



Lot 50–Kanyanyapilla, McLaren Vale
Bi-cultural Ecological and Cultural Regeneration
Newsletter No 3, July 2016

Hi Everyone

What's it all about, Alfie?

What's it all about, Alfie?
Is it just for the moment we live?
What's it all about when you sort it out, Alfie?
Are we meant to take more than we give
or are we meant to be kind?
(thanks to Cilla, Burt and Hal)

Over the cycles of the past year I have been further contemplating what this project is about. On the face of it, it is presented as a bi-cultural ecological and cultural regeneration project, and it is. But I also now understand it as basically a psychological project; the psychology of being in place, imagining a future and forming a clan.

Personally, if my psychological will falters or fails, the project will wither or die. Whilst my will is strong, it is reinforced by others; those close to me and the many people from a broader community/spectrum of life. It is reinforcing that others see value in the project and are providing assistance, resources and encouragement. There is no expectation that all will see value and this is where I imagine the concept of clan comes in, a group of people united by kinship or with a strong common interest. So welcome to the clan. Please invite others who you believe share the same affinities and understandings.

I've also been thinking about my career as an artist; I've almost given away exhibiting and public space practice. Is it wise to let go of twenty years of effort? It has taken me a while to better understand that I haven't, I had to see past the weeds and the problems to also see the opportunities. Rather than giving art away I've returned to the fundamental sculptural form and the root of my work, the land. 'Land art' has been with us since the 1960s, emerging in the USA. It has been an important stepping stone in changing aspects of arts practice. But land art has been both hugely damaging as well as, and less often, restorative.

To explain my perspective. In 1998 I wrote an article 'The Ecology of Art or Art as Ecology' for *Broadsheet: Contemporary Visual Arts and Culture*. In part I wrote:

What then is the place of art in ensuring our continued and equitable existence, which is humanity's great challenge...

Part of my work relates to conciliation between people and people, and people and the land.

It is easy to consider the sculptural form to be a river valley, paint strokes to be the planting of trees, shrubs and grasses, the grubbing of fennel and poisoning of blackberry to be the editing of superfluous content.

But bring in also others; collaboration with engineers, architects, urban planners, landscape planners, those who influence the form of our public space and infrastructure. Then another layer of ecologists, botanists, cultural planners and importantly artists. People who can see across borders and disciplines, who ask the silly questions, who articulate a vision, who forge new bonds.

Art is personal, public and political expression, cultural mediation, the manipulation of matter, the ascribing of an aesthetic. To manipulate an urban, rural or remote landscape, to change its aesthetic from degraded to sustainable, to mediate and act on the way people understand and live in the bio physical world can be and is art.

So life is an evolution, one step after another and different or meandering paths are always available. (*Ecology of Art or Art as Ecology* article available: <http://gavinmaloneartist.com/gavins-writing/>)

News

Planting 2016 Season

Planting is underway this season with about 1,200 seedlings to go in, the number has kept growing. Nearly twenty people have already assisted and my thanks to everyone. *But more help is needed please.* There will be planting sessions on Saturday 9, Wednesday 13 and Sunday 17 July. Sessions are 9.00 am to noon and 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm. If you would like to take part please let me know by email which session you will attend so that I can plan for the sessions, gavindmalone@gmail.com.



First planting day, late May 2016

The Natural Resources Work Plan is providing about 700 seedlings propagated from local provenance seed, particularly the species that are not commonly available. In addition there are 300 seedlings from Trees for Life. These were propagated by a volunteer, Rina Rossi, who only lives a few blocks from me at Goodwood. Thank you Rina.

And more recently two regional growers, Barbary O'Brien from Middleton and John Edmeades from Hope Forest, have donated 150 seedlings. My thanks to them.

Weed management through selective spraying and broad scale slashing has been undertaken (and is ongoing). Priority areas for revegetation are the reed swamp, the sedge lands along the drainage lines and establishing areas of woodland. To plant River Redgums and Tea-trees into the reed swamp 'planting corridors' have been slashed. Sometimes the big machines are the only way. Thanks to Justin, the tractor operator, from CL Contracting. He has now slashed/mowed about 13 ha on Lot 50, much of it 'virgin weed' as well as the planting corridors.



Creating a 'planting corridor'



It was noticeably cool as well as crunchy underfoot in the corridors. Access will be maintained until the plantings are established and the reeds will then quickly swallow them. This year's planting of 50 River Redgums and 100 Silky Tea-trees has been completed.

Dendro Theatre

In line with my musings above (well the prompt really), a Dendro Theatre, is being created. In essence a Dendro Theatre is an afforested amphitheatre where the landform and plantings are designed to provide the necessary infrastructure for a performance space but with the natural features and ambience of a woodland or park setting.

The concept goes back to 1994 when in my final year at Art School I developed a proposal for a Dendro Theatre in the Adelaide City Parklands (further details of the concept are on my website).

It didn't proceed then but now, 22 years later, a Dendro Theatre is finally being implemented. A site has been chosen, grass management commenced, about 80 seedlings planted, a 'stage' designed and is being built over time and logs and tree trunks placed to help define the space. These logs are from a mature Spotted Gum *Corymbia maculata* felled at Forestville in 2013. It stood adjacent the Goodwood Railway Station but was in the way of the railway line upgrade. I was able to salvage most of the large timber courtesy of the City of Unley.

The Dendro Theatre is a long term project, the trees and shrubs have to grow, who knows when the first public performance may be or who the performers will be! The first private performance was in May, Lexy playing one tune on her tin whistle, Blaitthin.



Tin whistle performance

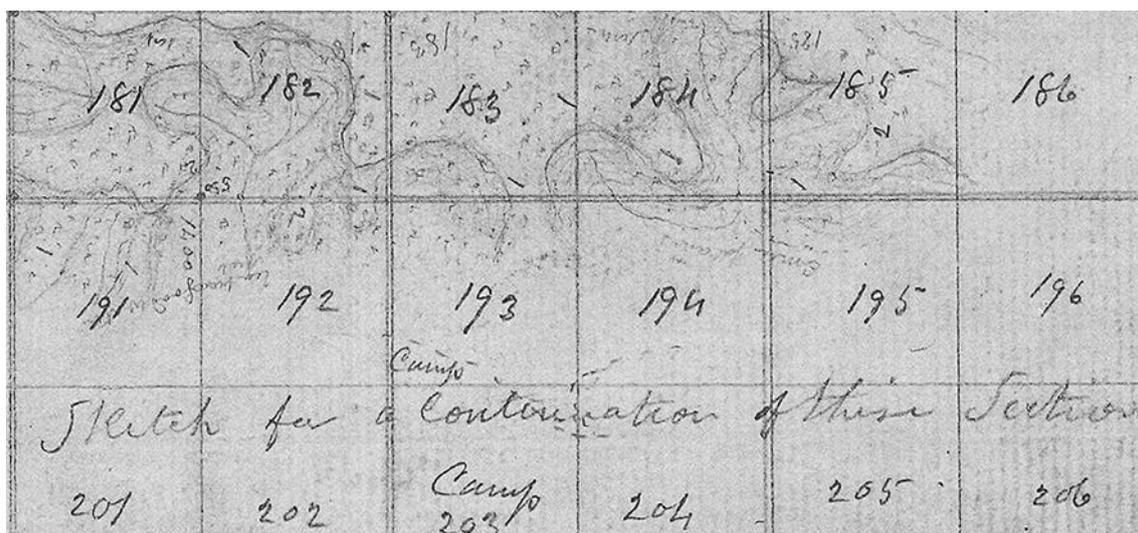
For the story about the Spotted Gum see: <http://localandbespoke.com/2012/12/18/significant-tree/>



Spotted Gum *Corymbia maculata*, Forestville, 2013 (Images courtesy Mary Heath)

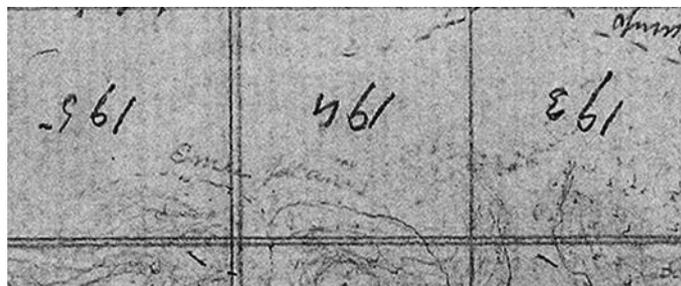
Cultural Mapping

Cultural mapping research is ongoing. A colleague, Chester Schultz, is undertaking research on Kaurna place names in the Willunga Basin and Fleurieu Peninsula. As part of that he has accessed the field note books of the first survey party in 1839. Thanks to Chester, here is the first European depiction of the Maslin Creek Reed Swamp locality. Lot 50 is part of Section 194.



Extract from Richard Counsel's Field Book 94-52

And upside down in faint hand writing he recorded 'Emu plains' across sections 194 & 195



Extract from Richard Counsel's Field Book 94-52

Where have all the emus gone, long time passing?
 Where have all the emus gone, long time ago?
 Where have all the emus gone?
 Young colonists have picked them everyone.
 Oh, when will they ever learn?
 Oh, when will they ever learn?
 (Apologies to Peter, Paul and Mary)

Archaeological Research

Keryn Walshe, Principal Archaeologist, South Australian Museum, has commenced field research which is ongoing. Whilst an archaeological survey was undertaken in 1993, the location of the current field work was not examined in any detail then. A rich source of post contact artefacts has been found. It will be some time before field collecting and follow up research and documentation is complete so we will all just have to be patient for the final findings. A selection of artefacts will be on display at the next Open Day.

Bird Survey

Graham Carpenter, ornithologist, has undertaken a bird survey as part of the Natural Resources Work Plan. Along with previous sightings, forty-six species have now been identified on, above or adjacent Lot 50-Kanyanyapilla. Thirty-nine species are indigenous and seven introduced. Eight species are utilising the reed swamp including the Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*, which is uncommon.

City of Onkaparinga - Feral Olive Tree Removal

The City of Onkaparinga has undertaken the first phase of removal of feral olives and other woody weeds along the western half of the northern boundary and in the adjacent road reserve. It looks a bit bare in places with the form and shade once provided by the substantially sized olives now gone. However, there is now a clearer view of the revegetation in the road reserve and the stumps of the old trees provide interesting 'sculptural forms'.



Count the fairy castle turrets

NRM – Feral Ash Tree Removal

A grove of feral ash trees in the swamp adjacent Pethick Road is being removed and being replaced by a grove of River Redgums. The ash have been poisoned and the Redgums planted.

History Snippet: End of Transportation

Transportation of convicts to Australia stopped in 1868, the last batch to Western Australia.

Transportation of winter water to Lot 50 stopped in 2016 with the installation of two rainwater tanks.

Having transported several tonnes of water on the back of the ute over the last 15 months it is absolutely wonderful to now have on-site water capture and storage. Current capacity is 2 kl, rainwater coming off Lorrie's Hut and the BBQ shelter. This supplies the winter plantings but come summer it will be back to the ute until the main shed is built and capacity increases.

Thanks to Kathy Schuller and Pamela Poole for the donation of tanks.

In Closing

Again my thanks to all who are supporting this project. The second Open Day will be in September or October with lots of changes to see. Details will be available when the date is finalised.

Cheers

Gavin

Contact and Information

Gavin Malone: gavindmalone@gmail.com

Website: lot50kanyanyapilla.com

Project Partners and Supporters



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