

1(3) Jan 1984

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE

EDITORIAL



● Bill Brennan

Mr W. G. (Bill) Brennan, the Officer-in-Charge at Kalgoorlie, retired from the Forests Department on 30.12.83 after thirty four years service based in Kalgoorlie. Bill's work covered the Goldfields, Murchison, south coast and wheatbelt areas.

In the early days Bill was responsible for the control of bush cutting operations carried out by the Lakewood Firewood Company, the Kurrawang and Gwalia Woodlines, the pumping stations on the goldfields pipeline and local hospitals and breweries. Local mining timber was also a major responsibility of this period.

During latter years, Bill controlled the sandalwood operations on vacant crown land and pastoral leases, greatly improving utilization, area control and pulling methods.

Bill retires with his wife Verna to 52 Rockton Road, Nedlands, and everyone associated with him wish him all the best.

We can only hope that he puts pen to paper and records his knowledge of the Goldfield's history. His knowledge of trees and tree species, as well as native shrubs will also be sadly missed. Many a botanist visiting the Goldfields region has had to think twice before making a statement in Bill's presence.

Kalgoorlie Division.
(see Notice Board, over)

I note, with no enthusiasm, that the accident rate for the first half of 1983/84 is more than double that for the same period last year.

Some blame the new chums taken on for job experience and employment relief, but the fact is we all need to be continuously aware of the dangers.

Over the last seventeen years the Department has made a particular effort to reduce the number of accidents, through education and the reduction of hazards. The Accident Frequency Rate - the number of lost time accidents per 1,000,000 hours worked - has been reduced from more than 100 in 1966/67 to 14 in 1982/83. Compare that with Queensland's current standard of some 200 and you can appreciate the effort. However, if we are not all careful and make a conscious endeavour to avoid accidents, a further six months at the present rate will set our own programme back five years. Particular attention should be paid to work in the field environment. From the December report just circulated it can be clearly seen that most accidents occurred in the field, and half of those involved fancy foot work; trips, falls and slides. (I frequently have my foot in the wrong place - sitting behind this desk - so I need to be doubly careful when venturing into the bush.)

The forest has its natural hazards underfoot and many of us have to use equipment and materials which add to those dangers. Sprays and chemicals are in the news again. If you have to use them at work or at home, make sure you get reliable instructions before you start, and always use the recommended protective gear while working.

It is clearly the Department's policy to provide the safest possible working environment, but it is up to each one of us to look after ourselves and each other to the best of our ability. So - steady does it everybody - think about what you and your friends are doing, and watch your STEP.

I. K.

Meet the Crew



It's 'smoko' for the Kirup crew, on the job at Dolly Road. A well seasoned team, they are chatting here with Andrew Hill (left) - on summer work from Canberra University - and Alan Seymour (hard hat).

Ross Frontino (7 years), Brian Mahony (15 years), Malcolm Crombie (3 years) and Trevor Radford (3 years) are low pruning radiata, after gaining access to the block using a D2 tractor to crush the thorny undergrowth.

They work within earshot of the fire truck and remain on call throughout the day.

Access to the block is an obvious problem and much of the discussion centred on weed control and the continued use of chemical sprays.

"Years ago, the sprays were messy and difficult to handle", said Brian. "We had to mix 245T with diesel. It was unpleasant to use and we had no protective gear in those days. But there were no real problems - we were careful," he said.

"Now", said Trevor, "the sprays are easier to use and we have all the protective gear we can use - rubber boots, overalls, goggles, masks and gloves. The Department supply a dry cleaning service for the overalls and we can wash or exchange the

other gear as often as necessary", he said.

"Still, no-one likes the job", said Andrew. "We would all rather do something else, but it is a big part of the work programme and the Department keeps the job as safe as possible".

All the rules and instructions are clearly set out on individual operator guide sheets organized in conjunction with the Australian Workers Union and the Public Health Department - active ingredients, mixing, application conditions (not too hot or with any wind), protective clothing required, first aid, spillage and disposal - and carefully supervised.

The team agreed the protective clothing was necessary, but said that it generally made the job more difficult.

"The gloves are the worst", said Malcolm. "The P.V.C. material stinks and you can't get rid of the smell on your hands. After a few minutes your fingers wrinkle with the sweat", he said. "We would like someone to come up with a better design."

But Brian was more upset about some of the recent stories in the Daily News. "We haven't used 245T at all this year", he said, "and nobody was sacked. The guys left because they didn't like using any chemicals."

"We don't like it that much either," said Ross, "but most of us have been using the stuff for years without problems, and we don't see why anybody new should get other duties because they don't like a particular job."

To get an idea of the size of the weed problem, Alan took me to where Bob Howlett (driver) and Nevil Johnson were rotary slashing to reduce fuel in a fire buffer zone. The unsprayed thistles were higher than the tractor's cab.

"Kirup has more than 2000 ha of noxious weed". Alan said. "A survey conducted last year suggested the division would need \$200,000 every year, for three years, to get on top of the blackberry (GARLON), thistles (24-D), and eucalypt regeneration (ROUND UP). This year our budget was \$30,700."

"All we can manage with that is major access roads and the boundaries adjoining neighbours. The problem can only be overcome by spraying - more spraying not less," he said.



'Bush Telegraph' is the staff journal of the Forests Department in Western Australia. Any views or opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Department and articles published should not be taken as statements by the Department or the West Australian Government.

All enquiries and comments should be directed to Ian Kay, the editor, phone Como HQ ext. 329.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I would like to question the practice of rehabilitating small gravel pits, road verges and other small disturbed areas with exotic (eastern state) eucalypt tree species. My understanding of the situation is that in the past these areas were seen as an opportunity to test the growth rates and resistance to *Phytophthora cinnamomi* of these eastern state eucalypts on a wide range of sites. However, recently I have seen extremely small areas along road verges and in small gravel pits planted with these eastern eucalypts. Although the areas are small, they are, however, wide spread throughout the northern jarrah forest, often along public roads. Since these rehabilitation areas are so small I can only guess that their function is cosmetic. If this is the case, why not use indigenous tree species that are dieback resistant, such as *Eucalyptus calophylla* and *E. patens* (since many roads occur low in the landscape). I myself would prefer to drive along an avenue of indigenous tree species, that blend with the surrounding jarrah forest, rather than an avenue of *E. resinifera*, *E. microcorys* or *E. globulus*. Is this current practice simply a result of apathy or is there a practical reason?

P.V.H., Como.

The Editor
Bush Telegraph

Having read the Editorial of the second edition of Bush Telegraph, I only hope the bias displayed will not become a characteristic of future editions.

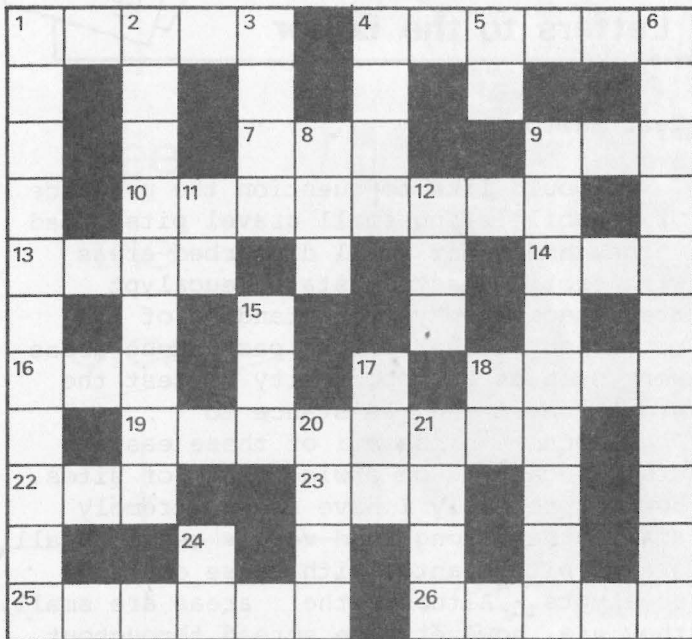
Andrew Cox

Editor

The only bias inferred was that people should take the time to think about 'life' - if not theirs, then their great-grand-children's.

It will persist, but the Bush Telegraph is happy to print all shades of opinion contributed in detail. - I.K.

FORESTRY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Sports car in the karri forest (5).
4. Commander-in-Chief of the Narrogin Infantry Platoon favours this recreation in the forest (6).
7. Red, white, or blue tree (3).
9. Joins District Forest Officer Dan (3).
10. This tree's need gave the characteristic of our pine plantations (4-4).
13. The type of forestry that nearly makes me angry (4).
14. Dull in the wood imperfect (3).
16. Log truck could tow only this number of king karris (3).
18. In Spain this is usually recorded in flat country but in the south west Walpole boasts the most (4).
19. Oops! *Phytophthora* has sore reproductive bodies (8).
22. Complete with endemic wrens but not mice. (3).
23. Heard during a wedding in the Marri-Dooto woodland (1, 2).
25. Faller's ejaculation wherever this occurs (6).
26. The Tasmanian manuscript alludes to why Captain Cook thought the pines on Norfolk Island would be useful (5).

DOWN

1. Part of the forest in carriage (11).
2. He superintends the suppressed, overtopped and subdominant trees (9).
3. Fire in dried gear (4).
4. Thankfully I am up now after dreaming about the "Nannup Tiger" (4).
5. Compare with Harris or Beggs, for example (2).
6. Tom can do sin with these very useful types of tree (11).

8. I attended university in Tunisia without my sita (3).
9. Fire does this to a doubly sad Shea (4-5).
11. Half a biscuit is very old (2).
12. It is modern to dub the inner waistline of a tree (3).
15. Does this insect pest of pine sip phloem? (3).
17. Gosh! Organization Development is divine! (3).
18. Begins a Head office memo dealing with royalty estimates (2).
20. Jarrah piles when ripe make a wharf (4).
21. Initially, Dr McKinnell, Mr Adams, Ms O'Neill and Mr Richmond wander far from State Headquarters (4).
24. Sailor in several of the obsolete fire suppression zones of State forest (2).

Solution next issue

Crossword supplied by Ian Abbott

NOTICEBOARD

On Friday 10 February 1984, at 5 p.m. in the State Headquarters canteen you are invited to a send-off and opportunity to wish Bill and Verna Brennan well in their retirement. Wives/girlfriends, husbands/boyfriends are very welcome.

Subscription will be \$6.50 (single or double) which will include a presentation.

Cheques should be made payable to "Forests Department Presentation Dinner Account".

To finalize catering arrangements those wishing to attend should forward advice to Margaret Elvis, phone 3676333 ext. 313, Information Branch by January 31.

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'Publications' are looking for coloured photographic material suitable for the promotion of all forest values - particularly wildlife - in poster form.

If you have a favourite 35 mm "tran'y" or postcard, please forward an 8 x 10 colour print for their careful consideration by the end of February.

☆ ☆ ☆

Are you receiving enough copies of 'Eush Telegraph' for everybody at your Branch?

*If not, ring
Robyn at Publications Como, ext. 325.*