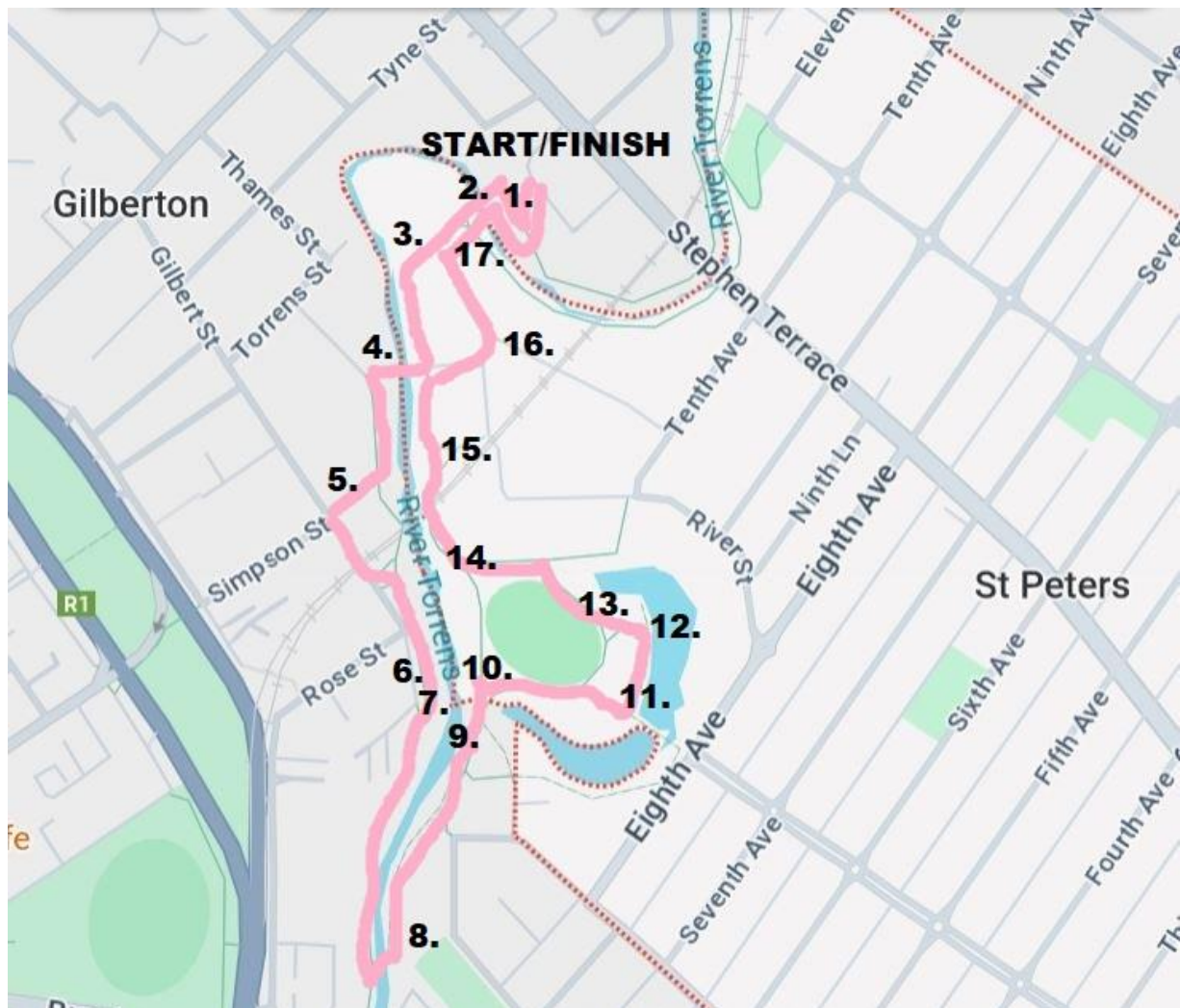


U3A St Peters Billabong (S) Monday Stroll - directions and information (3km)



Meet near the public toilet at the small carpark outside of the Walkerville Lawn Tennis Club, Cresswell Court Gilberton (entrance off Stephens Terrace). If the carpark is full there are spaces to park along Cresswell Court or further on at the Sussex Hotel or behind the Walkerville library. Allow about 10min extra time to walk from the further carparks.

START

1. From the little carpark go down to the Linear Park and turn right
2. Cross the bridge over the Torrens on your left
3. At the fork take the right hand path and again at the next fork keep right
4. Take the **Gilberton Swing Bridge *1** on your right (there is an alternative loop for people who prefer to not use the bridge) This spot on the river used to have a public **swimming pool *2**
5. Turn left after crossing the bridge and walk through a commemorative gate built from small river stones and when you get to a fork in the paths (in front of a **tennis court *3**) take the right path

6. The path enters Gilbert Street, turn left and walk along the street over the O-bahn track and enter a little garden on the left. Follow the path to your right and you will see a little weir on your left
7. Re-join Gilbert Street until it bends to your right; here you leave the street and keep left on the path walking along the river. From here there is a view of the St Peters Weir with Second Creek exiting through large cement pipes
8. Walk on a boardwalk and at end of it take a hard left turn onto a bridge that crosses the Torrens and keep left after crossing to the other side
9. Look out on your left for a different view of the **St Peters Weir *4**
10. Continue along the river until you see a purple sign board with information about the **St Peters Billabong *5**. Turn right at the sign into a smaller path that goes along the oval
11. There will be a small downward earthen path on your right leading towards the water. Stop by a bench with an insight. When on the water's edge experience a water table illusion. Turn left and walk along a wooden balustrade
12. Continue along the water's edge, later passing reeds
13. The path will split, keep left here (the right path leads up the stairs, don't go there)
14. Continue walking around the oval until you see a toilet ahead. By the toilet turn right onto an asphalt path. From here you will see the little weir again.
15. Go under the O-bahn. Spot a "bronze" tree.
16. Pass the Gilberton Swing Bridge on your left but don't cross it. Take a right turn here into Swing Bridge Lane and turn left into Player Ave. At the end of the street stop by the house at 26 Player Ave to discover a garden like no other, with ferns in pots on the roof and rocks on pallets.
17. When you see the river ahead follow the path to your left and retrace your steps to the cars

FINISH

Annotations

*1 Gilberton Swing Bridge

The bridge was funded by Frank Woolley, a well-known accountant and property developer in Adelaide, who wanted to increase the value of his land allotments by connecting them across the river to tramways. It was opened in 1920 and reconstructed in 2017. It is almost 60m long.



*2 Gilberton Pool



Members of the Gilberton Swimming Club, 1925
(Source State Library of South Australia B50125)



Swimming at Gilberton, c1930
(Source State Library of South Australia B50254)

The Gilberton Amateur Swimming Club started in 1915. With shovels and wheelbarrows the members moved 6,000 tonnes of earth to build terraces on the river bank for spectators.

In 1970 pollution of the river forced the club to close and swimming in the Torrens was over.

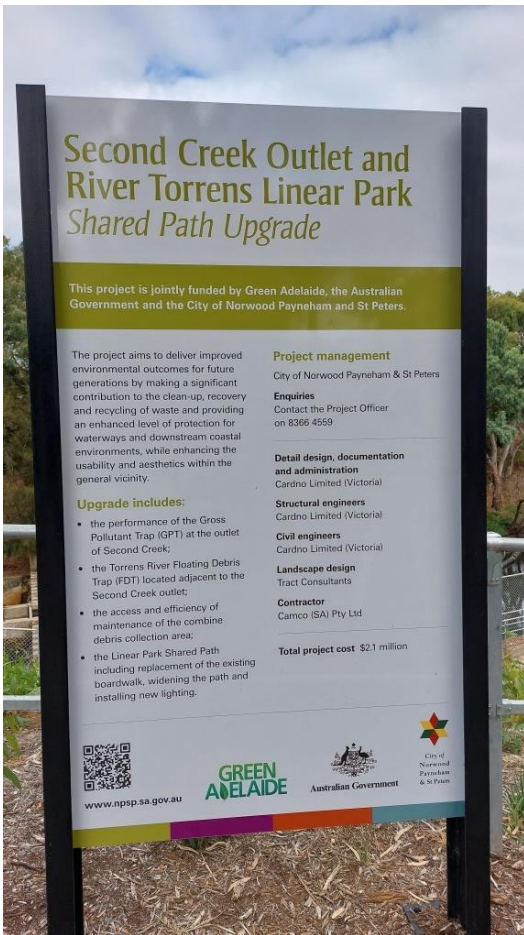


*3 The Bill Cossey Tennis Court



*4 The St Peters Weir





The Torrens Linear Park was completed in 1997 as the first of its kind developed in Australia where it is the largest hills-to-coast park. It began as a flood mitigation scheme along the River Torrens running westward from the Adelaide Hills, through the Adelaide metropolitan area, to the sea.

The Torrens Linear Park concept, using the river valley for combined use as urban open space with flood mitigation, required the cooperation of the state government, responsible for land acquisition and flood mitigation works, and the then 12 (now 8) metropolitan councils bordering the river, responsible for landscaping and construction of cycling/walking trails.

Construction works began in January 1982, and were completed in September 1997. The Linear Park became protected against further development with the passing of the River Torrens Linear Park Act on 21 June 2006.

*5 St Peters Billabong

In the early years of settlement the areas around the River Torrens were not protected, farming and mining of sand and loam were the main uses. Also the river was used as the City's drain. In 1971, the area encompassing the Billabong and River Park was compulsorily acquired by St Peters Council to close a dump. In 1978, the Billabong was created when, to minimise problems of erosion, it was isolated from the mainstream of the Torrens, with channel straightening and the construction of the two weirs.