

From the President's Tent...

July is a wonderful month for walking on the Larapinta Trail and following the recent soaking rains, we should be seeing some beautiful new wildflowers and native grasses emerging.

Congratulations are in order for Ros Beadle who has won first prize in our raffle, she receives a \$500 voucher to be used towards a Life's an Adventure tour.

There is still time to join committee member Sue on her progressive End to End trek of the Larapinta - for more information check out our facebook page or email us (info@friendsofthelarapintatrail.org.au).

Hot off the press is the brand new 4th edition of the NT Parks Larapinta Trail Map Pack. The updated packs show new trail alignments and relocated campsites along with a host of other great information - an essential item for any Larapinta Trail walker. They are available to purchase from the Friends of the Larapinta Trail, our stall in the Todd Mall markets (the last Sunday of every month), PWCNT, Tourism Central Australia or Lone Dingo for \$38.

Our next Friends walk is scheduled for Sunday 17th of July and will be on section 4 going to Reveal Saddle and return. Departs at 9am from Standley Chasm, please RSVP via email.

Happy trekking!

Richard Mayne, President FOLT

Section 4 - photo by Cheryl Baker



Upcoming Events:

- Sat 9th July:** Section 7, Ellery Creek to Serpentine Gorge.
- Sun 10th July:** Working Bee at Mulga Camp 9am til 1pm, Section 2
- Sun 17th July:** Reveal Saddle, Section 4. Meet just before the Standley Chasm carpark at 9am. 12km return.
- Sun 24th July:** Section 8 of the Progressive Walk Serpentine Gorge to Serpentine Chalet Dam.
- Sun 31st July:** Todd Mall Markets. 9am til 1pm.
- 6th & 7th August:** Section 9, Serpentine Chalet Dam to Ormiston Gorge.
- Sun 14th August:** Arrernte Walk, 8km return, 9am til lunch. Ochre Pits to Inarlanga Pass and back.

More information and a copy of our full events calendar is available on the website.



TRAIL MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP



Beware of dips and humps on Section 10! Though our work was so good you may not even realise they are there! Some dormant muscles got a bit of a workout...

As a bonus, the Friends also learned about the ancient art of constructing a stone arch. Keep your eyes open on and off the trail, arches could pop up anywhere!!

Snapper and crew are currently working on Brinkley Bluff. One of their tools is a Clinometer, to which we were introduced as well. A Clinometer measures the slope of the land, and the professionals use it for finding the optimum balance of maximum gradient, ie shortest route, but minimal erosion.



On Sunday 29th May, nine Friends had the privilege of being introduced to the art of track maintenance by Snapper and Beth from Tasmania. Snapper and crew are here for 6 weeks, doing full-time track building/track diversion and erosion control, and were nice enough to share some of their skills with FOLT.

The topic of the day was 'Grade-Dips', a very practical way to guide the water away from the track to prevent erosion. Between us we constructed 50 Grade-Dips under the watchful eyes of our supervisors.



The FOLT walkers bumped into Snapper and his crew on their last walk (May 21-22) on Section 4 of the Trail, and were impressed to find the crew creating a zig zag into the trail (Rocky Cleft area). This small track re-alignment lessens the trail gradient and is sure to be welcomed by walkers with fully loaded packs.

It was a great day, topped off by a slice of Cheryl's very fresh and delicious Hummingbird cake!

Thank you to:

Snapper and Beth for sharing your expertise.

Nick (Ormiston Kiosk) for getting us started with a delicious hot coffee.

Richard for luxury transport in the new Trek Larapinta bus.

And finally, Thank you to those willing workers for exercising their muscles for the day: Alex, Simon, Nannette, Cheryl, Ormondo, Anthony, Nick, Rosalie, Peter & Chris.



PROGRESSIVE WALK: SECTION 4

Written by Andrea Celofiga (click on the link below or check out our website for the full article. Visit our Facebook page for more fantastic photos).

8 Walkers gathered at Standley Chasm on Saturday 21st May, to don heavy packs and set out to conquer the seemingly notorious haul up Brinkley Bluff. Having no access to additional water between trailheads on this section, and intending to camp on the top of Brinkley's means extra water has to be carried and additional weight for all overnight campers to endure..... As the track traverses higher and higher, the loose slate path becomes harder and every step must be made with caution. Its not just the ascent or the pack weight on this section, but the trail itself has a technical degree that challenges your mind and body, so the summit is a place of celebration and exhilaration. We were treated to a full moon rising just before the sunset in the west, and the cameras were out in force playing paparazzi to Mother Nature in every direction..... Then came a toe squishing, knee crunching technical descent of some 3 kilometres, made only possible by our now much lighter packs and a snail like pace..... Section 4 is very hard but with the right gear and preparation, oh so worth it. If you own a set of poles, use them on this section..... **CLICK HERE**

Visit our website for the next Progressive Walk dates... only 5 Sections to go!



SPONSOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

This year we welcome aboard Glen Helen Homestead Lodge as a Corporate Sponsor of Friends of the Larapinta Trail. Most Alice Springs locals would have enjoyed the hospitality of Glen Helen on a visit to the West Macs but did you know they also offer transport and food drop services?

Glen Helen Homestead Lodge is a great spot to base yourself before or after walks, or to enjoy a cold beer, ice-cream or a Glen Helen Burger.

To find out more about camping, accommodation, functions, meals, tours from Glen Helen visit their website www.glenhelen.com.au or give them a call on (08) 8956 7489.



Are you thinking of participating in the second ever 'Run Larapinta' stage race on the 12th to 15th of August 2016?

Rapid Ascent are offering 15% off entry fees for all Friends of the Larapinta Trail.

Visit their website for more information and to register online. Simply enter **runlaraclub15** at the checkout which will apply the 15% discount.



Find us on Facebook

'Like' our page for reminders about upcoming events and other info related to the Larapinta Trail.



PART 4. (VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR PARTS 1 – 3 IN PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS)

EARLY DAYS OF THE LARAPINTA TRAIL

By Alan Ginns, former Planner with the Conservation Commission NT

Acquisition of parts of pastoral leases for amalgamation of the West Macs National Park was proceeding, so having reached Standley Chasm it was then decided to jump west. This was intended to give the Lara Trail some “presence” further out in the West Macs, and again to help build the project’s profile by adding some spectacular sections that were easily accessible from Namatjira Drive (also we’d run out of CCNT land heading any further west of Stanley Chasm at that time!). So we started route refinement in the Serpentine Gorge/Chalet and Ochre Pits areas, on sections 8 and 9. Dal Hartley, as Chief District Ranger West Macs, was enthusiastic about those stages starting out in his part of the world. By now the Lara Trail’s route refinement and flagging, track treatment specification, construction, and interpretation happened like a well-oiled machine!

Work on the Trail had helped refine the CCNT’s park development process, and I think it was among the first times that we had the classic “multi-disciplinary” team approach happening. Work on these later sections went something like this. First the “corridor” for a section (guided by the indicative route and target track standard/class as given in the original West Macs Strategy) was refined using topographic maps, aerial photos, and usually several helicopter runs. On a couple of occasions, in particularly tricky areas, we marked a possible route for later ground reconnaissance by using flour bombs thrown from the helicopter. I usually undertook this route refinement, or “proving up”, stage but as the Trail project progressed it was increasingly the Chief District Ranger, and sometimes others, who were involved at this key planning step.

With this refined corridor in our heads, and sometimes even marked on maps or aerial photographs, the entire corridor or at least the more difficult/problematic/unknown sections of it,

was walked for viability and ground-truthing. Once we were comfortable we had a workable corridor, it was then sacred sites clearance time with the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority (ASSPA). We’d typically spoken to them earlier for one or more stages to make sure there were no critical “no go” areas. We asked the ASSPA for sacred sites “clearance” for a corridor about 50-100 metres wide, to allow for some meandering at the next step in the process.

Then it was detailed track flagging time, when we went into the field en-masse and intensively flagged the Trail’s route on-site every 10 metres or so. This was a team job – usually involving Peter Hay (one of the CCNT’s most attuned landscape architects ever to work in Central Australia) to address route aesthetics, Russell Grant (CCNT Soil Conservation) to keep us out of soil erosion trouble spots and help realise a stable sustainable alignment, the Chief District Ranger or a couple of Rangers to cover manageability and safety (because it was their “patch” and ultimately their problem), Phil Asmussen to overview the practical/construction side of things and keep the “designer arty types” in check, Helge Pedersen (CCNT Environment Officer) to give an environmental protection perspective (and approvals on-the-run), and myself. Peter King, or the interpretive contractors, also sometimes came along to select interesting features and themes to link up along the route, and start preparing the track notes for the brochures.

Such numbers often led to “interesting” times, with people in the various disciplines going off on their own routes, and myself or Peter Hay playing shuttle diplomacy and trying pull everyone back to a single consensus alignment. But somehow it all worked, and sometimes even worked well.

Trail Tip #9

Section 5 - photo by Kylie Cowan

Drinking Staminade in the summer is a great way to replenish lost salts and electrolytes, but did you know it also makes for a great winter warmer? Mix it with warm water to give your body a much needed boost.



We are seeking DONATION BOXES that can be used at the markets and other points on the Trail.
Can you make / source / assist so that we can maximise donation opportunities?

Reveal Saddle Walk

WHEN: Sunday 17th July

WHERE: Section 4, Standley Chasm

TIME: 9am - approx. 2.30pm

Join us for a 12km return walk from the start of Section 4, west up to Reveal Saddle and back. You will need a good level of fitness and appropriate footwear to do this walk.

Meet just before the Standley Chasm carpark ready for a 9am departure. Carpooling welcome.

Ray from Standley Chasm has kindly offered to provide afternoon tea at the kiosk for Friends of the Larapinta Trail after the walk.

Email info@friendsofthelarapintatrail.org.au to RSVP or phone Richard on 0419 866 743.

Arrernte Walk

WHEN: Sunday 14th August

WHERE: Ochre Pits to Inarlanga Pass

TIME: 9am - lunchtime

Meet at the Ochre Pits carpark at 9am for a leisurely walk into Inarlanga Pass for morning tea and an explore.

This walk is 8km return and is relatively flat and easy, but with some rewarding scenery. Wear appropriate footwear and bring some snacks.

A great walk for beginners and experienced walkers alike.

Email info@friendsofthelarapintatrail.org.au to RSVP.





8 little ducks went out one day, over the hills and far away, Mother Duck called 'quack, quack, quack', but only 6 little ducks came back'

This was the story of Section 6 for the Progressive walk. What was touted as the most boring section became our most eventful hike yet. 8 starters on Saturday morning left behind breaking news of Brexit and a week of post hail storm clean up around Alice Springs, to pick up the trail at Hugh Gorge.



Section 6 is long, but seems to be talked about as nothing special. The Rangers had asked if we would do some track maintenance between Hugh Gorge and Rocky Gully camp site, which we had agreed to. Armed with pruning tools, a drill, bits, new track marker plates and stickers, we set off in earnest for what was supposed to be an easy 6 hour 15.9km commute to Rocky Gully.

The start was innocuous enough, with little of the trail needing pruning and the markers seemed in good repair. The track was easy going and it was nice to be able to walk a little more carefree. Admiring the views didn't require stopping to look and we were making good time. Morning tea was taken at the beautiful Ghost Gum Flat beneath the massive Corkwoods and the day was running to schedule.



Shortly after leaving Ghost Gum Flat, much to everyone's delight, we finally found a track marker that needed replacement – the first of quite a few. It was not long after, that Mark stumbled and his knee let go....

To read the full account of what the group encounters between the start and finish of Section 6, [click here](#) or visit the [Progressive Walk page](#) on our website!

..... We made it, and on time. A little damp, very relieved and suddenly incredibly exhausted. The physical and mental stresses of the day before kicked in. The team effort involved every one of us and there were smiles all round. Section 6 for us, highlighted the need for hikers to be able to help themselves and others if required, both physically and mentally.



Know your equipment, know your capabilities and never underestimate the Larapinta Trail for what it can or will throw at you!

Congratulations to the 2016 Raffle Winners!

1st PRIZE: Ros Beadle - \$500/\$250 Life's an Adventure voucher

2nd PRIZE: Hilary Snaize - \$150 Lone Dingo voucher

3rd PRIZE: Sally Bryen - \$100 Milner Meat voucher

4th PRIZE: Jimmy - \$50 Tempo voucher

Thank you to everyone who bought a ticket!

Parks and Wildlife Commission NT update:

Hi everyone,

We are experiencing big numbers on the trail at the moment, and the image of the food storage shed at Ellery Creek is testimony to that!

The Commission is committed to ensuring that the trail is managed sustainably well into the future and that it maintains its core values of a long distance, remote walk in the heart of Central Australia.

If you would like to provide comment to the Parks and Wildlife Commission on the management of the trail you can contact us via email at Larapinta.trail@nt.gov.au

Phil Cowan - Senior District Ranger, West.



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Four days, four stages. A unique & spectacular trail running experience

The Malbunka: 20km - 45km stages

The Namatjira: 11km - 30km stages

Runners and/or volunteers welcome

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SECTION 5 - Birthday Waterhole to Hugh Gorge, 4th & 5th June. **"This section is special, don't rush it."**
 To read Andrea's full account of the walk visit www.friendsofthelapintatrail.org.au/progressive-walk-2016



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