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LOOKING BACK..... with Molly



The *Walpole Weekly* recently featured the story of the demise of the Boxhall tree and this “Looking Back” seemed an ideal time to share a little story from Jack Edmonds. It tells of the time he first saw this magnificent specimen, named after John Boxhall the first teacher at Tingledale School. Jack Edmonds’ parents were pioneer settlers of the Tingledale group settlement. He married Dorothy Rich and together they farmed and raised their family on their North Walpole property. Jack’s grandson, David Edmonds is a resident of rural Walpole. Unfortunately the date of Jack’s story is unknown.....Here are his words:



(Picture courtesy David Edmonds)

“This tree has the greatest circumference of any karri tree known in the district. It is growing in an area on the east side of the Frankland River known as Boxhall’s Block.

During the 1920s and 1930s hundreds of visitors were taken up the Frankland River to see, admire and carve their names in the bark of this healthy giant that stood almost alone in open country. Both Mr Tom Swarbrick and Mr Ted Bellanger took groups on these trips in their boats.

Mr Boxhall was the schoolteacher at Tingledale, where I lived on my father’s block with my family. He was a good teacher and also good with a compass.

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FOR SALE BY TENDER

A quantity of miscellaneous equipment, furniture and materials are being offered for sale by tender, as is – where is.

Tender documents can be collected from Reception at the Parks and Wildlife office Walpole between 8:30am and 4:00pm Monday to Friday.

An excel spreadsheet of the tender documents can be emailed if you request one from Bernard.clark@dbca.wa.gov.au

All completed tenders are to be lodged in a sealed envelope in the box at Reception Parks and Wildlife office Walpole.

The tender process will close at 4:30pm on Friday, 5th April.

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In 1925, Mr Boxhall asked my brother Len and myself to help him blaze a track from the top corner of Dad's block to the top corner of his block on the Frankland, a distance of about four miles through virgin karri. After blazing the first tree we continued, with the aid of Mr Boxhall's compass, to blaze a tree, then push on through the thick bush as fast as we could and blaze the next. Finally we came out on Boxhall's fence line, only a few yards from the corner that had been our goal! We carried on across his block to the river and that was the first time I saw this giant karri tree.

This track made it possible for us to reach the Frankland River for fresh fish, or for a swim where previously we had to go to Peaceful Bay – about twelve miles.

Later we had picnics by the river on Mr Boxhall's place and sometimes we took some of the girls along. I remember particularly one fine day a big group of us got to the river for a picnic when the weather turned bad. The wet, miserable, return trek along the five mile narrow track to our house is hard to forget as is the immense pot of hot soup my mother had on the boil when we arrived! Young folk who were in that picnic group came from the families of Olds, Boast, Harris, Pascoe, Rich, Anning and Edmonds.

Today this tree is, sadly, neglected, damaged during the 1950s fire and now completely surrounded by young tingle forest and forest litter, feet deep. The next fire that passes through Boxhall block, which is now owned by the Department formerly know as Conservation and Land Management, will probably be the funeral pyre for this once majestic, still impressive karri, that visitors from all over the world gazed upon with awe..."

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May God bless you all.

Nick Robinson

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