

Special tree found at Saumarez

THE NATIONAL Trust (NSW) property Saumarez Homestead has hit the record books.

One of the homestead's garden trees has been listed on The National Register of Big Trees, after a surprise visit from tree expert Derek McIntosh, who believes the female Ginkgo Biloba tree in the garden is the largest of its kind in Australia.

Mr McIntosh had come to New England to inspect the old cork tree in Wood St, Tenterfield, which was also added to the register.

He was told about the tree at Saumarez by a local arborist and came to the property to see it for himself.

Mr McIntosh uses laser equipment to accurately measure a tree's girth at the trunk, height, and size at the leafy 'crown', before adding and qualifying trees to the register.

Local people often tell him about trees that may be suitable.

No-one knows when the Ginkgo tree was planted so its age could not be recorded on

the register.

Members of the White family and historians at Saumarez believe that Mr FJ White and his wife Margaret began planting the garden at Saumarez shortly after their marriage in 1881, with the intention of adding a new house as soon as they could.

It is believed the Ginkgo was one of those early plantings but if not, then it was certainly planted in the major structuring of the garden which was completed by 1890.

The Saumarez-White family photograph collection contains a photograph of the vegetable garden taken in 1909, and capturing the house and the eastern side garden in the background.

It shows an established, well-shaped tree which does not quite reach the height of the first floor verandah roof, so the age of the tree can now be estimated at about 120- to 130-years-old.

According to Mr McIntosh's measurements, the tree is 5.4m (212in) around the trunk, 18m (59 ft) in height and 17m (55ft) at the crown.

In Australia the Ginkgo Biloba tree is commonly called the Maidenhair Tree for the resemblance of the leaves to those of the Maidenhair Fern.

It is a deciduous tree that originated in the modern era from Asia in the region of China, Japan and Korea, where some trees are claimed to be up to 4000 years old.

The tree has an ancient heritage and is sometimes referred to as a 'living fossil' as it has remained largely unchanged in fossilised findings from the Permian period 270 million years ago, before the dinosaurs appeared in the Jurassic period.

It is now grown widely around the world but how it came to be in the garden at Saumarez will remain a mystery.

There is also another, younger Ginkgo tree in Brown St near the corner of Marsh St, outside the BUPA aged care facility.

Mr McIntosh is always looking for people who know of other large trees which might be suitable for the register.

He can be contacted by e-mail at derek@nr-



Derek McIntosh, with a special Ginkgo Biloba tree at Saumarez homestead trees.com.au or by telephone on 9948-0618. Check out the register at www.nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au.

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Australian Government

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▶▶ ROUND&ABOUT

Homestead opens for sausage sizzle on National Trust Day

ARMIDALE'S Saumarez Homestead will be open for a sausage sizzle and guided tours on April 18 as part of NSW for National Trust Day.

A 10-hectare property grazing property established in the 1830s including 20 buildings, charming gardens and farm area with stables, Saumarez is on the New England Highway.

The homestead will be open from 10am to 4pm.

Telemarketers to gain free rein on de-registered mobile numbers

THREE in four Australian mobile phone numbers listed on the *Do Not Call Register* in May 2007 have not yet been re-registered, and may fall prey to unwanted callers, according to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). Under the *Do Not Call Register Act 2006*, telemarketers are not allowed to call numbers listed on the register.

"Fixed line, mobile and VoIP numbers listed on the register are valid for three years," ACMA chairman Chris Chapman said.

"In May 2007, the register's first month, more than 373,000 mobile phone numbers out of 1.04 million were listed by their owners to cut out unsolicited telemarketing calls.

"There are still 280,667 mobile phone numbers to be re-registered before May, so if yours is one of them, you need to act now."

Re-registration is quick, free and easy.

Log on to www.donotcall.gov.au or call 1300 792-958.

Petrol Price Watch

Prices yesterday	Unleaded	Diesel
Mobil Marsh St	\$1.29.9	\$1.33.9
Shell Marsh St	\$1.29.9	\$1.33.9
Caltex North Hill	\$1.29.9	\$1.33.9
Canon's Beardy St	\$1.30.9	\$1.31.9
Central Coast average	\$133.4	\$127.9

OURWEATHER

TODAY: Rain periods. Chance of an afternoon thunderstorm. Headed for a high of 19 after a low of 13.



IT WILL BE A GREAT DAY FOR

Double checking with the Easter bunny that all is set to go for the family

TOMORROW: Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. East to northeast winds. Headed for a high of 20 after a low of 11.

FOR THE RECORD: Yesterday's minimum was 13, headed for a maximum of 22. On Monday it was 8.7 to 25.1.