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Membership Fees

\$40 per Person

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Sunraysia Bushwalkers

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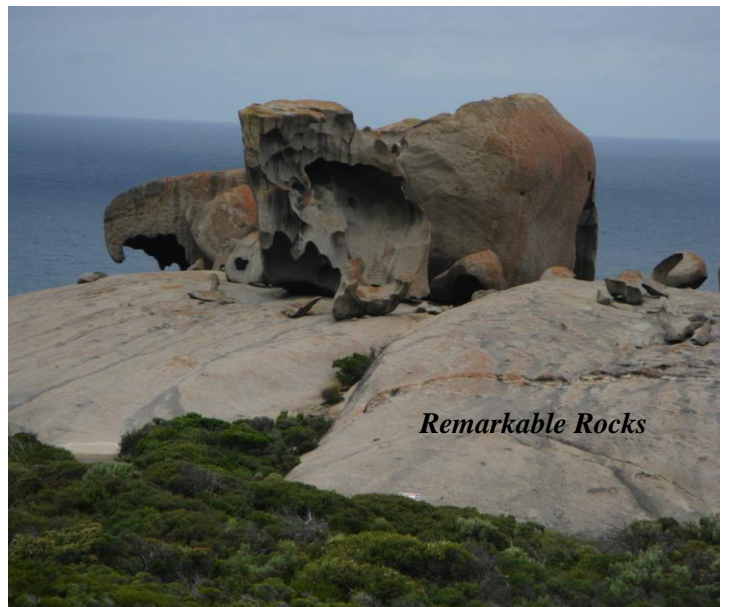
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**Bushwalking
Victoria**



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Remarkable Rocks



To view the complete calendar, please follow the link:

<http://www.sunbushwalk.net.au/calendarofactivities.html>

Beige Shall Not Weary Them

After a lapse of something like ten years I was off on a trip to Kangaroo Island (KI) with my old comrades from the Sunraysia Bushwalkers. We had agreed to meet at Cape Jervis and take the ferry together across to the island. Even though only I could make the trip, both Jennie and I set off from Victor Harbor in two cars so that Jennie could see Barb, Roger and Verna before the ferry left.

We sat in the ferry departure lounge waiting for them to arrive. Departure time drew near and eventually we realised that Barb had been there all the time. She summoned the rest who magically appeared out of the crowd wearing their inconspicuous camping garb in tasteful shades of beige. Jennie had only a few minutes to re-acquaint with old friends before we drove vehicles on board and sailed across dull choppy waters under grey skies to Penneshaw.

Penneshaw is on the extreme eastern end of the island. We had a fair drive to the narrow isthmus that separates the NE peninsula from the main bulk of the island. We then turned south on dirt roads. At every junction there were "Road Closed" signs. This is low lying country with many swamps and lakes that had risen over the roads but fortunately not on our track. We reached our planned camp site on the shores of D'Estrees Bay in Cape Gantheaume Conservation Park, in daylight but did little more than pitch camp and have supper.

I was pleased to go to Cape Gantheaume Conservation Park which I believed I had never visited before. Roger thought we had camped not far away on a previous Club trip. That was a night made remarkable by good views of the very bright Hale Bopp comet which dates the trip as 1997. There was little remarkable on this visit. This is a low lying coastline with a few residual signs of early farming that we failed to find. On the way out walking tracks were soggy and impassable but, and this is a big but, we called in at Clifford's Honey Farm where one can stock up with honey from KI's famed Ligurian bees, honey products, jams made from native fruits and buy old fashioned home-made honey ice cream. This glutton had two. We marked the visit with a formal group photo.



*In the rear:
Barb, Robert, Sandra &
Russell, Mark and Roger.
The two dwarves
masquerading as bees are
our leader, Verna
(appropriately the queen
bee) and Rita.*

Before long we were back on the main South Coast tourist road. This is a sealed road. That day it was littered with an amazing amount of road kill. The always observant Barb suggested that the rain seeps into KI's sandy soil without puddles so the wild life ventures on to the road to lap from the wet surface and is bowled over by the hurtling tourist traffic. We were heading for the National Parks headquarters at Rocky River at the western end of the island. On the way we called in at Seal Bay to view indolent sea lions lounging on the beach. They look like animated sausages with flippers but a reconstructed skeleton at the information centre shows how little the internal structure has evolved away from a four-legged land living mammal.

At Rocky River we mingled with tourist hordes and enjoyed the dissolute pleasures of espressos, fleetingly hot showers and a café lunch. Our Snake Lagoon campsite had pleasantly shaded individual bays carved out of the bush. There was a tap and a toilet and we had it to ourselves, possibly because it was seven kilometres from the main Rocky River caravan park over teeth jarring corrugated roads.

KI has few hills. Most of the island has been clothed with windblown sands in recent geological times, rather like icing on a cake. The result is frankly, featureless landscapes in the interior. The more interesting walks are to rugged coasts along the rare streamlines where the underlying rocks are exposed. A glance at the map of KI shows we had now travelled the length of the island. Flinders Chase National Park covers most of the western end of the island. Virtually all the Park was burned out in 2007. The vegetation is mallee. I suggest this is not because of low rainfall but because of the infertile, rapidly drying sands. Now, seven years after the fires and with good rains, the regrowth is prolific and dense, making the walks through the park interesting and at the time of our visit, full of late summer flowers.



Kangaroo Island is about 150 km long and hangs off the end of the Fleurieu Peninsula which in turn is part of the Mt Lofty Ranges.

We spent a couple of nights as sole occupiers at Snake Lagoon and enjoyed bush banquets each night. Before the trip Roger had instructed me, framed as a suggestion over the phone, to bring one supper that would feed the whole party. I was dubious about this but I must admit the unsubtle pressure on each of us to perform, led to excellent dinners lubricated with wine. Since we were all wrinkly to differing extents there was much reminiscing over trips of long ago.



By day we made the obligatory tourist trips to the Remarkable Rocks, Cape du Couedec lighthouse and the Admirals Arch where fur seals snooze on the rocks. In addition we had done most of the short bush walks so were ready to move on. The shortest route north to Cape Borda lay through the Park on Shackle Rd. I suspect the name is an abbreviation of “Shake rattle and roll” and we took the longer way round by sealed road. It was probably a wise decision because shortly after our arrival at Cape Borda lighthouse a dusty ute followed us into the car park lacking its rear number plate after shedding it on Shackle Rd. The Cape Borda lighthouse has an interesting history. For many years it was isolated by the thick bush and could only be supplied by sea and then only when seas were calm enough for the supply boat to come inshore to a small bay at Harveys Return.

Cape Borda Lighthouse. The cannon is fired at noon each day.

The campsite, again with well treed individual bays, is sited above Harveys Return and it is only a half hour’s steep scramble down to the beach where the most amazing white and black banded rocks outcrop in the cliff face. It is a geological monument but the absence of any loose banded stones nearby shows that these are quickly souvenired by visitors.

The zebra rock at Hervey’s Return. There is only a small patch in the cliff face where the stripes are so broad and well defined



One can walk the four km to the lighthouse through coastal scrub, passing the cemetery filled with lighthouse keepers, their family members and shipwrecked sailors from ships that had not been able to heed the warning light.

Roger at Harveys Return Bay on the platform that once mounted a crane for unloading stores from the supply ship

Once at the lighthouse we looked for the path to a remote vegetable garden tilled by the keepers' families. After milling about we found a small sign at ground level. It was a self-congratulatory notice erected by the Green Corps for resurrecting the path. Little appeared to have been done since the fires and the path became fainter the further we travelled. We guessed we had reached the original garden only because there was a depression in the land where the soil would be deeper and collect runoff from the surrounding limestone pavement. Apart from that there was only a length of rusty fence wire to show that at one time it had been cleared and carefully tended.



On the way to the lighthouse keepers' vegetable garden showing the vigorous regrowth following fire seven years ago



Back at the campsite Roger gave full rein to his nautical rigging skills and strung two large tarpaulins to protect us from the occasional showers that had been threatening all trip. I had to leave a day early so Russell brought forward presentation night. Under the imposing graduation shelter of Roger's tarpaulins, we each received a hand-made pen with our name and the occasion inscribed by Russell.

Some of Roger's elaborate rigging that kept the tarpaulins aligned and taut.

I was wakened on my last morning by what sounded like a road train passing with-in inches of my tent. It proved to be the resident Ranger, towing a corrugation flattening grid of old tyres behind his ute. After manfully holding back my tears I bid farewell to my companions and set off on my own for Penneshaw wondering if I should not have followed Roger's example and filled with petrol at a ruinous price at Vivonne Bay. I made it into Parndana half way across the island with a few litres sloshing in the tank and had an incident free trip back home to Victor Harbor. I was surprised by the ferry leaving a quarter of an hour early and wondered if I would have been left behind if I had arrived a little later.

Postscript: Jennie did get to spend time with the group as they called in at our house in Victor Harbor on the way home. By then I was away in the Adelaide Hills above the Barossa, picking a grape trial.

Report written by Mark

(Mark has generously donated about 20 maps to the Club)

A little extra of Kangaroo Island to enjoy!



This bracket fungus near the Lighthouse Keepers cemetery was dubbed “The Yard” fungus because it is made up of three feet



A water logged walking path



SUNRAYSIA BUSHWALKERS ANNUAL REPORT – 2014.

For yet another year, our Club has successfully accomplished a variety of activities in the outdoors. Although the membership is relatively small, we continue to offer opportunities for outings in most months.

On the June long weekend six members crossed the Major Mitchell Plateau in the Grampians as a two day walk. Then, in July fourteen people enjoyed a visit to Ned's Corner where we stayed and dined in the shearers' quarters. Although there had been a very dry winter, in August a day trip to Red Ochre Lake in the Hattah National Park was of considerable interest. In the same month we re-visited the Galpunga Wilderness in the Murray Sunset National Park with an overnight expedition.

A day walk in September to the Raak Plain locality kept us connected with the diverse landforms that exist in this region. In October, an evening walk to the bird hide at King's Billabong was well received, whilst at the same time another group visited Mutawinji.

Two members undertook an extended coastal trek in the Croajingalong National Park in east Gippsland in November. To mark the festive season, an evening walk from Psyche pumps was followed by an evening picnic meal at the nearby rotunda. The following weekend, a canoe journey was made along the Chalka Creek from Messengers to Boolungal crossing.

Although club members have hiked in Tasmania on numerous occasions, in January, six of us walked from the Walls of Jerusalem across the Never Never to the south of Lake St Clair over a five day period.

It is customary for the club to stage a progressive dinner in February, but the protracted heatwave prompted a switch to lunch at the Pizza Cafe. The change I believe was well received.

In early April eight of our members crossed to Kangaroo Island for five days of camping and walking.

The Club Executive has had discussions with the Mallee Catchment Management Authority with the objective of us conducting surveillance for the organisation in the Hattah National Park. The first such mission was made in April by eight persons checking a section of the Chalka Creek for problem weeds. There is an intention to periodically continue this service as conditions within the Park may now be increasingly influenced by water management programs.

When venturing into remote areas, members now use the club Spot Tracker that transmits live data of their locations to nominated recipients.

At the February meeting, we tested a structured approach to forward programming. It is clear that day walks within a reasonable distance of Mildura rate highly and this has influenced the forward plan for the coming year.

The Club appreciates the generosity of the Drysdale family who continue to provide a meeting venue. We thank Barbara for again compiling our vital monthly newsletter.

I place on record my appreciation of the significant time given by our Secretary Roger, and in particular the maintenance of our web site as an up to date and comprehensive window through which the world can see us.

I trust that the year ahead will show us even more new horizons.

Dick Johnstone.
President.



Paddling Chauka Creek

MAY CALENDAR

7th	AGM	Club Rooms	A chance to make a commitment to improve your Club.
?	Weed Collecting	Hattah	At short notice it is hoped that we can have sufficient members collect the weeds located in Hattah.
10th	Day walk & Canoeing	Hattah Walk & Canoe Trip	2 Activities with optional Participation Contact Roger 50257325/0488121648

Next Meeting
Wednesday 7th May at 8.00 pm
at Drysdale's
2164 Fifteenth Street,
Irymple