

# A new experience for the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens

Finally, **Newsletter # 4**...our project activities in the Covid years 2020 - 2021...we are now well into the new 2021 year!..... And much has happened since our last newsletter...as promised last time the shaped, sanded and drilled planks (all 32 of them, and remember they ranged in lengths from 3 metres to 4 metres) were taken back to the timber yard for preservative treatment and duly returned to our shed.

So, after the Christmas break, the Friends reconvened at the Gardens much refreshed and looking forward to continuing with the project.

Council had by now determined that the construction site is a designated site and as such all workers (the Friends) needed to be White Carded, wearing the appropriate PPE and their activities are to be overseen by a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) to ensure our health and safety. Under these conditions the Friends established a proper enclosed work site and were then able to proceed full steam ahead!



SO...first things first: we established our possession of the site by installing our SITE SHED!...and also eventually our signboard proudly proclaiming what the Friends were up to...



HiTech equipment was utilized to set out our structures accurately...



The pier holes were excavated by a vacuum/suction method in order to minimise damage to principal tree roots...a high pressure water jet displaces the soil and a giant vacuum cleaner sucks it up...the process whilst very impressive took a lot longer than we anticipated...



Reinforcement cages being placed in the holes

Once the holes were excavated cardboard caissons were installed to line the holes...and plywood safety covers were installed over each hole...this was also insurance against the holes filling up with water, in the event there should be rain...this didn't necessarily work all that well... and of course there was rain...lots of it...and the holes filled up...requiring ingenious methods of emptying them out...but we prevailed...



Ingenious systems employed to secure the steel spigots

The next three weeks were taken up by the installation of the first 7 steel spigots and the reinforcement steel cages and there was more rain...9 more spigots and it continues to rain, rain...in the last week or so (and 5 more spigots) the site has had 500mm of rain!!!



Concrete being poured

Onwards and upwards as they say and after numerous pump-outs of rainwater out of the holes we got to see the arrival of the concrete truck and pump. All footings were poured and another stage of the works was successfully completed.

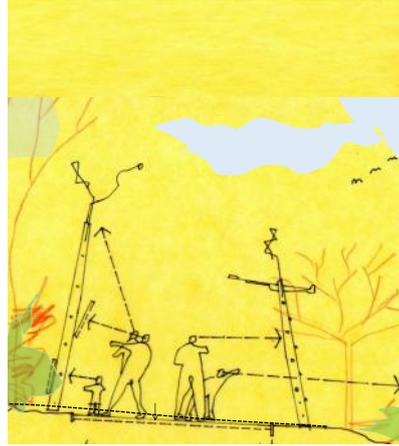


A typical spigot set up and ready for the concrete placement

# A new experience for the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens



*Stirrups all in place, concrete poured and waiting for the timber posts to be installed*



*A cross section through Node A as it was envisaged in the early days!!!*



*The team in the process of assembling the posts into pairs...*

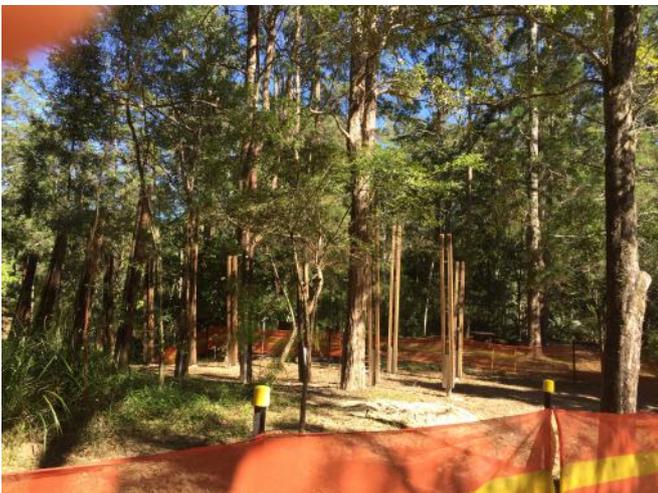
The next stage was for the assembly of the posts...ie the bolting together of the two sections of timber to form a single post element, each part separated from the other by a series of 75mm long x 50mmdia stainless steel tubes. Handling these huge lumps of timber was no mean feat...remember the tallest, 4m in length weighs approximately 110kg! However once again...onwards and upwards.



*Our supervisor making sure the posts are firmly in place and not about to fall over...*

So now, after assembly we were ready to install and after a few trial attempts it can be reported that there are now 16 posts standing proudly to attention along either side of the Node A site.

Since then we have taken delivery of the remainder of the timber for Nodes B, C, and D, shaped and processed it in time for the next phase of the project which is now happening as you read this newsletter...



*The posts for Node A now in place...*



*A detail of the spigot/post assembly. Note the careful detailing of the steel work, the bolt locations and the concrete base. Eventually when the surrounding pathwork and landscaping has been completed the concrete base will no longer be seen.*