

Newsletter

Friends of Stirling Linear Park Inc.

Summer 2004-5

Stirling Linear Park Management Strategy Report from Working Group

In the last newsletter we reported on the background and formation of this working group and that terms of reference and modus operandi were under consideration. These were finalised as follows.

The Working Group for the Stirling Linear Park Management Strategy shall:

1. Develop a brief for the appointment of a consultant to assist in the preparation of a Vision and Management Strategy for Stirling Linear Park.
2. Review tenders and provide a recommendation to Council on a preferred consultant(s).
3. Identify stakeholders, park users, potential park users and other groups who should be consulted during the preparation of the Management Strategy and appropriate public consultation that should be undertaken.
4. With the assistance of a consultant, determine the environmental, recreational and cultural

values of the Park and use these as a benchmark against which to assess the suitability of the various existing and potential uses. Consideration should also be given to the extent and ongoing management of such uses as well as the compatibility of one use with another.

5. Provide advice and comments to the consultant in order to identify issues and opportunities as well as management options during Working Group Meetings and formal consultation sessions.

Since then the Group has deliberated on the development of a Consultants' Brief. We are pleased to report that this was finally agreed upon before Christmas and that consultants are now being invited to submit tenders. These will be assessed by the Group and a recommendation made for a preferred consultant to be appointed by Council.

Annual General Meeting

Over forty people attended the Friends' 2003-2004 AGM held in the classroom at Woorabinda Environment Education Centre on Saturday October 23rd. Attendees included representatives from the Adelaide Hills Council, Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board, Onkaparinga Waterwatch Network and a number of other environment and walking groups.

Margaret Killick from Scotts Creek gave an informative and entertaining address on Birds of the Mt Lofty Ranges with the help of colour slides and recorded bird calls.

Chairman David Ragless presented an activities report and Treasurer John Allison

provided financial reports for the year. Both are reproduced elsewhere in this newsletter, along with a breakdown of volunteer hours worked for the park. Last year's volunteer hours are also included for comparison.

Retiring committee member Jack Benlow was farewelled and thanked with a gift of South Australian wines. Jack has been a committee stalwart for over seven years, undertaking many roles including photo-monitoring officer and newsletter editor.

Following the close of the business session a Devonshire afternoon tea was enjoyed by all. Our grateful thanks go to Bakers' Delight, who again donated the scones.

In this issue...

◇ SLP Working Party report 1	◇ Volunteer hours worked	6
◇ Annual General Meeting	◇ Recent working bees	6
◇ Review of 2003-2004	◇ An unexpected parcel	6
◇ Treasurer's statements	◇ Awards to FoSLP members	7
◇ Park news: Students using the park, Vandalism, Monadenia update, Dogs attack koala	◇ Working bees 2005	7
	◇ Conservation Volunteers Aus	7
	◇ FoSLP Committee 2004-5	8

Review of the Financial Year 2003-2004

Address by the Chair, David Ragless, 23 October 2004

The year seems to have been one of extremes.

On one hand our members and supporters have contributed a record amount of time and effort to on-ground works such as bushcare and revegetation, surpassing previous achievements. This has been a magnificent effort.

On the other hand the catchment management of birds, animals, plants and the tranquillity of the park has been subjected to an unprecedented number of threats.

This most worrying trend has demanded a greater amount of Friends time and energy to try and counter. It has detracted from our other projects such as the development of a linking trail to Mark Oliphant Conservation Park and support for ecotourism.

Some of the damaging issues seem to have now been abandoned but others are still being debated.

I will now summarise the year's work and the year's problems.

Our core business is bushcare, woody weed control and revegetation work.

Volunteers carried out a range of bushcare and woody weed control in all sections of the Park during 17 working bees, donating 894 hours of labour. Eleven of the working bees were rotational monthly events and six were ad hoc events as a result of outside groups volunteering to work with us. Individual Friends members also worked regularly throughout the year on their own. The following groups participated:

Staff from the National Australia Bank
Mt. Lofty Queens Scouts
International baccalaureate students from
Pembroke School
Conservation Volunteers Australia
Our regular member volunteers.

Planting of degraded areas with ground covers, wetland plants, shrubs and trees was done on five occasions during the year. All tubestock was

propagated from locally collected seed of native indigenous plants. A total of 3500 were planted. 131 volunteers took part. Those who helped included:

Planet Ark Inc
Staff of National Australia Bank
Students from Woodside, Aldgate, Heysen and
Woodend Primary Schools
Our Trees for Life volunteer grower
Volunteers from the general public
Adelaide Hills Council Natural Resource and
Landcare staff.

Other on-ground works during the year included:

Completion of two notice boards
Work on a self-guided 'interpretive trail' — soon
to be finished
Weed control in preparation for the Woorabinda
Native Demonstration Garden
Upgrading and surfacing trails in Stirling Linear
Park
Assisting with the upgrading of the Woorabinda
Environmental Education Centre.

None of our on-ground work could materialise without considerable planning.

None of our plantings, bushcare, woody weed control, trail upgrading or other activities are undertaken without lodging plans, or without Council staff approval. All of this involves many meetings, correspondence and site visits with the Council staff.

Without funding, no on-ground projects could have been undertaken. During the year the following grant funding was obtained:

\$10,640 from Envirofund for weed control and
revegetation work.
\$3,530 from Onkaparinga Catchment Water
Management Board to help support the low-
water-use Native Demonstration Garden at
Woorabinda.

We also applied for grant funding from Land and Water Australia and from Family and Community Services, but we were unsuccessful.

We continue to be members of Trees for Life, Greening Australia, and Friends of Parks. We are also an official Landcare Group.

Our community partnership has, however, expanded. We are now part of the recently launched *Central Hills Biodiversity 'Hot Spot' Conservation Project*. This regional grouping has been formed under the auspices of the government's *Integrated Natural Resource Management Act*. Our project involves a funding partnership between Urban Forest Biodiversity Program, Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board, Adelaide Hills Council, and seven local conservation groups. Initially the project is worth \$430,000, and will address biodiversity and water quality programs in parks, reserves and private conservation areas. A part-time project officer, who is headquartered here at Woorabinda, has been appointed to assist the project.

During the year we continued to monitor the Park's biodiversity and conservation values with the following programs:

- Photomonitoring from 34 sites.
- Waterwatch sampling and testing.
- Bushcheck monthly data collection and annual analyses.
- Monadenia mapping.
- Frog census, annually.
- Phytophthora root fungus observations.
- Currently this disease has not been found in the Park.

The Park also now has a registered bird observation site with Birds Australia. Data collected will be included in the *Atlas of Australian Birds*. This registration was organised by Conservation Volunteers Australia.

Publicity carried out during the year included:

- Quarterly newsletter to members
- Two articles published in the conservation newspaper *EcoVoice*
- A display in Stirling Library publicising our National Tree Day event
- Notices posted to members regarding working bees
- Maintaining our website
- A new revised *Walkers Guide to Stirling Linear Park*
- A letterbox drop and mailout to members alerting them of Council plans to inappropriately classify parts of the Park
- Posters publicising our National Tree Day planting event and this AGM.

The widespread recognition by conservation and

environmental organisations of the value of the Park (and its surprising biodiversity, given its peri-urban situation) has attracted environmental educationalists to the area.

The Onkaparinga Waterwatch Network is working from this building and receives many bus-loads of schoolchildren for environmental tuition.

Many other groups also use the building and the Park, including Conservation Volunteers Australia, Trees for Life, Greening Australia, Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board, Natural Resource Management Committee, and a number of individual environmental educators.

A Youth Environment Corps has worked most impressively at renovation of the bunkhouse building. Another team is due to start soon on a range of work in the Park including finishing the renovation.

From December 2004 Conservation Volunteers Australia will be using the renovated bunkhouse on a full time basis as its training headquarters.

Conservation Volunteers Australia also asked the Adelaide Hills Council if it could rent the Woorabinda cottage. Another major environmental organisation was also interested in a leasing arrangement. Regardless of these opportunities and that renovation costs could be recouped from lease fees in 5-8 years, Council has decided to sell the cottage despite previous agreements with us that it would not do so. In the future this short-sighted move will be regretted by Council.

Members will be aware that our Friends Group evolved from a group of local residents in 1989 who opposed the sale of Stirling Park by Council for subdivision and housing. Quite a number of our most dedicated volunteers remain from that time. Since then a cornerstone of our Charter has been to oppose moves that we see as a threat to the Park's future as a peaceful area for passive recreation while maintaining its high conservation values.

Until this year our opposition has been limited to plans to sell parts of the Park for subdivision. This year however, a number of threats have arisen which we have been duty bound to oppose. The natural beauty of the Park has attracted several interest groups who consider that they have a right to use the Park for their own special activities. Many of these activities such as walking are passive and are therefore benign. Others, including mountain bike riding, are clearly active and have a potential to be disruptive and damaging both to other Park users and the environment. During the year therefore, we have opposed the following:

- A roadway through Hender Reserve
- An oval within Hender Reserve

Active recreation in the Park, such as mountain bike riding and kayaking tuition. I must add that we are not the only people opposing these activities.

In a lengthy letter to Council, Dr. Jill Kerby, General Manager of Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board, said: *The Board expresses both concern and alarm at the activities proposed...* The letter goes on to explain reasons for this concern.

Adelaide Hills Council has also proposed under the Local Government Community Land Legislation to classify Hender Reserve for 'Sport & Recreation' and Woorabinda for 'Community Use'. These classifications are inconsistent with zoning under the State Planning Act and could allow a range of totally inappropriate, noisy and damaging activities.

In the Friends opinion both of these areas should be classified Conservation, as are Stirling Park and Madurta Reserve. Many people have agreed with us, as Council has received over 90 letters asking that the areas be classified Conservation. It should be noted that only about a third of the letters were from our membership — the rest were submitted by the general public.

As a result of this opposition Council has set up a

Working Party to develop a Draft Management Strategy for Stirling Linear Park, using the assistance of a consultant. We have two members on this Working Party, which is currently working on the terms of reference for the consultant.

It has been a busy and productive year despite many threats to the future.

Over the year our membership has grown from 126 financial members to 138 financial members. Not surprisingly, whenever publicity is given to new threats to the Park our membership grows! None of the Year's achievements and activities would have been possible without a massive amount of work by our members and supporters.

To you all I say very many thanks, especially to:

- Our bushcare volunteers
- Our woody weed control volunteers
- Our seed collectors and seedling growers
- Our path upgraders
- Our Public Fund committee
- Our Management committee
- Our funding bodies
- Our Waterwatch team
- Our photo monitors

Statements of Receipts and Expenditure

1. Friends of Stirling Linear Park Inc.

Receipts

Subscriptions	315.00
Donations	15.00
Interest	5.36
Deficit	321.59

Expenditure

Weed Cntrol & Revegetation	74.50
Subscriptions	15.00
Secretarial Costs	438.35
Debits Tax	6.10
Park Infrastructure	123.00

Totals 656.95 656.95

Funds Held: Savings Account 1/7/2003	3942.60
Deficit 30/6/2004	(321.59)
Balance Savings Account 30/6/2004	3621.01

Certified correct position of Friends of Stirling Linear Park at 30/6/2004: John Allison, Treasurer, FoSLP
JA Thompson, Auditor; David Ragless, Chair

2. Friends of Stirling Linear Park Fund

Receipts

Donations	180.00
Interest	0.92

Expenditure

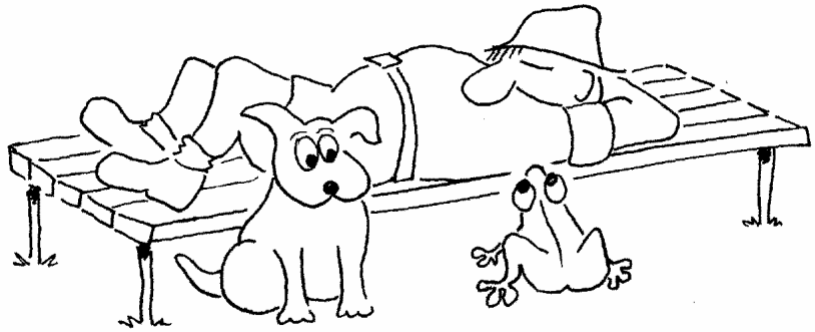
Debits Tax	0.00
Park Infrastructure	0.00
Surplus	180.92

Totals 180.92 180.92

Funds Held: Savings Account 1/7/2003	900.89
Surplus 30/6/2004	180.92
Savings Account 30/6/2004	1081.81

Certified correct position of Friends of Stirling Linear Park Fund at 30/6/2004: John Allison, Treasurer,
JA Thompson, Auditor; David Ragless, Chair

PARK NEWS



More Students Using The Park

The Onkaparinga Waterwatch Network continues to conduct educational programs on water management for primary school students at Woorabinda. Many busloads of children have attended the programs. Conservation Volunteers Australia also uses Woorabinda as its training headquarters because of the park's aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity.

As well as these programs a number of individual tertiary students have used the park over the last few months. They include:

- An environmental law student from Flinders University researching threats to the park's sustainability;
- A TAFE student from Adelaide preparing a revegetation plan for the park;
- A University of Adelaide student undertaking a bird survey; and,
- A TAFE student from Mt Barker preparing a vegetation survey.

These students are attracted to the park because of its surprisingly intact plant, bird, animal and aquatic life, so easily accessible for study.



Vandalism

Vandals recently attacked the overflow spillway on Woorabinda Lake, causing the lake level to drop. This was reported to Council, which very promptly repaired the damage.

Anyone with any information regarding the culprits should contact Adelaide Hills Council Natural Resource Officer, Glen Williams, on 8408 0547.



Monadenia Update

Friends volunteers have continued to monitor sites at which the South African weed orchid, Monadenia, has been discovered within the park in previous years. Plants found at the same sites this year were destroyed before shedding seeds, using techniques described in our last (Winter-Spring 2004) newsletter.

Sadly, two new sites were discovered this year. One was an infestation of several square metres and the other was a solitary plant. These plants were also destroyed before shedding seeds.

Anyone who discovers plants they suspect are Monadenia should contact a member of the Friends Committee or Adelaide Hills Council Natural Resource Officer, Glen Williams (8408 0547).



Dogs Attack Koala

Considerable commotion recently alerted people nearby that two dogs were attacking a koala near the entrance to Stirling Park. With some difficulty, the dogs' owners separated dogs and koala, which was intent on inflicting damage to the dogs and rescuers. Fortunately, the koala appeared to suffer only loss of fur, the dogs some deep scratches and the rescuer a lacerated arm.

The dog owners, who were mortified by the experience, commented that it was a good reason to keep dogs on lead in the park. They were surprised by the strength of the koala and its potential to rip dogs and people with its hind claws.



Volunteer Hours Worked

Activity	2002-2003	2003-2004
Bushcare and woody weed control	786	894
Revegetation , seed collection, tubestock production, planting and staking	286	398
Special projects: signage, grant applications, reporting on projects. Project meetings and correspondence. INRM Community Partnership development advisory work. Phone calls	173	603
FoSLP Committee work , Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor, Members attendance at workshops	220	251
Secretarial work: agendas, minutes, correspondence, website, filing, photocopying, phone calls	198	231
Newsletter writing, typing, editing, printing, distribution	196	210
Public Fund publicity, record keeping, correspondence, reporting and auditing	28	20
Displays and posters , production of captions, laminating, recording, filing and displaying	98	101
Environmental monitoring; Waterwatch; photomonitoring; bushcheck surveys, meetings and workshops	231	286
Woorabinda Environment Education Centre buildings and garden: repairs and maintenance	40	33
TOTALS	2256	2977

Recent Working Bees

Date	No. Volunteers	Area	Work done
17/10/04	9	Hender Reserve	Broom cut/swabbed, Acacia longifolia removed
21/11/04	9	Woorabinda	Watsonia cut./swabbed, seedheads removed
1/12/04	7	Stirling Park	Tubestock planting
19/12/04	10	Stirling Park	Cut/swabbed gorse, watsonia and broom

An Unexpected Parcel

A large padded bag arrived by post in mid-September 2004. It contained a tape cassette and a reminder that September is 'Frog Census' time. This is when volunteers all over the State take to their local wetlands after dark, tape recorders at the ready, to capture the voices of the resident frog population. (Whoever has the job of listening to all the recordings has a big job. In 2003, over 1000 recordings were made.)

The tape was duly taken down to Stirling Linear Park one fine night and the frogs at various locations were recorded. The tape went back to the Frog Census people for analysis.

The parcel also contained the preliminary results of the 2003 survey. Only one species, the Common Froglet, was recorded in the park, but numbers varied as follows:

Swale pond, Stirling Park	Lots: 50 +
Creek by walkway to Keroma Drive	Few: 2-9
Creek crossing, Stirling Park	Many: 10-50
Woorabinda Dam (pump shed end)	Many: 10-50

More information about frogs in SA can be found at www.epa.sa.gov.au/frogcensus/



AWARDS TO FOSLP MEMBERS

Two members have received awards for their outstanding work in the community.

Russell Seaman won an SA Planning Institute award for excellence in environmental planning for his work on the Coorong wetlands. Russell is an officer of the Department of Environment and Heritage. He also won a Minister's Award for an outstanding national or internationally significant program.

Lorri Ragless received a Civic Award from the Adelaide Hills Council on Australia Day in recognition of her many contributions. These include direction and co-ordination of the annual Stirling Nativity re-enactment, involvement with Stirling Community Theatre, fundraising for Community Aid Abroad, water monitoring for Waterwatch and much work for Stirling Linear Park.

WORKING BEES 2005

A Working Bee calendar has been prepared for 2005. A 'fridge magnet' calendar has been sent to all members on our monthly Working Bee reminder list. If you did not receive a calendar, and would like one, give Kath Bowman a call on 8370 9177 (after 7pm) or email her - kjbowman@internode.on.net
If you are receiving working bee reminders and would rather not, also let Kath know.



Conservation Volunteers Australia is offering Australian & International opportunities including: -

Galápagos Experience - 2005

DATES: Wednesday 6th to Wednesday 27th April 2005 (22 days)

Please Note: - Bookings close 23 February 2005
LOCATION: San Cristobal Biological Station and Reserve (Galápagos Islands)

ACTIVITIES:

The native forests on the island have been significantly reduced from their original size, given the agricultural activities on the island during past years. Many plants have been replaced by foreign species introduced to the island by humans.

Therefore, the station started a forest nursery in order to promote the recovery of the natural areas and native species.

The station is also working with local farmers in efforts to develop organic agricultural alternatives for fruit and vegetables, with a goal to sell the products on the island to the locals.

Volunteers will participate in the restoration of habitats and the organic agriculture component. Once a week you will have the opportunity to go along with personnel from the station on hikes and excursions to tourist locations that are ecologically important (a natural lake, beaches, native forests) for teaching visitors about the ecological issues within and the social dynamics of the Galápagos Islands. Volunteers will also have the opportunity to support

the research and monitoring of the diverse projects that are developed on the reserve.

For more information or an application form please contact Alice Egan at CVA Phone (08) 8212 0777 or email adelaide@conservationvolunteers.com.au

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) is working in locations around Australia and overseas to improve the natural environment that we all enjoy. 2005 overseas destinations include:

The Galapagos Islands; Costa Rica; South Africa; China; California, Alaska, Baltimore, Utah Nevada & Montana in the USA; Panama; Italy & France.

Australian locations include:

Kangaroo Island, Eyre Peninsula & the Flinders Ranges (SA); the Hunter Valley (NSW); Sydney Harbour National Park; Tasmania's forests & beaches; Uluru & Kakadu (NT); Queensland's rainforests; the Mornington Peninsula (Vic); the Swan & Canning Rivers (WA) and many more.

Or for those unable to travel away there are opportunities to volunteer locally to help the environment around Adelaide!

Conservation Volunteers Australia
GPO Box 2875, Adelaide SA 5001
Phone 08 8212 0777
Fax 08 8212 1066

Email adelaide@conservationvolunteers.com.au
Website www.conservationvolunteers.com.au

Friends of Stirling Linear Park Committee 2004-2005

John Allison	<i>Treasurer</i>	8339 1577
Shirley Benlow	<i>Displays</i>	8339 2218
Kathy Bowman	<i>Public Officer, Website</i>	8370 9177
	<i>Coordination, membership, Working bee notices</i>	
Merilyn Browne	<i>Newsletter, Waterwatch</i>	
Janet Bryan	<i>Minute Secretary</i>	8339 4639
Marilyn Forward		8339 3162
Phillip Hicks	<i>Photomonitoring</i>	8339 3156
Bob James	<i>Deputy Chair, Working Bee</i>	8339 1903
	<i>coordination</i>	
Alistair McHenry		8339 5114
David Ragless	<i>Chairperson, Grants officer</i>	8339 1038
Lorri Ragless	<i>Waterwatch</i>	8339 1038
Russell Seaman	<i>Management Plans</i>	8398 0626
Neil Strong		8339 4085

Affiliations

The Friends of Stirling Linear Park Inc. is a member of Friends of Parks Inc. We are also a registered Landcare Group and a member of both Greening Australia and Trees for Life.



Disclaimer: Contributors' views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the editor, th committee or the general membership of the Friends of Stirling Linear Park Inc.

Contributors to this issue include David Ragless, Jack Benlow and Merilyn Browne

Friends of Stirling Linear Park – Membership application/ renewal

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

Membership fee for both individuals and family:	
1 year.....	\$5.00
5 years.....	\$20.00

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

\$.....donation is included. (Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax-deductible. A separate receipt will be issued.

Name.....

Address.....

..... **Phone**.....

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