

N.B. The prayers of the faithful are required for success of this. But not Hail Marys! random Jabulla

THE AUSTRALIAN ARID REGIONS NATIVE FLORA RESERVE

MAKES THIS URGENT APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF "VISION" AND A TRUE SENSE OF "VALUES" TO CARRY ON THE AIMS SINCE LATE 1956 OF THREE MEN, VIZ. MR. REGINALD MARSH AND MR. HUGH BARCLAY (both former Assistant Administrators and the latter a distinguished Surveyor who was also Director of Lands and of this Reserve), supported by the HON. PAUL HASLUCK, then Minister for Territories (including this Northern Territory of Australia), IN HELPING THIS RESERVE.

It urgently needs defenders from sabotage threatened by the erecting of a huge water storage tank, and generous funds for fencing the unfenced portion - and especially for additional water reticulation on the top half of the 16 acres of flat (of the total with hills of 49 acres approximately).

Mr. (Asst. Administrator) Marsh, when having it gazetted, said he visualized it as a place of beauty and quiet for future generations in Alice Springs when all else is built upon - and to carry out that vision has been the sole aim since 1956 of the Honorary Curator he appointed to carry it out. Hundreds of native trees and plants have been grown. All except the Eucalypts (which were transplanted) have been grown from seeds given to the Hon. Curator. Valuable gifts of sand and manure have been given by Mr. E. M. Smith on many occasions and recently a bolt of hessian for a shade nursery. He and a few others do visualize its future value to the citizens of Alice Springs and so help.

In regard to tree planting, fifty Sturt Bean trees have been grown from seed and planted for shade and can, it has been stated, live to be 100 years old. Hundreds of Eucalypts have been transplanted - some now large trees - and many Ironwoods and Mulgas grown on the lower half of the 16 acres of flat between Annie Myers Hill and the hill opposite the Golf Links and Power Station Road.

During World War II the lower half of the area was used as a broken bottle dump by the Lines of Communication Army and, except for two Witchetty bushes and some Ironwood, all trees and shrubs were destroyed.

Since its gazettal in 1956 most years have been drought years; yet unbiassed people (some of distinction) and a few officials not obsessed with money saving (while squandering it elsewhere) already see in it a most valuable health preserving and cultural asset for future generations when the hundreds of native trees have become SHADE TREES and the Reserve a Botanic Gardens open to the public - a Botanic Gardens glorifying and confined solely to what the Arid (so-called Desert) Area of our continent can and does grow as indigenous to various States as well as the Northern Territory's "Central Australia."

Seeds sent by the wife of the Victorian Minister for Health and seventeen varieties of Arid Regions Eucalypts sent by a high Western Australian Government Official are held up until water reticulation in the Eastern half of the flat area is functioning. Mr. Richardson, "Valuator" Director of the Lands Department, and consequently the Reserve's Director, seems quite unable (or unwilling) to force the Commonwealth Department of Works to carry out the work of fencing and water reticulation promised two or three years ago.

AND NOTE THIS - While water for a future amenity for the public is deliberately held up, a home has been built opposite for the BARMAN of the "19th Hole" (Golf Links) with water provided for his LAWNS (on which he grazes one of the Reserve's pests - a Euro), as well as for his home and the Golf House LAWN. "Vision" and "true values" take a back place when facilities for DRINKING LIQUOR AND PAMPERING TOURISTS are put forward to Northern Territory Administration and the Department of Works. A place of beauty and

health-giving quiet has no chance of FUNDS when the 'Shylocks' of N.T.A. and Canberra are contacted. (Neither liquor licences nor American tourists are wanted here. It is primarily for permanent residents of Alice Springs WHEN DEVELOPED.

That is the DEVELOPMENTAL PLEA of the Reserve. NOW FOR THE "DEFENDING IT" PLEA. This refers to the proposed plan to put a million gallon cement and roofed water storage tank ON OR NEAR the Eastern boundary of the Flora Reserve and near the electrical high tension wires and poles going to Alice Springs East.

Two sites have been suggested by Head Works Department Engineers (one Hydraulic, Melbourne). The first plan is puerile! No engineer with any brains would put a million gallon tank ASTRIDE A NATURAL CATCHMENT AREA. There are six excavations - some full of water after even a little rain (as Mr. Richardson and Mr. Sweet saw for themselves) which, when rain falls, water FREE OF ALL COST the flat area of the Reserve (Shylocks please note!). A small creek with yellow foam on it comes from it too.

Their "alternative site" SABOTAGES THE SITE PLANNED WHILE MR. BARCLAY WAS IN CHARGE for a residence for the Botanic Gardens salaried Curator AND a Kiosk (no liquor) for the public nearby - and both with glorious views.

Yet recently an Engineer I took over the area and to the alternative site I suggest beyond the Power Station AND UP FROM THEIR TRANSFORMERS said, "Yes, it could be done - BUT THE OTHER WOULD BE CHEAPER!!"

So, unless people with Vision who care for the future of this Reserve prevent its being built there, then the "Vision" of three important men and the very hard work of the Honorary Curator (and for the last 2½ years of a Wailbri full-blood aboriginal assistant) will have been wasted.

The skyline will be entirely wrecked, not only by the tank itself but by the destruction of the indigenous trees and outline of hill to the north-east of power lines in order to get the cement and other materials over to the foundation holes - and workmen would ALSO destroy the Reserve's own trees in the vicinity. A native Wild Orange among them and Hakeas etc. would "go."

SO DO PREVENT THIS SITE BEING USED when, for a few thousand pounds additional money for longer pipeline and digging of new foundation holes (Aborigines, a mixed blood and a hitch-hiker from Glasgow did the others, so THAT was "CHEAP"!.) it can be avoided.

In conclusion: *-as an example of true values"*

"If thou of fortune be bereft
And in thy store there be but left
Two loaves -
Sell one, and with the dole
Buy hyacinths (or Sturt Bean trees)
to feed thy soul.

(Alice Springs "soul"
in this case)

Olive M. Pink

OLIVE M. PINK,
Hon. Curator (since 1956)

Home Hut,
Native Flora Reserve,
Alice Springs,
Feb. 5th, 1965.