of the value of the reserve.

As a general rule, we advise the Walking Federation to oppose the sale of unmade road reserves, although if the land owner wishing to buy the reserve offers to exchange an attractive strip of land suitable for walking but less productive for farming, we may withdraw our objection to the sale. We also object when any disposal of public land hasn't strictly adhered to the procedures for disposal required under the legislation.

Committee works with managers employed by Department for the Environment & Natural Resources (DENR), Forestry SA, SA Water and local councils on trails located in their parks and reserves and also works with the Walking Federation's Trails Technical Unit (TTU) on trails and road reserves threatened with closure where there are technical reasons for the closure..... such as trail sustainability or safety and '*wear and tear*' issues arising from sharing trails with horse riders, runners and cyclists. It also seeks to develop good working relationships with each council and liaise with staff responsible for road reserves: usually council planning officers and recreational officers responsible for council-managed trail networks.

Committee provides a written report to the Federation each month which updates executive members on the status of each matter currently before the WAC, and in real time advises it on any new access issues that come to attention.

John Eaton

Acting Chairman
Walking Access Committee



A few weeks ago when I happened to be in Sydney for Bushwalking Australia, I was invited by Sydney Bush Walkers to represent Bushwalking Australia at a ceremony in the Blue Mountains in honour of the late Wilf Hilder, one of the pioneers of Bushwalking in Australia. Wilf joins the likes of Myles and Milo Dunphy, Dot Butler (the Barefoot Bushwalker) SBW members whose legends live on in the mountains, and amongst the bushwalkers who go there.

For those that haven't bushwalked there, Sydney is blessed with magnificent national parks on three sides, with the Blue Mountains National Park in the west being perhaps the most spectacular. What you don't really appreciate from the road or even the train-line through the mountains is how rugged the country is once you leave the ridge that threads its way between the little towns that are perched on top. We headed out from Katoomba along Narrow Neck, a ridge that heads south to a place called Clear Hill which has a 360 degree view of the mountains and valleys. The magnificent scenery was accompanied by almost perfect weather; something that the locals thought was pretty unusual. Feeling slightly parochial, I felt it almost came up to the standard of the kind of winter's day we expect in the Flinders. A Sydney Bushwalker made a terrific little film of the day: www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_jWbhpT8OE. *There's also an article on the fat canyoners website:* <http://fatcanyoners.org/2011/09/04/wilf-hilder-memorial/>

There is no question that the Blue Mountains would not remain and be appreciated for what it is without the enthusiasm of the early bushwalkers, and their preparedness to buck the system. I got to know Wilf only in the last few years of his life when as president of the NSW Confederation, he came to our meetings in Sydney, Brisbane and last year in Melbourne. By that stage in his life, Wilf's main contribution was to tell a story or make a joke about his battles with bureaucracy, even though as an officer in the Lands Department, he was part of the bureaucracy himself. There are quite a few place names that unofficially found their way on to the official maps with Wilf's help. Wilf even scored an obit in the Sydney Morning Herald: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/obituaries/lost-bush-trails-were-his-to-tread-20110812-1iqt6.html#ixzz1UvJy3R9b>

Wilf's passing was in many ways the celebration of the end of an era, and the beginning of a new one. The exciting part for me was to meet some of the people now in their 20's and 30's who are helping to make Sydney Bush Walkers again into one of the great clubs of bushwalking. It was particularly interesting to hear that they had more than 200 members in the young adult age group, and to find out some of the things they were doing to attract them. Their story is one that all clubs should follow, and one Bushwalking Australia will be discussing at our meeting in November. Watch this space.

Bill Gehling

E-Newsletters Direct

If you have an email capacity, we encourage you to receive our newsletters at the earliest time. Just forward your email address and we will ensure you receive them 'hot off the press.'

Clubs open to new members

For information about Walking Groups open for new members, log onto Walking SA's website : www.walkingsa.org.au

