



## The October Weekend

Our October weekend turned out to be quite hot. We decided to swap our Saturday plans with Sunday's – hoping that the cool change would reach us on Sunday morning. As it turned out, Sunday was almost as hot as Saturday – but more about that later!

The plan was to have a 'history tour' to the Nuccaleena Mine – on the Public Access Route across part of Moolooloo Station, heading out westwards from the Glass Gorge Road.



We stopped on the way to check out the old township of Oratunga. This was a town surveyed in the 1860s at the site of the Oratunga Eating House. Just a few bits of ruins remain, but enough to show that there were a few buildings there as well as the eating house. (photo courtesy Julie Owen)

Along the adjoining Oratunga Creek was plenty of evidence of the redgum logging of the area a hundred or so years ago – to provide sleepers for the Port Augusta to Government Gums Railway.

From there we headed out past the old Oratunga Copper Mine, eventually reaching the township of Nuccaleena. We took a wander through the ruins of the pub and a couple of other buildings. Some of the walls are in remarkably good shape for a town that was abandoned almost a hundred and fifty

years ago.

A few kilometers further and we reached the Nuccaleena Mine ruins. The site has been stabilised and some interpretation work has been done in the past ten or so years. The mine chimney is in excellent condition, and is a very impressive structure. The mine works buildings are equally impressive.



Across the creek to the north are the old mine offices and accommodation – again very interesting to wander around, and a tribute to the people who built them in the 1850s.

A few hundred metres to the west of the mine, alongside the creek, is the Nuccaleena cemetery. There are perhaps a dozen graves there, but the only surviving headstone is that of Anson Fry, a prospector who died there in 1862. In 1850 he, along with his wife Alice, had built a hotel at Echunga. When his application went before the Licensing Bench the magistrates decided to defer granting the licence until the next sessions – six months later. The delay sent Anson broke. He later tried farming just outside Burra.

## Blinman Races



On the way back from Nuccaleena we dropped in to the Blinman Races/Gymkhana to check out the late-afternoon events and to join in the barbecue tea. The event was very well patronised – particularly after last year's cancellation due to the Equine Flu scare.

## Sunday at Guide Hut

We decided to have a very early start at Guide Hut on the Sunday in order to beat the heat. We were on the road by seven o'clock, and completed fixing the ridge capping to the hips by about ten o'clock. By then it was too hot and glary to remain on the roof. We cut the capping for the main ridge, but had to leave the fixing to a later date. We also cut the framing timbers for the doors, out of lengths of

timber Gordon had prepared previously.

## Lost Property

If anyone comes across a spare handheld UHF radio – or recalls me leaving it somewhere - please let me know. My vague recollection is that I left it for someone to use – we were working or travelling somewhere, and the group was splitting up for some reason, and I said to use it to contact us if necessary. I'm not sure what worries me more – my loss of radio or my loss of memory! It's a full-size hand-held, ICOM brand, in its protective jacket. I lost it on either the September or October weekend.

## The November Weekend

This is our final working weekend for the year, and is usually spent checking dripper systems and otherwise getting the Wilpena Homestead site ready for the summer break. Depending on the weather conditions, we may opt to fix the final section of ridge capping out at Guide Hut, or perhaps continue with our on-going project of documenting sites on the Park for our database.

Parks will be providing a barbecue (meat and salads) on Saturday evening at Wilpena. Please let me know if you will be attending – both for accommodation and for catering purposes.

Looking forward to a great end-of-year weekend.

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