



Newsletter

Friends of Stirling Linear Park Inc.



Autumn 2002

In this issue

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Woorabinda buildings update
Vegetation stripped below the dam wall | 2 Bushcare workshop |
| 2 Bird hide repairs
Thanks to Kristine Mosher
The MLC Working Bee | 3 Waterwatch trial
Recent Working Bees
Notice of forthcoming talk on bats |

Woorabinda buildings update

For earlier reports on this issue, readers are referred to Newsletters: Autumn 2001, Winter 2001 and Summer 2001/2002.

At present the main building is being renovated to enable Onkaparinga Waterwatch Network (OWN) to move their headquarters from Arbury Park Outdoor School to Woorabinda. The renovations will also provide space for CVA to instruct small groups of trainees in environmental care.

Adelaide Hill Council is funding \$25,000 for the work and Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board is supplying up to \$20,000 for fittings and furniture.

Volunteers from CVA, with help from the Friends, have cleared weeds and rubbish from around the buildings. In the main building, internal partitions and doorways have been moved, ceilings and walls have been patched and renewed and most of the interior painted. External repairs, including

new gutters are imminent, after which the exterior will be painted by volunteers.

Extra power points have been installed, while undergrounding of communications and power supplies is being costed. In the immediate future, carpets are scheduled to be fitted and tradesmen will be installing internal computer and security system cabling.



Volunteers get to work

By the end of the first week in May, volunteers' contribution to the Woorabinda buildings refurbishment was as follows:

CVA.....	1050 hours
Friends	90 hours

The gully below the dam wall

Questions are being asked about what is happening below the Woorabinda dam wall in March — why was the area denuded?

Volunteers had spent many hours cutting and swabbing blackberry, gorse and willow in this area, so that emerging wetland plants could thrive. Naturally they were incensed when they saw that the gully had been stripped of this regenerating vegetation. It seems (as is often the case in situations like this) there was a misunderstanding.

Council workers were instructed to just fill in an erosion channel leading from the dam wall near the

footbridge — a necessary and worthwhile job.

However, seeing as the front end loader was on site, and with the very best of intentions, the area was 'cleaned-up' as a bonus. Hence the very neat and bald appearance of the gully.

The Friends have given this area high priority for revegetation. Replanting with on-hand tubestock will take place just as soon as sufficient rain falls. Eventually we hope to see a viable wetland area in the gully.

Bird hide news

Following the vandalism to the bird hide late last year, Adelaide Hills Council has now carried out the repairs, and has made some welcome improvements at the same time.

The interior walls and bench seating are now covered with 6-ply sheeting. The structure is stronger and hopefully more resistant to random destruction.

Council reports that the all up cost of this work is approximately \$1500 — \$500 to repair the vandalism and a further \$1000 for the upgrading.

On behalf of our membership we extend our thanks and congratulations to the Adelaide Hills Council for their work.

The bird hide has become something of a 'hang-out' for young people in recent months. Let us hope that its refurbishment will demonstrate to them that this community values the amenities provided for communal use and trusts everyone to share that sense of value.

If we allow vandalism and graffiti to go unrepaired, then we are in effect sending the message that such mindless behaviour is OK.

Thanks Kristine

Our thanks to Kristine Mosher of Ridgehaven, who is our 2002 Trees for Life grower. At the end of April we collected ten boxes of fine young seedlings from her. This excellent consignment of 500 native plants was all grown from our locally collected seed. As soon as the rains arrive, we'll plant them below the dam wall without delay.

Kris is heavily involved with the Institute of Earth Education and was most interested to hear that the Woorabinda Campsite (the buildings) was being refurbished for environmental education and training. Back in the 1980's, she took groups of children to Woorabinda for environmental education. Since then she has often wondered at the fate of the campsite. As they say...it's a small world.



MLC working bee at Woorabinda



On March 8, ten staff from MLC Financial Planning volunteered a day's community work with the support of MLC Management. As they had requested to participate in a community environmental group, Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) organised a day trip to Woorabinda.

A number of varied work tasks were arranged by the Friends in collaboration with Adelaide Hills Council. Under CVA guidance, the work was completed with great enthusiasm and included:

- Bushcare of an area of remnant bushland.
- Cutting and swabbing willow regrowth around the lake.
- Cutting and swabbing blackberry, gorse and willow regrowth below the dam wall.

The MLC participants also inspected areas of Hender Reserve that have been bushcared for a

number of years by the Friends. These areas are now weed free..

At the end of the day's work, the volunteers were asked to draw up a list of items they had observed in the Park which they thought needed improvement:

- Walking paths have been extended (short cuts made off designated paths).
- Stones rising from path soil. The unwary can trip.
- Lake edges eroded.
- Vandalism. Warning signs might help, but the problem is difficult to control.

The MLC volunteers also offered their own suggestions to deal with conserving natural systems in areas of high human impact:

- More whipstick fencing to keep people within designated pathways and away from lake edges.
- More local education through school/community.
- Provide rubbish collection facilities.
- More natural seating (ie logs).
- More signage (directional, educational, warning).

A barbecue lunch was provided by CVA. Five members of the Friends acted as kitchen and dining room staff.

Book now for the Bushcare Workshop

As part of the Bush for Life program, Trees for Life will be conducting a further workshop in bushcare methods at Stirling Linear Park on **Saturday, 14th September 2002.**

These workshops are extremely informative. Participants will receive training in the principles and practice of minimum disturbance weed control.

There is no charge for attendance, but numbers are limited. Book now and reserve your place by phoning Trees for Life: 8372 0150

Please mention that you are a member of Friends of Stirling Linear Park.

Waterwatch Trial

During May, Waterwatch SA ran a 'quality assurance pilot trial' on water quality monitoring techniques used by community volunteers. The trial resulted from requests from Waterwatch volunteers to have their collected data formally used by water management authorities.

In response to the requests, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) decided to fund a Quality Assurance Program to assess the quality of volunteer Waterwatch-collected data, with a view to including that data in the definitive State of the Environment Report. The pilot trial was part of the assessment.

Out of some 500 monitoring groups across the State, only Onkaparinga catchment was selected for the trial. Twenty OWN monitoring groups took part, including our very own Stirling Linear Park team.

Why was OWN selected? To quote the publicity notice issued by Waterwatch SA:

'Onkaparinga Waterwatch was chosen for the trial because of the good quality data that it already produces, and the commitment monitoring groups have made to the monitoring program'.

Our three Waterwatch volunteers (Lorri Ragless, Vivienne Curro and Marilyn Browne) participated in the May trial. During the May 1 workshop they familiarised themselves with nitrate/phosphate testing equipment and learned how to calibrate their new salinity meters. On the following Monday (May 6) they carried out normal water testing of the lake

and the creek. They were also required to test a 'mystery' sample supplied by the EPA, to see how closely their measurements matched the known values.

The exercise will be repeated in June, and it is hoped that the forthcoming EPA assessment will show that volunteers, using the equipment supplied, are more than capable of conducting accurate monitoring of our water resources.

Waterwatch is a very successful community-based initiative. By involving schools and the wider community in water monitoring it increases our knowledge of aquatic ecosystems and the environment generally.

Become a Water-watcher

More volunteers are needed to monitor the Park on a regular monthly basis. It's interesting and important work and you will be part of the Australia-wide network that keeps an eye on our waterways. If you're interested, give Lorri Ragless a call: 8339-1038



Recent Working Bees

Date	No. of volunteers	Area	Work done
February	6	Bogaduck track	Cut and swabbed woody weeds
March	10	Woorabinda	Cut longifolia. Cut and swabbed other woody weeds in a Bushcare situation.
April	7	Stirling Park	Cut and swabbed gorse regrowth in revegetated areas. Some longifolia cut. Several Pinus radiata ringbarked.
May	5	Madurta Reserve	Cut and swabbed gorse, blackberry, cotoneaster and broom.

Forthcoming Working Bees (Volunteers meet at 10am, 2nd Sunday of each month)

9 June.....Hender Reserve.... meet at Hender Road entrance.

14 July..... Woorabinda..... meet at Woorabinda Drive entrance.

11 August Stirling Park.....meet at Branch Road entrance.

Dust off those workaday blues with a couple of hours each month helping the Park. It's a rewarding experience and it's fun. Tools are provided, but bring your favourite gardening gloves if you wish.

Discover our local bats

Stan Flavel ('Batman') will be giving a talk about the wonderful life of our local bats, and their importance to biodiversity and the health of the environment... Echunga Primary School, Friday, 7th June at 7.30pm.



Feedback

Although we do our best to report accurately and fairly on Park matters, we know there are issues we may have missed.

This newsletter goes to some 150 Friends and similar interest groups. That's a wide enough readership to harbour a diversity of ideas and opinions.

Do you approve of the program of revegetation and regeneration going on the Park? Or do you have misgivings about the Park's management and its future directions?

Let us know what you think. Keep it brief and we'll gladly publish it in the newsletter.

Post your comments to:

J. Benlow, PO box 1, Stirling 5152.

Disclaimer: Contributors' views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the editor, the committee or the general membership of the Friends of Stirling Linear Park Inc.
Contributors to this issue: David Ragless, Jack Benlow and Lorri Ragless.

Not a member yet?

The purpose and commitment of the Friends of Stirling Linear Park is to help restore the Park to natural bushland and to ensure its preservation as a public open space in perpetuity. If you share this vision, why not join us?

Active participation in working bees etc, is entirely voluntary. Membership is open to anyone who has the best interests of the Park at heart. This newsletter is distributed quarterly to all members.



Patron Anita Aspinall

Committee 2001/2002:

David Ragless (<i>Chair</i>).....	8339 1038
Bob James (<i>Dep. Chair, Working bees</i>).....	8339 1903
Shirley Benlow (<i>Secretary</i>).....	8339 2218
John Allison (<i>Treasurer</i>).....	8339 1577
Kathy Bowman (<i>Public Officer, Membership, website</i>).....	8370 9177
Reece Pedler (<i>Student representative</i>).....	8339 3658
Jack Benlow (<i>Newsletter</i>).....	8339 2218
Lorri Ragless (<i>OWN representative</i>).....	8339 1038
Philip Hicks.....	8339 3156
Alistair McHenry.....	8339 5114
Russell Seaman.....	8398 0626
Nick Stevens.....	8339 8643
Neil Strong.....	8339 4085
Glenn Williams (<i>AHC: Natural Resources</i>).....	8408 0400

Affiliations

The Friends of Stirling Linear Park Inc. is an Affiliated Member of Friends of Parks Inc. We are also a Registered Landcare Group and a Member of both Greening Australia and Trees for Life.



Friends of Stirling Linear Park – Membership application/renewal

I/we would like to join/renew membership of the Friends of Stirling Linear Park. (Strike out word not applicable).

\$.....membership fee is enclosed.

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Phone no:.....

I can help with (please tick):

- ☐ Publicity/letter-boxing
- ☐ Working bees
- ☐ Bushcheck
- ☐ Water Watch
- ☐ Other.....

- ☐ I would like to receive the newsletter only.

Membership fees (individual or family): 1 year/ **\$5.** 5 years/ **\$20.**

Please return to: David Ragless, Friends of Stirling Linear Park Inc., 6 Branch Rd, STIRLING SA 5152.