



ORAPARINNA TELEGRAPH

Official Bulletin of Friends of Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park

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NEW OPPORTUNITIES

It may be hard to believe but the fact is we are already in the third month of 2017. Of course that means it will soon be time for our first activity week in the park.

We have an interesting variety of projects in this year's schedule and hopefully there are enough members available each month to complete them all. There are also many opportunities to assist with production of the visitor app., and working with Hawker Area School students. (More on these later.)

With so many new members in the team we will be making time each month to introduce them to the history and features of the park. In this way the knowledge discovered and accumulated by members over the last two decades will be retained and passed on.

If you have not yet done so we encourage you to enter the dates of our visits to the park in your diary so that we see you in the Flinders during this year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thirty-one members braved the AGM last month to receive reports, review the health of our group, elect office holders and learn from the guest speaker.

Although all positions on the committee were declared vacant, the election result saw no change to last year's committee. Unfortunately we face another year without a Vice President. Our inability to attract one of our sixty members to assume this position reflects poorly on our group. The committee triad will attempt to fill that vacancy.

Alan Harbour, Ranger-in-Charge, Northern Ranges Parks, attended the AGM so that he could meet more of our members and be better informed about how we operate. He was the guest speaker and shared a wide range of plans and proposals for our park and

Vulkathana-Gammon Ranges.

The evening ended with the traditional "bring a plate" supper and plenty of happy chat.

Minutes and copies of reports tabled at the AGM have been circulated. If you have not received them, please give Secretary Helen a call – 8339 1311 or vhmon@bigpond.com

FOP INC. SCHOLARSHIP

Friends of Parks Inc. is awarding two scholarships in 2017 for Friends Groups to engage with a school on a conservation program within a national park.

When an email was received from FOP Inc. seeking submissions, our President contacted Alan Harbour to find out if he was interested in a three way tie-up with Hawker Area School. He was very interested. The idea was outlined at the AGM where members supported it. Vince and Alan then met Hawker Area School staff and they liked the idea too. By the time you read this, our submission will have been sent to FOP Inc. and we will be waiting impatiently for the outcome.

The proposed program really is an exciting one. All students from the school will be involved. They will plant trees, identify flora and fauna in a section of the park and provide input to the visitor app. Along the way they will improve skills in such activities as researching, planning, writing and editing, summarising, translating, calculating, leading, mentoring, information sharing, recording – the list goes on.

If the grant application is successful the program will begin in Term 2. Park staff will provide guidance and advice on all in-park activity. Friends will provide a few "specialist" speakers, oversee the program co-ordination, and advise on matters related to the visitor app. If you would like to read the full program details included in the submission, give Secretary Helen a call.

HOTEL STATUS

Hotels at Hawker and Blinman are used by members at times. Recent difficulties have seen the closure of both. To assist your planning we have sought the current status. Hawker Hotel is expected to re-open around mid-March and resume the same services as previously available.

There is no projected re-opening of the Blinman Hotel. This property has again been placed on the market and it is unlikely that it will re-open until it has a new owner.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

If you plan to attend the project week in March and you normally travel via Clare you should expect more traffic in the area. Clare is hosting the Masters Games on March 24-27. Competitors and supports will arrive before then so could be on the road when we are driving north. Worth knowing.

NAIDOC WEEK

NAIDOC Week is scheduled for 2-9 July this year. Our project week is June 29 – July 5 so there is some overlap. NAIDOC week activities to be held in the park are being planned. There is no indication of what or when these will be. However, we have been advised that an invitation will be extended for our members to attend. It would be useful if we are well represented at the events, so please keep this in mind.

VISITOR APP.

Bob (Beaver) Geary has been working tirelessly on development of our visitor app. since the moment members approved the project. Eight members have offered to assist in various ways and there is still room for others to join in.

Bob is initially concentrating on a tour of Appealinna which will become a demonstration model to provide members and supporters with a clear indication of how the app. will look and function.

Beginning at the project week in May we will need to take photos and GPS readings, and field test the app. construction to date. Completion date for the app. is November this year, so please let Bob know if you too are willing and able to provide assistance.

UNSETTLED

From March 24 to May 14 the State Library of SA is presenting an exhibition on colonial ruins in the Flinders Ranges. Open 10.00 am to 5.00 pm daily in the Institute Gallery, the exhibition features photography, artworks, archival imagery and documentary interviews. It seeks to move beyond the nostalgia of typical colonial ruins and unearth stories about the pioneers and the original inhabitants of the land.

RABBIT CONTROL

Try to imagine Elmer Fudd saying “pesky wabbit” in Korean. Flinders Ranges rabbits won’t be bothered by language if they catch a dose of the Korean strain of rabbit virus being released nationally. This is the first new rabbit bio-control to be released in 20 years and it has been receiving strong support in rural communities.

We should begin to notice a decline in rabbit activity around the park after a few population spikes noticed in recent years.

MARCH PROJECT WEEK

If you are coming to Oraparinna on March 23 to 29, need a room and haven’t let the President know, please do so now – vhmon@bigpond.com

OIC FOR JUNE/JULY

An earlier item bemoaned the fact we are without a VP. In June and July Vince and Helen will be travelling and unable to plan for the June/July project week, arrange tools and materials and supervise the week’s activities.

We need a volunteer to take over for that project week. If you are willing to help please give Vince a call asap. Should we not have anybody accept the role we may need to consider cancelling that visit to Oraparinna.

NEW MEMBERS

We enjoy welcoming new members. Trevor and Brenda Finney are no strangers to the Flinders and are known by a number of our team. They were among the hard working visitors from the Friends of Great Victoria Desert a couple of years back. As Trevor approaches retirement he and Brenda have

time to add our group to their volunteering list. Linda Harbour will soon know more about the park than most of us because she lives on site and knows the boss well. It will be great to have Linda and the children join us around the park from time to time.

Welcome Trevor, Brenda and Linda.

HISTORY SNIPPET

Early surveyors in the Flinders Ranges gave the names to many geographic features we recognise today.

Rawnsley Bluff, the southernmost tower of Wilpena Pound is possibly the most infamous. H.C. Rawnsley was a NSW public servant who lost his job and then bluffed his way into a prominent surveying position in SA. He claimed he had been sent from Britain to fill the job. Whether intentional or not, the name Rawnsley Bluff is certainly most appropriate.

William Greig Evans was a more honest and competent surveyor, who scattered names around Wilpena Pound quite liberally. Greigs Peak was one of his own names. The summits of Dorothy, Madge, Beatrice and Harold are named after his children. Even workmates and relatives took a turn with Dick's Nob, Fred's Nob and Walter's Hill. Snave Hill was given by Evans too. It is Evans spelled backwards. One name he seems to have missed is that of his wife and as it is not on the map we don't even know what her name was.

DEWNR RESTRUCTURE

DEWNR CE, Sandy Pitcher, has released a new organisation structure for the department.

The department now comprises six distinct groups.

- Parks and Regions
- Climate Change
- Water
- Economic and Sustainable Development
- Science
- People and Performance

Clearly the group of relevance to us is Parks and Regions. Most of our interaction with the department will occur within that group. It is encouraging to note that John Schutz has been appointed Group Executive Director of Parks

and Regions. Apart from his excellent managerial credentials and the fact he is a fine fellow, John has long been a strong and proven advocate for volunteers and their role in parks. We congratulate John on also being appointed Deputy Chief Executive of DEWNR.

MORE NOTES ON WILPENNA POUND

The first lease to include Wilpena Pound was Pastoral Lease No. 84 consisting of 154 square miles taken up by Henry Strong Price in 1851. In 1855 Price assigned the lease to William James Browne and John Harris Browne but then he took it back again in 1866.

From 1868 a new lease was issued over 825 square miles of country which included the Wilpena run. Price and the Browne brothers jointly held the lease until it expired in 1888.

There was more change to come. In 1889 the Browne brothers were issued the lease on Wilpena Rim and August Snelling gained the lease for Wilpena Pound, 29 square miles.

The Pound lease transferred to Shinnick, Davine and Buckley in 1894 but the lease was then cancelled in 1889.

The Hill family became lessees of the Pound from 1889 until 1915 when it transferred to H.E. Hill who held it until expiry in 1920.

Proclaimed a Forest Reserve in 1922 the Pound was leased for grazing to C & F.W. Gartner. In 1924 a new forest lease was issued to C.W. Hunt who held it until 1945 when the Pound was proclaimed a Reserve for a National Pleasure Resort.

The 2 room house we have worked on in the Pound was erected in 1904 by the Hill family. Valued at 120 pounds in 1920, the total value with improvements at the time of the lease expiring was 313 pounds sixteen shillings. That is the amount paid by the crown to the outgoing lessee.

NB: 154 square miles = 399 square kilometres
825 square miles = 2,137 square kilometres
29 square miles = 75 square kilometres