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across the state

A PANDEMIC PIVOT: THROUGH-HIKING THE HEYSEN

BEYOND THE HEYSEN WITH CAMEL TREKS

WALKING ON EYRE

EXPLORING THE YURREBILLA



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Cover: The Flinders & Beyond
Camel Trek Team leaving
Waukawoodna Gap.
Photo: Anne Kirk.

Trailwalker welcomes photo
submissions suitable for the cover
of the magazine. Please email
your high-resolution image to
trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au

About the Friends

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Wednesday 21 October
Wednesday 18 November

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S14-18 Arrangements
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Jack Marcelis

We acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians whose ancestral lands we traverse along the Heysen Trail. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal peoples to Country and pay respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal peoples within the Country we walk.



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DAVID HOGAN

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EXPLORING THE YURREBILLA

PAULEEN BOND

With an absence of organised hiking, Pauleen Bond, Anne Kirk and Paul Bond decided to hike Adelaide Hills' Yurrebilla Trail.

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AN OVERLAND TRACK DIARY

ADAM MATTHEWS

Eleven members of Adam Matthews' End-to-End 12 group completed Tasmania's iconic Overland Track.

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FAVOURITE SHORT WALK

JON HOLBOOK

The Long Ridge track in Chambers Gully.

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

Deadline for the next issue (Summer 2020):

30 OCTOBER 2020

The *Trailwalker* magazine is available by subscription or online at heysentrail.asn.au/trailwalker and is published and distributed quarterly:

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

The *Trailwalker* magazine has a typical distribution of 1500, and an estimated readership of approximately twice that number.

Contributors are urged to contact the Editor to discuss their article prior to submission. The submission deadline is usually the first Friday of the month prior to the month of publication.

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

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A commitment for 12 months advertising (four issues) would attract 10% saving.

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

ReBoot – We're Walking and Working Again

MELANIE SJOBERG



I've felt strangely disoriented over the past two or three months (like many of you I expect) as we gradually adjusted to isolation, physical distancing, an acute awareness of hygiene and the disrupted activities in our everyday lives. Thankfully, the whole community accepted the need to adopt new practices, modify travel expectations and, together, stave off the most severe effects from the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the SA Government and Health SA announced an easing of restrictions, the Friends began developing safe protocols to revive our Walk Programme and enable our trail volunteers and office teams to relaunch some of our valuable activities.

“

After regional travel was revived, and we reopened the Friends online shop, sales of maps and inquiries about walking the Heysen Trail grew rapidly.

”

We are cautiously optimistic that we can continue to build the Walk Programme, while our eager trail volunteers are primed to recommence attending to urgent safety issues. Even so, we're conscious that circumstances can change, so will be ready to respond if it becomes necessary; recent events in

Victoria and NSW remind us not to slide into complacency.

More generally, it has been heartening to see reports from many members venturing back onto favoured local tracks or discovering new trails.

“

Clearly, there is something wonderful going on: people are responding to isolation by seeking out experiences in nature.

”

After regional travel was revived, and we reopened the Friends online shop, sales of maps and inquiries about walking the Heysen Trail grew rapidly. The social connection of Facebook has also helped people discover the option of through-hiking the trail in numbers not seen before.

Clearly, there is something wonderful going on: people are responding to isolation by seeking out experiences in nature. Members bring stories that regular hiking haunts have many more people out, Walking SA has noted similar experiences, and we are aware that National Parks campsites are booking out, even during the week. More recently this has been encouraged through SA Tourism Commission promoting visits to great adventure locations across our state.

Sadly, the Friends has witnessed a down-side as a small minority seem to feel entitled to set up camp anywhere they like. Some of the small Heysen hike-in sites have been vandalised, and we've had complaints about a few vehicle campers that have disrespected private property near the trail by leaving rubbish or building fires.

“

Importantly, it highlights the precious and unique nature of our Heysen Trail, traversing various National and Conservation Parks as well as private land.

”

Our Trail Development Committee and Section Leaders put plenty of effort into developing a respectful relationship with landholders and will continue to work with them and DEW on this issue.

It's very disappointing when such anti-social behaviour causes tension and generates more work for our volunteers. Importantly, it highlights the precious and unique nature of our Heysen Trail, traversing various National & Conservation Parks as well as private land.

Meanwhile keep walking safely, visit our regions then send in your photos and stories.



Trailwalker is calling for iconic Heysen Trail photos

To help celebrate the Heysen Trail's 35th year anniversary in 2021, *Trailwalker* is on the hunt for iconic, unique, historic and distinct images of the Trail. We are planning to showcase these shots (plus brief location descriptions/walker anecdotes) in the upcoming 2020/21 Summer edition with a look back at the moments that have shaped, and continue to shape, our Trail.

Snow on Mt Bryan?
Aftermath of a fire?
Dolphins on Tunkalilla Beach? Endearing Trail figures? Landmark events? Send your high-resolution shots to the *Trailwalker* Editor trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au

COVID Safe Walking

SIMON CAMERON

In his role as a Public Health Doctor, Simon Cameron reports on COVID safe walking practices.

In uncertain times, some things never change. Walking is still the best exercise, and where better to walk than a bushland trail? The Friends are fortunate to have dedicated walk leaders ready to maintain our Walk Programme, while our Council and Walk Committee have been reviewing activities and policies to make walking as safe as possible.

As a Public Health Doctor, I have been drawn back into the fray and kept abreast of the rapidly expanding clinical information on the Sars-2 Novel Corona Virus that causes the disease COVID-19. Transmission risk comes from aerosols and droplets; the risk outdoors is small. This basic fact makes a COVID safe walk plan easy to prepare.

Physical separation minimises the risk of aerosol spread. Good cough/sneeze etiquette and hand hygiene also reduce droplet transmission. Talking for five minutes is the equivalent of one cough, hence the need for 1.5m of separation. Of course, it is even more important to isolate yourself at the first sign of respiratory symptoms — sore throat, runny nose, fever or cough.

Indeed, it is a community responsibility to isolate and test as soon as possible. To have any hope of containing this virus, cases must be isolated and identified within

48 hours to ensure close contacts can be informed before becoming contagious. This is the best way of stopping the spread without the need for general lockdowns.

Self-reporting of symptoms is now part of the Friends' booking system, and bookings only open three days before the event. If you feel symptoms coming on after you book, please let the walk leader know and withdraw your registration.

Below are a few recommendations.

- On walks, keep mindful of distance.
- After crossing stiles, use good hand hygiene before and after — help out by bringing your own.
- Travelling to and from walks is an indoor activity. Risk can be mitigated by travelling in household groups, thereby not exposing individuals outside the household. However, if that is not possible, the use of face masks is an effective way of reducing the risk for others (up to 75% reduction). This is essential if using public transport, with the addition of good hand hygiene before and after trips. For short journeys, the type of mask is unimportant.
- A mask should be positioned and removed by only touching the straps; once on, keep your hands clasped when free.
- Socialising after walks requires the same distance rules and is best done outdoors, if possible.

None of this advice is difficult, and, it offers the skills for safe activity and safe living. What could be better than that?



Wild South Coast Way Update

Melanie Sjoberg provides an update on the Wild South Coast project arising from the SA Government commitment of \$6 million to upgrade the Heysen and Deep Creek.

During June, members of the Project Steering Committee, which includes the Friends, undertook a site visit to assess concepts for the 5-day, 4-night hike-in campsites and potential upgrades to vehicle campgrounds in Deep Creek. The ambitious timeline has been affected by COVID-19, however, it is anticipated that trailheads will be finalised by the end of 2020.

KINGS HEAD PLATFORM

Volunteers from the Rotary Club of Victor Harbor recently funded and installed interpretation signs and a stylish platform at Kings Head that offers excellent views of the coast. It sits at the junction where the Heysen Trail proper veers away from the coast, and the new Wild South Coast section will continue to the Bluff. The Friends appreciates the invitation from Victor Harbor Rotary to install a Heysen sign on the platform that sits alongside

Parks signage announcing the new Wild South Coast Way on the Heysen Trail.

PARKS SA WEBSITE - INDICATIVE TIMELINE

BY JULY 2019

Establish stakeholder consultation group

BY DECEMBER 2019

Commence planning for new/upgraded facilities. Engage private sector to identify business opportunities

BY JUNE 2020

Concept plans complete and priorities for investment set

BY DECEMBER 2020

Construction activities commence. Wild South Coast Way gateways open

BY JUNE 2021

Opening of hike-in and upgraded campgrounds

BY DECEMBER 2021

Upgrade of vehicle access to the Wild South Coast Way

BY JUNE 2022

Open new day visitor site in Deep Creek Open new universally-accessible trail in Deep Creek

BY 2022-23

Complete Deep Creek campground upgrades.

.....
Parks SA now has a dedicated website page where members can access information:
<https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/park-management/wild-south-coast-way>



Trailthinker Quiz

1. How many pigs are located in Rundle Mall?
2. WOMADelaide is traditionally held in which Adelaide park?
3. A man nicknamed "Pegleg" discovered copper in which modern day town north of Wilpena Pound in 1959?
4. Which hiking trail runs the length of New Zealand?
5. SA's Pichi Richi Train is based out of which Heysen Trail town?
6. Which animal is used to represent WA's Bibbulmun Track?
7. The original vision for the Heysen Trail extended to which mountain at the northern tip of the Flinders Ranges?
8. Officially, which is Australia's longest multi-use hiking trail?
9. PCT and AT are popular acronyms for which two famous USA hiking trails?
10. The "queen of buckjumpers" Curio sits at the centre of which Heysen Trail town?

ANSWERS PAGE 12

Friends Obituaries

The Friends farewell three members of the Heysen Community.

It is with great sadness and sorrow that we share the death of our wonderful friend Michael Guest.

Early on August 1, at Morialta, we had reached the crest of the first hill and were regaining our breath. The weather was at its best, including sunny azure blue skies; perfect for walking and for flying, which Michael did with the RAAF. Sadly, Michael soon suffered a heart attack. The best efforts from his walking friends and paramedics could not revive him. Michael was always the gentleman, but you knew, from the twinkle in his eye, mischievousness bubbled away below the surface. Michael did, what we all want to do, walk well into our latter years. We in End-to-End 8 believe he was the first octogenarian to complete the Heysen Trail with the Friends. To take a phrase from the old cowboy movies, "he died with his boots on", and I'm sure he is now mapping trails he hadn't walked before. Vale Michael, our friend, you will be missed.

Written by Alan Harton.

Honorary Members Glen Dow and Terry Gasson have also died following protracted illnesses.

Glen Dow, an accountant and member of the Friends since our first year, became the Treasurer in 1991, during a time when the organisation had two employees. He remained in this role over the tenure of two presidencies, in the days before computers. Glen also completed the Trail and was involved, with his wife Jennifer, in Trail maintenance with ARPA. He was appointed Honorary Member in 2004.

Terry Gasson was appointed an Honorary Member in 2008 for his contributions as Walk Leader and Social Committee Organiser. As a fine raconteur, his tailor's shop in Gay's Arcade was a haven for coffee and telling tales, while he was also renowned for his bespoke walking gear.



The 'mischievous' Michael Guest



Welcome New Members

The President and the Council would like to extend a warm welcome to the following 107 members who have joined the Friends since the last edition of *Trailwalker*.

Alex Molyneux	Georgie Hart	Katherine Marks	Paul Kroon
Alexander Jenner	Graeme Bethune	Kathy Davies	Persia Janzen
Amanda Braund	Hamish Walsh	Krystina Durdin	Peter Morrison
Andrew Low	Hanne Damgaard	Kyle Baker	Peter Reed
Ann Maree Roche	Harold Camonias	Kym Davis	Peter Vincent
Anne Crouch	Helen Duddy	Leah Dobson	Riley Kruger
Bhavisha Keshwala	Ian Pope	Leone MacKenzie	Robyn Pope
Bill Dobson	Jackie Street	Libby Davis	Ron Watts
Bill Gehling	Jak Allen	Luke Duffy	Ros Helmons
Bruce Somerfield	Jake Glass	Malcolm Olle	Rosemary Burn
Caitlin Polack	Jan Wiebe	Maria Cutufia	Ruth Budge
Catherine Baldwin	Jane Grainger	Marianne Liddy	Sandra Braithwaite
Cheryl Wilmshurst	Jayn Lindholm	Mark Nicholls	Simon Frederick
Christopher Baldwin	Jeanette Houey	Martin Richardson	Simone Linder-Patton
Chuck Smeeton	Jennifer Harvey	Matthew Kennedy	Sue Green
Claire Elliott	Joanne Piercy	Melanie Payne	Sue Wetherall
Corey Johns	John (Paul) Johnston	Michael Batterham	Susan Bethune
Damien Fitzpatrick	John Hart	Michelle Keenan	Susan Packer
Dana Shen	John Lewis	Mike Smith	Thomas Henning
Daniel van Wyk	John Wilmshurst	Miranda Trewren	Tina Greagsby
David Lang	Jonathan Billington	Natasha Dawson	Tony Jennison
Deborah Jenner	Julia Johnston	Nathan Prime	Tori Tassone
Edward Keenan	Julie Burnett	Nicole Cain	Tracy Belling
Elsabeth Lang	Julie Howard	Nigel Dally	Trish Hensley
Frehd Southern-Starr	Karen Lowrey	Patrick Holland	vashti Janzen
	Kate Robb		Vicki Cardone
	Kath Morris		Wendy Green
			Wilma Oomen
			Yvonne Landels

Trail Maintenance

The shed workshop at Cobbler Creek has been raided by thieves with electrical tools, a welder and even the security system stolen.

In May, the Friends Maintenance Shed at Cobbler Creek was raided, with much of its contents, including power tools, stolen. This theft is a big blow to our volunteers, who were preparing to restart their activities after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. The loss will cost the Friends in the order of \$10,000 to replace the stolen equipment.

While Council upgraded and strengthened the security following the previous break-in, this event showed security is a continual risk. As this was the second theft in the past two years, a review of this facility was undertaken.

The Friends are fortunate that the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) provide access to this facility for our volunteer work. The shed and associated yard are an ideal size to store materials needed to maintain the Trail, as well as operate a workshop to prefabricate infrastructure to facilitate installation on the Heysen. Its location is also advantageous for loading materials for work on all but the most southern sections of the Trail. After discussion with DEW, the shed now has a monitored alarm system installed and are gradually replacing the stolen equipment.

Fortunately, we have already received some incredibly generous donations to help replace the power tools. In particular, many thanks go to the Heysen 105 trail running group who donated \$1000 and Cigweld who have donated a replacement welder. Other cash donations have also been put to good use.

Additional donations are still welcome as we continue to purchase tools to continue our important Trail work. Any donation, large or small, will help

the cause. Donate online at www.heyseentrail.asn.au/shop/donations

With a shortened walking season due to COVID-19 restrictions, the maintenance group is trying to get the Heysen into good order as quickly as possible to cater for the increased numbers walking the Trail. Unfortunately, the workload has also inflated by an unprecedented number of reports of misuse, such as tank taps left on or stolen, platforms damaged, and parties who have been walking/camping on private land. Likely, much of this may be due to people driving in, rather than walking. If you see anything suspicious, please contact the office by phone or email. Remember, photos are a handy way of describing the situation and help to pinpoint the location.

Check the Walks Calendar online and register to join the volunteers on Maintenance Shed days (most Thursdays).

www.heyseentrail.asn.au/walks/calendar

A Trail Angel's generous gesture for Eyre Depot.

In June, the Friends received an email from Ben Jeuken, a hydrogeologist with Groundwater Science in Adelaide. He had finished a walk from Quorn to Hawker, noticed a hole in the tank at Eyre Depot and offered to replace the shell as he had enjoyed the hike so much. After a bit of tick-tacking with landowner Andrew Smart, he installed a new tank and recycled the old one. Many thanks, Ben.



Ben Jeuken and his merry helpers.



Colin Edwards receives OAM

Colin Edwards has been a member and contributor to the Friends organisation since 1990. Since becoming involved, he has had an active involvement in the organisation's evolution, firstly as the President in 1993, then as a day and extended trip Walk Leader. He also produced a guide for walk leaders and co-edited a book of extended day walks, 'Push the Bush'.

Colin took on the management of the Friends shed, and in many cases, has used his draftsman skills to design valuable infrastructure for the Trail. In 2005, he took on the role of Section Leader through the Adelaide Hills. Since 2009, Colin has been a key organiser of new infrastructure programs, including the fundraising and installation of new water tanks, camping benches, toilets, plus coordinating their on-site construction. In 2010, Colin became the Trail Development Coordinator, overseeing and scheduling work for approximately 70 volunteers. In 2013-14 he assisted Walking SA re-establish Mt Lofty Trails, as a member of their sub-committee and organising workgroups for trail marking etc. He is the Friends key liaison with the Department for Environment and Water.

Colin was awarded an **Order of Australia Medal** in Queen's Birthday Honours 2020. In 2003, he was granted **Honorary Membership of the Friends** for his contribution to the Friends and walking in South Australia. In 2016, he was given an award for **Longstanding Contribution/Distinguished Service to walking** by Walking SA.

The travails of tree planting

Neil Nosworthy provides the Greening Committee Report.

Photo: Wayne Turner

Ever since the Greening Committee was resurrected in 2012, the greening task at Hiskeys Hut (near Georgetown) has been an ongoing labour of love. On the opening weekend of this project — also, the first tree-planting the Committee had undertaken — the hard-working team planted 350 trees by the end of the day. However, a mob of hungry sheep soon arrived and began monsterring the young saplings. A reel of old wire netting was scrounged to guard the trees, but this idea presented minimal protection against the ravages of the sheep.

In 2016, we returned to Hiskeys and erected 33 more robust tree guards using star pickets and mesh fencing wire. This infrastructure provided sufficient protection for many of the trees, while the other survivors continued to suffer regular predation from roaming sheep.

In the last couple of years, the industrious Wayne Turner has worked diligently to plant and care for more trees at Hiskeys. One of the major challenges has been to find inexpensive materials to construct tree guards. Fortunately, we obtained a supply of star pickets and wire from Kevin Crawshaw (thanks, Kevin) and another picket collection after demolishing old fences in Sturt Gorge Recreation Park, courtesy of the Friends of Sturt Gorge. As a result, there are now around 100 trees under Wayne's care with a range of different tree guards providing security from ravenous sheep and, ultimately, providing protection for the walkers using the hut.

FUTURE PROJECTS

We have not undertaken a major tree-planting project for some years. Still, we are always on the lookout for possible new planting sites. If you have an idea for a new planting site, please contact me by email at neil@noztours.com.au or by phone on 0429 773 800.

Meanwhile, we are investigating an opportunity to plant trees near the Bethany Reserve up the hill towards Rifle Range Road. Another opportunity under consideration is a clean-up and replanting of the road reserve at Aldgate Terrace near Bridgewater. Inevitably, planning for these projects takes a lot longer than implementation, but we will keep everybody posted as things progress.

SUPPORTING LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

In line with our strategy of assisting environmental groups working in areas along the Heysen Trail, we want to encourage volunteers to support these groups.

Cape Jervis Coastal Community Group. The CJCCG holds bi-monthly working bees on the site and welcomes all volunteers. The next working bees are scheduled for 3-4 Oct and 5-6 Dec 2020. Interested volunteers should contact Carolyn Schultz by email at carolyn.schultz165@gmail.com

Friends of Newland Head Conservation Park. The group has working bees weekly on Friday mornings and on the second Saturday of the month from 9am-midday. Interested volunteers should email Simon Swan on simonandlee01@gmail.com



WARREN
BONYTHON
HEYSEN TRAIL
FOUNDATION

THE WARREN BONYTHON HEYSEN TRAIL FOUNDATION

was established as the fundraising arm of the Friends of the Heysen Trail in order to assist with the development of the Heysen Trail and other walking trails in South Australia.

The Foundation is a registered charity with tax deductible donations being directed towards improving the environment along the Trail.

We thank **SIMON PIKUSA** and **NEIL BEVERLEY** for their generous donations of \$500 each to the Foundation.

MAKE YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION ONLINE

wbheysentrailfoundation.org.au

In addition, lifetime membership of the Foundation can also be obtained by payment of \$25 through the website.

Volunteer Profile: Eve Buckley

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED WITH THE FRIENDS?

It must be 25 years ago when I first became involved with the Friends — not long after I moved to Adelaide from Darwin. I wanted to continue bushwalking, but it had to be with a group as I have a poor sense of direction. In the Northern Territory, I regularly walked in Katherine Gorge with other bushwalkers — I can still remember beer cans stuck in the trees as trail markers.

WHAT ARE SOME ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU'VE VOLUNTEERED WITH THE FRIENDS?

I've always been an office volunteer. It must be 10 years ago — after I retired — when I started working in the Friends' Pitt Street office. I'm a good talker and very enthusiastic about the Heysen Trail, so I mostly answered the phone. When I first started, little fuss was made of those who had walked the Trail independently. They'd come to the office looking for recognition, and we did very little to acknowledge their achievement. In those days, we mostly issued certificates to members. Now anyone who completes the Trail receives a certificate.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE WALK ON THE HEYSEN?

The section from Hawker to Parachilna is my favourite; I've walked it four times. I first completed the Trail with End-to-End 1, then Minus 1, and finished a third time with a number of E2Es, particularly E2E2 and E2E4.

I remember the first time I finished the Trail with E2E1; we all sped up as we approached the trailhead at Parachilna. There was an older woman in our group, Dawn, who had battled chronic pain in her hips but still managed to arrive at the end with the help of anti-inflammatories. Our leaders, Julian Monfries and David Beaton, encouraged us to stand back and allow Dawn to climb the stile first. After that, it didn't matter who went next.

WHAT'S A FAVOURITE WALK OTHER THAN ON THE HEYSEN TRAIL?

I found the Northern Territory's Larapinta Trail particularly difficult; however, the UK's Coast to Coast Walk in 2011 was my most memorable. Not only because of the horrible weather — we endured a cyclone through the Lakes District — but also the stunning scenery.

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU'D NEVER BE WITHOUT WHEN YOU'RE WALKING?

A full flask. A hot cup of tea is my reward on any walk.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS ON THE TRAIL?

It would have to be encountering snow on Mount Bryan; I was one of only two walkers wearing shorts that day!



For some people, a large group is not appealing, but, for me, the walking experience is about building friendships and camaraderie that make it worthwhile.

I also think that the Friends maintaining a 1,200km trail as a volunteer organisation is an extraordinary achievement. I've just resigned as an office volunteer because I can no longer walk; my back is in agony after 15 minutes. I'm grieving because, after 40 years of bushwalking, I have to give it up.



Melanie Brown, Belinda Grayling,
Peter Moriarty and Richard Moriarty.

Photo: Peter James

**Trailwalker
Photo
Competition**



This ingenuitive group printed and shared their Winter Trailwalker at Boat Harbour Beach.

We invite our readers to submit photos of themselves or others reading *Trailwalker* in interesting or unusual locations.

Please send your high-resolution photos to The Editor at trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au

ASK A HIKER

Which luxury item do you typically take on multi-day hikes?



I like to read while I'm on multi-day walks, though books can quickly become bulky when I pack my overnight bag. To save space and often weight, I often take my trusty **Kindle** (pictured) to keep me company on the long nights.

COLIN EDWARDS

Trail Development



Well, originally my luxury item was a necessity. That was until Marlene found me trying to stash the object away in her backpack on one of our longer walks. Now – it is indeed a luxury. Those of you who know me may not be surprised to know that I am referring to my **laptop**.

DOM HENSCHKE

Office Chair



Breakfast is the most important meal when on a multi-day hike. Having a solid breakfast will get you through the day, and I don't skimp. I take little **cartons of 150ml full cream long-lasting milk**. Yes, I realise it is indeed a luxury, but for me, it's seriously worth the extra weight.

CAROL HOMEWOOD

Walk Leader



As caffeine to start the day is a must, I like to take a **small coffee maker** with me on the trail. I use a light-weight filter and espresso ground coffee to get my morning under way.

JULIAN MONFRIES

Secretary



My multi-day hikes typically involve planting food drops and walking for a week at a time to reach them. Carrying enough gear to get through seven days doesn't leave much room for luxuries... but my box drops often include **fresh clothes, Toblerone, canned food (including fruit to add to my muesli the next morning)** and a **bottle of wine**.

PETER WYENEN

Past Trailwalker Editor



It is not my normal drink of choice, but a **flask of Scotland's finest** is my luxury item. Nothing like a wee dram as a nightcap after a long day on the trail, and oh so warming when it's cold.

JUDY MCADAM

Walk Leader



PROLOGUE

Everyone my age remembers where they were and what they were doing when they first heard about the contest. I was sitting in my hideout watching cartoons when the news bulletin broke in on my video feed, announcing that James Halliday had died during the night.

I'd heard of Halliday, of course. Everyone had. He was the videogame designer responsible for creating the OASIS, a massively multiplayer online game that had gradually evolved into the globally networked virtual reality most of humanity now used on a daily basis. The unprecedented success of the OASIS had made Halliday one of the wealthiest people in the world.

At first, I couldn't understand why the media was making such a big deal of the billionaire's death. After all, the people of Planet Earth had other concerns.

Trailthinker Quiz Answers

1. Four. Truffles (the standing pig), Horatio (the sitting pig), Oliver (the pig at the bin) and Augusta (the trotting pig)
2. Botanic Park (Tainmuntilla)
3. Blinman (named after Robert "Pegleg" Blinman)
4. Te Araroa Trail (3,048 km)
5. Quorn
6. The Waugal, the rainbow serpent of the Aboriginal Dreaming
7. Mt Babbage
8. Bicentennial National Trail (5,330 km including trail through Victoria, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and Queensland)
9. Pacific Crest Trail and Appalachian Trail
10. Marrabel



Photos: Julie Stapleton

A COVID Catch Up Walk

JULIE STAPLETON

Eight members of Julie Stapleton's End-to-End 10 group, two leaders and four backup vehicles completed a catch up walk between Dutchmans Stern Conservation Park and Buckaringa Gorge.

This 49km stretch is the most spectacular, challenging and scariest section of my Trail experience so far. I found my mind wandering to the ghosts of South Australian explorers Eyre, Flinders and Stuart — they were looking for an inland sea; while our party was looking for enjoyment. Only one of us would be left disappointed.

We began our hike from Dutchmans Stern Conservation Park, north-east of Quorn. The park's iconic bluff, after which the reserve is called, was so named as the rocky outcrops and slopes appear to resemble the reverse stern of Dutch sailing ships from the eighteenth century. The outlying Eyre Depot also played a notable role in South Australia's European history, providing a vital water source for embattled early pioneers.

These historical hardships and the remoteness of the area left me with an eerie feeling as we passed through.

The region's ripple rocks are an incredible sight; masses of them, all intricately chiselled underwater some millions of years ago. The vastness of these limestone, granite and slate rocks have to be experienced by all, in conjunction with the most unimaginable neverending creek bed.

“

Mt Arden awaited; a climb that is no mean feat.

”

Mt Arden awaited; a climb that is no mean feat. The landform is the largest

in the area, and, naturally, the vista at the summit stretches on forever. Dutchmans Stern, Mt Brown and Mt Remarkable are now in the south, Willochra Creek is to the east, and the lure of those famous purple ranges await us in the north. We were blessed with perfect breathless sunny weather, with the occasional kangaroo and a smattering of goats keeping us company.

Traversing the ridge affords a spectacular landscape of inaccessible ranges, deep valleys and vast skies both to the east and the west. The eye can see for hundreds of kilometres over mountains and gorges. I recommend stopping and consuming these views; you will not see scenery like this anywhere else on the Heysen Trail. ➤



Massive boulders lined our path.

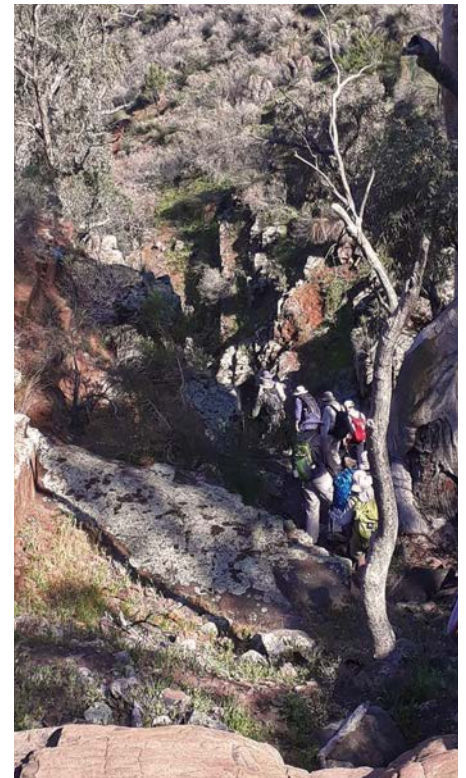
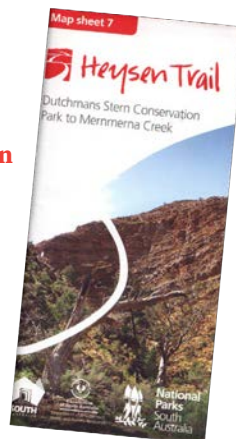
We had the privilege of camping in Quentin Smith Memorial BBQ campground, near Mt Arden, which was a lovely end to a tough day. A huge thank you to those who set up the cosy campfire, where we devoured Judy's specialties and kept ourselves entertained with tall tales. The temperature dropped to minus 4 overnight, but the fire quickly roared back to life come morning, allowing the hot coffee to flow.

“
We even searched for yellow-footed rock-wallabies, though, they were probably hiding and giggling to themselves as we battled the tricky terrain.
 ”

The final stretch of this three-day adventure was truly stunning; but, oh so rugged. We navigated creeks,

witnessed goat tracks veering through the scrub which upset the leaders, and brushed past saltbush, Andamooka Lillies and river red gums. We even searched for yellow-footed rock-wallabies, though, they were probably hiding and giggling to themselves as we battled the tricky terrain. The track eventually petered out to a lifeless gibber plain, but that's all part of the Trail journey. I look forward to what the Heysen throws up next.

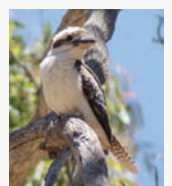
.....
 This section of the Heysen Trail can be found on **Sheet Map 7, Dutchmans Stern Conservation Park to Mernmerna Creek.**



The group navigating a steep incline.



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PAUL CONNELLY

A Pandemic Pivot: Through-hiking the Heysen

Photos: Paul Connelly

After 18 months of preparing to attempt the Appalachian Trail, COVID-19 quickly changed Paul Connelly's plans. He needed to pivot. With SA getting their act together quickly, he dusted off long-standing plans to hike the Heysen Trail.

WEEK 1

CAPE JERVIS TO ROCKY CREEK

On 1 June, I was dropped at the Heysen Trail trailhead at Cape Jervis by my youngest son, Liam. After a handful of quick sentimental photos, including one of Liam's thumb, I began my journey north shortly before midday.

The first week was bursting with highlights, including dolphins frolicking in the surf, scores of monarch butterflies fluttering on milkweeds, a vivid rainbow on Day 1,

a frosty morning at Inman Valley, a fence-hurdling cow, some enchanting fungi and a large flock of yellow-tailed black cockatoos in Kuitpo Forest.

WEEK 2

TO MARSCHALLS HUT

I found the urban areas challenging when planning to camp. Initially, I was worried about spending a night at Woodhouse Activity Centre on a Monday long weekend — especially after their online booking system stated they were fully booked. But, once I arrived, I may have been the only person staying the night! This week also included the closed section south of Cudlee Creek. Fortunately, the charitable Heidi from the 'Heysen Trail E2E Through Hiking' Facebook group offered a lift around the fire-affected area.

The week's highlights included hillwalking near Mt Lofty, koala sightings in Horsnell Gully, a cluster of ladybird beetles sheltering in Scott's Shelter, seeing solid ice at midday in a vehicle rut near Mt Crawford,

the sunset from Rossiters Hut and the company of inquisitive horses north of Kapunda.

WEEK 3

TO HALLETT RAILWAY STATION

After passing through the vineyards of the Barossa and the grain-growing region of the Light District, the halfway mark brought more remote areas. To my uneducated eye, the farmers looked to have had a solid start to the season, with crops looking healthy. I rescued a sheep that had caught its front legs in the top strands of a fence. I'm not sure if it survived, but I called into a nearby house to let them know.

Week 3's highlights included Burra Creek (I'll be sure to return), the heritage-listed Burra township, four soaring wedge-tailed eagles, the endless hills north of Burra, the sunset from Black Jack's cabin and seeing giant earthworms on Mt Bryan.

WEEK 4

TO GO-CART TRACK SHELTER

The tent didn't get used a lot this week. Instead, my accommodation included Spalding Hotel, Curnows Hut, Hiskey's Hut and Bowman Park Hut. Before this through-hike, I'd covered, as day, overnight or shorter multi-day hikes, from Cape Jervis to Spalding; this week bought me into new territory. I also shared both Curnows and Hiskeys Huts with a section hiker called Mel. We didn't walk together, as she didn't think she'd get to Hiskeys, so when she showed up, it was a pleasant surprise for both of us.

Highlights included following the Bundaleer Channel either side of Spalding, the creek north of Crystal Brook with its big, bent, burnt, broken but unbowed gums, and the sunset overlooking the Gulf St Vincent from Go-Cart Track Shelter. >



⌆ Nature was constantly out on display.



⤴ Above: I had the fortune of seeing the steam train near Pichi Richi Park and again the following day in Quorn.

⤵ Main: The vibrant glowing hills of the Flinders Ranges.

WEEK 5

TO MT ARDEN SOUTH

The route took me up and over a couple of large 'hills' — they might be called Mount Remarkable and Mount Brown, but we don't 'really' have mountains here in SA. The landscape becomes instantly dry north of Goyder's Line section including passing Eyre Depot where the tank is out of commission. Extra water and a refilled food bag from Quorn increased my pack weight through this section.

Week 5's highlights included scones with jam and cream in Quorn, seeing the steam train near Pichi Richi, trekking the ridgeline over Pichi Richi Park and spotting a potential fossil on the underside of a rock.

WEEK 6

TO YANYANNA HUT

Even though I was now deep into the Trail's arid north, the creeks were surprisingly full; not flowing but plenty of sizeable pools — some spring-fed, others brimming from the last rain. At Calabrinda Creek, I almost unscrewed the tank's tap spindle from its housing — fortunately I realised what was happening before it became a disaster! As I was getting close to the end, I booked my bus home from Parachilna,

which gave me a set date, meaning I could enjoy a few shorter days.

Highlights included meeting a section hiker called Alan at Buckaringa Gorge, following Wonoka Creek either side of Mayo Hut and meeting through-hikers Chris (who I'd met on Larapinta in 2018), then Rob and Craig in quick succession.

WEEK 7

TO PARACHILNA GORGE (& BEYOND)

The final days! After a short day to Middlesight Water Hut, I was joined by Corey, a fellow northbound through-hiker. We'd met on Day 1, and I'd expected to bump into him on and off along the way, but this was the first time we'd crossed paths since beginning the Trail. After reaching the terminus, I camped at the Parachilna Gorge hikers camp, then walked out to Parachilna the next day. Unfortunately, the Prairie Hotel and the campground at Parachilna was closed due to COVID-19, so I eventually hitched a ride to Hawker.

My final few days had one undeniable highlight — reaching the Heysen Trail's northern trailhead.



Best of luck to those attempting a Heysen Trail through-hike this season.

Paul Connelly, Craig Masterman, Carl Greenstreet, Chris Finn, Hollie Whiting, Corey Phillips, Robert van Heerikhuizen, Michael Shepherd, Doug Dunsmore, Lucy Ella Rose, Lachlan Dyer, Jak Allen, Alexander Campbell, Sean O'Gorman.

HIKING FOR A CAUSE:

Ronan Banks (*fundraising for Nature Conservancy*), Damian Fitzpatrick (*and on to Mt Hopeless – fundraising for Operation Flinders*), Bec Bazeley (*fundraising for Beyond Blue*), Dani Dutschke [**pictured**] (*fundraising for Uganda girls education*), Holly Marquis (*fundraising to save the Tarkayna*), Britt Franzmann (*fundraising for Di's Disney dream*).

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ON THE MOVE? RING US FOR A REMOVAL QUOTE

Photos: Anne Kirk

Beyond the Heysen with Flinders & Beyond Camel Treks

ANNE KIRK

Anne Kirk travelled north of the Heysen Trail's Parachilna Gorge terminus with the team from Flinders & Beyond Camel Treks.

This isn't the typical challenging hiking story of experienced walkers exploring a well-worn trail. Instead, this is a tale of an adventure that removed me from my comfort zone and left me with a plethora of wonderful lifetime memories. And, importantly, this is an experience I couldn't have imagined pursuing if I wasn't a Friend of the Heysen. It was on a TrailStarter hike in 2016 when I first heard about Camel Treks in the Flinders Ranges. Then, as I neared the end of the Heysen Trail with End-to-End 8, I firmed in my resolve to continue walking to discover the country further north. So, last year I booked in for the June 2020 trip and waited anxiously as COVID-19 hit and travel restrictions were introduced to protect regional areas. Thankfully, South Australia was ahead of the Pandemic curve, and the seed that was planted four years ago could finally be harvested.

Firstly, I need to clear up a common misconception: camel treks through the Flinders Ranges don't include camel rides. As a group, we walked from Blinman to Yankaninna Station near Arkaroola, much to the relief of the desert packhorses carrying our belongings. Ryan and Natalie McMillan from Flinders & Beyond provided everything we needed, including swags, 'luggage transfers', meals and water along the arid journey. This luxury is what attracted me to the expedition — I could enjoy walking through the Northern Flinders without the burden of carrying a heavy backpack and planning where and what we would eat each day.

The first part of my adventure started on the road to Blinman. I'd never driven so far alone before, so I decided to sightsee and stay overnight in Quorn — both prior to and following the experience. The camel trek officially began at the Blinman property of Ryan and Natalie on a Monday afternoon ➤



Navigating the gorge at Waukawoodna Gap



when I met my fellow travellers, eight 'Trekks' and four 'Cameleers'. There would usually be only two Cameleers, but due to the COVID-19 restrictions, we enjoyed the company of four camel drivers, which made our trip extra special as we could absorb their insightful knowledge.

The next morning we met the camels and learnt about the packing up and loading process. We left the farm just after lunch and commenced our adventure toward Angorichina Station across Adnyamathanha Country, first passing by the historic timber shearing shed.

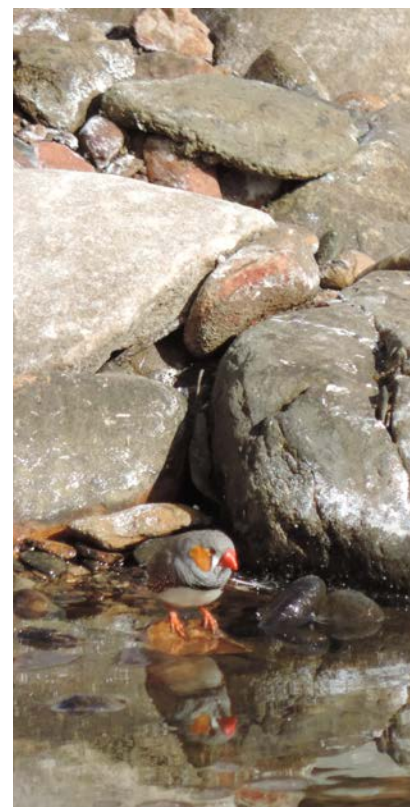
“
Adnyamathanha means 'people of the rocks' as they have a spiritual connection to the rocks and ranges through the region.
 ”

There were countless rocks to navigate as we ventured through the country's

rugged gorges. As I hiked, I would think of those who had walked before me: Australia's indigenous population, early explorers, settlers, miners and station workers. Troubled youth, based at the Operation Flinders property in nearby Yankaninna, also passed through here each year. Our visit didn't coincide with their trip, but we lunched in the gorge where they abseiled. Even though many sets of feet had transversed these lands before me, I pondered if, due to the region's extraordinary remoteness, I was, in fact, the first person to step over the rocks that passed under my feet.

However, I soon realised we weren't as isolated as I expected. While we were well and truly out of mobile range, we did surprisingly cross paths with owners and workers from four outlying stations. It is indeed a great privilege for station owners to allow us to travel over their private properties.

Sadly, we didn't encounter much wildlife due to the dry conditions, though we did notice fresh tracks. This area of the Flinders hasn't had



⤴ Above: A zebra finch enjoying a cool drink.

⤵ Left: The camels taking a break at Frome Creek on Angepena Station.

solid rain for four years, but, despite the drought, the rustic colours of the natural landscape were stunning. There was still plenty of plant life to enjoy with gum trees lining the route's dry creekbeds. I also learnt to appreciate eating mistletoe berries and sweet lerp from beneath the towering gums.

“
The camel's average speed of 3.5 km per hour guided our leisurely pace throughout the 163 km travelled over 15 days.
 ”

These ranges are ancient, and we were lucky to see stromatolites — evidence of the organisms which were responsible for the build-up of oxygen which contributed to first life millions of years ago. ➤

Walking through the Flinders gives you a greater appreciation of geology and how ranges are formed. Even the skies are stunning. Via Ryan's laser pointer tour, we observed the Milky Way in our first week and then the full moon toward the end of our trip.

“

An unexpected bonus was getting to know the camels... several of which had starred in the movie "Tracks"

”

The camel's average speed of 3.5 km per hour guided our leisurely pace throughout the 163 km travelled over 15 days. Camels typically take it slowly moving over steep hills, which gave us the freedom to explore our own path, as long as we kept the team in sight. We were fed a different hot meal from the menu each night, while wraps, fruit, yummy fruit cake and hot billy tea from the fire were served for lunch each day. Roomy swags were provided, plus we stayed overnight at the Angepena Shearing Quarters, which was a pleasant surprise.

An unexpected bonus was getting to know the camels: Cracker, Bubbles, Thomas, Taipan, Rolley, Mindi, Mona, Narie, Victor and Henry — several of which had starred in the movie "Tracks", though they were all stars in my eyes.

Once we reached the end, my welling tears were an indication of how much I would miss the camels, my fellow travellers and the overall Flinders experience. And we were all especially amazed by Ryan's ability to walk the entire way wearing Crocs!

I would highly recommend walking with camels in the northern Flinders Ranges. The tour is suitable for everyone, whatever your experience. I hope to return sooner rather than later.

Flinders & Beyond Camel Treks offer a range of camel safaris in the Northern Flinders Ranges. The treks range anywhere from 3 to 21 days and can be tailored to suit your individual or group needs.

BLINMAN, SA

FLINDERS & BEYOND

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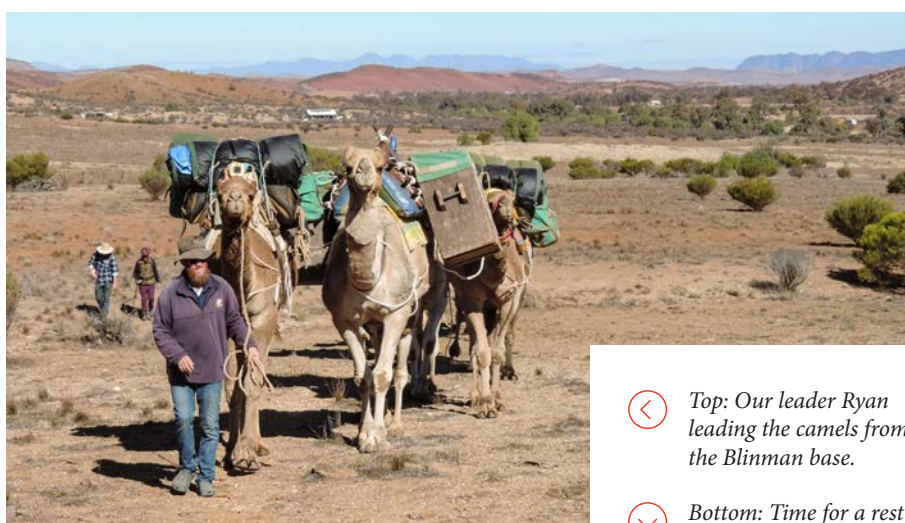
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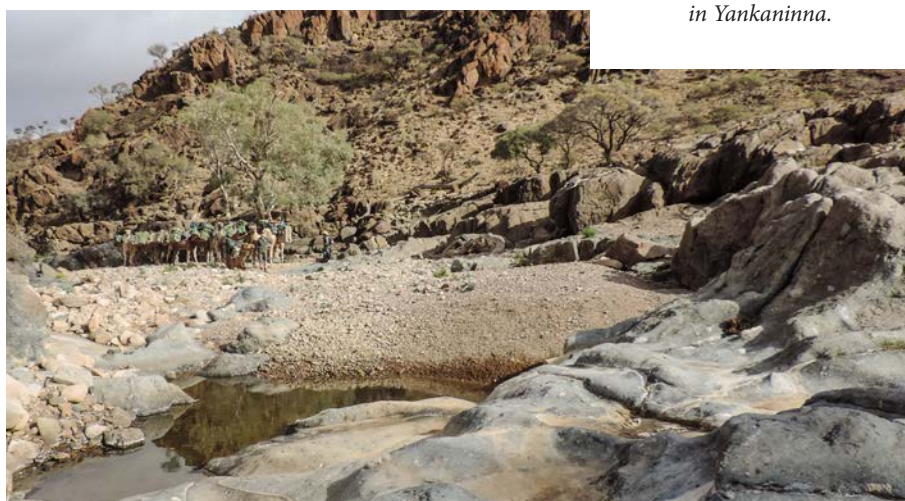
CONTACT US FOR 2021 TREKKING DATES



Top: Our leader Ryan leading the camels from the Blinman base.



Bottom: Time for a rest near Gammon Creek in Yankarinna.



Truth-telling: Black Lives Matter

Mark and Miranda Waters explore their geographical links to the reported massacres in the Aroona region.

The anticipation of walking through the iconic Aroona Valley is laced with expectation for walkers that were approaching the end of the Heysen Trail. Old homesteads and information boards describe a story of early settlement. However, little is said about the original inhabitants.

For one couple, the exploration through this area was tinged with question marks and apprehension. What if their ancestors had been part of the reported massacres in this region? What if they had a dark past in their family tree that needed to be accounted for?

This was the reality for Miranda and Mark Waters as they trekked with End-to-End 8. For Mark, it was a journey that reflected the work that he had done for the previous eight years as the State Manager of Reconciliation SA. For Miranda, it was a true discovery tour. But first, a bit of back story.

Miranda and Mark are fourth cousins (found out after having met and fallen

in love in the early 1980s). Their ancestors were McLeays and Frasers. In 1854 John McLeay married Mary McLennan, and his sister Christina married Murdoch Fraser on the same day in the same church at a small crofter's village in Scotland. Within three months the young couples got on a boat together in Liverpool, the "Marian", and sailed to Adelaide. Upon arrival, John and Mary jumped on a bullock dray with a newborn child and travelled to the Flinders Ranges arriving in the middle of summer in January 1855. The Frasers went to Port Wakefield and settled there.

John was Miranda's great great grandfather. Christina was Mark's great, great grandmother. John McLeay went to herd sheep in the Flinders Ranges based upon the skills he had from Scotland.

In 2018 the University of NSW had released a map of massacres across the country. Their research had been mostly based on the eastern seaboard, but there were 6 reported massacres of local Aboriginal people in South Australia; one of them in the Flinders ranges near Aroona Valley.

The map used records from the time when the landholder Frank Hayward, in his own diaries, described him taking the law into his own hands along with his stockmen and being

responsible for 40-60 deaths of Aboriginal men, women and children. The numbers killed were later clearly crossed through in his diaries with 16 written above it in their place.

“

For the Waters, this has been an important journey in truth-telling and discovering their past.

”

What if the Waters' progenitors were part of this? Was there a dark past that they might have to reconcile? Further research showed that the key dates for the owners' forays were 1851 and 1852. The McLeays arrived in 1855; hopefully, there was no connection. Miranda also took solace from clippings from the local press that indicated when the McLeays left the Flinders Ranges, due to drought a few years earlier, the local Aboriginal families wept at seeing them go.

For the Waters, this has been an important journey in truth-telling and discovering their past. We can all be open to such fresh knowledge and confrontation of our own history. It shows that ongoing reconciliation and the black lives matter movement is so essential right now; because history shows we have much further to go.

The Friends' Reconciliation Committee meet with Aboriginal stakeholders, Reconciliation SA and DEW to discuss opportunities for sharing stories along the Heysen Trail.



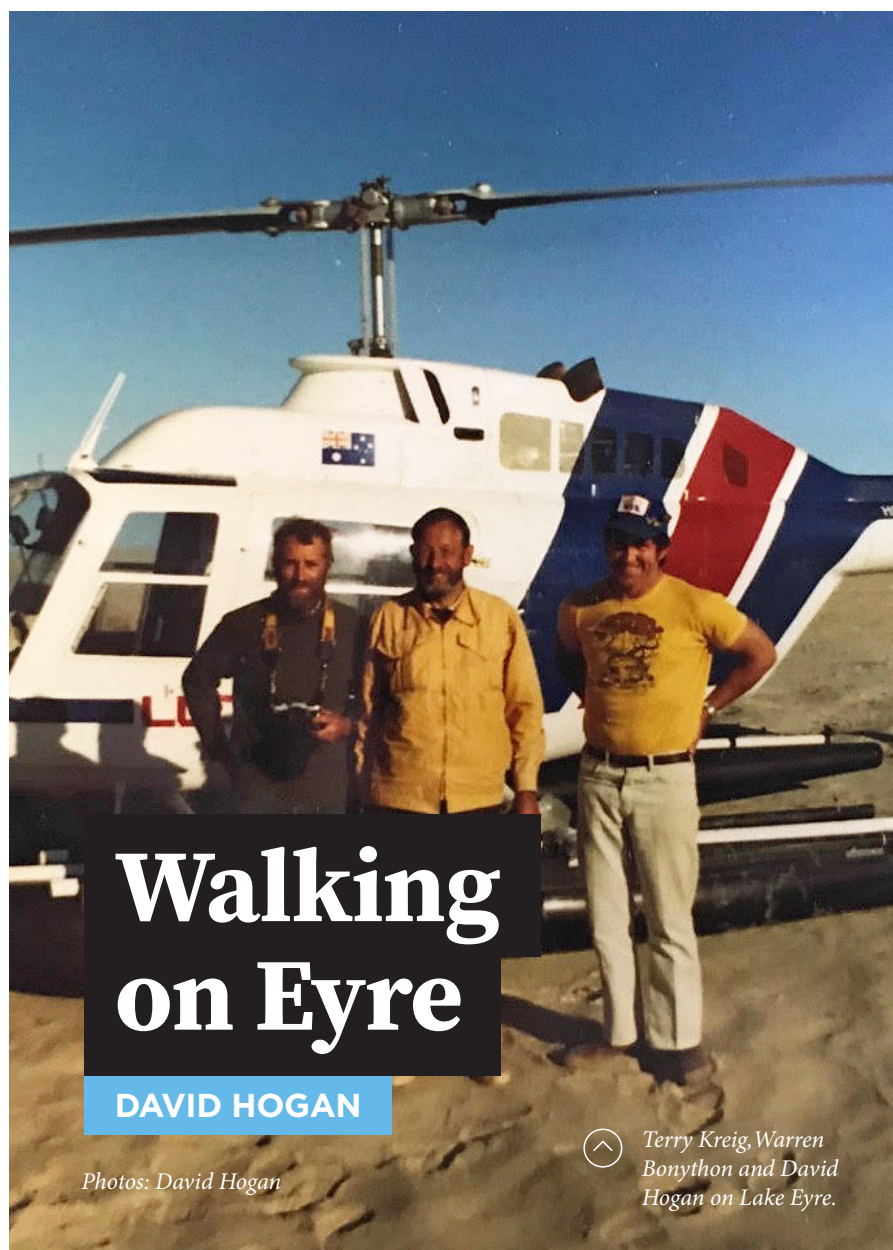
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Walking on Eyre

DAVID HOGAN

Photos: David Hogan

⤴ Terry Krieg, Warren Bonython and David Hogan on Lake Eyre.

David Hogan retells his experience helping Warren Bonython and Terry Krieg circumnavigate South Australia's Lake Eyre.

During a recent conversation with a fellow Rotarian Robert Koehne, the subject of interesting old motor vehicles came up.

I'm not saying he's strange, but he has four eclectic old vehicles: a Mercedes Benz, Russian Lada, Land Rover Defender and a Humber Pullman

— the latter being a former official vehicle for the Tasmanian Governor. The subject of 'Minis' came up in our discussion, closely followed by the 'Mini Moke'. Robert pointed out that he was a keen bushwalker and a member of the 'Friends of the Heysen Trail'.

He went on to state that the instigator of the Heysen Trail was Warren Bonython and he also owned a Moke. 'Yes', I responded, 'I have met Warren, and the Moke, plus the other co-owner of that Moke, Terry Krieg'. That revelation quickly stalled the subject of old cars.

In 1982, I was a pilot with Lloyd Aviation based at Adelaide Airport when Warren Bonython enquired about using a helicopter to assist his

quest to circumnavigate Lake Eyre (officially known as Kati Thanda–Lake Eyre) on foot. A meticulous planner, Warren explained that he and his walking companion Terry Krieg could not physically carry the supplies, particularly water, they would need in their estimated five-week walk.

Now I'm not saying they're both strange, but that thought may have entered my head at the time... and several times thereafter!

Their plan to fly in and deliver four supply caches at particular locations around the lake seemed outrageous, but, was this possible? Of course!

I only had my helicopter licence for a year at that point and had actively flown this type of aircraft for six months. Still, I was no stranger to aviation, having accrued some 12,000 flying hours in aeroplanes over 16 years. A large chunk of my career had involved flying over inland Australia, including a five-year stint flying RFDS aircraft based out of Port Augusta. Lake Eyre was in my patch.

“

Warren was very particular as to the locations he planned to leave his supplies.

”

Warren was in luck, as part of the oil and gas exploration project in the Cooper Basin, Delhi Petroleum had commissioned Geosurveys to carry out a seismic program across Lake Eyre. The lake was quite dry, and it was Winter, searing temperatures and flies were non-existent. Geosurveys had hoped to cross the lake using small Suzuki 4WD's fitted with oversize tyres. While the idea sounded good, the cars were a major fail, hopelessly bogging in no time. The solution was to use lightweight buggies capable of being slung beneath a helicopter; that's where I came in.

A preliminary survey was carried out using a Bell JetRanger helicopter, fitted with low-pressure floats (designed for landing on water) rather than skids, which were likely to break through ➤

the surface's soft crust. A bogged helicopter would be a serious and costly issue, not easily solved.

Later, on my way north to commence the seismic program, I arranged to rendezvous with Warren at Muloorina Station, where I caught up and stayed with friends Malcolm and Colleen Mitchell. The JetRanger was loaded up and, with Warren sitting alongside me, his wife Bunty was squished in the back with water containers and supplies piled around her.

This expedition was before the availability of GPS, and Warren was very particular as to the locations he planned to leave his supplies, easy enough to locate from the air but entirely different perspective from lake level. Having established the spots, Warren produced a shovel and had sand going in all directions as he dug a hole to bury the precious supplies. I was amazed how fit he was, and Bunty urged him on! I had a German Shepherd at the time, and he was no slouch at digging holes, but Warren would have put him to shame. Quite remarkable for a man in his mid 60's.

With their supplies ensconced in the hole, Warren covered them with



⤴ Bunty Bonython urging her husband Warren on with Bell JetRanger in the background.

chicken wire to keep the wild dogs out, then he jumped back on the shovel to fill the ditch, refusing my offer to help. With the four caches in place we returned to Muloorina, I bade this charming couple farewell and flew on to a tent on the eastern shore of Lake Eyre which was to be my home for the next 3-4 weeks.

There were no frills living in a camp. Conditions were primitive, and the days could be cold with the nights even more so. The wind blew, and the dust blasted, oh, and the mud! However, we had access to bore water, could take hot showers, and we had a cook — I'm not stupid, I made friends with him straight away! We also had a Cessna 206 supply plane land on Saturday, which may have had slabs of a bubbly brown amber liquid on board (I don't drink, so I'm not sure), but I do know there was none left on Sunday morning!

“

The official name changed in 2012 to combine 'Lake Eyre' with the indigenous name, Kati Thanda. The native title over the lake and surrounding region is held by the Arabana people.

”

The hours were long, we were up before daybreak every morning, bar Sunday when we slept in, then cleaned and fixed our gear, did some washing and relaxed. It was then when I would think about Warren and Terry doing the hard yards walking around the lake. No doubt about it, they were tough. Tough, but strange. ➤

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As the seismic crew progressed across the lake, I was indeed a busy helicopter pilot. Nevertheless, I kept an eye out for the intrepid walkers and managed to catch them on a few occasions and landed to say hello.

“

Terry asked jokingly if I had a beer — maybe he was feeling the pinch.

”

They were pleased to see someone, anyone, even me — there aren't many passers-by out there on Lake Eyre. On one occasion, I was heading south to Leigh Creek to swap helicopters (mine was due for maintenance), when I spotted them toiling along the lake's edge, so I landed.

Terry asked jokingly if I had a beer — maybe he was feeling the pinch. On my return journey later that afternoon, I delivered four beers on ice, together with that day's Adelaide newspaper. They were so excited I thought they were going to kiss me; their bedraggled appearance, amongst other things, put me off!

Later — I think it was about day 10 of their walk — our paths crossed again. This time Warren was having trouble with the spring in the shock absorber of the towing handle on his cart. It had undoubtedly expired from too much hard work. I offered to help.

The seismic program was wrapping up soon, but I took the offending part back to our camp to see what I could do. At first glance, there didn't appear to be much on offer, until I realised tension springs on all the tents — perfect! However, I didn't remove the spring from my tent — I didn't fancy it blowing down in the middle of the night. A spring from someone else's tent made the supreme sacrifice and went for a walk with Warren. When I dropped it off, it was accompanied by a 20-litre container of hot water. Warren and Terry could have a well-deserved wash, scrubbed up, they may have come looking for another kiss, but they were too late, my job was done. I was beating the air into submission on my way home.

“

Walking on Eyre had to be a hard slog, kilometre after kilometre of that harsh Lake Eyre environment is daunting but Warren and Terry were determined.

”

Walking on Eyre had to be a hard slog, kilometre after kilometre of that harsh Lake Eyre environment is daunting but Warren and Terry were determined. Despite being weather-beaten, dishevelled and tired, they were steely-eyed and stoic; I knew they would succeed.

Six years later I was back on Lake Eyre, only further north by the Warburton Channel. A Piper Warrior — a single-engine light aircraft — apparently developed engine troubles and landed on the lake.

Having landed safely, the aircraft was bogged; there was no taking off. The three occupants were rescued by helicopter shortly after.

Some weeks later, I was commissioned to use a helicopter to sling the downed aircraft back to the shore where repairs could be carried out, and a takeoff attempted from a makeshift airstrip. There was a setback. The Piper Warrior had settled into very salty mud, and part of the propeller and both alloy main wheels were eaten away by corrosion; replacements were required.

Muloorina was again our base camp, and a helicopter was the only means of accessing the site. The operation was touch and go, but we managed. Surprisingly, the aircraft's engine ran perfectly — there was nothing wrong with it. We surmised that the pilot deliberately landed to have a walk around; the so-called engine trouble was a furphy. It appeared Warren and Terry's up-close curiosity for Australia's largest lake was shared by others.

I have been fortunate to see various floods on Lake Eyre, including the highest recorded in 1974, with the resultant birdlife scarcely believable. Lake Eyre really is an amazing place.



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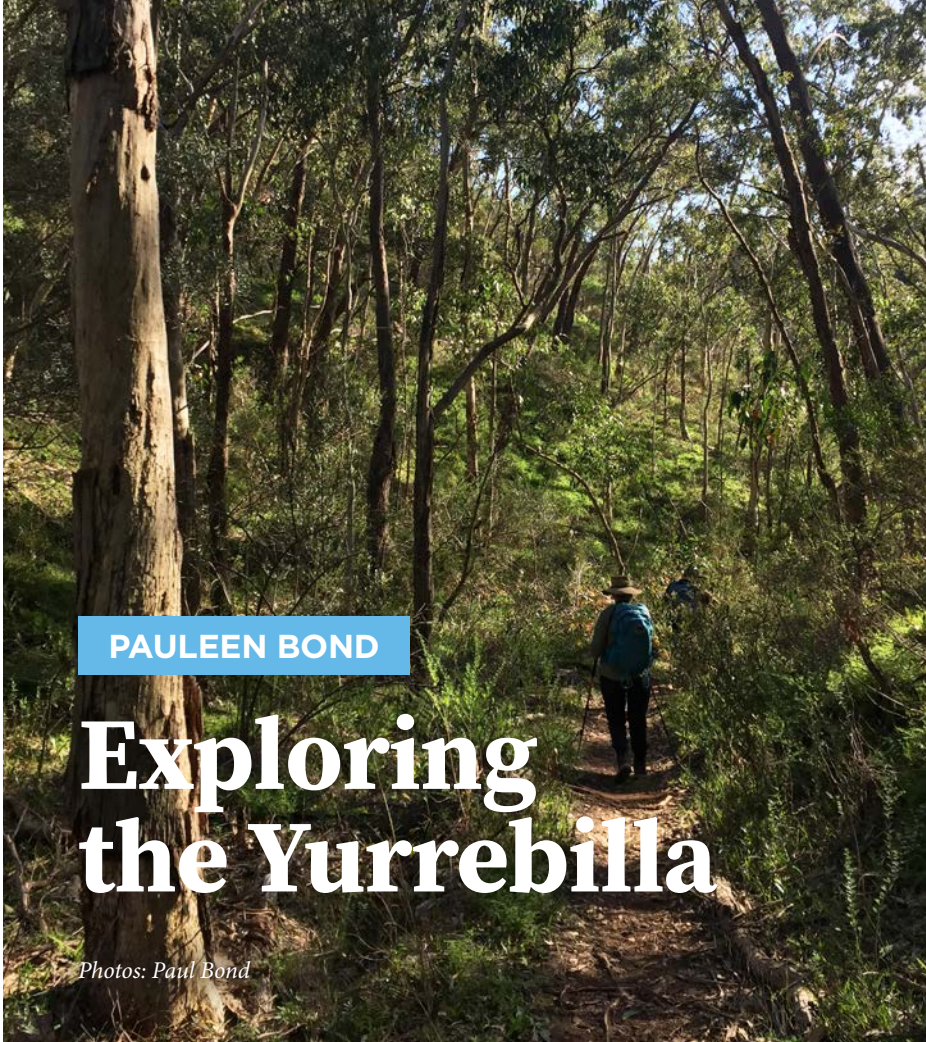
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PAULEEN BOND

Exploring the Yurrebilla

Photos: Paul Bond

With an absense of organised hiking, Pauleen Bond, Anne Kirk and Paul Bond decided to hike Adelaide Hills' Yurrebilla Trail.

With the arrival of the Pandemic in March, came the disappointment that we were unable to hike with organised Friends' walks for some time. Thankfully, the South Australian Government had encouraged people to exercise locally. So, once a week for a few weeks, two to three of us would explore the various Belair trails, ensuring we abided by COVID-19 restrictions. Having hiked nearly every inch of Belair, the idea was suggested — 'Why don't we hike the Yurrebilla Trail'?

The Yurrebilla Trail is a 54km hike from Belair to Ambers Gully. While we had walked parts of the track over the years, we had never completed the journey. By the time we decided to hike the Yurrebilla, the state government

had fortuitously allowed the public to walk further afield.

The next step was working out the logistics. At that time, we couldn't carpool; we, therefore, split the Yurrebilla into five separate walks. For the first three, we parked, hiked a certain distance, then returned to our cars.

The traditional owners, the Kaurna people, called Mt Lofty and Mt Bonython 'Yurrebilla' — meaning 'twin ears'.

During our first walk from Belair to Brownhill Creek, we were able to cut short the return hike from 9km to 6km, giving us a total of 15km. The next week we hiked from Brownhill Creek to Measdays Lookout and back again (17km), while the following week we hiked Measdays Lookout to Ridge Road, Greenhill and back again (15km). We were again able to carpool for the final two walks; from Ridge Road to Morialta (14km) and Morialta to



- ⤴ Above: Views of Adelaide over the region's autumn vineyards.
- ⤴ Main: Navigating the Hills' dense vegetation.

Ambers Gully (15km). So, instead of completing 54km, we totalled 76km.

The Yurrebilla Trail is a wonderful experience complete with views across the city, challenging terrain, captivating history, and endemic flora and fauna. We chatted, laughed, swapped recipes and examined interesting plantlife, all the while huffing and puffing up, and carefully walking down, the trail's many hills.

Hiking the Yurrebilla Trail, during this time of uncertainty, helped put our senses back in order

We thoroughly enjoyed every step of that 76km over those 5 weeks. I love the quote from John Burroughs — 'I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in order'. Hiking the Yurrebilla Trail, during this time of uncertainty, helped put our senses back in order and affirmed our appreciation of what an amazing world we live in.

The 54km Yurrebilla Trail meanders through eight conservation parks, national parks and reserves; allowing hikers to follow the route and be no further than 15km from Adelaide's city centre.



An Overland Track Diary

ADAM MATTHEWS

In March, eleven members of End-to-End 12 completed Tasmania's iconic Overland Track. Little did they know, by the time they reached the end, the outside world would be a different place.

Suggestions of tackling the Overland Track had circulated amongst our End-to-End group throughout last year. Before long, a group had formed to go and do just that. In March, eleven members of End-to-End 12 set out on the trail.

DAY 1

The previous day was a cracker, but today we were to be greeted with Tasmania's rebellious weather. After being dropped off at Ronny Creek,

we began our seven-day adventure by strolling along a boardwalk through open grass plains before slowly climbing through a heavily wooded gully beside a fast-flowing stream. Before long, we arrived at Crater Lake. Despite the rain, this was our first taste of the spectacular scenery we would encounter on the rest of our trip. We sheltered in a little boatshed from yesteryear for a quick morning tea. From here, we started the steep ascent to Marion's Lookout where support chains are provided to assist hikers in pulling themselves up. Once on top, >

we battled low-hanging cloud and gale-force winds. Thank God for walking poles; without them, I would have been blown off my feet.

The scenery at this height is beautiful, but I only say that from previous family trips. Today's weather was shocking, so we pressed on toward Kitchen Hut. I know this shelter well as my daughter and I stayed here overnight seven years ago on my first attempt at the Overland Track. On that occasion, after taking 5 hours to walk 5km in snowshoes, we found distressed hikers harbouring inside that had been stuck at Waterfall Valley Hut for three days. This was when I deemed it unsafe to continue, and we returned to Cradle Valley. Anyway, that's another story for another article. After a hot drink, we were on our way.

“
By now, the rain was constant, and the trail had turned into a creek.
”

After skirting our way around the base of the unseen Cradle Mountain, we arrived at a junction that would lead us to our first night's hut. In the coming years, many of these old huts will be replaced, so instead of continuing to the unavailable Waterfall Valley Hut as planned, we diverted to Scott Kilvert Memorial Hut: a lovely shelter situated near Lake Rodway. Unfortunately, all the elevation we had gained earlier was soon lost, and we now had to retrace these steps on Day 2. For over 2km we descended down, with steep steps in



Right: A misty morning view of Crater Lake.



Main: Setting up for morning tea at the historic boat shed on Day 1.

*Photos:
Adam Matthews*



places. By now, the rain was constant, and the trail had turned into a creek.

The hut was bursting at the seams. With the unruly weather settling in, nearly all hikers in the area had opted to utilise the shelter rather than brave the elements in a tent. Most people went to bed early, and it wasn't long before we were all laid out like kids on a sleepover. The word 'sardines' was muttered by several parties.

DAY 2

The next morning, we awoke to the sight of snow covering the area's higher peaks. For most of the trip, we broke into two or three groups as people trundled along at their own pace, though, with conditions as they were, we decided to stay as one large group this morning as we weren't sure what weather would greet us back at the track.

Surprisingly, the climb out seemed easier than the walk in. We began the ascent wearing single layers, though, as we neared the top, we applied all our gear to protect us from the frosty conditions. You could see the moisture on our black jackets start to turn to ice.

Apart from a few undulations, most of the day was downhill. After crossing a few icy boardwalks, the snow slowly faded as we dropped down into Waterfall Valley. Thankfully, panoramic views began to appear. Barn Bluff is a side trip of 6km, 2.5 hours return, but we couldn't even see it, so we gave it a miss.

The sun even made an appearance as we walked through the trail's open plains and woodlands. Our group dispersed as some made the side trip to Lake Will (1.3km), while the others continued onto Windermere Hut; tonight's slightly less squeeze accommodation. ▶

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DAY 3

Stormy clouds saw us begin the day's 15km in our wet weather gear. Fortunately, temperatures soon warmed, and only shirts were needed. The scenery too turned more spectacular. We hiked through open button grass plains and into densely wooded forests, then onto boardwalks around the edges of swamps and out into spectacular mountain scenery. Overall, Day 3 was my favourite day on the trail. A short side trip to River Forth Lookout left us gazing down into valleys some 500m below. With Mt Pelion West (1560m) on one side and Mt Oakleigh appearing on the other, we were soon at Frog Flats — the lowest point on the whole track (720m above sea level).

Pelion Hut was to be our home for the next two nights as we had reached our 'rest day'. Sleeping up to 60 people, this shelter was enormous. Half sleeping area/half kitchen and dining, the hut contained balconies offering views to die for. Unsurprisingly, Pelion Hut

was my favourite for the trip. As the weather had cleared, many hikers slept in their tents, which left the hut only partially occupied.

DAY 4

Our rest day – HA! We had decided to climb Mt Oakleigh today. At just under 10km and 500m elevation, it took us four hours to complete, including two breaks and a lengthy breather at the summit to absorb the unbelievable scenery. We equally enjoyed this landform from the comfort of our hut later in the evening. The sunset view was like watching the colours change on Uluru. If you have the time, this is a must.

There is no order to how hikers use the huts, some people do two or three sections a day, while others reach huts from access tracks, get comfy for 2-3 nights, then walk out. It's up to you to create your own hiking itinerary. I can see myself talking 9-10 days in future and allowing time to experience the Overland Track's many wonderful side trips.

DAY 5

Day 5 had us heading for Kia Ora Hut just under 9km away. A long gradual climb through myrtle and eucalypt forests saw us arrive at Pelion Gap. With mountain views surrounding us, this four-way junction offered side trips to Mt Pelion East (1461m) and, Tasmania's highest mountain, Mt Ossa (1614m).

This intersection felt quite busy as walkers had dropped their packs and headed off to bag their next peak; aside from this extra roadside luggage, we had the track to ourselves most days. Some of our group went up Mt Pelion East as far as they felt comfortable, while others continued onto Kia Ora. Talking to a group of young hikers later, who'd attempted the Mt Ossa climb, mentioned it was "quite hairy at the top", suggesting the route involved more rock climbing than hiking.

From Pelion Gap, we descended through a variety of landscapes and, with the sun back out shining, we crossed our first snakes for the trip. ➤

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Paddy Pallen

Tonight's hut slept 24 at a push, but with the beautiful weather and loads of available tent platforms, the shelter wasn't too squeezezy.

DAY 6

One of our first stops today was Du Cane Hut — an old trappers hut set amongst a thick forest, which we walked through for most of the day. The weather was a bit drizzly but still warm enough to not put on raincoats. Soon, we came to our first side trip for the day: D'Alton and Ferguson Falls. Leaving our packs, we set off down the steep track. We hadn't had much rain since Day 2, but we were amazed by the volume of water still raging over the falls.

“

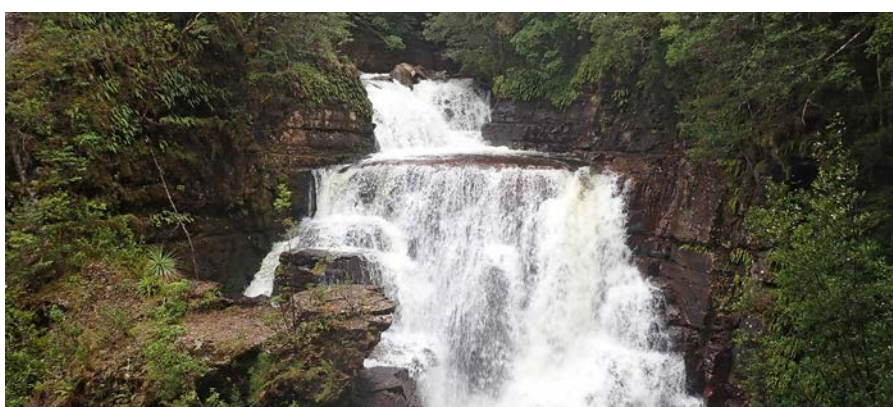
One of their leaders informed us of the possibility of 30mm plus of rain tomorrow, and gale-force winds the following day.

”

Once back at the junction, we met a private tour group who walked with day packs and stayed in private huts each night — oh, the creature comforts! One of their leaders informed us of the possibility of 30mm plus of rain tomorrow, and gale-force winds the following day. This set everyone's minds thinking about how we would complete the trail.

Further up, at the next junction, the group split; some left to view Hartnett Falls, while others continued up the gradual climb toward Ducane Gap, then downhill to our accommodation for the night.

The split level Windy Ridge Hut was set in a thick forest, and, I assume, the last shelter to be upgraded in the area. The sleeping quarters were split into three large rooms with platform bunks in each, and the dining room set on the lower level. After tea, the conversation was steered toward the gloomy forecast over the next few days. Some of our party had decided they would walk to Narcissus Hut (10.5km) then catch the ferry back across Lake St Clair to Cynthia Bay — this being where ➤



Top: A view of the sun shining down on Mt Oakleigh from our accommodation at New Pelion Hut.



Left: The icy conditions at high altitude kept us on our toes.



Bottom: A gushing river after several days of rain at D'Alton Falls.



◀ A bleak but beautiful start.

most people finish their Overland experience. The rest wanted to attempt the last 15.8km from Narcissus Hut to Cynthia Bay around the edge of the lake. Either way, the group required an early start, that was for sure.

DAY 7

Up at 6am; on the trail by 7:30am. Despite the early hour, we moved at a reasonable pace on what seemed to be a more manageable track. After walking nearly 5km through scrub, open forests and sub-tropical areas, we arrived at the turn-off to Pine Valley — another side trip requiring an additional day to complete. A further 5.5km later, we reached Narcissus Hut, enjoyed a final group morning tea, and farewelled those awaiting the ferry. We continued to Cynthia Bay, splitting into our usual walking groups, without any signs of that forecast rain.

Suzanne and I soon found ourselves crossing a small creek, no more than

2m wide, when I spotted a platypus floating leisurely beneath the platform. I called for her to look, but he had disappeared. From here, we entered a dense subtropical forest full of ferns, fungi, towering eucalypts, and, of course, mud. Inspecting the map's elevation chart, this section appeared straightforward, alas, it wasn't. Small, but constant undulations, plus the route's obstructive fallen trees, were energy-sapping.

“
Trust me when I say, the scenery is spectacular; photos don't do it justice.
”

About 6km from Narcissus Hut we discovered Echo Point. A small rustic hut that sleeps 8 people, 5 possums, 10 rats and God knows what else. This was potentially going to be our last hut

for the trip (as the ferry also stops here when requested), but due to the surprisingly clear weather, and the remaining daylight hours, we pushed on. 10km to go.

Cruelly, we saw our first glimpse of civilisation with 4km remaining; but, it was enough to lift our spirits. So, after one last push, we eventually finish one hell of a day's walking, at just over 27km in 9.25 hours. The forecast rain was now upon us, and we were soaked; with 1km to go, it wasn't worth stopping to put wet weather gear on.

We took a quick photo of the official finishing spot, then dashed into the bar for celebratory drinks and nibbles. From there, we said our goodbyes as the group dispersed to take buses, planes, cars or boats back to Adelaide. A few of us went to the delightful Derwent Bridge Hotel for tea — not the first time I've enjoyed a fantastic meal in the middle of nowhere in Tasmania. Thankfully, that menacing forecast didn't eventuate. I wouldn't have liked to have completed that final day walking amongst those monstrous trees through gale-force winds.

Trust me when I say, the scenery is spectacular; photos don't do it justice. Tasmania's Overland Track is a hike that everyone should experience, either independently as we did, or in a private tour group. A track I will most certainly revisit.

.....
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JON HOLBROOK

Favourite Short Walks

The Long Ridge track in Chambers Gully.

Photo: Jon Holbrook

Submit your favourite short walks to the Editor

mountain biker was cautious and respectful of walkers, so there is no problem sharing the trail. The light fog was very evocative and gave the rest of the walk a lovely ambience.

The trail keeps heading up, with a few turns, until reaching the Long Ridge Track, and eventually Cleland Wildlife Park. We continued on to Mt Lofty (because we could), but there is the option of turning right here and taking the Long Ridge track back to the start.

Lofty is an excellent place to sit and enjoy the view (and coffee and cake), but there will be other people present, especially on weekends.

Having completed the route again this year, there is now a nice new trail (the Steub trail) that, while clearly designed for mountain bikers with banked corners and steady gradients, is marked as a shared trail and allows one to reach the summit without having to use the Waterfall Gully – Mt Lofty track. I'm not sure that I'd want to race down it on a bike anyway, given the size of the roo that I've seen there.

“

There are many ways to vary the tracks from and to your starting point.

”

If you spend any time in Adelaide, it's easy to be reminded that we live in a different time to a lot of the country. If you spend any time in the Adelaide Hills, you also realise that we live in a very different place to the other major capital cities. Brisbane is perhaps the only other city that comes close to having such an expanse of bushland within a short distance of the CBD. We are very blessed.

We discovered Chambers Gully only last year when training for the last two weeks of End-to-End 9. We don't have a lot of hills near home (beaches do have a tendency towards flatness), so this seemed a nice way of enjoying some hills without the argy-bargy of the Waterfall Gully – Mt Lofty trail.

The first time we did it may just have ruined it for us, however. It was a typical Adelaide July day: cool and foggy, with the promise of if not rain then at least some drizzle. We set off from our parking spot on Waterfall Gully Road and resigned ourselves with the fact that we would likely get a little damp and probably more than a bit muddy.

The first part of the walk is a trail managed by the City of Burnside and is primarily an access track to reach Cleland. The trail's adjacent creek appears to flow for the majority of winter, and was in full gush, with the contents eventually ending up in First Creek and then the Torrens.

“

I usually have a quiet word to myself about the person who thought bringing blackberries to South Australia was a good idea.

”

Once inside Cleland, the trail narrows slightly and the climbing gets a bit steeper (though never too steep). This is the point where I usually have a quiet word to myself about the person who thought bringing blackberries to South Australia was a good idea. DEW are having a good go at getting rid of them, but they're tough little so-and-so's.

However, the eucalypts are gorgeous and the birdlife prolific. The occasional

The Long Ridge track provides a nice loop and gives a view over the city. The whole circuit is not overly challenging, though it is uphill for the first half and downhill for the second half.

This is a highly recommended easy loop close to the city. Grab a map of the Cleland trails as there are many ways to vary the tracks from and to your starting point. The Avenza app is also a great way of getting maps of SA National Parks on your phone (though there is much to be said for paper).

.....
Do you have a favourite short walk you'd like to share? Please send your article to The Editor at trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au



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