



**MEN OF THE TREES**

# TWAHAMWE

The official publication of THE MEN OF THE TREES Inc Queensland Branch

Patron: The Prince of Wales

Founder: The late Dr Richard St Barbe Baker O.B.E.

TWAHAMWE IS SWAHILI FOR ALL TOGETHER OR PULL TOGETHER

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Volume XXVIII

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## Planning Meeting

### Change of date and venue

## Invitation to all MOTT members and friends

The management committee has postponed the proposed Planning Meeting set down for Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February until 3<sup>rd</sup> March. All MOTT members and friends are invited to attend the Planning Meeting as follows:

**Date & Time:** Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at 1.00pm  
**Venue:** Conference Room, Arana Hills Leagues Club  
274 Dawson Parade, Keperra

The conference room is air conditioned and is accessible via lift from the ground floor. Members of our management committee will be in the reception area to welcome and sign MOTT visitors into the club. Afternoon tea will be served during the afternoon.

Pam Usher, from Greening Australia, has kindly agreed to facilitate the Meeting. Some of the topics we hope to cover may include:

- Vision for MOTT Qld - strategic direction and long term planning
- Goals: what we want to achieve and how to achieve that
- Priorities
- Needs
- Organisation
- Performance/Actions
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Partnerships
- Interaction with community
- Commitment



Please RSVP to Fran on 3851 0858 or info@menofthetrees.org.au

All members and friends welcome.

## BIG TREE VISIT

Recently ten of our members travelled to Jimna and Gallangowan to inspect probably one of the largest grey ironbarks in South-East Queensland. Measuring 174 centimetres diameter at breast height, it took three members with their arms outstretched to reach around its base.

A small plot that encloses the tree is designated a Feature Protection Area, which requires that the site be managed for the best interests of the feature (ie the tree) which is located in Jimna Forest Reserve. Ultimately the reserve will become a national park.

The day began well with an uneventful trip to the gate on the Kilcoy-Murgon Road, but started to unravel from there with a convoy separation, an overheated engine and some hazy memories from the tour leader. The latter saw us exploring some of the lesser travelled parts of the forest where our arrival was greeted with some expectation by the lessee's cattle. We were at the point of giving it away as a lost cause when Miriam's sharp eyes spotted our quarry, where it has stood for over 500 years (only the immediate surrounds had changed). Our enthusiasm was immediately reignited on seeing such a magnificent specimen in all of its glory towering over the rest of the forest. It was a thrill to know that we were some of the privileged few who have been fortunate enough to see it.



A late lunch was enjoyed by all at Peach Trees Camping Ground about 4 km from Jimna. We then went into Jimna itself, only recently surveyed and gazetted as a town in its own right during the 1980's after since the sawmill closed down. On view were some of the original mill houses (now privately owned) and remnant garden specimens which marked the location of the early forestry married rigs.

The trip continued with a visit to the local museum and a short talk by local enthusiast Dave Wright who is running a campaign to save the heritage listed Jimna fire tower from demolition. Need for the tower has passed, now that technology in the form of a web camera is providing continuous 360 degree landscape panoramas to an office computer screen. Marion will be lying down in front of the bulldozers if the proposal to save the tower fails. The day ended with an inspection of the tower and some of the magnificent

hop and bunya pines growing in the adjoining scrub breaks. A great day was had by all!

Jim Dale

## Men of the Trees Schedule – February to April 2007

Check with Fran (3851 0858) for possible changes **or to book for 20<sup>th</sup> April trip.** Activities, depending on availability of water, will include: weeding, planting, mulching, watering etc. Except for Gold's Scrub (8:30am) we normally work from 9am-12:30pm.



| Date  | Location   | Contact  |
|---|--|--|
| Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup>                               | Holy Spirit Anglican Church, 1036 Mogill Road, Kenmore   | Kerry 3289 9205 or Jim.. 3263 5713   |
| 10 <sup>th</sup>                                  | 77 Wooley Street, Taringa  | Dick - .3371 3185 or Marion 3366 1448  |
| 17 <sup>th</sup>                                  | Gubberley Creek, Gubberley Street, Kenmore   | Kerry... 3289 9206   |
| 24 <sup>th</sup>                                  | Cabbage Tree Creek off Yingally Drive, Ferny Hills (Wightman Reserve near children's playground)   | Amanda Fox 3480 6745 or 0437 439 774<br>Fran 3851 0858   |
| Mar 3 <sup>rd</sup>                               | Extension of the Girl Guide area, Coolibah St, Bardon  | Marion . 3366 1448   |
| 10 <sup>th</sup>                                  | Extension of the Girl Guide area, Coolibah St, Bardon  | Marion 3366 1448   |
| 17 <sup>th</sup>                                  | Across the street from 207 Taringa Parade, near Freeway  | Pam 3870 0950 or Kerry 3289 9206   |
| 24 <sup>th</sup>                                  | Gold's Scrub, Gold's Scrub Rd. Samsonvale  | Laura –3902 4448 or Angie - 3902 4412<br>or Carole –3379 1453  |
| 31 <sup>st</sup>                                  | Cedar Creek behind Police Station, Tramway Street, Ferny Grove.  | Kerry 3289 9205 or Tristan.0416 478 615  |
| Apr 14 <sup>th</sup>                              | Gubberley Creek, Gubberley St. Kenmore   | Kerry... 3289 9206   |
| Fri 20 <sup>th</sup><br>We MUST have 10-20 people | 9 am. Tjuringa Emu Farm Tour \$5.00<br>550 Reeseville Road, Maleny -<br>Bring morning tea or buy emu sausage & pies<br>12:30pm Mango Hill Organic Farm-\$11 includes<br>3 hour tour and Devonshire Tea | Fran...3851 0858<br>Peter Thompson...5494 2224<br><br>Fran ... 3851 0858<br>Joy Hermanson... 5494 9329 |
| 28 <sup>th</sup>                                  | Cabbage Tree Creek off Yingally Drive, Ferny Hills (Wightman Reserve near children's playground)   | Amanda Fox 3480 6745 or 0437 439 774<br>Fran 3851 0858   |



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## THE WORK DONE BY THE SATURDAY MORNING GROUP BY ONE OF THE WORKERS

In recent years the MOTT Saturday morning group has found itself working more and more along suburban creek banks, removing exotics and replanting natives in their wake. Creek banks and the removal of weeds have become a focus of our work, quite different to the type of big plantings MOTT was involved in years past, so I thought it might be helpful, or of interest to others to know what this type of work is trying to achieve.

There are two outstanding reasons that make creek banks an obvious flora and fauna habitat; humans don't build there (as much) and there is water (resulting in food). After years of working with Landcare and Catchment Management groups it became obvious that waterways and their immediate environment, known in the industry as the riparian zone, is the most crucial ecosystem to protect, particularly in the urban context where nearly everywhere else is occupied by people.

In built environments where significant habitat is sparse and fractured, waterways are the most important areas left to provide wildlife with space, with a water and food supply, and most importantly access around this reduced habitat. All over the suburbs of Brisbane, rivers, creeks and gullies provide a network of interconnected native habitat linking patches of remnant bush, and providing access for wildlife all the way from the mountains and plains to the sea

Well that's what there should be.

Instead the clearing and abuse done by past ignorance have resulted not only in a reduction in the quantity of habitat but most importantly the quality. Where ever we work on the creek banks of the northern suburbs we see the same infestation of about a dozen or so introduced weeds that completely dominant the vegetation. About 80% – 90% will be the same rampant weeds with a few struggling natives amongst them.

A few dominant weed species now take the place of the thousands of different natives once found there, that of course once supported an equally wide variety of fauna including the insects and micro-organisms providing the basis of the food chain.

Many of the less common species particularly birds, butterflies and insects are very often species-specific and when their particular host plant is reduced in number so are they and they struggle to survive. Butterflies are a prime example; many butterflies rely on one host plant and research has found them to be particularly vulnerable, (the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly being a high profile example).



If you reduce the number of species of flora you have you will automatically reduce the number of species of fauna it can support. The spread of successful weeds in all countries is "loss of biodiversity" in the process, which in itself is a consequence of the environmental globalization of the planet, the same process happening to humans.

This process also throws the whole delicate balance of the species out, as when some natives that may survive or even thrive on certain introduced plants, with the added advantage will end up doing too well to the detriment of others. Hence the whole balance established over thousands of years is quickly derailed.

The MOTT Saturday morning group spends its time working on these creek banks battling the invasion of a dozen or so vigorous weeds to try and re-establish that balance. It is an attempt to restore some of the authenticity back to the original ecosystem, the habitat that slowly evolved there, and the wildlife dependent on it.

However the changes that have happened and are still happening in these areas are dramatic and fast; too fast for the more vulnerable species to adapt to and too fast for a hand-full of ageing tree-huggers to keep up with. We may also become a vulnerable species.

Kerry Walker

### MORE NEWS FROM AFRICA

New Scientist, October 2006, reports some good news from the barren wastelands of the Sahel region on the Sahara's southern region. Farmers are reclaiming the desert turning the land into green, productive farmland. "Satellite images taken this year and 20 years ago show that the desert is in retreat thanks to the resurgence of trees. Tree planting has led to the re-greening of as much as 3 million hectares of land in Niger, enabling some 250,000 hectares to be farmed again.

They are mainly ana trees (*Faidherbia albida*), a type of acacia. The trees create a virtuous circle of benefits. Leaves and fruits provide food, fodder and organic matter to fortify the soil. More livestock means more manure, which further enriches the soil enabling crops to be grown, and spreads seed so new trees grow. The trees also provide shelter for the crops and help prevent soil erosion. In times of drought, firewood can be sold and food purchased to tide families over."

Coupled with simple measures such as ditches and holes to catch scarce rainwater for irrigation, the programmes are helping communities in Niger re-establish control over their fate, simultaneously halting the march of the desert and helping to prevent famines like the one that hit Niger in 2005. Analysis of satellite images and rainfall in the Sahel region between 1982 and 1999 show that 10 to 20 percent more rain falls when the land is green.

The final message is one of caution. "The recovery is fragile and can only be sustained through international aid and investment in transport infrastructure and education. The situation in Niger is much better than it was last year, but there are pockets of insecurity."

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[enews@menofthetrees.org.au](mailto:enews@menofthetrees.org.au)



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