Newsletter Wet Season January - March 2005

TREAT PLANTINGS

Date	Location	Group	No. of Trees Approx	
January 29	Peterson Ck. (Byrnes')	TREAT/QPWS	2500	*1
February 12	Peterson Ck (Palumbo's)	TREAT/QPWS	1500	*2
February 19	Picnic Crossing Reserve	Mabi Forest Recovery Team	3000	*3
March 5	Peterson Ck (Palumbo's)	TREAT/QPWS	2500	*3
March 12	Picnic crossing Reserve	Mabi Forest Recovery Team	2000	*3
March 19	Halloran's Hill (Donbadoy's)	Donbadoy	2500	*3

*** Funding sources:**

1. FNQ NRM Ltd (Natural Resources Management Regional Body)
2. TSN (Threatened Species Network - World Wildlife Fund)
3. Envirofund (National Heritage Trust)

- 8am. Start for all plantings
- Bring water, trowel, hat & sunscreen
- Phone the nursery for more information

For TKMG (Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group) planting dates and Info. Phone Larry Crook on 40968243 or www.tree-kangaroo.net

---

Inside this issue

Peterson Creek - Funding from three sources

Mt Garnet and Herberton Schools Visit Display Centre

How to Know Trees

Presentation

Fruit of the Month

Stan Crichton

Nursery News

Seed Collection Diary

Tree Shelters

The Early Days

Geoff Errey's Poem

Kids Page	Rainforest Wordfind

Peterson Creek

Funding from Three Sources

By B. Lanskey

The Peterson Creek Wildlife Corridor project linking Lake Eacham National Park and the Curtain Fig Forest is now in its 8th year, and this planting season will be another 6500 trees added to the corridor.

There are 3 plantings scheduled, each planting receiving funding from a separate source.

The 1st planting on Sat. 29th Jan. is to plant 2,500 trees on Byrnes' property to extend to Lake Eacham end of the corridor. For this planting TREAT will receive a grant of $18,760 from FNQ NRM Ltd., the regional body covering Natural Resource Management in the Wet Tropics for the Commonwealth National Heritage Trust. This is part of a total of $53,038 granted to community groups on the tablelands for revegetation works.

The 2nd planting of 1500 trees on Sat. 12th Feb is receiving funding of $6,040 from Threatened Species Network, part of World Wildlife Fund Australia. This planting will replace trees lost to frost or other factors on Palumbos' property.

The 3rd planting of 2500 trees on Sat. 5th March will be to extend and thicken plantings on Palumbo's and de Tournourer's properties. This planting is receiving funds of $12,000 from the National Heritage Trust through their Envirofund program.

Thanks must go to TREAT's Grants Secretary, Noel Grundon, for his efforts in obtaining funding for our projects.

Mt Garnet and Herberton Schools Visit Display Centre

By B. Lanskey

In October and November we had another 2 primary schools take up TREAT's offer of an educational morning at the nursery for students to learn about nursery activities and to visit the Display Centre.

Mt. Garnet had 30 students from grade 2 and 3 keen to try their hand at cleaning Millaa Millaa vine fruit with Don and pot up a couple of seedling trees each- the mobile potting bench lowered appropriately for the younger than usual age group. As it was such a hot day we omitted the weeding activity outside and instead enjoyed a hugh watermelon they brought along for smoko. Afterwards Joan and Dawn took them around the Display Centre and Syb and Barbara pointed out different features of plants and trees outside. The "TREATWISE" video rounded off a very enjoyable morning.

Herberton had 20 Grade 5 students visit and again they took part in the seed cleaning (Atherton Nut this time) and potting up seedling trees. Peter Snodgrass was on hand to demonstrate potting techniques and to crack some cleaned nuts in a vice to obtain the seed. Some of the seeds were sacrificed for the students to taste, much to their delight. Joan and Dawn Took them to the Display centre and this time it was Glenda and Barbara showing them the plants outside. The students had been well schooled in environment and botanical matters and asked some searching questions. It was another enjoyable morning for all.

Later Mt Garnet School sent TREAT a Thank you card and a collage of the students' art work on 2 posters containing Joan's latest little poem for youngsters:

> ‘Every big tree has a root,
> Every flower makes a fruit.
> Look inside and find the seeds
> Just what every big tree needs.
> Birds and wind spreads seeds, you know,
> And then, more mighty trees will grow!!!’

Herberton School students sent us a page each of their art work, thanking us and showing what impinged most on them from their morning visit.

How to Know Trees and Grow Trees

Tree Identification and Seed Propagation Workshop

Gwen Griffin

On Saturday 20th November 29 keen people attended the TREAT/Centre for Tropical Restoration workshop. Half of us learned how to identify some of the 1,100 tree species in the wet tropics. Clearly it isn't easy, but Tony Irvine (Rainforest Botanist) discussed 9 families, which make up over 45% of rainforest canopy trees. He brought so many leaves and twigs for us to examine that it was a little like the arrival of Burnham wood that so upset that poor Macbeth Chap. At the end of the session with Tony I felt quite comfortable identifying leaf types, stipules, pulvinus and, with the aid of a lens, hooded pits and tufts of hair!! I was getting to know them quite intimately. There was a lot to remember but the ingenious handout has proved a really practical resource.

At 'smoko' Barb and Rosemarie produced a feast and then we all 'changed ends' and my group were given the theory and practice of seed collection and propagation by Peter Dellow. The fruits are as varied as the methods used to extract the seeds. The seeds are as different in size and shape as the Mother Nature deemed necessary for the distribution and propagation. From tiny to huge and everything in between. Peter also prepared a handout that is a really practical and informative resource.

This is a workshop not to be missed. Be sure and watch for it next year and book in early. Usually two sessions are run to meet the demand. This year an initially poor response prompted a session to be cancelled. Then the phone rang hot with requests - alas, too late. Don't miss it next year.

Presentation to Joan and James

This year Joan retired from the TREAT management committee after 22 years and at Joan's insistence, James and she also retired from their responsibility of organizing the morning teas. Of course both are still Friday morning regulars.

After so many years of dedicated service, the TREAT management committee decided the equivalent of a gold watch or grandfather should mark the occasion, and at the Christmas break-up party on the 17th Dec. a presentation was made to them both of the latest Coopers' book "Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest."

It was received with much enthusiasm and Joan has been busy "keying out" various specimens, encouraging other TREAT members to use the book in this way to identify trees and other plants.

Thank you Joan and James.

Christmas Party

The break-up at the nursery on Friday17th December was a very happy occasion with a few extra faces adding to the normal crowd.

A presentation was made to Joan and James for their dedicated years of service to TREAT and Geoff Erry read us the poem he'd written about TREAT after experiencing being a member for 12 months.

Barb Walsh had taken on the table catering for the occasion and while we weren't allowed to tuck into what was on offer till all was ready at 10am, it was well worth the wait. Barb had some helpers to assist with the catering and we thank them all for the lovely feast presented.

Now, after the Christmas-New Year break, there's a very busy planting schedule ahead, so it's "back to work".

Needing Some Basic Starch - Try the Fruit of the month?

by Tony Irvine

Danny Janggaburru (a Yidinyji man) and Betty Bunyji (a Ngajonji woman) were visiting Sam McCoy's place at Topaz. Sam, a timber cutter, had about 90 ha of rain forest on his block. Now and then, he would harvest a few trees of particular species for saw logs and veneers. Sam knew the country he owned, was originally the land of Betty's people and he would often let Ngajonji people come onto his land and harvest traditional products as well as enjoying just being in the forest of their ancestors. On this occasion he was showing Betty and Danny some beautiful light yellowish, dressed sawn boards that he had recently prepared.

"Do you know what this timber is?" he asked. "It is a good structural timber but it is much better as a decorative timber for walls, furniture and veneers." Danny and Betty looked and puzzled but could not give Sam the correct answer. " I thought you two knew everything about rain forest," he chortled. "It's Yellow Walnut, ya nits." For a long time, Sam had wanted to be one up on his two friends who seemed to know so much about the forest and were always tricking him with some of its fruits. "The tree grows very slowly and I will probably never harvest more than ten of them from my block."

"Well we're not used to looking at Yellow Walnut like that" uttered Betty and Danny. " We're used to seeing him standing in the forest as a tree often with prominent, hard, pointed shells at its base which usually have a hole chewed into them by **durrgim**" (the White-tailed Rat in Ngajon and Yidiny language). "But **ganggi** (pronounce the "**a**" as in "**pass**", the "**ng**" as in "**sing**" and sound the last "**g**" as in "**go**") is a very important tree to both our peoples and we use the same name for it too."

"Basic starch is a very important food for humans" said Betty. "White people obtain their starch from wheat, rye, barley, oats, rice, maize and potatoes for example. But we had to try and find starch in country where the grasses were poor for starch yields, so we had to turn to the fruits of forests and we found that the one's that we could use were often toxic if we ate them fresh. So we had to learn a system where we could detoxify the fruit and convert them to a starchy flour that was safe to eat. With **ganggi**, we would pick up the greenish, dull yellow fleshy fruit that range in size from 33-75 mm long x 34-62 mm wide, break them open to reveal a hard shelled nut with usually a point at each end. We would steam the nuts in an earth oven and after cooking, we would crack the nuts with a stone and then grind the seed in between two stones to produce a moist flower. We would place this material in a dilly bag lined with large leaves and position the basket in a stream, usually below water flowing over a small rocky fall, where we could place a funnel made from ginger leaves, to guide the amount of water flowing into the basket. Usually after 24 hours of leaching, sometimes a little longer, the wet meal would be suitable for eating. And that's how we ate it, in the wet flower stage and the texture would be similar to eating rice or sago pudding. The taste of the starch would differ subtly from the starch of other fruits that we used, in much the same way as rice flour differs to wheat flour" conveyed Betty.

"Trees often have two seasons between crops, but different trees usually produce large crops in one year and other trees will produce the crop in the next year, which made it worth while processing" said Danny. "There should be fruits on the ground in your forest now." "My timber manual says, its scientific name is *Beilschmiedia bancroftii* in the family Lauraceae" said Sam "and it grows in the wetter forests, from sea level to 1300 m altitude. It is a difficult species for large scale restoration plantings as the seed usually takes 1-2 years to germinate and germination times for individual seed have varied between 140 to 2070 days."

Vale, Stan Crichton

Stan Crichton, who passed away in mid-year 2004, was one of the early members of TREAT.

His custom was to arrive early at the nursery and to work hard at the potting bench, with his friends, for a couple of hours and then be off.

Morning tea was not for him!

Stan was the first TREAT worker to be made an Honorary Member.

In former times, when he pursued his profession of Health Inspector for the Mulgrave Shire, he encouraged the planting of trees when he could.

He is much missed at his accustomed place.

Joan Wright

Nursery News

Peter Dellow

Nursery staff would like to welcome back all TREAT members after the Christmas New Year break. Once again the nursery is bulging with trees which over the next six months will find new homes across the Tablelands and coastal lowlands as part of a busy planting season starting on January 15 at Don and Jill Crawfords'. The diversity and quality of plants in the nursery clearly reflects the dedicated efforts of many volunteers and staff during 2004 and sets the stage for what should be another successful planting season for TREAT and the QPWS.

With the New Year comes a new member of staff. Ray Albress joins the team on a part time basis and will be a regular face in the nursery on Friday mornings. Ray has been with the QPWS since 1998 during which time he has been based on Fraser Island and more recently in Atherton. Ray is a keen zoologist having completed his tertiary studies at James Cook University in Townsville and will no doubt find a use for this knowledge in his new position at the nursery.

Nursery Roof

As part of the Agency's roll out of the new Strategic Asset Management System (SAMS), funds have been allocated for the replacement of the nursery roof including the seedhouse, potting area, shadehouse and common area. Work should commence in April after all Tableland plantings are completed and will involve replacement of structural elements that have succumbed to the weather and most of the roof cladding. Given the scope of work involved, the nursery will be closed for the duration which is expected to take up to 2 weeks to complete. Further notice will be provided.

Seed Collection Diary

Species	Common Name
Aceratium megalospermum	Bolly Carabeen
Acmenosperma claviflorum	Trumpet Satinash
Acronychia acidula	Lemon Aspen
Aleurites rockinghamensis	Candlenut
Arytera divaricata	Rose Tamarind
Athertonia diversifolia	Atherton Oak
Beilschmiedia obtusifolia	Blush Walnut
Buckinghamia celsissima	Ivory Curl
Cardwellia sublimis	Northern Silky Oak
Castanospermum australe	Black Bean
Castanospora alphandii	Brown Tamarind
Chionanthus ramiflora	Native Olive
Claoxylon tenerifolium	Brittlewood
Cryptocarya hypospodia	Northern Laurel
Cryptocarya mackinnoniana	Rusty Laurel
Cryptocarya oblata	Tarzali Silkwood
Cryptocarya pleurosperma	Poison Walnut
Cupaniopsis anacardioides	Tuckeroo
Darlingia darlingiana	Brown Oak
Darlingia ferruginea	Rusty Oak
Diploglottis diphyllostegia	Northern Tamarind
Doryphora aromatica	Sassafras
Dysoxylum rufum	Rusty Mahogany
Elaeocarpus coorangooloo	Brown Quandong
Elaeocarpus ruminatus	Brown Quandong
Eleagnus triflora	Millaa Vine
Ficus destruens	Rusty Fig
Ficus obliqua	Small Leaf Fig
Ficus watkinsiana	Watkins Fig
Flindersia bourjotiana	Silver Ash
Flindersia pimenteliana	Maple Silkwood
Flindersia schottiana	Floppy Ash
Glochidion harveyanum	Harvey's Buttonwood
Glochidion Hylandii	Hyland's Buttonwood
Glochidion philippicum	Philippine Buttonwood
Guioa lasioneura	Woolly Tamarind
Helicia nortoniana	Norton's Silky Oak
Licuala ramsayi	Fan Palm
Macaranga involucrata	Brown Macaranga
Macaranga tanarius	Macaranga
Mischocarpus exangulatus	Red Bell Mischocarp
Myoporum montanum	Myoporum
Opisthiolepis heterophylla	Blush Silky Oak
Pararchidendron pruinosum	Tulip Siris
Polyalthia michaelii	Canary Beech
Pouteria obovoidea	Yellow Boxwood
Pouteria xerocarpa	Blush Coondoo
Prunus turneriana	Almondbark
Rhus taitensis	Sumac
Ristantia pachysperma	Yellow Penda
Sarcopteryx martyana	Tamarind
Symplocos cochinchinensis	White Hazelwood
Syzygium cormiflorum	Bumpy Satinash
Syzygium erythrocalyx	Scarlet Satinash
Syzygium kuranda	Kuranda Satinash
Xylopia maccreae	Orange Jacket

↑ Top of Page

Using tree shelters to protect rainforest seedlings planted in the dry season

Jason Cummings[1], Sarah Broome & Jessica Dales

School for Field Studies. 1 - jcummings@fieldstudies.org

Locally, the majority of planting conducted into pasture occurs during the wet season. The feeling amongst the community is that planting success is greatly enhanced if planting occurs during the wet season. Tree shelters are used throughout Australia to improve seedling establishment and growth in restoration projects, yet they are not used widely in the wet tropics. In this study, our aim was to determine the effectiveness of tree shelters in improving seedling establishment for a planting undertaken during the dry season.

We planted seven species of rainforest seedlings in April 2004 in a clearing on the SFS property (top of Gillies Range) with a westerly aspect on Basalt soil (Table 1). The clearing was located adjacent to Complex Mesophyll Forest. Seedlings were donated by TREAT or grown at our on-site nursery. Two tree shelter types were used to compare the effectiveness of shelters in enhancing growth and establishment of rainforest seedlings during the dry period (Figure 1). The commercial shelters are a plastic green colored, slightly translucent, triangular tube approximately 80 cm tall with side widths of 15 cm. The home-made shelters are made out of four cut and stacked plastic white translucent milk cartons stacked one on top of the other to produce a protective tube about 42 cm tall (although the height can be varied by 'telescoping'), with a width of 10 cm. Survival, health and growth through the dry season were measured (6 months after planting). Microclimatic information within shelter types was also recorded across 5 days at 8 am, 11am and 3pm, to help interpret effects of different shelter types on seedling responses.

Table 1. Species planted, common names and number of individuals planted.

Scientific Name (Family)	Common Name	Number Planted
Ficus septica (Moraceae)	Septic Fig	56
Ficus hispida (Moraceae)	Hairy Fig	37
Ficus pleurocarpa (Moraceae)	Ribbed Fig	28
Acmena resa (Myrtaceae)	Red Eungella Gum	35
Syzygium wilsonii (Myrtaceae)	Wilson's Satinsash	19
Mischarytera lautereriana (Sapindaceae)	Corduroy Tamarind	63
Phaleria clerodendron (Thymelaeaceae)	Scented Daphne	60

Figure 1: Planted seedlings

A) no protection (150 seedlings); B) home-made shelter (52 seedlings); C) commercial shelter (96 seedlings)

During the dry period, the use of shelters increased overall survival from 86% in unsheltered seedlings to 98-99% in sheltered seedlings. In fact, only one death was recorded in each of the shelter types. *Ficus septica* and *F. pleurocarpa* displayed 100% survival with and without shelters. Interestingly, it was the *Syzigium* and *Acmena* that displayed the lowest rates of survival without shelter (28% and 58% survival respectively). Of the surviving seedlings, more unsheltered seedlings were considered 'healthy' (73%) compared to those with shelters (61-63%; based on leaf colour/ chlorosis, necrosis, herbivory etc.), suggesting that the suppression of seedlings within shelters may have a short-term negative effect on health, despite improving survival.

Across the dry period, growth of seedlings in commercial shelters, was on average, double that achieved in home-made shelters or without shelter. There was no difference in growth rate between home-made shelters and no shelter. The effect of shelter type on growth was not consistent across species (Figure 2). Growth of each of the *Ficus* species was markedly improved with commercial tree shelters. Similar to the survival results, growth in the Myrtaceous species was not improved with any shelter type. Home-made shelters improved growth for only two of the seven species trialed.

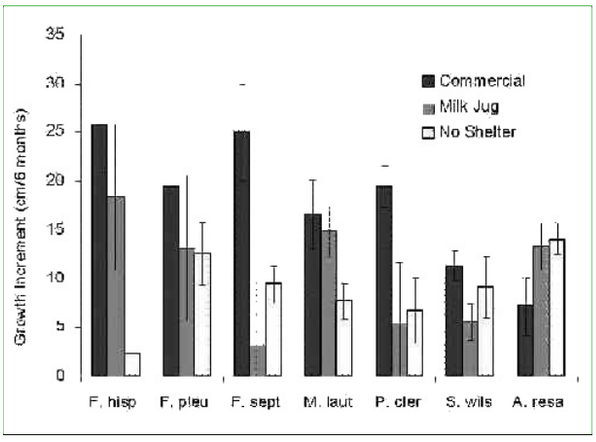

Figure 2. Differences in growth across the dry season for seven rainforest species planted with different types of shelters (means plus/ minus one standard error are presented).

While temperature differences between shelter types were only marginally different across the day, light levels and humidity were markedly different. Temperatures inside commercial shelters were usually similar to unsheltered seedlings, but home-made shelters usually maintained higher temperatures by 1-2 ^{o}C. Across the day, humidity inside commercial shelters was maintained between 70-75%, whilst it declined in home-made shelters and at unsheltered trees to 50-55% in the afternoon. Similarly, light levels inside commercial shelters were maintained at 20-50% of unsheltered seedlings across the day. In summary, commercial tree shelters maintained an environment more similar to that found in the understorey of a rainforest, conducive to secondary and late successional rainforest seedling survival and growth.

Tree shelters may be a tool to enable planting of rainforest seedlings in the dry season in the wet tropics. Enabling planting to occur during the dry season has several benefits. Firstly, seedlings do not need to held over in the nursery allowing the next crop of seedlings to develop. Secondly, with planting not restricted to the wet season, volunteer input can be spread out, reducing burn-out. Along the same lines of reasoning is that we could potentially re-forest twice the amount of land per unit time if we are not restricted to planting in the wet season. Further, if seedling growth and survival can be enhanced, restoration costs can be reduced; primarily by reducing costs associated with re-planting and by reduced weed control costs associated with quicker canopy closure. Commercial shelters can be re-used, meaning that their cost per planting is halved each time they are used to help establish seedlings.

The long-term benefits of using tree shelters on the Atherton Tablelands remain to be seen, and we will keep monitoring differences between sheltered and unsheltered seedlings. Of course the benefits of having trees sheltered through the wet need to be tested, we have removed half of our shelters to test the difference between removing them at the start of the wet season versus keeping them on. It would be neither cost- nor time-efficient to shelter tree species for which there is no benefit. As this study showed, different species respond differently to being sheltered. A fertile field of research awaits regarding different species' responses to being sheltered.

The take-home-message from this study is that tree shelters may enable plantings to occur during the dry period on the Atherton Tablelands. We recommend conducting small planting trials using shelters when the next dry commences. These positive results may not be replicated further west as rainfall declines, but the evidence suggests it is certainly worth a try.

TREAT: the early days

Joan Wright

Looking back from today in the early years of the twenty - first century it is hard to realise that history on the Atherton Tableland has been so short. To be correct history has only extended for about 150 years. Of course, indigenous history has been so very much longer. Early European history on the Tableland was concerned with the trees, as TREAT today is concerned with trees, but with very different motives. The early European pioneers came here to find and remove the great red cedar trees in the thick forest. They were soon followed by miners, and then by settlers who cleared the forest completely. The basalt soil and the good rainfall meant the Hypsi forest (Type 1 b) and Mabi forests (Type 5b) were thoroughly cleared for agriculture. Today both Hypsi and Mabi remain only as remnants.

In the early 1980's Geoff Tracey and family, and Joan and James Wright were all living in Yungaburra. Geoff and Joan, both botanists, had had previous botanical contact and were both interested in the forests of the Tableland. Geoff suggested to Joan that people might welcome a supply of seedlings of native trees.

At the time, the only subsidised tree seedlings available from the Dept. of Forestry, were exotic species of Eucalypts and pines which produced poles and timber in plantations. Geoff and Joan called together a group of friends to discuss possible plans to make other species of tree seedlings available. They met with James Wright, Tony Irvine, David Leech, Les Barnes and Bud Driver at "The Cycads" (Joan and James' home) and planned a public meeting, in order to find out whether there was any public support for the idea.

Early in 1982 the meeting was held in the Yungaburra State School.

After Geoff had explained the concept of a tree planting society to rear native rainforest trees, the 30 people present voted to start a group. The committee planned to collect the seeds of rainforest trees, which would be raised in member's gardens in the way Geoff did. Fortunately a much more efficient system was soon brought into effect when the first Lake Eacham nursery was built. Geoff was very friendly with Peter Stanton who, at the time, was Regional Director of the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service in Cairns. Between them, they planned the tree nursery which was constructed of spare materials, behind the workshop, at the Lake Eacham Head Quarters of Q.N.P.& W.S.

Ros Rob was the first nursery manager. She raised some beautiful rainforest trees, some of which are thriving in the picnic area beside Lake Tinaroo. From early times, volunteers helped at the little nursery on Friday mornings. The first purchase made with TREAT funds was a punch with which to make drainage holes in the bottom of the plastic milk bags in which we bought the milk in those days!!

We used them for potting up. After a year, Ros Rob was replaced by Nigel Tucker who began his career of tree rearing and forest restoration in the little nursery. (A photo of this old nursery can be seen in the TREAT Display Centre.)

One of TREAT's first tree plantings was at the base of Halloran's Hill, near the creek just up-hill from the children's playground, Tony Irvine did some very early planting, and Geoff Tracey planted the native pines, now flourishing beside the track.

A very early TREAT excursion to Sluice Creek road was notable for being very wet!! We were permitted to dig up tree seedlins from the roadside in the rainforest to take them back to our little nursery. Geoff's three children enjoyed getting throughly wet!!

Another early event was the planting beside the public toilet block on Tinnaburra Peninsula (with the blessing of the Eacham Shire Council). The hideous poles (old railway lines) which edged the road were hidden by Callistemons and other shrubs. Les Barnes brought his tractor and post hole digger to make the holes, and we had a barbecue afterwards. A sign of things to come!

Geoff Errey's Poem

Members who attended the 2004 TREAT Christmas breakup were treated with Geoff Erry's rendition of his poem, "Welcome to TREAT." For those of us who couldn't attend Geoff has kindly contributed the poem for the newsletter.

WELCOME TO TREAT

(With apologies to Banjo Patterson)

There came a stranger to TREAT one day
To TREAT one day on a Friday morn
He had followed his neighbours to learn the way
And was shown around there by Ken and Dawn
He was hoping to learn a thing or three
How to pot a seedling or plant a tree.

He was introduced to the boss man there
The boss man there of the nursery
"You'll be impressed," they said, "by the things he'll share
At his show and tell after morning tea
You'll learn how to grow a bumper crop
But we're learning still how to make him stop."

He was welcomed along by Barbara L
By Barbara L who's the president
She seemed to know everyone so well
And always knew where the money went
She made sure James could collect the cups
And get some help with the washing-up.

He learned that the lady who banged the post
Who banged the post when the chat was due
Was Joan, and she had been there the most
She'd started TREAT back in '82
So much to learn, they let him begin
Scrubbing pots with Ben at the wheelie bin.

He watched while Jim filled the mixer red
The mixer red never saw cement
It was loaded with bark and sand instead
And some dolomite, whatever that meant
It was all so new, would he have the skill?
Then they gave him these tiny pots to fill.

They taught him the right way to use a knife
To use a knife, not for cutting food
But to lift up seedlings - he got in strife
To begin with; his technique was pretty crude
But they persevered and he got it right
Leaves up in the air, roots out of sight.

They said, "You can come out on Saturday
On Saturday, there's a planting due
Just bring a trowel and a drink and stay
For afterwards there's a barbecue."
They're making some sort of corridor?
He wondered which end they would put the door.

They took him out to the Burchill's place
To the Burchill's place late in January
Where they set him off at a cracking pace
Said, "You wanted to learn how to plant a tree."
They were sadists all, it was 38
And he learnt a new word - dehydrate.

But he continued to come till his hands grew black
His hands grew black and his nails did too
He learned lots of names and, amazing fact,
Found he could even remember a few
Flindersia, Milvia. What was the chance
He'd learn which were people and which were plants?

They gave him some trees and he grew them out
He grew them out in his own back yard
And although he began it with lots of doubt
With the help of rain it was not so hard
He learned how to sow them from seeds and fruits
Though he still loses some to the bandicoots.

Yes I was the stranger who came to TREAT
Who came to TREAT just twelve months ago
I know that my knowledge is not complete
There's bound to be stuff that I'll never know
But they gave me a job and it seems, I fear
That I'll just have to come back again next year.

More Newsletters

- TREAT Newsletter Wet Season January - March 2005 (this page)
- **TREAT Newsletter Storm Season October - December 2004**
- **TREAT Newsletter Dry Season July - September 2004**
- **Previous TREAT Newsletters**

↑ Top of Page