

## TREE LOOK-OUTS.

by D.W.R. Stewart.

The appearance at Head Office of a small segment from a Marri tree with a section of 2" diameter Karri peg through it, revived memories of our first tree look-out in the main Jarrah forest area. It was felt that some notes on the development of tree look-outs might be of general interest.

Prior to 1936 there were no look-out towers south of the Collie division and no effective means of fire detection from Kirup southwards. A proposal in 1934 to erect a look-out in a pile-sized tree at Yornup was vetoed by higher authority on the grounds that no-one would ever climb it after it was erected. In 1936 a Tuart tree at Ludlow was converted to a tree look-out by Mr. Jack Watson (who was later Superintendent at Kings Park). In the following summer, 1936-37, a Marri tree was pegged some six miles west of Alco Siding on a moderately high ironstone ridge. The view exceeded all expectations, a crow's nest was built in the limbs and the following year a 6ft by 4 ft cabin was constructed, with floor level some 85 ft. above ground. This served for some 26 years before it was replaced by a 110 ft. tower, and it was from this "Alco Tree" that the sample was sent to Head Office, showing the Karri peg in perfect condition, after 26 years service in an exposed position. About the same time a small crow's nest was built in a jarrah tree just south of Kirup headquarters.

Observations from the established "Alco Tree", together with many observations taken by Jack Watson from trees climbed to various heights on many hill tops, enabled the selection of many other look-out sites. In the high forest south of the Blackwood River, constructed towers to give clear vision over canopy from 150' to 190' high, would have been very costly, but a series of tree look-outs were established at very low cost as under:-

Big Tree	1938	146 ft.
Pemberton H.Q. Tree	1939	120 ft.
1st Gardner Tree	1940	160 ft.
Diamond Tree	1941	180 ft.
2nd Gardner Tree (for permanent use - replacing the first tree)	1942	190 ft.

Gloucester Tree (This replaced the small tree at Pemberton H.Q. but its construction had been deferred for 6 years awaiting trade cutting of the surrounding forest)	1946	200 ft.
Beard Tree	1952	160 ft.
Boorara Tree	"	180 ft.
Greenbushes Tree	"	85 ft.

Although the use of several of these trees has been discontinued or is intermittent, five of them are still major look-outs in the southern regions of our forest area, and will apparently give service for many years yet.

Incidentally, the Karri peg referred to in the opening paragraph is in very sound condition after 26 years exposure to the elements.

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