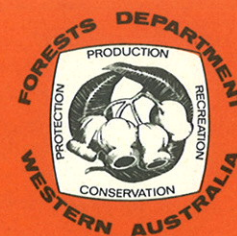




INFORMATION SHEET

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TALL TREES

P. N. HEWETT

The explorers who first found and mapped the coast of Australia, which was then known as Terra Australis, took back to their respective countries an opinion based upon observation of coastal heath and poor forests, and an impression of a dry, hot, infertile land.

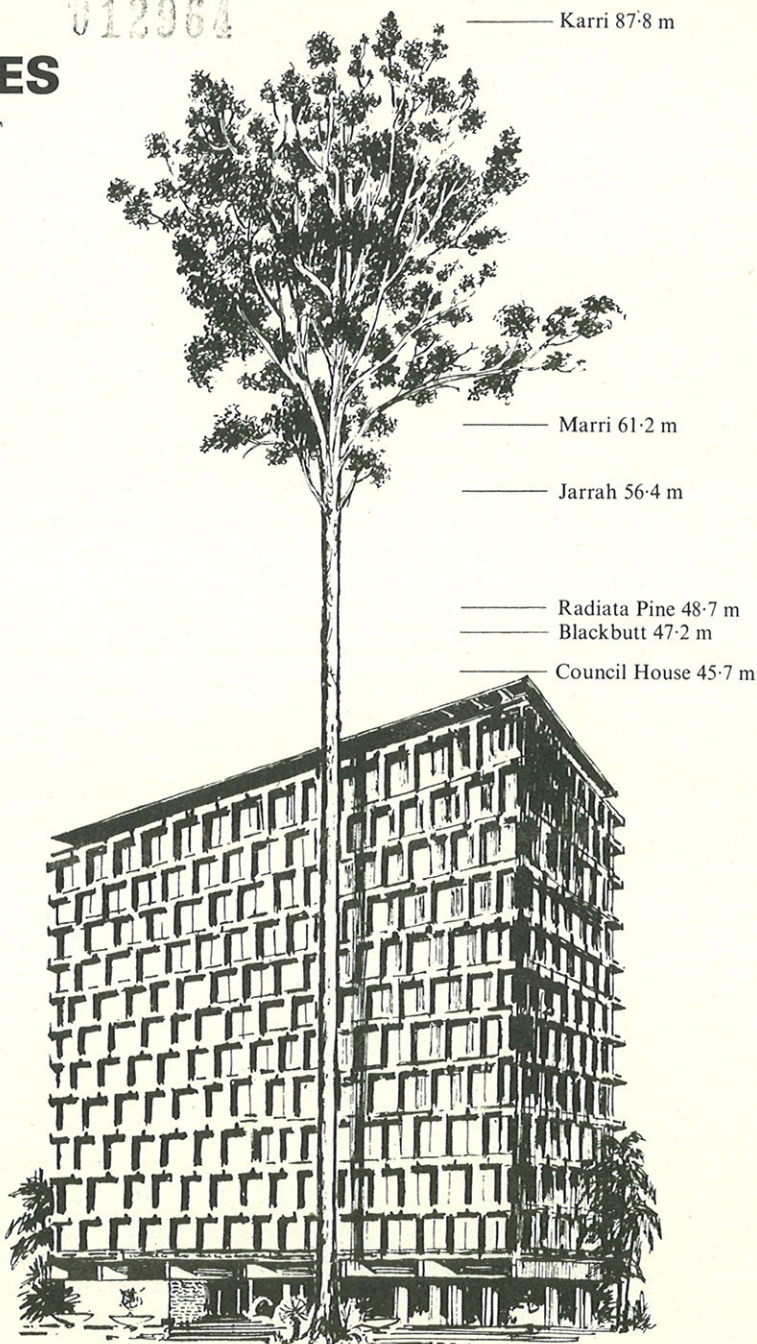
Some 200 years later, on 2nd May, 1828, the Swan River Settlement began, but it was some years before land based exploration first discovered the extensive high quality Jarrah forests of the northern Darling Range, and later still before the magnificent Karri forests were visited.

Jarrah timber under the early name of Swan River Mahogany was one of the first exports from Western Australia and there was active production of Karri through the town of Karridale and the port of Hamelin Bay by 1880.

As was so often the case in a new country little consideration was given towards a long term programme of selective felling of timber and during the years from 1840 to 1918 logging of all forests of the South-West was virtually unrestricted exploitation. Many stories are told of huge trees removed from the forests and it is probable that some of the tallest trees fell to the woodman's axe.

Few of the tall trees reported were accurately measured and the tallest Karri tree for which detailed measurements are recorded was a specimen cut down in 1901 at Pemberton. This giant was 104.2 m tall and compared favourably with the tallest Australian eucalypt, a Mountain Ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*) which measured 114.3 m (375 ft). The next tallest tree measured in the world is a Californian Redwood, and is known as *FOUNDERS TREE*. This remarkable tree grows in Humboldt Forest, and is 112.2 m (368 ft) tall. The table shows measurements of the tallest living trees in Western Australia for each of several species, and it is of interest that the introduced species, Radiata Pine and Pinaster Pine are taller than the best trees of this species in their country of origin.

Note: We are indebted to Mr. A. C. Carder, Victoria, B.C., for data on the Mountain Ash and Sequoia.



LOCAL SPECIES				IMPORTED SPECIES	
Eucalypts		Others			
Karri	87.8 m	Christmas Tree	18.3 m	Radiata Pine	48.7 m
Blackbutt	47.2 m	Paper Bark	20.4 m	Pinaster Pine	29.3 m
Jarrah	56.4 m	Banksia grandis	15.0 m		
Marri	61.2 m				
Salmon Gum	28.6 m				

Exercise: Use simple geometry or a clinometer to calculate the height of a flag pole, goal post and tall tree in your district. How does this compare with those on the table?