

# BOLFA 2024



**California and Nevada: street food, beers and climbing**

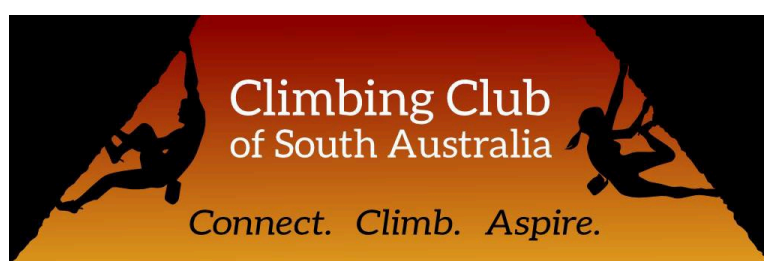
**Q & A with Darren Williams and Steve Kelly**

**The Hole, Morialta and Car Crash Quarry days**

**Urban Climb**

**The SA Para Climbing Community**

**Crag Care: get ready to make a difference!**



# Welcome to BOLFA 2024

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## Presented by the Climbing Club of South Australia

*On the cover: Hannah Nguyen climbing Technicolour Sunfish, Car Crash Quarry (21) Photo by Nicole Bray.*

Rock climbing is dangerous. It is your responsibility as a climber or boulderer to have received adequate training and to know and accept the risks involved.

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Hi all, I'd like to acknowledge the Kurna people, the Traditional Custodians of the lands where I am writing today and where I climbed this weekend. I acknowledge their continued connection to these lands, and pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. A special mention goes to Ngannu, the ancestral body of the Adelaide Hills, and that I feel grateful to be amongst our beautiful natural landscapes.

I'm chuffed to share BOLFA 2024 with you, which brings together my love of climbing and reading. Luke Adams has delivered a great story about his California and Nevada trip with Ray Prideaux this year. I asked Darren Williams and Steve Kelly a few questions to learn about their climbing experiences. Then we have fabulous Hills photos by Nicole Bray and an introduction to Urban Climb Adelaide by David Fletcher. I'm happy to share news of Para Climbing by Billie Weir and Crag Care by Ross Christian.

A big thank you to all the contributors of articles and photos this year! Also thanks to webmaster Joel Williams and the CCSA Committee for their part in putting BOLFA together. Thank you for reading BOLFA, I hope you enjoy it.

*Kylie Jarrett*  
BOLFA Editor



*Actual BOLFA moments for my birthday this year, Dan and I went on a scenic flight at Ikara Wilpena Pound with Chinta Air.*



# Climbing California and Nevada: A Tale of Street Food, Beers and Climbing

## Story and photos by Luke Adams

It's always worth checking if there is a public holiday in the country you are visiting.

Getting into Yosemite during a Public Holiday weekend proved to be hard.

We spent the first few nights in Groveland, the last town, and about 60 mins from Yosemite on a private campsite.

We explored the local area and did some walks.

This was my third trip in 30 years to Yosemite.

Such a beautiful place, big granite cliffs with huge waterfalls and amazing forests.

It is busy and it is hard to get campsites.

Once we got a Camp 4 campsite we headed out to do some climbing.

Munginella (5.6) was our introduction back to granite climbing.

After Seven (5.8) was a great introduction to crack climbing.

The Commitment (5.9 \*\*\*) - one of the best routes in the Valley.

The "commitment pitch" involves climbing up to a large roof on small holds and traversing under the roof to a swing around to a layback corner.

So many great climbs that are easily accessible from the Ring Road.

The Camp 4 camp booking system is a pain for international visitors as it opens the 7 days before the booking date (in the middle of the night for Australians) and books out almost instantly.

We had to use a combination of camp site bookings and stealth camping on weekends to stay in the valley for more than 5 nights.

Each day we would head out to climb a classic.



Yosemite Valley





Amazing face and corner climbing, a long way up the canyon. The views were back to Las Vegas



**Red Rock Canyon Nevada**

I had seen the Honnold videos on YouTube of Red Rock and wanted to visit the area.

Arriving on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, the start of summer, we found the campgrounds had been closed because of the anticipated heat. Luckily we found a well-priced Las Vegas hotel 20 mins from the park entrance.

Red Rock Canyon National Park is a series of huge canyons and cliffs on a circular access road.

Starting early each day we explored a different area each day. Some of the best climbs we did were:

Great Red Book (5.8) 80m, Ray led both pitches and I seconded.

Black Shadows (5.8) 103 m, 4 pitch on the Mescalito Formation at Pine Creek Canyon. I led pitches 1 (5.5) and 2 (5.6)

Ray led the much harder 2 upper pitches (5.8 each). There were 4 rappels back to the ground.





With a 50 min walk in and 50 min walk out in the midday heat, it made for a good morning workout.

Climbing on the deeply varnished, brown, shiny rock was amazing on the upper pitches.

Luckily there was a small pool of water at the base of the climb so we could have a cool down with the frogs before heading back to the trail head and the car.

We then spent a couple of days chasing the shade sport climbing on fantastic red stone in the canyons. Climbing interesting routes in the 5.7 to 5.10a range.

We would finish up around 1-2 pm and head back for a swim and a few beers in the heat of the afternoon.

Ray introduced me to the street side Taco Van dining on a busy main road in the more run-down suburbs of Las Vegas. The Tacos were excellent.

As it was my first trip to Las Vegas we had to do the mandatory walk on the Vegas strip. I was surprised on how clean and vibrant the place was. Ray walked away a slot machine winner.

### Tuolumne Meadows

Above Yosemite is the beautiful Tuolumne Meadows, massive granite domes and big mountain summits are the highlight of this area.

Lots of late snow delayed the road opening to Tuolumne Meadows and we were into week 3 of the trip before we could gain access.

Cathedral Peak was a highlight. Two hour walk in followed by 6-7 long pitches to a pointed mountain summit, with a descent across exposed slabs and then a long walk back to the bags. While not hard it has a fantastic alpine

view and amazing climbing on clean granite knobs.

Northwest Books (5.6 \*\*), Lambert Dome. Easy access and fun climbing on runout slabs. The long steep walk off the back of the dome was scarier than the route.

Zee Tree (5.7), Pywiack Dome. I decided to do the 40 m 4th class slab first pitch with no gear to the hanging belay stance.

I got slightly off route and was standing on steep knobs about 1 m to the right of the belay bolts contemplating life choices. I kept saying don't fall, it's easy, just move your feet.

Ray led the steep runout 5.7 second pitch on fantastic knobs, bolts every 6-7 metres.

Pitch 3 was a 30 m easy 5.0 slab but sporting only 3 bolts.

Pitch 4 slab lead to a more protectable corner. 3 long 60 m abseils got us back to the bags.

### Mammoth Lakes area

We were having trouble finding camp sites open in Tuolumne and we ended up on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada range near the small town of Lee Vining. We were able to get a fantastic camp at a campground on a beautiful river in the forest for \$14 a night.



Each day we would venture out to a local Mammoth Lakes crag and sample the different types of climbing in the area.

We met up with Darren and Cherise from Adelaide at Mammoth and decided to climb together at Brenton Crag. It was quite an extensive crag, and we only sampled some single pitch climbs at the Locals Only area, amazingly we had the crag to ourselves.

The granite had a more pink gritty texture.

The 5.6-5.8 climbs all finished at lower offs with a 70 m rope needed to get down.

Ray ticked the climb of the day, Surfin' Safari \*\*\* a tricky 5.9 requiring moving over thinly protected cracks.

We also visited 4.20 Crag, a short bolted area that had some great 5.7-5.9 sport routes.

**Pine Creek Canyon**

We did the 3 pitch 5.7 Racing Lizards in 3 long pitches, with 3 double rope rappels to get off.

The canyon was amazing with huge cliffs lining a very narrow canyon and a cliffline of over 5-6 km.

**Sagehen Granite Summit**

This was a remote cliff requiring a long narrow vehicular track approach in the hire car.

We only did a couple of routes here as I think we were starting to get worn out and could hear

the Mammoth Lakes breweries calling us for beers.

We found a local hot springs in the desert on the way back to Lee Vining and visited a couple of times. It was a nice way to recuperate.

On the last day of climbing, we packed up early and drove back to Yosemite.

I ticked the classic Pinline (5.7) at the base of El Cap and Ray wanted to push himself on the

endurance pitch of Moby Dick (5.10a).

Moby Dick starts with a very slippery off fingers crack and works its way up to off hands at the top.

It was a fantastic way to finish our trip.



We drove back towards San Francisco to be tourists and to sample more Mexican street food, before the long flight home.



**Summary**

Having hurt my ankle on day 3 of climbing, I severely impacted what we could go on the rest of the trip. A big shout out to Ray who took all the hard leads, worked out what to climb and at what crag, and was understanding on what we could do.



An advertisement for Vertical Reality Climbing. It features a woman in a black tank top and patterned leggings climbing a grey rock wall with colorful holds. The logo is a yellow triangle with a climber silhouette and the text 'VERTICAL REALITY CLIMBING' and 'CLIMBING SINCE 1995'. At the bottom, it says 'top rope lead &amp; boulder', 'OPEN 7 DAYS', '560 NORTHEAST RD HOLDEN HILL', '82664090', and 'VERTICALREALITYCLIMBING.COM'.

# Q & A with Darren Williams and Steve Kelly

## 1. Tell us a bit about yourself and how you got into climbing

**DW:** I grew up in the town of Naracoorte, in the South East of SA. I first went climbing in 1978 on a year 9 camp where we stayed at Mt Arapiles. I was fortunate to have a couple of teachers who were into climbing, caving and bushwalking, which was unusual in the 1970's. We did some top roping and abseiling, which I enjoyed, but without any gear or climbing mentors it was nearly 10 years later that I next went climbing with some friends from university. This hobby became a routine, then an occupation when I became a climbing instructor in 1991.

**SK:** I used to be a human being that liked climbing until I realised that my body just wasn't built for it and I was better off walking around a paddock eating hay and looking at piles of (my own) poo.

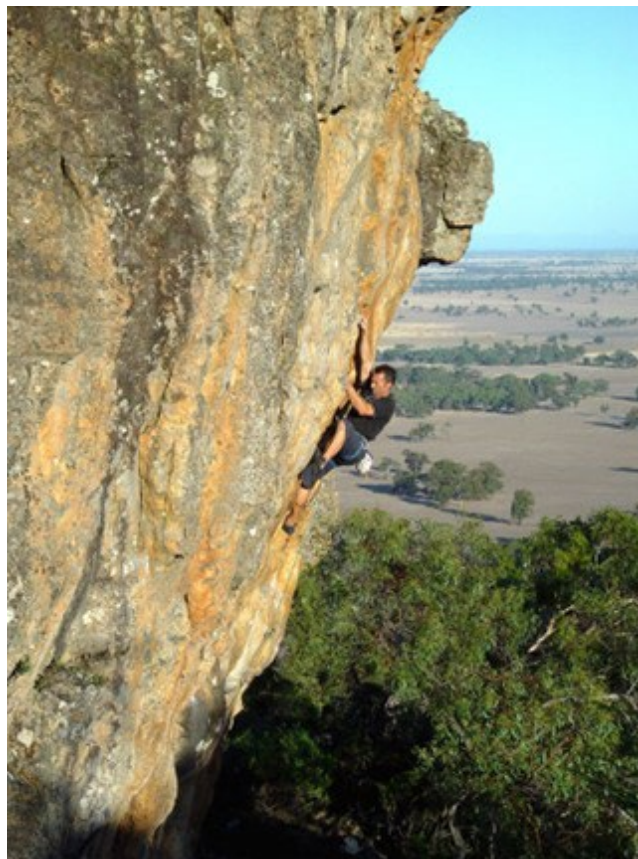
Mountain Magazine was to blame. The mag featured full page cover images with minimal text overlay that were aimed to blow your mind. I was right into tree climbing at the time but got bored of the branch thing, so I eventually just

hitchhiked to a cliff. Not having any gear I ended up soloing stuff around grade 10-14, until I met a guy who introduced me to a rope.

## 2. What do you love about the sport?

**DW:** Over the years I've formed some great friendships and travelled widely with people who share a passion for climbing. Having learned to climb trad, back in the day, I've always enjoyed long multi-pitch routes and have sought climbing destinations that include opportunities to seek those out. I plan to continue climbing 'til I fall off the perch, hopefully a long time from now. You don't stop climbing because you get old, you get old because you stop climbing!

**SK:** I don't consider it to be a sport. That would suggest that it is some sort of competition. The only competition I'm having is how fast I can drive to a certain crag, or how many quick draws I can skip on a route.



*Darren climbing  
Non Stop (25), Central  
Gully Right, Arapiles.  
Photo by Steve Kelly.*

## 3. Share with us some of your finest SA climbing moments

**DW:** I've had many trips to Moonarie over the years, some where my climbing partner and I were the only ones there. Exciting, peaceful and a bit daunting. Putting



up a probably unrepeated route with Colin Reece, back in the 1990s was certainly memorable, but not something I would have recommended to anyone wanting to keep their sanity.

**SK:** I'd consider that to be more about the SA people I'd shared moments with rather than any SA specific locations. For instance, following Rob Baker up Lamplighter at Arapiles (without a rope) was pretty memorable. I deviated out of the crux pitch into unknown territory because I didn't trust the crack section – then we met back at the start of the top pitch. He was laughing his head off.



*Alpaca selfie by Steve Kelly*

**4. Were there any SA climbing mentors who inspired you?**

**DW:** Nick Neagle was an inspiration and a good friend. Great to climb with and fun to be with. I shared several trips, interstate and overseas with Nick and his wife Lee over the years.

**SK:** Stu Williams would probably be the closest but I just really made a point of searching for routes that inspired me via the history attached to them and then going out and having a look. Consequently people like Stu and Col Reece were related to those routes, but then so was Barber, Carrigan and the odd goat.

**5. How would you describe your decisions around the risk-taking?**

**DW:** Climbing has obvious objective and subjective risks. I've developed habits to avoid complacency like doing partner checks before we climb. I've backed off routes, and I place gear regularly, even on easy routes. I usually wear a helmet, and I try to maintain a dynamic approach to managing the risks present on any particular climb.

**SK:** Ha ha ha ha! My immediate answer is 'bad', but the fact that I am still alive has to count for something. There have definitely been bad decisions made, but the term 'risk taking' is

relative to what you are used to isn't it? I have definitely stepped out of the comfort zone where it is significantly 'uncomfortable', and the grade of something hasn't really made the difference. For instance, I nearly died soloing The Bard (12) but felt completely solid going up Missing Link (17) shortly afterwards. It's more the people I've affected within range where I've later thought – 'Yeah that wasn't a great thing to do.' A really good mate said he walked into the forest to vomit after watching me one afternoon on a 25, 7 metres out (from the ground) while desperately slapping for a jug. I don't do that stuff anymore (now that I'm an alpaca).

**6. What's your fondest climbing memory anywhere in the world?**

**DW:** Too many to pick a favourite. The nose of El Capitan, the Grand Wall in Squamish, the Verdon Gorge, towers and cracks in Utah, sport routes in Smith Rock and Kalymnos. The climbs, and the people I shared the trips with, make all these memorable.

**SK:** Sitting at a pub in the afternoon sun drinking pints with mates after a successful day of climbing and talking about being weak and slappy.

**7. Do you have a pearl of advice for your younger self, or for people starting out on their climbing journey?**

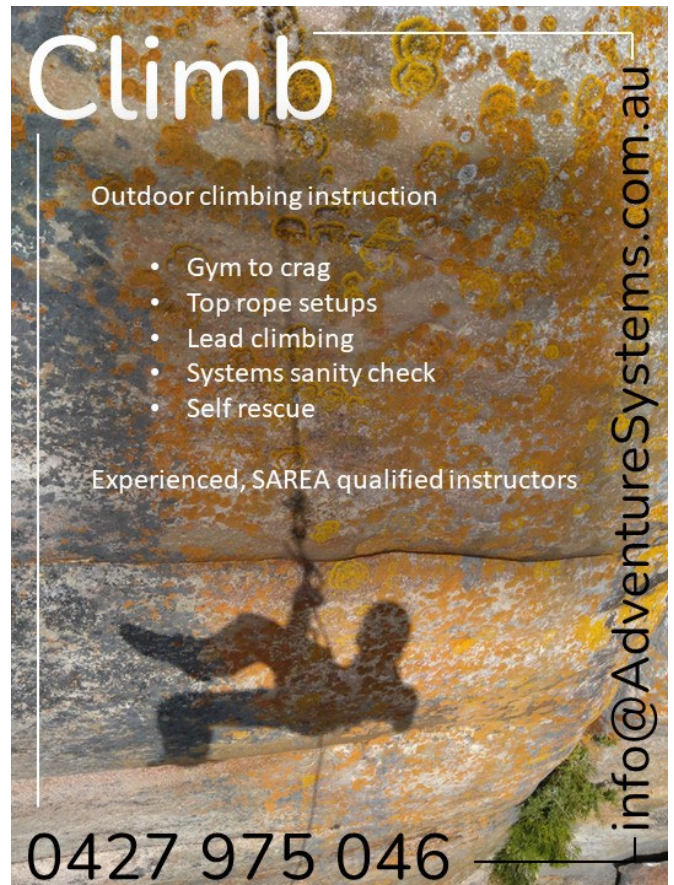
**DW:** Don't get hung up on grades and invest time in learning to place gear well. Get some climbing instruction and learn rescue skills so you know what to do if you're involved in, or around others, who have an accident. Ask for feedback from more experienced climbers and always conduct buddy checks before you climb.

**SK:** Seat belt material isn't a great first harness, neither are Reeboks as climbing footwear. Get someone to buy you the real gear. Also, get yourself in shape. Being weak and slappy will only get you so far and will most likely end in you walking around a paddock staring at your own shit for the rest of your life.

**8. Do you have any info on the original BOLFA sign whereabouts?**

**DW:** Most likely taken by aliens 😊

**SK:** I'll have to rifle through my collection of Adelaide Hills speed limit signs and let you know.



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*Locals Only area, Mammoth Lakes, June 2024. Photo by Darren Williams*





*L to R: 5 gallon buckets, Smith Rock and Queen of the heartbreaks, Pine Creek Canyon, United States.  
Photos by Darren Williams, July 2024*

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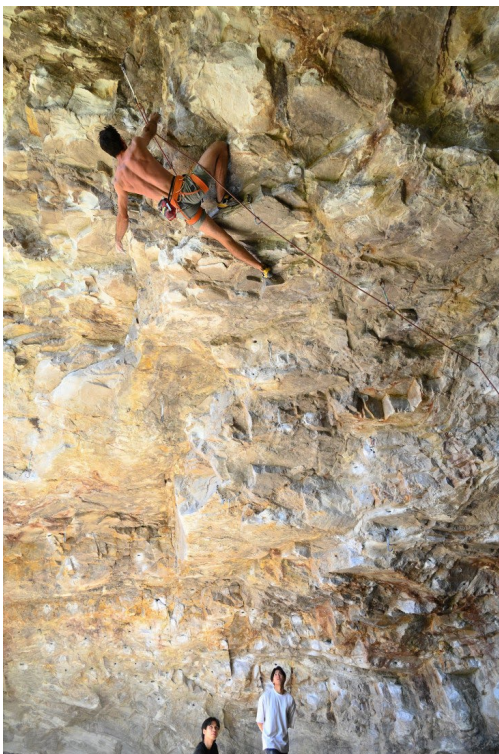
# The Hole, Morialta and Car Crash Quarry days

Photos by Nicole Bray

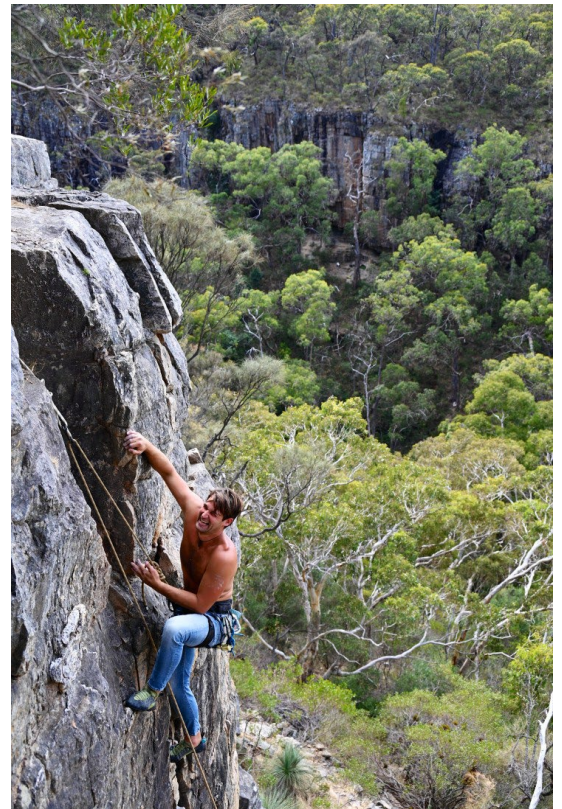


## Climbing at the Hole May 2024

*Top right: Chloe climbing probably Dr Strike (25).  
Bottom right: Felix Binns on Steep in the deep (V9) with Adam Binns spotting him. Chloe, Felix and Adam are involved in the VRC youth squad.*







**The many moods of  
Mike at Morialta**

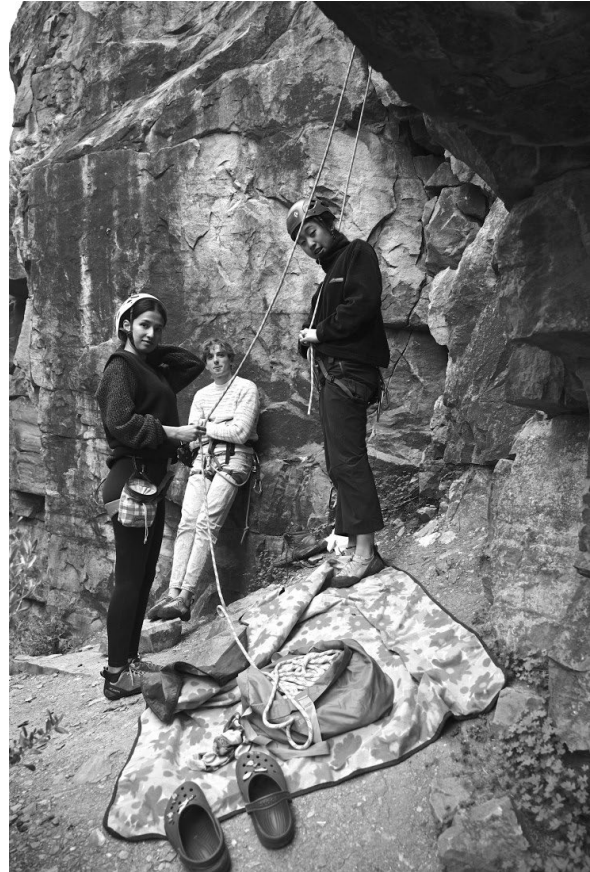
*Michael Kaczkowski climbing on  
the Illequipt Wall in April 2024.*





**Car Crash Quarry kids**

*Above: Sehaj on Exodus wall (16); Below: Hannah Nguyen climbing Technicolour Sunfish (21)*



*L to R: Sehaj, Max and Hannah*



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# Urban Climb

## with David Fletcher

Hi there, Dave here, Director of Urban Climb and, previously, El Presidente of the University of Queensland Climbing Club. Absolutely love what you guys do and honoured to have been asked to contribute to BOLFA!

The first Urban Climb opened as a rope gym in 2004 in the industrial backstreets of West End off Montague Rd, now one of the busiest arterials in Brisbane. Twenty years ago it was so quiet you could safely walk across blindfolded at any time of the day. After a rough few years (and a handful of great parties) Urban found it's groove as it broadened its vision from a climbing gym for climbers, to a place where people of all abilities could come together and enjoy the shared challenge.

Our (your?) newest gym, Urban Climb Adelaide has just opened its doors in the CBD on Hindley St following more than two years of intense effort to convert several levels of the old cinema into climbing heaven. What some don't know is that the facility is the purest expression yet of Urban's two decades of experimentation, development and let's face it, obsession with community.

I did a little digging into the original project notes for the space. In early '22 the full project team arrived at the overall project vision, just a few brief points: needs to be a complete experience, it sets them up to be a climber with a good base if they move outdoors, supports the unique variety of outdoor spots around town and beyond; Maintain exploration, natural materials, pockets of discovery; Lean into Hindley street, raw feeling - Street art & posters; Interesting mix of street and environment; Must not be shiny or perfect!

Next time you swing by please look around reflecting on the above and see if you can uncover some of that intention... and finally, consider the gym isn't yet complete. That the scale and variety of open, incomplete spaces is an exciting opportunity for us to further grow and reflect the needs of the community here as you interact with the different areas, and we learn more about the local quirks and interests.

I can't wait to see how it evolves!

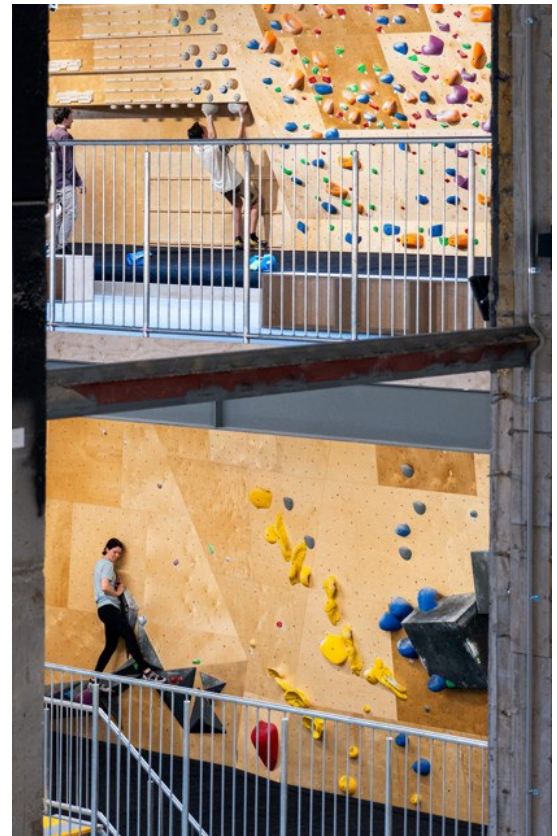
Thanks again and look forward to hopefully catching you in the gym when I'm next in town.

Dave





The newly opened Urban Climb Adelaide.  
 Photos by Sam Lauder @lauder\_sam



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 An advertisement for Exurbia. The background is a photograph of a climber in a green shirt and brown pants scaling a dark rock face. The climber is in a dynamic pose, reaching up.
 

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# The South Australian Para Climbing Community

It's been a year of outdoor exposure for our Para Climbing Community. With Miffy (our support hound in tow) as our mascot, our community had pushed through boundaries that they thought could not be possible. Most outings were at Onkaparinga, Morialta Falls CP and Car Crash Quarry. From youth with terminal illness, to those on the spectrum and wonderful personalities, we have been able to access these routes with help from Parks SA and Morialta Crag Care, ran by the Climbing Club of South Australia.

Outdoor climbing for those who have different abilities require a specialist skill set in rigging techniques and an understanding of human anatomy whilst being suspended. It takes years of practice to initiate these techniques in a real-life environment, specialised for each individual. Next year we will be asking for volunteers who have accreditation or years of mountaineering experience to join us to enable access for all at our local crags.

Our volunteers and staff have been working around the clock over the last few years, with a committee now looking to be fully functional by 2025. The aspect of having a committee built from the ground up by those who have disabilities is paramount to ensure authenticity, and a real-life experience is kept within its core beliefs. The aim of the Board is to have a delegate work with Sport Climbing South Australia to aid in the education and delivery of

our official participation throughout all competitions, especially now LA has announced 2028 for Climbing in the Para Olympics. Bouldering, lead and top rope will be on the cards which is super exciting.

For social catch ups, we are aiming to provide monthly catch ups at the local gyms. The Adelaide community has been incredible with donations of spare shoes, chalk etc, as having a

disability for many, does not instantly grant you NDIS, nor a stable job. Without donations from the community and local shops (Paddy Pallin Rundle Street and Exurbia Norwood) we would have really struggled.

Adelaide's Bouldering Club is where our local youth squad trains on Saturdays. Having the advantage of Australia's Olympic Team Coach Irene Torrealba Merida by their side, with other great coaches, has enabled our

youth to not only develop their technique, but to improve/maintain other elements that are due to disability. We were fortunate to have Patagonia sponsor the youth club, which has been going for over a year now.

We have been running indoor roped climbing at Vertical Reality Climbing, where we have witnessed some absolute legends. One in particular, Keran, a strong athlete smashed up the 16 on the overhung wall on her first try. It's no surprise really, since she competes in abled marathons with one lower limb and one hip and



*Miffy and climber at Adelaide's Bouldering Club*



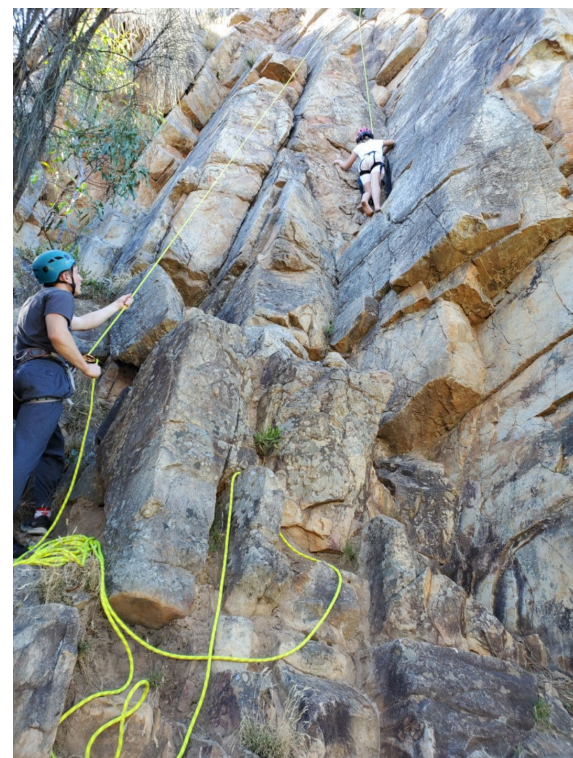
still beats abled people by just using her crutches. She's one to look out for in the coming years. Our other little sensation is Alexander, who will be trying out for our V2 category for our state. As with all of our other athletes I'm sure as a community we all look forward to seeing them achieve.

Finally, I wish to thank everyone who has contributed towards this project and cannot wait until we have it running in full motion. Yew!

Billie Weir.



*Para Climbers at Vertical Reality Climbing and Top Cliff, Onkaparinga*





# Crag Care: get ready to make a difference!

Dear Fellow Climbers,

May 2024 marked 10 years since the beginning of Crag Care, the brainchild of long-time climbers and devoted environmentalists Liz Milner and Garth Wimbush. Since that first Crag Care in 2014, hundreds of volunteers have contributed thousands of hours into helping Flora and Fauna at this most important site.

The collective efforts of volunteers have helped employ minimal impact bushcare techniques to remove highly invasive weeds and allow the remnant bush on the tops of the cliffs to flourish.



We are proud to say in this time the majority of the primary weeding in the bush above the crags has been completed and the simpler process of following up emerging weeds is now underway.

The Crag Care project is now able to focus on maintaining the gains made and expanding the site to other areas of need such as the base of the cliffs. Thorn Buttress is in our sights too!

Importantly, in November 2023 the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta were successful in their application for a \$20,000 grant from the QBE Foundation. The funds are being utilised in Black Hill, Horsnell Gully and the Crag Care project in Morialta.

Specialist contractors have been engaged to treat olives to the west of the Crag Care site to build on the terrific work of our volunteers.

Watch this space!

### **Upcoming dates for Crag Care:**

Our Crag Care days are an opportunity for us to give back to the environment that we all enjoy. Mark your calendar for the upcoming Crag Care:

- **Sunday, 22 September 2024, 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM:** Meeting at Morialta Climbers Track, Gate 15 on Norton Summit Road,

For updates and more information about our next Crag Care event, please refer to our Events section.

### **What is the Crag Care program all about?**

Rock climbing allows us to access some of the most pristine and challenging environments on Earth, and with that privilege comes responsibility.

In conjunction with FOBHM, Crag Care helps by fighting off invasive weed species such as olives and allows the natural bush to regenerate. Sometimes the bush requires some extra help by planting or removing rubbish or graffiti.



*Liz Milner*

### **Join us in preserving our climbing crags!**

We encourage you to join to continue the success of this project by:

1. **Register Your Interest:** Email our CCSA Crag Care Coordinator to express your interest in becoming part of the Crag Care team. We welcome climbers of all skill levels and backgrounds.
2. **Participate in Crag Care Days:** Generally held on the 2nd Sunday of every odd month (weather permitting), these events kick off at 9:30 AM at Gate 15 on Norton Summit Road. After a productive morning of preservation work, we often enjoy an afternoon of climbing. Don't forget to bring your gear and some lunch!



As climbers, we cherish the freedom, adventure, and connection to nature that our sport provides. Let's make sure we're giving back to the environments that make our journeys possible. Together, we can continue to enjoy the wonders of rock climbing while ensuring that future generations can do the same.

See you on the crags, and let's make every climb count!

Warm regards,

Ross Christian



*Above: Freddie and Jo at the first Crag Care event; Right: Jason Maddison*



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An advertisement for Beyond Bouldering. The background is a photograph of a person with curly hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt and jeans, climbing a large, dark grey boulder. The person is using their hands and feet to grip the rock. The text is overlaid on the image.