



ORAPARINNA TELEGRAPH

Official Bulletin of Friends of Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park

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STABILISATION SUCCESSFUL

Most members who have seen the Mount Billy hut chimney have been sceptical about plans to straighten and stabilise it. However in October a handful of members together with Tom and Steve from park staff set about achieving both aims.

By the end of the first day, there was no doubt they would succeed.



Chimney before work

Work in progress



Another day's work in November should see the task completed and the chimney ready for another century of withstanding the elements, and ready for Christmas.

FIRE SEASON PREPAREDNESS

It has been many years since the Flinders Ranges has enjoyed the plentiful winter rains received this year. The downside of the phenomenal grass growth is the massive fuel load for fires as the grass dries out.

Park staff in preparing for a potentially busy fire

season asked Friends to inspect fire tracks and water supply points. A hot Sunday during our October project week provided the perfect excuse to down tools and enjoy the comfort of air conditioned vehicles as we inspected tracks. Apart from Jones Camp Track which became impassable within just 1 kilometer because of excess water, track conditions were assessed as suitable for use by fire trucks. Two water points were identified as needing pre-fire season work. All details have been given to Senior Ranger Tom McIntosh.

During November members will re-visit Jones Camp Track and the few minor tracks not inspected in October.

GRANT APPLICATION

Our application for a DEWNR grant to enable repairs and stabilisation to a number of stone structures around the park was submitted in October.

If successful the grant monies will provide for two members to participate in a traditional stone masonry workshop and enable the purchase of essential equipment.

The return on investment evident in our application should ensure we are strong contenders for a share of the grant monies available. DEWNR assess the value of volunteer input to be \$34.34 an hour. Based on the hours our volunteers contribute in planning, training, travelling and working, our contribution next year towards stone projects is valued at \$110,000. To provide that benefit to DEWNR we are seeking a grant of \$4,500.

FUEL VOUCHERS

A happy coincidence? Last month's OT mentioned that since submitting an application for fuel vouchers at the beginning of the year, nothing had been heard from Port Augusta office. We have now been advised through Senior Ranger Tom that some vouchers will be Available to us this month. While the vouchers

are not intended to reimburse the outlay for fuel used by members, it is a welcome gesture that DEWNR recognises that volunteering costs. Vouchers will be shared among members according to the number of visits to the park this year and the distance travelled each time.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Who among us can believe that 2016 is soon to end? It is time to make your diary entry for the 2017 AGM to be held on Friday February 17 at 7.30 p.m.

Although a review of members' addresses indicates Greenhill Road to be the most central location for a meeting, we recognise the Findon Community Centre to be inexpensive and suitable. Unless a comparable venue is identified near the CBD we will again meet at Findon. You can expect a note confirming AGM details and venue early in the new year.

Meanwhile please consider a committee position. All positions will become vacant. We do need a Vice-President and a Treasurer.

GREEN ARMY IN PARK

Previous advice was that Green Army participants working on conservation projects would be operating from Wilpena beginning early next year. Those arriving at Oraparinna last month in fact met with the young men in the Green Army team who had started a few days before our arrival. There are 6 participants and a DEWNR employed supervisor. They are now working from Oraparinna and have been scheduled to be away from there on the dates we are in residence.

The young men are undergoing a variety of training courses and projects during the 12 month program, all designed to improve amenities within the park. A significant feature of their program will be eradication of noxious plants. We can expect the friendship with Green Army participants that started last month to continue strengthening over time. It is probable that we will work together on some projects during next year .

MEETING DATES IN 2017

Our meeting dates are largely determined by the availability of the Oraparinna Shearers' Quarters. After conferring with Tom and Tanya, the dates have been confirmed. With the exception of November we have been able to maintain a six weekly cycle.

Dates are: March 23-29; May 11-17; June 29-July 5; August 17-23; October 5-11; November 16-22.

2017 BUDGET

The Treasurer is preparing a budget for acceptance at the AGM. If you have suggestions for either expenditure or income for 2017 please provide them to the Treasurer by the end of this month.

WALKING TRAIL APP.

Rob and Sue Marshall are the hard working duo responsible for promoting the major walks in the Flinders Ranges. We assist them by restocking trailhead containers with their maps and leaflets.

They have now produced an app. to complement the leaflets. To install the app.

- 1) Start 'Play Store' app.
- 2) In Google Play enter 'flinders ranges walks'.
- 3) Tap on multi colour ranges icon.
- 4) Tap on "Install" icon and follow prompts.

We will be visiting all trailhead containers during our November project week.

ANOTHER FIRST AIDER

Congratulations to Julie Owen who recently completed First Aid training at Port Augusta. Julie is now the seventh member to qualify in this important service. When two more qualify early in the New Year, we will be assured of having a first aider among us whenever and wherever we are in the park.

WELCOME

Our newest member is David Lores from Mount Barker. We welcome David to our team and look forward to his contribution to our activities in the park.