

THE TRAILWALKER

ISSUE No. 56

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF
THE HEYSEN TRAIL AND OTHER WALKING TRAILS INC.

DECEMBER 1995

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*Season's
Greetings*



*Merry
Christmas*

The Trail Walker

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Peter Hill	Vice President
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Ian Jays	
Rosemary Hutter	
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Trail Maintenance

Ian Jays plus Section Leaders listed elsewhere

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Richard Schmitz

Walking

Sadie Leupold - convenor

Colin Edwards

Marlene Edwards

Ric Trutwin

Jon Selby

Mick Thomas

Greening

Vacant (Sadly)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well another year has passed, and it seems to have sprinted, not walked. That seems to be the way of things as one approaches use by date, not that I take much notice of them anyway, having been brought up on a farm and learning at an early age to use ones own judgement and common sense as to whether something is good or bad. Sadly we seem to be living in an age when many of our leaders in government seem to be lacking in the ability to make such judgements.

However, to return to more relevant topics, I believe the Friends can be proud of their progress during the year, with increased levels of trail maintenance activities, training for same, and record numbers of people participating in well organised walks. The list of people to thank for organising and running the above activities is too long to include, but I am sure everybody actively involved knows who they are.

We are still in need of more help in the office, and particularly need somebody to take overall responsibility for the production of Trailwalker.

I wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and look forward to your involvement in our activities in the coming year.

Arthur Smith - President

The Trail Walker

MEMBERSHIP

It's nearly the end of the year and that means two things. Firstly members subscriptions are nearly due (but only for those members who have a 31.12.95 expiry date).

If you are unsure of when your membership expires, there are three ways to check:-

1. Check the expiry date on the back of your membership card
2. Ring the office to check, or
3. Check the address label on your Trailwalker envelope.

When looking at your label you will see the following information:-

A1234,31.12.99 (Your membership number and expiry date)

Mr. T. Walker (Your name)

W/Shop, (Indicates if you have completed a Maintenance Workshop)

12 Walkers Way

Adelaide 5000 (Your address)

Secondly I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members and their families a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Richard Schmitz
Membership Officer

NEW MEMBERS

SINGLE

Kylie Warnock
Jennifer Thomson
Yvonne Turton
Guy Cundell
Barbara McCallum
Jan Hilditch
Margaret Wade
Nigel Pratt
Laima Guscia

Anna Lister
Geoff Pollard
John McCarthy
Paul Dawe
Sandra Obst
Ken Bragg
E.A. Sawyer
Kay Pickles

FAMILY

Bill & Floortje Costain
Phil & Barbra Lardner
N.V. Strawbridge

ORGANISATION

S.A. Road Runners Club

The Trail Walker

MAINTENANCE VOLUNTEER SECTION LEADERS

1.	Cape Jervis to Boat Harbour Creek	Steven Harkness H 384 3530
2.	Boat Harbour Creek to Back Valley Road	Peter Hill H 085 565213
3.	Back Valley Road to Moon Hill	Thelma Anderson H 278 4420
4.	Moon Hill to Hindmarsh Tiers Road	Paul Carruthers H 336 1889
5.	Hindmarsh Tiers Rd to Black Fellows Creek Rd	Bob Verrall & Jim Pearce H 382 8577 H 276 5190 W 372 5170 W 372 5169
6.	Black Fellows Creek Rd to Glen Bold	Stephen Boyle H 391 1696
7.	Glen Bold to Piccadilly	Jamie Shephard & Nev Southgate H 331 8107 H 364 2191 W 373 1422
8.	Piccadilly to Norton Summit	Liz O'Shea (WEA Ramblers) H 352 1636
9.	Norton Summit to Cudlee Creek	Shirley Tavender / Arthur Smith H 337 3692 H 261 6746
10.	Cudlee Creek to Bethany	Doug Leane H 43 3388
11.	Bethany to Peters Hill	Joyce Heinjus H 085 252054 W 085 622022 Fax 085 252271
12.	Peters Hill to Logans Gap	Michael Tilley H 396 4363
13.	Logans Gap to Spalding	Hugh Greenhill - Burra Branch H 088 438115
14.	Spalding to Hughs Gap	Ray Griffith Mobile 015 973 955
15.	Hughs Gap to Mt. Brown	Ray Griffith (Inspection only)
16.	Mt. Brown to Hawker	Vacant
17.	Hawker to Wilpena	Vacant
18.	Wilpena to Parachilna	Shayne Reschke - Leigh Creek Branch H 086 752885 W 086 754332
	Mt. Lofty Walking Trails Barossa Section 2 & 3	Michael Southren H 263 0791 Mobile 019 678205
Project Officer		Ian Jays Office 212 6299 H 356 2220

TRAIL MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

Two more months have passed by and brought us to the end of the Walking Season. For the many volunteer trail maintenance workers and Section Leaders a well earned rest over the festive season, restoring lost calories to convert into potential energy for next year!!

The **dedicated trail maintenance projects** have been busy ones, in both **October and November**.

On the first weekend in **October**, Section Leader Liz O'Shea ably assisted by her team of WEA Ramblers were busy at Horsnell Gully Conservation Park. Under Liz's leadership they completed the previously started re-route at Rockdale Hill. This section is now open, by-passing the badly eroded old section, now closed off to allow for revegetation.

The same group were also busy trail clearing early in November between Giles Corner at Norton Summit and the staircase to the south. The path had become badly overgrown with bracken that impeded and hindered easy access for walkers.

The first weekend of **November** saw work carried out in Section Leader Steven Harkness area, Cape Jervis to Boat Harbour Beach.

Steven led a work group of eight volunteers. These included Susan Dupuis, Valerie North, Michael Southren, Colin Biggs, Julian Monfries, Peter Hill and myself handling transport and logistics.

A lot was achieved over the two days, we worked between Cape Jervis up to and just past Marrano Creek, in this scenic coastal part of the trail. Approximately ten kilometres of trail were way marked with new permapine posts and direction logo's. Two stiles were installed and a Heysen Trail finger board leading to a Long Distance Trail Sign were set up adjacent to the Cape Jervis information bay, on top of the carpark bank. This particular area and the Fisheries Beach section which have easy road access are unfortunately subject to vandalism, so continual maintenance is required.

The efforts were appreciated by a group of Bushwalkers from NSW who passed us by on the second day. They had started out from Cape Jervis on the Saturday and said they could have saved the cost of a Map, we advised them to hang on to it, for they were about to enter the unknown!!

Michael Tilley, Section Leader for the area Peters Hill to Logans Gap has been particularly busy. Since the last dedicated maintenance weekend at Peters Hill, Michael has continued way marking and clearing this section on and up in to the Tothill Ranges.

Doug Leane and his group of ARPA helpers have been extremely busy during the season. Among their many achievements they have installed over 41 two step stiles with support posts, built a bridge over a small creek in the Warren Conservation Park and performed a lot more needed maintenance in the Cudlee Creek to Bethany area.

Its hard to define all the hard work put in by the Section Leaders as the task is continuous and on going, from inspection to routine maintenance.

The Trail Walker

Overview. It's been a successful year which has seen seven **Practical Trails Workshops** conducted in the grounds of the Recreation Centre at Mylor, in the Adelaide Hills. Over seventy members who have volunteered their services to Trail Work have attended these workshops. The last for this year was held on Sunday 12th November 1995, when eleven members attended.

We have established a group of active volunteer trailworkers. These members have been involved in trail maintenance and some greening activities from Cape Jervis to Burra in the mid north. From this nucleus of members some have gone on to become Section Leaders, replacing Leaders who have retired for various reasons. If the inertia and momentum can be continued, we will be able to offer continuous improvement to the Heysen and Mt. Lofty walking trails. This will be by training new members in practical trail maintenance to support the established Trail Section Leaders, by the volunteer members dedicated to the further maintenance and development of the trails.

The eight dedicated maintenance weekends held this year, have seen over one thousand work hours put in to the trails. This does not include the continual efforts of Section Leaders and mid week work, put in by other volunteers.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you all, for your support and the fulfilment I have had, working with such a good team, well done.

Happy Christmas and New Year.

Ian Jays (Project Officer)



*Section Leader Doug Leane and ARPA volunteers
near Mt. Gould.*

The Trail Walker

VOLUNTEER MAINTENANCE WORK

At the last meeting of Council, a resolution was passed which clarified certain matters in relation to persons involved in maintenance work with the Friends.

It was resolved that all Section Leaders must be financial members of the Friends and must complete a maintenance workshop. It is not necessary for volunteer maintenance workers to be financial members, however, a list of names of all workers (whether members or not), must be kept for insurance purposes.

Volunteer maintenance work is a rewarding contribution to the activities of the Friends from which volunteers get a great deal of satisfaction and pleasure. It is not arduous and generally results in a fun day out. Workers in this activity are always welcome and their contribution is much appreciated. No particular skills are required as a prerequisite and one-day maintenance workshops are held from time to time at which prospective workers can not only "learn the ropes" but also get a feel for what is involved if they are feeling a bit uncertain about participating. If you wish to be registered as having an interest in this activity, please advise the office on telephone 212 6299.

Arthur Smith
President

A MEMORABLE SOCIAL MEETING

The eighty plus members who attended the recent social meeting were treated to an enthralling illustrated presentation by Dr. Don Hopgood.

As well as being a former Minister responsible for our water supply, Don has privately studied the Murray Darling Basin over many years, and produced many interesting facts, figures and comparisons with other major river systems in the world.

He also spoke of the many threats to the Murray Darling system, on which we are so dependant, and what can be done to preserve the system.

His apolitical talk received spontaneous applause at its conclusion, and we all adjourned to a convivial supper.

Arthur Smith
President

The Trail Walker

ALDINGA SCRUB ECO WALK

On 9th July, sixteen walkers turned out for a pleasantly relaxed five hour walk through the Aldinga Scrub, to Sellicks Beach and back through the Washpool. It was the second time this eco-walk was offered and proved to be as successful as the inaugural 1994 version.

The scrub, a state Conservation Park, is the last remnant of sclerophyll coastal vegetation of its type remaining on the Adelaide Plains and it contains a unique range of flora including the rare Coral Lichen. It consists of approximately 200 hectares and its extremely fragile nature is the constant concern of many local residents who see the advance of Southern urban sprawl now marching past Moana Beach. Host John Lawrie, a former Willunga Councillor, informed the group of points of significance and major species, also mentioning the recent strategic planning process undergone by the Willunga Council which has placed a high priority on the preservation of the scrub. However the conflict between local conservationists and development interests is ongoing and vigilance is part of the green agenda in Willunga Basin.

Having tracked through the scrub, the walk then proceeded in fine cool conditions along the beach to Sellicks ramp where lunch was taken before returning via the Washpool. This currently languishing natural water feature has an interesting history, being a previous major wetland that was artificially drained about 50 years ago to allow access to farmland. In the late 80's a development oriented council sought to convert the degraded area into an island marina which raised the ire of many local folk, resulting in intense political confrontation that ended with the state government's veto of the proposal. Currently there has just been convened a working party with representatives from local, state and federal governments as well as local environmental and resident groups which is an exciting development, hopefully guaranteeing the reinstatement of the wetland as a major environmental feature including boardwalks etc, for the benefit of visitors and local people.

The walk concluded with a second route through the scrub back to base followed by a Devonshire Tea at "Serendipity" courtesy of John and Imelda Lawrie. This holiday house (see advertisement) enjoys a magnificent view over the scrub to the coast and the beautiful Willunga escarpment.

John Lawrie

SERENDIPITY
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RESTFUL WEEKENDS

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*This holiday house at 58 Bristol St Aldinga Beach overlooks the Aldinga Scrub to the Coast & the Willunga Escarpment.
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\$80 per weekend
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AS NEW \$100

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WALKING REPORT

The Walking Committee have spent considerable time over the past month planning our 1996 programme. We intend to start off with our three summer walks during the months of January, February and March. These are listed separately in the Trailwalker.

Bookings are essential as they all include a meal. Please let the Office know when you book for these walks whether you will be dining as well as walking as we need to let the restaurants know.

Mark Darter led a beginners backpacking weekend in October. We were fortunate to have excellent weather and a gem of a camping spot picked out by Mark to pitch our tents on the Saturday night. All the backpackers felt the challenge a worthwhile experience and we hope they continue to do more of this type of walking in the future. Thankyou Mark for your leadership over this weekend.

During the Adelaide Cup weekend 18th to 20th May 1996 we will be journeying up to Oraparinna Station between Hawker and Blinman. Colin Edwards will be leading us on walks in this area and we hope to include one day walking in Wilpena Pound with the challenge of climbing St. Mary's Peak. Accommodation will be in the Bunkhouse which is the old shearers quarters at Oraparinna. Bookings will be confirmed on receipt of a deposit to the Office.

The 1996 walking season will be officially opened on Sunday 31st March. This event is to be held at Sundews in the Onkaparinga National Park. We will be joining other clubs on this day and walks will be organised for the morning and walkers will return to Sundews at 12.30 for a communal lunch.

Some of our Introductory Walkers have asked for more walks to be put on as they feel one walk a month does not prepare them for the more arduous day walks. In order to do this we need more leaders. If anyone is interested in leading a series of introductory walks in 1996 could you please register your interest at the Office. We intend to put on the usual one introductory walk a month in 1996 but we can reassess this if we have some more help with leadership.

As the year draws to a close I would like to thank everyone for their support over the past year. Many people have made new friends and shared enjoyable experiences over the past twelve months. Our volunteer helpers in the Office have been fantastic. There are many people who have given their time freely and willingly to assist in making the walking programmes smooth running possible. A big thankyou to Bradley Howell, Ric Trutwin and Lyn Condon whose help in the Office has been most admirable. Thankyou also to all the members who led walks for us over the past year.

On behalf of the Walking Committee I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

Sadie Leupold

THANK YOU

The Friends would like to thank the **Scout Outdoor Centre** for their generous donation of two pairs of Kosciusko Wilderness Wear socks as door prizes at our recent Social meeting on December 7.

Richard Schmitz
Publicity Committee

The Trail Walker

SUMMER WALKS PROGRAMME

"Bogong Boys" Walk

January 26th - Friday - Australia Day

Leaders Colin Edwards, Ric Trutwin, Bradley Howell, Arthur Smith, Michael Fretwell, George Driscoll.

Walk to commence at 5 pm followed by dinner at the Waterfall Gully Chalet.

"Onkaparinga Odyssey"

February 25th - Sunday

Leader Jon Selby

Late afternoon walk in the Onkaparinga Estuary area followed by dinner at the Port Noarlunga Hotel.

"A Rich Harvest"

March 23rd - Sunday

Leader Ric Trutwin

Morning walk in the parklands of Adelaide stopping at pubs and other places of interest. Lunch at Sumptuous Food and Catering, North Adelaide.

Bookings essential for all the above walks.

Phone (08) 212 6299

AUTUMN AT ORAPARINNA 18th to 20th May 1996

ACCOMMODATION IN THE BUNKHOUSE AT ORAPARINNA STATION FLINDERS RANGES

The Walking Committee of the Friends of the Heysen and Other Walking Trails will be conducting walks in this area during the Adelaide Cup weekend in May 1996. Colin Edwards will be our leader. Bookings will be confirmed with a deposit payable to the Friends Office, 10 Pitt Street, Adelaide. For more information phone (08) 212 6299.

MORE THANKS

I experienced an impressive week of customer service recently. Thanks to Jeff at the **Scout Outdoor Centre**. As well as adjusting my newly purchased backpack, he also fine-tuned by wife's old pack even though it had been purchased elsewhere.

Rossi Boots also did the right thing. Poor quality soles on my shoes were replaced but the replacement would not properly adhere to the shoe. By the second time the sole came off the shoes were almost through their second season and no longer a current model. I was impressed therefore to be offered as a replacement the current model for a nominal amount. Thanks Rossi.

Alvin Whittle

SPROUT WALKS THE HUME & HOVELL TRACK

Following the completion of the Heysen Trail in August I set out, accompanied by Gunther Schmitz, to walk the Hume & Hovell Track during October. Having finished this track I feel I can compare the two tracks and pass on my thoughts. I know a group is doing the H & H next year and any enquiries of the route from Yass to Woomargama is welcomed. The following review is my personal thoughts; others may not agree but --,

Basically the two tracks are unlike as peas in a pod. The Hume & Hovell Track, expressed simply, wanders down the inland side of the Snowy Mountains from Yass to near Albury, some 350 to 400 kms. In terrain, climate, growth, facilities & construction it is definitely different from our Heysen Trail.

First impression is that a LOT of money has been spent on it, 1.3 million initial grant. The design and construction is unbelievable - top marks to those involved. Full use has been made of natural and also existing man made features. As well as the usual roads and fire tracks they have used old mining terraces as walkways and in most cases where one has to walk on the hillside it has been benched to give a flat track. I'm still trying to find out how this was done! The route is clearly marked, signposting is superb, virtually every major turn has a wooden sign pointing the way. Logos can plainly be seen, although like all trails there could be more. On the southern section they have a plate with the distance in kms, from the centre trailhead. The stiles get full marks - they are a standard design, strong, right height, and have a handrail. In wet areas an extensive use of corduroys, walkways, and various bridges is made. We only had to bypass one ford due to the bridge being washed out just after being installed. There is only one small hut, bare, but several campsites, flat ground with adjacent water, toilet, tables, and BBQ. Also there are 4 trailheads with shelter sheds with electric light and free electric barbie, water, toilets, tables and benches, sinks and hot water on tap, (no shower). A series of log books are along the track and it's surprising how many interstate people walk it.

As for the walk. The whole route is actually isolated as, unlike the Heysen Trail, it passes through NO towns; only going within 8 - 10 kms of Tumut and Tumbarumba. So a backup vehicle is a must. (Much to my chagrin). The northern section, down to the Tumut/Cooma road is over some steep (very), rocky terrain in isolated country. The remainder is a mixture of ridges, pine forests, pasture and roads.

Birdlife, if you have the time, and inclination to spend the time to get in there, is prolific. In Bago Forest, in particular, the trees and ferns are "magnifique le grand". I've seen big trees, but here the eucalypts take the breath away. At this time of year all the creeks were running well and here was an unexpected disappointment. All along the track you could hear water running, cascading, and falling, but could rarely see it. In the old mining areas the explanatory signs pointed out places, pieces and races, but you couldn't see them. The reason? Blackberries are everywhere and choking out everything. Where farmers have sprayed dead canes are lying bare, ready to latch into the unwary. In only one place had they been burnt - it certainly cleaned up the selected areas - but I wouldn't take bets that the greens hadn't got stuck into him.

The Trail Walker

The maps are in a guide book. Both of us agreed that the format is too large for packs; it got wet and stuck together; the maps are too small, unclear (compared with our equivalent) being in black and white, cluttered with comments of the old explorers and type of growth etc, while lacking detail of heights, features and location points.

I expected views from mountain tops but I must admit I was badly disappointed. As a whole the track gives very little in worthwhile, outstanding views. In no way would I classify it as a bushwalk. To answer the question bluntly:-

Would I walk the Heysen Trail again? Definitely yes, I intend to do it the other way at least.

Would I walk the Hume and Hovell Track again? Although I enjoyed the experience and the physical challenge involved, I definitely have no desire to do it again, - I wouldn't waste my time!

So South Australia, wake up to the fact that we have a far better walking trail here than this so-called, (quote) "perhaps the most extensive walking track in Australia" (unquote). In this area we are definitely in front of the "premier state" and should let people know so!

Sprout

Any enquiries regarding this, or info re the Heysen Trail water spots (I have a record of water locations recently updated by info passed on) or general info forward on to John Crouch, Stansbury 5582.

ENCOUNTER OF THE UNEXPECTED KIND

It was dark and after the usual starcheck we had turned into the sleeping bag. After about twenty minutes I heard a sound, - "cherchuff, cherchuff". Following ten more minutes curiosity got the better of me and I unzipped the tent zips, "zzzz,zzzz,zzzz, SILENCE. Then it was there again. With torch in hand I eased myself half out the door and waited for it to begin again. "Cherchuff, cherchuff,, cherchuff". Aha, it had to be a possum in the tree six feet to the tent side, so I aimed the beam half up the trunk and switched on. Nothing. Down the trunk and out to the right. Nothing, it had beaten me so I started to reenter the tent. In doing so I swung the light along the side of the tent, and got one helluva shock. There it was, and I found myself virtually nose to nose, with less than a metre away from a full grown wombat. At my calling out to Gunther he apparently thought two was too many so he slowly backed off, turned around and nonchalantly waddled off up the rise. There was plenty of time for Gunther to spot him and for us to make comment. After turning in again it was only ten minutes before Cherchuff was back, giving me several more minutes to watch his feeding, this being the noise I had heard. This unexpected encounter was one of the highlights of the Hume and Hovell Track walk, for not too many walkers get nose to nose with a wombat!

Sprout

WALKING REPORT: BUCKARINGA GORGE, SOUTH TO DUTCHMANS STERN

This is probably the most isolated part of the Heysen Trail and very awkward to access for day walkers, so this current "update" may be of help to other day walkers who have yet to approach this section.

The Trail Walker

We have been gradually making our way north on the trail from our starting point at Cape Jervis, (some years ago I would add, as we can only do sections during holiday breaks) and we have already done day walks using the 'car at each end' method. By early October this year, we were ready to tackle what was looking to be the most challenging part of the trail so far.

The overall walking distance for this section is probably around 45 km with the only possible midway access point we could see on the map being at Eyre Depot, which happens to be private land. It is also fairly remote - an 80 km drive west from Quorn via Stirling North.

Following up on some helpful advice from Ian Jays at The Friends HQ, and Bronte Leak at the Resource Centre, we contacted the landowner and were kindly offered a key to open the locked gates to Eyre Depot, without which we would not have been able to get anywhere near the trail as it is a long way back from the public road.

The night before the walk, we left a car at the Dutchmans Stern car park, then early next morning four of us set off very early from our base at Quorn on the 80 km drive round to Eyre Depot. The weather was overcast on this first day and a steady drizzle began to fall as the day wore on.

After gaining access through the gates we were able to park our car right alongside the Heysen on an open stretch of ground.

The first stretch of trail south from Eyre Depot was easy going, following a fenceline across country at the base of the hills and on to Thompsons Gap. Excellent views abound in all directions on this massive open landscape.

Soon after Thompsons Gap, we began a steady climb up into the ranges. Here a new four-wheel-drive track has been carved out of the hillside, making the going a lot easier at first. (We assumed it to be fairly new as it was not marked on the map).

Then the trail gradually descended into Dry South Creek, which wasn't at all living up to its name on the day, as the steady rain had ensured a constant flow of water along its length. The rain hadn't been heavy enough to cause any real discomfort however, but had in fact made our walk far more enjoyable by really bringing the beautiful valleys to 'life'

After a long trek following the creek we eventually joined the four-wheel-drive track marked on the map which we knew would lead us to the Dutchmans Stern car park where we had left our other car the night before. All up, it had been only six hours walking for us that day. Including breaks and photo stops etc, but we knew that the next day would be the real challenge as the distance would be greater.

The following morning it was an early start again as we now drove north from Quorn to Buckaringa Gorge with the intention of walking across to Eyre Depot, where our car had stayed overnight from the previous walk. To allow plenty of time for the distance we started walking at 6.30 am (and we do this for pleasure?).

Unlike the previous day's start, the trail was arduous for the first few kilometres as it climbed continually with rocky and uneven ground underfoot. When we reached the lower slopes of Mount Arden, although still ascending, the walking became somewhat easier across the open grazing land, eventually following a four-wheel-drive track to the summit. On this section we startled a rather large eagle, hidden from us in a hollow. It had apparently been dining off the carcass of a feral goat which had managed to get its rear legs entangled in a fence wire, and must have died a slow and painful death.

Finally we reached the summit of Mount Arden at 10.30 am, and here we had a well-earned morning tea-break beneath the radio mast, absorbing the spectacular views all around us.

The Trail Walker

From the mountain the trail descended into what is known as the Mount Arden Picnic Grounds, and we believe that Intrepid Tours, who operate out of Quorn, are now able to bring people in to this point in their four-wheel-drive vehicles along a newly cut section of road. This may be a good alternative for walkers who would like to bring the walk into three days instead of two.

The trail then followed this new(?) four-wheel-drive track for some distance (once again, not marked on the map) before eventually following a creek bed for a good many kilometres. We were taken by the beauty of this section whilst watching out for the waterfalls which the blurb on the back of the trail map had warned us about. We negotiated the first two waterfalls as directed and reached the final waterfall, at the place where the trail leaves the creek some 9 km downstream. Here the creek bed drops some 10 metres quite suddenly and would be quite spectacular when in flood; the trail is well marked with an easy detour to the left as you approach the waterfall. We then found ourselves walking along an old mining track which eventually led us back to our car at Eyre Depot.

This had been a full day's walk as we arrived at the car around five o'clock in the afternoon, about a ten and a half hour trek altogether, with breaks. Add to this the 80 km drive back around to Quorn, and then north to Buckarings to collect the other car, and as you can imagine, it was a full yet very satisfying day.

We must state that we used only conventional cars at both ends and we were lucky in that the weather was kind, as heavy rain could have meant not being able either to access the starting points or retrieve the cars afterwards, especially on the track to Eyre Depot. Check the local weather forecast if you don't have off-road vehicles.

Do inform the local police if you leave a vehicle overnight near the trail, or at least leave a note behind the windscreen saying where you've gone and when you expect to be back.

We're now looking forward to going further north when the next walking season begins, and hopefully completing the trail in the near future.



Ron & Glennys Warren

*Ron and Glennys Warren
at the top of Mt. Arden*

The Trail Walker

WALKING THE HEYSEN TRAIL WITH JOYCE AND SID OSBORNE

Joyce and I have always been keen on walking, mainly on holidays when in some new area, but did not take it seriously until joining a bush walking club soon after it was formed early in 1984. Recently we completed the Heysen Trail walk with a party of 16 from our Club. Nine of us had walked the whole trail in its entirety.

The trail commences at Cape Jervis and finishes at Parachilna Gorge and is 1200 kms long, being the longest walking trail in Australia. Because of fire hazards and other dangers some of the trail is closed to walkers from 30 October to April. This greatly restricts the time available for walking.

Our party took 55 walking days. Ages ranged from 62 to 72 with the average being 68 years. One of our members is blind and has a Guide dog, Okon, a cross between a labrador and a poodle, on both parent's sides, and is therefore a 'double labrapoodle'. The dog did a wonderful job, but naturally there were times, particularly over dangerous and perilous stretches such as washaways, exceedingly rough, jagged areas and the like when our friend had to have a 'sighted guide'. He was a former runner and keen bush walker before his affliction, and his determination, attitude and courage commanded our greatest admiration.

Due to club commitments of two or three camps (often interstate) each year, the group of 16 adopted the practice of walking the Trail for a week at a time. We would make a base camp at a Youth hostel, caravan park or cabins in the area we were to walk, each participant getting their own meals and cut lunch for the day's walk. The next base camp would be further north until we reached Hawker where, after one week's walking, we moved to a sheep and cattle station 59 kms north. Here we occupied the shearers' quarters and had full board. We reasoned that after 'doing for ourselves' the whole way we would indulge in a little luxury for the last conquering week. The meals were excellent, the variety of meats, breads, fillings cakes and fruit provided each night enabled walkers to make their choice of lunch for the next day.

During the walk we climbed countless mountains, the highest two being Mt. Bryan, 935m, and Mt. Remarkable at 995m. The exceptionally bare Mt. Bryan was climbed on a terribly wet day into gale force winds making it a hazardous climb. The Trail follows through National Parks, Pine Forests (Kuitpo, Mount Crawford and Wirrabara), vineyards of the Barossa and historic mining areas of Echunga, Kapunda and Burra. For much of their 30kms length we followed the old (1901) stone intake channels leading into Bundaleer Reservoir near Spalding and were often in sight of the more recent Whyalla-Morgan pipeline. Truly a diversification of scenery with its cropping, sheep and cattle country along the way.

Many ruins were passed along the whole track giving evidence of early pioneers overstocking, especially in the northern areas. This was brought about by the then authorities (originally from England) allocating small areas of land similar to those existing in England which were entirely inappropriate for the harsh conditions, including droughts, of the Australian outback.

The Heysen Trail walk was a most enjoyable challenge which was successfully accomplished without any major mishap.

Sid Osborne

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