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Issue 40

Spring 2008

AUSTRALIAN FOREST GROWERS - REPRESENTING & PROMOTING PRIVATE FORESTRY

Mt Lofty-KI AFG Newsletter

What's happening ...

Members seem to be more interested in big events than field days on grower's properties and the mooted visit to the Gumeracha Agroforestry Demonstration Area. So the committee is thinking that it would be better to hold fewer but bigger events such as the recent visit by Andrew Lang. This means that the committee need only put energy into events that are likely to be well supported.



Forthcoming activities

- ◇ AGM—noon Sunday 28th September for BBQ (meat provided) at Peter's at 5 Kent Rd Aldgate but best parking is via Surrey Rd near AFG sign on gate (BYO drinks and salad or sweet but **RSVP pbulman@bigpond.net.au or 0408 395 055** for catering)
- ◇ Conference Albury-Wodonga in early October (being attended by Brian and Michael Cornish, Peter Bulman and myself ... anybody else?)
- ◇ Mayo by-election questionnaire and **Nov 20th field day** (see p3 and MLRPF p4)
- ◇ Final phase of the harvesting at David Handyside's (Meadows) in early autumn 2009

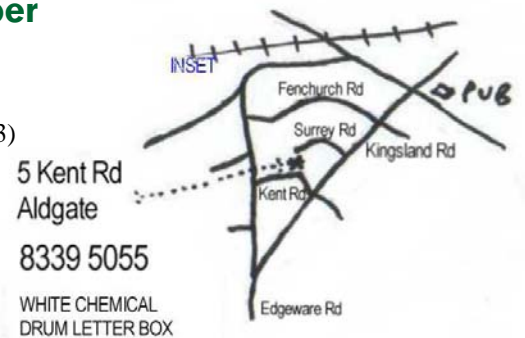
Jill Stone, President Tel: 0407 695 029 or email: stone.jm@bigpond.com


AGM Sunday 28th September

1. Welcome/apologies
2. Minutes of 2007 AGM (see pages 2-3)
3. President's report
4. Treasurer's report
5. Election of office bearers
6. Other items

A copy of the full statement will be available at the AGM. Branch revenue comprised \$20/member. Expenditure covered items such as purchase of Agroforestry News (Australian Agroforestry) at \$20/member for four issues, the Kangaroo Island trip, committee teleconferences, postage and social functions eg AGM. All the annual revenue and more is being used to provide services to members, particularly the more active ones.

This is now utilising reserves built up when the branch was receiving more assistance with such costs from State agencies. MLRPF is still paying for the printing of the Newsletter.



 Australian Forest Growers Mount Lofty Ranges / Kangaroo Island Branch <small>Account Statement Detail: 01/07/07 to 30/06/2008</small>		ID#	Date	Memo	Debit	Credit	Job No.	Ending Balance
		2-2239		Mt Lofty Ranges/KI				
		Beginning Balance:		\$5,516.57cr				
				Total:	\$2,596.93	\$1,212.73		\$4,132.37cr
				Grand Total:	\$2,596.93	\$1,212.73		

AFG Mount Lofty Ranges & Kangaroo Island branch Annual General Meeting 2007

Minutes of the Meeting.

Meeting held Sunday 30th October 2007 at Jill Stone's property near Victor Harbor

Attendance

Jill Stone, Brian Cornish, John Campbell, Tony Dickson, Yvonne and Bob Long, Grant Kelly, Ursula and Peter Bulman and Tony Brookman.

Apologies: Barry and Joan Spencer, Richard Bennett, Anthea Howard, Clare Buswell and Heiko Maurer.

Thank you to Jill Stone for hosting us for the day.

Presidents Report

Our committee for 2007 comprised of the following:

President, Bob Long, Clare Buswell, Sec/ Treasurer, Peter Bulman Newsletter and committee, Jill Stone, Tony Dickson (representative with John as backup) Anthea Howard and Barrie Spencer.

The **Annual Branch Report** has been sent to AFG HQ for inclusion in the National AGM Report and the National AGM and was read to the meeting. Accepted and seconded by Jill Stone and John Campbell respectively.

A Highlight of the year was a trip to Kangaroo Island to support out KI members and see what forestry activities are happening there. Those who attended and were visited would endorse my comments that it was excellent & worthwhile trip. We thank the KI members for their help for hosting us for the properties & other facilities will visited.

The National Policy Forum and Annual General Meeting is being held on October 15-16th in Melbourne.

We are entitled to 3 delegates at the Policy Forum at this meeting but we will not be represented at this or the AGM.

Barrie Spencer and Peter Bulman to attend. (Barrie and Jill Stone attended)

Treasurer's report.

In the absence of Clare, Peter Bulman reported that we have been using our funds to distribute the Agroforestry News and other activities such as funding for the Kangaroo Island trip and partial payment for the S.A. Tree Farmer of the Year award to Tony Brookman. The opening balances were \$5517 and \$4755 respectively.

Other Items

A list of activities, which were raised during this last year and recommend we include in the coming year.

1. Chainsaw training- Identified that Stuart Rayson from the Logging Industry Training Association who conducts CFS training and can fit members into these sessions. However they are generally on weekends. Some weekend training available but for intending members we need to be able to slot them in when a position is available. We have had four enquiries to do this but so far have not happened. Suggest that more members should partake of this offer.
2. A Farm Forestry Toolbox session was offered on March 19th 2007 for members to attend conducted by Andy Warner. Also available are Pruned Stand Certification

courses. These were discussed and will be followed up.

3. Stephen McNamara AFG member and President of the Firewood Association of Australia offered us membership and participation for our members. He also sent us the Firewood Certification Scheme & Code of Practice information. We need to support these initiatives for our future involvement.
4. The AFG Green Triangle branch offered us to visit for a trip. As yet we have not taken this up.
5. Training courses for auditors are regularly run by Andy Warner on behalf of AFG. If we have some interest in our area (about 10 persons is great) we can discuss with AFG's Christina.
6. **TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR AWARD**
As advised in the November edition of the Branch Communiqué, the winners of the 2006 Tree Farmer of the Year Award were John and Diana Lord. John Lord is currently doing a lot of estate planning in rural areas and there is potentially an opportunity for him to speak to AFG Branches or farm forestry groups as the National Tree Farmer of the Year Award winner. If you would like to organize for John to speak at a Branch meeting he can be contacted on (03) 6391 1490 or via email to jlord@kpmg.com.au. In relation to the 2007-2008 State Tree Farmer of the Year Awards, guidelines are currently being reviewed and the updated version will be distributed in March 2007.
7. **AFG BIENNIAL CONFERENCE 2008**
A place and approximate dates for the next AFG Biennial Conference have been set – the 2008 Conference will be held in Albury, dates (probable) are 19-22 October 2008. We strongly encourage our members to attend, given all the issues we are currently facing.
8. With the success of the last Master TreeGrowers Course the current Committee suggests it should be on the agenda for next year.

The Membership Survey

Peter Bulman reviewed the survey with the aid of graphs to illustrate the main outcomes. Generally speaking members are supporting the direction that committee is taking, but there are some guidelines for the future committee to consider. We encourage any input by members.

The President thanked the existing committee for all their efforts during the year. Of particular note was the excellent support from Peter Bulman with the Newsletter and his knowledge and expertise of the forestry industry.

Thank you Peter.

There are plenty issues still facing us locally and nationally with the forestry industry and the general public especially in regard to water issues and developing our own markets for wood. We look forward to more members' inputs and support for the work our committee in this coming year.

Election of the next AFG branch Committee

I will be stepping down as President and will now vacate the position.

The committee asked me to conduct the Election of the new committee.

The following were nominated seconded and accepted.

Jill Stone President, Committee Peter Bulman (News letter), Bob Long, Tony Dickson, Grant Kelly, John Campbell, Clare Buswell, Barry Spencer and Anthea Howard. Congratulations!

Thursday November 20th community forestry field trip

This is a golden opportunity for tree growers to mingle with those from local government, water allocation planning, 'natural resource managers' and conservationists to better understand each other's points of view and concerns—such as water, fire, transport and biodiversity. This should complement the by-election questionnaire (see below).

The bus and/or convoy will leave from the entrance to the Mt Compass Football Club grounds at 10am Nov 20th and return at approximately 4pm. A picnic-style lunch will be provided to those who RSVP by emailing pbulman@bigpond.net.au or calling 0408395055.

The provisional program itinerary involves visiting:

- ◇ Jill Stone's property *Three Streams*, a **herb property growing hardwoods and softwoods**
- ◇ Tony Dickson's property *Ferret Farm* in the Back Valley that is producing and retailing **firewood and broombush**
- ◇ A 20ha **leased Adelaide Blue Gum woodlot** and *Callawonga*, a **property-scale tree farm** to discuss any related issues including protection of swamp hydrology
- ◇ *Bracken Ridge*, a viable **softwood tree farm near Mt Compass** compared with a woodlot typical of the numerous smaller woodlots planted back in the 1970s and 1980s
- ◇ *Bingfield* near Meadows to look at **commercial-scale harvesting and marketing of firewood**

Mayo by-election questionnaire

Questions put to the candidates—see wwwmlrpf.asn.au News Page for the link to the responses

The Greens, Lynton Vonow; Conservatives for Climate and Environment, Rachael Barons; Independent, Bill Spragg; One Nation, Mathew Keizer; Independent, Mary Brewerton; Australian Democrats, Andrew Castrique; Liberal, Jamie Briggs; Independent, Malcolm King; Family First Party, Bob Day; Democratic Labor Party, David McCabe; Independent, Di Bell

Balance of trade

Australia currently imports \$2b more of wood and paper products than is exported.

Do you think that we should reduce this \$2b national deficit in wood and paper products by growing more of our wood and fibre crops in plantations?

Firewood

Currently tens of thousands of tonnes of red gum firewood are trucked >600km annually from remnant native forests in NSW and Victoria — well over 90% of that sold in Adelaide's woodyards.

Do you think that Mayo should contribute to regional self sufficiency in firewood (rather than import it from NSW and Victoria), reduce use of fossil fuels and save greenhouse emissions associated with the transport?

Climate change

Forests planted on cleared agricultural land can remove 5-30 tonnes of CO² per hectare from the atmosphere annually.

Do you think that reforestation should be supported in principle for its role in sequestering carbon and helping to address global warming?

Habitat

The overwhelming threats to our biodiversity are the fragmentation of remnant native vegetation and overall loss of habitat. Studies continue to highlight the value of plantations in buffering remnant native vegetation, providing habitat and corridors.

Regardless of this contribution, the quality of the habitat can never be equivalent to that of native vegetation, but do you think it is fair that tree crops are often still be expected to provide the equivalent habitat to native vegetation when horticulture, viticulture and agriculture are not?

Natural resource management plan

The A MLR NRM plan has targets to improve water quality, reduce water erosion and maintain primary production.

Do you think that partial reforestation can contribute towards the following NRM goals/targets in the? Do you support reforestation to:

Improve water quality in terms of nutrients, turbidity and pathogen levels? (Target 2)

Reduce water erosion and mass erosion? (Target 4)

Help reverse the decline of primary production associated with lifestyle properties? (Target 5)

(Continued on page 4)

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Jill Stone	President	8251 1217
Clare Buswell	Sec/Treas	8388 9516
Peter Bulman	Newsletter	8339 5055
Bob Long	Committee	0419 504 716
Tony Dickson	Committee	8554 5283
Malcolm Boxall	Committee	8553 9016
Barrie Spencer	Committee	8568 5622
Grant Kelly	Committee	8568 2109
John Campbell	Committee	8556 2916

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(Continued from page 3)

Water (Allocation Planning)

Whilst recognising that clearance of native vegetation increases runoff and flood peaks (and associated land degradation issues), partial reforestation would reverse this to some degree but also reduce inflows into Lake Alexandrina, *do you think that forestry should be taken into account in the water allocation planning process by licensing or permitting non-irrigated forestry?*

If you do, then do think that revegetation with local native species should also be taken into account in the water allocation planning process?

[Considering that reforestation of approximately 1.3% of the region (5000ha of 400,000ha) compares with the NRM target of achieving 30% cover with native vegetation (a net increase of 16% — up from 14% remnant native vegetation)?

Other policy elements

Is there any other policy position relating to private forestry that you would like to outline?

Mt Lofty Ranges PF

The analysis for the **firewood harvesting and marketing report** has now been completed and available to download from the ‘news’ and ‘technical pages’ on the website.

The cost effectiveness of the industrial-scale harvester ended up far exceeding that of the small-scale system with net returns to the grower of approximately \$36/tonne forecast when the logs are sold in 2009.

The smaller system, although highly mechanised, battles against the number of times the logs need to be handled and the associated labour costs. Even though all the woodlots on David Handyside's property are only being thinned, harvesting costs would be considerably reduced if he was clear felling. Understandably, a lot of small-scale growers also indicated a clear desire to thin their trees rather than clear fell part of them as a 'crop harvest' and regrow them.

One contractor was considering an alternative system that involves less handling. **He has dropped that idea now because, we as growers, do not seem to have enough wood ready for harvest.** In the interim, it appears that in many cases, that felling the unwanted trees and leaving them on the ground to break down and build up organic matter may be the best solution.

The **Mayo by-election** has hopefully provided the opportunity to raise the profile of private forestry in the eyes of the community—politicians, water allocation planners, natural resource managers, local government, conservationists, irrigators and the general public.

The **questionnaire** on pages 3-4 was brainchild of Tony Dickson. It is designed to get ‘all of the above’ to think a little bit more objectively and a bit deeper about the net benefits of private forestry.

A follow up **field trip** is planned for November 20th and those with an interest in any part of the process of growing productive trees should be there—to mingle with and influence the wide range of participants expected. See page 3 for the provisional details of the field trip and keep an eye on the ‘news’ page.

By the way, the modest funding for MLRPF is no longer available, so we’ll eke out our remaining funding as long as possible.



www.mlrfpf.asn.au

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