

Southern Highland News

THE HOME OF SIR DONALD BRADMAN

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Trust a possibility for gaol

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Telling a story at Sturt

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Derek McIntosh stands with the monster Cooliatta tree, nestled within a lush garden Burradoo estate.

Photo by Dominica Sanda

Our tree tops the nation

By Dominica Sanda

HIDDEN among nature in a lush garden is a 25-metre-high tree, which has been named the biggest of its kind in Australia.

The nation's largest Cedar Deodar tree has been growing in a charming garden estate in Burradoo since the 1880s.

The Cooliatta property reflects the Southern Highlands rich plant life with lush green trees around every corner.

And hidden away, is the Champion Australian Tree which has been added to the very top of the National Register of Big Trees.

National Register of Big Trees co-ordinator Derek McIntosh said while Cedar Deodars were commonly found, this one was a "monster" tree because of its size.

"It's such a magic tree," he said.

"This type of tree is widely planted, but to find one this large is rare."

To make it onto the National

Register of Big Trees, trees are measured by their circumference, height and crown (spread of canopy) and a total point score.

Mr McIntosh said this method of measurement gave a "holistic view" of the tree.

The Cooliatta tree's circumference is 6.65 metres, height is 25 metres and the crown is 28 metres, with a total point score of 365.

It has branched out and up - replacing the former biggest Cedar Deodar tree in Daylesford,

Victoria, which has a total point score of 310.

Tree enthusiast, Mr McIntosh said he found the tree "by luck".

"I drive around the area often and I couldn't believe my luck when I stumbled across it," he said.

Mr McIntosh said it was a combination of the cooler Southern Highlands climate and the "stunning" soil which made the trees grow "unbelievably".

"By listing it on the register, it creates a general awareness and

enjoyment of trees," he said.

"It also creates a sense of pride in the Southern Highlands for having a national champion."

This "monster" Cedar Deodar joins 12 other Champion Australian Trees which have rooted themselves in the Highlands.

Details:
www.nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au/