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Preview of the latest Footsteps Newsletter from the
Lavender Federation Walking Trail



Footsteps Newsletter

MAY, 2014

Dear Footsteps Followers,
We have a new Footsteps Newsletter for you.

Footsteps
Newsletter of the Lavender Federation Trail
South Australian Recreation Trails Incorporated

Volume 13 Issue 2 May 2014

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Fire Damage & Track Closure Update

Trail Manager George Adams has spent many days and travelled hundreds of kilometres back and forth from home in Adelaide checking the LFT in the Eden Valley and Rockleigh areas affected by the recent fires.

George reports:-

After the catastrophic reports of the fire damage to the area from the Sturt Highway to

Monarto, I decided to check what damage was done to the LFT.

In early March I surveyed the Trail from the Sturt Highway to Preaminna Mines by car, trail bike and on foot, and was delighted to see how well the trail survived overall. The Munchenberg property had been burned from Coppermine Road to the Gorge but with only minor damage to trail hardware. At the entrance to this property the fire had burned around the markers and stile.

Near Murray Road the property owner has installed new fencing over a 2 km section and from Keynes Hill Road south new marking is required.

The worst fire damage is in Keynes Gap which was devastated. Stiles survived but trail intersection signs were warped and will be replaced together with trail markers. There were lots of fences destroyed and Blaze Aid Volunteers had already started replacing fences. This area although badly burned can still be traversed safely with care.

Other sections of the Eden Valley fire area have been checked with only minor damage needing attention.

The Rockleigh/Tungkillo fire area has also been checked with most fire damage between Bondleigh and Critchley Road which will require replacement trail markers.

In summary, all sections of the trail in the fire affected areas can now be walked. From a potential damage bill of up to \$10,000 over 26 kilometres of trail, the current estimate to replace fire damaged infrastructure is \$2,100. Work will be commencing soon.

The SARTI Board greatly appreciates financial support from both Friends of the Heysen Trail and ARPA to enable the work to proceed.

It should be noted that although the Lavender Trail was relatively lucky to escape serious fire damage



Coppermine Road near Truro. Burnt trees & grass but undamaged stile.
A few metres nearby, the fire went either side of a stile.
nearby the fires burnt on either side of a stile.



Warped signs, undamaged stile
but the fence has been destroyed.



Trail marker on the Munchenberg
property near Truro Gorge.



Monarto Crown Lands and the Lavender Federation Trail

The SARTI Board has been negotiating with several State Government departments for around six months after it was discovered that several sections of State Government controlled land at the western end of Monarto were in the final stages of being sold. The concern to the Board was that the Lavender Federation Trail passed across a section of this land between Hartman and Highland Roads.

Several meetings took place between SARTI and personnel involved in the sale process. During these meetings it was discovered that the Lavender Federation Trail

had not been recorded on any State Government's maps or documents. Land at Monarto previously under the control of several State Government departments had been consolidated under one department, Crown Lands. Although personnel who previously managed areas where the LFT traversed were fully aware of the trail and possessed documentation and maps, the new land managers, Crown Lands were not aware of this.

As a result, a total of 232 Ha of land was declared surplus to State Government needs and was on the verge of being placed up for sale. Formal letters raising our concerns were sent to the Minister Gail Gago, Minister of Agriculture, Food & Fisheries and other involved departments. Concern of the sale process was also raised by several conservation bodies concerned at the potential destruction of native vegetation and effect on native birds and animals.

Also transferred to Crown Lands management was Rocky Gully and although this area was not for sale, Crown Lands were also not aware the Lavender Federation Trail traversed Rocky Gully or were they aware of a proposal to construct a loop trail north of the existing trail.

In February this year, good news with Minister Ian Hunter announced he *"has considered the Community's recommendations regarding the future management of the Monarto lands and has given his support to investigate the possibility of forming Conservation Parks over three areas"*

(These areas are along a section of the western end of Monarto, along the SE Freeway corridor and the Narrinyeri Hills and Rocky Gully. This will form wildlife corridors from the edge of Murray Bridge to the eastern edge of the Bremmer Valley).

There is still much work to be done however if everything goes well, the future of the Lavender Federation Trail is assured.

Negotiations are now underway with Crown Lands in Berri who manage the Monarto area to ensure all information is recorded so there is no possibility of problems in the future. We have also asked Crown Lands if they could also obtain all details of the proposed Rocky Gully Loop Trail including data collected by a consultant hired by the previous land manager. A plan to use Crown Land to take around 1.5 kilometers of trail off of Hartman Road is also being reinvestigated. Initial talks took place a number of years ago but were not continued so we could give priority to extending the LFT towards Tungkillo.

Sturt Highway to Eudunda Section Opening

Put Sunday September 28th into your diary.

This will be the official opening of the Sturt Highway to Eudunda section of the Lavender Federation Trail and will also mark the 15th Anniversary of the first walk in

September 1999 when around 150 walked from Murray Bridge to Monarto (see Volume 12 Issue 4 of Footsteps).

We can confirm that *Dan van Holst Pellekaan*, MP local Member for Stuart will officially open this section on the day.

Plans for the opening include the release of Map 4 Truro to Eudunda, organized walks, stalls with a walking and local focus as well as many other activities. A large local community input is anticipated. We hope you will come and celebrate this new milestone.

Some work still remains to be done on this section of trail but all those involved in this project have recommenced work now the hot weather has passed. I know walkers will be pleasantly surprised at the fantastic country they will have access to when the next section is opened and much of this is due to the fantastic cooperation and involvement of the local community. Many areas of the trail are on private land and not only have property owners allowed access for walkers but have assisted in building the trail across their property by trail marking and carting materials. More details in "Footsteps" and on the web site as the opening get closer.



Some of the views walkers will experience between the Sturt Highway & Eudunda. Waterfalls, gorges, permanent waterholes, panoramas, historical markers, ruined buildings

Another Trail Upgrade Section Completed in Murray Bridge

Murray Bridge Council has completed another section of its upgrade program of the Lavender Federation Trail near Murray Bridge. The latest upgrade is from the Mannum Road wetlands to Cypress Terrace.



Council's news release states *"The Lavender Federation Trail links the Murray River, historic sites, parks and river access points via a connection of trails, esplanades and board walks."*

Three more sections are to be upgraded this financial year.

Wooden markers have been installed as part of a Murray Bridge Council grant to SARTI.

Bits and Pieces

Congratulations Reg Munchenberg OAM.

The SARTI Board congratulates Reg Munchenberg, a recipient of the "Order of Australia" in this year's Australia Day awards. Reg served on the SARTI Board for several years during the time the trail was being planned and constructed in the Truro area. His intimate knowledge of the Truro district, its history and his contacts with local residents contributed greatly to the LFT. A legacy of his input is the use of 5 kilometers of trail over his son Kinsley's property from Coppermine Road to the Sturt Highway. You can read more on the Truro website at

<http://truro.sa.au/news/reg-munchenberg-of-truro-is-awarded-oam>

Interesting Tracker Stats.

A "Tracker" counter installed at the western end of Rocky Gully has continued to indicate increased use of the Lavender Federation Trail in this area. The first 3 months of 2014 showed a 17% increase over the same period last year.

Advertising on Website.

In our last Footsteps for 2013 we made this offer to businesses.

"Businesses such as accommodation providers near the Lavender Federation Trail, walking clubs or businesses associated with walking are now able to advertise on our web site with details and photos and provide a web site link to their web site. The first example of these adverts, a "Walking Tour of the UK" in 2014 has recently been added.

This service is free to SARTI corporate members as a membership bonus offer for this financial year.

The "Walking tour of the UK" tour has sold out and another is planned for 2015. The

2014 advert was viewed by 3403 viewers with 69 obtaining more details.

The offer to place a free advert on the LFT website is still open. Already we have the new "Walking tour of the UK 2015" advert in place and welcome the "Rabbiters Hut" accommodation as our latest advertiser. The Rabbiters Hut is located 16 kilometers East of Mount Torrens on the Pebbly Range Road.

Become a SARTI corporate member if not already a member; leave a message on the web site indicating your interest and we can organize your advert. The offer also applies to SARTI donors who have made financial contributions to SARTI.

Popularity in the LFT web site www.lavenderfederationtrail.org.au continues to increase every month. The first quarter of 2014 indicated a 60% increase in site visits and 169% increased hits compared to the same period last year.

Feasibility study for new Murray River Trail.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge has secured funding for a feasibility study for a walking/cycling trail from Morgan to Salt Creek, a trail of approximately 400 km following the Murray River as close as possible. It is planned to link twelve towns along the way, *"combining on and off road options and linking to major attractions, existing trails and other experiences along the way."*

It is anticipated to be built in stages *"over a 10-25 year period."* The project is a partnership between Mid-Murray, RCMB and Coorong Councils.

"The project will identify key loop trails-both existing and new - which can build on the attraction of this as a recreational pathway and linking key destinations across the region (e.g. loop trail to Monarto Zoo,.....Lavender Federation Trail ...)"

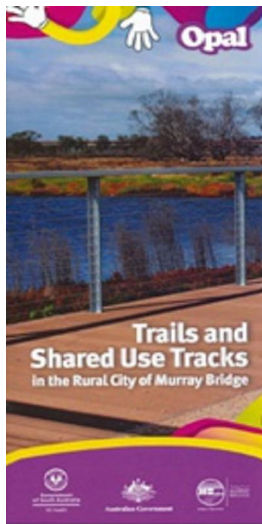
SARTI has been asked to be a part of the stakeholder group and has accepted.



Murray Bridge U3A walking group experience the Ngarrindgeri Hills walking trails.

New Trail Brochure

A brochure is now available showing walking trails in the Murray Bridge area.



Of particular interest is the Ngarrindgeri Hills Walking Trails shown in the brochure.

These connect the Lavender Federation Trail in Rocky Gully with a series of 5 loop trails from 2.7 to 7.6 kilometers in length that intersect each other. The trails connect Rocky Gully to the Princess Highway and into Murray Bridge. The trails are not marked, give views to the river and beyond and can be used as a loop trail to and from Murray Bridge.

Brochures are available from the Murray Bridge Information Centre. (All Information Centre details are listed on our web site.)

Because of space constraints in this issue, Part 2 of "Back in Time", the history of the Lavender Federation Trail has been deferred until a future edition.

Suggested Walk - Through Gum Gully at Rockleigh.



This is a very attractive section of trail and is all off road along an unmade road reserve. It will require a car shuffle but the scenery is great, a lot of native wild life and few signs of habitation. Access is from Rams Road which leads off of Rockleigh Road and a suggested finish point at Range Road. For a longer walk, finish at Pym's Road or climb to Mt Beevor summit with views on a clear day to

the Coorong, Southern Ocean, Mt Lofty and Mt Barker, Barossa Range and the Murray River then continue to Caleb Virgo Road.

Alternate start points are at Bondleigh Road or Critchley Road where you can enjoy the view from a seat installed by a local land owner and add your name to the visitor book provided in a waterproof box.

Full details of this section of trail can be found in "Map 1-Murray Bridge to Mount Beevor." The LFT maps give information on distances, altitude, track access points, sections subject to inundation after heavy rain, car parking spots and historical information.

Locations of all map outlets can be obtained from the web site www.lavenderfederationtrail.org.au.

Walking SA new website.

Walking SA has launched a new web site, www.walkingsa.org.au. The site enables you to find a place to walk, hike or bushwalk, whether it be a 1 hour walk near home with your dog, a half day hike in a park, or a longer trail in one of South

Australia's national parks and to use the search tools to narrow down the walks to the type of walks you like. The site also enables you to find walking guides: books, magazines, smartphone apps, websites and maps that feature walks around South Australia, find walking clubs suitable for the type of walking that suits you as well as find walking events. News on what you are interested in can be sent to you with regular updates.

After Eudunda, where to next?

SARTI Trail Planning Manager Ian Pool has been looking at several potential routes to take the LFT onwards towards Clare including the use of the disused rail corridor from Eudunda to Hampton as well as several options for spur trails and links to the Heysen Trail. Early stages of investigation at present but when firmer plans are in place, funding will need to be obtained so the next stage of trail can be built.

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and follow the links. You can also download previous newsletters here too.

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Having trouble reading our PDFs, check out this help from Web South our hosting service.

Sincerely,

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



Click to check out the 'Rabbiters Hut' Accommodation located 16 km East of Mount Torrens on the Pebbly Range Road.



Click to check out Greg's fantastic tour
'A Walking Tour of England 2015'

List your Tourism Business or Accommodation on our Website

Do you own or run accommodation near the trail?

Why not visit our web page listing **accommodation** for ideas?
Contact us to add your listing.

Currently an advert spot is free for 'Corporate Members', so hurry, join up and add your listing.
Please note that listings are restricted to being relevant to the walking trail, and work on a random rotational basis.

Official Opening Truro to Eudunda Section

On the 26th September 2014 - Come and join SARTI and the local community of Eudunda for the official opening of this part of the Lavender Federation Walking Trail.

We can confirm that *Dan van Holst Pellekaan*, MP local Member for Stuart will officially open this section on the day.

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