

Mudgee home to Australia's biggest English Elm

By SAM PAINE

The biggest English Elm tree in Australia is growing across the road from Mudgee Racecourse, according to Derek McIntosh, founder of the National Register of Big Trees.

After measuring the tree last Monday, Mr McIntosh declared it the Australian Champion Elm, tied with one in Wandiligong, Victoria.

Mr McIntosh last visited Mudgee two years ago, when by chance he came across a Rough-Barked Apple that proved to be the largest he had found in Australia.

He returned last week because of an anonymous tip received in June, although he left his visit till now to ensure the tree would have its leaves.

Mr McIntosh said finding the biggest English Elm in Mudgee was unexpected, and he credited its size largely to its fertile location near the river.

"Normally the elms do well in the colder

climes, so to find a really big elm in Mudgee is a surprise," he said.

While Wandiligong's English Elm is taller than Mudgee's, five metres higher than Mudgee's 26 metres, Mudgee's 6.22 metre circumference is wider than Wandiligong's 6.14 metre circumference.

Mr McIntosh estimated the age of both trees at around 110 years old.

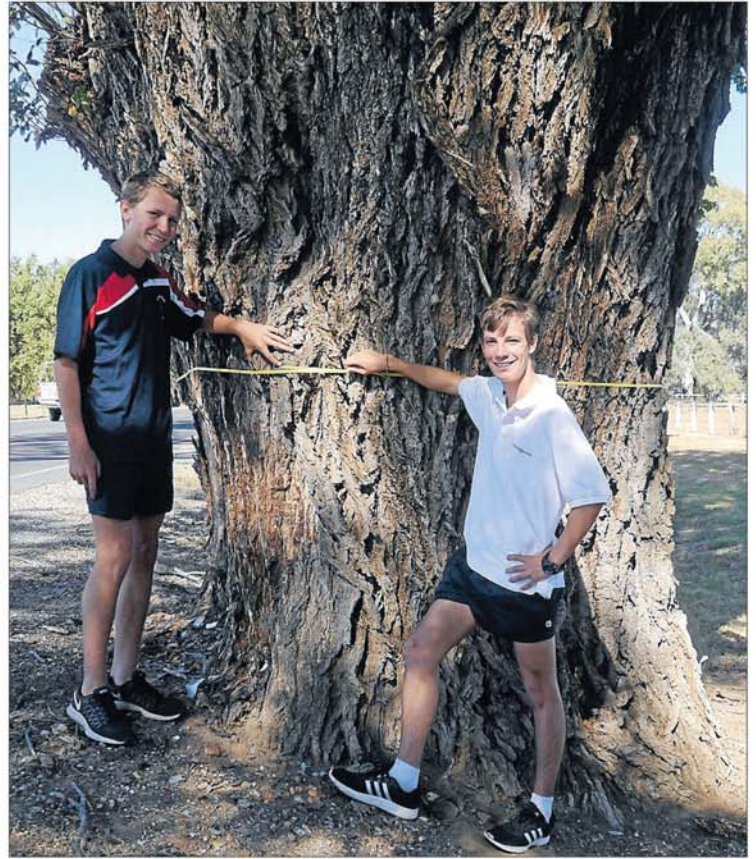
Mr McIntosh looks for big trees everywhere he goes, and accepts submissions from around the country for his online register at www.nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au.

The register now includes almost 750 trees, and Mr McIntosh seeks out the biggest of each variety in every state, as well as the Australian champion tree of each type.

As the register has grown, he said it has become increasingly challenging to find trees that would break his existing records, but he could still see promising trees around the Mudgee area, particularly on the drive through Bylong to Muswellbrook.



Australia's biggest elm, with a circumference of 6.22 metres and a height of 26 metres.
150416/ELM



D'Arcy and Conor Needham helped measure Australia's biggest English Elm on Ulan Road.
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