

Around the Ridges

And a bit beyond

Issue 137 October 2015 E: aroundtheridges@hotmail.com

Fax 49345565 Phone 49341192

COTTON GROWING AT ALTON DOWNS by Peter Foxwell

Cotton was first grown in the district in the early 1800's in small plots planted by hand. It probably became a little more prolific following the failure of the sugar industry at Alton Downs. The Pandora Sugar Mill was built before it was discovered there wasn't enough underground water to support sugar as a feasible cropping alternative. Cotton, on the other hand, survived quite well in the many drought years in the early part of the 1800's due to its deep tap root and the heavy black soil Alton Downs is famous for. I am very fortunate to have been given a horse drawn two row cotton planter that planted the first "large scale" crop in the district.

The Foxwell family has been growing cotton at Alton Downs since 1971. Over that time cotton has proven to be the most reliable crop in terms of generating a return. It is drought hardy, responsive to good seasons, challenging and rewarding. The home block has always been dryland, however flood irrigated cotton was grown on a South Yaamba Road block in the late 90's and early 2000's.

Cotton production techniques have changed dramatically over recent years and the experiences of cotton growing at Alton Downs have helped shape industry best management practices for dryland production. These include row configurations, trap and refuge crops for insect management, use of beneficial insects in integrated pest management, and planting windows. The crop is now 88 percent Bollgard cotton which is bred to eliminate the need for chemical control measures for the major cotton pest, the heliothis caterpillar. Weed control is very effective now with the enhancement of the cotton plant's natural resistance to a particular herbicide.

The ideal planting time is mid-November through to the end of December following good rain and so always into full soil moisture. The crop will be setting fruit in February - hopefully during good moisture conditions, maturing in cooler conditions in late autumn. It will be ready to be picked in the drier winter months. Cotton is machine picked and packed into 40 foot long modules on the ground and tarped. The modules are picked up with chain bed tilt semi-trailers and carted to Moura to be processed. Each module weighs around 15 tonnes and produces around twenty four 220kg bales of lint after the seeds and any leaf material is removed. Each bale of cotton can produce around 270 pairs of jeans.

The sustainable cropping practices of the farm have resulted in the managers being recognised as Reef Guardian Farmers by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. This is a first for any cotton or grain farm. Work is regularly being done to improve the efficiency of nutrient application and to decrease nutrient loss from the farm. The health of the river system and ultimately the reef is important for all land managers to consider and the mixed cotton and grain enterprise is considered to be environmentally sustainable.

After 44 years, the plan is to continue to grow cotton for many more years.

Around the Ridges and a Bit Beyond is a community and school newsletter.

It is produced monthly, and is funded through sponsorship and advertising.

Advertising for special events must be submitted two months in advance.

PLEASE TELL US YOUR STORIES! We want to hear them!!!!

If you wish to contribute to the newsletter, please send all material in by the 11th of every month.

FROM THE RIDGELANDS SCHOOL.....

Prep Orientation – Thursday, 29th October 2015 – 9:00am to 11:30am

For parents of students who are eligible to start Prep in 2016 (children born between July 1 2010 and June 30 2011) we would like to extend an invitation to meet our Principal and Prep Teaching Team and to find out about our Prep Program and schooling expectations for 2016. Students and parents are encouraged to attend, interact in the classroom environment and experience the wonderful learning available at Ridgeland State School.

Enrolment packs, including enrolment forms, 2016 prospectus and Prep introduction materials, are available by calling the school on 49345518 or alternatively can be collected from administration. We are more than happy to accept enrolments before the Orientation Morning, enrolment packs will be available and enrolments will also be taken on the day. If possible, please bring along your child's birth certificate and morning tea for your child.

2016 eKindy

If your child turns 4 by July 31 2016 you may like to register your child for eKindy. Please note that eKindy does not operate through the school as it is an 'at home' kindergarten program. If you are registering please let the school know, as if there are numerous enrolments from this area; we may be able to provide resources to assist eKindy families e.g. computer laboratory, library, social opportunities. More information and forms can be found at <https://brisbanesde.eq.edu.au/Curriculum/ekindy/Pages/ekindy.aspx>

Woolworths Earn & Learn – Thank you!

We were excited to collate our Woolworths Earn & Learn program sticker results totalling a score of **16440 stickers**. This was a wonderful achievement as last year Ridgeland school collected a total of 1158 stickers and we well and truly exceeded our of 1300 sticker goal for this year. We will be able to redeem the stickers to purchase a range of resources for Mathematics, English, Science, Art & Crafts through to sports gear. We are grateful for your support and the numerous sticker donations made by the community.

CREAM CHEESE SCONES makes 6 scones

Needs: – 250g cream cheese, ½ cup soft butter, 1 cup self-raising flour

Mix cream cheese and butter with a beater until combined. Gradually add the flour beating slowly until blended. Roll out, cut with a scone cutter, arrange so that each is touching the other on a paper lined tray. Bake in a 200c oven for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown.

Optional: For savoury, add some parmesan cheese or sun-dried tomatoes (YUM)

'Neologisms' - where people supply alternative meanings for common words e.g.

Coffee (n) the person on whom one coughs

Flabbergasted (adj) appalled over how much weight you have gained.

Abdicate (v) to give up hope of ever having a flat stomach

Esplanade (v) to attempt an explanation while drunk

Triple P – Positive Parenting Program can help parents manage toddler tantrums, bedtime battles, dinner table dramas, disobedience, bullying, fighting and help to create a happy family environment

How can I access Triple P for free?

Free Triple P seminars, workshops and courses are being rolled out progressively across Queensland. Visit the [Triple P Queensland website](#) to learn more about the program and to find out when a free Triple P session is being delivered in your local area. You can also [search for a free Triple P provider in your local area](#). You can [register for the Triple P Online parenting course](#) at any time via the Triple P Queensland website.

Qld Government <https://www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/positive-parenting>

- *Police were called to a day care centre where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.*

80% of Queensland is again in Drought.....

Lots of local children who attend the Pre-Kindy children at RGS were interested in learning about the drought this year, the thoughtful carers thought it would be a great idea to help out the families who are affected by the drought in western Queensland. As a centre, they are hoping to collect donations and send packages off to families who need it. Some ideas for donations would be: Clothing for all ages, new baby items (nappy, clothing, etc), female hygiene products, personal/bathroom products, non-perishable food items, toys or generally all the items we use daily. The organisers are also trying to organise pen pals for the children to share pictures and photos of their environments so they all can get more of an idea of how other people live and become aware of why we should be more sustainable with our practices and don't take everything for granted. If you know of families that are in need of a care package or are able to help deliver these to the outback, please let the centre know.

Thanks in advance for your help to support the people 'living in our own backyard' who are going through such hard times. C Booth

Tom Rayners 30th Birthday

About 50 people attended on 3 October including ex Principal John Moritz and his wife Bev, John and Vicky McLean from the School. 'Fe', Tom's carer, drove to Craigilee after her shift finished and presented Tom with a Lovely Birthday cake complete with Motorbikes on it. Tom's brother provided rides and Tom had a great day and finished about 10.30pm. The family fondly remember the care and wonderful support he had at Ridgeland State

School during his time there. Thank you all for your best wishes and for those who were able to make it on the day. L Edgar

ENGINE CENTRE ROCKHAMPTON

Servicing All Makes of Vehicles – Cars, 4WDs, Trucks & Tractors

.....your engine specialist



- ✓ Qualified Technician
- ✓ Logbook & Fleet Vehicle Servicing
- ✓ Brakes, Steering & Suspension
- ✓ Diff Overhauls & Upgrades
- ✓ Full Spools, Lockers & LSDs
- ✓ Clutch Replacements
- ✓ Engine Rebuilding & Tuning
- ✓ Performance Upgrades / Chips
- ✓ Turbos
- ✓ Superchargers

- ✓ Prosystems & CSU Carbies
- ✓ Brodix Cylinder Heads
- ✓ Methanol & E85 Ethanol
- ✓ Nitrous Kits & Refills
- ✓ Digital Flowbench
- ✓ Professional Cylinder Head Porting
- ✓ Full Race Car Set-ups
- ✓ Sonic Testing
- ✓ Amsoil Racing Oil
- ✓ MSD Ignitions



22 Sheehan Road Alton Downs QLD
Email: enginecentre@dodo.com.au

Telephone: 0749 341473
Mobile: 0438 341473

Disclaimer: Around the Ridges and A Bit Beyond reserves the right to edit all articles as necessary. Submission does not always guarantee publication. The Committee does not accept responsibility for errors, omissions and inaccuracies.

Opinions in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of this committee, school or community.

's Happening this Month?

Community Notices

Date Claimers

Christmas Karaoke

Christmas Karaoke in aid of
Ridgelands Hall Funds.

Saturday, 28th November, 2015.
6.30 pm. At the Ridgelands Hall.
All Welcome.

.....

Alton Downs Dump Hours

September to April

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and
Sunday, 3pm - 6pm.

**Free disposal of Green Waste at Alton
Downs - depending on the size of
the load**

.....

Dry windy Gardening:

Plants don't absorb very much water through their leaves, but they do lose water through their leaves. A well-developed root system with lots of little sponge-like root hairs is a plant's best insurance for survival in drought conditions. To have that, they need to be working in a loose, friable soil. Adding compost, leaves, hay etc will make your soil more porous, so water that's applied to the soil surface won't run off but rather will move down into the root zone. Absorbing moisture is the task of the youngest, most tender part of a plant's root system—the growing root tips and root hairs. When moisture conditions alternate radically between wet and dry, these root hairs get

Celebrations

Happy Birthday to all the resident in our community who are having a birthday in OCTOBER:

Fiona Peterson
Greg Dyer
Lahlan Hunt
Joshua Hunt
Andy Schnalle
Kelly Kime

.....

WANDAL ROAD CONVENIENCE STORE

Fish & Chips, Burgers Cold Drinks
133 Wandal Rd Rockhampton
Phone 49225494

Tracey and Ken Milner

FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR TRAINER AND ASSESSOR

Category A,B,C,D & H

Ph Ben Abotomey 0429 341 550

Nyssaph2@bigpond.com

Licence No 74001612-00

FARMBUTCHER

Slaughter and butchering of cattle, pig and sheep. All processed in a refrigerated mobile butcher shop, Mince, sausages, corned meat and rolled roasts, all cut to your requirement. Cryovac of whole cuts available. Please call Jamie for an obligation free quote.