

FOTP European Walking Trip 2026

A group of FOTP travellers had their first stop in the Bohemian Paradise, exploring the ancient vibrant city of Prague with its 9th century bridges and buildings.

From Prague we moved to the World Heritage UNESCO site of Cesky Kumlov with many picturesque and preserved buildings.

After exploring and walking through countryside we finally flew from Prague to Biarritz on the French/Spanish border. There we walked for a week through the Basque country in the Atlantic Pyrenees, visiting villages with exotic names such as Saint John Pied-de-Port and Saint John-de-Luz - it was 15-20km a day of beautiful scenery.

After a week we moved on to Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne to follow the charming French towns and villages along the River Dordogne valley route. Lots of French cheese, bread, pastry and wines were consumed - a real joy!

What an amazing experience we all shared.

Anne



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OPENING HOURS:

Monday	6.30am - 7.00pm
Tuesday	6.30am - 4.00pm
Wednesday	6.30am - 6.00pm
Thursday	6.30am - 6.00pm
Friday	6.30am - 4.00pm
Saturday	8.00am - 1.30pm
Sunday	Closed

Fitness on the Park is an organisation of health and fitness professionals whose objectives are to provide high quality and innovative exercise programmes for the whole community. These programmes, with an emphasis on education, will enable a variety of participants, young and old, fit or unfit, to achieve and maintain a greater level of health and well being.

2026 Programmes

Back Care/Mobility Plus
Be Stronger – over 60's
Strength
Balance

Countryside Walking
Cardio/Strength - outdoors
Fit for Life - outdoors

Fitness Circuit

Masters (over 65's)

Personal Training

Pilates

Resistance Training Circuits

Weights & Stretch - outdoor

Seated Yoga

Yoga



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Winter Walking Program

A small snippet...

18 October

Wittunga & Blackwood Park

Leader: Jenny Agnew.

Meet at Wittunga Botanical
Gardens car park,
Shepherds Hill Road,
Blackwood.

25th October

Old Noarlunga Hill

Leaders:

Kerry & Duncan Irvine.
Meet at Old Noarlunga
Institute Building, Market
Crescent, Old Noarlunga.

1st November

River Torrens Walk

Leaders: Linda Sampson & Paul Ensor.

Meet at 10 Eighth Avenue,
St Peters.

Lunch to follow

Kentish Hotel

173 Stanley Street,
North Adelaide

Please book at reception.

FITNews

Issue 102

Spring 2026

Dear Members,

Returning to South Australia after a time away is always a great pleasure - there is a lot to be said for 'sleeping in your own bed'! We travelled away on our walking trip to Europe in the winter and returned home to the beautiful Adelaide spring and daylight saving. There is a short report and pictures on page 4.

Thank you to Michelle and the team of staff who worked tirelessly to maintain the amazing standard of care which is shown to all at Fitness on the Park.

Now is a good time for me to mention the two long standing class instructors, Ann Moore and Carolyn Pikl, who have both retired from teaching after being here since 1968 when we were the Institute for Fitness, Research and Training. Both women started life as teachers at universities and continued to share their knowledge and enthusiasm over many years. Thank you Ann and Carolyn - we wish you happy retirement years ahead.

We are excited to announce that we have set the date for our annual **Christmas Drinks Party** in the Park, **Friday 4th December** at 6pm. Please mark it in your diary now. We will keep reminding you as we look forward to sharing a Christmas drink with you, your partners and families - all are welcome.

Anne Lang
Manager

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Congratulations to Anne Lang and Ann Jefferies for their outstanding performances in the World Masters Athletics Championships.

Anne has now returned from a well-earned holiday, walking and sightseeing with a group of keen walkers from Fitness on the Park. Read about their travels on page 4.

Catherine Doyle

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Impact of Exercise on Joints

Ageing gradually wears down the cartilage and fluid that protect our joints, but avoiding movement may actually make matters worse.

As we age the amount of cartilage, which is a tough but flexible kind of connective tissue, and the fluid in your joints, decrease over time. But rather than avoiding exercise, with the right approach, exercise can actually help protect your joints.

Cartilage is a type of specialised tissue that covers the ends of bones, protecting the joints by creating a smooth surface for motion. A thick fluid known as synovial fluid also helps lubricate your knees, hips and shoulders. It does this by reducing friction between your cartilage and joints. Synovial fluid also supplies cartilage with key nutrients.

However, cartilage is not very good at repairing itself, partly because it doesn't have its own blood supply. The gradual breakdown of cartilage results in pain in weight-bearing joints such as knees, hips and spine.



How Exercise Impacts Your Joints

The body distributes synovial fluid through motion, so exercise helps get this fluid, and the nutrients it contains, to cartilage.

In addition to this, the muscles around your joints act as shock absorbers. So strengthening your muscles through exercises, such as weight lifting, helps reduce the pressure placed on your joints. Research suggests strength exercises targeting the quadriceps, a group of muscles at the front of the thigh, are particularly effective at reducing joint pain.

A landmark Cochrane review assessed all the relevant evidence looking at the effect of exercise on osteoarthritis. It found exercise reduces pain and improves function in people with knee osteoarthritis. It also showed exercise has a similar impact as anti-inflammatory drugs, but without the same side effects.

Source: Science Daily, "The common mistakes that could make ageing joints hurt more" 16 Aug, 2026

What's Good for the Body is Good for the Brain

The brain is ravenous, burning through a huge amount of energy and requiring a constant supply of oxygen and nutrients to be delivered through the circulatory system. Exercise helps keep this network of blood vessels healthy and blood pressure low.

However, exercise does more than just pump more blood to the brain. When we exercise, our muscles pump out a cocktail of hormones and other proteins, many of which can travel to the brain. Called myokines, these are thought to be so influential on our mood and behaviour that they have been nicknamed the "hope chemicals".

Myokines have also been implicated in the growth of new brain cells. It was once thought that we were born with all the brain cells we will ever have, but it has since been discovered that exercise is one of the few things that can spur new brain cell growth.

The most well-studied hope chemical, Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF), has been linked to the growth of new brain cells in the hippocampus of humans, and improvements in learning and memory. One study looking at various types of exercise and the effect on the brain found that HIIT training (high intensity, interval training) offered more cognitive improvements than lower intensity aerobic exercise. Strikingly though, strength training seemed to result in a greater variety of myokines being released from muscles.

While studies continue on this topic, the message is to continue exercising, particularly strength training and the many benefits it offers.

Source: New Scientist: "Mental Muscle" 3 June, 2023

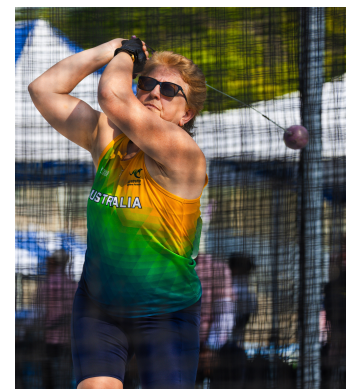
World Masters Athletics Championships 2026

In mid August, Anne Lang and I travelled to Daegu, South Korea to take part in the World Masters Athletic Championships. This was my first World Champs and Anne's 13th!

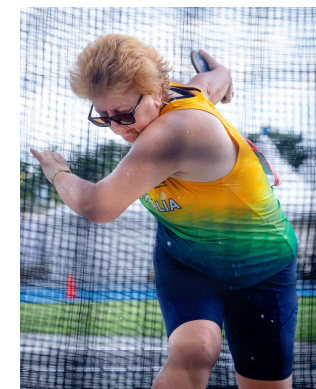
The weather was warm, about 32-36 degrees (which to us South Australians is typical summer temperatures) but the humidity was a killer - 85-95% every day!

I was lucky enough to be able to parade with 30 of my teammates behind the Australian flag in the opening ceremony which was a great honour.

I really had no expectations for my performances other than wanting to make the top eight in each of my events (for those who don't follow athletics, everyone in the field events has 3 throws and the top eight have another 3). My first event was javelin where I finished 7th. Next up was hammer, which had been going particularly well in training due to the 16 weeks of extra gym I had been doing in preparation for competing against the best in the world. My first throw was a new state record of 38.45m - I couldn't ask for a better start! Come the end of 3 rounds, the 18 competitors became 8 and I was sitting in third place. By the final round, my Australian teammate, Gabi, was the only person who could overtake me and when she fell a few centimetres short I knew I had won my first ever World Masters bronze medal. This was far beyond my wildest dreams and I couldn't be happier! It really is something special to stand on the podium under your country's flag! In my remaining 3 events I was 7th in the shot put



Hammer



Discus



Teammates Sarah, Anne and Ann with their medals



Anne with her gold medal for the 400m

and the discus, and finally, in the throws pentathlon I managed to finish in 5th position which I was extremely happy with.

Anne also had no expectations for her performance as she is only one year post knee replacement and has worked really hard since January to get her

strength and fitness back. Her first event was the 200m and she ran really well to win a silver medal! Anne's final event was the 400m, which anyone who has run one knows, is a very hard event - not a sprint but not a distance event. There is a real skill to running it well and Anne did brilliantly, keeping a steady pace all round and having enough left in the tank to repel her challengers and finish in first place! A gold medal just one year after having a knee replacement - absolutely inspirational! The whole competition was a fantastic experience and one I will certainly be taking part in again, hopefully in two years time which is to be held in Breda, Netherlands. Athletics is quite a solitary sport so being part of the Australian team and the camaraderie was really great.

Next up is the Oceania Championships which are in Christchurch, New Zealand in January 2027 - I love competing so can't wait!

Ann Jefferies