

**REPORT OF THE 23RD FORUM OF FRIENDS OF PARKS GROUPS
PORT LINCOLN RACING CLUB, 3-5 AUGUST 2007**

'Catastrophe or Sustainability'

*Hosted by the Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks
and Friends of Coffin Bay National Park*

Compiled by the Volunteer Support Unit

*Refer to the appendices for the list of attendees and apologies.

FRIDAY 3 AUGUST 2007

FIELD EXCURSION

Some delegates participated in a visit to Memory Cove.

1. **REGISTRATIONS AND DISPLAYS**

Delegates were greeted by members of the Host Friends Groups.
Groups organised interpretative displays.

2. **BARBECUE DINNER**

A barbeque dinner was enjoyed by delegates.

3. **WELCOME TO THE FRIENDS FORUM**

Chair for the Forum, Brian Gould, welcomed all delegates.

Chair of the Host Steering Committee, Steve Pocock, welcomed all delegates and introduced special guests:

John Schutz, Director, Regional Conservation
Mike Williams, Deputy Director, Operational Planning, Regional Conservation
Brian Foster, Chairperson, Eyre Peninsula Natural Resource Management Board
Brian DuBois, President, Friends of Parks Inc.
Ross Belcher, Regional Conservator, West Region
Chris Halstead, Program Leader, Trails, Visitor Management Branch

Members of the Host Steering Committee were introduced - Vicki and Brian Gould, Gaile Bobridge, Lesley and Doug Easson, Shylie O'Brian, Rosemary Pocock, and Barney and Sally Williams.

4. **WELCOME TO LAND**

Unfortunately Howard Richards (Barngalla people), was not able to attend. Brian Gould gave the indigenous welcome, acknowledging that the land is the traditional land of the Barngalla people.

5. **WELCOME TO PORT LINCOLN**

Ian Phillips, Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks, welcomed delegates to Port Lincoln and gave a history of settlement.

6. **INTRODUCTION OF THE FRIENDS OF PARKS INC BOARD - BRIAN DuBOIS, PRESIDENT, FRIENDS OF PARKS INC**

Brian welcomed all delegates to the Forum. He said that it was important for Friends to know the Board members who work on their behalf and encouraged members to contact the Board with any important issues. He introduced members of the Board (see appendices).

Brian noted that all recommendations from the 2006 Southern Hills Forum were followed through, and that a schedule was in the forum folders.

7. **ROLL CALL/HIGHLIGHTS FROM EACH GROUP**

Brian read the roll call of those Friends Groups present, in alphabetical order, asking one delegate from each group to give a short report on the highlights over the last 12 months.

8. **PRESENTATION OF SPONSORED AND GROUP AWARDS**

Citations were read by Peter Wilkins (Senior Ranger, West Region) and Amy Ide (Communication and Education Project Officer, West Region). John Schutz, Director, Regional Conservation, presented the awards (see appendices).

9. **BROCHURE LAUNCH**

Ian Abbott, President, Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks, said that the trails project started about nine years ago. 109 km of walking trails include 262 guide posts, 264 check points, 18 direction signs. Work on the brochure started four years ago. Ian commended Ross Belcher and the West Region staff for their support. The brochure is available for \$1.00 per copy.

10. **GUEST SPEAKER - TERRY KREIG - NUCLEAR ENERGY IN RELATION TO CATASTOPHE OR SUSTAINABILITY**

Terry proposed that nuclear energy should be a big part of the future energy mix. Nuclear waste is minuscule compare to the way that other waste is handled. It is not too dangerous - it is clean, green, safe, and abundant.

11. **CLOSE**

Brian invited all to stay for supper, look at the displays and fill in the voting sheet for the People's Choice Display.

SATURDAY, 4 AUGUST, 2007

12. **REGISTRATIONS AND DISPLAYS**

Delegates registered and set up displays.

13. **WELCOME AND OFFICIAL OPENING**

Brian Gould welcomed all delegates. Apologies were read (see appendices).

Brian introduced Shylie O'Brien (member, Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks for over ten years). On behalf of the Host Groups, Shylie welcomed all to this forum and declared open the 23rd Friends Forum.

14. **GUEST SPEAKER - STEVE POCOCK, CHAIR, HOST STEERING COMMITTEE - HISTORY OF LOWER EYRE PENINSULA IN RELATION TO CATASTROPHE OR SUSTAINABILITY**

Steve gave an interesting talk about the history of South Australia. Evidence suggests that the first Australians arrived more than 40,000 years ago, and that other people visited in 1522 and 1627, prior to Matthew Flinders mapping the area in 1802.

15. **GUEST SPEAKER - BRIAN FOSTER, PRESIDING MEMBER, EYRE PENINSULA NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT BOARD - CLIMATE CHANGE IN REALTION TO CATASTROPHE OR SUSTAINABILITY**

Brian gave an interesting talk about Natural Resource Management, and the need to start at a local level to address issues. He encouraged individuals to take responsibility, and to market the system to help solve problems.

16. **MORNING TEA**

17. **GUEST SPEAKER - JASON VAN WEENEN - OFF-SHORE ISLANDS AND DIVERSITY -> SUSTAINABILITY**

Jason gave a general overview of the offshore islands in South Australia. Active management and care will be needed to maintain the conservation capacity of our islands.

18. **GUEST SPEAKER - JOHN SCHUTZ, DIRECTOR, REGIONAL CONSERVATION - DIRECTOR'S ADDRESS**

John said that he really enjoyed being part of the award presentations on Friday night. It was great to hear about the variety of projects that the Groups are involved in, and of course to be able to acknowledge those that have made an outstanding contribution. Gatherings such as these also provide a great opportunity to have hearty discussion and to share information between the Department and the Friends, and between the Friends themselves. A summary of John's speech is included in the appendices.

19. **GUEST SPEAKER - JOHN O'MALLEY, MANAGER, BUSINESS OPERATIONS - ASSET MANAGEMENT/INFRASTRUCTURE**

John spoke about infrastructure development and asset management in parks. In parks, there are currently 1100-1200 buildings, 266 ablutions, 422 shelters, 7000km of trails, 9000km of roads, and fences.

20. **PANEL TO DISCUSS PREVIOUS SPEAKERS/FORUM TOPICS**

Panel members were:

John Schultz (JS), Director, Regional Conservation
John O'Malley (JOM), Manager, Business Operations
Ross Belcher (RB), Regional Conservator, West Region
Tim Hall (TH), District Ranger, West Region

David Wilkin (DW), Regional Investigator, West Region
Chris Halstead (CH), Program Leader, Trails, Visitor Management

Question 1 - illegal clearance of native vegetation - it is inadequate in the way in which the Act is being administered.

JS said that there are some issues across the state with split responsibilities between the Department for Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation (DWLBC) and DEH. The legal side is with DWLBC. DEH has been blamed for being too tough, and then not tough enough. The Minister is reviewing this and new procedures will be put in place where all will be consolidated and DWLBC will be responsible.

Question 2 - the Friends have heard a lot about the history of the area, but where do heritage sites fit in - what is the current situation with managing these sites?

JOM said that the Department does not have the resources to restore and retain every heritage site across the State. The Department is to identify critical items to protect and conserve, or strategically for re-use.

Question 3 - there should be other areas in the Department where money could be saved.

JS said that this was a vexed issue at any point of time. A target for the State Government is to include 19 marine parks, with some funding given, but DEH has to find \$4m more. In relation to mining leases, Native Title claims need to be resolved in seven to eight years through co-management. The Department needs to work with communities to get the best outcome. Funding and priorities need to balance. Positions have been cut significantly with a full time employee cap. New positions can only be created by the Chief Executive.

Question 4 - Burn off practices limit environmental damage.

Mike Williams (MW), Deputy Director, Operational Planning, Regional Conservation, said that the Fire Management Program face this question all the time. There was no progress eight years ago. \$10m has been provided by the Government to manage fire. Every burn has a risk process undertaken, and a weed management programme included. A responsible Fire Management Programme now exists.

Question 5 - John O'Malley had been the first person to say that the Department needs to cut down on infrastructure. Regarding the buildings to be disposed of, will these be historic sites as well?

JOM said that this was not that simple. There are 7,000 km of walking trails and we need to ask if this is sustainable - do we need all? Would there be better access with less? Are they designed to be sustainable? Can we deliver the same services with less?

Question 6 - Volunteers in Parks - are they an asset?

JOM commented that Australia has the highest percentage of volunteers in the world, and the Department could not survive without this support and physical assistance.

Question 7 - Walking Trails - you need to direct users where we want them to go, otherwise they will be destructive.

CH said that we need to focus on planning sensibly, on walking trails that mean something. Plan them properly, fix them up, and walking trails become a good

experience. Funding from other sources could be obtained to do this work. We need to look at what we have got, and upgrade these.

Question 8 - Concern about the future of Marble Hill.

JOM said that whether it be Marble Hill or Martindale Hall, it is hard to say that one gets more funding than the other. There are not enough resources to go around. The organisation spreads resources and they are fragmented, and not a good deal is received.

Question 9 - Concerns about Belair National Park. Colin Houlahan (a former Ranger) said that he was very concerned about Belair National Park - all buildings are in trouble, the new roadway that was waived would cost millions.

JOM said that the Department is investing a lot of money because of the park's importance. We need to ensure that it is there for many years to come and to bring the park up to a better standard.

Bill Heycox added that the Belair staff have moved to Cleland recently. JOM said that the infrastructure has been upgraded.

Question 10 - Using commercialism as a resource. Steve said that in other parts of the world, environmental management projects use other assets. Using commercialism can be a resource to environmental management, ie tourism.

MW said that tourism can be beneficial, but can also cause grief. The Department is working with SA Tourism for commercial opportunities. Changes have occurred in Naracoorte and Tantanoola Caves management to get a better return. There are significant commercial operators in NSW where there was significant return and benefit, but when it went down, tourism operators wanted to be propped up.

Question 11 - Remote areas without facilities. John Grund referred to remote areas without facilities where there is no development, ever. He asked if Local Government can share costs with the State Government.

JOM referred to the Levels of Service programme which is an assessment of parks and sites for their facilities/assets/services. Socio-economic drivers to get the best return for any investment. People do not need assets and facilities in some areas. There is a partnership with Local Government on road maintenance, or capacity to assist with maintenance.

Question 12 - The walking trail at Picaninnie Ponds is advertised in the '40 Short Walks' booklet. There is annual maintenance. People want somewhere to walk. There are no designated walks in some areas, so people walk wherever they can. Friends Groups should be asked to maintain walking trails, or else be closed.

CH said that there is a five year process to have a good look at what we have got planned for the future. Walking is one of the most popular activities. Most people who visit parks want to walk. If there are no facilities, they will make their own way through the bush. The Department will develop some trails and decommission others. Areas to be focussed on over the next five years include the Flinders Ranges, and Belair National Park. The Department needs to decide if it wants it, if it is in the right place, and to fix it up now for the future.

Sue Barker said that the Walking Trails Support Group has been responsible for instigation ten walking trails in the Flinders Ranges, fifteen years ago, both in and outside of parks. The group has regularly looked after them for all of that time. Sue encouraged the Department to not dismiss the efforts of volunteers on trail work.

MW said that the Regional Conservators met about this issue. The management of public lands is a complex business. The management of assets, responsibility, provision of walking trails. The Department wants to revisit this in the future.

21. **NATURE FOUNDATION SA INC - LUNCH**

Dr Barbara Hardy presented the award for the Best Biodiversity Project to the Friends of Ferguson Conservation Park for the 'Rehabilitation of Stonyfell Creek Environs'.

The Foundation kindly contributed to the packed lunch which delegates enjoyed before departing on the field excursions.

22. **FIELD EXCURSIONS**

Delegates participated in one of the following field excursions:

- Axel Stenross Maritime Museum and Koppio Smithy Museum
- Lincoln National Park
- Coffin Bay National Park
- Wildflowers

23. **FORUM DINNER - sponsored by ElectraNet**

Ross Belcher, Regional Conservator, West Region, compéred the Dinner. He gave a background of the Region, which consists of three districts - Eyre, Gawler Ranges, and Far West. Special welcomes:

The Hon Gail Gago, MLC, Minister for Environment and Conservation
Liz Penfold, MP, Member for Flinders
Brian DuBois, President, Friends of Parks Inc
Brian Foster, Presiding Member, Eyre Peninsula NRM Board
John Schutz, Director, Regional Conservation
Mike Williams, Deputy Director, Operational Planning, Regional Conservation

24. **PRESENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL AWARDS**

ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

The Hon Gail Gago, MLC, addressed the delegates. Rosemary Pocock, (Treasurer, Forum Steering Committee) read the citations. Minister Gago joined with Dr Barbara Hardy, AO, Nature Foundation SA in presenting the awards (refer to appendices for list of awardees).

25. **LIFE MEMBERSHIP - MRS ENID L ROBERTSON, AM**

Brian DuBois read a citation for the presentation of Life Membership to Enid Robertson (refer appendices).

Dr John Butler, Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park, accepted the certificate on Enid's behalf.

26. **LUCKY SEAT PRIZE**

Tim Hall, District Ranger, Eyre District, used a scanner to find three lucky door prizes.

27. **GUEST SPEAKER - RONTHEO VAN ZYL - ELECTRANET**

Rontheo Van Zyl gave a background about ElectraNet. ElectraNet is committed to actively engaging the community. It is strengthening links and relationships with Friends Groups to identify opportunities across SA and into the future. Rontheo invited forum delegates to speak with representatives about conservation activities.

SUNDAY 5 AUGUST 2007

28. **BIRDWATCHING**

Colin Gill led a Bird Walk for early risers.

30. **WELCOME**

Brian Gould presented Greg Rossiter of Roxy's Music with a wooden plaque to thank him for his expert photography and audio visual work.

31. **GUEST SPEAKER - SIMON CLARK - CLIMATE CHANGE, MARINE ISSUES**

Simon gave an interesting talk on Marine Parks and encouraged the community to Value It....Protect it....Enjoy It.

32. **PANEL TO DISCUSS PREVIOUS SPEAKERS/FORUM TOPICS**

Panel members were:

Jason Van Weenen (JVW) - Ecologist, Threatened Species, West Region
Simon Clark (SC), Manager, Great Australian Bight Marine Park
Brian Foster (BF), Presiding Member, Eyre Peninsula NRM Board
Samara Miller (SM), Prawn Fisherman's Association

Question 13 - What is a reverse estuary?

SM said that in the Spencer Gulf, the saltier water is up the top and fresher water down the bottom - this is quite unique.

Steve said at the Great Australian Bight Marine Park, it is reverse, and the head is warmer in the winter and the whales visit. Simon said that the current comes down the West Coast. The Continental Shelf is a long way offshore (100 km).

Question 14 - What is DEH considering regarding the desalination plant in the Gulf?

SM said that she is very concerned about the desalination plant because of the impact on breeding and nursery areas. The Association is talking to BHP about tidal monitoring. Brine needs to mix as quickly as possible so there is less impact on the environment.

Steve Pocock said that in the Upper Spencer Gulf, work was done 15-20 years ago. Water does not exchange for at least fifty years. There are huge salt works at Whyalla (ICI) and they would be happy to have it.

Question 15 - Seaweed.

Seaweed and food are put back into the ocean. PIRSA has a draft management plan for harvesting seaweed off the beach. There is no common harvesting in gulfs. At the lower south east, there are arguments as fish and birds rely on maggots and other life created in seaweed. State and Federal Governments are encouraging harvesting.

Question 16 - Are the shorelines part of the Marine Park environment?

SC advised that the Fisheries Department makes these decisions. The management plan takes up the coastline to the dunes.

Maureen acknowledged that no research was done using the precautionary principle, and allowing 75% to be harvested.

Question 17 - Aldinga Conservation Park and Washpool. John said that the Aldinga Conservation Park and Washpool (unmanaged reserve) is to be amalgamated as a united conservation area. It is not in the sixteen mooted Marine Parks.

SC advised that there will be public nomination after the first nineteen marine parks are finalised.

Question 18 - How are Marine Parks affecting climate change?

BF said that the community is coming to terms with marine protected interface. Kelp harvesting needs some discussion. The introduction of Native Vegetation Clearance in 1976 put a line in the sand regarding clearance. 46% of native vegetation present at Eyre Peninsula but 20% at a state level. The base line has shifted. There is more than 50% of productive land that has no remnant vegetation. In the development of marine parks, there was angst in the rural community, learning how to consult is the key. Good community consultation is essential.

Question 19 - How supportive have the fishermen been in relation to Marine Parks?

SC said that there are different levels of engagement. Some are not interested in the Bill, they want to see the boundaries. There is a Fisheries Aquaculture Taskforce which wants to be consulted. Engagement will increase when the boundaries are known.

Question 20 - High Water Mark.

Neil Dickins referred to the high water mark by putting in a gauge and getting an average reading. The high water mark as a stormline can be metres high. In relation to an estuary, this can be half a mile off the beach.

Question 21 - Global Warming. The whole of the west coast of Eyre Peninsula has been built by climate change. The sea was moving 3-4 km a week in the last ice age. How we can adapt to this situation. Does the Government have the ability to adapt?

BF said that these things happen over a long time. Changes are occurring or processes driving change are very different. The capacity of earth's system cannot change as we know it. Our form of civilisation, as we know it, from carbon, maybe cannot survive.

Question 22 - Off shore islands - how do they fit in under Marine Parks? Consultation - how has SA learned from Victoria, where they have undergone a similar process?

SC said that the islands will be included in some marine parks. Implementation of marine parks will improve management of some of these islands. Knowledge comes from other areas and States and legislation from other States has been looked at first.

Question 23 - Feral pests under the water.

Jim Ayliffe asked if there was any way to control the feral pests under the water - weeds, worms, etc – is there any way to control them?

Question 24 - Climate Change.

To make a choice between methods of energy production - when we build and maintain, operate and dispose, it is hard to make a judgement on the best way to use energy unless we have the figures.

BF said that Terry Krieg had given him some booklets on analysis of nuclear power. The books mentioned in detail about costs (power, steel etc) to build a nuclear reactor four times less than the equivalent of wind farms CO₂ produced by cement making is enormous.

Question 25 - policing of parks. Policing parks on land is hard enough, but marine parks would be more difficult. How would the budget cope?

SC said that the park has been in place for ten years. There is a good relationship with the fishermen. The need for compliance is greatly reduced. Access to resources is good.

John Schutz added that the Department is trying to reproduce what is done on the land. It is much harder, more costly and slower. The Government is looking at partnerships with Fisheries (compliance code already in place), effectiveness use of, and education (significant amount of effort to consult the community and use of properly).

Question 26 - Consultation.

At the stakeholders meeting about marine parks in the South East, about twenty people were present. Professional fishermen were very concerned about 'consultation' and preferred to use the word 'negotiation' instead. The feeling is that public consultation is not useful. The Department does what it wants to anyway.

SM said that the fishing community want to know what consultation is - the level of participation and engagement is important. The Body wants to talk about management and to work with the Government.

Question 27 - Marine Debris. Marine debris will always be an issue. Does DEH envisages a role for volunteers?

JS said that there is a role for volunteers in a whole range of activities. However, the Department does not want to jeopardise the good work already being done. Possibly attract some new volunteers for new opportunities.

Dr Barbara Hardy said that whilst on the tour on Saturday, delegates saw the tuna farm cage. Cages must have a lot of debris. How does the debris made not be a problem in the sea?

SC referred to education. Tuna farmers are pressured not to lose debris and rubbish from their farm. Abalone farmers had trouble last year when baskets broke. Aquaculture practices are changing. At the Great Australian Bight Marine Park, debris is removed from beaches to reduce the threat to whales etc.

33. **MORNING TEA AND NATURE FOUNDATION OF SA - RAFFLE DRAW**

34. **FRIENDS OF WHYALLA AWARD FOR THE MOST COMMENDABLE DISPLAY - PEOPLE'S CHOICE**

Barney Williams, Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks, announced that 81 votes had been received for the 13 displays.

Clinton and Margaret Garrett presented the award to the Friends of the Flinders Ranges National Park. Jan Jackson accepted the award.

Marg said that the award first started in 1992, at the Friends Forum which her group hosted, to encourage Friends Groups to think about getting the message across to the public.

35. **FRIENDS OF PARKS INC BOARD - PRESIDENT, BRIAN DUBOIS**

Brian gave a brief background about the Board and what it does. The Friends network started on 1982 and Friends of Parks became incorporated in 1993. This enabled the body to apply for grants, and brought with it legal obligations. The Board is currently discussing governance and a new Friends e-newsletter is soon to be produced. The Board receives requests from the Department for submissions on various draft plans.

36. **GUEST SPEAKER - SAMARA MILLER, SPENCER GULF AND WEST COAST PRAWN FISHERMAN'S ASSOCIATION INC - LOCAL PRAWN FISHERIES INDUSTRY IN RELATION TO CATASTROPHE OR SUSTAINABILITY**

Samara gave an interesting talk and presented a DVD about prawn fishing. It is a potential catastrophe turning around to sustainability. The Association started in 1967, producing 2,000 ton/year (25,000 in Australia in total). There was a big drop in 1987 to 1200 tons produced. The effort was changed to reduce the fishing to 55 nights per year, but the same catch is maintained. Fishing has stopped during the day, and only undertaken after the full moon and when very dark. Work with Mother Nature to assess what has happened to find the best prawn size. Areas can be closed if the prawns are undersized, any time.

37. **VOLUNTEERS' PANEL - TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY**

Panel members were:

Brian DuBois (BDB) - President, Friends of Parks Inc

Barney Williams (BW) – Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks

Rosalie Brown (RB) – Campground Hosts

Jill Salvi (JS) – Friends of Belair National Park

Sue Grund (SG) – Friends of Kimba District Parks

Question 28 - How can information be shared between Friends Groups dealing with various problems, eg weeds.

BW said that the level of poisons allowed or registered weed sprayer. Each Friends Group could contribute information. Perhaps Friends Groups members could get accreditation.

Question 29 - Risk Management. Some members are over 70 years of age. Is there a limit on the insurance cover on the age of volunteers?

BW replied that all volunteers are covered and a 'Volunteer Project Commencement Advice Form' (pink form) needs to be submitted. If an accident occurs, each case would be judged on its merits. Aspects such as negligence, use of drugs or alcohol, are also considered.

Question 30 - Tree planting.

Treeguards are no longer used in campground areas at September Beach in Lincoln National Park, kangaroos just eat the plantings. RB said that plants have had wire put around them. Ross Belcher said that this is a local decision only. There is an application for tree planting.

Joyce Yeomans (Friends of Innes National Park) said that on Yorke Peninsula, there are green plastic tree guards all over the place, but they will not stop the kangaroos.

John Butler added that prickly stuff inside the treeguards (like blackberry) will discourage kangaroos.

BW referred to work by Neville Bonney, when it suggests that when you plant, also plant acacia paradoxcl – it helps to deter pests.

Question 31 - Herbicides. There has been an effort in the registration of herbicides for environmental use through a website. This could help with local problems. Friends Groups should discuss this issue with their Liaison Ranger.

BDB added that Trees for Life have a full page on its website about specific weed control. Exchanging information could be done through the new Friends newsletter.

Question 32 - Volunteer Skills Register.

BDB suggested that a volunteer audit of training and skills register be done. Ideas could then be exchanged. Annette McLean added that a form will be circulated shortly about training undertaken and what training is required.

Question 33 - Sustainability of members.

JS said that older members have been visiting the parks on their bikes. More bicycles are sold now than cars. Bicycles do not stay on the tracks. Riders go through the scrub.

Question 34 - Recruitment of younger Friends. Parks should be an extension of younger people's backyards. How to attract younger members is an issue.

BDB said that there have been several opportunities for junior members. There is a very successful Young Friends of Black Hill and Morialta Parks. The Junior Friends of Cleland was run by several parents but the children have grown up now. Rostrevor Junior School is a new Friends Group, has a Conservation Centre, and is doing projects at Morialta Conservation Park. Most Friends Groups work with local schools. University students come for a while to do their thesis and often return years later. There are five schools in a two kilometre radius of Belair National Park.

Denise added that recognition through Friends of Parks Inc could be given to young people. BDB referred to the VMAG group which covers volunteers throughout SA. In Year 12 students can do voluntary work which can be credited in their studies.

BW suggested that Friends Groups use local papers to publicise activities, including photographs - this often attracts new enquiries.

38. **VOTE OF THANKS**

Brian DuBois thanked members of the local Host Groups, Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks and Friends of Coffin Bay National Park for hosting an outstanding Forum. He presented a gift to a member of both groups and a gift to Steve and Rosemary Pocock for their outstanding leadership. Brian thanked the West Region and Volunteer Support Unit for their valuable support.

Steve Pocock thanked the Host Steering Committee and presented a gift from the Volunteer Support Unit to Vicki and Brian Gould, and Barney and Sally Williams.

Steve thanked the people and organisations involved in staging the 23rd Friends Forum. He particularly thanked:

- All the Friends and DEH staff for attending, input and support
- Ian McLeary of the Port Lincoln Racing Club
- Caterers - Del Giornio's - Craig Bunder and staff
- Guest Speakers and Panellists
- Wonderful sponsors
- The tour leaders
- Eyre Peninsula Four Wheel Drive Club for assistance on the Memory Cove tour
- Numerous community groups at Port Lincoln
- Greg Rossiter, Roxy's Music, for audio and photography work
- And congratulated Award Winners

39. **CLOSURE OF THE FORUM**

2008

Vince Monterola, Chair of the 2008 Friends Forum Steering Committee formally invited all to travel to Wilpena in August 2008 to attend the 24th forum. The theme will be 'Footsteps in the Flinders' and information kits were given to all present.

Vince declared the 23rd Forum closed.

40. **LUNCH**

Delegates enjoyed a delicious lunch before they bade farewell.

Another hugely successful forum was acclaimed by people who attended.

MONDAY 6 AUGUST 2007

FIELD EXCURSION

Some delegates participated in a visit to Coffin Bay National Park (four wheel drive tour).

APPENDICES

ATTENDEES

FRIENDS OF PARKS GROUPS

Aldinga Scrub - Julie Burgher

Arid Recovery - Gavin Ibbett, Michelle Watson

Belair - Brian & Noeline DuBois, Pam & Ron Tamblyn, Michael & Peggy Cerchez, Jill Salvi

Biodiversity & Endangered Species Team - Travis Hague

Butcher Gap - Joyleen & Phil Gibbons

Campground Hosts - Rob & Di Letcher, Phil & Rosalie Brown,

Canunda and Beachport - Neil & Bernice Dickins

Cleland - John & Mandy Carter

Coffin Bay -

Coorong -Gavin & Marie Campbell

Flinders Ranges - Tricia Bott, Kaye & Keith Crossman, Athol & Jan Jackson, Vince & Helen Monterola, Frank & Margaret Williams

Fort Glanville Historical Association - Bill & Lesley Heycox

Gawler Ranges - Marie & Malcolm McDonald, Sandy Alexander, Leighton George, Ian & Leala Hoffman, Lyle Wallace, Ian & Mary Westlake

Heysen Trail and Other Walking Trails -

Innamincka Reserves -

Innes - Joyce & Peter Yeomans

Kangaroo Island, Western Districts - Ida & Garth Jackson

Kaiserstuhl - Bob & Stefani Traeger

Kimba District Parks - Steve & Cheryl Atkinson, Frank & Judy Schaefer, Austen & Thelma Eatts, Lyla Francis, Gordon & Mavis Leiblich, Aileen Woolford, John & Sue Grund

Kyeema - Trudy & Grant Good

Lake Newland / Waldegrave Islands - Dianne & Ian Penna

Lenger Reserve - Len Phillips, Jan Read

Marble Hill - Diana & Marcel Clark, Jeanette & Malcolm Dallwitz

Moana Sands - John Edmeades

Mount Gambier - Ian Mitchener

Mount Remarkable - Roger & Heather Hunt

Mylor -

National Parks Heritage Committee - Colin & Lois Houlahan, Dene & Dianne Cordes

Nature Foundation SA Inc - Dr Barbara Hardy, AO

Old Government House - Robert & Annette McLean, Norma & Ron Muggleton, Heather Olorenshaw

O'Halloran Hill -

Onkaparinga Park - Judy & Tony Dowling, Colin & Anne Malcolm, Dave & Anitra Angel, Anne & Tony Endacott, Gill & Bill Heaven, Cynthia & Malcolm Kirkham, Lesley & Andy McKinnon, Ray & Pat Rogers, Jan & Graham Thomas

Para Wirra - John & Anthea Fuller, Ted & Molly Hughes

Riverland Parks - June Plush, Margaret Jennings

Sandy Creek -

Scott Creek - Dr John & Rosemary Butler,

Shorebirds SE - Maureen Christie

Simpson Desert Parks - Lesley Hunkin

Southern Eyre Peninsula - Steve & Rosemary Pocock, Brian & Vicki Gould, Sally & Barney Williams, Doug & Lesley Easson, Terry Kreig, Marion Harvey, Dean Jacobs, Merrick Savage, Helen Breakey, Shylie O'Brien, Ian & Chris Abbott, Bill Broughton, Dr Jenny Chillingworth, Jan Harvey, Wilma Kemper, Alison Manthorpe, Margaret & Ian Phillips, Gweneth Davies, Di & Bob DeLaine, Kye Langmead

Sporting Shooters Association of Australia, Hunting and Conservation Branch (SA) -

Jan & Jim Ayliffe, Graham & Barbara Henley

Streaky Bay District Parks - Christine Taylor, Kaye Freeman

Telowie Gorge - Wally & Betty Klau

Troubridge Island - Jasmine Swales

Volunteer Support Unit - Jim & Joshua Smith

Walking Trails Support Group - Rob Marshall & Sue Barker

Whyalla Conservation Park - Clinton & Margaret Garrett, Denise Sharp, David Poyner, & Hamish

Staff

Minister's Office - The Hon Gail Gago, MLC, Dr Susan Close

Regional Conservation - John Schutz, Mike Williams

Adelaide Region - Dr Laurie Haegi, Carol Schmidt, Steve Taylor, Nick Dinan, Janine Kraehenbuehl, Nalini Klopp, Bryn Troath

Murraylands Region - Merridie and Glen Martin

Northern and Yorke Region - Tim Collins, Caroline Paterson, Anthony Pieck

Outback Region - John Watkins, Tom McIntosh

South East Region - Keith Welsby

West Region - Ross Belcher, Tim Hall, Carissa Male, Ross Allen, Simon Clark, Brett and Trish Dalzell, Michael Freak, Amy Ide, Katrina Pobke, Jason van Weenen, Peter Wilkins, Craig Nixon, Louisa Halliday, David Wilkins, Bettina Jackner, Sarah Way

Visitor Management Branch - Chris Halstead

Land Management Branch - Mary-Anne Healy

Volunteer Support Unit - Kosette Lambert, Pam Smith, Gwynne Gray

Business Services - John O'Malley

Others

ElectraNet - Rontheo Van Zyl

Eyre Peninsula NRM - Gaile Bobridge, Brian Foster

Liz Penfold, MP, Member for Flinders, and Geoff Penfold

Greg Rossiter, Roxy's Music

NRM Volunteer Committee - Cecilia Woolford

Prawn Association - Samara Miller

Others - not sure which group

Jan and Larry Bebbington

Trevor and Helen Cox

Colin and Elspeth Gill

Aaron, Steve, and Michele Haynes

Jodie Hull

Yvonne and Freeman Puckridge

Myles Somers

Kathy Speed

Jeremy Tiller

Clee, Andrea, and John Tonkin

Matt Williams

Alex Wyschnja

Joan Clarke

APOLOGIES

The Hon David Wotton, Life Member and Patron, Friends of Parks Inc
Allan Holmes, Chief Executive, Department for Environment and Heritage
Jean and Verne McLaren, AM, Life Member, and Patrons, Friends of Parks Inc
Campground Hosts - Lorraine and Ron Potts
Friends of Black Hill and Morialta Parks - Ann Taylor
Friends of Ferguson Conservation Park - Dr Geoffrey Bishop
Friends of Cobbler Creek Recreation Park - David and Margie Mitchell
DEH – Land Management Branch - Dr Bob Inns and Dr Jane Wright
Friends of Burra Parks - Heidi Nicholson
His Worship The Mayor of Port Lincoln, Peter Davis
Friends of Mount Monster Conservation Park - Ian and Carolyn Cutten
Friends of Para Wirra Recreation Park - Dr Colin Winsor
Friends of Volunteer Support Unit - Stephen and Kay Henshaw
Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks - Isabel Smith

FOP INC BOARD MEMBERS

VICE PRESIDENT	Graham Henley, Hunting and Conservation Branch (SA), Sporting Shooters Association
TREASURER	Lesley Hunkin, Friends of Simpson Desert Parks
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Mandy Carter, Friends of Cleland - Grants Facilitator John Fuller, Friends of Para Wirra RP (Gift Fund) Annette McLean, Friends of Old Government House Vince Monterola, Friends of the Flinders Ranges
SECRETARIAT	Kosette Lambert, A/Manager, Volunteer Support Unit Pam Smith, Snr Admin Officer, Volunteer Support Unit
<i>(In absentia)</i>	
SECRETARY	David Mitchell, Friends of Cobbler Creek RP
PUBLIC OFFICER	Cathy Potts, Friends of Kaiserstuhl CP (CCSA Rep)
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Dr Geoffrey Bishop, Friends of Ferguson CP (Historian) Anne McLean, Friends of Old Government House

SPONSORED AND GROUP AWARDS

DEH Award for Best Trail Stewardship Project

Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks - Trails in Lincoln National Park (presented by Chris Halstead, Visitor Management Branch)

Heritage Branch Award for Best Heritage Project

Friends of Innes National Park - Development and Management of the Inneston and Stenhouse Bay Heritage Walks

Natural Resource Management Award for Best Landcare Project

Friends of Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park (presented by Cecilia Woolford, NRM Volunteer Committee)

OUTSTANDING PROJECTS – GOLDEN WALLABY AWARDS

Best Project

Biodiversity & Endangered Species Team (BEST) - Dedication to Biodiversity Projects

Best Newsletter

NPW Walking Trails Support Group

Project Awards:

Friends of Moana Sands - Undertaking archaeological work for educational purposes.

Friends of Mount Gambier Area Parks - Assisting with the fish ladder at the Piccaninnie Ponds Outlet.

Friends of Shorebirds, South East - Survey work at the lakes, coast, and ephemeral wetlands.

Friends of Mount Monster Conservation Park - Care and maintenance at Mount Monster Conservation Park.

Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks - Planting its 7,000th tree as part of a six-year project.

NPW Walking Trails Support Group - Developing the Walking Tracks Handbook.

Friends of Arid Recovery (Roxby Downs) - For ongoing success in conservation.

Friends of Newland Head Conservation Park - Raising and Planting more than 40,000 indigenous plants.

Friends of Shepherds Hill Recreation Park - Dedication to the removal of woody weeds and revegetation.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDEES

Ian and Chris Abbott - Friends of Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks

John and Susan Grund - Friends of Kimba District Parks

Frank and Judy Schaefer - Friends of Kimba District Parks/Gawler Ranges Park/Barossa Goldfields

Lance Dean (in absentia) - Friends of Whyalla Conservation Park

Don and Donna Reid - Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park

Annette McLean - Friends of Old Government House

David & Margie Mitchell (in absentia) - Friends of Cobbler Creek Recreation Park

Jim and Jan Ayliffe - Sporting Shooters Association of Australia – Hunting and Conservation Branch (SA)

Kevin and Sandra Smith (in absentia) - Friends of Riverland Parks

Maureen Christie - Friends of Mount Gambier Area Parks/Shorebirds SE

MOST SUPPORTIVE STAFF MEMBER - Nature Foundation SA Inc. Award

Caroline Paterson, District Ranger, Yorke District, Northern and Yorke Region

FRIENDS GROUP OF THE YEAR, 2007 - Nature Foundation SA Inc. Award

Friends of the Gawler Ranges National Park

FRIENDS GROUP OF THE DECADE, 1997 – 2007

sponsored by Verne and Jean McLaren - Campground Hosts

BEST FRIENDS MEDALLISTS, 2007 (based on twenty years of outstanding work) Barney and Sally Williams, Friends of Coffin Bay National Park/Southern Eyre Peninsula Parks

SUMMARY – DIRECTOR'S ADDRESS

Friends of Parks volunteers fulfil an increasingly important and diverse role. As we are challenged by increasingly complex management and biodiversity conservation issues, the ability to inform, engage and work with the local community through Friends groups is more and more valuable. The contribution that Friends of Parks groups make to achieve the Department's goals should not be understated. There is certainly no doubt that through this partnership the Department is able to achieve significantly more than it could if it relied solely on its own resources.

The high value DEH places on community involvement is evident in the Department's recently updated Corporate Plan. One of the key priorities in the Plan is '*South Australians involved*', which is about encouraging South Australians to enjoy and be actively involved with their rich heritage and diverse natural environments. More specifically, it is about involving people in conservation, through connecting people to nature, and involving volunteers in our work. A second goal of the Plan is '*Better decisions and partnerships*' – which is about building and maintaining strong partnerships to deliver better decisions and results.

John referred to these priorities. Firstly, they acknowledge the value the Department places on its relationships with the community. And secondly, they acknowledge the need for these relationships to continue into the future – that is, the sustainability of these relationships.

John said that he was really pleased that the forum has taken on sustainability as one of the key themes for the forum as it underpins a number of agency initiatives. For example, the Government's 'No Species Loss' agenda that is being delivered (in part) through NatureLinks. The Department also recognises that sustainability of volunteer involvement in our environment is a vital consideration for all of us.

The Department began addressing this issue of sustainability of volunteer effort back in 2005 with the development of the volunteer engagement strategy – which many of you will have been, or will be, involved in at some point. This innovative strategy provides DEH with a plan for ongoing involvement of volunteers. By identifying trends in volunteer involvement, opportunities for engaging the community in new programs and projects, and the areas that the Department must address to ensure it continues to provide the support to our existing, highly valued volunteer base; the strategy allows the Department to position itself to respond to, embrace and even determine, the future of environmental volunteering.

It is important, of course, to maintain linkages with the past, but equally we should not be so tied to tradition that we are unable to change. It is only through the ability to adapt to the changing circumstances around us that we can be confident of maintaining our relevance in the future. John relayed the quote '*Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape*'. As this quite eloquently suggests, it is important that we don't get so focussed on doing the work, that we don't take the time to reflect on how we can build on and improve the way we do what we do, the way we work in partnership with others, and where our priorities should lie. This relates to the point raised earlier about the importance of the partnership between the Department and Friends groups, and of course the need for open and regular communication.

Implementation of the Volunteer Strategy remains a key priority for the Department over the coming years and the staff look forward to engaging with the Friends all in this process.

John strongly encouraged delegates to make the most of the opportunity to talk with staff and with the many Friends groups present over the next two days. He wished everyone all the best for a valuable and productive Forum.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP - MRS ENID L ROBERTSON, AM

Enid's commitment to native vegetation management has both personal and professional components. She has known the land at Blackwood that is now Watiparinga Reserve since childhood and was a botanist all her working career.

After graduating from the University of Adelaide, Enid worked as a weeds adviser and systematic botanist at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute. From 1967 to 1987 she worked in Adelaide University's Botany Department in the field of marine algae, sea-grasses and fresh water aquatic plants.

Her conservation work began about 35 years ago when she joined the National Trust of South Australia's Nature Preservation Committee of which there are many groups, and the Board of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. Her involvement with the management of the National Trust's Watiparinga Reserve began in 1973. (Her family had donated this land to the National Trust in 1957).

Since her retirement in 1987 Enid has worked virtually full-time in a voluntary capacity for nature conservation. She has played either an advisory or practical role with a variety of organisations, including the City of Mitcham, Native Vegetation Council, Friends of Parks, but her outstanding contribution has been to the National Trust's nature reserves.

Enid's love of Australia's native plants and bushland is evident to all with whom she has worked. She is both dedicated and enthusiastic; over the years she has involved and inspired many, many other South Australians to become involved in nature conservation.

Enid is a member of the following Friends Groups: Scott Creek, Shepherds Hill, Marino, Sturt Gorge, Ferries McDonald and Monarto, and the Wildlife Habitat and Support Group.

I would not be surprised if there were other groups which I have not mentioned. When talking to her she told me that at one stage she was attending 10 working bees a week!

IN MEMORIAM

Ivan Wittwer	former Chair, Eyre Consultative Committee
Val Cromack	Friends of Mount Gambier Area Parks
Madge Bichard	Campground Hosts
Dorothy Mikolaj	Campground Hosts
John Kloeden	Friends of Old Government House
Basil Bowden	Friends of Dutchmans Stern Conservation Park
Margarete Heiland	Campground Hosts
Les Wells	Campground Hosts
Dawn Kloeden	Friends of Old Government House
Beth Anderson	Friends of Dutchmans Stern Conservation Park
George Cornwall	former Ranger
Nancy Chapman	Friends of Old Government House
Jean Thomson	Friends of Aldinga