

# TRAILWALKER

Issue 174 • Apr 2026

FREE

## 40 Years of Heart, Service, and Friendship



**FRIENDS  
OF THE  
HEYSEN  
TRAIL**

- ➔ A Snapshot - 40 Years of Volunteering for the Heysen Trail
- ➔ Trail Angels
- ➔ New walk programme inside!
- ➔ 40 Years of Heart on the Trail

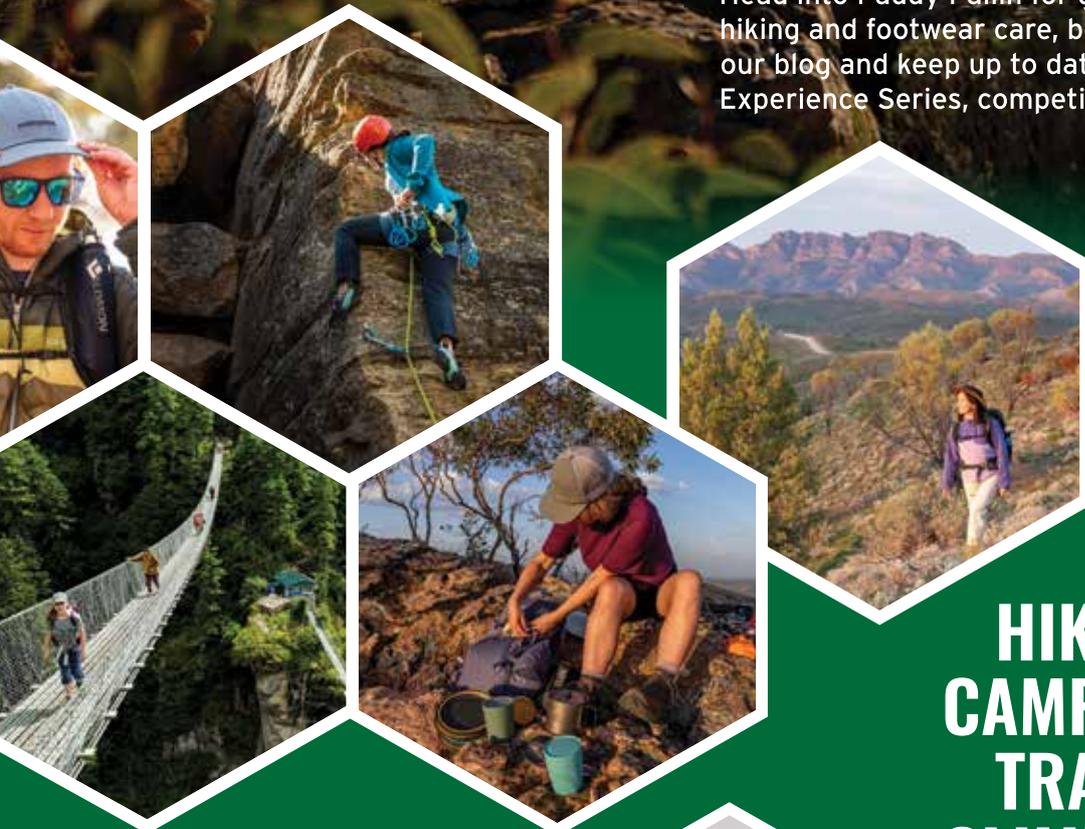
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SINCE 1930



# FRIENDS OF THE HEYSEN TRAIL

Published by the Friends of the Heysen Trail and Other Walking Trails

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### MEMBERSHIP

**SINGLE** \$29.50/year  
**FAMILY** \$49.50/year

Membership is valid for 12 months from the date of payment.

### TRAILWALKER

Editor/Sub Editor  
Tammy Main/Barbara Sedgley



**Cover image:** Volunteers celebrate the completion of the Northern Trailhead upgrade, 2024. Photo: Outback Communities Authority.

Trailwalker welcomes photo submissions suitable for the magazine cover. Please email your high-resolution images to [trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au](mailto:trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au)

# About the Friends

The Friends of the Heysen Trail is a voluntary organisation established in 1986, dedicated to the maintenance, development, and promotion of the Heysen Trail and other walking trails in South Australia.

The Heysen Trail is a long-distance walking trail in South Australia, running from Parachilna Gorge in the Flinders Ranges via the Adelaide Hills to Cape Jervis on the Fleurieu Peninsula, spanning approximately 1,200 kilometres in length.

The Department for Environment & Water (DEW) is the authorised manager of the Heysen Trail on behalf of the SA Government. The Friends volunteers undertake operational maintenance, development and promotion of the Trail in partnership with DEW.

Members of The Friends can actively contribute to the development and maintenance of the Heysen Trail, participate in leadership roles in the regular walking program (catering to beginners and experienced walkers), provide a valuable information source for hikers and help promote the volunteer organisation and the benefits of walking.

New members are always welcome.

### COUNCIL MEMBERS 2025

#### President

Neil Hendry

#### Vice President

Melanie Sjoberg

#### Secretary

Vicki Stewart

#### Treasurer

Rudy Pieck

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Mark Fletcher

Judy McAdam

Ross McDougall

Kathy Wright

Daniel Jardine

John Wilson

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#### Reconciliation

Chair Vacant

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#### Office & Administration

Julian Monfries

#### Promotion: Membership & Marketing

Nick Gray

#### Trail Development

Melanie Sjoberg

#### Walking

Paul De Laine

#### Membership Secretary

Judy McAdam

#### Founding Patron

C Warren Bonython AO\*

### END-TO-END WALK COORDINATORS

**E2E15** Mark Curtis

**E2E16** Kathy Wright

**E2E17** Paul Frost

**E2E18** Paul Delaine

**E2E19** Kristyn Willson

**E2E20** Lyn Nottage

### TRAIL DEVELOPMENT SECTION LEADERS

**S1** Glenn Chambers

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**S3** John Newland

**S4** Hermann Schmidt

**S5** Robert Smedley

**S6** John Babister

**S7** Robert Ruediger, Ken Smith

**S8** Carl Greenstreet

**S9-11** Peter Deacon

**S12-13** Dom Henschke

**S14** Hugh Greenhill

**S15-20** Daniel Jardine  
Coordinator\*

**S19** Simon Cameron

\*assisted by Retired Active SA Bushwalkers

### Key Dates

#### APRIL

**22nd** – 2026 Friends AGM

#### MAY

**20th** – Council Meeting

#### JUNE

**24th** – Council Meeting

#### JULY

**22nd** – Council Meeting

The Friends of the Heysen Trail acknowledge and respect the Traditional Custodians of the ancestral lands we traverse along the Heysen Trail, embracing the Ngarrindjeri, Kaurna, Peramangk, Ngadjuri, Nukunu and Adnyamathanha peoples.

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→ Heysen Trail, South Bound Towards Mayo Hut on Wonoka Station • Photo: Warwick Hallinan

## Editorial

Articles, reports and other submissions by members and interested parties are welcome. Article guidelines are available upon request. Contact the Trailwalker Editor at [trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au](mailto:trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au)

**Deadline for the next issue (August 2026):**

**12th June 2026**

The Trailwalker magazine is available by subscription or online at [heysentrail.asn.au/trailwalker](https://heysentrail.asn.au/trailwalker) and is published and distributed tri-annually:

- April
- August
- December

The Trailwalker magazine has a minimum of 1,500 copies printed for each edition. The estimated readership is in excess of 2,500.

Contributors are urged to contact the Editor to discuss their article prior to submission. The submission deadline is approximately 7 weeks 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 Heysen Trail.

## Advertising rates (ex. GST)

**1/8 PAGE** \$180 per 3 issues  
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**1/3 PAGE** \$315 per 3 issues  
**1/2 PAGE** \$450 per 3 issues  
**FULL PAGE** \$660 per 3 issues  
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Advertising specifications are available from the Advertising Officer at: [trailwalker.media@heysentrail.asn.au](mailto:trailwalker.media@heysentrail.asn.au)

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## 40 Years of Heart on the Trail

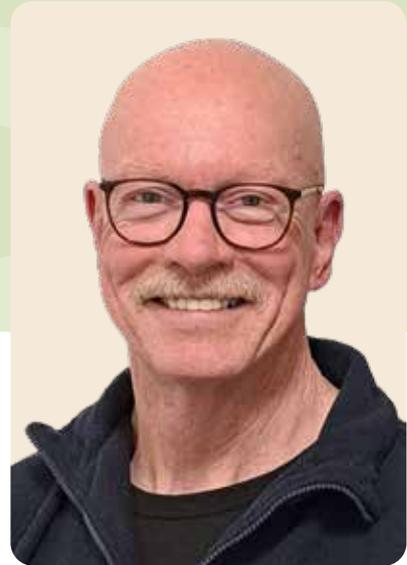
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# A New Year, A New Adventure Awaits...



The walking season will soon be here. The Walkfest, which takes place in Belair on Sunday 29 March, marks the official start of the season with WalkingSA – but you don't have to wait. Our Summer Walks, Trailwalker and Trailstarter programs are already underway. Check out our Walks Program calendar on our website.

Our redeveloped website will go "live" soon, showcasing our new look. Check out the article later in the magazine that will give you more information about this exciting evolution.

Other good news is a long-awaited outcome from the Governance Review completed 12 months ago. We have received confirmation from the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, the Hon Lucy Hood MP that DEW will allocate an additional \$55,000 per year for dedicated trail maintenance over the next 5 years. This provides a great opportunity for developing the Trail in addition to the \$22,000 Annual Maintenance Grant currently provided to The Friends. Additionally, DEW will employ a coordinator dedicated to the Heysen Trail in line with the 5-Year Management Plan. This is a major win as the current position has to cover all other DEW trails as well as the Heysen. The new position will allow for a single strategic focus.

Melanie (our vice-president) and I met up with Lucy at the Heysen Trail Monument at Woodhouse and had a great discussion about all things Friends and our commitment to the Trail. We appreciated the 90 minutes spent on the Trail together - time well spent.

Since that meeting, the fires that tore through Deep Creek and threatened Cape Jervis have closed the southern section of the Trail. Although no lives were lost, significant damage occurred within the park and to Trail infrastructure. We hope the Trail will reopen in time for our new group, End-to-End 20 to begin, although it will be challenging to walk through the devastation.

Let us hope for Autumn rains to rejuvenate the vegetation and begin the process of renewal, even though it may take many years – perhaps decades – to return to what it once was. Bushfires appear to be becoming more frequent and more intense. In my autumn report last year, I reflected on the fires between Mount Remarkable and Wilmington and the resulting Trail closure. The Trail is ever-changing, and several reroutes each year are to be expected. Our website provides the latest updates.

Thank you to our 100's of active volunteers, the tireless Section teams and Walk Leaders, those

in the office and on Promotion & Membership, Trail Development, Reconciliation and Walks committees and everyone else that makes our organisation what it is as we celebrate our **40th anniversary** this year. Expect to see articles and events that celebrate our members and the work of the Friends.

Good luck to all the Heysen Trail walkers in 2026. I hope to meet some of you on the Trail.

**Neil Hendry**  
President

.....  
"Leave the road. Take the trails."  
– Pythagoras 45



## Welcome new members!

The President and the Council would like to extend a warm welcome to the 36 members who have joined the Friends since the December edition of Trailwalker.

Members and supporters are the life-blood of the Friends, so being a member helps to safeguard this precious community resource for future generations. Thank you!

# Celebrate 40 years of volunteering with Friends

Following this year's AGM, join fellow members for a relaxed gathering over wine and refreshments, taking time to reflect, connect and celebrate 40 years of volunteer contribution on the Heysen.

**6.30pm, Wednesday, 22 April 2026**

**BDO Place**

Level 19, 30 Pirie Street, Adelaide



Members are warmly invited to attend the 39th AGM for the Friends of the Heysen Trail and Other Walking Trails inc

Date: Wednesday, 22 April 2026

Time: 6.30pm

Venue: BDO Place

Level 19, 30 Pirie Street

Adelaide

Registration is essential and must be complete via the website:  
[heysentrail.asn.au/event/agm-celebrate-40-2026/](https://heysentrail.asn.au/event/agm-celebrate-40-2026/)

## SOUTHERN OCEAN RETREATS

Deep Creek Conservation Park

Renowned as the crown jewel of the Fleurieu Peninsula, Deep Creek National Park offers spectacular coastal views, tranquil forests, and abundant wildlife. Make the most of your visit by staying in one of our charming cottages nestled within the park. With easy access to a variety of graded walking trails - including the iconic Heysen Trail - you can explore at your own pace. From cozy retreats to family-friendly stays, there's a cottage to suit every style and budget.



## A New Look for the Friends

We hope you are enjoying our new look for the Friends. It has taken us almost 3 years to get here and we think the result is a fitting tribute to our organisation and the Heysen Trail.

This new look arose from a redevelopment of our website as the major “face” of the Friends. Our website was established and evolved through the years with the outstanding work of volunteers, particularly Jeremy Carter. A survey of our users confirmed that our website is the best source of information for all things Heysen Trail and an incredible record of our history, but it needed improvement. “Clunky” was a word used by many respondents. Some information was difficult to find, and it was difficult to read and use on mobile phones. More importantly it did not present a clear focus on the Friends’ role in the development and maintenance of the Trail.

Council appointed a consortium of design professionals made up of Studio Foster (web development), Morrow (design), and SLICE (content), who started work in early 2024. After an in-depth analysis, they confirmed that our website not only needed to be streamlined, simplified, and brought up to date with today’s hand-held technology, but was also in need of a refresh.

With Council only meeting once per month, it was a cautious start until a Steering Committee was set up to manage the process. This committee has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to not only be the bridge between the Council and consultants but has taken on much of the

redrafting of content and advised on the restructuring of the website.

Our website is the only comprehensive source of information in the world about the Heysen Trail and is our major promotional and marketing tool. Our redeveloped website retains the history and culture of the Trail and Friends and presents our story for a new generation. This edition of Trailwalker gives you a taste of the new look and the website will become “live” in the following weeks.

The tender included the requirement for an updated image and brand for the Friends. Council, Committee and designers worked to capture our new brand with an updated logo and colours across our public image. Our new logo retains the symbolism of the Trail and colour of the old logo while inviting walkers to step onto the Trail with us. There is also much in the new brand that is more subtle in the language and style used. This gives better cohesion across our organisation and makes it easier for users to find the information they need.

We acknowledge and thank the following members for the countless hours committed to the success of this project. The Steering Committee Barbara, Rosie, Peter, Dom, Neil and Nick, our web technician Jeremy Carter, and our Consultants Jordan Graetz (Studio Foster), Ellen Beames (Morrow), and Lizzie Annells and Vanessa Keys (Slice).

**Neil Hendry**

FoHT President - on behalf of Council



## Trailthinker Quiz

1. What was the date of the first issue of the Trailwalker?
2. Who was the first editor of the Trailwalker?
3. Where was the public meeting to discuss the formation of a society interested in the Heysen Trail?
4. How many people attended the above meeting?
5. What were the four committees formed by the Steering Committee?
6. After a long process the Steering Committee wrote the Constitution. When did the Friends receive the official documents?
7. Where was the first Friends office located?
8. When did the Department of Recreation and Sport release the Jubilee Walks?
9. The 80km section between Cape Jervis and Newland Head was launched in 1987. When were the 800 waymarks, signs and stiles installed by volunteers?
10. When did the Steering Committee arrive at the name, ‘Friends of the Heysen Trail and other South Australian Walking Trails’?

ANSWERS PAGE 21



## ➔ Trail News

# Deep Creek Bushfire 2026

The local community and Heysen Trail walkers are devastated about the Deep Creek bushfire that blazed through the first weeks of February. Long hours by dedicated volunteers from our Country Fire Service and farmers, along with Parks and ForestrySA staff battled and eventually contained the fire. Despite a close risk, the fire was held back from the Cape Jervis town area.

Extensive damage across a large swathe of Deep Creek will take time to assess and revive. Deep Creek Rangers have advised The Friends that a significant stretch of the Heysen Trail from Fisheries Beach to Tapanappa has been burnt and major remarking will be needed once it is safe to enter.

The Friends understands that Wuldi Krikin Ngawanthi/Eagle Waterhole hike-in site was most affected with several tent pads and the bridge burnt, but the shelter and toilets appear to have been protected. Other hike-in sites were successfully protected.

The Friends Trail Development Committee will continue to liaise closely with Parks. On 2nd March Parks advised that the Heysen Trail Wild South Coast Way is closed from Cape Jervis to Tapanappa.

We are fortunate that many of our members and volunteers have already indicated they are willing to get to work as soon as the access is declared safe.

## Fire Danger Season closures remain in place until mid-April/ May 2026

The end date remains subject to confirmation by the Country Fire Service assessment of risk in each region: [heysentrail.asn.au/news/fire-season-closure-dates/](https://heysentrail.asn.au/news/fire-season-closure-dates/)

It's good practice to review the "Know Before You Go" sites before starting any hike.

**Parks:** [parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go/closures-and-alerts](https://parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go/closures-and-alerts)

**ForestrySA:** [forestrysa.com.au/before-you-visit/forest-closures-and-alerts/](https://forestrysa.com.au/before-you-visit/forest-closures-and-alerts/)



### Mark your achievement and help the Friends advocate for improvements

The Friends of the Heysen Trail issue certificates to people who have hiked the entire Heysen Trail from Cape Jervis to Parachilna Gorge (Northbound) or from Parachilna Gorge to Cape Jervis (Southbound).

**Apply for a certificate:**  
[heysentrail.asn.au/friends/end-to-end-certificate/](https://heysentrail.asn.au/friends/end-to-end-certificate/)

## End-to-End Awards

Congratulations to the walkers who received End-to-End awards for completing the Trail up until the **end of February 2026**.

Shelly Forester

Gillian Heppenstall

James Noonan



# SOUTHERN OCEAN WALK

*the Wild South Coast Way specialists*



We specialise in small group pack-free walks along one of the most spectacular sections of the Heysen Trail. If you've always wanted to experience this stunning stretch of coastline in comfort why not join one of our bespoke tours. Our walks include return Adelaide transfers, comfortable homestead accommodation each night, gourmet meals & regional wines, local guides & use of equipment. A proud SA family owned business with over 30 years experience on the Fleurieu Peninsula.



## ➔ Trail News

# Major re-route at Georgetown in the Mid North

**Please be alert for a temporary re-route near Georgetown that impacts on distances and planning, and day walk start and finish points. Day walk sections 34, 35 and 36 are affected.**

Aula Energy is constructing renewable power generation to the east of Georgetown, consisting of both wind turbines and solar. This will have a significant effect on the Heysen Trail as it will take in all of the ridge line of Campbell Range between the old Bundaleer Forest and Lehmann Road. The windfarm construction is expected to take at least 2 years.

FoHT trail volunteers have installed a re-route to get around the construction zone. This re-route is shown on the map below. Heading north, it starts 750m north of the Baderloo Walk-in camp site and heads west along Bundaleer creek following a fence on the left for app. 5 km.

Walkers should be aware that this is all private property and the FoHT are grateful to the landholder for allowing this access. Once the Trail leaves the private land it follows Abbeville Road, Pipeline Road, Cloverhill Road and Lang Road to enter Georgetown from the south.

Unfortunately the re-route goes off the current Heysen Trail Map sheet 5A. Maps of the re-route will be available on the Friends web site: [heysentrail.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Georgetown-re-route-map.jpg](http://heysentrail.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Georgetown-re-route-map.jpg)

For the duration of the re-route the trail will be one day-walk section shorter, particularly section 35 which cannot be hiked at all. This also means that Curnows Hut will no longer be on the Trail.

FoHT volunteers have installed signage for the re-route and there will be signs at each end to help direct hikers.

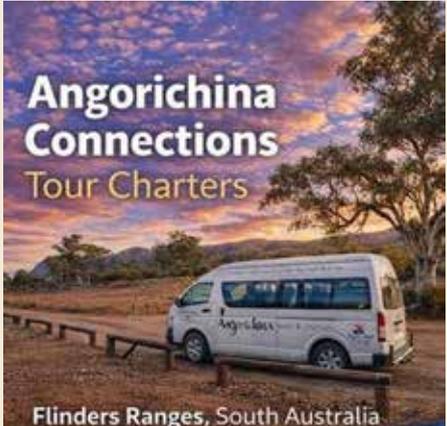
During the construction period, there may be some limitations to access at Hiskeys Hut due to power lines being built, but hopefully this will occur when the Trail is closed and not affect hikers.

Negotiations with Aula Energy will continue during and after construction

in order to return the Trail back along Campbell Range. The FoHT website and facebook will provide alerts and updates as the construction progresses.

**Daniel Jardine**

Trail Development Section Leader



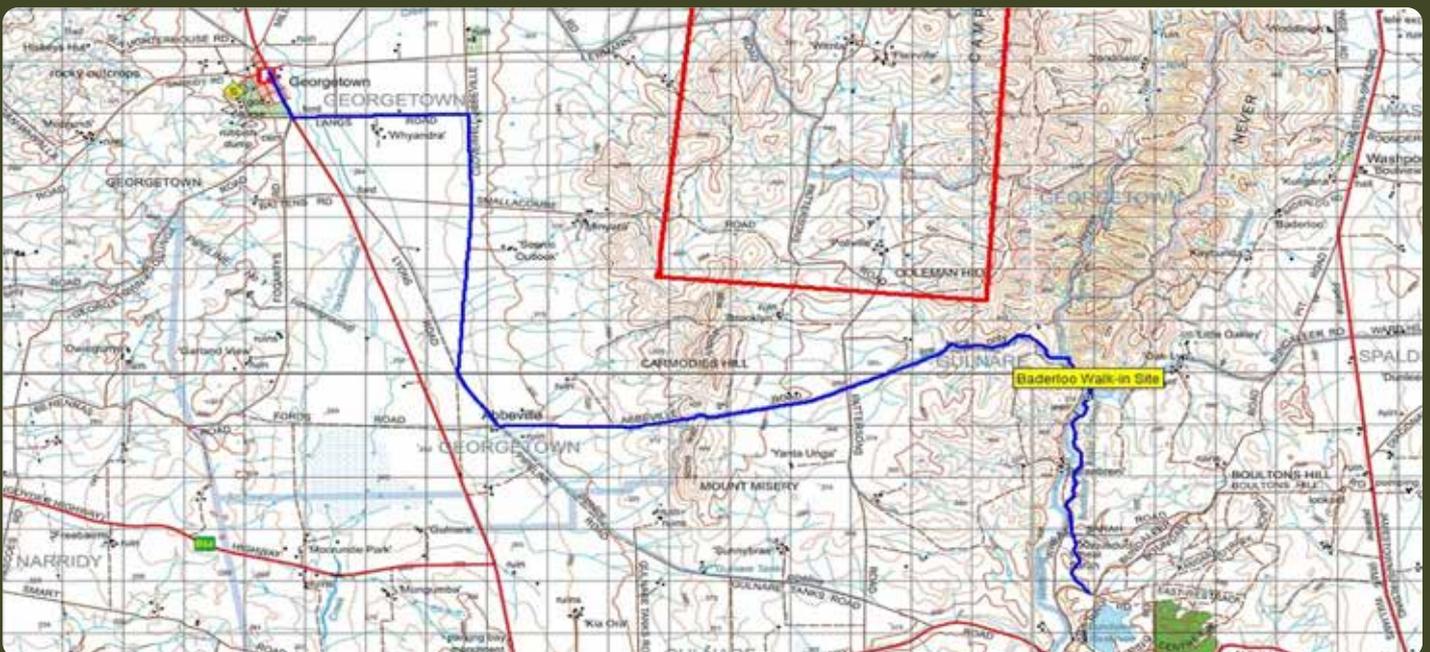
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[ango1@westnet.com.au](mailto:ango1@westnet.com.au)

## Georgetown Re-route Map



Map illustrating the re-route (blue line) from the car park at Bundaleer Reservoir to Georgetown. The new alignment departs from the existing trail approximately 750 metres north of the Baderloo Walk-in Site. The area outlined in red indicates the southern boundary of the Windfarm Construction zone.

## → Trail News

# A little birdie told me...

This May, endurance athletes Johan Botha and Aaron Young will take on one of Australia's toughest long-distance challenges — a supported Fastest Known Time (FKT) attempt on the full 1,200km Heysen Trail. Running from north to south over just 11 days, the pair aim to combine elite performance with a powerful community message. The current Heysen Trail FKT supported time was set by Rurik "Roo" Symon, Simon Duke and Dan Camac in July 2022 at 12 days, 8 hours and 20 minutes.

The aim is to start on May 6, 2026. The attempt will require relentless high-mileage days, a dedicated support crew, and exceptional physical and mental resilience. Building on the momentum of Aaron's previous FKT on the Bibbulmun Track, the journey will be documented through social media, media coverage, and community storytelling, with plans underway to secure funding for a feature documentary.

Alongside the run, the team is launching "11 Days in May," a

nationwide movement challenge in partnership with the registered charity organisation TIACS (This Is A Conversation Starter), a free Australia-wide text and call counselling service providing qualified mental health support for blue-collar communities.

The initiative encourages individuals, workplaces, and community groups to walk, run, or hike over the same 11-day period, set personal goals, and share their progress while raising awareness and funds for free mental health support for blue-collar workers.

Inclusive and community-driven, the campaign aims to highlight the link between movement and mental wellbeing, proving that while two athletes may be chasing a record, the wider goal is getting Australia moving together. A public sign-up portal is expected to launch in the coming weeks.

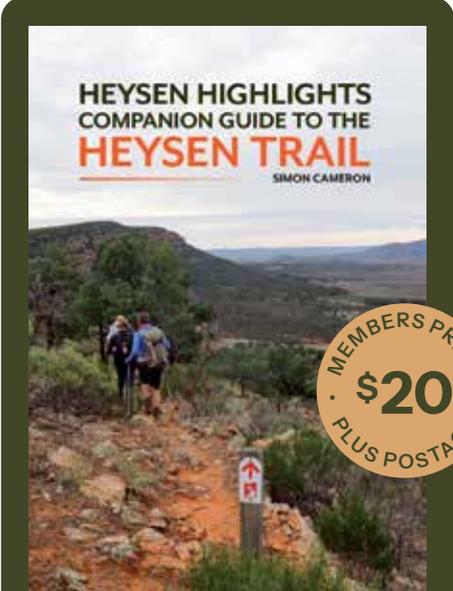
As the countdown to May begins, the Heysen FKT attempt is shaping up to be more than a record chase.

We can not wait to bring you more

information as it comes to hand. In the meantime, curious about the boys?

Take a peek at Aaron's FKT Bibbulmun (supported) journey where he completed the 1100kms in 9 days, 3 hrs and 22 mins and set a new record: [youtube.com/watch?v=rZATIGvsC5c](https://youtube.com/watch?v=rZATIGvsC5c)

And yes, Johan Botha was that South African cricket captain, amongst many other achievements. Check out what he has been up to at: [instagram.com/johanb22/](https://instagram.com/johanb22/)



**HEYSEN HIGHLIGHTS  
COMPANION GUIDE TO THE  
HEYSEN TRAIL**  
SIMON CAMERON

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\$20  
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BLINMAN, SA

**FLINDERS & BEYOND**

**CAMEL TREKS**

Join us in 2027 on a trek that completes the Heysen Trail's remote section 'Beyond Heysen'.

Explore hidden treasures of the Flinders Ranges with camels carrying your supplies. Trek through gum-lined creek beds, towering gorges, rare geological formations and sparkling dry lakes. See native flora and fauna in its natural habitat and enjoy a night sky show with astronomer Ryan.

Walking treks fully catered. Swags and transfers included. No roads, no vehicles, no mobile reception; detach from hectic everyday life and enjoy an unforgettable experience that will create memories to last a life time.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

T: (08) 8648 3713

E: [info@flindersandbeyonddcamels.com.au](mailto:info@flindersandbeyonddcamels.com.au)



STRZELECKI DESERT EXPEDITION JULY 2026, HEYSEN EXTENTION JUNE/JULY 2027

## Hiking the Heysen on Private Property — Biosecurity

### Did you know the Heysen Trail crosses a significant amount of private property?

The Friends appreciates and works closely with landholders who provide consent for trail access (this may include privately owned conservation areas or farming properties and Parks are also conservation areas). We put that access at risk if walkers misuse or fail to show respect for property traversed by the trail.

Biosecurity is concerned with the transportation of weeds and other pests between areas of land. This should be a particular concern for hikers as we cross a diverse range of land types.

Walkers can reduce any biosecurity threat by following a few simple principles:

- **Stick to the trail**
- **Clean your boots**, hiking and camping gear at every opportunity.
- Wear gaiters as they help prevent seeds lodging in socks and being transported between sites. *Don't pick seeds off your gear and leave them on the ground, collect them for rubbish disposal.*
- **Be aware** of weeds and pests so that if you notice them along the trail they can be reported to the Department of Environment and Water or the local Landscape board (NRM). Information can be found on the PestSmart website ([pestsmart.org.au](http://pestsmart.org.au)).

- **Leave No Trace** principles, 'Carry it in—Carry it out'. This includes huts and shelters: do not leave food in them, it will attract vermin and our huts do not have any vermin proof storage. This can even be extended to leaving the trail in a better condition than you found it.
- **Camp only in designated sites**; this not only assists in Biosecurity but helps to keep landholders supportive of the trail.
- Talk to other hikers about the need to follow these principles.

**Farm animals:** when walking through farmland it's also important to be aware of potential interaction with animals. Again there are a few simple principles to follow:

- **Watch your step!** You may encounter manure along the way, and during the rainy winter months roads and trails can be muddy.
- **Don't startle the animals.** Keep your distance and allow plenty of space to walk around groups. When cattle feel pressured they may react aggressively; sheep may disperse chaotically.
- **Farm animals can be protective of their young.** Take care not to get between a young animal and its mother, and don't try to touch them. If you see a stray animal, leave it alone! Calves and lambs are often left by their mothers as they look for food or water, so they have not been abandoned and the mother will return.

- **Never climb or cut a fence: use stiles.**
- **Keep gates closed in general.** Make sure you know how to properly close a gate before opening it, even take a photo before opening it to assist in ensuring it is shut securely. Otherwise leave gates as you find them — a farmer may have opened a gate for stock to pass.
- **Sick or injured animals should be left.** While it can be difficult to see an animal that may be in distress it can make things worse and have biosecurity implications if you attempt to assist. If possible, the animal's location can be reported to the local farmer, NRM board or local council.

### Other resources

[walkingsa.org.au/news/advice-bushwalkers-consider-biosecurity/](http://walkingsa.org.au/news/advice-bushwalkers-consider-biosecurity/)  
[invasives.org.au/how-to-help/keep-gear-clean-wild/](http://invasives.org.au/how-to-help/keep-gear-clean-wild/)  
[bushwalkingmanual.org.au/](http://bushwalkingmanual.org.au/)

Thank you to Daniel Jardine for the tips and etiquette when walking on privately owned property. Some simple ideas that keep the trail open to us all. If you are a land owner and you would like to share some of your stories about the Heysen Trail, we'd love to hear from you. You can reach us at [trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au](mailto:trailwalker@heysentrail.asn.au)



Located in the Hallett Township, adjacent to the Hallett Country Store.

Two self-contained rooms with queen bed, single bed, ensuite, reverse cycle air conditioning, microwave, toaster, kettle, fridge, TV with tea, coffee and milk provided.

Onsite kitchen/laundry with washer and dryer, benchtop oven, utensils and fridge.

Enquiries: Chris & Susan  
(08) 8894 2078



# End-to-End Season Programme 2026

	1ST WEEKEND	2ND WEEKEND	3RD WEEKEND	4TH WEEKEND	5TH WEEKEND
<b>MAY</b>	<p><b>E2E 20</b> SUN 3 MAY Dump Rd - Inman Valley</p>	<p><b>E2E 17</b> SAT 9 - SUN 10 MAY Wandillah - Newikie Creek - Dares Hill Summit Rd</p>	<p><b>E2E 16</b> SAT 16 - SUN 17 MAY Mt Zion - The Bluff Lookout - White Park Rd</p> <p><b>E2E 19</b> SAT 16 - SUN 17 MAY Myponga - Mt Compass - Kyeema</p>	<p><b>E2E 18</b> SAT 23 - SUN 24 MAY Cudlee Creek - Nuggett Rd - Mt Crawford</p> <p><b>E2E MINUS 3</b> SAT 23 - SUN 31 MAY Parachilna Gorge - Leigh Creek Rd</p>	<p><b>E2E 19</b> SAT 30 - SUN 31 MAY Kyeema - Dashwood Gully Rd - Mylor</p>
<b>JUN</b>	<p><b>E2E 20</b> SUN 7 JUN Inman Valley - Myponga</p>	<p><b>E2E 17</b> SAT 13 - SUN 14 JUN Worlds End - Burra - Wandillah</p> <p><b>E2E 15</b> SUN 14 - SAT 20 JUN Calabrinda Ck - Moralana Scenic Dr</p>	<p><b>E2E 18</b> SAT 20 - SUN 21 JUN Mt Crawford - Pewsey Vale - Tanunda</p>	<p><b>E2E 19</b> SAT 27 - SUN 28 JUN Mylor - Cleland - Montacute Heights</p> <p><b>E2E 16</b> SAT 27- SUN 28 JUN White Park Rd - Murraytown - Melrose</p>	
<b>JUL</b>	<p><b>E2E 20</b> SUN 5 JUL Myponga - Mt Compass</p>	<p><b>E2E 17</b> SAT 11 - SUN 12 JUL Dares Hill Summit Rd - Hallet - Nth Booborowie Rd</p>	<p><b>E2E 19</b> SAT 18 - SUN 19 JUL Montacute Heights - Cudlee Ck - Nugget Rd</p> <p><b>E2E 16</b> SAT 18 - SUN 19 JUL Melrose - Alligator Gorge Rd - Horrocks Pass</p>	<p><b>E2E 18</b> SAT 25- SUN 26 JUL Tanunda - Kapunda - Hamilton</p> <p><b>E2E MINUS 3</b> SAT 25 JUL - SUN 2 AUG Leigh Creek Rd - Dutchmans Stern</p>	
<b>AUG</b>	<p><b>E2E 16</b> SAT 1 - SUN 2 AUG Horrocks Pass - Broadview - Woolshed Flat</p>	<p><b>E2E 17</b> SAT 8 - SUN 9 AUG Nth Booborowie Rd - Oban - Bundaleer Reservoir</p> <p><b>E2E 20</b> SUN 9 AUG Mt Compass - Kyeema</p>	<p><b>E2E 19</b> SAT 15 - SUN 16 AUG Nugget Rd - Mt Crawford - Pewsey Vale</p> <p><b>E2E 15</b> SUN 16 - SUN 23 AUG Moralana Scenic Dr - Parachilna Gorge Trailhead</p>	<p><b>E2E 18</b> SAT 22 - SUN 23 AUG Hamilton - Peters Hill - Gerkie Gap</p>	<p><b>E2E 17</b> SAT 29 - SUN 30 AUG Bundaleer Reservoir - Lang Rd - Locks Ruin</p> <p><b>E2E 16</b> SAT 29 - SUN 30 AUG Woolshed Flat - Quorn - Dutchmans Stern</p>
<b>SEP</b>	<p><b>E2E 19</b> SAT 5 - SUN 6 SEP Pewsey Vale - Tanunda - Kapunda</p> <p><b>E2E 20</b> SUN 6 SEP Tapanappa - Balquhiddier</p>	<p><b>E2E 17</b> SAT 12 - SUN 13 SEP Locks Ruin - Bowman Pk - Mt Zion</p> <p><b>E2E 16</b> SAT 12 - SUN 13 SEP Dutchmans Stern - Eyre Depot - Warren Gorge</p>	<p><b>E2E 18</b> SAT 19 - SUN 20 SEP Gerkie Gap - Webb Gap - Burra Rd</p>		
<b>OCT</b>		<p><b>E2E 19</b> SAT 10 - SUN 11 OCT Kapunda - Hamilton - Peters Hill</p> <p><b>E2E 20</b> SUN 11 OCT Balquhiddier - Waitpinga</p>			

## Walking with the Friends

Check the online walk calendar for the latest updates to the program. For details about each walk, the hot weather policy, what to wear, what to bring and details of walk grades, visit [heysentrail.asn.au/walks](http://heysentrail.asn.au/walks)

## Walks Registration

Register for a walk either online at [heysentrail.asn.au/walks](http://heysentrail.asn.au/walks) or by phoning the office on 8212 6299. Walk registration closing dates and times are listed on each walk event page, accessed via the website walk calendar.

## Walk Cancellations

If you need to withdraw from a booked walk, please notify the leader or the office as soon as possible. The easiest way is to login to your account and withdraw from the walk.

End-to-End walks are not subject to a weather forecast temperature limit, however the walk leader may decide to cancel or amend the event if a weather event is deemed to present a high risk.

Trail Starter, Trail Walker and Trail Rambler walks will be cancelled if the forecast temperature for Adelaide is equal to or higher than 32°C. Be aware that walks are automatically cancelled when the forecast weather on the day of the walk is for severe storms with damaging winds as per the 7pm ABC News on the day prior to the walk. Refer to [abc.net.au/news/weather](http://abc.net.au/news/weather) or [bom.gov.au/sa](http://bom.gov.au/sa). Your Walk Leader will send an email to all walkers to advise of the cancellation. We suggest you check your emails before leaving to join the walk.

## Bushfire policy

If a Total Fire Ban is declared by the CFS in the Fire Ban District where the walk event is being held, the walk event will be cancelled. In such a case walk fees will be refunded.

## Keeping track of the End-to-End Groups

**E2E 15**  
Calabrinda Ck

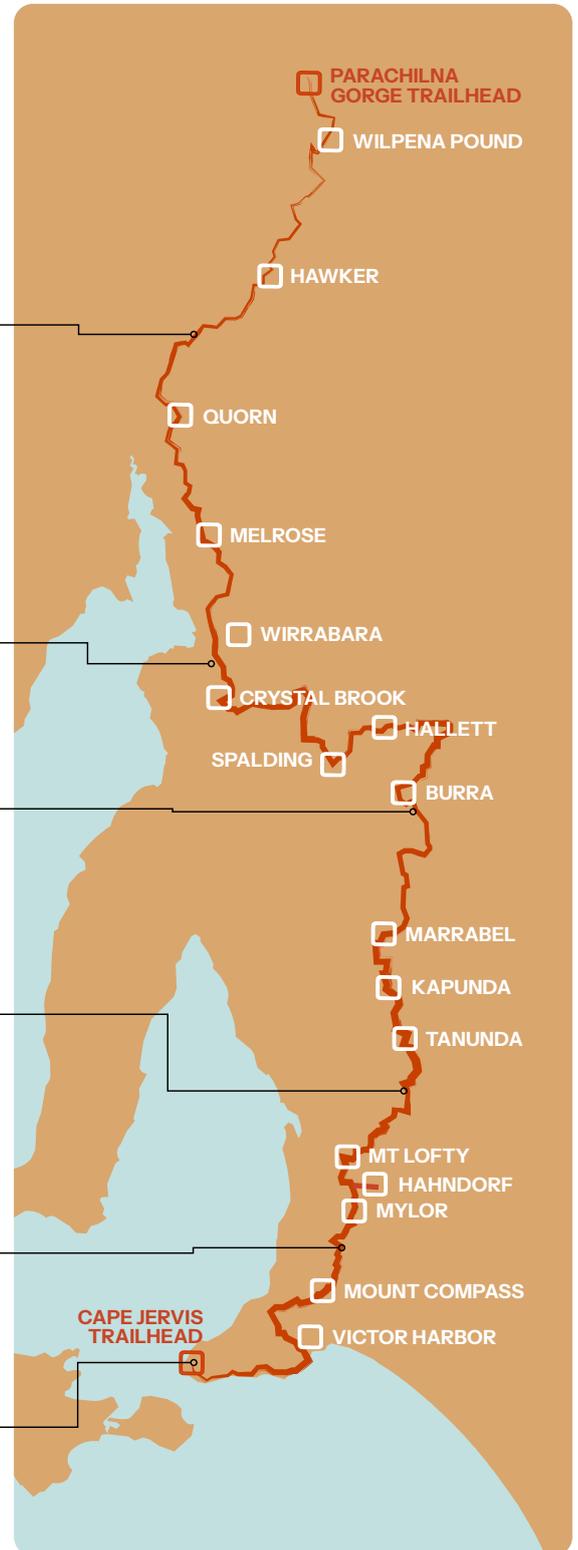
**E2E 16**  
Mt Zion

**E2E 17**  
Worlds End

**E2E 18**  
Cudlee Ck

**E2E 19**  
Myponga

**E2E 20**  
Cape Jervis



## Wonoka Station

Cottage and campgrounds.  
Hot showers, flushing toilets.  
The Heysen Trail follows alongside  
Wonoka Creek, here on  
Wonoka Station.

Andrew & Robyn McInnis  
T: 0438 472 700  
T: 0437 870 378  
[www.wonoka.com.au](http://www.wonoka.com.au)

# Friends Season Walk Programme 2026

	1ST WEEKEND	2ND WEEKEND	3RD WEEKEND	4TH WEEKEND	5TH WEEKEND
APR	SAT 4 APR <b>Cleland</b> Paul Gill	MON 6 APR <b>Pioneer Women's Walk</b> Kathy Wright	SAT 18 APR <b>Cleland</b> Paul Gill	SUN 26 APR <b>Black Hill</b> Paul Gill	
		SAT 11 APR <b>Onkaparinga</b> Judith Ellis	SAT 18 - SUN 19 APR <b>Walk The Yorke</b> Gillian Stevens		
		SUN 12 APR <b>Dump Rd - Waitpinga</b> Kristyn Willson	SUN 19 APR <b>Belair</b> John Babister		
		SUN 12 APR <b>Cleland</b> Paul Gill	SUN 19 APR <b>A Taste of Tuscany in Autumn</b> Judy McAdam		
MAY	SAT 2 MAY <b>Black Hill</b> Kristyn Willson	SAT 9 MAY <b>Reservoir and Park</b> Judith Ellis	SAT 16 - SUN 17 MAY <b>Heysen Highlights</b> Heather Jensen	SAT 23 MAY <b>Sturt Gorge</b> Melanie Fischer	SUN 31 MAY <b>Pioneer Women's Walk</b> Julia McLachlan
	SAT 2 MAY <b>Mylor</b> Judith Ellis				
	SUN 3 MAY <b>Belair</b> Kristyn Willson	SAT 9 MAY <b>Glenthorne</b> Karen Baker	SUN 17 MAY <b>Mt Bold</b> Robert Ruediger	SUN 24 MAY <b>Mt Lofty/Heysen Loop</b> Marlene Henschke	SUN 31 MAY <b>Sturt Gorge</b> Noeleen Smith
	SUN 3 MAY <b>Cleland</b> Peter Deacon	SUN 10 MAY <b>Three Mounts</b> John Babister			
JUN	THUR 4 JUN <b>Talisker and Beyond</b> Judy McAdam	SUN 14 JUN <b>Kuitpo</b> Robert Ruediger	SAT 20 JUN <b>Mt Crawford</b> Peter Deacon	SUN 28 JUN <b>Warren Tower</b> Marlene Henschke	
	SAT 6 - SUN 7 JUN <b>Walk The Yorke</b> Gillian Stevens		SUN 21 JUN <b>Cox Scrub and Beyond</b> John Babister		
	SUN 7 JUN <b>Cleland</b> Judith Ellis	SUN 14 JUN <b>Para Wirra / Mack Ck</b> Marlene Henschke	SUN 21 JUN <b>Mt Lofty Botanic Garden and Summit</b> Julia McLachlan	SUN 28 JUN <b>Gandy's Gully</b> Simon Cameron	
JUL	SUN 5 JUL <b>Nurragi Conservation Reserve</b> Judy McAdam	SAT 11 - SUN 12 JUL <b>Walk The Yorke</b> Gillian Stevens	SAT 18 JUL <b>Onkaparinga</b> Judith Ellis	SUN 26 JUL <b>Belair</b> Melanie Fischer	
	SUN 5 JUL <b>Horsnell Gully</b> Kristyn Willson	SUN 12 JUL <b>Bridgewater</b> Peter Deacon	SUN 19 JUL <b>Morialta</b> John Babister		
		SUN 12 JUL <b>Aldinga Scrub</b> Robert Ruediger	SUN 19 JUL <b>Kaiserstuhl</b> Marlene Henschke		

● TRAIL WALKER ● TRAIL STARTER ● WALK THE YORKE



Photo: Vicki Stewart  
Heysen Friends inaugural end-to-end Walk  
the Yorke group.

# A Coastal Walking Journey

Walk the Yorke - a remarkable trail stretching 500kms.

Gillian Stevens

Walk the Yorke – a remarkable trail stretching 500 kilometres around breathtaking Yorke Peninsula in South Australia. This year and next, Friends of the Heysen will hike twenty-four sections of the trail, led by Vicki Stewart, Shaun Scheepers and Gillian Stevens. Our hike will begin in Moonta heading south, 18-19 April 2026 over two years.

This long-distance track, interspersed with long stretches of beach walking, offers hikers the opportunity to experience spectacular coastal landscapes up close. From rugged clifftops and pristine sandy beaches to samphire flats, mangroves and bushland scrub, this trail presents a diverse array of environments that are both challenging and beautiful.

The Yorke Peninsula has a distinctive boot-like shape with 700 kilometre's of coastline stretching down the leg and around the 'foot' of the peninsula. The trail winds along much of the coastline, with Spencer Gulf to the west and Gulf St Vincent to the east. Along the way, we will clamber

over wave-washed rocks, slide down windswept sand dunes and enjoy the endless ocean views. We will get to know the lesser-known tourist towns, with their history, treasured jetties and lighthouses, as well as diverse wildlife encounters. We will connect with the rich heritage of our First Nations people through sites and cultural objects of deep significance woven into the landscape.

Vicki was one of the leaders for the Friends of the Heysen's previous Walk the Yorke series of hikes and has a wealth of knowledge she will share with us along the journey. As a gifted photographer, Vicki has published 'Hiking South Australia's Yorke Peninsula' that follows her journey along the trail. Whether you chose to join us or not, Vicki's book is a beautiful coffee table recording of her experience.

The hikes will be completed over six weekends in 2026, including the two long weekends. This brings with it the opportunity to holiday with family and friends, as well as catch-up any of the missed sections that sometimes occur.

## 2026 Walk Dates

April 18-19th, June 6-7th, July 11-12th, August 15-16th, September 12-13th, October 3-4th.

## Registrations

Opening in late March 2026. For more details visit: [heysentrail.asn.au/walks](https://heysentrail.asn.au/walks)

Southern Flinders Ranges

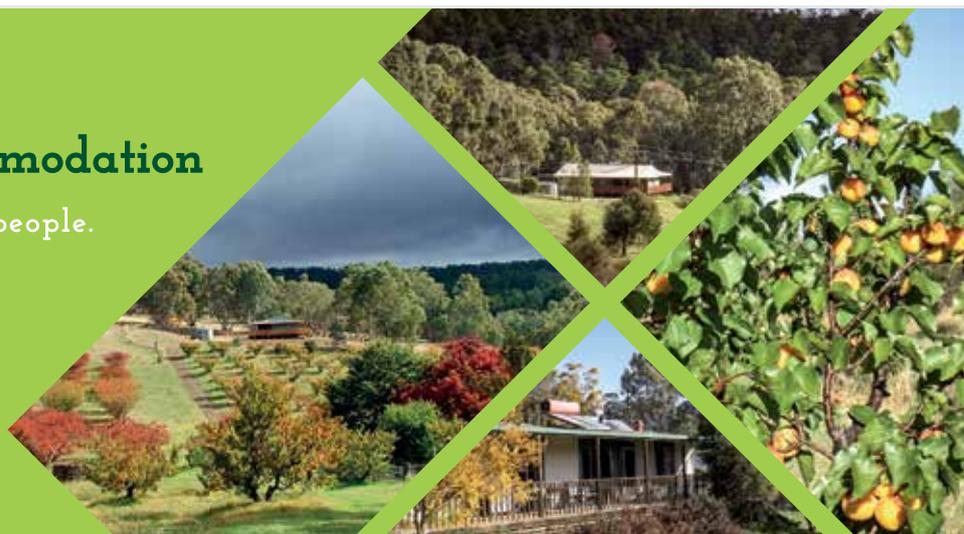
## Wirrabara Forest Accommodation

Self-contained cottages for up to 8 people.

Welcoming Heysen Trail and Mawson Trail Adventurers.



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[www.taralee.com.au](http://www.taralee.com.au)



# A Snapshot - 40 YEARS of Volunteering for the Heysen Trail

Melanie Sjöberg

In 2026 The Friends and broader walking community celebrate 40 years of volunteering to maintain and develop the Heysen Trail – what a fabulous achievement. There's far too much to tell the whole story so hopefully these snippets are enough to inspire reflection and admiration for the dedicated volunteers past and present that keep our wonderful Trail alive.



## Beginning in 1986 – How do you remember that year?

Bob Hawke was Prime Minister, and John Bannon was SA Premier. Cultural highlights included: Crocodile Dundee; John Farmham's You're the Voice; Crowded House Don't Dream It's Over and Neighbours on TV.

These were different times. Believe it or not, people were smoking in the workplace, pubs and restaurants. What a significant technological shift we've witnessed: only paper maps for navigation, no apps and gps; no general access to internet; email and mobile phone use was rare; spotify, streaming services and social media were unimagined.

## The Friends Forming

Back in 1986 The Friends of Heysen Trail formed at a meeting of some 200 people – yes, lots of people turned up to talk about walking and trails! Dedicated bushwalking club members agreed to provide volunteer time and energy to build the Heysen Trail with guidance from the Department of Recreation and Sport's project officer, Terry Lavender.

It seems – just like The Friends organisation today – that it was more than shovels, mattocks, posts and markers. There had to be a name, aims and objectives, a constitution and

application to be incorporated. Sub-committees focused on Organisation and Management, Promotions and Publicity, Building and Maintenance and Conservation. Those aspects continue today – successful volunteering needs an organisational structure

Communication with members and the community has always been important, and so the first Trailwalker was produced in July 1986. Our magazine continues, although most people now receive it in electronic form. The Friends has evolved with technology to place more emphasis on our website and social media.

## Building and Marking the Trail

Along with the organisational requirements, active trail work kicked off from 1986. 34 volunteers, including 11 women, were trained in maintenance, marking, bridge and stile building.

Terry acknowledged the volunteers' enthusiasm in his book, *The Last Post*. He stated that the Trail was finished 4 years ahead of schedule due to the dedication of The Friends. He contrasted this to work done by the "Long Distance Trails Committee" that only delivered 7kms over its 9 years.

The Trailwalker reported on the end of that process in Summer 1992: "... a significant event, completion of



➤ Friends volunteers installing a marker post.

marking of the whole Trail... when Hugh Greenhill and Joylene McCann of the Burra Branch completed the marking of a three kilometre stretch south-east of Spalding."

It is fitting to pause during the experience of walking the whole Trail to imagine the time and effort contributed by those early volunteers to find and mark out the routes we still follow today. It is, however, a never-ending story as the Trail is shaped and realigned to meet changing landscape, ownership or the ravages of bushfires and weather.



## Acknowledging First Nations Country

Recognition of First Nations has evolved since the initial formation of the Trail when cultural awareness and education was limited. The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) now has a Reconciliation Plan with an active program to develop co-management within Parks.

The Friends Reconciliation Committee has created connection and awareness about First Nations Country traversed by the Trail – Ngarrindjeri, Kurna, Peramangk, Ngadjuri, Nukunu and Adnyamathanha. Walkers now find Ngarrindjeri signs along the Wild South Coast Way (WSCW) as well as our new Town Signs and rejuvenated Northern Trailhead that acknowledge First Nations.

## Snippets of the Heysen Development Story

### Which Hut came first?

Huts are a special treat for hikers along the Trail, offering a reprieve from harsh weather or a night without the tent and occasionally a small fire.

### 1988 Mayo Hut

Situated on Wonoka Station north of Hawker, this hut was originally a

pioneer settler's cottage. It was rebuilt in 1988 by a group of unemployed people supported by the Adelaide Central Mission. The Friends appreciates ongoing support from the local landholder.

## The 1990s Good Times for Trail Development

### Greening 1991

The Friends volunteer Greening group initially planted 400 trees near Kapunda. Over the years volunteers planted trees at: Hiskeys Hut near Georgetown, Bundaleer Channel in Spalding, Worlds End out from Burra and Point Pass on the Lavender Trail.

### Water Tanks 1992

Water is critical to hikers on a long-distance trail in the arid north, so it is no surprise The Friends started to install water tanks early in the program. The first few included: Mt Cone camp, Newland Hill camp, Finnis camp, Mylor and Waukerie Creek (Mt Brown).

### More Huts 1995

The official opening of huts at Mt Bryan East School, Marschalls and Dutchmans near Quorn boosted Trail facilities. A substantial grant of \$100,000 from the Health Commission and more than \$10,000 injected by The Friends delivered this milestone. There are now 15 huts for Heysen hikers.

**Flinders  
Ranges  
Motel**



Based in Quorn, specialising in accommodation and Heysen Trail transport.

Accommodation rates:

Deluxe Queen or Twin Share  
\$129 per room  
(discount for cash payment).

Transport rates:

Approx. \$1 per km from Quorn.  
(eg round trip to Hawker would be \$100 for the 132km trip).

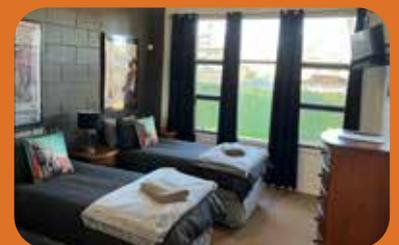
Package Deals:

**4 hikes, 5 nights for up to 2 people including Dutchman's Stern, Devils Peak, Warren Gorge/Mount Arden and Mount Brown with drop-off/pick-up.**

**\$750**

**Pick-up from Port Augusta, with 2 nights accommodation and Parachilna drop-off for up to 2 people.**

**\$550**



Enquiries to:

Paul - 0488 782 352

Kylie - 0418 250 646

[flindersrangesmotel.com.au](http://flindersrangesmotel.com.au)

## 1999 Website advance

Heading into the 21st century, The Friends introduced email and launched their first website to improve promotion of the Trail and communication with members.

Developed by volunteers and funded by members, it continues to evolve with advances in software and design, serving as the only comprehensive source of information on routes, distances, accommodation and transport essential for walking the Trail.

## 2001 Eagle Waterhole Shelter

In 2001 Parks opened a prototype hut design at Eagle Waterhole in Deep Creek – it offered serene camping over its 20-year life. At the time Parks suggested more would roll out along the Trail. Sadly, that never eventuated.

The Eagle story took a twist during development of the Wild South Coast Way on the Heysen from 2017 to 2022 – a fabulous boost for the coastal section, however plans didn't include the old shelter. The hut remained serviceable, so it was dismantled and stored at The Friends shed. In 2024 Eagle resurfaced as Wandillah Shelter north of Burra after reconstruction by volunteers.

## 2009 Rainwater Tanks

The Friends persistent advocacy finally achieved an improved tank design from the, then, Department of Heritage. The initial plan was to fund, build and

install 10 water tanks costing around \$50,000. This target was achieved, and the program has continued, with additional tanks installed over the past 15 years.

## Tank Telemetry

Recently The Friends won a Gold Award for Innovation from Friends of Parks and Nature for our remote tank monitor project. The initiative and design arose from one of our Trail volunteers that is now monitoring up to 25 tanks. The old method of knocking on the tank to check water levels has been superseded and tank levels may be looked up on The Friends website.

## 2022 Wild South Coast Way on the Heysen Trail (WSCW)

The Friends and Yankalilla Council partnered with DEW to deliver the State Government \$6m upgrade to Deep Creek with 4 high-quality hike-in sites along the south coast section of the Heysen Trail. In 2022, we welcomed the official opening after 6 years of planning and construction. Importantly, consultation with Ngarrindjeri/Ramindjeri has generated cultural stories to reflect the deep connection to country. WSCW is growing in popularity and is available to walk throughout the year.

## 2024 Northern Trailhead

The stunning new trailhead at Parachilna Gorge was The Friends biggest single project and testament to

the confidence of The Friends Council to underwrite the design concept. Thanks to enthusiastic Trail volunteers spruiking the benefits across the walking and local community we generated more than 60% of the cost through grants and especially generous donations from members.

## How does the Heysen Trail shape up today?

From a dream over 40 years ago, the Trail is well-marked and respected – there are some 350 stiles; thousands of marker posts; several bridges; boardwalks; and platforms along the 1200km. While our Section maintenance teams are often not visible, we receive plenty of positive feedback from day walkers, section and through hikers.

The partnership between The Friends and DEW (the authorised managers of the Trail) helps keep a focus on improving the Heysen Trail with a 5-Year Heysen Trail Management Plan 2022-2027 to guide development. Our working relationship with DEW now includes an Annual Maintenance Grant for core Trail work. The Friends continues to fund infrastructure and maintenance of most huts, hike-in sites and water tanks.

As an ambitious organisation, The Friends strategic focus is on protecting access to the Trail, so we are discussing longer-term options with DEW. Watch future Trailwalkers for updates.



## More Than Just A Trail

Did you know the Trail traverses 16 small towns and is close to at least another 6? Maintenance volunteers and walkers stay, eat, drink, shop and explore these areas – all of which benefits local communities.

Importantly, an enriching part of volunteering for the Heysen Trail, is beyond the track we walk on. Our volunteers keep the Trail alive and our relationships with landholders, local communities, small businesses and First Nations are essential to keep it breathing. There are rich stories to be gathered from local pubs, accommodation providers and transport services about how the Trail is important for bringing hikers to town and are often fundamental to their survival. This is what makes volunteering on and for the Trail a richer and deeper experience.

Photos:

- ← Far left: Volunteers installing the Arkaba Tank, 2023.
- ← Middle left: Volunteer welder preparing maintenance materials.
- ← Left: Volunteers painting the interior of the Hallett Railway Station Hut, 2019.
- ↗ Top right: Volunteer team fixing stiles and marking from Parachilna Gorge to Aroona, 2022.
- ↗ Middle right: Spalding Greening plaque.
- ↓ Below: Volunteers install a bridge at Chain of Ponds, 2025.



Best of the Heysen Trail on Instagram

Southern Ocean Walk participant, Leanne Bond caught this beautiful Autumn coastal heath in full glory on the Wild South Coast Way.

# Unexpected Hiking Essential?



**Fly net**, to keep those pesky flies away from my mouth. A **small light towel**, for those hot days to wet and cool the back of your neck. A **small thermos**, on those cold days a warm coffee or tea for breaks is divine. **Phone battery back-up**, if you are following the trail on your phone as the battery drains quickly.

**Paul DeLaine**  
Friends Walk Leader



I've adapted my **cycling nutrition** for hiking: a hydrolyte tablet to start, electrolytes and energy gels during the day, plus dates and almonds for snacks. It keeps my pack light and hydration steady. After tough days, a protein drink aids recovery. Simple, effective fueling makes the journey easier.

**Gillian Stevens**  
Friends Walk Leader



My unexpected essential is my **Swiss Army knife**. I have produced the corkscrew once or twice over the years, and it was always a much-appreciated item when others are in need of opening a bottle at the end of a walk. OK, twist tops are replacing corks these days, but it is still a handy accessory.

**Mark Darter**  
Friends Trail Development Volunteer



I never used **trekking poles** when I was younger, but now I feel incomplete without them. They improve stability on uneven or slippery terrain, help share the load with my upper body, and even provide support when stopping for photos. They are a simple addition that makes hiking more comfortable and secure.

**David Roberts**  
Friends Walk Leader



My pick is a **picnic rug**! I love having the chance to stretch out during breaks, without sitting on wet ground or ants. My current hiking picnic rug is one I upcycled from a tent ground sheet - lightweight, easy to pack, and just the right size.

**Rin Green**  
Friends Walk Leader



My unexpected essential is a **Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)**. I bought it when I began hiking solo in unfamiliar areas and climates, wanting extra security if plans went wrong. I've never needed to use it, but it gives me confidence and peace of mind on both solo and group walks.

**Dean Mortimer**  
Friends Walk Leader



**Walking pole/staff**. I walked for years without using one, tried one and didn't like it. Then I realised I was slowing up other walkers on down hills. I was given a walking staff to try and now I'm a convert. It makes a huge difference to your balance on steep slippery slopes.

**Kristyn Willson**  
Friends Walk Leader



## Trailthinker Quiz Answers

1. 1986
2. Derek Walker
3. Dom Polski Centre
4. 150
5. Conservation, Trail Building, Promotion, Organisation
6. Early 1987
7. 3rd floor Grenfell Centre, 23 Grenfell St
8. 1986
9. 1986
10. 1986

# Peter Clark



## When did you first become involved with the friends?

I joined the FoHT during the summer walking season of 2009-10 before joining E2E5 led by Russel O'Brien in 2010, completing the trail in August 2015. This was mainly as a way of ending a period of mourning following the death of my partner in 2007.

## What inspired you to become a volunteer with the friends?

I began as coordinator of E2E9 in 2014 as a way of 'giving back' to the Friends. Russel had encouraged me to consider it and – thanks to my co-leaders – in August 2019, I was able to enjoy issuing almost 40 E2E certificates.

## What are some activities in which you have been involved?

Since E2E9 I have been involved as coordinator with Vicki Stewart on the end-to-end Walk the Yorke in 2021/22; with Bill van Riet and Paul de Laine on the Great South West Walk in 2024 and volunteering in the office since 2021

For a while now I have assisted with the maintenance of the web site and have been part of the team involved in the design of the new web site.

## What is your favourite Heysen Trail town/region?

The north. Quorn and Hawker are in my favourite region ... although the E2E9 dinner at the Black Sheep made Burra a favourite too. As for sections of the Trail - the section through Bridle Gap is probably my favourite and Tourilie Gorge is particularly memorable.

## What was your fondest memory on the Heysen?

Walking towards the final stile with my E2E9 group. The joy, the sense of accomplishment, the camaraderie

amongst the group ... it was a great pleasure and an honour to be part of enabling that for so many people.

## Is there something you'd never be without when you're walking?

I am a firm believer in walking poles. The extra push they allow when going uphill and the assurance when descending make them essential for my walks.

## What has been your favourite walk aside from the Heysen Trail?

The Jatbula Trail, from Nitmiluk Gorge (Katherine Gorge) to Leliyn (Edith Falls) that I walked 2014 over 4 days. I walked this with Fiona McInnes, and Dana and Victor Florea. It was quite warm, although less than it can be in the region, but each campsite was besides running water with rockpools and waterfalls. The afternoon swim was a great way to end each day's hiking. Honorable mentions should also go to the Abel Tasman Coast Track, the Tongariro Northern Circuit in New Zealand and to the Walls of Jerusalem in Tasmania.

## Which other volunteer has inspired you and why?

Gavin Campbell has been an inspiration. His attitude to hiking is to 'smell the roses'. A reminder to enjoy the hike itself rather than rush to the finish and 'tick it off'.

Bill van Riet is an inspiration too. For the joy he extracts from hiking.

## ➔ Volunteer with us

We're always on the look out for volunteers (and Friends!). If you'd like to get involved and support the Trail, here are some current opportunities:

### ➔ Reconciliation Sub-committee Chair

Our Reconciliation Committee advises the Friends' Council on policy and actions to help us grow our reconciliation activities. As Chair, you'll help to develop information and resources for Walk Leaders, liaise with Traditional Owners and Reconciliation agencies, and explore new opportunities to educate and share stories along the Trail.

### ➔ Promotion: Membership and Marketing

Help share the beauty and stories of the Trail by volunteering your social media skills. If you enjoy creating engaging content and supporting a passionate outdoor community, join us to inspire more people to connect with South Australia's iconic long-distance walk.

.....  
Email your interest to:  
[heysentrail@heysentrail.asn.au](mailto:heysentrail@heysentrail.asn.au)

Become a member:  
[heysentrail.asn.au/friends/membership/](https://heysentrail.asn.au/friends/membership/)

Make a donation:  
[heysentrail.asn.au/shop/donation/](https://heysentrail.asn.au/shop/donation/)



# 40 Years of Heart on the Trail

Landowners and volunteers share the stories behind the people who built and sustain the Heysen Trail

Vicki Stewart

→ Friends Volunteer Jill Rowe during restoration at Marschall's Hut

What began in 1976 as a modest nine-kilometre walking trail within Cleland Conservation Park has grown into one of South Australia's most treasured hiking experiences.

In 1978, the State Government Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport entrusted the task of trail development to Terry Lavender. With this appointment came the opening of a further fifty kilometres of trail between Mount Lofty and Mount Magnificent.

It was Terry's vision and unwavering commitment that helped transform an ambitious idea into reality, with support from the many volunteers of The Friends after its formation in 1986. Terry gave credit for the completion of the Trail ahead of schedule to the dedication and hard work of The Friends volunteers. It's official opening in 1993 is marked by a plaque at Woodhouse Adventure Park.

The development of the Heysen Trail was never the work of one person alone. It was made possible through the cooperation and support of state government departments, district and local councils, countless trail maintenance volunteers, and hundreds of generous landowners

who welcomed the trail across their properties. Together, they created something truly enduring.

Today, the Heysen Trail stretches an impressive 1,200 kilometres and is recognised as one of Australia's longest dedicated walking trails. It stands as a significant achievement for South Australia and a powerful reminder of what can be accomplished when communities come together with a shared purpose. None of this would be possible without the ongoing support, goodwill, and hard work of our volunteers and landowners.

As we celebrate this 40-year milestone, it is fitting to pause and acknowledge the people who have given so much to the Trail. This article shares the stories of three individuals — one landowner and two volunteers from The Friends. Their volunteering journeys reflect the passion, generosity, and commitment that continue to sustain the Heysen Trail.

## Rob Hammat – Landholder north of Spalding

Rob Hammat is one of the Heysen Trail's original and long-standing landholders, generously welcoming walkers onto his property north of Spalding since the Trail's earliest days.

When the Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport first approached Rob about allowing the Heysen Trail to traverse his land, his answer was immediate and unwavering. He did not hesitate to say yes — and in all the years since, that support has never faltered. For Rob, the decision was simple and deeply personal. He loves the countryside and believes it should be shared. Allowing the Trail to pass through his land was never a question; it was a natural extension of his respect for the landscape and the people who wish to experience it.

The Heysen Trail winds through Rob's property as it passes near the Bundaleer Reservoir and Bundaleer Weir, follows the line of the Never Never Creek, and climbs toward Curnows Hut. From there, walkers step onto the land of Rob's nephew, another strong supporter of the Trail — a reminder that this section of the Heysen is sustained by family connections as well as community goodwill. True to the Mid North, the Trail here is defined by rolling hills and winding creeks, offering both challenge and reward in equal measure.

Rob enjoys meeting hikers as they pass through, often stopping for a chat to learn where they are from and what draws them to the Trail. Many welcome

Photos:

➤ Right: Premier Lynn Arnold, Warren Boynton and his Niece at the official opening of the Heysen Trail at the Woodhouse Adventure Park in 1993. Photo: Robert Alcock

➤ Far right: David Beaton carrying Trail marker posts into Bridle Gap in the early 2000s. Photo: A.Smith



the conversation, though occasionally a determined walker keeps their head down, focused solely on the climb ahead. Rob takes it all in good humour.

One encounter, however, still makes him smile. While spraying weeds on his property, Rob noticed a woman standing near the creek, carefully studying how best to cross the flowing water. He gently pointed out that she wasn't actually on the Heysen Trail. The hiker disagreed and was adamant she was on the right path. With quiet confidence, Rob explained that he owned the land and was therefore fairly certain he knew exactly where the Trail ran. The moment passed, and the walker was soon back on course.

Incidents like this are rare. Rob says most walkers stick closely to the Trail — the steep hills alone are reason enough not to wander. As he puts it, you simply get on with it and get the hill done.

Beyond welcoming walkers, Rob plays an active role in caring for the Trail. He keeps a close eye on the track, regularly spraying weeds or cleaning campground toilets when needed. The trail maintenance teams greatly value his involvement and responsiveness, and more recently they enlisted Rob's help with the re-route around Georgetown to accommodate the new wind farms.

To quote Rob, "progress is part of life". The Trail adapts and finds new paths when it needs to. Yet much remains unchanged. The hills still provide a strenuous workout, the creeks remain a pleasure to walk beside — even if they now carry little water — and the landscape continues to offer quiet beauty.

From the hilltops, walkers are rewarded with sweeping views across the properties lining the Spalding to Jamestown Road. In spring, the countryside is painted in vibrant yellows as canola flowers bloom. Winter brings every shade of green as wheat and barley flourish. These are views Rob never tires of, and he considers it a privilege to share them with those who walk the Trail.

Rob speaks with authority about the beauty of the land. Horse riding has taken him across the Rocky Mountains in Canada, through Kenya, the Snowy Mountains in New South Wales, and into the Flinders Ranges with his trail riding clubs. Yet some of his most memorable views come from herding sheep on his own property, standing atop one of the many hills and looking across the valley below.

Rob describes the Heysen Trail as "one hell of an achievement" — something that simply does not happen without

the collective effort of many people.

Over the years, as the number of hikers has grown, so too has the work required from volunteers to maintain the trail. Through it all, Rob and his family remain proud to be associated with the Heysen Trail and to play their part in its ongoing story. ❄️

### Liz O'Shea – Trail Maintenance Section Leader

Liz was an early member of The Friends of the Heysen Trail and one of the many volunteers whose commitment helped develop the Trail in its formative years. She served on Council from 1995 to 1998, including a **year as Vice-President, contributing** both practical effort and leadership during a period of growth for the organisation.

Her journey with The Friends began through the WEA Ramblers Bushwalking Club, which she joined in 1979. Liz became involved with The Friends in the early 1990s, undertaking trail maintenance and working alongside trail pioneers such as Terry Lavender and Warren Bonython — experiences she still describes as the highlights of her volunteering life.

Originally from the middle of London and with no background in manual work, Liz nonetheless rolled up her

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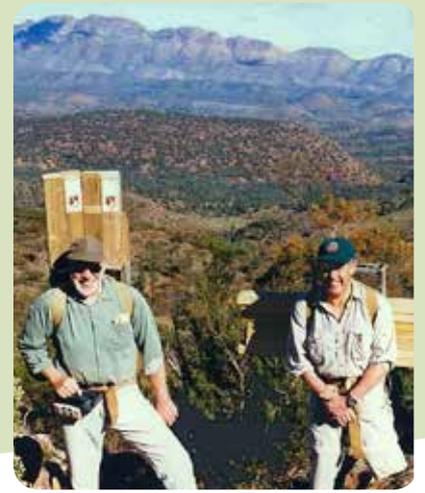


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sleeves and threw herself into every aspect of trail maintenance. She helped mark trail sections, install stiles, and drive in fence posts, learning as she went. Among her fondest memories are the long, hard days spent marking new sections of trail north of Burra and at the Saltia Steps near Quorn. Fence posts and marker plates were carried up steep hills, then volunteers would hurry back down to collect more, repeating the process until the job was done.

Late one afternoon, a group of schoolchildren passed through and became the first to walk the newly marked section. One young boy asked if a helicopter had delivered all the materials. Liz remembers his amazement when she explained that everything had been carried up by hand — all day — just so people like him could enjoy the Trail.

Even now, Liz says she can still recognise every marker plate she installed around Burra. The tell-tale sign is that every one of her nails is crooked — a lasting reminder of the rock-hard terrain they were working on.

In the early 1990s, Liz took on the role

of Trail Maintenance Section Leader for the Piccadilly to Norton Summit section through the WEA Ramblers. It was a role she inherited when her predecessor took on another trail section, and, true to form, Liz simply said yes. She remained in the position until recent years, overseeing a very scenic and well-loved section of the trail.

She recalls being drawn to the Heysen Trail because it was such a wonderful idea, arriving at a time when bushwalking and long-distance hiking were beginning to gain momentum in Australia. Liz remains grateful for the early maintenance workshops run by the Department of Recreation and Sport and for the trail managers who were allocated to support each group during those early years.

Liz also remembers some of the early challenges faced by The Friends, including discussions around introducing planned hikes on the trail to raise funds for maintenance supplies. Approved by the Department of Recreation and Sport in 1995–96, this initiative marked the beginning of the organised walks program, with end-to-

end Heysen walks following a few years later.

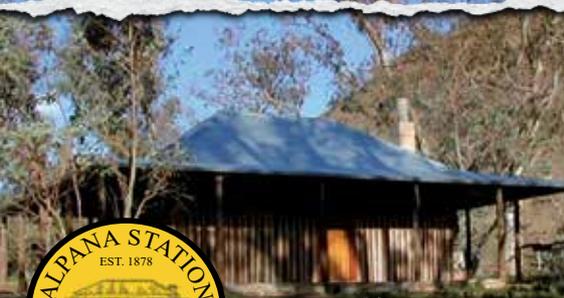
Looking to the future, Liz is passionate about the long-term security of the Heysen Trail. She hopes to see government commitment to securing and protecting the marked route, eliminating re-routes wherever possible. This passion was sparked in 1996, when she attended a demonstration opposing the proposed re-routing of a section on the southern coastal trail — an experience she now recalls with a chuckle as she tells the tale of getting herself into a spot of trouble for attending the protest.

Liz has been involved in volunteer bushwalking and trail maintenance for nearly 40 years, with contributions spanning the WEA Ramblers, The Friends of the Heysen Trail, and Walking SA. She values the diversity the Heysen Trail offers and the opportunities it creates for people to connect with nature and to be active through walking. Above all, Liz is proud of the work she and the Ramblers have done in caring for the Piccadilly to Norton Summit section — a part of the Trail she describes as ‘truly beautiful.’ ❄️

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Photos:

← Far left: Terry Lavender at the official opening of the Heysen Trail at Woodhouse Adventure Park in 1993.

← Middle left: End-to-End 1 walkers on the Heysen Trail at Wirrabara

← Left: David Beaton and friend carrying trail marker posts into Bridle Gap in early 2000's.

→ Right: Friends volunteers working at the Friends Shed preparing frames for onsite installation.

→ Far right: Friends volunteer working on repairs to the Waitpinga sandladder, 2025.



## Hugh Greenhill – Trail Maintenance Section Leader

Hugh's journey with The Friends of the Heysen Trail began in 1991 with a chance conversation. While chatting with the owner of Burra's Polly Tea Rooms about what brought visitors to town, the answer was clear – groups coming to mark out the Heysen Trail. From that conversation, the Burra Branch of The Friends was established with 14 members, and Hugh taking on the role of Secretary.

The Burra Branch soon found itself playing a vital role in linking the southern and northern sections of the Trail through the Mid North. Initially, the group was responsible for a long stretch from Peters Hill through to Spalding, and this was later refined to Huppatz Hut through to Spalding, a more manageable but still demanding responsibility.

Hugh took on the role of Section Leader, a position he continues to hold. He speaks warmly of the support and expertise provided by the Department of Recreation and Sport at the time, noting that nothing would have been achieved without close cooperation between volunteers and government staff.

Maintenance work has been constant. Their first working bee was held at the Old Mount Bryan East School site, where they tackled long grass and invasive box thorn. From there, maintenance became a regular and ongoing commitment.

Hugh's trusty motorbike became an essential part of his trail work. It allowed him to cover long distances quickly, carrying tools and supplies and reaching parts of the Trail that were difficult to access. When asked how he managed stiles on a motorbike, Hugh would simply grin and say he found a nearby gate.

Water supply on the Trail soon became a priority. Hugh noticed that between Burra and Old Mount Bryan East School there were no reliable water sources unless walkers organised water drops. He began calculating how far an average walker could comfortably travel in a day and what kind of access would be needed to service a shelter.

Hugh approached the Department with a proposal to build a shelter at Wandallah. He received the green light, along with generous financial support from the Burra Lions Club and further support from the Department.

Construction began in 1998, and at the same time the Department provided additional funding for two shelters at Blackjack and in Caroon Conservation Park. These projects kept the Burra Branch busy for several years.

In 2005, another major project followed in Caroon Creek Conservation Park – a new, larger shelter with cement pavers, seating and tables, along with the installation of toilets at both the Heysen campsite and a nearby public camping area. A further double toilet was later installed at the Old Mount Bryan East School site. The original shelter was removed and placed into storage, marking yet another chapter in the Trail's evolving infrastructure.

Over the years, Hugh has also been closely involved in numerous Trail re-routes. Some were minor adjustments, others major changes, often driven by safety concerns, landowner requests, or changes in land access. In Spalding, for example, the Trail was diverted from the Bundaleer Reservoir channel into the township and then along Freshwater Creek – a change that benefited both walkers and local businesses.

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Even the trail markers themselves tell a story of change. Over the years, the Heysen Trail has progressed from red reflective triangles, to narrow reflective strips on steel posts, to larger steel plates with fixed arrows, and then aluminium plates with interchangeable arrow stickers and space for additional information. Each update reflecting the growing professionalism and evolving needs of the Trail.

Throughout it all, Hugh is quick to acknowledge the many volunteers who have worked alongside him, helping with maintenance, shelter construction and water tank installations. He is particularly proud of the strong relationships he has built with landowners. With a background in farming, Hugh understands their concerns and has been able to work respectfully and collaboratively to ensure the Trail continues to pass through their land with mutual trust and goodwill.

Hugh also treasures the chance encounters with walkers from around the world, recent conversations with French and American hikers among

them. Whether offering directions or the occasional lift back into town, he enjoys the human connections that come with caring for such a well-loved trail, even if it sometimes includes reminding walkers about requirements to only hike during the hiking season. Although Hugh is pretty sure they already knew!

There have been moments when Hugh's role extended beyond trail maintenance. He recalls an incident while working near Mount Bryan when a walker dislocated her shoulder. Hugh rearranged his plans and drove the group down to safety. This was a trip he remembers as the longest drive of his life.

Although the Burra Branch has since closed, Hugh continues in his role as Section Leader, supported by a small, dedicated team of volunteers who ensure the work is still getting done. Their focus remains firmly on the safety of walkers and the ongoing care of the Trail.

For Hugh, the greatest reward is knowing that people from near and far

can walk the Trail safely and take in its remarkable beauty. From the top of Mount Bryan on a clear day, the views stretch all the way to Loxton — a fitting reminder of why this section of the Heysen Trail is so special, and why the work of volunteers like Hugh continues to matter so much. ✨

These stories are just a small reflection of the many hands and hearts that have shaped the Heysen Trail over the last 40 years. As we honour this milestone, we celebrate the generosity and community spirit of our many landowners and volunteers, past and present. We look to the future with gratitude and confidence that this remarkable Trail will continue to inspire for all who follow.

My sincere thanks to our three storytellers for so generously sharing their experiences. Your stories remind us all why this Trail, and our community is so special.

Vicki Stewart  
Secretary, Friends of the Heysen Trail



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# Heysen Captured

## From Trail to Print: Show Us Your Best Hiking Moments

### Want to share a special moment you captured on the Trail?

Submit your photos to the Trailwalker editor for a chance to be featured in the Friends Heysen 2027 Calendar. If your photo is selected, you'll receive a complimentary copy of the calendar.

We are looking for images that celebrate the character, landscapes, and experience of walking the Heysen Trail. Whether it's a sweeping view, changing seasons, or a quiet moment along the way, your photo could help showcase the Trail to the wider community.

### Handy hints for submissions:

- Photos must clearly feature the Heysen Trail. Including a trail marker is a great way to show location and add context.
- Images with hikers can be very effective for storytelling, but please avoid close-up portraits.
- Landscape images are also welcome — big views, distinctive terrain, weather, light, and seasonal changes all help tell the story of the Trail.
- We aim to represent the full length of the Trail. Many

submissions come from the northern and southern ends, so consider sharing images from central sections or from one of the welcoming towns along the route.

- You may submit up to four photos per person.
- Photos must be landscape orientation (horizontal).

### Image quality requirements

For a high-quality print at 300 × 200 mm, your photo should be at least 3600 × 2400 pixels. Larger is fine. Please send the original file without resizing, cropping, or compressing.

As a general guide, photos taken with a 7-megapixel camera or higher, set to the highest image quality, will usually meet the required standard.

### How to submit

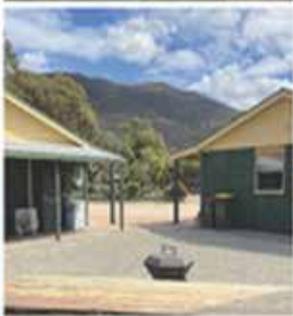
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Please include your name and the section/location where each photo was taken.

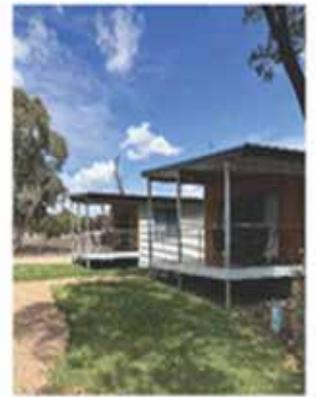
### Deadline

The final date for submissions is Monday, 14th August.

We look forward to seeing the Trail through your eyes and sharing the beauty and diversity of the Heysen Trail in the 2027 calendar.



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# Trail Angels: Kindness Along the Heysen

Julia Patten



Finally arriving at Black Jack Hut, at a time when the gully winds had not yet blown the door off the loo 50 metres away, my friend Tammy and I were finishing our dinner as darkness settled over the day.

Without warning, the hut door flew open and a young woman burst in, the cool breeze behind her and a head torch lighting her way.

Her name was Hannah, and through campsite log books she had been tracking our progress for days. In fact, she had been double-hutting each isolated section of the Heysen, steadily closing the distance between us.

An ultralight trail runner and hiker, Hannah struck trouble that evening when she ran out of gas while preparing dinner. Without hesitation, Tammy offered her fuel from her own cooker. Hannah finished her meal and chatted with us as we prepared our beds, but it had been a long day for all of us and the hut soon fell quiet.

For Tammy and me, the next town was still two days away. Hannah, moving at a much faster pace, would reach it in a single long day. This would be the end of our section, where cars were waiting to take us back home to Adelaide's western suburbs.

I mentioned to Hannah the pub meal I was looking forward to in Burra. To our delight, she walked back out to meet us there, and we finally had time to sit, talk, and share stories of the Heysen and life beyond it.

In the days ahead, water along Hannah's route was uncertain at best and likely unavailable. I offered to be a trail angel and give her a lift to Greenock. She gladly accepted. After a quick phone call, her partner Dan flew down from their Brisbane home, and together they enjoyed a short break in the Barossa before Hannah resumed her journey.



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Photos: Julia Patten

← Left: A poignant Day 1 of the final section before finishing Jule's Heysen journey. A little melancholy behind every smile.

↑ Top: 1200km done for Jules! That was twice for Hannam though. Edel in for support and about to begin her Heysen adventures.

→ Right: Hannah guiding Edel across wet rocks.

↘ Bottom, right: With the Heysen done, a moment for reminiscing on time spent together on the Trail.

After this encounter, Hannah and I stayed in touch through social media. Later, when I was asking in an online forum about water availability for the final days of my own Heysen walk, a message arrived from her:

"You're not finishing this alone. I'm flying down to walk the last section with you."

The person I had once helped as a trail angel was now returning the kindness, becoming my trail angel and companion for the closing days of my journey.

Since then, Hannah, Dan and I have hiked together in remote parts of Tasmania. The connection formed through a chance meeting at Black Jack Hut has grown into a lasting friendship.

The Heysen has a way of bringing people together. Acts of generosity offered freely on the Trail often return in unexpected ways, and the friendships formed along the journey can last long after the walking ends.



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# Marion Historical Village Walk

Leanne Bell

This heritage walk in the Marion area of Adelaide is a loop that covers just 2km. However, it can easily take more than an hour, depending on how much time you spend exploring the interpretive boards, historic sites, and mosaics along the way.

I begin at the Marion Road end of Finnis Street, where one of the Little Marion sculptures peers down at the site of one of the village's original wells.

From there, I walk along Finnis Street, passing the original Marion Inn and the remains of the 1940s Pomona pump before arriving at St Ann's Chapel. A strong Irish Catholic community settled in Marion during the 1850s, many having fled the famine in Ireland. Behind the chapel stands Annie Doolan's Cottage, built in 1876 as a convent for the teaching Sisters of St Joseph, founded by (now Saint) Mary MacKillop. The church received a bell in 1866, but as it was too large for the chapel, it was hung in a gum tree between the cottage and the chapel. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, the bell is no longer there.

If it is almond blossom season, I detour to Light Square via the Almond Grove on Oliphant Avenue after passing the

former site of the original post office and general store. Colonel William Light and his team surveyed and laid out the Marion village in 1838. Interpretive boards at the corners of Market Street and Nixon Avenue provide information about the Kurna people and early village life.

Next, I continue to George Street Reserve, once the site of one of four major pug (clay) holes used for brickmaking. Returning to the corner of Finnis Street and Township Road, I pass several historic cottages, including the original police station. Just a few metres north is Cafe Finnis, a great place to stop for a coffee or light meal (open from 7am to mid-afternoon).

Heading south along Township Road, I pass the Wesleyan Chapel (built in 1862) on the left and workers' cottages and Thredgold's Birthing House on the right. The route then takes me past the Charlesworth Nuts Factory Shop, built in 1977 (open Monday to Saturday).

To extend the walk, I continue to Marion Road and head east along Sturt Road to enter the peaceful Warriparinga Wetlands beside the Sturt River. This tranquil area, bounded by Sturt, Marion,



Photos: Philip Bell

↖ Top, left: Interpretive boards, corner of Market St and Nixon Ave, Marion

↑ Top: Wesleyan Chapel on Township Rd, Marion

and South Roads, features beautiful old (and younger) gum trees, birdlife, and sculptures. Following the river to the cultural centre brings me to the lawns in front of the Living Kurna Cultural Centre (open Monday to Friday). After a rest and a look around, I return to the starting point by following the Sturt River Linear Park back to Marion Road.

## Do you have a favourite short walk you'd like to share?

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Image: Maggie Moy

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