



Lot 50–Kanyanyapilla, McLaren Vale

Bi-cultural Ecological and Cultural Regeneration

Newsletter No 19, Summer 2020

Hi Everyone

News

Natural Resource Management - Landscape SA Logo

Last issue was the last appearance of the old banner image, it was also the last appearance of the NRM logo as NRM has been abolished, replaced by Landscape SA (LSA), and my NRM Work Plan expired a few years ago.

But say hello to the LSA logo for Hills and Fleurieu on the last page. L50K has been successful in receiving a grant of \$3,500 for swamp edge regeneration. This will enable a concerted effort on weed control, the weeds really prosper there, and the planting of another 500 seedlings along the swamp edge in 2021. LSA funding is supported by the contribution of 340 hours, or \$11,250 worth, of labour by me and volunteers. Call to arms for planting later.

The aim is to achieve the most intact and species diverse remnant reed swamp edge in greater Adelaide.

Other Stuff

Oh What a Night

Nick Graalman, filmmaker of *Treading Lightly* and a regular contributor at L50K, celebrated his 40th birthday with family and friends at L50K in late October. Nick being Nick didn't just have a BBQ and a sponge cake with 40 candles but put on the first electrified music event in the Dendro Theatre along with a camp over for those who wanted to.

Three solo acts, Sandy, Zoe and Tom, supported the main musos Bromham 'a big old folk band' from Adelaide with up to 13 musicians on stage. There were 9 or 10 this time and the crowd was on the dance carpets in no time. 'If you want to dance' said the organist and the Covid deprived body shakers flooded the floor in a blink. It was such fun we'll have another one, probably next April.

Thanks Nick, happy 40th and welcome to your 5th decade.



Bromham



Zoe



Tom (didn't get a piccie of Sandy)

Swamp Edge Plants Donation

As mentioned above, there is a year of concentrated activity along the swamp edge. City of Onkaparinga has also come to the party. Surplus swamp edge species were available from the Council nursery so 400 are making their way to L50K along with another 150 seedlings for the closed road reserves. They have to be nursed over summer until autumn rains and thanks muchly to Ched for taking on this task at his home.

Happening in the Hood

Pethick Road Swamp Crossing

City of Onkaparinga commenced construction of the culvert based road crossing in early October. This will allow low flow environmental water flows and stop the road being washed away during high flows. The swamp crossing was first metalled in the 1850s and over time built up to form a dam which backed up water causing unwanted flooding and salinity problems in the vineyards upstream, as well as denying water downstream.

An impressive amount of machinery was on site but it was a circa \$250,000 project.



This is what it looked like at times before:



Winter 2016

And this is what it looks like now; a new Royal Flying Doctor emergency landing strip?



Summer 2020

Pethick Road Ferals

The eagle eyes may have spotted the olive hedge row in the 2016 image above receding, another section is being cleared of feral olives. A couple of hundred metres of olives have been removed just south of the swamp courtesy of SA Power Networks, City of Onkaparinga and Treasury Wine Estates. Power Networks is gradually removing olives under power lines instead of continuous pruning, Council is removing them at any opportunity and Treasury have chipped in as the olives were intruding into their vineyard big time. And a goodly amount of chippings have ended up at L50K as mulch, about 50 cubic metres so it's a job and a half to spread.

Also missing from the 2016 photo are the feral ash trees being replaced by River Redgums with their canopies now well above the reeds



Pethick Track

Heading north from Branson Road, Pethick Road is closed and has been for some decades enabling feral olives, box thorn and dog roses to take over and swamp the Eucalypts that are still there. Thanks to Council the first 150

metres has been cleared at a contract cost of circa \$7,000. This will enable Treasury Wine Estates to have a new entrance into their vineyards at the northern end of this cleared section and thus avoid heavy machinery traffic through the Aboriginal heritage site and over the root zone of a wonderful old River Redgum.



Pethick Track: Before and After

The road looks a bit bare for now but time and plantings will heal. It's definitely a different neighbourhood to five years ago. What will it be like in another 5?

Willunga Basin Woodlands

The Pethick Track is the segue into the concept of the Willunga Basin Woodlands, linear biodiversity corridors criss-crossing the Willunga Basin utilising abandoned and current road reserves. It's an idea at the moment with an ambitious objective over a decade requiring expenditure of circa \$1,500,000 p.a., funded between the three tiers of government.

The Pethick Track experience gives an indication of a likely cost of \$100,000 per kilometre to clean up and plant medium to heavily infested areas. A submission to governments is being prepared; stay tuned.

Fox Creek Wines

As many would know, Fox Creek are my neighbours, just upstream on the Maslin Creek (aka Fox Creek). They have been the generous wine sponsor of L50K from the start, as again many of you would know and would have enjoyed at an open day or after a work session. Fox Creek has been a highly active supporter of the arts and culture for years.

Well, an ownership change is occurring. The Fox Creek story started in 1986 when Helen and Jim Watts started a vineyard, and then with others founded the winery we know. It became a Watts family affair with all involved but matriarch Helen has decided to call it a day. Thank you to all involved at Fox Creek for your support of L50K.

The good news is that Fox Creek will remain in local ownership with three partners, one being McLaren Vale local Jock Harvey. I've known Jock for a couple of years now, mainly being fellow committee members on the McLaren Vale Biodiversity Project. Jock was a co-founder of this initiative. So looks like Fox Creek will be in good hands for the next phase. Keep supporting and enjoying Fox Creek.

History Snippet

Allocasuarina verticillata, the Drooping Sheoak, the Wind Tree, or Karko in Kurna Meyunna is another of my favourite trees. A tenacious tree growing in all sorts of conditions, rocky to sandy, hot to bloody hot, wet to dry, hundreds have been planted at L50K and are now making their presence, and their whispering sound, their murmuring in the wind, known. Their music, early settlers sometimes compared to a harp.

Where does the common name come from? And there are multiple common names for various species; Swamp-oak, Bull-oak, He-oak. A couple of theories for She-oak, functional and more melodic; the first dating back to the voyage of Captain Cook in 1770 and a 1914 quote:

SHE OAK OR CASUARINA

"Curious" wishes to know the origin of the name she oak, and why it was given to a tree so utterly unlike the real oak. Professor Morris, in his work "Austral English, a Dictionary of Australian Words," quotes from the journal of Captain Cook in 1770, who said of this tree: "Another sort grows tall and straight, something like pines. The wood of this is hard and ponderous, and something of the nature of American live oak."

R. Pickersgill, "Journal of the Endeavour," May 5, 1770, wrote:— "We saw a wood which has a grain like oak, and would be very durable if used for building; the leaves are like a pine leaf."

Numerous other quotations are given to show that from the earliest days, the name oak was given to this tree, the correct name of which is *Casuarina*. With respect to the prefix "she," he says:— "The prefix "she" is used in Australia to indicate an inferiority of timber in texture, colour, or other character, e.g., she-beech, she-pine. The names swamp oak, bull oak, were invented to represent variations of the *Casuarina*. He goes on to say that this simple explanation was too simple for some people and other spellings, e.g., "shea-oak" and shiak were introduced to suggest a different etymology. Shiak seems to claim an aboriginal origin; but no such aboriginal word is found in the vocabularies. He states that there is no doubt about the origin of the name.

The late George Fletcher Moore, who published one of if not the first vocabulary of the native language of the Aborigines of the Swan River district, about 1836, uses the word she oak as though it were then well known, and gives the native equivalent as "gulli". (Western Mail [Perth], 10 July 1914, p. 4)

An alternative is that it is from the Irish Siog 'Shee-oge', a fairy, because of the whispering sound, the fairies chatting away in the woods (Arthure, et al, 2019:252, *Irish South Australia*).

This aligns more so with some Aboriginal understandings of the tree, the old ones whispering away, telling stories, sending messages. Diane Bell's *Ngarrindjeri wurruwarrin: a world that is, was, and will be* says:
I've read about this tree in Tindale and much of it concerns sacred matters which are not discussed openly. What can be said is that tungi, the female she-oak, marked with colour and considered sacred, are distinguished from kula, the male she-oak tree.

Many a time I've sat under a Sheoak, somewhere or anywhere; dry, hot and dusty; cool and verdant, and listened, and enjoyed, and thought, and

Matthew Condon writing in the *Griffith Review* (No.2, 2003) sums it up nicely:
It is melancholy at times. Or happy. Or eerie. Sometimes it sounds like how you feel inside. Sometimes it's the sound of memories. And other times I have no idea what the tunes mean.

Whether they're coming from an unsettled present. Or whether they're songs from an unknown future.

Cheerio for Now

Well, that's it for 2020, an unusual and sometimes challenging year all round. But the rains still came, the Redgums kept growing and the b..... broadleaf weeds seeded, again.

May 2021 be a rewarding year, and a year of growth and satisfaction for all.

And there is some great news in the wind for 2021 (heard it from a Shee-oge). Still crossing the T's and dotting the I's but will let everyone know as soon as the dotted line is signed.

Slainte (slawn-che; cheers in Irish)

Gavin

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Project Partners and Supporters



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