



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/>

August

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2017

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

It seems as if the weather gods have smiled on us, at least for a while, in that much needed rain has fallen and given the environment generally a good tonic. My personal observations are that this year's planting are doing Ok but follow-up rain is essential otherwise we will be watering more in the warmer months.

On a recent 'Thursday Thugs' working bee, we were removing deadly nightshade plants from the Sundews riparian area when one of our number noticed that a young koala had perished in the back waters of the river. Given that my mind works in strange ways it set me thinking about the talk at our July general meeting by [Dr] Elisa Sparrow. What was apparent from Elisa's presentation is that we do not record enough data on the fauna that frequent the parks. 'Citizen Science' is the backbone of the data-sets recording what still exists and what is under threat. You can play an important part by recording what you see, when you see it, and where. Please let me, or anyone on the committee know what data you have so we can forward it to Steve/Elisa.

Probably the most important point to arise out of this process is that such data can be used to justify more funding into research or protection of an endangered species. The ball is in your court!

The proposed group camp at the new campground off Chapel Hill Road is being considered for later in the year. A date hasn't been set yet, so if you have one in mind please let someone know. Speaking of the campground, I was there the other day looking at how it may be planted out with natives to provide a representation of endemic species, and to provide screening of the camp sites to give some privacy. As previously advised there will be a 'come and try' day at the site on Sunday 13th August. It would be nice if we can have a strong FOOP presence to assist and direct any of the public who want to help with the plantings. If you can assist please come along. The next day of note will be Sunday August 27th at the re-vamped Sundews site. You will be able to try some of the new tracks out to the Punchbowl Lookout site where magnificent panoramas will please anyone. With any sort of luck [???] you may see feral goat or deer. These have been particularly prominent lately on the southern side of the gorge opposite the new lookout.

As part of the 2017 re-vegetation programme we are judiciously planting the slopes above Old Noarlunga. Our main objective there is twofold; first, to create bio-diversity in the flora at the site. This involves strategically placing canopy trees to break the monotony of the skyline as there are lots of shrubs of the same height and species. Secondly, it is hoped that by planting local provenance species it will protect and encourage smaller birds to find their way down to the river without being harassed by the 'bullies'. The harassers are mainly honeyeaters like Noisy Miners, Wattlebirds, and New Holland Honeyeaters. I would hope that this illustrates that some thinking does go into what we do, and lots of people contribute to how the programme evolves and how it is implemented.

I believe that those of us that now share stewardship of the parks owe a very big debt of gratitude to our predecessors. Those who had the foresight to establish FOOP and have either used existing knowledge or developed it, to enable the group to do so much good work in re-vegetating what was over grazed and depleted agricultural land. It is when we look at the big picture, we see how much effort and thought has gone into making the parks what they are today. It would be inappropriate to single any particular individuals out, but suffice to say a very big collective thank you on behalf of all South Australians. Let's hope that we, the present crew, can glean some of that enthusiasm and knowledge to put to good use.

It will be interesting to watch how the politics of the replacement footbridge in Old Noarlunga plays out. The present State government has promised and provided for it by allocation of monies in the State Budget. It would be good to see the opposition provide similar assurances in writing. Watch this space!

A number of our members have either been on overseas holidays or are planning them. Anyone that fits this category has an open invitation to share their experiences with the rest of us at our monthly meetings. Please consider accepting the chance to let others enjoy what made it so pleasurable to you.

"How can we be so arrogant? The planet is, was, and always will be stronger than us. We can't destroy it; if we overstep the mark, the planet will simply erase us from its surface and carry on existing. Why don't they start talking about not letting the planet destroy us?" — Paulo Coelho, The Winner Stands Alone

Graham Thomas August 2017

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

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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

Working in the Park on a Tuesday morning recently we had a wonderful turnout and it was good to see that even after all these years the spirit of FOOP Inc is still alive and well. We have been lucky over the years with little dissent in what has been a disparate group over some 31 years. Long may the trend continue.

One day we need to produce a scroll of members past and present.

One colleague was voicing his frustration that even with all the work done by many people over the years there were still areas where weeds were predominant and he lamented that we would never win. The thing is even if we could wave a magic wand tomorrow and have all the weeds removed within a month we would see weeds back within the park boundary.

And it is not the ones we see it is the blighters that we don't see that do what they are designed to do—reproduce— that are the real problem and so it goes.

When the parks were proclaimed and the first weeding session occurred there were more weeds than we have now although I think the olives have “blossomed” in areas not seen before. New ones (eg monodenia) have come up over the years and in a couple of cases if we and DEWNR had acted quicker they would not be the mess they are now; prickly pears come to mind but that's for another day.

On the same Tuesday Ray Rogers and I were looking around the riparian area and remembering that not so many years ago there were the most monstrous figs and they have gone; as to have the Ash and other nasties. To our eyes, while there were still many weeds, the area looked a lot better than it did.

Over the years the FOOP Inc mob has worked at the weeds, planted native plants only to see new weeds come in and our much loved native plants sometimes die for whatever reason. The trick is to keep being optimistic even in the face of the disappointment that we don't seem to be winning. Sometimes we are too close to the pointy end to notice we are making a difference. Think how the parks would be had we not been weeding over the years.

What we should be able to eradicate is the goats and deer; not only within the confines of the park but from the Adelaide Hills region in the Mt Lofty ranges. The only reason this would be an impossibility is that we had a situation where people are releasing goats and deer into the region as fast as they are being eradicated.

DEWNR is not entirely devoted to our parks and reserves these days. Since the NRM⁽¹⁾ has come under the umbrella surely the game has changed. My understanding is that while the NPWS part of the Department is confined to the Parks NRM's role covers all of the state.

I doubt many local farmers are happy that goats and deer tramp through their properties just as we volunteers get distressed when on arriving at a planting site we note that covers have gone and plants carefully grown at home or purchased with precious funds have been destroyed and or eaten by the aforesaid goats and deer.

I shudder wondering what will happen if the alpaca industry fails.

If we have to lose anything let's ensure it is not our collective vision to make the Onkaparinga Parks the best that they can be.

Finally I thought it appropriate that as an inaugural year FOOPer I comment on Graham's thank you to the first FOOPers.

For a start I have only ever been a follower except for the accounting side of the group. With 50+ years training and experience in that area I am sure I know more than most FOOPers; I don't offer botanical advice—horses for courses.

FOOP history is well known and has been commented on before.

Dene Cordes (an NPWS employee at the time) started the ball rolling with an Ad in the paper calling for interested parties to attend a meeting. From that meeting a small group of people agreed to become the “Friends of Onkaparinga Parks”. Even that name has changed a little.

In the beginning we were guided and controlled by the ranger of the day. I think that was Dean Launer and later Terry Gregory. As confidence in our own abilities and growing botanical knowledge grew we started to control our work in the parks.

The role of the rangers has changed over the years to reflect that FOOP has its own clever people. We have been lucky with our rangers because they collectively accepted this change. Having been on the FOP Inc board I know it can be a real problem if mutual respect does not exist.

Fortuitously FOOP had an influx of people with skills in horticulture, with an emphasis on native plants, within the first few years of the group's life. That influx added to and complemented the originals and guided FOOP as an organisation into the success it is today. Some of those people are no longer with us. With others it was an incredible work ethic that was instrumental in FOOP's success.

For my part I have largely enjoyed the work which was so distant from what I did as an occupation that it was/is a wonderful therapy. I am still a botany dunce but occasionally I surprise even myself –thanks FOOP for that.

Bill.

PS., **Thanks to all the newsletter contributors who rose to the need this month for the newsletter to be early.**

(1) Natural Resource Management.

PLEASANT DAY OUT (PDO) 21st JULY 2017

A glimpse of early times in Mitcham. Laid out by the S.A. Company in 1840 complete with a village green the centre of Colonial life.

Some early cottages remain down small narrow lanes - inviting a glimpse of yesterday. A leisurely stroll took us past the Post Office, shops, a bakery which operated for 60 years, Allison's Apothecary,

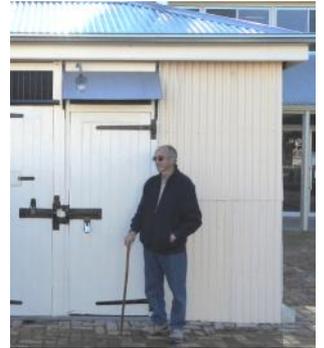


The Institute.

The Police Station still has the gaol at the rear.

There is also a Cobblers Shop and a Temperance Hotel.

Wealthy newcomers built mansions on Muggs Hill Road such as 'Torrens Park Estate' and 'Kallawar' with large stables and impressive gateways (all now part of Scotch College).



The Keystone Bridge over Brownhill Creek is a well known landmark, replacing the original ford.

Sutton Gardens was originally the site of 'Jerusalem', a large house built in 1844 for Revd. Thomas Playford, the forebear of two SA Premiers. There was a lot of history to explore and earlier Colonists names to recall such as Inspector Tolmer who lived nearby, also Barr Smith, R.R. Torrens etc.



Lunch was had in beautiful sunshine followed by a drive through Brownhill Creek Recreation Park.



There are many quarry sites, a big industry in early days providing building material, road metal and railway ballast.

A stop at the Caravan Park to admire 'The Monarch of the Glen' a 400 year old red gum. The majority of red gums had been removed by 1850.

In the creek a large 'swimming bath' had been constructed. The quality of the water was essential for households, orchards, market gardens, dairies and breweries. Next it was the exciting manure pits constructed in the 1890s to store manure for the numerous and productive market gardens near the end of the gully.

The road now becomes extremely narrow, so great care has to be taken. It was a squeeze to turn around and then we pulled up by the side of the

road.

One of our cars went on ahead and disappeared, then another and another with one remaining. We know not where they all whence.....an unusual ending for the day. However we hope you enjoyed the day and we will see you all again.



FAE & JIM TRUEMAN

**NEXT PDO 25th AUGUST: 10.00AM
MEET AT OLD RAILWAY STATION STRATHALBYN**

(Photos courtesy Michael Whitaker.)

(I must apologise to Fae and Jim we were the car that sped away. I had a dental appointment which we had advised so thought every one would know that we had to go. I was a bit surprised to see the other vehicles following.



Welcome Swallow.....*Hirundo neoxena*14-15cm resident breedingcommon

One of our prettiest small birds, and one I would think most of us may be familiar with in the Park region, and most other places. However, a friend asked me if the Welcome Swallows were still existent, declaring he had not seen any since he was a child. I found that hard to believe as there is always an abundance of these birds, in most areas of Australia. I find it a little disturbing just how little some people notice in the natural world outside their modern hi-tech homes with all the trappings of modern society. Is it any wonder so many conservation minded people have so much difficulty trying to convince others the need to preserve our dwindling natural assets.

So determined to prove to my friend that the Welcome Swallows were still very common, I grabbed the camera and headed into the wetlands of the Onkaparinga to photograph what he has missed in seeing. As expected they were abundant over the marshy grasslands actively feeding on the multitude of insects emerging from drowned depressions in the grassy terrain. There were dozens zooming around at great speed taking as many insects on the wing as possible, amazing to watch their acrobatic flying skills, and amazing they don't collide with one another.

The Welcome Swallow is seen over much of Australia except maybe some of the more harsher interior regions, and it dislikes heavily forested areas. Common around water sources and open fields where insects are plentiful, but also common in suburbia in many parts. They have adapted quite well to suburban areas, utilising building eaves, bridges, tunnels and the like to build their nests and raise their young. Nest consists of a mud construction, a half cup shape attached to walls etc, lined with downy feathers. Often the same nest site is used year after year, often quite large colonies adorn the nesting sites.

Well, lots of rain lately and it has been difficult to get out and about with the camera and binoculars, but I've still seen quite a lot of birds around, particularly water fowl. The Blue-billed Ducks, Australian Shovelers are back in full colour. The Blue-billed Ducks do seem to be permanent residents now, have successfully bred 2 or 3 times now, and still hanging around. Interesting there has been a solitary Cattle Egret in the wetlands as well lately. Hope you manage to get out in the Park between rain, by the time you read this I will again be overseas, heading for the warmer climes of tropical Niue Island for 3 weeks, can't say I'll miss the cold of this Winter, I'm chilled to the bone



Fauna check list.

Keep an eye out for these and report if seen.



Antechinus flavipes

FAMILY	Dasyuridae
Species	Antechinus flavipes
Common name	Yellow-footed Antechinus
Main colour; body size	Varies from dark brown to orange-brown; body 11.7 cm long, tail 9.7 cm
Mature weight	About 79 g
Scat shape, size	Black, pointed at both ends, insect remains present



Southern brown bandicoot

Scientific name:	Isoodon obselus obselus
Diet:	Omnivorous – insects, spiders, fungi, plant roots, seeds, berries
Breeding season:	Late winter to mid-summer Length of pregnancy: 14 days (bandicoots have the shortest pregnancy of any mammal)
Litter size:	2 – 3 young
Pouch life:	2 months, then independent
Longevity:	2 – 3 years
Adult weight:	Average 700 g (females) and 850 g (males)



Platypus

Scientific name	Ornithorhynchus anatinus)
Description	Males 400 – 630mm, 800 – 3000g; Females 370 – 550mm, 600 – 1700g. Males and females are very similar in appearance: streamline body shape with short limbs; prominent duck-like bill; thick, brown waterproof fur covering the body; large webbing on the fore feet which folds back to expose strong claws for digging; hind feet are partially webbed and also clawed; rudder-like tail, predominantly consisting of fatty tissue; males are equipped with a venomous spur on each
Habitat	Streams and ponds etc. Likes banks suitable for burrow making.
Diet	Aquatic insect larvae, shrimp, worms
Litter size;	Usually two eggs.

Platypus did inhabit the Onkaparinga and recently there have been reports of them setting up home in Onkaparinga tributaries in the Mylor, Belair area. So who knows one day they may return. Foxes are the problem.

Said Hanrahan

J Hartigan

We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan
In accents most forlorn
Outside the church ere Mass began
One frosty Sunday morn.

The congregation stood about,
Coat-collars to the ears,
And talked of stock and crops and
drought
As it had done for years.

"It's lookin' crook," said Daniel Croke;
"Bedad, it's cruke, me lad
For never since the banks went
broke
Has seasons been so bad."

"It's dry, all right," said young O'Neil,
With which astute remark
He squatted down upon his heel
And chewed a piece of bark.

And so around the chorus ran
"It's keepin' dry, no doubt."
"We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan,
"Before the year is out.

"The crops are done; ye'll have your
work
To save one bag of grain;
From here way out to Back-O'-
Bourke
They're singin' out for rain.

"They're singin' out for rain," he said,
"And all the tanks are dry."
The congregation scratched its head,
And gazed around the sky.

"There won't be grass, in any case,
Enough to feed an ass;
There's not a blade on Casey's place
As I came down to Mass."

"If rain don't come this month," said
Dan,
And cleared his throat to speak –
"We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan,
"If rain don't come this week."

A heavy silence seemed to steal
On all at this remark;
And each man squatted on his heel,
And chewed a piece of bark.

"We want an inch of rain, we do,"
O'Neil observed at last;
But Croke "maintained" we wanted two
To put the danger past.

"If we don't get three inches, man,
Or four to break this drought,
We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan,
"Before the year is out."

In God's good time down came the rain;
And all the afternoon
On iron roof and window-pane
It drummed a homely tune.

And through the night it pattered still,
And lightsome, gladsome elves
On dripping spout and window-sill
Kept talking to themselves.

It pelted, pelted all day long,
A-singing at its work,
Till every heart took up the song
Way out to Back-O'-Bourke.

And every creek a banker ran,
And dams filled o'ertop;
"We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan,
"If this rain doesn't stop."

"Before the year is out."

And stop it did, in God's good time:
And spring came in to fold
A mantle o'er the hills sublime
Of green and pink and gold.

And days went by on dancing feet,
With harvest-hopes immense,
And laughing eyes beheld the wheat
Nid-nodding o'er the fence.

And, oh, the smiles on every face,
As happy lad and lass
Through grass knee-deep on Casey's
place
Went riding down to Mass.

While round the church in clothes gen-
teel
Discoursed the men of mark,
And each man squatted on his heel,
And chewed his piece of bark.

"There'll be bush-fires for sure, me man,
There will, without a doubt;
We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan

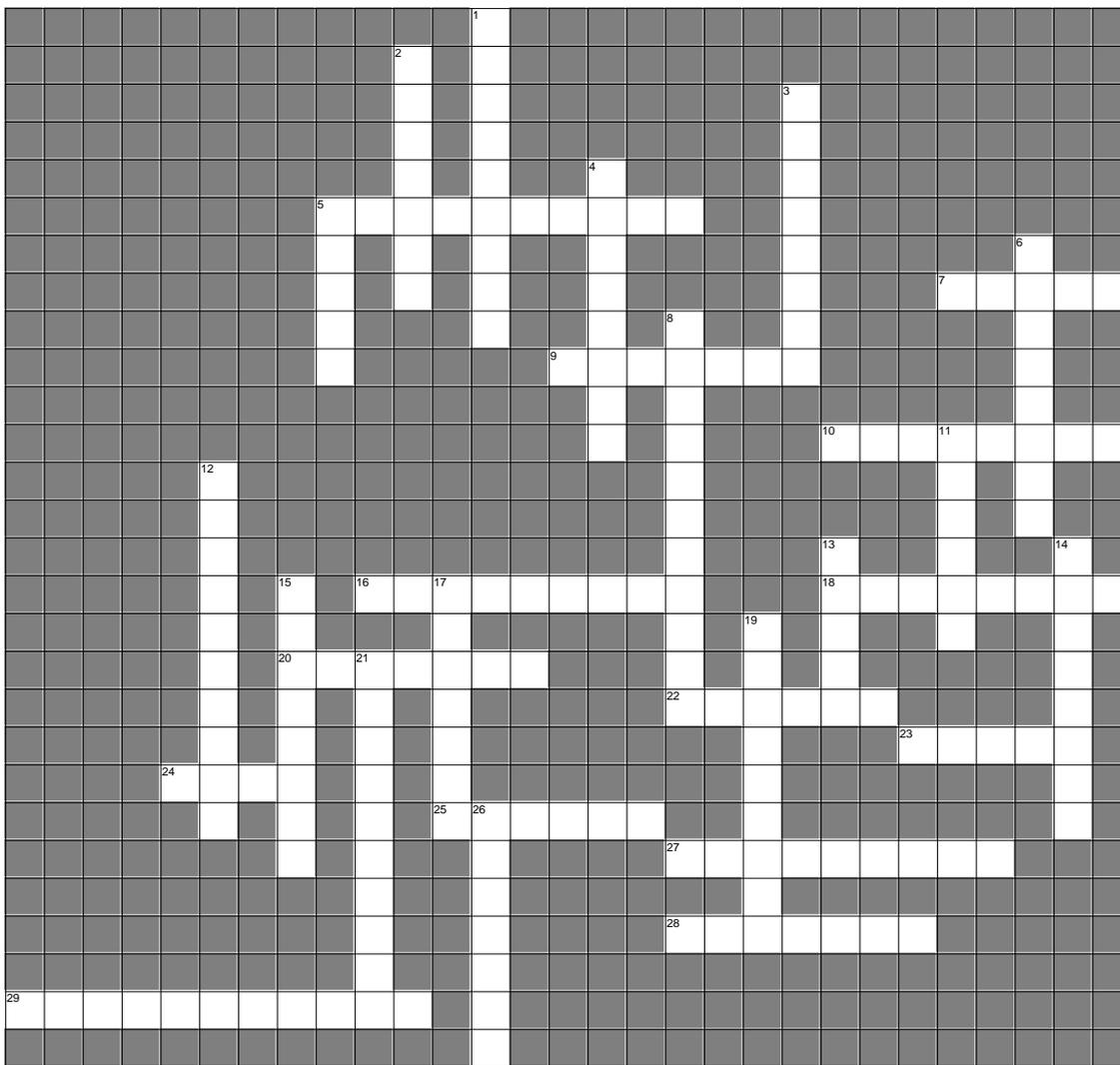


Be thankful for small mercies.

Read this in the paper the other day.

A grasshopper goes into a bar for a drink.
The bartender says "G'day did you know we have a drink named after you."
Grasshopper—"What Terence?"





EclipseCrossword.com

Across

5. This is an important Anglo-Saxon site found in Woodbridge Suffolk UK (10)
7. This book by Homer was allegedly used to determine the site of Troy. (5)
9. This goddess was the equivalent of Athena and a favourite of the Roman army. (7)
10. This is a famous shipwreck in Turkey. (8)
16. He cut the Gordian knot. (9)
18. Ancient port destroyed when Thera erupted in 1600bce. (8)
20. This temple is called the temple of the obelisks. (7)
22. This civilisation was in Crete. (6)
23. He wrote most of " The Divine comedy". (5)
24. Plural of forum. (4)
25. An Assyrian king. (6)
27. Ancient Assyrian city noted for its square shape. (9)
28. This city was covered with the volcanic ash of Vesuvius. (7)
29. Mega Lith (11)

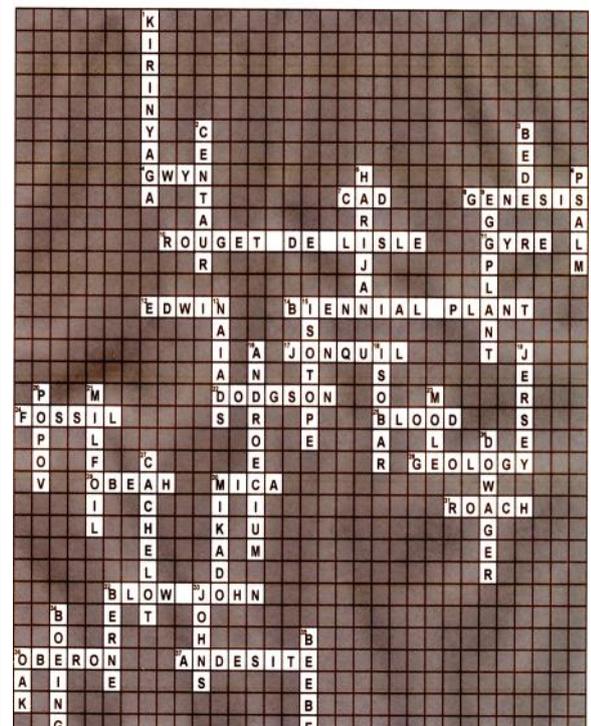
Down

1. A king of the Ostrogoths. (9)
2. Name of a famous Viking boat . (7)
3. Huge crossbow in Roman times. (8)
4. The name for the temple of Hephaestus in Athens. (8)
5. A Roman gladius was an essential weapon. (5)
6. Name of ancient impressive style of building. (8)
8. A Roman warm bath. (11)
11. Roman theatre in Lebanon relocated in 1921. (6)
12. Healing megalith found in England. (10)
13. a caldarium. (5)
14. This mountain range provided the bluestone double oval structural material at Stonehenge (8)
15. Hannibal came from here. (8)
17. Not Homo sapiens but Homo ?. (7)
19. Name of Assyrian script. (9)
21. He excavated Troy. (10)

Last month's solution...

A bit of this and a bit of that.....

8 Heaven



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.

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, PIGGOTT RANGE ROAD. ENTRY VIA TEMPORARY GATE 200M EAST OF STATES ROAD.

FURTHER DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED AT A LATER DATE.

FOOP PROGRAM AUGUST 2017.

**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.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednes- day	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 NP Gate 20 – Springs Chapel Hill Road Weed control <u>Andy 8386 2393</u> General Meeting 7.30pm Old Noarlunga Institute	2	3 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	4	5 NP Gate 18 Whitings Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Michael 8557 7498
6	7	8 NP Gate 10 – Punchbowl Piggott Range Road Weed control Graham 7220 5568	9	10 RP Gate 1 – The Shed Railway Road Maintenance Graham 7220 5568	11	12 NP Gate 18 Whitings Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Michael 8557 7498
13 Discover the new camp- ground/Plant a Tree 9am & try abseiling at gate 15 Chapel Hill Road	14	15 NP Gate 7a – The Knoll Piggott Range Road Weed control Graham 7220 5568	16	17 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	18	19 NP Gate 16 Chapel Hill Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Michael 8557 7498
20	21	22 NP Gate 29/30 Riparian zone Weed control Graham 7220 5568	23	24 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	25 Pleasant Day Out Meet Strathalbyn VIC 10am. Visit to "Pangarinda" Wel- lington Jim 8278 9359	26 NP Gate 19 Chapel Hill Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Michael 8557 7498
27 Come & Try new walking trails 9am at gate 11 Sun- dews, Piggott Range Road	28	29 NP Gate 7a – The Knoll Piggott Range Road Weed control Graham 7220 5568	30	31 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	1	2 NP Gate 18 Whitings Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Michael 8557 7498
3	4	5 NP Gate 20 – Springs Chapel Hill Road Weed control <u>Graham 7220 5568</u> General Meeting 7.30pm Old Noarlunga Institute Coordinators Updates & Special Presentations	6	7 NP Gate 25– Chapel Hill Weed control Graham 7220 5568	8	9 NP Gate 18 Whitings Road Hardy's Scrub Boneseed removal Michael 8557 7498