

We The People

Program 64

It's not Easy Being Green



Of all the vegetation on planet earth none seems more inspiring than the tree. We gain much from trees and above all they give us an array of benefits for the soil, water and air. Trees are majestic in all their forms and as Alfred Kilmer wrote "I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree". Trees are literally the lungs of the earth and without them we would surely perish. The Torah is believed to be the Tree of Life while in the movie Avatar the Tree of Souls was the mother of the mythical planet Pandora. Anthony Hordern of department store fame used the phrase "while I live I grow" referring to the stores iconic oak tree logo. We are blessed in Australia to have the eucalypt which is a handsome tree and a prolific creator of oxygen and sequester of carbon.

Just imagine a stand of majestic Australian forest on the Gold Coast home to glossy black cockatoos, Koalas, rainbow lorikeets, kookaburras and wallabies. Home also to a myriad of small creatures and possums that shelter there. It's steep country close to the ocean yet the roots of the trees hold the earth resolutely and provide a wonderful vista to nearby residents. This is a peaceful place and a rare piece of endangered coastal Eucalyptus Pilularis forest.

Got the picture, because now the woodland silence is broken by the sound of a rampant chain saw as a selfish man cuts down a section of this forest without permission from any authority and does so at a time when the neighbours are away. In fact the trees are not even on his property and he trespasses on two adjacent lots and destroys mother forest at will. His chain saw kills Grey iron Barks, Spotted Gums, Pink Bloodwoods, Stingy Barks, Mahogany, White Bottle Brush, Tallow Wood and Grey Gums to name just a few. These large slender wooded blocks cascade toward the Currumbin wild life sanctuary from atop Simpsons Rd and are unique and most residents rightfully see themselves as caretakers. All but one that is being Ricky George Leverett who was found guilty of willful damage by chain saw and fined \$3000 plus costs of \$2,500 expended by caring neighbours for a professional environmental damage report. The report using a true scientific assessment, values the trees lost at \$70,000. I dare say the wild life values them differently because it's their home. The matter may now be heard as a civil matter where compensation may be sort and the good folk of Simpsons road will give that money to the Curumbin Wild Life Sanctuary should that eventuate. I call them real Australians and real worthy citizens of the Gold Coast. They took action after the errant destruction Mr Leverett wrought against the forest and they didn't sit back with indifference. They acted and brought this bloke to justice. According to the Crown Prosecutor he wanted to improve his view and sell his property and that in fact, is exactly what has happened, he sold and left.

This segment is called We The People and is a celebration of democracy at the heart of each narrative. It's all about free will and to step forward and act when evil prevails or where laws should be addressed or where bureaucracy and politicians are failing. We can't just leave it up to others and if Australia and in particular the Gold Coast is to prosper then we must all do our bit regardless of age or position or ability. I congratulate Wendy Cheesman, Alan Man and Stan and Sandy Chapel for seeing this matter through and hopefully Ricky Leverett's chain saw mentality is now gathering dust.

Let's also acknowledge Gecko Regen for their assistance and the fine work they do all year round for the environmental good of the Gold Coast. If nothing else support the Currumbin Wild Life Sanctuary and Gecko which rely on many volunteers who freely give of themselves to make our natural world a better place for us and those to come. I leave you with a time honoured quote....."For evil to prevail only requires good people to do nothing".

Until next time this is Kent Bayley

Foot note from Edmund Burke

"It is not enough in a situation of trust in the commonwealth, that a man means well to his country; it is not enough that in his single person he never did an evil act, but always voted according to his conscience, and even harangued against every design which he apprehended to be prejudicial to the interests of his country. This innoxious and ineffectual character, that seems formed upon a plan of apology and disculpation, falls miserably short of the mark of public duty. That duty demands and requires that what is right should not only be made known, but made prevalent; that what is evil should not only be detected, but defeated. When the public man omits to put himself in a situation of doing his duty with effect it is an omission that frustrates the purposes of his trust almost as much as if he had formally betrayed it. It is surely no very rational account of a man's life, that he has always acted right but has taken special care to act in such a manner that his endeavours could not possibly be productive of any consequence."