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Volume 8, Issue 1

Summer 2006



What's happening ...

The end of another year and let's hope for substantial rain for next year! Following the AGM (below & p2), the committee discussed activities for 2007. These include: a meeting possibly in March focusing on **trees, water and swamps**; a **chain saw course** in mid winter; and a **forestry tour to Kangaroo Island** on weekend of March 31st. More details will be forthcoming

The committee will be phoning members to check your contact details, your current forestry tree 'status', what are your expectations and requirements from your membership and what you can offer. Please be prepared to participate to help improve your branch's effectiveness by organising pertinent future activities, understanding your requirements and making important decisions about our future. Past members will also be contacted.

Congratulations to MLR-KI AFG member, Stephen McNamara as the new National President of the Firewood Association of Australia. We will be discussing the benefits of a mutual exchange of information and working with this industry body.

Please email me rjlong@ozemail.com.au for any further information.

Bob Long, President

AFG MLR & KI Branch AGM October 8th 2006

Minutes

Present: Jill Stone, Tony Dickson, Clare Buswell, Bob and Yvonne Long,

Apologies: Andrew Taylor, Joan & Barry Spencer, Clare and Heiko Maurer, Louisa & Ilker Daveriadams, Anthea Howard, Richard Bennett and Peter Bulman.

President's report—see page 2.

Financial report—opening balance \$; current balance \$; income \$; expenditure \$. The main expenditure items included

Matters arising (for follow up by the committee)

- ◆ There was a common thought of the AGM meeting that we need to engage the members in more of the AFG branch activities to ensure we support each other to achieve our goals.
- ◆ Tony Dickson agreed to discuss strategies to engage DWLBC or not and AFG's overall role with P Bulman
- ◆ All supported the idea for a weekend field trip to KI in April.
- ◆ A need to for a member review was identified involving: updating contact details including email; review of tree stocks; marketing needs and what services members want from AFG etc. It was resolved that each committee member phone and mail 10 members each. This should include following up recent MTG participants (6 have joined).
- ◆ Bob agreed to organise a committee telecon to review a report from ForestrySA; get input from P Bulman on MTG outcomes; plan finances and the program for 2008 MTG.
- ◆ Jill Stone agreed to collate list of contractors available to service AFG members.
- ◆ All supported the organisation of a chainsaw introductory course in August 2007.

AFG MLR & KI Branch AGM October 8th 2006

Presidents Report

Welcome to members and others.

Constitutionally we are required to have our AGM well before the National AGM, which is at the Conference in Tasmania in October.

Thanks to Tony Dickson for hosting us today.

Highlights of the year

Without question a very successful and well-attended *Master TreeGrower* program was the highlight of the year. The course was attended by one or more of the registrants, business or family. Different AFG members joined in when a particular subject of interest was being presented. So we had excellent attendance, presenters and good learning outcomes.

I am pleased to announce that Tony Brookman is the *SA Tree Farmer of the Year*.

Other activities included a social BBQ last years AGM; pre- and post-MTG dinner to promote and celebrate the course; sharing of experiences own marketing firewood—in the field and via the newsletter (Dickson, McNamara and Chambers).

We had a dinner meeting with guest speakers on firewood and water. Barrie Spencer found a Creswick sawmilling course very valuable and we participated in the water allocation debate.

Tony Dickson is now representing AFG on MLRPF (with John Campbell as an observer).

Various members had input into the CFS Plantation Design Standards. This was debated over most of the year and has now been finalized and circulated to local government planners.

Members joined the MTG session on wood properties, processing and markets with Bush Timbers, Pfitzner furniture and Russell Washusen from CSIRO.

The Master TreeGrower Program 2006

Our branch helped facilitate this second program—sponsored by *Computershare* with support from *Mount Lofty Ranges Private Forestry*, *AFG*, the *National Landcare Program* and *ForestrySA* (now *PIRSA Forestry*) with national MTG Coordinator Rowan Reid from the *University of Melbourne*. The program is sponsored by the *Joint Venture Agroforestry Program* (<http://www.rircd.gov.au/programs/afi.html>).

The MTG course is not an accredited skills based training course, nor is it a formal university subject. It is, however, one of the most popular and successful adult education courses available to farmers in Australia.

This participants' feedback to the course was very positive and we look forward to their involvement with our branch in the future.

General

I suggest to members that they read the national *Australian Forest Grower* magazine and take advantage of support systems, which are available through the national body and our own branch. Services provided such as forestry insurance, information on forestry property rights, technical information and sources, national lobbying to the government on topics such as taxation, water rights, acceptance of forestry as a legitimate Agricultural pursuit etc. can be easily overlooked. Please support AFG by maintaining membership, encouraging others to join and be involved.

As with all events farm visits, field inspections are the most popular means of members to learn, communicate and encourage each other to pursue their interest in forestry.

I urge members to offer your property for visits and encourage you to advise the committee now so we can help co-ordinate a visit into our yearly program.

I wish to mention the strong support and working relationship with Peter Bulman who is on our committee and the Executive Officer of the *Mount Lofty Ranges Private Forestry*. His expertise and experience is a valuable resource for our AFG branch. Thank you Peter.

Also thanks to Anthea's representation on the National Board keeping us in the picture and doing great work at that level.

The four newsletters, which communicate our activities to all members. I strongly encourage members to contribute to this Newsletter to make it more interesting and report your news and views.

Thank you to all the committee who have contributed through out the year.

We had a few teleconferencing committee meetings and I think this worked well. Decisions were more easily made and it was more convenient than having to travel to meet.

Bob Long, President



AFG biennial conference in Tassie—pictorial essay and Jill Stone’s best bits



L: Brian Cornish (ex SA AFG President) & chainsaw-carved sculpture



R: Native regrowth forest harvesting and young regrowth



Tahune Air Walk/E obliqua



Jill Stone and baby blackwood; latest safety skirt fashion and her impressions of the five-day tour of

Lower life form, Lake St. Clair



Tasmanian forests—impeccably organised, topped off with the conference in Launceston, again most professional and superbly catered it’s hard to pick the best bits. Perhaps one field trip does stand out in my mind. We took a rather long bus trip out to the central tiers where Forestry Tasmania were conducting a blackwood nurse crop trial. Having just seen massive blackwoods in native forest around Dismal Swamp, it was hard to imagine why a trial was needed. However with more and more private plantations going on, help is needed. The site was cold and windy. *E. nitens* and radiata pine were being used as nurse crops planted at various spacings and subject to various pruning and thinning routines used to gauge the effect on the blackwoods planted between. The outcomes suggested a grid pattern with progressive thinning to allow for light to reach the tops of the blackwood and constant form pruning of the crop trees.

L to R: Gunns’ north coast nursery, Preolenna *E nitens* plantations & veneer mill; export log loading (cop the scale)



Andy Warner; farm forestry timberbelt; and history in Dismal Swamp—home of the famous blackwood; pre-con tour group



Tony Brookman L; Malcolm Boxall M socializing and Bob Long presenting the SA Tree Farmer Award



PO Box 10
GUMERACHA SA 5233
barenjoe@bigpond.net.au
www.afg.asn.au

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Bob Long	President	8251 1217
Clare Buswell	Sec/Treas	8388 9516
Peter Bulman	Newsletter	8339 5055
Jill Stone	Committee	0407 695 029
Tony Dickson	Committee	8554 5283
Anthea Howard	Committee	8553 0427
Joan Spencer	Committee	8568 5622

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Mt Lofty Ranges PF—swamp buffer guidelines media release



The Private Forestry industry in the region welcomes a project which is developing swamp buffer guidelines, according to the new Chair of *Mt Lofty Ranges Private Forestry*, Barry Featherston (left).

As CEO of *Fleurieu Regional Development*, Mr Featherston said, ‘I expect that Adelaide Blue Gum, state agencies, local government and conservationists will also welcome the guidelines which will define the distances that plantations need to be set back from the Fleurieu swamps to be able to maintain the hydrology required to conserve the swamps’.

‘Independent consultants, Lu Zhang (top right) a CSIRO hydrologist and Michelle Casanova (bottom right) a Victorian ecologist, have been engaged to develop the guidelines.’

Mr Featherston recognises the potential for a significant additional contribution from the embryonic private forestry industry in terms of employment, wealth and diversity within the region.

‘Forestry in the Mt Lofty Ranges already directly and indirectly employs more than 200 and injects approximately \$14m into the economy annually.’

‘Having stable non-tax driven corporate investment through companies such as *Adelaide Blue Gum*’s \$70m project, is a bonus as it provides landholders with opportunities to lease land and enter profit-sharing joint venture agreements.’

‘I expect that over time, the community will better understand the net benefits and increasingly support a local private forestry industry too’, said Mr Featherston.

‘For instance, changing land use from grazing to forestry immediately removes grazing from swamps and reduces nutrient and pathogen levels in streams.’

Primary Industries and Resources, SA and the *Department of Water Land and Biodiversity Conservation* are jointly funding the project which is being managed by *Mt Lofty Ranges Private Forestry* Executive Officer Peter Bulman and is due to be completed by mid December.

Mr Featherston said Peter is also keen to engage with the local communities through the water allocation planning process, local government, environmental and natural resources management groups. Peter can be contacted on 0408 395055 or pbulman@bigpond.net.au.



www.mlrfp.asn.au



Farm Forestry Toolbox training session—register your interest

The Farm Forestry Toolbox is a Compact Disk computer package containing user-friendly tools that has been developed over the past six years by Private Forests Tasmania to help forest growers better handle a wide range of issues that must be addressed to grow trees successfully.

The Farm Forestry Toolbox version 5 project has been funded through Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation. The project has updated and expanded the previous version of the Toolbox increasing the usefulness of many tools to the specific regions covered by the Private Forestry Development Committees (PFDCs).

If you are interested in this one day workshop sometime between Wed 14 Mar & Sun 25 Mar, contact Amy Ho on 8291 5418.