

TURNOUT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NORTHERN TURNERS INC.

VOL9 No.13
Oct 2020

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF NORTHERN TURNERS INC.

Dear Members,

As an Incorporated body, our Constitution states that we must have an AGM. It is essential that we have a quorum of >50% of our members (i.e., about 55 people or more), and we can accommodate 75 people at the Function Room at the Hub. (If we have good weather, we can make use of the outside area next to the Function Room.)

Therefore there will be an election of the committee for 2020/21 at the AGM on **November 7th** at Para Hills Community Hub starting at 9.30 am. The current committee has agreed to stand for nomination, but the Secretary will call for any nominations from members.

We have organized a second meeting at the Para Hills Community Hub in the Function Room on November 21st. This will be another opportunity to meet as a club, so we hope many of you will be able to come to that event, up to a maximum of 75. We plan to have some sort of display/video in place of a demonstration, and possibly a sausage sizzle!

A Covid-safe plan has been submitted to Mike Placentino who is the officer in charge of the facility. The details of cleaning and disinfecting will be arranged through him. Members will have to bring their own food and drink. Social distancing will be followed as far as is practicable. Although the risk of Covid-19 is very small, most of us are in the vulnerable age group so it is wise to be cautious. If you have any snuffles or coughs, please stay away.

Please bring your "Show and Tell" pieces to the AGM, including any which have been circulated as digital photos and emails. There are some good stories to tell!

The Community Hub is next to Woolworths at Para Hills Shopping Centre on Wilkinson Road. Here is a picture of it:-



Looking forward to catching up with many of you.

Tim Smeaton

President, Northern Turners Inc.

Northern Turners Committee

President	Tim Smeaton
Secretary	Dale Starr
Treasurer	David Kleinig
Vice President	Bill Elliott
Member	Roger Coulter
Member	Glenn Kutchen
Member	Fred McCann
Member	Nik Surikov,
Member	Graham Reed
Member	Flora Rumbelow

Send all articles to

turnout@woodgroupsa.org.au

Your Northern Turners

- *Seeking Excellence*
- *Encouraging Individualism*
- *Fostering Creativity*
- *Teaching Skills*
- *Providing Support*

Acorn Box

I thought I would include this item in Turnout to show it is worth reading! I looked through Ron Allen's demonstration of an acorn box, and I managed to make the box below. The lid is peach (again a small piece from Dick Pillar) and Huon pine for the base.

Tim Smeaton



EDITOR'S NOTE

The following in the second of articles after a trip to the Kimberley region a couple of years ago. Hope you enjoy her musings.

The BOAB TREE

Every Boab tree is unique. They have character and personality as you would expect of such an ancient creature. Some individual boab trees are 1500 years old and older, which makes them the oldest living beings in Australia, and puts them amongst the oldest in the world.

Aboriginals used the giants as shelter, food and medicine. For the white settlers they served as easily recognisable land marks and meeting points, and not to forget as impromptu prison cells.



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Boab Tree Facts

The Australian boab tree (*Adansonia gregorii*) is related to the Madagascan and African *Adansonia* species known as baobabs. Like its relatives it is sometimes called a "bottle tree", but we locals refer to the trees as just boabs. There are two theories about how boab trees arrived in Australia. One says the seeds have floated here from Africa and spread from the coast. The other theory suggests Boabs might have survived from the time when Africa and Australia were both still part of one continent, the ancient Gondwana, 65 million years ago.

A mature Boab tree is a sight to behold. Though not exceptionally high, up to 15 metres, they appear huge. The name bottle tree relates to the swollen trunk that can reach a massive girth of up to 20 metres.

The Boab is a very slow growing tree and it takes many hundreds if not thousand years to grow into one of those impressive specimens.

The bark of the Boab tree is grey brown and very smooth and the leaves have 5 to 9 longish leaflets.

Boab trees are deciduous; they drop all their leaves during the dry season. Since the dry season is the main tourist season most travellers only get to see the grey brown skeletons.

When the wet season approaches the trees sprout new leaves and are already covered in lush green when the first rains arrive.

Boab trees flower and fruit in the wet season. Flowering can start as early as October and the flowers are gorgeous; big, white, with a pinkish hue, intricate and fragrant. The fruit starts setting around January.

Mature "boab nuts" are woody capsules of varied shapes and can reach enormous size. Most of them are kind of oval, but they can also be round and squat, very long and pointed, or simply weird shaped.

The nut is covered in fine hair of a light olive to brownish colour, which can easily be scraped off to reveal the dark brown of the boab nut itself. When the nuts fall on the ground they often break open to reveal several kidney shaped seeds inside the white pith.

Seeds, pith, in fact most parts of the tree are edible.

Boab Trees As Food

All *Adansonia* species, Australian and African, have long been used as a staple food source by the indigenous populations. Studies on the African species have shown parts of the tree to be exceptionally high in Vitamin C, more than ten times the Vitamin C content of oranges! The Australian Boab tree is not as well studied, but it is known that the seeds are very high in Vitamin C as well.

In the past edible Australian plants were called "bush tucker" and seen as a curiosity and as survival food, something you'd eat when you get lost or similar but this perception is slowly changing. The interest in Australian native flora as a hardy food crop has been increasing and Australian bush foods have come a long way since the early experiments by some adventurous chefs and food enthusiasts.

Boab trees are now grown commercially in the Kimberley and sold as a gourmet food, although you will probably have problems tracking some down. Interestingly it's not the nuts or the leaves that get all the attention. No, it's the Boab tree root, (although the young leaves are nice in salads, too).

When commercially grown Boab trees are harvested at about 6 - 8 weeks of age their root has the size and shape of a big carrot, very big actually for the little tree top it supports. Like carrots they are sold in bundles with the tops still attached, and are peeled, then sliced or grated.

Boab tree roots are delicious! Similar in texture to water chestnuts, and sweet and crunchy like the core of a carrot.

If you want to taste fresh boab root try *Paddy's Market* in Kununurra (in Whitegum Park on Saturday mornings during the dry season). Growers Peter Fox and Denise Hales offer free tasters and sell all kinds of Boab delicacies from their stall.

A word of warning: Boab trees are a protected species. **You are not allowed to gather seedlings or seeds from the wild!**

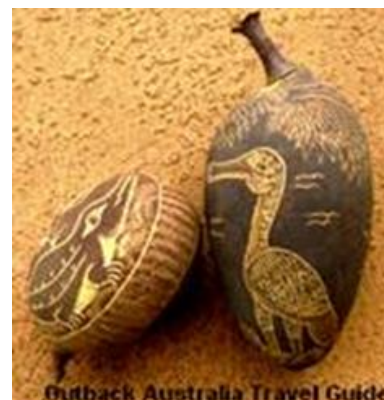
Boab Trees and Aboriginal Art

Today many Aboriginal artists of the Kimberley use Boab tree nuts for carvings and paintings. When the dark surface of the boab nut is scratched away it reveals a light colour underneath.

Large and regular shaped nuts are more popular but the smaller nuts are used, too. What is most important is the time of harvest. The nut has to dry on the tree, but needs to be picked rather than fall on the ground where it will most likely crack.

Motives include highly detailed faces, usually the much lined faces of Aboriginal elders, and native animals like snakes, kangaroos, birds and others, set in local landscapes.

Individual artists have individual style and the preferred motives and the preferred nut shape vary. The colour, size and hardness of the nuts depend on the location of the tree... A carved boab nut is intimately connected to the region where both the artist and the tree grew up.



Outback Australia Travel Guide

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Prison Boab Trees

This is the famous **Prison Boab near Derby** at the west coast.



The hollow tree trunk has a circumference of over 14 metres and the door is a metre wide and two metres high. It was used as a "prison cell" in the 1890s by the local police to lock up Aboriginal prisoners over night, on their way to Derby for sentencing. You can find it 7 km out of Derby, just beyond the Gibb River Road turn off.

Another prison boab tree of similar age and size is located near Wyndham at the eastern end of the Kimberley. It can be found 23 kilometres along the King River Road. Despite the grand name the road is only a rough bush track, hence the tree is not as well known as the easily accessible Derby tree.

The remarkable Wyndham Boab tree has a circumference of 14.7 metres and is estimated to be at least 1500 years old. Like the Derby tree it was used by local police as an overnight lock up. The tree was an obvious choice for an overnight stop. It's a day's travel from Wyndham (in the old days, that is, when travel was on horseback) and water is found nearby.

The Wyndham prison Boab tree is of cultural significance to the local Aboriginals. It is fenced off and travellers are asked not to approach it. A word of warning...it is considered very bad luck to stand inside the hollow of a Boab tree

Franky Pastuch