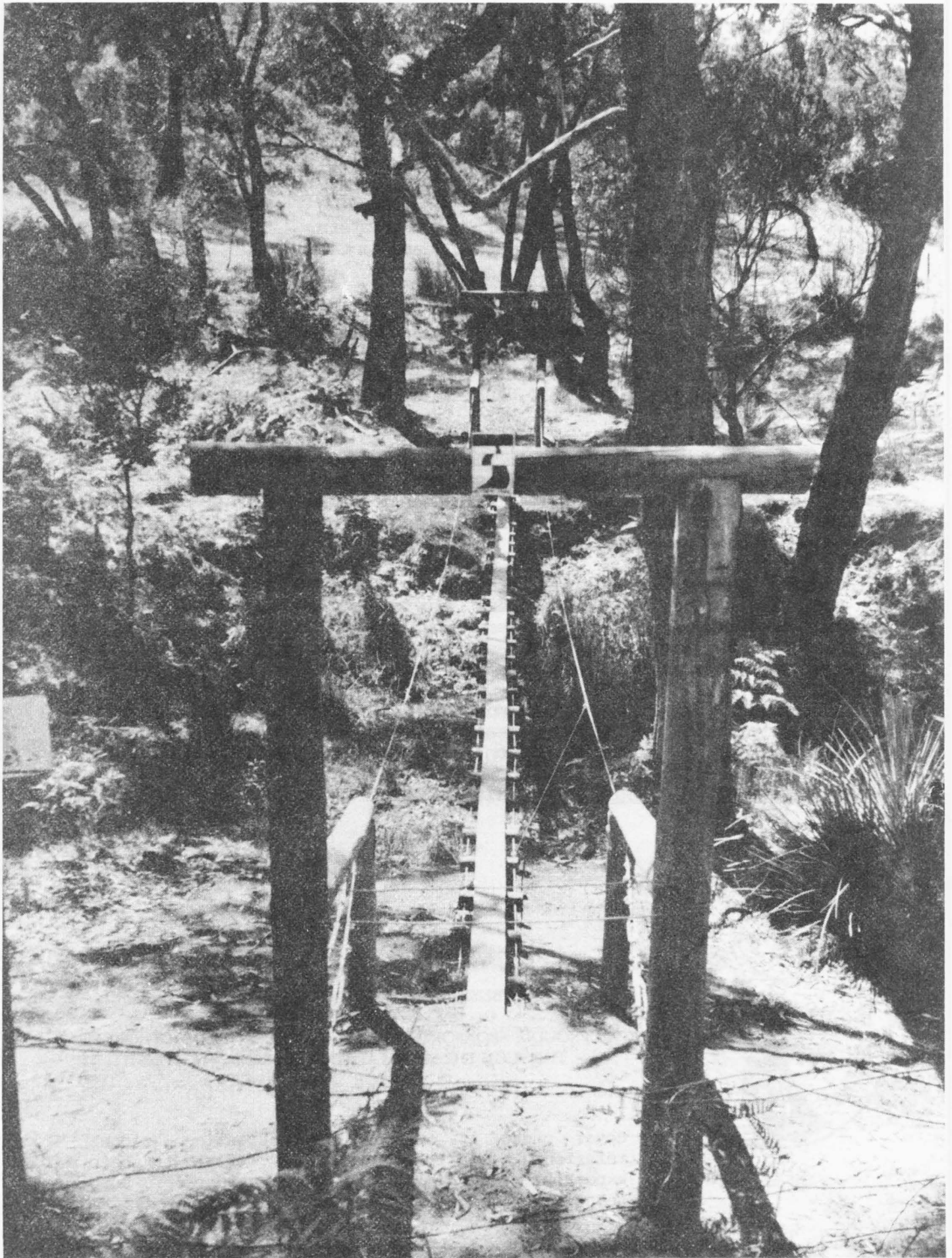


THE TRAILWALKER

ISSUE No. 27

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF
THE HEYSEN TRAIL AND OTHER WALKING TRAILS INC.

FEBRUARY 1991



The Trail Walker

MEMBERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A warm welcome is extended by the President, Nev. Southgate and members of Council to the following new members who have joined the Friends' since December, 1990.

Lyall and Wendy Chittleborough (family)	Joseph Lean
Geoffrey and Margot Lean (family)	Eric Rowatt
Bob and Vari Booth (family)	Judy Harvey
Salisbury Ramblers Club (organisation)	Bruce Waters
Narelle Wagener (family)	Deane Le Cornu
Trevor Bateman	

A friendly REMINDER appears elsewhere in this issue that MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS are now due for renewal. Please use the renewal slip enclosed with the December issue, or if that has been mislaid, simply write your name and address on a piece of paper and include it with your cheque to the Membership Secretary, C/o S.A.R.I., 304 Henley Beach Road, Underdale, 5032.

You will notice from items contained in this issue that a certain degree of activity continues throughout the warmer summer period. Of course, the walking trails are officially closed until 1 April, 1991 and members are urged to strictly observe all "Trail Closed" signs and to uphold the high reputation of responsibility by walkers which has been established since the inception of this organisation.

Sincere thanks are extended to all contributors of items for publication in the "Trailwalker". These items provide a wide range of interesting walking experiences for our readers and assist in maintaining the high standard of the magazine. An assurance is given that all contributions received will be published, so please keep writing.

A cordial invitation is extended to all members to attend the various activities planned for 1991 - trail construction and maintenance, walks, social meetings, map craft instruction, tree planting, and first aid courses.

DEADLINE FOR COPY FOR APRIL ISSUE: 31 March, 1991.



"THE TRAILWALKER"

IS PUBLISHED BY "THE FRIENDS OF THE HEYSEN TRAIL
AND OTHER WALKING TRAILS INC."

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
THROUGH THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN RECREATION INSTITUTE

EDITOR : DOUG PAICE

Cover photo is one of the suspension bridges referred to in 'Development News' which has been expertly restored by dedicated volunteer, Doug Leane, ably supported by other member volunteers.



The Trail Walker

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

I feel that you, the 500 members, can feel proud and satisfied with the results of the past year, 1990, and I am sure that you will join with me when I say a very sincere thank you to all those "Friends" who toiled to make the year such a success.

Sadly, it is a case of too much being done by too few - only 20% of our 500 members have been active!

How about a resolution for 1991 - "To put something back!"

- REMEMBER IT IS WE NOT ME! -

Let me list some of the amazing progress made during the 1990 year!

- * 1500 km of the Heysen Trail completed.
- * Eleven assessment/maintenance teams operating (under the control of our hard-working Trails Co-ordinator).
- * The structuring of a huge land ladder in the Warren Conservation Park.
- * Three overnight huts completed on the Trail.
- * Six network trails marked.
- * Operating our own maintenance workshop.
- * Donated a major footbridge to the Centenary of National Parks in South Australia.
- * Formed the first Branch at Leigh Creek.
- * Formed a very successful walking committee.
- * Introduced an equally successful Map Craft course.
- * Now conducting a Basic First Aid course.
- * Setting up a tree planting (Greening) group.
- * Designed and operating a fine static display unit.
- * Designed a new logo.
- * Designed a new membership badge.
- * Now have a range of "Friends" apparel, complete with logo.
- * Re-designed our magazine - now a first grade "Trailwalker" magazine.

What a year! And with your help, WHAT A FUTURE!



The Trail Walker

This is YOUR association - with the help and guidance of S.A.R.I. and in particular, Terry Lavender and the trails managers, we have gained our own identity.

It is now up to you, the members, to assist your Administrative Officer, Executive, Council, and Committees to continue this good work, of not just building and maintaining ONE OF THE GREAT WALKING TRAILS IN THE WORLD, but to now help to promote it and encourage people to use all trails and to find what we have found - that there is a wonderful world to be discovered and enjoyed and much to be seen - together with a HAPPIER, HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE.

Let's put our best foot (feet) forward in 1991 and join in building an even better

FRIENDS OF THE HEYSEN AND OTHER WALKING TRAILS!

On behalf of your "A.O.", Executive, Council and Committees.

PRESIDENT NEV.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE

All membership subscriptions (except for members who joined the Friends' after 30 September and members of the Leigh Creek Branch) are now due.

Although many members have responded to the reminder in the December issue, quite a number of subscriptions are still outstanding. Please forward YOUR SUBSCRIPTION NOW to avoid deletion from the mailing list for future issues of the "Trailwalker".

Annual membership fee remains at \$10 for individual, \$15 for family, \$25 for school and youth organisations and \$50 for other organisations.

Subscriptions may be left with the Administrative Officer, C/o the South Australian Recreation Institute, 304 Henley Beach Road, Underdale, 5032 on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays or left with the Receptionist at S.A.R.I. on other days or posted to the Membership Secretary at the above address.

Your co-operation will be greatly appreciated.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Just thought I would say I appreciate your magazine. Although my wife and I don't participate in the "Friends" functions we read about Arkaroola with interest because in May last year we went to Rawnsley Bluff, St. Marys Peak and Arkaroola (all in one week).

Then in September we went to Lake Eyre North and South plus three days at Coopers Creek. We camped and walked as much as time would allow each day.

Please keep publishing the magazine.

4 Sincerely,
R.I. Murdoch



The Trail Walker

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

This year again we expect to be undertaking a number of working trips of two or more days' duration for construction of the northern part of the Heysen Trail. Sections still to be completed, plus one or two possible re-routes, lie between Mt. Bryan (north of Burra) and Hawker. The usual arrangement is for accommodation, transport and an evening meal to be provided by the Friends. Both week-end and mid-week groups of normally 8 - 10 people will be organised when numbers are available. A lift-out sheet is included with this issue of the "Trailwalker" for completion and return by those interested in participating in what I believe those previously involved have found to be an interesting and enjoyable experience.

Walkers familiar with the trail near Myponga will be aware that several suspension bridges in that area were in a very shaky condition. They will be relieved to know that this situation has been rectified by recent work, thanks largely to the efforts of Doug Leane and Joe Teusner with help from other Friends. The bridges have been completely rebuilt with a slightly modified construction which hopefully will prove more durable.

Other maintenance activity recently has been in the nature of general trail repairs in the Barossa, Mount Crawford, Mt. Compass, Newland Head and Deep Creek areas. Trail maintenance surveys have also been done between Cudlee Creek and Glen Bold and between Moon Hill and Inman Valley.

Allan Colgrave,
Trails Co-ordinator

WATERS ROAD

Members are alerted to prepare submissions to the Onkaparinga District Council, Woodside, with a copy to be sent to the Surveyor General, Lands Department, Adelaide registering objection to the proposed closure and sale of Waters Road at Bridgewater. Reasons for the objection are required to be stated in the letter. Many members, and local residents, have already written to the Council regarding difficulties encountered when using Waters Road, which is still a public road.

However, recent enquiries indicate that a survey, for which the proposed purchaser is responsible, has been completed and the matter is now in the hands of the Onkaparinga Council. A request will shortly be forwarded by the Council to the Lands Department, and a notice will be inserted in the "Government Gazette" advising members of the community of the proposal. A Road Plan number will be stated and this number should be quoted in correspondence to the Onkaparinga Council and to the Surveyor-General. If the notice appears in the Government Gazette before publication of the next "Trailwalker", a special newsletter will be sent to members advising the Road Plan number and requesting you to forward your letter of objection, quoting this number, to both Onkaparinga Council and the Surveyor General AS SOON AS POSSIBLE as objections must be received within one month of the date appearing on the notice in the Gazette. If you have already sent an objection to either or both the Council and Lands Department, you should do so again, quoting the Road Plan Number, to ensure consideration of your objection.

The Trail Walker



The section of Waters Road in question is a delightful, undeveloped public road reserve linking Bridgewater and the Onkaparinga Valley as well as the Mount George and Kenneth Stirling Conservation Parks. It is intended to be used by the Recreation Trails Division of the S.A. Recreation Institute as part of the Mount Lofty Network Trail system. It is also the last remaining walking access between Bridgewater and Verdun, all other connecting routes having been cut by the South Eastern Freeway. It has been used by local residents over a period of many years to walk between Bridgewater and the Onkaparinga Valley area.

The Adelaide to Melbourne railway line intersects Waters Road but very few trains use the line during daylight hours when walkers are in the area. Clear vision in both directions provides ample warning of the approach of a train which is a rare occurrence.

Australian National Railways do not oppose the proposed closure, but neither will they seek closure of the section of road intersected by the railway line in the event of members' objections being upheld by the Surveyor General.

Too many undeveloped public road reserves, which provide ideal safe walking lanes, are being lost to adjoining landowners with the co-operation of local district councils. We all have a responsibility to future generations to preserve this means of safe walking access.

WE CAN AND WE MUST LIVE AND WALK SIDE BY SIDE WITH LANDOWNERS IN SCENIC AREAS OF OUR STATE, RESPECTING EACH OTHER'S RIGHT WITH DIGNITY!

A tiny skink
flattened over red rock
close as cream on milk.
Throat throbbing
eyes like mushrooms about to pop
claws burnished talons.
Curved, still.
He will disappear if I blink.

Maureen Vale

MAP CRAFT INSTRUCTION

The Map Craft Instruction session for February filled very rapidly and members have already registered for the March session to be held on Wednesday, 6 March, 1991.

Theory sessions are held at 7.30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month at the South Australian Recreation Institute, 304 Henley Beach Road, Underdale, with a practical field session on the following Sunday to complete the brief course.

Numbers for each course are limited, so if you wish to be included in these sessions, will you please register your interest by telephoning the Administrative Officer (Thelma Anderson) on 234-0844 on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. Maps and compasses are provided for the use of participants.

CONSERVATION COUNSEL OF SA INC

An Autumn School on the Marine and Coastal Environment to promote its policy on parks and reserves in South Australia will be held at the Clayton Outdoor Education Centre from Friday, 15 March to Sunday 17 March 1991.

The week-end is a fundraising venture for the Council and includes full board and lodging in excellent hostel accommodation, guest speakers and field trips (including by canoe). If anyone is interested, please contact Jasmin Rose after hours at 380 5321 for further details.

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Heysen Trail Weekends
River Murray
The Austrian Tyrol
The English Lake District
The Cotswolds

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The Trail Walker

TRAIL MONITOR COLLECTION

An excellent response for more volunteers to ensure regular collection of the monitor sheets was very encouraging.

The eleven monitor sites throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges will be serviced during March for the commencement of the 1991 Walking Season on 1 April, 1991.

Spare sheets, plastic bags, pencils, string and a check-list will be forwarded to the volunteer monitor collectors before 1 May, 1991 to enable them to collect the sheets for April and check the pencil and protective cover.

Still on the sick list is former Kyeema Trail Monitor Collector, Ian Martin. Sincere wishes to both Ian and Betty for Ian's speedy recovery.

Reserve volunteer for Trail Monitor collection, Laurel Green, is winning her battle with cancer and is to be congratulated for her determination and courage in coping with this devastating illness.

GREENING THE WALKING TRAILS

A great deal of interest in tree-planting has been indicated by members when joining the Friends.

It is proposed to form a group to organise a tree-planting programme with the co-operation of one of the existing groups involved in this activity.

All interested members are invited to attend a gathering at Arbury Park, Bridgewater (now officially the Mount George Conservation Park) on Sunday, 10 March, 1991 at 10.00 a.m. to discuss a course of action.

FIRST AID TRAINING FOR WALKERS

A basic first aid course for walkers will be conducted by Gloria Curtis, Training Officer in First Aid at St. Johns, on Tuesday, 12 March and Tuesday, 19 March, 1991 at the South Australian Recreation Institute from 7.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

As numbers are limited, members are invited to register their interest in attending this course by advising the Administrative Officer (Thelma Anderson) on 234-0844 (Monday, Thursday and Friday) as soon as possible.

Participants are required to bring a note book and pencil.

YOUTH HOSTELS ASSOCIATION

Friends' representatives attended the celebration of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Kersbrook YHA Hostel at the National Trust property, "Roachdale" on Sunday, 20 January, 1991.

The Hostel, set in a pleasant native woodland environment, was built by volunteer labour and opened in 1961 by Major General G.W. Symes. Mrs. D. Kimber, President of YHA, addressed the group of invited guests, reflecting on the trials and tribulations encountered by the amateur builders which however, paled into insignificance by the spirit of comradeship throughout the experience and the sense of achievement on completion.

8 A delightful picnic lunch, organised by the YHA Activities Committee, was enjoyed by everyone.

The Trail Walker

WALKING PROGRAMME

The Walking Committee, established at the beginning of last year, continued and expanded the programme of conducted walks for members which has now been operating, and has proved increasingly popular, for several years. There is a growing community awareness of both the enjoyment and health - physical and mental - benefits which result from recreational walking as more and more people seek involvement in this satisfying activity.

Colin Malcolm has resigned as Walking Co-ordinator - thank you to Colin and to all members of the Walking Committee for their efforts during 1990. However, plans are in hand to form a new committee, from which a leader will be appointed, to organise activities for 1991. Special thanks to those Friends who have already indicated an interest in leading walks and in assisting as members of the 1991 Walking Committee.

All prospective leaders and Committee members are invited to attend a special gathering at Arbury Park (now officially Mount George Conservation Park) on Sunday, 3 March, 1991 at 10.00 a.m. to form a Walking Committee and to plan a programme for 1991. Please bring lunch.

Details of the first walk of the season appear elsewhere in this issue under the item referring to the official opening of the 1991 Walking Season and the official opening of the bridge over the South Para River in the Warren Conservation Park.

In conjunction with the Centenary of National Parks in 1991, it is proposed that the Friends will conduct walks throughout Conservation and Recreation Parks in the Mount Lofty Ranges as part of the celebrations. These walks will form part of the Friends' extended programme and will also be offered to the public.

Details of walks available on Sunday, 28 April, 1991 will be published in the April issue of the "Trailwalker", together with a programme to the end of June, 1991.

Pictured is a group of walkers enjoying the Mount Gould walk on a delightful late Spring day in November, 1990.



The Trail Walker

SOUTH PARA RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

As reported in the previous issue of the "Trailwalker", the major part of the Friends' contribution to the Centenary of National Parks in South Australia in 1991 will be the provision of a pedestrian bridge over the South Para River in the Warren Conservation Park.

Work has commenced and will be completed in ample time for the official opening.

A combined ceremony to declare open the bridge and the 1991 Walking Season, at which the Hon. Kym Mayes, Minister of Recreation and Sport, will officiate, will be held at the site of the bridge in the Warren Conservation Park on Sunday, 7 April, 1991, at 12.00 p.m. All members are cordially invited to attend.

As referred to in the Walking Programme item in this issue, the FIRST WALKS FOR THE 1991 SEASON will enable walkers to enjoy a walk through either the Hale or Warren Conservation Parks and be present at the official ceremony for lunch and continue the walk in the afternoon, either by retracing the morning route or continuing through the other Park. Of course, individual arrangements for transport will need to be made.

One walk will commence at 10.00 a.m. from the Warren Conservation Park entrance on Watts Gully Road (eastern side of Kersbrook to Williamstown Road) and a second walk will leave from the Williamstown-Gumeracha Road at the same time. Members choosing this alternative are asked to meet at Williamstown by 9.45 a.m. in the parking area near the big gum tree. Please come prepared for a normal walking day with lunch and drinking water. A delightful walk is available from both directions, but the terrain is rugged with some steep sections.

Special arrangements for members wishing to attend the official ceremony but not to walk, are currently being negotiated. If you are interested in this alternative, will you please contact Thelma Anderson, Administrative Officer, (Tel. 234-0844) on Mon., Thurs. & Fri.) for further details.

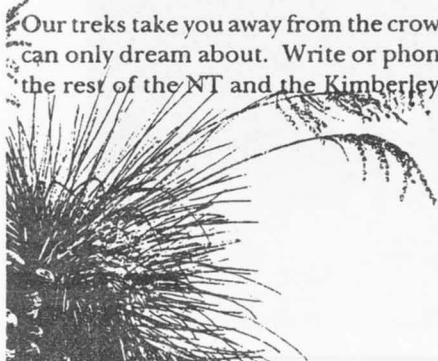
THE MACDONNELL RANGES

Rising almost vertically out of the plain that surrounds them, the Macdonnell Ranges dominate the central Australian landscape. Incredibly rugged and forbidding at first glance, they hide numerous deep gorges where permanent water provides green oases, the sole remaining habitat for ancient plant species which covered central Australia in days when the land was far wetter.

Those who view the Macdonnells from below see only a small part of the landscape made famous throughout the world by Albert Namatjira and other Aranda painters. They miss the spectacular vistas you get from the high points. The mountains seem to extend for ever as they snake out of sight to the east and west.

This is a landscape where colour dominates as nowhere else. Sometimes it is a striking contrast such as a white ghost gum outlined against blue sky or red rock. At others, a subtle merging as when the soft greens and yellows of the plains yield to the blues of distant hills. Whether striking or subtle, it is always beautiful.

Our treks take you away from the crowds into the heart of the ranges to enjoy the sights and experiences that others can only dream about. Write or phone for a free brochure describing our bushwalking tours in the Macdonnells, the rest of the NT and the Kimberley.



Willis's Walkabouts
12 Carrington Street
Millner NT 0810
Phone: (089) 85 2134
Fax: (089) 85 2355



The Trail Walker

JUNIOR TRAIL WALKERS AND WORKERS AT WIRRABARA

If you are in the Wirrabara Forest, keep a lookout for activities bearing a blue and white Forest Care logo.

Children from Wirrabara Primary School have been setting up a Kids' Trail in the forest between the picnic ground and the old nursery. A major part of their school camp was devoted to digging post holes, putting in marker posts and clearing the trail.

The trail is just one aspect of "Project Forest Care", a co-operative venture between the school and Wirrabara Woods and Forests Department. It began in July, 1990 and will continue to expand over the next few years.

The forestry workers have been fantastic in supplying resources, help and encouragement, even if a demonstration of how to eat live witchetty grubs was a bit hard to stomach! One priority recently completed was the restoration of an old hut in the old forest nursery that had been badly defaced by graffiti. The trail is nearing completion, with other trails planned. A programme of planting in the old nursery area will help to retain the unique character of this area which was the first forest nursery in Australia.

Tony Fairweather, Principal,
Wirrabara Primary School

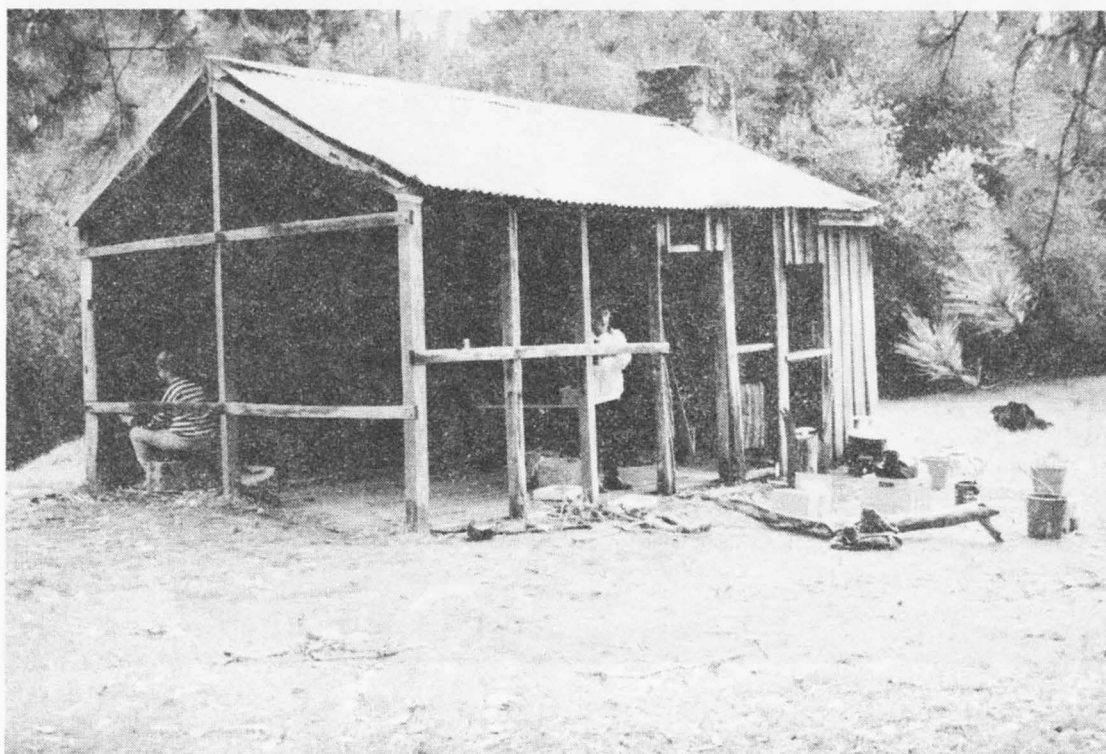
Congratulations to the students of Wirrabara Primary School on your enterprise and initiative!



Boyce demonstrating how to eat live witchetty grubs.



Hut restoration sign.
Presented by Director of Forestry Resources
(Bob Cowin)



Hard at work painting over graffiti

The Trail Walker

IN PLACE OF STRIFE

This Paper was presented by Terry Lavender, Manager, Recreation Trails Unit, S.A. Recreation Institute at a National Conference held in Adelaide in October, 1990 to discuss "CONFLICT IN PARKS".

South Australia is not usually considered to be one of the Commonwealth's scenically attractive States. Yet those of us who traverse its busy, mountains and coastal areas, have found it to be a most exciting and interesting place to walk. Indeed, South Australia, with its moderate climate and abundance of scenic attractions, its valleys, its rugged mountain ranges, its gorges, its lush rolling hills and its ancient rugged coast, is a most appealing State for walkers.

It is often a source of bewilderment and wonder to many people why the State Government should go ahead and take on a project so full of pitfalls as the establishment of walking trails. At the very outset the project seemed doomed. Grave predictions were made as to the failure of a scheme such as this, and to the physical and mental health of any public servant that took part in it. The prophets of doom were soon to come forward. They gazed into the heavens, they cast the runes and they looked into their crystal balls, and saw Ministers being burnt in effigy, they saw public servants pilloried, they saw only depression and failure for those who were bold enough to take on such a project. Why then, would any Government involve itself in a scheme so certain to be doomed to failure.

When the Department of Recreation and Sport was formed in 1975, it had a small, competent and highly informed staff. Those staff members could answer questions on a wide range of traditionally popular Australian pastimes. Yet from the day that the Department first opened its doors for business, visitors to the reception desk and callers over the telephone did not ask the questions that we believed would be asked. They did not ask questions about cricket or football. What they did ask was, "Where can I go for a walk?" Nine out of ten enquiries were something to do with walking or access to the natural or rural countryside. Surveys showed clearly that it was passive pastimes such as walking, cycling and to a lesser extent horse-riding that were the recreations that the majority of the people would undertake. A 1984 survey clearly showed that in excess of 250,000 South Australians regularly walked for pleasure, and that an equal number would have done so had the facilities been available to them. Considering that South Australia has only a population of approximately 1.25 million people, this represents a very high percentage. But it is not unique or unusual for this level of participation or desired participation to become apparent in a community. The figures for Australia as a whole indicate strongly that there are three million people who walk, out of a population of 16 million people. That is enormous support for one single activity. These figures are repeated around the western world. In Britain walking for pleasure, as they call it, is acknowledged as the most popular pastime. The same can be said for the most of northern Europe, and certainly for North America.

It was in this climate that the South Australian Government set about developing a state-wide network of walking trails.

In 1969, the concept of a long-distance walking trail for South Australia from Cape Jervis on the Fleurieu Peninsula, to Mt. Babbage, 1600 km north in the northern Flinders Ranges, [proposed by Warren Bonython who is now a Vice-President of the Friends'] was accepted by the Government of the day. And so the development of the Heysen Trail began. It soon encountered problems. Five different Planning Officers were destined to take charge of the project during the next seven years.

The Long Distance Trail Committee always based the development of the trail on legislation. A Recreation Trails Bill was drawn up, but this caused more problems than it solved. Some district councils opposed the Heysen Trail and many landowners voiced their objections to it. Many were critical of the legislation and its American origins. The possibility of the Bill containing powers of compulsory acquisition did nothing to still the criticism. Some progress was made during 1976. Nine kilometres of trail was constructed but this was mainly through the Cleland Conservation Park. Indeed, the projections of the early critics were beginning to come true and were forcing the development of the Heysen Trail to a rapid halt.

In 1978 the Government of the day placed the responsibility for the development of walking trails under the Ministry of Tourism, Recreation and Sport, now known as the South Australian Recreation Institute. And so the South Australian Recreation Institute found itself at the beginning of one of the biggest and boldest outdoor recreation undertakings ever to go forward in South Australia. For any group of recreationists to be given the responsibility of creating one of the world's longest walking trails through the principal ranges of mountains of the State was a daunting task.

In June, 1979, we undertook a feasibility study between Cape Jervis and Parachilna Gorge, some 700km north of Adelaide. The results of this study clearly demonstrated that the Heysen Trail could be developed only if agreements with the number of Government Departments were forthcoming. The National Parks and Wildlife Service, Woods and Forests, Engineering and Water Supply, Lands Department, Education Department, and the active co-operation of some twenty-two district councils would also be needed, if we were to achieve our aim.

All Government Departments gave their support to the trail. There were and still are obvious areas of conflict. The Woods and Forests Department's prime responsibility is to produce softwoods, a product of which South Australia is in desperately short supply. The Woods and Forests Department has shown considerable forethought, by keeping large tracts of native forest for the pleasure of South Australians. Obviously where the Trail passes through active forests it will, from time to time, need to be closed and detoured in areas where logging or thinning is being conducted. Similarly with the Engineering and Water Supply Department.

However, we had over the preceding years dealt with many of these and were on good terms with them. Our dealings with Government Departments were carried out on a face to face officer level and the outcome was almost always successful. Not only did departments such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service support what we were doing but they did so with great enthusiasm.

What really now began to daunt us was the fact that we were to deal with some 300 freehold landowners who were either to be asked to have the Heysen Trail on their property or on a Crown reserve adjacent to it.

Rural communities would not be easily converted to the advantages of a network of walking trails. Indeed, many landowners directly opposed this and voiced their opinions loudly and clearly. They feared a lowering of their income and a change in their traditional way of life.

People living in rural districts working on the land do not have a high opinion of Government nor of their public servants. Rural dwellers live a precarious life, often with very large capital investments with very modest returns.

Often properties which comprise a considerable freehold acreage, numerous sheds, a substantial house, perhaps more than one, a considerable amount of plant and equipment which would total up to many millions of dollars, and if sold and invested, could be lived on probably as well as from the earnings on the land. Added to this, such people live in constant jeopardy of rains, floods, drought, fire, disease and simple bad luck, and yet many of them choose to do that and would want no other life.

The Trail Walker

You can imagine then that their opinion of public servants is perceived as high wages, absolute security of tenure in their jobs, superannuation and dwelling all their working lives in a secure air-conditioned ivory tower. How then was my staff and myself to make an approach?

The vision haunted us of a bright shiny car arriving in the farmyard and from it alighting a charcoal-grey clad public servant who delicately minces his way across the farmyard, carefully dodging the cow pats as he goes.

South Australia is a vast State, but its population is very small - a million and a quarter people living in an area the size of New South Wales and Victoria combined. In all this vast State, only .75% of South Australia's population lives outside of the cities and of all of the population in the State, three-quarters of that population live in or close to Adelaide.

The rural communities that we were to pass through would be living quite a different life-style from ourselves. How then would we be able to start successful negotiations with a group of men and women who lived without many of the conveniences of modern life that we all take for granted? Often areas without water, sewerage, electricity, public transport and in the seventies without good radio reception and no television or postal services, but on the other hand were areas where people chose to live because they enjoyed other things. They did not have all of the charges associated with the services that we in the city enjoy. Nor did they have to put up with crowded roads, pollution or stobie poles. They were able to shop in the general store without having their brains numbed by so-called popular music being played at outrageous noise levels. In other words, people in rural areas tended to live a life-style much different from those in the city.

Their values were often the values of the fifties. In country areas, a person was expected to do the right thing! To seek permission to camp, or to walk across a farm.

People living in rural areas had often expressed a number of fears arising out of increased visitor impact in their areas. The question for us was, in fact, were these fears genuine or were they simply the reaction of unselfish people who wanted to keep a traditional way of life to themselves. From our discussions with the United Farmers and Stockowners Association we became convinced that these fears were indeed genuine and we set out from the very beginning to do whatever we could to overcome them. These fears were usually headed by the fear of increased likelihood of bushfires. This we would overcome by keeping the Heysen Trail closed during the bushfire season between December and March each year. Third party liability for those injured on freehold properties also was a major fear. We overcame this by asking our Minister to indemnify landowners against the possibility of being sued. Damage to fences and gates being left open and allowing stock to wander was also a great fear and this we overcame by adopting the European stile, whereby a fence would be protected from damage and there would be no necessity to open a gate. Armed with techniques like this we set out to go into the country areas to commence our negotiations. Although, in all cases, we spoke to the District Council at its meetings, and often at the Council's request spoke to public meetings in the village hall, - some of which I might say were extremely lively - most of our negotiations were to be done by visiting individual farmers, graziers and stockowners.

And so we determined our strategy.

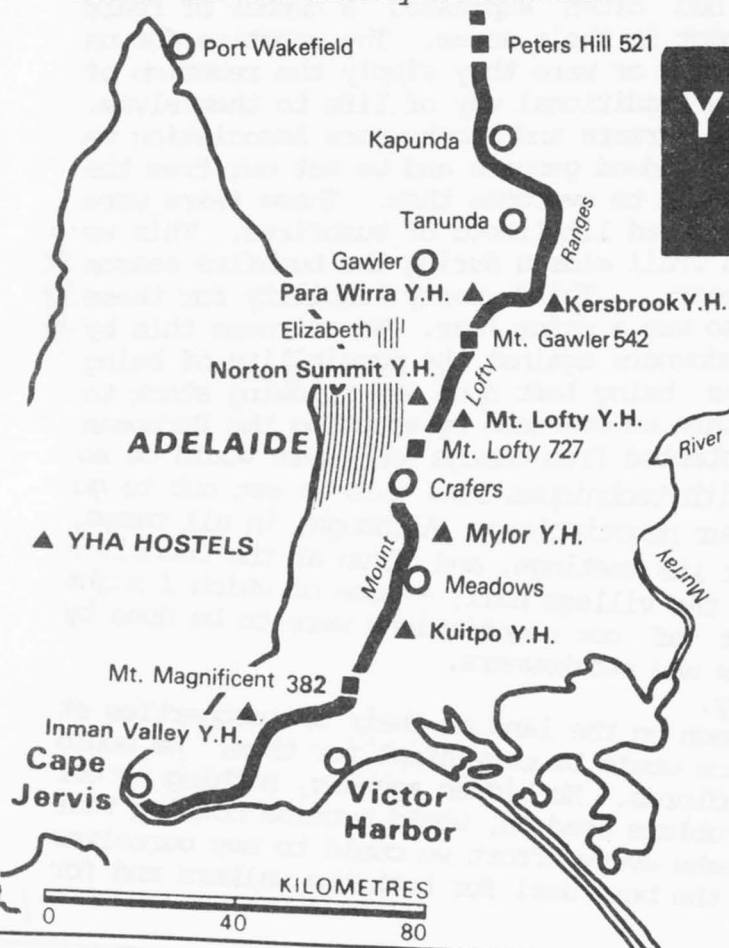
We would meet the men and women on the land on their own properties at whatever time and at whatever place would be convenient for them. We would be frank and open with the landlords. No hidden agendas, nothing up our sleeves! We would confront the problems head on, would promise nothing that we could not deliver and would make every effort we could to see ourselves truly as the middle man getting the best deal for both the walkers and for the landowner.

We have often found ourselves sheltering from the heat of the day in a hay shed, or in a corner of a dairy before dawn. We have eaten our lunch in barns and often spent the evening in front of the kitchen fire eating fresh scones. In all we decided that we would be down to earth and practical people. We also decided that a negotiation process would not end with a simple agreement. The Managers of the Trail would continue to be accessible by day or night on the telephone and made certain that each landowner had our business and home numbers; also with the invitation to reverse the charges wherever they might have found us. We have kept them informed through the Friends' magazine "The Trailwalker" and so our negotiations have been done face to face on the land and sealed more often than not with the shake of hands. Now the Heysen Trail nears its end. It is almost with a sadness that we see the job finishing. Rather like the disappointment on coming to the end of a good book.

We have negotiated with over twenty District Councils and some three hundred freehold landowners. Of these most are moderately happy. Some have become firm supporters of the Trail and now work actively on its development and maintenance. Others have become close friends of members of the staff. Some are, of course, still disaffected with the Trail and their distrust of city people and their suspicions about the Trail itself have continued. But these are very few indeed. Out of that 300 they could be counted on one hand. Even though they are still opposed to what we do we continue to maintain a liaison with them and will do everything we can to lessen the impact of the Trail upon their livelihood and their traditional way of life.

In conclusion then, the South Australian Government has undertaken one of the boldest, most radical outdoor recreation developments ever undertaken in this State. We have brought together the people from the country and from the city and we believe that we have a facility that is second to none and will be of great benefit both to the country people, the city dwellers, our State and our country as a whole.

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The Trail Walker

JUNE LONG WEEK-END IN THE FLINDERS RANGES

A marvellous week-end was spent walking in the area between Parachilna and Wilpena under the guidance of Friends' Council member, Dave Glover and his partner Don Jensen, who had recently joined forces to form 'Track'N'Trail - a company for both walks and outback tours. Fifteen of us, varying in age from twenties to late fifties, were based at Angorichina Village, with all the comforts of hot showers and soft beds! And from there we ventured daily onto the Heysen Trail. The group split into two parties, which nicely reflected personal abilities (a faster group and a slower group) and with judicious placement of cars we were able to minimise travel time to and from the start of the day's walk.

Travel up to Angorichina on the Friday evening was staggered to meet the needs of the participants, with the last car arriving approximately 12.30 a.m. However, we all managed to be up 'bright and breezy' for 7.30 a.m. breakfast and ready by 9 O'clock.

On the Saturday both contingents made their way south along the Blinman Road and one then parked at Yanyanna Hut and walked south, while the second group parked at Wilpena and walked north up the Trail - exchanging vehicles at the end of the day.

I was with the Yanyanna group, walking south over very rocky terrain and the Trail is not well-marked in this section, but the higher ground afforded magnificent views west to the A.B.C. Range and further south to Wilpena Pound. With the lack of adequate markers the intersection of the Heysen Trail with a fire access track at Bunyerroo Creek would have been easy to miss but with our astute leader, we were soon on the right path - climbing up to view the panorama of a very verdant countryside, with clear, running water in most of the creeks we crossed. A one and a half kilometre 'stumble' along a rocky, dry, creek bed brought us out to its junction with Wilcolo Creek - and lunch with the others in a meadow clearing.

The afternoon section was straightforward and well-signposted, with the detour avoiding a climb up onto the outer ramparts of the Pound, instead, affording gentle undulations south to Wilpena Station. The light was fading as we trod our way around the Caravan Park to the Heysen Trail start, where we joined the others (who'd made faster time to the Hut) - and we then all adjourned to the Blinman pub for a Saturday night 'on the town'!

Sunday's walk had one group starting from the Village and onto the Trail at Parachilna Gorge, while the second went down to Aroona Ruins and travelled north. This section is well-marked, offering 22+ kilometres of undulating path following the main Aroona Creek and numerous crossings of its tributaries from the west. The Heysen Range forms a beautiful backdrop and there are remains of various mining ventures on the eastern side of the creek - with Pigeon Bore forming a definite landmark a few kilometres north of Aroona. Tea that night was a convivial outdoor B.B.Q., with the good food, good company, and an occasional drink keeping away the night chills!

Monday had us busy cleaning out the huts prior to setting out to view Blinman Pools - or what we could see in the allotted time. Dave pointed out the disused, underground, meat and food storage areas near the Village, as we jumped and capered across the well-filled creek in an effort to keep our feet dry. The only injury of the week-end occurred when someone misjudged a jump and used a hand to save himself. We ended the walk trying to be as nimble as the goats, kangaroos and emus we'd encountered on the Trail!

A very contented group made its return to Adelaide that afternoon and not even the breakdown of a vehicle (which necessitated 'doubling up' in the other cars, could detract from that feeling of good fortune that - thanks to the two leaders - we had been able to walk and enjoy the Heysen Trail without backpacks!.

The Trail Walker

SOMETHING DIFFERENT!

I still walk quite a few kilometres a week, but my only near adventure lately has been almost stepping on a brown snake on the path at the top of the cliffs at Moana South. This, I will admit, gave me one big fright. I did not argue with it when it hissed at me as I gave it right of way and a wide berth. Beyond this I was feeling life was getting a bit tame so I booked a flight in a sail plane. The members of the Adelaide Soaring Club, where I booked, have their club at Gawler and this adventure turned out to be one of the highlights of my life.

I asked my son, Paul, to come along for his birthday. I must admit that I had an ulterior motive as I handed the chore of driving my car over to him. It is quite a distance from my home at Moana South to the Soaring Club at Gawler. (We Mums are not as dumb as our families think!)

We had to wait quite a few hours for our flight, as a group of Air Force cadets were doing their solo flights. We had a good look around Gawler - a pretty little town. We also watched the activities at the airfield, which was a very busy and extremely well-run place.

When my turn came for my flight they insisted I wear a parachute strapped to me. Getting me into the sail plane with this on was a major feat. Anyone more ungainly would have been hard to find. I did not know whether to laugh or cry! After a struggle, and with the help of half of the members of the ground crew, I made it into the sail plane cockpit. The sail plane was then towed by a nylon rope which is attached to the tail of an aeroplane. The rope is approximately sixty feet long, and being nylon, has plenty of give in it which helps prevent unpleasant jerks or, worse still, the rope breaking as the slack is taken up. When the plane reaches a height of 2,000 feet there is a terrific bang as the pilot of the sail plane releases the rope from the front of the sail plane. The aeroplane then returned to land and we glided blissfully on.

The experience is simply out of this world. It is so peaceful and silent. On that day we could not go a great distance as the thermal currents were very poor. However, I believe if they are good, one can glide around for many hours. I find it hard to describe the feeling of utter peace one feels when gliding around with the birds and the landscape many feet below, looking like a beautiful picture.

Dennis, my pilot, taught me how to sight different landmarks and other planes by using the Air Force terms to time these objects at one O'clock, eleven O'clock, etc. Once our altitude dropped to 1,000 feet we had to make our landing preparations and start circling to land. The landing went very smoothly but, of course, was far too soon for me. Getting me out of the sail plane cockpit was another major exercise, but with many helping hands I made it, though at one stage I thought they would have to call in a crane. To make matters worse I was still very sore from the surgery I'd had just a month before.

Finally, back on firm ground, I looked up and saw a sail plane doing all sorts of aerobatics and guessed that my son Paul was in that one. He had gone up with a young pilot, John, and they did all sorts of hair-raising things, much to Paul's delight, though I noticed he did look a bit pale upon landing!

I learned that these small sail planes cost around \$90,000 and are made of a special fibreglass compound that does not craze in the sun. They are made in Germany and are imported to Australia where the Government charges up to 45% sales tax on each one - a pretty hefty sum I feel. I believe most clubs buy the sail planes and hire them out and, of course, some are privately owned.

I found sail planing a really enjoyable experience and would love to do it again some day in the near future.



The Trail Walker

TURKISH DELIGHT

The first time I visited Turkey was by small scruffy boat whose excellent cook was a fugitive who could never risk going ashore. After dropping him off on a small deserted island in the Aegean we docked at Bodrum, Ancient Halicarnassus, just below its magnificent Crusader's Castle which is floodlit to great effect after dark. The harbour is lined with caiques made of golden wood and along the quay totter "Ships of the Desert". Their owner holds up a placard inviting tourists to (literally transcribed) "Live me ecstasy of Bodrum's Charms by Riding Camel" - not the greatest of Turkish Delights.

In complete contrast on my more recent visit I sailed from Athens on the Orient Express Vessel which like the train is the ultimate in luxury: two pools, four restaurants, theatre and the ballroom that rendered our well-appointed cabins superfluous as we danced the night away. After sailing through the Dardanelles we arrived at fabled Istanbul, the sun glinting on the domes of mosques and minarets that pierce the sky. Our hotel was a former house of the Ottoman Empire that retained its decadent grandeur in the beautiful Byzantine mosaics that covered floors, the sumptuous rugs and brocaded drapes, the richness of chandeliers and ornaments, and in the complexity of architectural detail. In the basement were Turkish baths where clients were pummelled mercilessly on marble slabs. The masochists assured us, during dinner served on a balcony overlooking the Bosphorous, that it had done them a power of good.

A short distance up a muddy street from the Hotel was the Blue Mosque where an open-air Sound and Light performance was given every evening in a different language. The lighting created the effect of a fairy tale palace that could fly away transported on its six tall slender minarets. It is the addition of minarets that turned churches into mosques. Today they are fitted with loudspeakers that regularly transmit calls to prayer but it is mostly only retired people who respond as workers have to keep to standard hours.

Days of sightseeing emphasised Istanbul's remoteness from modern Europe. The first of many mosques we entered (after removing shoes) was Sophia, the mosque which dominates the city's skyline. The decorative arabesques and delicate calligraphy on its walls and massive columns are characteristic of Moslem civilization, as is the confining of women to balconies or small pens at the back, despite the vastness of the internal space. Females had more room but not more status in the rambling harem of the Topkapi Palace which rules over the Golden Horn. It was built by Suleyman the Magnificent. His nightly choice of concubine was indicated to the Chief Eunuch and the girl was bathed, perfumed and dressed exquisitely.

As we crossed from the Palace to the Museum a Festival procession of dissonant bands, courtiers dressed in feudal costumes with elaborate headdresses and fierce-looking warriors in chainmail armour paraded into the courtyard. The Museum houses a dazzling collection of jewels, many amassed by Suleyman, a patron of the arts, and includes a huge pearl in the shape of a Sultan.

At the end of a week we left Istanbul for an extensive tour. First we visited a few of Turkey's sixteen National Parks - yes, a surprise to me too! They are still relatively undeveloped and are very diverse in character as exemplified by the Ulug Dag and Kuscenneti National Parks.

Ulug Dag is the principal winter sport resort in Turkey and has snow covering from December to May. On our hike up Mt. Olympus (3,000 metres) in June snow patches on surrounding mountains enhanced the views and broke up the barren granitic rocks of the higher altitudes. Walks below the tree-line were more attractive especially when the coniferous belt of alpine vegetation gave way to a medley of broad-leaved trees such as chestnuts, beeches and maples. On one ramble through these lovely woods we met an eccentric old hermit living in a tree-hut. He excitedly showed us some scrapings in the



The Trail Walker

earth nearby which our guide interpreted as having been recently made by a wild boar (are boars ever tame?). Wolves, bears, deer and reptiles are some of the other inhabitants of the Ulag Dag Park.

The Kuscenneti National Park is a complete contrast to Ulag Dag. It is situated in the lowlands by Kus Golu (Bird Lake). In Spring the waters rise and migratory waterbirds from northern Europe nest in the reeds and willows around the great expanse of the lake. Species include herons, glossy ibis, cormorants, reed nightingales, pelicans, swans and geese. The formal entrance to the Park was bordered with vivid flowers and rosebushes but beyond the Information Centre the tracks that meander through the Sanctuary were often ill-defined and marshy. All the way we could hear small birds singing sweetly but could only see them when we looked through binoculars from the discreetly concealed hides.

The next stage of the tour in terrific heat was in a coach without airconditioning or ventilation. Through blurs of sweat we saw cultivation of olives, figs, grapes, watermelon, tobacco and cottonfields where women were cotton picking. Late in the evening our bus passed open trucks which were carting the women packed like cattle back to small villages through which we had driven earlier in the day, noting the many men sitting outside cafes.

Along the side of the roads we frequently saw dancing bears, poor toothless mangy animals which jumped whenever their master banged his tambourine. They had been trained to this reaction by having their paws burnt every time they heard the sound.

The tour included many of Turkey's magnificent archaeological sites. Because of shortage of funds the sites are far less developed than excavated ruins in Italy and Greece which greatly intensifies their impact. Weeds, wildflowers in profusion, and bushes grow around fallen masonry (in the undergrowth at Priene snakes were mating and ready to attack), and there are fewer tourists to spoil the atmosphere. That so much of the grand structures remain is astounding considering the whole of Turkey is an earthquake region. A 4.5 on the Richter Scale tremor was registered fairly close to Celcuk while we were there. Today's crumbling houses that are held together with bits of tin, the burnt woodwork and tangles of cables and wires bear witness to the unstable terrain.

Ephesus is one of the largest archaeological sites in the world. Its white marble-paved streets are flanked with colonnades, civic buildings, porticos, a library, baths, a brothel, gymnasium, the Temple of Hadrian, and the Temple of Diana, the multi-breasted Lady of All Things Wild, which was one of the seven wonders of the world. Cleopatra made her triumphal entry up its Arcadian Way to visit Mark Antony. St. Paul preached in its theatre which seats 25,000 and has excellent acoustics. All streets had lighting from 400 B.C. and elaborate water and sewage systems. The whole massive complex in which there are so many expressions of the noble and elegant conveys a vivid impression of the richness of thought and life of the civilization that created it.

From Ephesus we drove past the crenellated Byzantine fortress on the hilltop near Celcuk and on to a hotel in Kusadasi. In the evening we were taken (the sublime to the banal) to one of the many raucous stuffy nightclubs along the seafront where obese Belly Dancers perform, wobbling and gyrating to drums and squawking violins and keeping up a continuous jangle of bells held in their hands. Any man who fails to insert a note into the dancer's bra or bikini will be bumped until he pays up.

It was with relief that we resumed the far more inspiring visits to archaeological sites with their infinite variations of situation and layout. Pergamum, the grandest of the North Aegean sites, has a library that contained 200,000 volumes. Its theatre is not for those who suffer from vertigo - 78 rows of seats (instead of the more usual 48) are pitched at an angle of 72 degrees. Nor were its plays for the squeamish. When they

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included a murder it was real not acted. In its arena gladiators fought with wild animals. Sometimes it was flooded for sea battles or crocodile fights. In the same region is the Asklepieion, a great medical centre of hospitals, baths, a four-Corinthian columned latrine room with 30 splendid marble seats, and buildings for culture and entertainment. Here Asklepios practised his healing methods which were the basis of medicine until the Renaissance. The treatment combined the analysis of dreams, diet, exercise and social interaction. The snakes carved on blocks are the symbol of Asklepios. Just as a snake sheds its skin to gain a new life so the sick shed illness and emerge healthy.

The tour continued to Miletos, once the greatest of Ionian trading cities. When the Ionian colonists arrived they slaughtered all the men and married the widows! And to Priene which has the most spectacular setting of all perched up in the lee of rocky outcrops with glorious views towards the sea. It is one of the best examples in the world of a Hellenistic City as hardly any later Roman structures have been overlaid on the Hellenistic.

Long before fascination with the ancient world waned we were returned to Istanbul. Souvenir collectors were able to satisfy every whim at the Covered Grand Bazaar, a labyrinth of tunnels and arcades with some 2,000 shops selling just about everything and especially Turkish carpets. Paunchy shop or factory owners accost potential buyers, nudge them into their lairs, serve them deliciously refreshing apple tea and then perform a carefully orchestrated theatrical act, flinging in the air, tossing about and flipping over dozens of really gorgeous silk, cotton and wool rugs that change colour with the light and placement. The slightest flicker of interest leads to high pressure harangues and haggles over price. Several friends succumbed. I was not impressed by the boast that the best carpets were made by eight to twelve year-old children as only they had small enough fingers to tie the umpteen knots per square centimetre that are needed to produce the finest fabrics. I purchased instead a kilo of Turkish Delight.

Jean M. Cook

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The Trail Walker

HOW GREEN WAS THE VALLEY OF EDEN

In September last year Muff and I enjoyed our fifth Bed and Breakfast trek and discovered a few more comfortable stopovers.....And we STILL think it's a great way to walk!

Muff's 14 year-old grandson accompanied us the first day, a great introduction to the Heysen Trail - 30 degrees and steep! He was exhausted but enjoyed the day, although he says he is too embarrassed to tell his friends he went walking with two grandmothers.

This time my daughter, Carol, drove us to Birdwood where our walk began. We followed Winton Road to Forreston, then Forrest Road to link up with the Heysen Trail, and continued through a section of Mt. Crawford Forest (I had forgotten how steep it was!) to Puddledock Farm, our first overnight stay. Richard and Janice Garnham are members of the Friends and look after several monitors along the Trail. Puddledock Farm is shown as a ruin on the Heysen Trail map, which it was when the Garnham's bought it fifteen years ago. However, Richard has put a lot of hard work and craftsmanship into restoring the cottage, and the guest room (for two people) is delightful. Janice is a collector of antiques, specialising in kitchen gadgets, and enjoys showing her guests how the ingenious old inventions work - in most instances a lot better than the modern plastic fall-apart variety!

Tuesday morning Richard brought us in a cup of tea while Janice prepared breakfast and cut our lunch. We set off about 9.00 a.m., following the trail to Watts Gully Road where we turned right, then through the forest (I agree with Laurel Green [October, 1990 "Trailwalker"] - pine forests are lovely to walk through, quiet and peaceful, yet now and then producing the unexpected). Our next overnight stay was Holmes Estate, east of Springton, so we set our course due east as best we could. It was a long walk, approximately 28km, and we were glad to arrive at our destination at 5.30 p.m'. Leon and Leonie Holmes have a spacious self-contained cabin which they rent to overnights and Leonie had prepared a casserole and dessert for our evening meal, with cereal, eggs, cheese, bread, rolls and fresh fruit for breakfast, enabling us to cut our own lunch before heading off for Keyneton the next day.

A change of scenery on Wednesday as we followed quiet dirt roads over gently undulating farmland, across the River Marne to the delightful township of Eden Valley, where we stopped for a drink and an icecream at the local store. Two kilometres of quiet bitumen to scenic Peggy Hill Road led us to our next overnight stop at "Rockville", a lovely homestead set in a pretty garden and surrounded by green pasture and majestic gums. After a refreshing shower our hostess served a delicious three-course meal in front of a cosy fire and told us the history of the homestead.

"Rockville" is only eleven kilometres from Angaston, our next stop, so we lengthened the walk by going through Keyneton and following unsealed roads north of the township, where we noticed considerable re-afforestation taking place. We stayed that night at comfortable Angaston Hotel.

The original plan had been to continue on to Tanunda via Tanunda Creek Road, Kaiser Stuhl Conservation Park and the Heysen Trail. However, for various reasons we decided to return home early, so boarded a bus at 9.00 a.m. and enjoyed a relaxing drive back to Adelaide.

P.S. How often we have laughed at the number of times our hosts have remarked "You are our first guests to have arrived on foot".

Maps used: ONKAPARINGA 6628-II
BAROSSA 6628-I
ANGASTON 6728-IV



The Trail Walker

MOUNT KOSCIUSKO

All my life I have loved trees and mountains. The joy of my life is to climb a mountain and from the top admire the view. Even as a child I longed for trees and mountains. I was brought up in an isolated swampy area where there was not even a hill, let alone a mountain. Trees were non-existent. I guess the area's only claim to fame was an abundance of snakes of all types - how I hated it!

I always dreamed of climbing Mount Kosciusko. In the New Year of 1989 my dream came true, thanks to Eric and May of the South Australian Road Runners Club. They invited my bush-walking friend, Joan and me to accompany them with their running group to Thredbo.

The journey there by bus took 19 hours. It was very tiring but excitement kept us going. The lodge we stayed at was Schuss House. The room Joan and I shared was very small and was made even smaller when we were joined by Caroline who was lots of fun and did not mind sharing a room with two women old enough to be her mother. We were so crowded that if one turned over in bed we all had to - (a slight exaggeration!). We turned it into a fun situation and had lots of laughs.

On the second day I realised my ambition and climbed to the top of Mount Kosciusko, something I will never forget. We went up to the Crackenback terminal on the chair lift then walked about seven kilometres to the summit. I had made up my mind to climb this mountain even if I had to crawl. Once or twice I thought I may have to do just that! The altitude had affected my breathing and turned my legs to jelly. I felt like this for nearly three days!

I saw my first pockets of snow. The mountain side above the tree-line was one carpet of wildflowers in pinks, blue, white and yellow. I will never forget this scene! We did quite a few other walks. One of the main ones was the Lakes walk, which was very taxing. We took a path at the top of the range and walked towards Charlotte Pass. The weather was very cold but the scenery was out of this world. It was so cold we ate our lunch going along as it was too cold to stop and eat.

Another day we went by bus to Charlotte Pass, then walked right down to the Snowy River and crossed over and climbed up the other side and walked to the Blue Lake. This was not too bad, but on the way back we found out that the side of the valley we had walked down was extremely steep. Climbing up again was a test of one's fitness and determination. I never thought I would make it! I later discovered it was called Coronary Hill - how I agree! Some of the places have very odd names. Another walk we did was called Dead Horse Gap, so named, I think, on account of the swarms of large stinging flies.

I think our best nature walk was Merritts Nature Walk. Before starting we inspected Australia's highest weather station which is not far from the Crackenback terminal. We started off among the wildflowers above the tree-line, going down to various lookouts with spectacular views. During this walk we descended to running creeks with huge ferns growing on their banks. To our delight we saw several black cockatoos. The male of the species is shiny black with red feathers on its neck and head. The female was just a grey-black and, of course, we saw parrots and kookaburras.

We did many other shorter walks in this area, but the ones mentioned were our best.

Even though I was elected cook for our group I can honestly say everyone survived the arduous walks - and my cooking. We returned to Adelaide very tired but in tip-top condition - I feel a fitting final to a lifetime ambition.

The Trail Walker

WALKING AROUND MYLOR IN SPRING

Our group, the Hackham West Bushwalkers, decided to follow the Heysen Trail from Glen Bold along Glen Bold Road and turn down Feder Road and to cross the Onkaparinga River on the swinging bridge.

It was a beautiful day - the wattle and prunus trees were in full bloom. With the pink of the prunus and yellow of the wattle and a background of green hills it was like a magnificent painting that only Nature could paint. We stopped numerous times to admire the scenery.

When we came to the crossing of the Onkaparinga on the swinging bridge we had a spot of bother as one of our group, Moira, very quietly said "I cannot go over that bridge!". She was so calm about it that I thought she was joking. After a couple of attempts I could see it was no joke as, by this time, even though outwardly calm, she was quite a few degrees paler, so I gave her "A" for trying.

She decided to turn back by herself - a no-no in bushwalking - but she insisted no-one go back with her as there were plenty of farm houses on the track back so we let her go back by herself.

We went on our way. I wonder if Mylor people realise how beautiful their district is!

We had a bit of a hiccup following the Trail as some bright spark had removed the Heysen Trail marker from the road sign and placed it on another sign across the road pointing in the wrong direction - and to do this they had pulled out two nails and hammered them into the other post!

We replaced the metal marker in the right place - no easy task with only a stone for a tool. It was fortunate I had walked this part of the Trail before so realised that what happened.

I often wonder if people who do this type of thing have a brain or a complete vacuum!

We continued on our way down Silver Lake Road to the Mylor/Strathalbyn Road, then turned off this road onto Glen Bold Road and back to Glen Bold. We had walked a complete circle of about 10 km.

When we arrived at Glen Bold, Moira had just returned. We found she had just done her good deed for the day. On the way back she met a lady trying to drive her cow home by following it with her car. The cow would have none of this so Moira walked behind the cow and the lady drove her car. Much to their relief the cow walked sedately home under Moira's control.

As it was quite early I took the group over the Heysen Trail's famous bog ladder - very aptly named - then returned to Glen Bold, again via the bog ladder. However, I had a slight mishap when Moira remarked about the large clumps of Snow Drops growing in the mud. I took my eyes off my feet and promptly stepped off the planks into the mud and sank up to my knees. I squelched my way back to the cars on a high after enjoying a day of seeing such beautiful scenery.

It makes one feel lucky to be alive!

Laurel Green, Hackham West Walking Group

Goanna spread along a gumtree
belly fattened like a flat tyre
camouflaged, scrambling, spitting-
parrot's eggs for tea.

Maureen Vale