



ONKAPARINGA PARKWATCH

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF ONKAPARINGA PARK INC.

Note opinions and commentary in this newsletter are not necessarily the general opinion of the FOOP membership. Any complaints should in the first instance be directed to the author.

Website: <http://www.communitywebs.org/OnkaparingaParks/>

June

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

The beginning of winter is officially here. I suspect I am not the only one who thought it came somewhat earlier. As we age and my birth certificate seems to be suggesting that is the case, it seems to be that it feels colder more quickly. But again could it be my imagination?

In any organisation there will be times when something is said or done that we don't agree with. If that is the case, I believe we should have the courage of our convictions and express how we feel about what was said or done. FOOP members are mature enough to accept that we don't always get it right and can learn from others. If you have something that concerns you, please make your concerns known.



As part of the monitoring of the Hooded Plovers that I do locally, I have also been researching one of their most serious predators the fox - *Vulpes vulpes*, and have found that whilst foxes are a serious threat to ground [beach] nesting birds such as the 'hoodies'; they have evolved into an incredible animal that as a species I now have a grudging respect for. One interesting correlation is that one of its main preys is mice. And as there have been plenty of mice during late summer and early autumn, the local foxes visit the 'hoodies' area less frequently. The recent release of the RHDV1 K5 Korean variant of the calici virus will significantly reduce rabbit populations. Rabbits do well then foxes also do well; does this mean foxes will suffer and start to prey more on birds such as the 'hoodies'? Don't know the answers but worthy of analysing what occurs?

Why do politicians at all levels endorse and promote petitions when they are sending mixed messages? For example, some are supporting expansion of open leash-free dog areas when councils have regulated set hours? Regulations are usually for a good reason such as protecting threatened or endangered native fauna. I think our elected representatives are displaying crass populism. As I commented last month, they just don't get it. Why are National, Recreation and Conservation reserves established? To protect vulnerable flora and fauna, so why propose dogs, bikes and horses in these spots?

I suspect that quite a few of you would have seen the 'SA with Cosi' episode on Sunday 14th May in which both the National and Recreation Parks featured. Call me cynical if you will, but the message being pushed in these 'infomercials' is bike and horse riding activities. I would dearly love to see the brief given to the presenter of that show. How much did it cost and does this cost form part of the promised funding for improving visitor facilities?

On a recent working bee it was very evident to those present that the deer and goat populations are damaging flora and in some parts erosion is promoted by what the animals do. Both species of these ferals are rubbing on and pushing over many shrubs, and the goats are foraging under the dry grass looking for emerging tender young shoots of native and exotic species. One area in the 'Springs' location is very much affected by goats.

A number of Thursday working bee participants were joined by some DEWNR and NRM staff and the district ecologist Anthony Abley to look at the Chapel Hill project site and to gain some advice on current re-vegetation work. It is pleasing to note that our activities are 'on the money'. Anthony provided advice on species and spacing of plantings with specific emphasis on 'grassy woodland' habitats. Thanks to Steve, Jodie, Elisa and Anthony.

Along with other FOOP members, Jan and I recently attended the 'Swampfest' planting day at the Stipiturus Conservation Park. It is exciting to see an extremely well managed restoration project. One of the consultants advising DEWNR/NRM gave an outline of the physical work undertaken to change the hydrology of one of the few remaining true Fleurieu swamps. This work will see more habitat for the endangered Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu Wren. With due regard to C.J. Dennis "I dips me lid" to all involved, it brings a smile to one's face.

We have commenced our planting programme and it is noticeable how dry the sub-soil is. Let's hope we get some decent rain soon.

Graham Thomas

"Like music and art, love of nature is a common language that can transcend political or social boundaries."
— Jimmy Carter

FRIENDS OF ONKAPARINGA PARK INC

PATRON: Dr B HARDY AO

Incorporating The ONKAPARINGA RECREATION PARK and ONKAPARINGA NATIONAL PARK.

Proudly a member of THE FRIENDS OF PARKS INC.,

Chairperson: Graham Thomas Deputy Chair: Michael Whitaker

Secretary/Treasurer: : Andrew McKinnon 8386 2393

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

The Secretary, Friends of Onkaparinga Park Inc C/- 27 Kym St., Port Noarlunga Sth 5167.

E mail: mackins@tpg.com.au



From the Editor 's Desk.

Send **all** articles via: billandgill@yahoo.com.au or by snail mail to 27 Marston Drive, Morphett Vale 5162 or hand deliver to Gill or me. Mobile 0427 306758

In early 1987 FOOP was on its way but we were generally ignorant of all things to do with conservation nonetheless our interest had been piqued by one of our children's teachers—Grant Good. Grant was a primary school teacher who used his interest in conservation as a teaching tool with great effect. FOOP over the years has benefitted greatly from people with similar backgrounds (eg Sherry Malcolm).

We found that conservation knowledge in the group was general with some knowing more than others although I suspect we were all working on a "wing and a prayer" to some extent.

Conservation was becoming a big ticket item politically with an emphasis on "bringing back the bush" but not everyone in the community was on board. Our group was.

We were keen, eager, but relatively ignorant re conservation so whatever the ranger told us we accepted almost without question. On the ranger's side this was the first time he had a willing, if inexperienced, volunteer group and this was the case right across the state.

For this we can all thank a bloke called Dene Cordes. Overlooking the politics that did cause the occasional issue the relationship worked well. It depended/depends on mutual respect between all parties and indeed individuals. None of us have all the answers.

As the group became more involved conservation knowledge, for some, was acquired at a rapid rate and with that knowledge came questions and at times differences of opinion as to how to do whatever was being done at the time. So names of plants changed, methods of controlling or even eradication of undesirable plants were considered, tried and retained if it was doing the job.

For instance olive trees were and are a major problem and various methods have been used. To date the only method I think works most effectively is bulldozing; and I am not even sure that is 100% effective. I don't think any past or current method is working that well. It's heartbreaking to have to work on a plant that someone has diligently tried to kill previously because the method did not work. We experienced this recently on a Tuesday morning so in my opinion we need to keep looking for yet another method. Bill Hayes' rather drastic "agent orange" method sounds attractive at the moment. The problem is that it would kill everything so not such a good idea.

I am of the opinion that we probably have more olive trees than ever, especially in some areas. We are even seeing them in places where most of us thought the battle had been won. I suspect that with the removal of the huge goat population the olive has come into its own. I don't want the goats back and the deer can go "as soon as" but they did "control" the olives—sort of.

A problem is that to many members of the public a tree is a tree and there will be some that see the eradication of any plant as a desecration of the environment. This has been impressed upon me a number of times by people from all parts of the community.

I stated last month the State deliberately quarantined parcels of land for the purposes of recreation and conservation and having a lovely Pleasant day out (PDO) in Belair last Friday, courtesy of Jim and Fae Trueman, I was reminded that the idea of parks has changed over the years.

The first parcel of land was what we now call Belair National Park. Belair was dedicated in 1891, making it one of the oldest National parks in the world.

While there is a lot of native flora there are also many areas deliberately planted out to non native flora and proudly so. We saw cherry trees, sequoia, pepper trees and various pines on our PDO (highly recommended) which made me think that the park was more a Botanical/history garden than Conservation park. Especially as there are tennis courts and ovals as well.

But this is/was what the general population wanted. I doubt little has changed since that time so far as the general public is concerned.

Whether we like it or not politicians will almost always reflect the general population's desires.

Conservation in 1987 was a hot topic and the general feeling at the time was that the Australian bush had been ravished (if not raped) and the mood was to undo the wrongs of the past. FOOP had a two day planting event in the early 1990's and in two days we planted about 8000 plants by hand because the public came in droves. Many years later with the same advertising we were not overwhelmed.

Even Belair National Park became a minor battle ground where, in a burst of conservation zeal, old pine trees were removed as part of a program to return the park to its true roots—conservation. The public were not impressed and the work on that project was quietly shelved.

We had Franklin river, marches on mining projects and a myriad other conservation issues also received public support but slowly the public mood changed. The mood changer was the economy. Vested interests were quick to point out that the green movement might be costing jobs.

Conservation became a dirty word with many business people because it got in the way of maximising profits by placing restrictions on how an enterprise could conduct its activities. My lot did flirt with triple bottom line accounting but even that has gone quiet.

Today with the world economy staggering a bit many people feel that if there is a choice between high minded conservation projects and job creating jobs the greenies can get S*****d. Politicians will eventually reflect this and enact legislation and funding accordingly.

I honestly believe that one day soon conservation will become a must do again. It has happened before. In the early 20th century native trees were favoured in city streets over non natives then the mood changed again and now we have old plane trees gracing the city rather than Australian flora.

Surprisingly because of Trump's decision some of the most forward thinking entrepreneurs have withdrawn support so perhaps the worm is turning again. They are pursuing green technology with zeal.

If we can get job creating conservation projects we may see conservation as the "new" in thing.

Here's a thought let's have a Department for removing olives or perhaps a large private company that gets paid to take on olive and weed control as a major project with jobs as a result.

Bill

PS., Does anyone have an interest in Accounting books. A little old but if you have a business student they may get some use from these -for free- books. They cover basic to very advanced bookkeeping, NPV management modelling, company and commercial law, oldish tax law and auditing techniques etc



SILVEREYE.....*Zosterops pinarochrous* ?
.....11-13cm.....common.....resident.....breeding

I have been away again for the past 2 weeks, this time taking in the wonders of Sth. Africa so have not ventured into the Park much of late. However I have squeezed in some walks around the Estuary and Gorge over the past few days, and as usual came across a number of birds types.

One I have seen in good numbers lately is the common Silvereye, often in the company of Red-browed Finches, eagerly harvesting seeds before the cold of Winter. Some will stay locally while others are busily putting on condition in readiness to move northerly to warmer climes. However they do seem quite common most of the year locally around the southern suburbs and the Onkaparinga Park.

Diet is mainly seed, small insects and grubs, plus both native and cultivated fruits if available. Many people may be well aware of them visiting gardens and taking just a few bites out of every fruit, an annoying habit leaving lots of blemished fruits. There are several sub species across Australia and offshore island territories, including those closer to Indonesia. Males and females look much alike, the female may be a little more paler in colour. Not unusual to see them in large flocks moving through the tree tops. Mostly olive green in colour with some variants of greys, yellows and browns but all have the very distinct bright white ring around the eye making identification easy.

Right now the Lerp insects are bursting from many of our Eucalypts, and often on my walks lately the sugary/starchy, white crystalline secretions are in profusion. Many of the pathways and footpaths at present have the appearance that a hail storm has occurred with so many match head size white Lerp cases that have fallen. Lerps are a vital and relished food source for many of our honeyeater birds foraging in the Gums. What this means is the numerous Honeyeater and Nectar loving birds are showing themselves in great numbers happily gorging on the sweet treats offered by the Lerps. A good time to keep an eye out for some of the more uncommon birds in the Park.

The wetlands are mostly dried up now, but still retaining moist patches which in turn are still keeping some of the water fowl active, and the off Red-bellied Black Snake on warmer days....watch your step.....they are out there.



VALE

Dianne Cordes

It is with great sadness that I advise the FOOP family that Dianne Cordes, a tireless volunteer and dear friend to many, passed away on Thursday 25/05/2017 at 7.40 pm.

Diane had a very long battle against cancer.

Dianne was a strong supporter of the Friends of Parks movement having been a President, Secretary, and Member of several groups, including the Friends of Old Government House, Friends of Belair National Park, Heritage Committee - just to name a few.

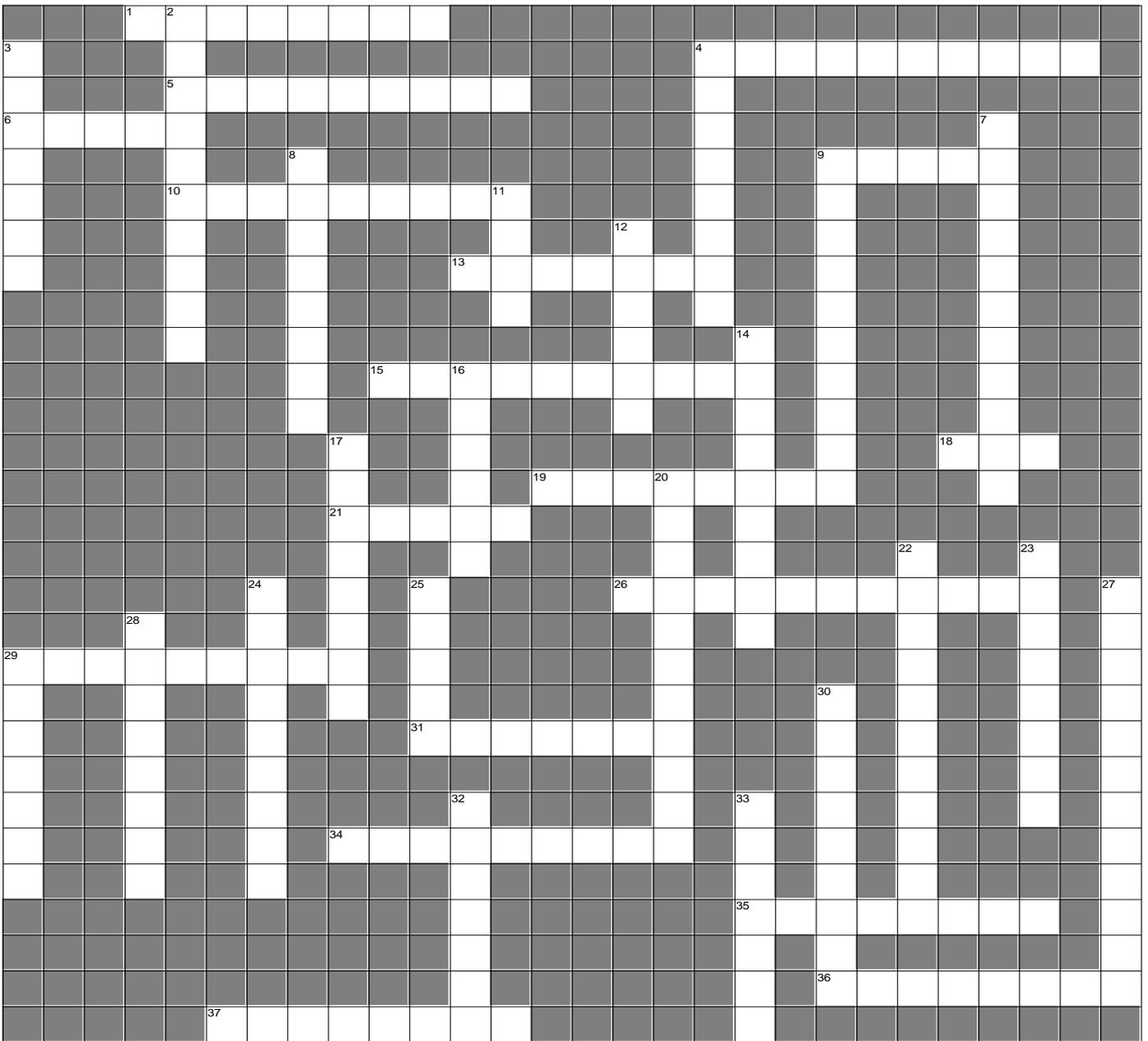
04 January 1944–25 May 2017.

A brief history of Dianne Cordes.

For those who don't know or failed to make a connection Dianne was the wife of Dene Cordes. Dene is rightly known as the father of the Friends of Parks movement in South Australia and given the support Dianne gave Dene over the years the Friends of Parks movement we just lost its mother.

Without these two people DEWNR would not have the friends groups attached to the many State parks.

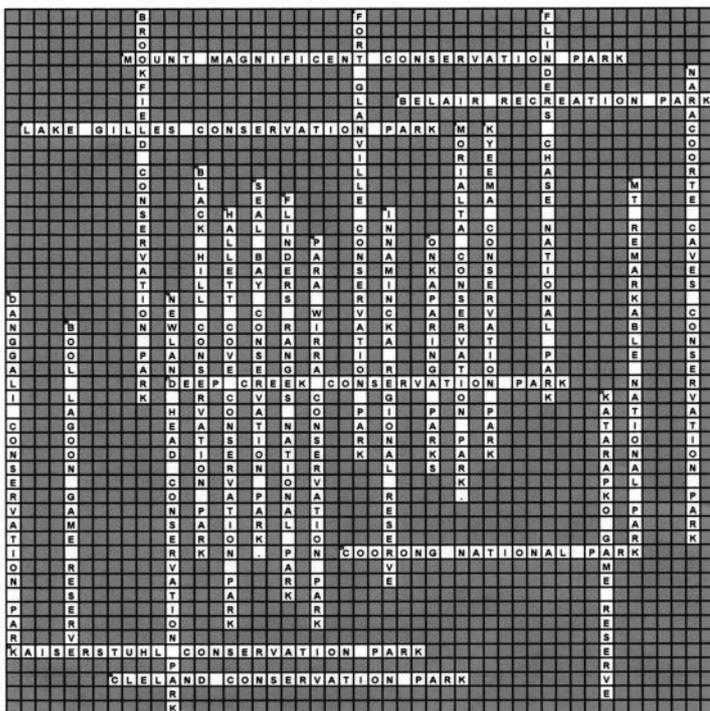
It was fitting that more than 200 people attended the funeral service to say goodbye and celebrate her life.



Last month's solution...

Parks of South Australia

W Heaven



Across

1. Laugh at (8)
4. Ownership (10)
5. Satyr, lothario (9)
6. Accumulate (5)
9. Sympathise (5)
10. Exculpation (9)
13. Attack (7)
15. Proxy (10)
18. Gentleman (3)
19. Court of three (8)
21. Possessor (5)
26. Show how (11)
29. Paternity (9)
31. Disespouse (7)
34. Contrition (9)
35. Convey (8)
36. Teetotalism (8)
37. Sensualist (8)

Down

2. Unlawfulness (10)
3. Litigation (7)
4. Real estate (8)
7. Counter punch (11)
8. Trial result? (8)
9. Laughing stock - for a calendar month (10)
11. Perdition (4)
12. Vestal (6)
14. Kept (9)
16. Conviction (6)
17. Creator (8)
20. Christian charity maybe (11)
22. Insobriety (11)
23. Giving (8)
24. Destroyer (9)
25. Progeny (5)
27. Temper (12)
28. Infirmary (8)
29. Bring forth (7)
30. Stuff -as a noun. (9)
32. Round about (7)
33. Exrophyagy (7)

FOOP Subscriptions Form



Subscriptions are due on the 1st November of each year.

(Financial year 1st November to 31st October)

New members who join after 1st September are covered for the year following.

Please accept my/our new/renewal subscription.

Name(s):.....

Address:.....

Telephone No......**Mob No.**.....

Email address.....

Please indicate if you would like to receive notices by email **Yes** **No**

Please indicate if you would like to receive newsletter by email **Yes** **No**

Please indicate if you would still like to receive newsletter by post **Yes** **No**

I am paying (please indicate the one you are paying)

Family Membership **\$15.00**

Single Membership **\$10.00**

Donation **\$.....** **(NB., Not tax deductible)**

Then detach this form and forward with payment to:

The Secretary/Treasurer, Mr A McKinnon, 27 Kym Street, Port Noarlunga South 5167

Payment can also be made to the Treasurer at general meetings held the first Tuesday of the month. (except January) Payment also by *electronic transfer*, details below.

EFT Details:

Account Title: Friends of Onkaparinga Park Inc.

BSB Number: 805-007A/C Number: 00707387 (Credit Union SA)

Reference: Last name, first name, "subs".

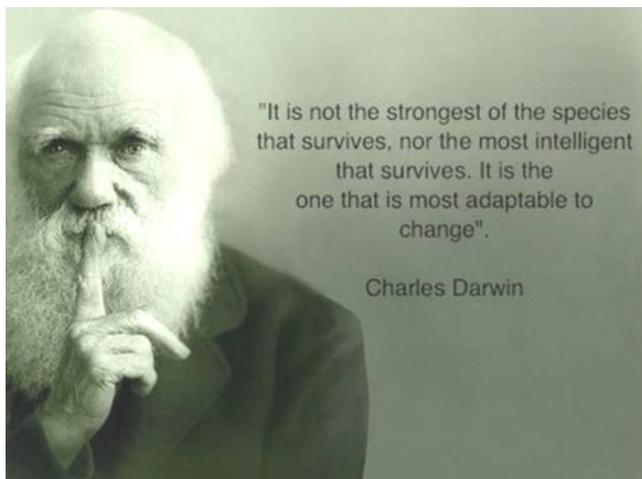
Send email to mackins@tpg.com.au to confirm payment.

If you are a **new member** please forward contact details as above.

Andy McKinnon

Secretary/Treasurer

Friends of Onkaparinga Park Inc.



PLEASANT DAY OUT (PDO) BELAIR NATIONAL PARK, FRIDAY 26TH MAY, 2017

What a glorious day. The sun was shining, the birds were singing and we were off on a historical tour of the second oldest National Park in Australia (1891) and one of the first ten in the world. We can be very proud of that.

First a visit to the old signal box at Belair Railway Station - burnt down by vandals, but since restored by volunteers. Next another historical feature, The Maze (1886), the second in Australia and the only example of an early colonial maze still alive. The outline is marked by hawthorn shrubs, based on one in the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. A dedicated volunteer tends it and it is struggling to survive.

A wander around Playford Lake and a view of the tall Sugar Gums which line an earlier entrance to the Park from Sheoak Road. Now it's Pines Oval and Echo Tunnel which passes under the railway line on The Waterfall Track. Retracing our steps we pass a memorial plaque which records a Scout Jamboree held nearby and another poignant memorial for a Scout who died at that time (1936).

Old Government House (1861) is well maintained, again by volunteers. A feature is a large in-ground bathing pool, fed by two springs. A moonlight possum shoot was a highlight of a visit by the first Duke of Edinburgh in 1867. A small building nearby was used in the 1870's to manufacture carbon bisulphite for eradicating rabbits.

The Gold Escort area used by Police Commissioner Tolmer in the gold rush era. A Board of 12 Commissioners managed the Park and used the small hut here. We passed by the Railway Dam - water provided for steam trains. The hedge along the road is planted with kaffir apple - mind the thorns. A cherry orchard in Sparkes Gully (1922) commemorates Allied victory in WW1, further along the path an imposing plantation of sequoias (American Redwood) 1962 were planted as a memorial to soldiers of WW2. Now it's back to Friends of Belair rooms to look at historical photos and enviously admire the wonderful facilities they enjoy. If only!



Next PDO meet at Davenport Square, Macclesfield...10am, Friday 30th June.

Fae & Jim Trueman

BUSH GATHERING SUNDAY 28TH MAY, 2017 WATIPARINGA NATIONAL TRUST RESERVE, BELAIR

The family of Enid Robertson welcomed all those present and gave their recollections and anecdotes of Enid over the years. The area once owned by the Ashby family extended over a broad expanse of the foothills. Since that time the Home, garden and surrounding land of Wittunga Botanical Gardens were gifted by Enid's father while Alison Ashby gifted the large Watiparinga area. Wonderful gifts for the enjoyment of South Australians. A memorial to both Enid and Alison was unveiled under tall trees and waving kangaroo grass.

Enid contributed greatly to our botanical knowledge of South Australia in so many ways and was associated with many Friends of Parks groups where her assistance was greatly appreciated. Several Friends of Onkaparinga attended.

FAE & JIM TRUEMAN

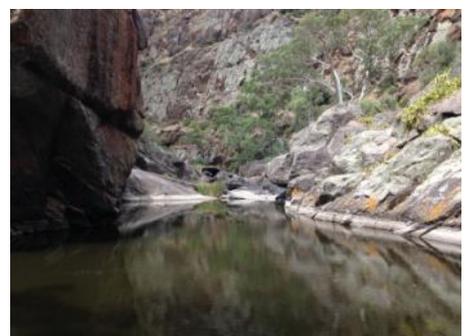
RESERVE THE DATE FOR THE *FRIENDS OF ONKAPARINGA PARK BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.*

THIS EVENT WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY 15TH OCTOBER FROM 11.30AM.

LOCATION:

AT A SITE NEAR THE NEW PUNCHBOWL LOOKOUT, PIG-GOTT RANGE ROAD.
ENTRY VIA TEMPORARY GATE 200M EAST OF STATES ROAD.

FURTHER DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED AT A LATER DATE.



JUNE 2017 FOOP WORKING B PROGRAM.

Note Working B's in the park will be cancelled when there is a Total Fire ban in the MT Lofty Region
All Working B's start at 9:00 am & finish at 11.30am unless otherwise stated.

Note: all new gate numbers

Sunday	Mon-	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	2	3 No working bee
4	5	6 NP Gate 29/30 Riparian zone Weed control/Planting <u>Andy 8386 2393</u> General Meeting 7.30pm Old Noarlunga Institute	7	8 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	9	10 NP Gate 17 Chapel Hill Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Andy 8386 2393
11	12 Public Holi- day	13 NP Gate 7a – The Knoll Piggott Range Road Weed control/Planting Andy 8386 2393	14	15 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	16	17 NP Gate 19 Chapel Hill Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Andy 8386 2393
18	19	20 NP Gate 7a – The Knoll Piggott Range Road Weed control/Planting Andy 8386 2393	21	22 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	23	24 NP Gate 19 Chapel Hill Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Andy 8386 2393
25	26	27 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Planting Graham 7220 5568	28	29 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	30 Pleasant Day Out Meet Davenport Square Macclesfield 10am Jim 8278 9359	1 NP Gate 18 Whitings Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Andy 8386 2393
2	3	4 NP Gate 20 – Springs Chapel Hill Road Weed control <u>Andy 8386 2393</u> General Meeting 7.30pm Old Noarlunga Institute District Ecologist, Elisa Sparrow "Small Mammals"	5	6 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	7	8 NP Gate 18 Whitings Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Andy 8386 2393