

Trailwalker

The Friends of the Heysen Trail

South Australia

Free

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Summer 2018

Issue 146




The Half-Way Point on The Heysen Trail

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Membership Information

Single \$25 per year
Family \$40 per year
Schools & Organisations \$60 per year

Membership is valid for 12 months from
the date of payment

Trailwalker Magazine

Views expressed in contributed articles are
those of the authors, and not necessarily
those of the Friends of the Heysen Trail.

The Trailwalker magazine is
available by subscription or online at
heysentrail.asn.au/trailwalker

The Trailwalker magazine is
published quarterly:

- Autumn (March)
- Winter (June)
- Spring (September)
- Summer (December)

The Trailwalker magazine has a distribution
of 1200, and an estimated readership of
approximately twice that number.

Articles, reports and other submissions
by members and other interested
parties are welcome and should be
emailed to the Trailwalker Editor at
trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au

The submission deadline is usually the
first Friday of the month prior to the month
of publication.

Advertising Rates

1/8 page vertical \$55 per issue
1/4 page \$80 per issue
1/2 page \$135 per issue
Full Page \$200 per issue

Flyer (supplied for insertion) \$240 per issue

A commitment for 12 months advertising –
4 issues, would attract 10% saving

Advertising specifications and
article submission guidelines are
available upon request or by visiting
heysentrail.asn.au/trailwalker

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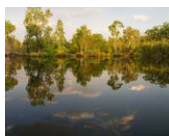
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The Friends of
the Heysen Trail
& Other Walking
Trails

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Hugh Greenhill	Section 13 Leader
Sam Nichols/	
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Wednesday 20 December 2017
Wednesday 17 January 2018
Wednesday 21 February 2018

Autumn Trailwalker Deadline

Friday 2 February 2018

Articles, reports and other submissions
are welcome from:
members walking on the Heysen Trail or elsewhere;
non-members walking the Heysen Trail;
other interested parties.

To submit an article, contact the Editor at
trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au.

Contributors are urged to contact the Editor to
discuss their article prior to submission.

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the Honourable
Hieu Van Le AC

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Cover

Between Dutchmans Stern and Eyre Depot
Photo: Anne Kirk

President

A Word from the President Melanie Sjoberg



Walk Season slides into Summer

Memories of rising on those dark, often cold, early mornings to motivate ourselves for a walk seem to drift out of our minds as the balmy spring days, promise of wildflowers and more birds encourage a bounce in our step – except perhaps for the occasional snake along the trails.

Summer doesn't mean we need to shy away from walking; although being sensible about when and where we walk on hot days is wise – nothing quite like a river, cliff or beach walk concluding with a swim for instance. Keep an eye on the Walk Program for the Friends' Twilight walks that tend to be shorter with a social meal at the end.

We know that the Friends' walks are all planned and led by member volunteers; committed and enthusiastic about the Heysen Trail. We benefit each weekend with a choice of End-to-Ends and day walks (Trailwalker/Trailstarter) that motivate a significant number of people to get out walking in nature, which is a fabulous contribution to our overall health and wellbeing. Planning for next year's walk program is already advanced with E2E and Day Walks listed ready to go – it truly reflects the strength of the organisation that new walk leaders willingly put up their hands to coordinate E2E13.

Looking back on the past 6 months it is evident that our walk program keeps growing in interest and success:

- in August some 34 people completed their Heysen Trail at Parachilna with E2E7;
- E2E8 has hit the northern Flinders and E2E9 passed the halfway mark;
- E2E10 and E2E11 are making steady progress; and
- E2E12 launched this year with over 70 walkers and is still going strong.

While many members enjoy participation in the walks, it's worthwhile reiterating that the walk program is also an essential element of our revenue-raising to support our primary function – maintain and develop the Heysen and other walking trails.

The Heysen Trail is divided into 20 sections and dedicated trail section leaders coordinate regular pruning, clearing, signage and general maintenance to ensure walkers have a reasonable track to follow. Funds raised from walking and volunteer time help us to carry out work on specific infrastructure projects,

repair and renovation of huts, add tanks and toilets or install new fixtures along the trail.

So while you take a break from the main walk season, perhaps ponder what other opportunities exist to contribute to the Trail and the Friends. Sometimes it's difficult to know where to begin or how much time you need. In a totally volunteer organisation like the Friends, any and every contribution is welcome no matter your skill or interest and time available – people have varying preferences for volunteering – ad hoc basis or regular and planned activity: existing expertise or try something new. As the saying goes **JUST DO IT!**

There also comes a time when long-standing volunteers need to take a break or do something different. This issue I wish to convey thanks to Peter Wynen who has been a solid effective editor of the Trailwalker and produced the beautiful Friends annual calendar for many years. Peter is taking time to travel next year so on behalf of the Friends Council and members I want to express our deep appreciation for his commitment to many aspects of Friends work and wish him interesting and safe travels.

Are you a handy person?

**You probably know -
The Heysen trail is 1200km long**

Did you know? - It's also 42 camp sites, 14 huts, 38 tanks and 21 toilets

This will soon increase as the Friends of the Heysen Trail (FOHT) are currently developing additional infrastructure.

And did you know? - The FOHT (and friends) are responsible for maintaining all of this infrastructure -
And we need help.

We aim to make the Heysen Trail a world class trail - It needs world class infrastructure.

Are you:

- A skilled tradesperson or home handyperson?
- Are you willing to participate in one or two maintenance trips per year with a small group?
- Typical work includes carpentry, painting, roofing, plumbing, glazing and plastering.

Please contact FOHT to express your interest.

Email heysentrail@heysentrail.asn.au with your details



News

Trail Closure during the Fire Danger Season

The Heysen Trail is closed during the Fire Danger Season.

The Trail crosses four different Country Fire Service Fire Ban Districts so the closure dates vary slightly. However, as we are in December, all sections are now in Fire Danger Season. **Consequently, the Trail is now closed until 30 April 2018.** In the Flinders Fire Ban District the trail will re-open on 15 April 2018.

The Trail closure times must be obeyed at all times, as the viability of the Heysen Trail is dependent on the continuing cooperation of private landholders.

Some sections of the Trail are still open – depending on local fire ban conditions. There is still the opportunity to walk along the Trail in forest reserves, national and conservation parks, and along country roads. However camping and the ability to cook with a naked flame is restricted or banned in many areas. Public reserves such as forests and national/conservation parks

are open to the public over the Fire Danger Season, however, on days of Extreme or Catastrophic Fire Danger they are usually closed.

The closure information on these dangerous fire days is usually promoted through the media via radio and television news bulletins. In addition, access gates to forests and parks are locked and have a sign informing people that the area is closed due to fire danger.

You can find out more about the sections of the Trail that remain open most of the year on **the Fire Danger Season section of our website.**

Access to huts on the Trail is also restricted. A number of the huts are on private property and are not accessible to the public (including walkers) during the Fire Danger Season. These are Marschalls Hut, Huppatz Hut, Hiskeys Hut, Catninga Hut and Mayo Hut. Huts in national and conservation parks or forest reserves are accessible during the Fire Danger Season, provided it is not a day of Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger.



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Office closure

The Friends Office will close for a holiday break at 2.30 pm on Friday 15 December 2017 and re-open at 10.30 am on Monday 5 February 2018. During this time the on-line shop will continue to operate, although with extended delivery times. Normally we undertake to despatch orders within 3 business days. Over the period of the office closure, we will aim to despatch orders within 5 business days.

End-to-End Awards

Congratulations to the following walkers who received End to End awards for completing the trail over the period August to October 2017. Walkers who completed their journey with End-to-End 7 are listed on page 10.

Rick Price	Phyl Wyett	Carolyn Bradley
Colin Rozman	Kirstie McConnell	David Till
Geoffrey Tolcher	Shane Peters	
Garry Wyett	Andrew Smith	

Mid-week walks to be offered in 2018

In 2018 the walk calendar will include 6 mid-week walks to be held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from May through to October.

All the walks will start at 9.00am and take around 4 to 4½ hours to complete including a short break for a snack and a drink along the way.

Each walk will be graded as Trail Walker as all of them will be reasonably challenging, offering some testing climbs and descents, often on difficult terrain.

At locations in or close to metropolitan Adelaide it should enable everyone wishing to walk easy access, despite the busy morning traffic.

John Babister

New Members

The President and the Council would like to extend a warm welcome to the following 31 members, who have joined the Friends since the last edition of the Trailwalker, and urge them to become involved in the voluntary, walking and social aspects of the association.

De Allen	Jacqui Garcia	Catherine	Fred Rochler	Amelia Veale	Anne Wilson
Lisa Barr	Cathy Hall	MacHado	Adrian Schwindt	Angus Veale	Paul Wilson
Toni Chaplin	Marianne Hammat	Terri Murgatroyd	Emma Schwindt	Michael Veale	Tom Yeatman
Peter Cram	Allison Johns	Charles Nagy	Rachel Schwindt	Rupert Veale	
Debby Davies	Esther Lonie	Anne Raudam	Rebecca Schwindt	Sarah Whitford	
Graham Davies		Jeff Richards	Clara Tait	Chris Wigg	

ADVANCE NOTICE

On Sunday 29 April 2018

Walk for the Heysen 2018

walking trails fundraising event

will be held at the **Bridgewater Oval**

Multiple walks will be available from the oval.

BBQ lunch at the clubrooms will be included.

Keep the day free, put in the diary – watch out for further announcements early in 2018.



Maintenance and More

Colin Edwards

Trail Development Co-ordinator

Many Hands Make Light Work

In the nature of things, nothing stays the same. Everything is in a process of change. Natural disasters take their toll on the environment. Bush-fires ravage the country-side, flooding water causes destruction to the landscape. Fires burn forests to the ground. Flooding creeks and rivers wash away bridges, and alter the natural terrain of the land, to say nothing of loss of life. Due to the devastation wrought by fire and rain, fence-lines are lost, walking trails disappear along with stiles and signage. Sometimes overnight huts are destroyed. In the aftermath of the devastation walking trails have to be re-routed and later restored, bush-land cleared, new signs erected, and stiles built over fences.

Changes to land-tenure also impacts on the Trail, and its maintenance. A new property owner may decide to withdraw access to an established route or overnight hut, thereby making a re-route and hut replacement necessary, adding to the work-load of the maintenance workers. Repair, renewal, replacement and general upgrading and maintenance of facilities aptly describe the 'work in progress' that is the Heysen Trail. There is constant need to work on the Trail, ensure that the overnight huts are structurally sound, water-proof, vermin-free, serviced with water from tanks (uncontaminated), and with hygienic out-houses.

Due to the circumstances of the day, and the demands made on the Trail by a continuous and growing number of walkers and the End-to-End Program, the demand for volunteer workers to participate in hands-on active maintenance work also increases. The Friends of the Heysen Trail have in place a progressive and informed band of volunteers to attend to the work of maintaining and upgrading the condition and marking of the Trail, enhancing it for the pleasure and safety of all walkers, and making the overnight accommodation comfortable, safe and appealing

MAINTENANCE ORGANISATION:

- Trail Development Committee- plan work, and oversee progress
- Section Leaders-assist with reportage of problems, and engage in trail work
- Team of Certificated Chainsaw Operators- heavy pruning
- End-to-End Maintenance Program- upgrade the marking and condition of the full-length of the Trail
- Trail workers- engaged in clearing bush-land, pruning etc.
- Working for the Dole- construction of facilities for camp sites (toilets, tank shelters, benches)
- Infrastructure Team- huts, toilets and tanks

The Friends of the Heysen Trail goal is to have not only a higher standard of infrastructure but to improve the standard of maintenance generally of the trail for walkers.

Production has commenced at the Cobbler Creek Shed on three new toilets, six tank shelters, and fifteen benches for camp sites; chairs and tables are planned.

A new hut is to replace the much-loved Freeman's Hut (closed last year due to change in land-tenure), to be known as Hermann's Hut. The proposed hut will be built around existing stone walls and be larger, with a rear extension to form a kitchen area. Pending approval, the work will start on site early next year. There are also plans to remodel and improve Rossiter's Hut, the size will be increased, and the building upgraded to meet the higher standard of the other huts.

To meet the ongoing work demands required to maintain and upgrade the Trail, more members are wanted as volunteer workers. Most of the tasks are of a practical hands-on nature and do not need trade qualifications or trade skills. The Maintenance Team would welcome male and female volunteer workers to help us to bring the Trail closer to world class standard. Your support is a way of ensuring the Heysen Trail is maintained in terms of safety, comfort and pleasure for all walkers for its full length.

An Open Day and Barbecue, was held at the Cobbler Creek Shed on November 25, 2017. The Cobbler Creek Shed is the location where tank shelters, benches and the like are constructed, ready for installation on the Trail. If you managed to get to the Open Day we hope you will have a better understanding of the extent and complexity of maintaining the trail and will be able to better inform those that could not get to the Open Day. With this in mind and hearing more about our plans for the future we hope many of you will be impressed enough to recruit as a volunteer worker of the Maintenance Group.

Email the Friends on heysentrail@heysentrail.asn.au for more information.



Greening

Words and photos by Neil Nosworthy

October presented an opportunity to visit all our recent plantings and see what progress has occurred. As usual, it is something of a mixed bag.

Hiskey's Hut

With a little imagination, our trees on Slaughterhouse Lane approaching Hiskey's Hut could be described as an avenue. Most of the trees have grown well with several being 5-6 metres tall. While others have a way to go, they are making good progress.

The trees around Hiskey's Hut itself are finding life much tougher. We installed substantial wire netting guards on over 30 trees but many of these have proved no match for the sheep. While the trees continue to grow, they have been nipped back by the sheep. Work will be undertaken to resurrect the tree guards and provide better protection for the trees.

Spalding

The plantings along the Bundaleer Channel at Railway Dam Road east of Spalding are making good progress. The trees seem to have almost doubled in size over the last twelve months and there is the semblance of a forest, in my imagination at least.

Worlds End

Earlier in the year, we were thrilled to see the progress of our plantings at Dutton's Trough. After four years of effort some of the trees stood out in the landscape.

Based on our October visit, it seems that they have had a dry, windy year at Worlds End. The trees have not made much growth, but they are surviving.

Point Pass

We planted about 500 trees along the Lavender Federation Trail near Point Pass in April. There has been an excellent survival rate with about 90% of the trees still alive. It is also clear that they have been buffeted by strong winds as many of the guards had been tilted.

2018 Projects

We have not investigated sites for major plantings in 2018 so we will not have a planting day in 2018. Instead, we are investigating a very small planting to screen the toilet at Robinson Hill. We are also considering opportunities to contribute to control of phytophthora and other environmental pests in the Adelaide Hills. Initial contact has been made with a landholder at Waitpinga to identify an opportunity to undertake some greening activities there. It is expected that these activities will progress during 2018.

If you have any ideas for improving the environment along the Heysen Trail (not just planting trees), please contact Neil Nosworthy on neil@noztours.com.au.



The Avenue near Hiskey's Hut



Great growth at Spalding



Slow progress at Worlds End

Trail Tips

Here are some more bushwalking tips offered from experience by our readers.

Leaky bladder

Ever had a problem with your water bladder leaking into your backpack? There is an easy solution. Simply keep your bladder in a plastic bag. Any minor leaks will be contained within the plastic bag and away from the contents of your backpack. This tip has another benefit. It makes it much easier to slip the bladder into your backpack. Try it. You have nothing to lose.

Mike Joyce

Frozen water bottle

A small bottle of frozen water keeps your lunch cold and you get the bonus of a cold drink.

Judy McAdam

Short and regular breaks

Try keeping your breaks short and regular rather than long and occasional. This allows less time for the muscles to stiffen up, thus making it easier to get going again.

Walking Uphill

When walking uphill, always try to maintain a steady pace and take fewer breaks, rather than walking faster and having to stop more regularly. By keeping your heartbeat relatively constant, rather than subjecting it to dramatic fluctuations, you will expend less energy and cover more distance.

Vaseline

Vaseline should be a staple in your walker's kit. Chaffing can be irritating to downright painful. A touch of Vaseline on sensitive areas and you'll be gliding along the trail.

Treat Yourself

A little treat can make all the difference after a long day and lift the spirits when times are tough. Chocolate, sweets or a flask of coffee or tea in your backpack can be a rewarding pick-me-up. Packing a few extra treats for your walking companions makes for an even nicer reward.

Win \$100 Worth of Heysen Trail Merchandising

Please let us know if you have useful Trail Tips you would like to share with others. The best Trail Tip for the Autumn issue will win a Heysen Trail Merchandise pack valued at \$100. Email your Trail Tips to the Editor on trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au

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Letters

Dear Trailwalker,

A comment if I may regarding "Doggy Doo bags for rubbish" in your Spring 2017 edition.

Annually I have the need to pump out a long drop toilet that campers and hikers use.

Having these bags and other light weight bags with "rubbish" dropped into long drop toilets makes it very difficult for pumps to handle let alone the poor operator that has to unblock their pipes and pumps of plastic bags and their contents.

This rubbish has to be removed from these types of toilets so they can function and be usable for the long term.

Please respect the toilets that are provided for your use and think about others that have to clean the facilities and keep them functioning after you have left. Remember what ever goes in has to come out!

Regards,

Peter Curtis

Subject: Thanks.

I started walking 8-10 years ago regularly, with "Keep Walking S.A." and became familiar with some of the Heysen Trail.

This past weekend, 4 of us went from Inman Valley down to Encounter Bay - about 20km.

One can go on these walks when it's the Heysen Trail, because the signage is so reliable and lessens the chance of getting lost!!!

So, many thanks for all the work that goes into this organisation and trail. We do appreciate the security of walking safely through the wonderful Adelaide Hills and beyond.

Thanks again. Keep going. !!!
and likewise so will we.!!

Val Bools.

ALPANA STATION — Bushwalkers Transport Service

David and Sally Henery of Alpana Station Blinman offer a friendly, flexible and accredited transport service to the BEST end of the Heysen Trail: Wilpena, Blinman, Parachilna Gorge Heysen Trailhead, for walkers (individuals or groups). Also transport to the Mawson Trail and further afield if required.

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Web: www.alpanastation.com

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End-to-End Group Reports

Farewell to End-to-End 7... Peter Larsson

The End-to-End 7s were the self-anointed 'Blessed Sevens' - so called because from the beginning six years ago, they were blessed with exceptionally fine weather. It often rained on a Monday, but never on Sunday when they were walking.

The heavens continued to smile favorably on the Sevens throughout their journey and all but one section was walked in sequential order - even negotiating the unpredictable access at Newikie Creek on schedule in mid-winter 2015.

The two week-long walks this year were a very good finale to the entire adventure - with the Flinders Ranges bathed in sunshine.

Of the 52 people that started the trail on the first E2E7 walk six years ago, 18 finished the trail together - with one person, Anne Saunders who didn't miss a single E2E7 walk. A guesstimate of ages of those walking on the last day would suggest that the average age of the group was around 62 years and perhaps one of the oldest groups to have walked the trail - a great achievement.

The final dinner at the Woolshed Restaurant was a gala occasion with 34 walkers receiving completion certificates. Congratulations to you all.

How lucky the 7s were to have Dale Searcy sharing his photo log of the journey, David Keelan as such a capable support driver, and the drinks boys, Peter Deacon and Phillip Keane attending to our thirst needs.

Thanks to all the leaders over the 6 years, Mary Cartland, Graham Dunstan Julie Larsson and a special mention to tail-ender Judith Ellis. Also, Jerry Foster was a great support to me throughout the early years and provided much essential advice.

I took on the role of leading E2E7 whilst only half way along my own trail experience with E2E4. It had its personal and organizational challenges but there was a great sense of satisfaction (and relief) in seeing all those joyous faces after having crossed that final stile.

End-to-End groups are about the camaraderie of like-minded people enjoying walking, having fun and the friendships made along the way. My lasting memory ... the gala dinner, thanks to MC Beryl, Paddy for her poem and all the other contributors - it was a hoot!



End-to-End 7 Completion Certificates

Andrew Forbes
Anne Saunders
Beryl Rowe
Carolyn Ricci
Craig Philbey
Dale Searcy
Darryl Burrowes
Graham Loveday
Heather Drew
Jane Bartlett
Jane Sellwood
Jennine Vine
Jenny Pascoe
John Schumann
John Wallace
Judith Dawes
Judith Ellis
(2nd time)
Judith Matthewson
Kevin Ward

Magdalene Kerr
Margaret Forbes
Margaret Keelan
Mark Hall
Paddy Burrowes
Peggy Knight
Peter Deacon
Peter Matthewson
Rae Howison
Rhonda Perriam
Roslyn Rubath
Sue de Laet
Trudy Thorp
Vicki Barrett
William Vine
Marian MacLucas
(completed the
trail with E2E9
on 17 September)

In addition, Lyndon Grimmer completed the trail for the 2nd time on 22 October

We hope to publish reports for the End-to-End 8 and End-to-End 11 groups in the next issue

End-to-End 12

We decided to join the Heysen End-to-End 12 group in 2017 having done some Heysen Trail Starter walks in 2016.

The End to End 12 hike leaders put on an introductory walk at the end of April so those interested could experience what an End to End stage might be like. This also gave us an opportunity to meet our walk leaders Adam and Suzanne with Kara, James, Sam and Robin as support. We were able to observe what amazing organisational skills they have in trying to keep a group of 80 hikers safe and on the move.

The End to End 12 walks started in May at Cape Jervis and finished in October at Myponga. The changing scenery on this part of the trail is spectacular, particularly along the coastline. Seeing an array of wildlife along the various stages was an added bonus as well as the beautiful wild flowers along the way.

Joining a Heysen End to End Group has given us the

opportunity to meet some wonderful people with a common interest in hiking. Our leadership group went out of their way to make everyone feel at ease and encourage us when the going got tough. A few laughs along the way also helped particularly on a very windy day when we struggled to walk upright. Beware the words undulations and character building when uttered by your Heysen leader! We were also lucky to have Mark and Phil, Heysen volunteers as support in case of emergencies, to provide photographic evidence of our monthly achievements and to have liquid refreshments available for purchase at the end of a long walk.

Words of advice for anyone wanting to join a Heysen End to End and we can't emphasise this strongly enough: make sure you are fit and can walk up some steep hills. A great way of doing this is to join in the Heysen Trail Walkers which are on most Sundays. What a great 6 months of hiking it's been and we look forward to the continuing adventure next year.

Paul Bond, Pauleen Bond and Julie Testi

End-to-End 9... Peter Clark End-to-End 9 Coordinator

The success of the E2E9 group was evident at the Gladstone Gaol on the evening of 21 October - the final dinner of the year. It was a pleasure to see so many individuals who were now a group, united by the joys and the difficulties they have shared hiking the Heysen Trail over the last four years.

Not all have been with us for the whole journey - we have had newcomers on virtually every walk. To see those newcomers welcomed into the group is, to my mind, another indicator of our success.

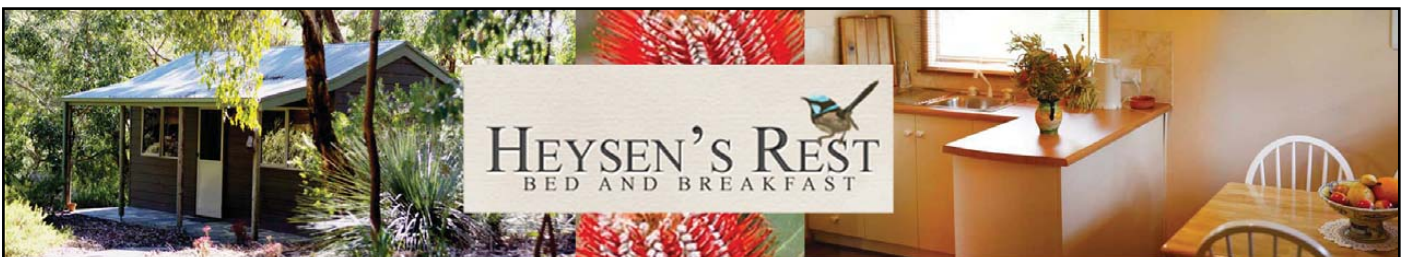
The walks this year have averaged attendances in the high thirties and I can report that we have had no injuries or geographical embarrassments. It is a record that I will be working hard to keep intact over the next two years!

After four years, we have quite a number who have been on most walks and, by my records, a single walker who has been on every walk.

Besides the walkers themselves, the success of the group is also due to the leaders who assist me; Cathy Anderson, Dávid Szilassy and Aled Jones, with occasional assistance by Jon Holbrook. Both personally, and on behalf of all of the E2E9 walkers, thank you for your assistance.

Mike and Sheila Parsons have assisted by providing a support vehicle again this year. The reassurance provided by their presence and the pleasure of their company both on and off the trail has been appreciated by all. Both personally, and on behalf of all of the E2E9 walkers, thank you for your assistance.

I look forward to seeing you all on the trail again next year.



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End-to End-10....Carol Homewood

End-to-End 10 are on their third year of hiking along the Heysen Trail. The group started the year from Cudlee Creek, walking through Mt Crawford, onto the Barossa via the Wirra Wirra Peaks. The group had one really bad day, weather wise which was our walk from Pewsey Vale to Tanunda - rain, hail and wind; but this did not deter walkers. They are a tough group E2E10; rain, hail or shine - they will walk.

We started our weekends away in October 2017 at Kapunda. Fortunately we had a public holiday within the weekend so we managed to get 3 days of solid walking along the trail, which took us all the way to Gerkie Gap. Saturday it was up early as it was AFL Grand Final day. So the group started walking early in time to get back for nibbles and drinks to watch the game. (Shame about the result). In the evening the group dinner was held at the North Kapunda Pub along with a Historic tour of the pub for those who wished to participate. On Sunday it was a group BBQ at the Camp Kitchen at the Caravan Park. Our first weekend away was a great success and so much fun.

Unfortunately our year ended on a low as our November walks were cancelled due to the Fire Ban season being brought forward to 1 November 2017.

I am sure most of E2E10 participants will be ready to

Rock and Roll at the Friends of the Heysen Christmas Bash on 3 December 2017.

Our 2018 walk program is going to be a tight schedule for E2E10 with many extra walks planned.

Thanks to all the walkers, back up drivers and leaders for making it a great 2017 along the Heysen Trail. See you all at the Christmas Bash.



The E2E10 group at their last walk for the year at Marrabel along with training Royal Society Guide Dogs Leroy and Quattro

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2017-2018 Twilight Walk Programme

This version released 14 November 2017
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	November	December	January	February	March
1st week of month	Wed Nov 1 Walkerville Robert Alcock	Wed Dec 6 Thai on Hutt Richard Milosh	Wed Jan 3 Chambers Gully Caroline Prescott	Wed Feb 7 Onkaparinga Melanie Sjoberg	Wed Mar 7 tba tba
2nd week of month	Wed Nov 8 West Lakes Richard Milosh	Wed Dec 13 Lynton John Babister	Wed Jan 10 Living in the Port Julian Monfries	Wed Feb 14 Summertown John Babister	Wed Mar 14 Mawson Lakes Dom Henschke
3rd week of month	Wed Nov 15 Chambers Gully Peter Larsson	Wed Dec 20 Christmas Lights Chris Porter	Wed Jan 17 Greek on Brompton Richard Milosh	Wed Feb 21 Wild Dog Glen Peter Clark	Wed Mar 21 Bistro on Hyde Park Richard Milosh
4th week of month	Wed Nov 22 Marino Robyn Quinn	Wed Dec 27 No walk	Wed Jan 24 Port Noarlunga Melanie Sjoberg	Wed Feb 28 Western Torrens Linear Park Lyn Wood	Wed Mar 28 tba tba
5th week of month	Wed Nov 29 Glenelg Simon Cameron		Wed Jan 31 South East Parklands Rosemary Hayward at 21:30 Moon eclipse Robyn Quinn		

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To donate, visit wbheysentrailfoundation.org.au



A Southern Extension of the Heysen Trail

by Jim McLean

In the second of a three-part series of articles Jim McLean continues his case for the Heysen Trail to start on Kangaroo Island.



Kangaroo Island 2013

It's all in the preparation and planning. Our objective was the western and southern cliffs and coastline of Kangaroo Island. All the way down the western end and along the southern coast and up to Penneshaw, in four 3-day walks: 17 days, two vehicles and a trailer, five lay days, 200 kilometres in all. What could go wrong?

Bob Koehne had helped me extensively on the Heysen Trail and John Fuller more recently. We were used to doing the car shuffle, being self-sufficient, camping out along the way. In May we caught an early ferry, checked in at the Flinders Chase Visitor Centre, left Bob's car at Cape du Couedic, and drove my car and trailer to Cape Borda where we stayed the night in the lighthouse keeper's cottage. The ranger at the visitor centre had expressed strong reservations about the magnitude of our undertaking but we were undeterred. We were experienced and well prepared, so we thought.

In the morning we set out briskly over rock rubble and low-lying scrub that would turn out to be our walking surface for the day of 19kms. The 100 metre drop into Ravine des Casoars and up again took time and energy. By late afternoon we were still 5kms away from West Bay, our destination for the day. We decided to take a short cut. The scrub looked harmless from a distance, but turned out to be almost impenetrable. We pushed through until in the fading light I could not see the compass in front of my face. We camped there. We shared the 300ml of water that we had between us but we could not eat the dried food that was to be our evening meal. We pushed on hungry and thirsty next morning for three hours before reaching the rainwater

tank at the West Bay campsite, and prepared last night's dinner for lunch.

That was a first-ever experience of a dry camp for us. We had grossly underestimated the difficulty of the terrain. We were in our 60s and were not as fit as we might have been. Our first leg planning needed a big rethink. And how were we going to get to our car? Fortunately, we heard a car and voices and met very kind people who gave Bob a ride all the way to Cape du Couedic to collect his car and rescue us. We killed time, camping at West Bay and collecting my car and trailer from Cape Borda, before taking residence for the night at Cape du Couedic. We had aborted two days of our first leg.

We regrouped at Vivonne Bay, where we dropped a car, and collected my son Luke and his friend Andrew Schurgott who were joining us for the second leg. All was going beautifully walking the next day, camping in scrub at Hanson Bay, and heading toward the mouth of the Stun'sail Boom River. The cliffs and the sea were spectacular as always. The diversity of coastal plants did not cease to amaze. We stopped and stared as the seals and sea lions at Cape Bouguer put on a spectacular display. And we saw a whale. Then John experienced some chaffing which just got worse.

After a very wet camp and an early morning team meeting the 'old fellas' walked the 5kms out to the main road to hitch a ride while the 'young guys' did the 20km walk to Vivonne Bay, arriving at three o'clock, not long after we did; and they didn't let us forget it.

So another setback and another rethink. The boys had left and we had a big 3-day walk in front of us. Two of those days were on the very remote Cape Gantheaume. It wasn't hard for us to decide to leave that for another time.

When we had recovered sufficiently we left Bob's car at Seal Bay and set off in the morning from Vivonne Bay relieved with our lightweight daypacks. The walking was sheer pleasure and we were doing it easily. We arrived at our car at 3pm, only to find a concerning note on the windscreen. A DEWNR official has requested that we phone the number on the note as soon as possible.

Communications on KI have improved a little in 2017, but in 2013 there were only two spots in the Flinders Chase where you could get a mobile phone signal. In Vivonne Bay you had to climb the highest sand hill, so that's what we did.

KI is a different part of the world. On the mainland no one cares much if you park a car for a night and a day. But on KI, missing bushwalkers have caused problems



before. So when a strange car was discovered at a bush road junction, alarm bells rang.

The rangers were concerned. The KI police had taken measures to trace the owner of the car. The Mount Barker police and Bob's wife were involved. Luke was hassled on a busy day at work because at the Flinders Chase Visitor Centre I had put his name down as emergency contact. Luke did his best to assure the authorities that we were experienced, self-sufficient and we knew what we were doing. We had been fine, thoroughly enjoying ourselves and oblivious to the fuss. Now on KI, we notify authorities when, where and what cars we leave parked for any extended period.

Our current record in mind, we reduced the fourth leg

to an easier two days. John Barton, another seasoned walking companion, joined us. We took the coast from Pennington Bay before angling up in the direction of Penneshaw, camping in scrub along the way and enjoying the change in environs to peaceful pastoral and agricultural country.

We had achieved roughly half of the planned 200kms. We would have to go back. It took some time, but go back we did.

[The final instalment of Jim McLean's 'A Southern Extension of the Heysen Trail' will be published in the Autumn 2018 issue.]



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Arkaba Angels

by Simon Cameron

Arkaba Station is one of the walking gems on the Heysen Trail. Flanked by the Elder Range, the trail winds along Arkaba Creek, crossing over the watershed to Beatrice Creek and offers magnificent views of the southern rim of Wilpena Pound.

Arkaba, meaning “place of water,” was one of the earliest pastoral leases in the Far North, and it suffered from over a century of grazing. It is now undergoing a remarkable recovery under the stewardship of the Arkaba Wildlife Conservancy, returning to its pre settlement natural state.

This is how the pastoral scout, William Chace, would have seen it when he was exploring the region for entrepreneurs, the Browne brothers, in the late 1840s. His report prompted a private survey, conducted by Frederick Sinnett in 1851. The Brownes took up the lease in partnership with William Marchant. William managed other leases, but contracted a young newcomer, Robert Bruce, to oversee Arkaba. Just turned 20, born in Surrey, Robert had followed his brother Douglas north. Robert was a poet and diarist who wrote four books, at least two plays and several songs. He has left a remarkable record of early life on Arkaba in his “Reminiscences of an Old Squatter.”

It was lush country, populated by well fed “natives” who were affable “light-hearted and cheery,” but it was nightmare country for sheep shepherding with its endless gullies and hidden nooks. It wasn’t a lonely life since the homestead was a way station on the route north, and an endless stream of characters, including several visits by John McDouall Stuart kept Robert amused. The station kept cricket gear on hand, and batsmen were co-opted on what must have been a very dry pitch. Bruce had had his fill after two years but Douglas convinced him to stay in the colony and take up his own lease near the Gawler Ranges.

Arkaba proved disastrous for the Marchants, with the 1864-5 drought wiping out the operation. Dingoes made the other years unprofitable and rabbits arrived in the late 1870s. The pastoral leases were resumed in 1895 and a new 32 square mile Arkaba was created. However, none of the leaseholders could make it pay until Otto Bartholomaeus,

from Burra, took up a perpetual lease in 1904. Otto undertook the herculean task of erecting vermin-proof fencing. The family held the property for 80 years until the Rasheeds acquired it in 1984. At that time the property was once again described as a “moonscape” from a rabbit resurgence, abetted by feral goats. The control of both continues to this day.

The Arkaba Wildlife Conservancy bought the property from the Rasheed family in 2009 to establish an ecologically focused tourist venture. It has been steadily destocked which has resulted in lush growth on creek banks and slopes. However, their efforts have not stopped there, with a major feral animal control program continuing. Nearly 500 feral cats have been removed and successful fox baiting has allowed a program of wildlife re-introduction including brushtailed possums and western quolls. The Yellow Footed Rock Wallaby are now re-populating the steep gullies instead of sheep. The re-introduction program means that access through the station is limited to walkers only and then it is imperative that they stick to the tracks.

Over the next years, monitoring programs hope to document the steady development of the introduced populations, developing into a wildlife haven that will spread its reach to the neighbouring National Park. In the meantime, trail walkers can travel in the footsteps of Robert Bruce and enjoy the bush as he knew it.





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Twin Peaks of Ladakh Trek

by Luke Adams

After completing a 27-day trek in Nepal last year, I wanted to have a similar trekking and mountaineering experience in a different country. That's why I decided to join World Expeditions and their 22-day Twin Peaks of Ladakh trek in India.

We met the eight members of our trek in New Delhi on the first evening. Sara, Melissa, Roger, Theo, Kevin, Tim, David and I introduced ourselves and chatted for a couple of hours, learning about each other's experiences in the outdoors. An early night was needed as we were up at 2.30am to get a flight from Delhi to Leh, the small capital city of the Ladakh area in the Indian Himalayas.

Flying from Delhi to Leh at 3,500m really made us aware of the sudden increase in altitude. Most of us came down with headaches, lethargy and lack of appetite. So the first few days in Leh were quite easy to allow us to get used to the altitude. We could do a half-day walk in the hills or visit a local temple, then have the rest of the day off to look around Leh or just lazed about.

Once we were feeling a bit better about the altitude, we gathered our trekking kit and headed to the small town of Stok, about 30 minutes south of Leh by road. Here we met our trekking crew of local guides, horseman and kitchen staff; and the horses that would carry all of our equipment and personal gear. Our gear was loaded onto the 16 horses and we set off on the first day's trekking.

Stok Kangri 6,153m

Our trek would follow a large river valley towards our first mountaineering objective of Stok Kangri at 6,153m. The first few days of the trek involved only a few hours of walking followed by lazy afternoons resting, reading and exploring the surrounds of our campsite. After these three easy days of trekking, we arrived at Stok Kangri Base Camp. The camp was quite popular with approximately 100 people either in the process of preparing for an ascent of Stok Kangri, on the ascent, or returning from the summit.

Our group had different levels of mountaineering experience so our guides took us up to a snow patch above camp and we all practised our crampon technique, using the ice axes correctly. It was good to have a practise before actually climbing as we needed to brush up on skills we rarely use in Australia.

We had a long lazy afternoon, an early dinner and a wake up call at 10:30pm. After a quick supper we were ready to leave by 11.30. We followed a steep trail in the dark for a long, two-hour walk to the start of the climbing. We had to cross an old glacier and follow



Walking up the Stok Valley towards Stok Bascamp

across a steep scree slope; from here we could see the actual route to the summit in the pre-dawn light.

My travelling partner David set the pace at the front of our small party of climbers. He would count out 20 steps and stop so we could get our breath back for a

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minute or so, and then David would set off again. This pace meant it was a slow but steady ascent.

As the first light of dawn appeared on the horizon we reached a group of rocks that signalled the start of the steeper upper section of the route. This steeper section of icy snow steps led to the shoulder of the ridge that eventually would lead to the summit. At these rocks David, Sara and I tied ourselves to our Sherpa guide and continued up the steep and icy section together. The other team members gathered with the other guides slightly behind us.

As we started up, we noticed that other groups ahead of us had turned around and were coming down. We thought maybe these groups had rushed their acclimatisation and were feeling the affects of the altitude at 5,700m.

We arrived at the shoulder section of the climb around 6.30am. Despite feeling the altitude, we were keen to continue on to the summit. It was here that we, unfortunately, witnessed a shocking fall. An inexperienced climber had untied from his rope to take a 'selfie' at the edge. Unroped and without his ice axe he had fallen backwards off the edge. It was a terrifying sight to see someone start sliding and then gain speed

and tumble for over 350m before coming to rest in the rocks we had passed two hours before. One of our guides who had a bottle of oxygen raced down and attended to the stricken climber.

Sara decided not to go any higher so Kevin tied onto our rope and we continued on towards the summit. Two hours later we arrived on the small flat summit. Prayer flags were draped over the summit blocks. There were crystal clear 360° views of the surrounding mountains and the distant Zanskar Ranges. We spent 30 minutes on the summit soaking up the views and taking lots of photos.

We took our time safely descending and, at the lower snow slopes, we watched the accident victim being evacuated by Indian Army helicopter almost five hours after his accident.

Stok La Pass 4,865m

Next morning we descended the Stok valley before detouring up and over three even higher passes to the top of the Stok La Pass, then a long winding descent to the small village of Rumbak. The sure-footed pack horses would slowly wind their way up the narrow single mountain paths; we would stop and get off the

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Happy to have made it to the Summit of Stok Kangri 6153m

trail and let them pass. Everyone was feeling the toll of hard walking but we all got to the top of Stok La Pass.

On the top we could see the new view down into the next long valley to the distant village, which would be our night's camp. The long descent started steeply then

levelled out on a long valley following a fast flowing stream. Rumbak camp was a welcome sight.

The next few days were filled with a slow ascent to the top of another pass, the Grande La at 4,950m.

While it was quite cool and windy on the pass, the descent was lovely. We were passing a lot of trekking parties ascending the pass from the other side. A few hours of descent saw us at the lovely village of Shogdo. We had a wonderful grassy campsite beside a rocky stream. We had arrived in the early afternoon and had time to relax in the shade and wash ourselves and our clothes in the nearby stream.

The Markha Valley

The next morning the gorge was quite narrow as we descended steeply. This part of the trail had been washed away in a flood in 2006 and we had to pick our way down the trail slowly. It marked the junction of the smaller gorge with the larger Markha Valley. We stopped at the village of Skiu for snacks and a soft drink at the unique trailside stalls consisting of round stone walls with a second hand parachute strung from a centre pole.

We had lovely morning walking up the Markha Valley, marvelling at the huge rock mountains that encircled the valley. Magnificent rock formations appeared around every corner.

We trekked and camped next to the fast-flowing

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The dramatic trail to Stok La Pass



Rest break on the trail

Markha River for the next few days. The Markha village at 3,770m was the largest settlement in the area. The ancient Markha Temple, poised on the hill above the village, was maintained by a solitary monk who would spend 12 months at the temple before being relieved by another monk.

Kangyaze 6,200m

We slowly ascended the summer mountain pastures, past large herds of cows and horses. Kangyaze base camp was a spectacular spot on the bend of a glacial-fed stream directly beneath the south face of the mountain. Here we had a rest day to get our gear and bodies ready for next day's 11.00pm ascent.

Soon after leaving camp, my stomach was feeling bad and I didn't feel I should continue, so I went back to camp. During the course of the night most of our party of ten turned around due to a variety of ailments. However, David and Melissa persisted up steep snow slopes, traversing and climbing to a small, cold and spectacular summit. They reported clear views almost to the Karakoram and Tibet.

Our last days of trekking took us down to the village of Nimaling and a long descent down a very narrow

gorge and a welcome finishing campsite at the village of Shang Sumdo (3,690m). On the drive back to Leh, we stopped at the magnificent Hemis Monastery, a Tibetan Buddhist monastery initially built in the 11th century.

Trekking and climbing in Ladakh really did provide a very different experience to the more traditional trekking of Nepal. Beautiful valleys, impressive ancient monasteries, the dryness of the surrounding mountains and the untouched remoteness made this adventure very special.



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Bridge Crossing Markha Valley



A Remote and Entrancing Walk along the Jatbula Trail

By Anna Molan & Michael Fogarty

September, the 'most heavenly month of the dry season', though this year it's the driest, hottest, on record and it's a searing 39 degrees leading up to our walk. We'll learn to leave at first light, walk slowly, and cherish water.

The Jatbula Trail is a 60 kilometre, five day walk that starts with a ferry ride to the north bank of the Katherine River. A crossing of anticipation in the luminous early morning light.

Named after traditional owner Peter Jatbula who was pivotal in securing land rights for his people, the trail weaves along the edge of the Arnhem Land escarpment following ancient Jawoyn songlines. It's a remote and entrancing walk through natural and cultural landscapes of deep spiritual significance. Dreaming beings brought this country to life by 'putting themselves' in it, and their stories are kept alive in sacred songs and stories.

Walking in the shadow of the escarpment we wind through softly lit savannah woodlands to Northern Rockhole with its sheer cliff face black with algae and green with remnant ferns and mosses. A gentle climb takes us up the escarpment to Biddlecombe Cascades

campsite. Arriving mid-morning we spend a slow afternoon in its rockpools. Banksias, salt palms and rock figs offer shade; blue-faced honeyeaters, diamond doves and white cockatoos provide the soundtrack, while green ants labour folding and gluing leaves to form a cocoon-like nest.

A rare coolness in the night breeze gives way to a humid morning. The trail meanders through stone country 'cleaned up' with fire, new growth sprouting on blackened vegetation. A languid afternoon at Crystal Falls lulled by the slow symphony of water falling over rocks. Lilac and mauve water lilies, their reflection a delicate, finely detailed, drawing. Electric blue and red dragonflies skim over the pool while a water monitor watches lazily from a log suspended above it.

A smattering of rain overnight, strange in its unexpectedness. Walking across savannah country with an understorey of grasses glowing dusky pink in the morning sun. Speargrass bent double by the end of wet season knock-em-down winds. Bright green, fern-leaved grevillea, beautiful salmon gums and thick-trunked bloodwoods with garnets of resin at their base. Termite mounds like monumental Henry Moore sculptures. The coolness of the Amphitheatre with its lush green monsoon forest, clouds of butterflies and Jawoyn rock art: emus, a horse and a spirit figure who seductively entices young men to their doom.

We walk in blistering heat to the top of 17 Mile Falls and a reviving swim. The dusk vibrating with cicadas and microbats. The dawn a tremolo of blue-winged kookaburras. The warm air heady with frankincense and sandalwood. Walking across floodplains to



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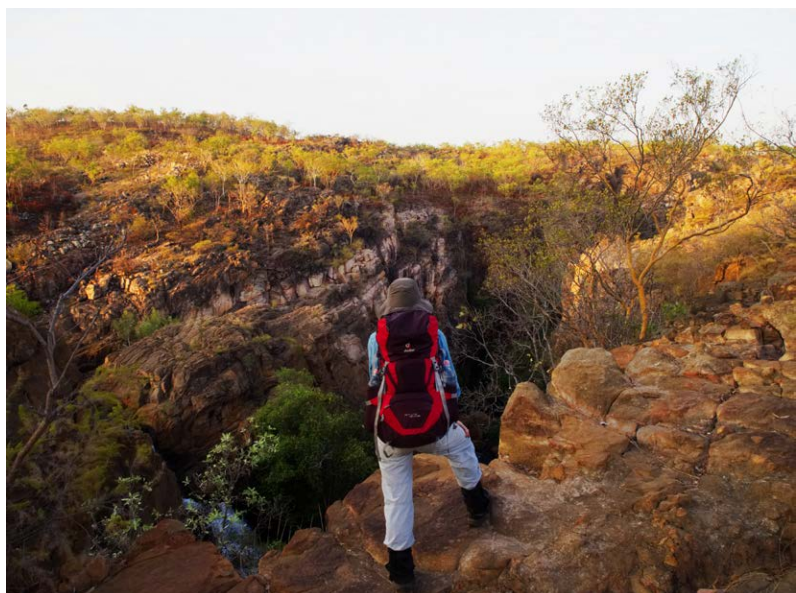
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Crystal Falls



Sandy Camp

Edith River from where we follow the sound of water downstream to Sandy Camp. It's a beautiful pool fringed with paperbarks, swamp banksias and pandanus and shimmering with rainbow bee-eaters catching dragonflies on the wing.

The waterhole, alive with activity deep into the night, quietens just before dawn. On the last day the stone country is rough underfoot and radiates heat as the morning lengthens. Kapok trees bright yellow with flowers indicate that crocodiles are carrying eggs. The grasslands rustle with rainbow skinks. Red-tailed cockatoos crashland in fragile trees. Sweetwater Pool is deep and cooling and we stop for one last swim,

drying ourselves on rocks holding the waves from the long-vanished inland sea.

At Leliyn (Edith Falls) we're woken by the eerie call of a Bush Stone-curlew. We reflect on our journey through Jawoyn country; walking from one idyllic swimming hole to the next, over the sandstone plateau and through woodlands, monsoon forests and riverine landscapes given birth to in the time called 'Purwurr' and dream of returning.

Visit <http://our-wanderlust.com/2017/10/16/jatbula-trail/> to see more photos from this walk.



Trekking in the Carpathian Mountains of Transylvania

By Helen Morgante

'While hiking in Transylvania you must carry a wooden stake and at least one bunch of garlic.' Is that enough I asked myself as I put down the 1890 guidebook and slowly moved my hand to cover my neck, wary that Hollywood may have got it right. 'Ross!' I called to my husband, 'we're gonna need a bigger stake!'

In August we decided on the less beaten tracks of Romania, and a challenging and fearless month that included a six-day intensive trek in Transylvania.

Transylvania, nestled in the richly endowed Carpathian Mountains, is a historic region in the centre of Romania.

TIP: Try to get at least 300-400 kilometres of hills into your legs near to the time of your trip and know your boots and pole work.

We hit Bucharest, with Adelaide's cold and wet winter behind us, and 35 degrees on our first day in Romania.

We had booked a six-day walking tour with a Romanian company, Marian Walking Tours. Our guide drove us the two hours from Bucharest, Romania's capital, to Brasov through the roller coaster and dodgem cars, trucks and carts of Romanian traffic. Good quality maps and information were given out at the briefing but one of our troop, Dana, could speak Romanian and had hiked the Carpathians in her youth, so we decided against engaging a paid guide. Routes were well marked and could be download onto a GPS. With the good notes we received and thoroughly modern Dana with her GPS, we judged ourselves to be bullet proof. Ross had acquired a well-hewn hiking support stick come club with a surprisingly sharp point that would do as a stake, if needed.

TIP: Not many locals have good English, so if you don't have a Romanian speaker in your group or haven't done it before, consider hiring a guide.

Day 1. Piatra Mare Mountain – 8 hours, 21 kms

We were picked up at eight o'clock after a good breakfast provided by our Euro hosts. They packed each day's food so one less essential to worry about, leaving us free to look up and contemplate the day's ascent. It was still hot on Day 1, but we climbed to the highest point in this range, the Piatra Mare (Big Rock) through cool and shadowy forests. We started at 700 meters and reached 1843 metres.

A highlight of the day was 'The 7 Ladders Canyon'.



These ladders take you up steeply and quickly through waterfalls and narrow openings and it is a unique part of the climb that needs some strength and your wits about you, as it's slippery.

After ascending through the forest for four hours we emerged into a kaleidoscope of meadow grasses and wildflowers to find a small wooden chalet, like a nativity scene, dressed with cows with bells, donkeys, horses, sheep and shepherd's dogs out for the sun. On top of that the place had the best coffee I have ever tasted.

Feeling hunger pangs we decided to climb to the highest point for lunch. We filled up our water bottles from the crystal-clear mountain stream and climbed the last 200 metres to where the sunshine embraced us and the view stretched for kilometres.

Day 2. Bran to Magura – 5 hours, 10 kms

We were driven to Bran, a collection of villages 30kms from the city of Brasov. The medieval Bran Castle, once besieged by Vlad the Impaler, is a popular tourist destination, resembling the home of Dracula as described in Bram Stoker's 1894 novel, Dracula.

I tried convincing a local caped Dracula with bloodied teeth that the rules state he should be asleep until it's dark, but I guess you can't earn a buck if no one sees you! Touring the castle is a must and helps expunge any Hollywood-induced creeps and willies.

TIP: Make sure you have local currency in small denominations as in many parts cash is still king.

Then we moved to Magura, a mountain village 1000m above sea level nestled in the Piatra Craiului National Park. We were warned about bears as the summer finds them on the move. The advice was to make noise as you walk in the national parks where you are more isolated. So our strategy was to belt out renditions of 'Climb Every Mountain' and 'The Hills are Alive'. Did it work? Well, we didn't see bears but saw their large paw prints on our trail.

We passed through tiny mountain villages with beautiful lush meadows and nearby forests. After a sharp two-hour ascent out of Bran we reached the ridge with brilliant panoramas. Very old villages peppered each valley with their beautiful wooden houses and churches that have withstood the Soviet era. We spotted our village Magura well before we hiked down into its main street to our digs. Depending on your route, you can find yourself in such pretty places, but they are isolated with no urban luxuries like cafes, so our host became our cook to calm our hunger pains. We had started the day at 750 metres and finished at 1020 metres. While it seems a small number, it hides the trickiness, steepness and the need to stop in wonder of the views.

Day 3. Magura through Piatra Craiului National Park and back to Magura – 8 hours, 22kms

The day was a loop and as we left Magura we struck our first and only wet weather. We ascended to Pestera village then into Piatra Craiului National Park and the Curmatura Chalet. The first part took us through combinations of meadow and forest but more open than we had seen. We passed a monastery and dairies and, at first, a few people, but then it was isolation with no other intrepid souls in sight.



Curmatura Chalet broke the tranquillity with its 'shock' of young backpackers from all over the world. Why had we not seen them sooner? Then we spotted the cross road where eight trekking and climbing trails intersected. We were thankful for our quieter route choice.

The chalet had great bean soup and coffee so we delayed our departure as the rain fell and chatted with staff about our planned descent. When they saw we were no spring chickens they advised us to take an easier path than that recommended by our guide. But in these parts 'easier' does not mean less careful as it was very slippery, tricky and muddy. Back in our digs our host kindly washed our clothes and put everything in the drying room.

TIP: It pays to seek local knowledge as any mistake can be your last and guidebooks may not cover all conditions.

Day 4. Simon to Bucegi National Park – 7 hours, 21kms

A short drive to our start at the village of Simon where we could see the ranges of the Bucegi National Park. Bucegi was declared a protected area in March 2000 with its beech forests, limestone grasslands, alpine rivers and unique rock features such as the mushroom-like Babele (The Old Woman) and the Bucegi Sphinx. Lunching by a big boulder, after two hours of climbing through pretty meadows, we soon had woolly lunch guests with tinkling bells and their own guard dogs. The sheep didn't seem to give a baa about our being there, and when we did move on we surprised the shepherds and their dogs having a sleep! Could this be the career change I was looking for?

A steep narrow two-kilometre climb was made difficult because those same sheep had just come down and so the path was messy and slippery. At the top we found a sheep farm selling its cheese and were invited to buy after being offered taster plates.

Our next task was to find an abandoned hunter's house that was the landmark for us to message our driver to say we were starting the descent to the pick-up point. This was our steepest yet and followed a stream all the way down. The spray and wet put us on high vigilance as some sections were bare rock. At the bottom, Day 4 felt very much like a tricky job well done.

TIP: Summer in these parts does not guarantee dryness so ensure appropriate soles.

Day 5. DAY OFF

Phew! Brasov for a little retail therapy, washing, resting, eating and a 'no poles' walking tour of the city.

Day 6. Postavarul Mountains, Poiana Brasov Ski Resort – 10 hours, 25kms

A gondola to the top was available but no, not us. We criss-crossed the slopes to the peak eating plenty of juicy wild raspberries on the way.

Our first stop on the ascent was Postavarul Hut – a euphemism for a chalet – founded in 1886 at 1604m and one of Romania's first significant ski and winter sports resorts.

We loaded up on cake and coffee before pushing to the top for lunch where it was crowded, as the gondola had hoisted the hoards for the majestic views. This was a very steep three-hour climb but the down route was longer, more breath-friendly and very open.

We arrived back in Brasov to a street food festival and a well-earned cold beer, knowing it was back to Bucharest next day.

Reflection is a wonderful 'add on' for the adventurous hiker. Until this trip, Romania and Transylvania were subjects for novels and guidebooks and, of course, the movies. Hiking lets you physically and emotionally touch these places and lets them touch you. That is what I call a great hiker's relationship.

The Heysen Trail in 55 days

By Shane Peters

Shane Peters and Kirstie McConnell hiked the Heysen Trail from August to October 2017 as a fundraiser for Beyond Blue and MS.

The Idea

Ever since Kirstie moved to South Australia from Victoria 5 years ago, the Heysen Trail had captured her imagination. Kirstie mentioned the idea of 'one day' walking the entire trail but it seemed like an impossible task – I mean who can get that time off work right?

In June 2017, I was taking a career break (accountant) and found myself looking through the 'one day' pile. Free of the 9-5 job constraints now was the time to do something remarkable. Although I'd only done a little hiking, the Heysen Trail offered a once-in-a-lifetime challenge, too amazing to overlook and a great opportunity to explore our own backyard.

I mentioned this to Kirstie and it took her less than a second to say "sure – I'm in!"

The Preparation

We discovered the trail was 1200km and if we didn't break down along the way, would take amateur hikers like us between 50-60 days. Kirstie, a photographer, checked her schedule and worked out she only had a 55 day window so – timeline set!

We soon realised the adventure needed a bigger purpose for such a massive undertaking. We've both been touched by issues of mental health in the past and my brother Brenton was diagnosed with MS a few years ago, so we chose to support Beyond Blue and MS Society of SA and NT Inc.

Kirstie quickly went to planning mode, purchasing maps on her way home from work the day she signed up to this mad idea of mine. She studied distances, campsites, water points, towns and terrain to work

out how far we could hike each day and where we would need to place our supply boxes. We spoke to people familiar with the Trail and I started contacting businesses in towns along the trail to trust leaving our supply boxes and was amazed by the enthusiastic support.

Then maybe the hardest part of preparation was meal planning as we knew pre-packaged hiking food would cost too much. Lisa Murphy (Big Heart Adventures) recommended a book called Extreme Gourmet which was full of inspiration for fantastic and varied recipe ideas. We scoured supermarkets, Indian and Asian grocery and the Central Market to find ingredients we would need.

The Trail Starts

Kirstie's parents travelled from Victoria to drive us to the trailhead in Parachilna. Along the way we met the business people looking after our boxes and would often exchange stories about mental health. We were initially a little shocked by how honest people were. We knew mental health was an important issue in rural communities but hearing first hand gave us a reality check. We didn't know it yet but over the coming weeks it would be these inspirational people and their experiences that would keep us going when we felt like giving up.

Taking our first steps on 15 August, the reality of our adventure never really registered; but I know Kirstie's parents were worried sick leaving us in the outback with just hiking packs and poles.

The first day on the trail proved a massive wake up. Although the coolest time of year, the temperature hit 30°C. When we finally staggered into camp at sunset after only 18km – we doubted we would last the week.



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Flinders Ranges – Spectacular is an Understatement

The first two weeks on the trail were spectacular but also very hard. Despite our limited training and experience we were gradually adjusting to the demands on our bodies – and quickly became grateful for the walking poles.

Eventually we began to feel fit and covered ground more quickly, allowing Kirstie's trademark sleep-ins. Sometimes we were walking in near dark struggling to find a hut or camp site but our trusty maps.me app would always show us the right way. Heysen signage was also reliable.

After a week, I noticed my near new boots were being destroyed by the harsh rocky terrain of the Flinders Ranges, making walking painful. In the next town I ordered new boots and had them delivered to a stop further down the track.

Mid North – Country Hospitality at ITs Best

As we left the Flinders, the landscape changed from ancient rocky mountain ranges to rolling hillsides, canola fields, hidden conservation reserves and fertile farmlands. We stayed in huts most nights- each with their own history and story to tell: every few days we reached a town with a luxurious 'real bed'.

SA's mid-north proved to be a very hospitable place. Publicans organised fundraisers, families welcome us into their homes, new friends took us to secret places off the beaten track, farmers proudly showed us shearing sheds or chased us down to give us fresh oranges. We were overwhelmed by the support we received and friends we met and reminded that there are many very kind people in the world.

Adelaide Hills and FLEURIEU PENINSULA – Natures Playground

With 2 weeks left we finally reached panoramic views of Adelaide from Mt Lofty. After hiking 900km we could almost see our house down by the beach. The mental effects and emotions of hiking together for so long suddenly overcame us and for a moment we considered giving up. After a long rest, we decided to car shuffle. I was carrying an injury that made hiking with a full pack difficult so this way we could complete the trail carrying daily food and water.

The Hills and Fleurieu Peninsula are perhaps some of the most beautiful along the whole trail. We spotted our first koala, passed stunning waterfalls, walked through a magical foggy sunset and camped overlooking the city lights.

The Finishing Line

The last few days of the trail along beaches and cliff tops, were some of the best and we finally caught up to another couple walking the entire trail. On the last night we were joined at Trig campsite by family and friends, including Melanie and Daniel from Friends of the Heysen, and plenty of tame kangaroos.

Then we were joined by the Friends of the Heysen for our final day of walking to Cape Jervis. The group gave us an amazing reception which continued right to the end where a guard of honour, streamers and champagne awaited us. We struggled to hold back tears as we realised our amazing adventure was over.

We'll never forget our 55 days on the Heysen Trail. We found a new appreciation for the land and learned all you really need to be happy are the people that matter most to you and a 65 Litre backpack.



Terry Lavender Churchill Fellowship

The Churchill Fellows Association of South Australia is raising funds for a one-off fellowship titled The Terry Lavender Churchill Fellowship – To investigate ways to develop, improve, manage and promote outdoor recreational trails and pursuits to be awarded in 2018.

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust has kindly undertaken to match any funds raised dollar for dollar. The cost of a Churchill Fellowship is now \$26,000 so the target is to raise \$13,000.

Terry Lavender was awarded a Churchill fellowship in 1991 to study the development of recreation trails and their impact on tourism in UK, Canada, USA and Hong Kong.

Terry's fellowship built on an already impressive list of achievements within the SA trail walking fraternity. Terry delineated and marked the routes and trails throughout the Mount Lofty and Flinders Ranges, and was instrumental in establishing the Friends of the Heysen Trail. He and other volunteers marked the Heysen Trail, completing the task in 1992, six years after the formation of the Friends. He was also responsible for the marking and mapping of the Mount Lofty Walking

Trails in the Barossa district and part of the Onkaparinga area.

Terry was the first chair of the South Australia Recreational Trails and subsequently formed a company, Lavender Trailmaster, to provide guide services to interstate and overseas tourists, school groups and local bushwalkers along and beyond the trails he was commissioned to develop. He produced various maps and a number of books including co-authoring 'Strolling South Australia' and two volumes of 'The Heysen Trail: A Walker's Guide'.

Terry was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 1994 Australia Day Awards. In 1998 the Lavender Federation Trail that runs from Murray Bridge to Eudunda was named in his honour.

Terry died on 9 January 2004 leaving this remarkable and valuable legacy.

Anyone interested in making a donation to the Terry Lavender Churchill Fellowship can easily do so online at <https://fundraise.giveeasy.org/campaigns/terry-lavender/>

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