

Friends of Glenthorne National Park Inc

Annual General Meeting 2024

Wednesday 21st August 2024 – 7.00 pm

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 20 Ragamuffin Drive, Hallett Cove

MINUTES

Attendees: As per the AGM sign in sheet. 27 attendees.

Catherine Beer

Neville Bonney

Karen Bostock

Alan Burns

Carolyn Burns

Judy Clarke

Jeff Dougherty

Mitchell Eglinton

Jean Hancox

Chris Hann

Christopher Ide

Hanne Ide

Bob Kirby

Laima Kosiol

Elisabeth Maddison

Graham Maddison

Gill Marshman

Carol Mawby

Sue Milnes

Peter Milnes

Karen Peake

David Roberts

Isaac Schroeder

Peter Smytherman

Garry Veroude

David Vinall

Margaret Wheadon

Apologies: Martin Schumacher (President) (overseas), Jean Haselgrove (Queensland).

Welcome: Due to Martin Schumacher's absence, Alan welcomed those in attendance including the speaker, Neville Bonney. Alan opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country as follows.

We acknowledge that Glenthorne is a part of the traditional lands and waters of the Kurna people and we respect their connection to the Glenthorne National Park – Ityamaitpinna Yarta and we aspire to work alongside them in taking care of this land and its community.

Previous Minutes: Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 27th September 2023 were tabled but not accepted due to an oversight.

Guest Speaker:

Neville Bruce Bonney (South Australian Pioneering native plant expert, ethnobotanist and published author – over 20 texts on Australian native plants):



Neville acknowledged the importance of the Glenthorne National Park – Ityamaitpinna Yarta, saying that the new national park retains a small piece of open space and native revegetation for future generations.

Neville's talk tonight will reflect on his 60-year journey with native plants.

Born in the South East in 1939 in Mt Gambier, as a 5-year-old he spent time with his grand parents on his mother's side and went on bush walks, collecting butterflies and pinning them under glass. This started Neville's fascination of the bush.

His parents were farmers, working people with 3 children. After WWII local men and women worked in a nearby factory. Neville got a job after his school years, working in a mill, which he did not enjoy. Neville married and lived on a 6-acre property and while on the bus to work, he looked at the plants he passed and learnt their names. The plants Neville first planted died due to the wind and the thin South East soil. Plants such as Japanese Maple did not survive. Neville noticed that the local gums did much better. At this time a forestry worker from NSW visited and was looking for native seed, so Neville started collecting native seed and growing native plants. They germinated well, and soon Neville had too many native plants so many were given away.

The son of a farmer, Neville could see a future in growing native plants. Soon he was earning more money than his factory wages. As he was promoted in the mill, Neville would pull weeds in his spare time to relieve his work-related stress. In 1958 the first tissue paper had been developed but Neville loved working with plants and by 1972 he was a father of three children and a professional seed collector. There were no plastic pots in those days, just jam tins with holes in the bottom and soon Neville was growing plants in match-ply, rolled and secured with a rubber band with no bottoms.

The business was growing. Local nursery catalogues took plants from anywhere. Many were not local and native plants were not valued. It was the era of scrub clearing. Two to three nurseries stocked flowering gums, Geraldton Wax shrubs and Brown Boronia which was suited to acidic soil. Neville opened his nursery on Saturday mornings and collected seed from the bush the rest of the week. Neville helped farmers with shelter belts and people from Adelaide visited and bought plants.

Years later Neville taught in the local TAFE college, writing a book and holding classes of 15 people once a week. Those attending loved the classes. But there were mistakes made in the early years. Neville collected 3 to 4 pounds of Bloodwood seed and sent it to a buyer in WA but was not paid. Some species seemed to produce seeds of different colours, but the flowers were the same and buyers did not pay if the seed was not what they wanted. The science of species identification was in its early years.

Neville did nursery work for 15 years. He knew the plants of the South East but was getting stale growing the plants of the SE he knew well. Bob Hawke was elected in 1983 and under Senator Richardson in 1990, the Greening Australia Project was announced to plant more trees to remedy the salt affected lands in many places and Neville secured a job in Adelaide under this project.

Farmers wanted seed collected and when it was drilled into the ground, they wanted results. Seed was direct sown in August and September across SA from Kangaroo Island to the Lower South East to the Adelaide Hills and results were good. Neville soon learnt to sow in autumn. Seed banks were set up in Kangaroo Island, the Fleurieu Hills, Coober Pedy, the Riverland, and Yorke Peninsula. Eight seed banks were set up and people were employed.

Demonstration sites were set up on properties and Neville worked under this project for 15 years and learnt a lot, including the plants and conditions of the Eyre Peninsula. Neville had to do his homework to have success. He studied when to sow, the different soil types and what was needed for plants to grow as well as rainfall and topography. Up to 30 to 40 acres were sown in a day. Species which were hard to grow or where seed was scarce were grown in tubes and later planted.

Germination was often variable with some species slow to grow. Any that were not growing in good numbers after the initial sow were re-sown the following year. Good preparation was essential. Weed control including spraying and scalping the soil were important approaches. Removal of 5cm of soil was often enough to reduce the weed seed load in the soil.

Neville planted sheoaks on Kangaroo Island for the Glossy Black Cockatoos 25 years ago. He collected seed, drilled and sowed the seed and 9 months later these plants completely failed and funds were lost. Neville realised that there were 35,000 kangaroos on KI and that they enjoyed eating sheoak seedlings. There was one more chance to succeed. The machine was checked and proven operational and the seed was viable so a *Acacia paradoxa* plants were planted next to each sheoak and now a forest grows. *Allocasuarinas* allelopathically release chemicals to prevent other plants growing near them. *A. paradoxa* is a short-lived plant in forests and in the longer term, they dropped out of the system and the sheoaks grew well.

In Venus Bay plots of 50 acres were sown next to adjoining scrub to create larger native blokes.

Where Kangaroo Island highways were being altered, seed was collected before the trees were cut. 5 inches of sandy soil was removed and later replaced once the roadworks were completed and the site direct seeded with the seed previously collected. The result was almost perfect with a native forest resulting.

Neville's work in direct seeding was widespread, from Tasmania to Victoria, indigenous areas to the mining area of Coober Pedy. Indigenous areas were direct seeded in the north in the wet years. Greening Australia were good to Neville from 1990. Neville retired early and grew wildflowers – banksias and proteas – for export. He visited Singapore with Austrade and took boxes of flowers to test the market and later his neighbour invested in 100 acres of flowers in the South East. Demand in Asia for flowers was around 2 tonne per week. Farmers were now growing good quality flowers and were supplying petrol stations.

Neville's working life with native plants has been long and varied. Neville spoke of growing Eucalypt foliage near Mannum at Palmer with 100 acres in production producing 2 to 4 semi-trailer loads each week, year-round. Production of native wildflowers cannot keep up with demand. In South West WA cut flowers removes the supply of

seed. Some trees need to be left to ensure natural regeneration of species. Neville stated that there was more money in seed compared to flowers.

Neville has even worked in the Mongolia deserts where the wind blows sand towards Beijing. Neville was paid to visit Mongolia, going there three times. The ground was like concrete so direct seeding would not work. Pine seedlings were planted by horticultural students, starting work at 7.00am and working hard. A shelter belt called the Green Wall of China was 400km x 15km and planted in the Gobi Desert.

Neville has also worked to promote bush foods, working in many remote areas with indigenous people. He described the indigenous people as good people, willing to share knowledge. 30 – 40 years ago bush foods were unknown. Neville enjoyed working with indigenous people to promote bush foods, saying that the respect went both ways.

Recently, in 2021, Neville self-published a large book called “From one small seed, a forest is born”. It is a comprehensive guide to Australian plants covering more than 700 species from 63 families and 240 genera. Neville thanked his partner of 30 years, Chris Debell.

During a question & answer session, discussion moved to *A. paradoxa* which Neville said was useful under trees, where it makes good habitat for wrens. He referenced his previous success on KI with growing sheoaks (*Allocasuarinas*). It was said that the rangers at Glenthorne did not want any more *A. paradoxa* planted despite a few kangaroos there. Neville said that it was a useful plant in small areas which could be removed later if necessary. It lasts 15 to 20 years. *Hakea* is a better plant to grow for bird food and habitat.

Neville said that the future of wattle seed was bright with the Federal Government and overseas countries such as Ethiopia and Sudan interested given that it is a healthy food. It can be mixed with wheat and barley.

Muntries were also discussed. A kilogram is worth between \$40.00 to \$50.00 and it is grown at Normanville, the SE, KI, and Bordertown. In Australia the cost needs to be reduced to about \$4.00 a kilogram, according to Neville. Quandongs are the same.

President's Report:

Alan delivered Martin's President's Report, covering the following topics.

- Volunteers and Bushcare Day success.
- Farewell to Senior Ranger, Angus Droogan-Turniski and Ecologist Sam Chesson. We welcomed Senior Ranger Genki Kondo who is assisting with the early planning for the native plant nursery.
- The Glenthorne Community Grassland (Max McQuillan – PhD student) had a second year of direct seeding by Seeding Natives before the autumn rains.
- The relationship with the Riding for Disabled (SA) branch and the work with the RDA and DIT to develop the nursery.
- Grants and funding - \$5,000 Conservation Dividend from the City of Marion is being planned to fit well into the Friends' Work Plan. The \$5.5K Butterfly habitat project has been completed with 4 areas of *Gahnia* planted as well as 200 *Cullen australasicum* plants added to many of the existing 49 pods. Generous donations have also been received.
- Several school groups have been involved in activities in the national park – Annesley College, Garden College, and local scout groups.
- History Group – still in the development phase.
- The second edition of the book “Glenthorne Its History and Politics” was released and launched in July 2024.

Alan added a few items of interest.

- Promotion of the Friends and its work is to be promoted next year.
- Thanks to the core volunteers.

- Thanks to Judy for her work with the Open Garden project which raised significant funds, Chris who has continued to work in the north west paddock and is seeing good progress after several years of hard work and long, hot summers and the Wednesday group who continue to do great work.
- The general meeting with Prof. Patrick James who spoke about local Geology and Geotourism in a meeting held on 5th June 2024.
- Thanks to our outgoing Treasurer, Karen Peake, who helped in a big way to organise the July 2024 book launch which occurred on a very cold, windy, and wet day.
- New birds spotted this year include the White-fronted Chat, Red-rumped Parrots, Singing Honeyeaters and White-naped Honeyeaters.
- The Majors Road Interchange has progressed during 2024, affecting the access to Majors Road and access to the park.
- Thanks also to Laima Kosiol for her committee minute taking.

Treasurer's Report:

Karen Peake presented the following Income and Expenses Report for the 2023/2024 Financial Year to the meeting.

GLENTHORNE NATIONAL PARK ITYAMAII TPINNA YARTA			
Financial Year – July 2023 to June 2024			
	\$		\$
Membership	820.00	Audit Fees	20.00
Sponsorship	-	AGM Expenses	127.85
Grants	5,295.49	Membership	20.00
Donations	484.00	Grants	9,338.10
Book Sales	20.00	Venue Hire	50.00
Plant Sales	4,656.64	Working Bee/Events	1,358.86
Bank Interest	16.03	Equipment/Provisions	4,727.08
		Bank Fees	61.00
TOTAL	\$11,292.16	TOTAL	\$15,702.89
INCOME		EXPENDITURE	

The Friends currently have two accounts with an ANZ account which is the older account and one which will be superseded soon by a Beyond Bank account. The Beyond bank is moving customers to online banking with cheques being phased out.

Balances in each account as at 30th June 2024 are as follows.

Beyond Bank (Account 04031168) \$9,470.20

ANZ Bank (Account 015220 / 198876197) \$11,536.81

Total funds \$21,007.01

Karen commented that the Friends were doing well financially.

Grants windows are small meaning that we must be ready to apply in future to secure funding for projects.

Commitments: Money will be required for the Second edition of the Glenthorne History book.

Memberships should remain an active focus for the group to remain financially successful and to achieve on-ground goals.

Election of Office-bearers:

Alan asked Gill Marshman to act as Returning Officer and Gill declared all positions vacant. Gill's Grandfather, Harold Drew owned Glenthorne from 1911 to 1913 and Gill is a retired medical specialist.

Nomination forms were received for the following positions:

Martin Schumaker – President

Judy Clarke – Vice President

Alan Burns – Treasurer

Karen Peake – Assistant Treasurer / Grants Officer

Margaret Wheadon – Committee Member (where needed)

Robert Kirby - Committee Member

David Vinall - Committee Member

Harmony Stevens - Committee Member (where needed)

Gillian Marshman - Committee Member

No nomination was received for the position of Secretary.

Gill asked for further nominations and Christopher Ide was nominated as a Committee Member. Laima Kosiol was nominated but declined.

Gill thanked the outgoing committee members.

The following people were elected unopposed:

President: **Martin Schumacher**

Vice President: **Judy Clarke**

Secretary: **Vacant**

Treasurer: **Alan Burns**

Committee Members: **Karen Peake (Assistant Treasurer / Grants Officer), Robert (Bob) Kirby, David Vinall, Gillian Marshman, Christopher Ide, Margaret Wheadon, Harmony Stevens.**

The meeting closed and supper was served.

Minutes Prepared by: Alan Burns

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Signed: _____

Dated: _____