

Our jaca could take record

Tim Howard

tim.howard@dailyexaminer.com.au

THE Hunter Valley town of Singleton's claim to the biggest jacaranda tree in Australia could be short-lived.

In June the town's newspaper, The Singleton Argus, wrote the founder of the National Register of Big Trees, Derek McIntosh, had anointed a 17m-high specimen that doubled as the community Christmas tree, as Australia's biggest.

But Grafton Jacaranda Committee festival manager Kristy Schrader said the Jacaranda City was about to steal a march on its southern rival.

"We can't say too much yet about it, but we're pretty sure we've found a tree to

THIS IS THE ONE TO BEAT

Scientific name: *Jacaranda mimosifolia*
 Circumference: 4.5m; Height: 17m; Crown: 30m.
 Singleton's record making tree can be viewed at
www.nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au/tree_register.php

beat it," Ms Schrader said.

"We've got to get all the measurements done and have it photographed, but we're not too far off an announcement.

According to the report, the biggest trees are rated on a points formula devised by American Forests.

A tree's girth, height and crown spread are measured and from these figures points are awarded.

The largest tree on the register comes in at 1125 points and Mr McIntosh said on average a large tree would be around 300 points.

Singleton's jacaranda scores 257 points.

Mr McIntosh said he had visited Grafton, but not seen a tree to match the Singleton specimen.

"The girth of the tree is quite outstanding," he said.

"I've been to Grafton and have seen a lot of jacarandas but never one as big."

Mr McIntosh spends at least three months of the year on the road to keep the register current.

He wants to hear from people who think they have identified a tree that may qualify to notify him.



BRANCHING OUT: The large jacaranda tree in Singleton that has been declared Australia's biggest but is under challenge from the Jacaranda City.

CLAIM TO FAME: School's massive jacaranda tree about to be named the biggest in the country

Grafton heads straight to top

Tim Howard

tim.howard@dailyexaminer.com.au

GRAFTON is about to go back to the top of the big jacaranda tree list – and The Daily Examiner will do its bit to keep it there.

Only four months after announcing Singleton as owner of the biggest jacaranda tree in Australia, the National Big Tree Register is in for a significant shake-up.

Organisation founder Derek McIntosh said he was about to declare a massive

jacaranda in the grounds of Grafton High School as Australia's largest specimen.

Mr McIntosh said he would take action after receiving measurements of the tree from Grafton's Jacaranda Festival Committee.

"As soon as I receive photographs of the tree, I will be putting it up on the register as Australia's champion jacaranda," Mr McIntosh said.

"Then it will be the Champion Jacaranda Tree in

Australia as far as the National Big Tree Register is concerned."

Daily Examiner photographer Adam Hourigan has taken a series of photographs of the tree in full bloom.

These will form part of the big tree register's records.

The Grafton High tree's vital statistic make impressive reading.

It stands 17m tall with a girth of 5.5m and a crown of 25m.

These figures combine to

give it a score of 293 on the American Forests points formula.

Mr McIntosh, who was born in South Africa's own jacaranda city of Pretoria, said there had been a flurry of interest in jacarandas after he had put the Singleton tree on the big tree register.

"On the website there's a series of links to articles printed on jacarandas," he said.

"I've received a lot of emailed photographs of jacaranda trees."



BIG TREE: Grafton High students under the jacaranda tree now thought to be the biggest in Australia.

Australia's biggest Jacarandas

Circum	Height	Crown	Points	State	Town
05.50	17	25	293	NSWN	Grafton
04.50	17	30	257	NSWC	Singleton
03.60	16	28	225	QLDS	Maleny

A table showing how the top three jacaranda trees stack up against each other in height, crown and circumference.

WHO'S GOT THE BIGGEST . . . JACARANDA!

OUR Facebook friends got on the jaca defensive yesterday when it was suggested Singleton had the biggest tree:

Joanne Kitcher said the biggest jacaranda tree had to be in Grafton: "We are jaca city

after all," she said.

Craig Howe suggested: "The one at Grafton High is pretty big!"

Brianna Price said: "I come from Grafton and live in Singleton and couldn't believe it!"

"They had a write up in the paper and everything!

"Grafton all the way!"

Francesca Williams agreed: "I also believe the 1 at Grafton high is taller and rounder Grafton all the way!"

■ **Have your say by visiting the Daily Examiner Facebook page.**

Customers go crazy for big day of sales

Lachlan Thompson

lachlan.thompson@dailyexaminer.com.au

PURPLE wigs, balloons and actual Looney Toons: Grafton went bonkers for this year's Crazy Day sales.

Tim Ellem, owner of More 4 Men on Prince St, said this year saw a big increase in customers.

"We definitely did better than last year," Mr Ellem said.

"We offered a bigger special this year and the placing of my ad on page three of The Daily Examiner helped too."

Mr Ellem said the feeling on the main street of Grafton was great throughout the whole day.

In Shoppingworld the jumping castle and face painting proved popular, with donations going to the Grafton Hospital Auxiliary.

Peppa Pig also proved a roaring success.

"Lots of customers have been in to celebrate the Crazy Sale Days already and are grabbing lots of bargains, with over 30 Grafton Shoppingworld stores offering huge savings," marketing assistant Alison Smith said.



WIGGING OUT: Liesa Thompson, Chloe Thurtel, Fiona Green and Temika Konemann of City Centre News get in the spirit of Crazy Day.

PHOTOS: ADAM HOURIGAN

"We're looking forward to another day of Crazy Sales."

At Low Pressure Surf Co, Noel Smith was standing outside his store in a purple wig.

Mr Smith was buzzing not only because he had a great day but because he'd fin-

ished organising his favourite Jacaranda event.

"I think today might be a turning point in the local economy," Mr Smith said.

The sales continue this morning, so don't miss out on a bargain.

And just down the road

today at the Grafton Barn, Noel and his mate Peter LeBretton have arranged more than 100 surfboards for a Classic Surfboard Exhibition.

The surfboard display can be viewed at the Grafton Showground from 8am.



Marie Brown of Grafton.



Sally Vassallo and Karen Collins of Donuts and Dairy.



Cherie Dawson and Steph Moss of My House.

Biggest jaca measures up in home soil

FITTINGLY for the Jacaranda City, Grafton is now the official owner of the largest jacaranda tree in Australia.

Yesterday morning the coordinator of the National Register of Big Trees, Derek McIntosh, updated the register's website, crowning the might specimen in the grounds of Grafton High School as the champion.

It was an exciting and timely decision for Jacaranda Festival Committee manager Kristy Schrader.

"We sent the measurements through to Derek a couple of weeks ago, but he told us to keep it hush-hush until the photographs were taken," she said.

"When the committee first heard Singleton had the biggest tree, we couldn't believe it.

"We knew Grafton had to have the biggest tree and we resolved we would find it."

Ms Schrader said the community response had been fantastic.

"People really focussed on jacarandas and we knew with so many people on the case, we would find the biggest one," Ms Schrader said.

"It was really exciting when we sent in the measurements of the high school tree and Derek said it looked like ours was the biggest.

"It's also come at just the right time for us."



WOW: The National Big Tree Register webpage announcing Grafton as having the champion jacaranda tree.