

Rehabilitation of the Specimen Hill area, Balfour

This project covering 2 to 4 hectares of ground at Specimen Hill, Balfour, started on 22 March 2004 and finished on 28 May 2004, a total of 33 working days.

The driver of the 22 tonne excavator was Norm Taylor, who was employed by Rodney Collins.

It was very important to have a good working relationship with the driver as his thorough job was the key to the whole project being done properly. We were fortunate that he had just completed two months work with Forestry rehabilitating tracks made to fight the summer fires. He has also had years of mining experience. As you well know getting the right operator is a very important decision. Norm was on the site for 15 days. This included a day on road repairs.

We mostly worked on the western side of Specimen Hill (the side visible from the road). We recovered a very original and old mine site which was very fortunate we did not cover in. We were also fortunate that a fire burnt the whole area out in November this enabled us to recognise and recover such a valuable site for future heritage.

The hill was steep and very open to the wind but April–May was the perfect time of the year to be working in such a location. It did become very hard to move on top of the reclaimed soil once the rain started coming. The areas were seeded and used cast dry kelp was widespread so the use of a four-wheel motor bike was essential, especially when it came to placing the jute.

Jute

We used six pallets of jute; 18 bails x 10 biscutts (= 180 biscutts).

The jute was delivered to the Parks and Wildlife depot at the Arthur River. This was very handy for us because we were going past everyday for work. We used a Rodeo dual cab ute, excellent bus, except for those who had to ride in the back. It cost \$55 a day. We also used a tandem trailer. It would take us 1½ hours to load up at the river and deliver to Balfour each day. This was because of distance and the nature of some of the road, especially from the Arthur River to Couta Rocks. The jute is very heavy to handle in a bail form but easy once cut and loaded in the biscutt form. The hill up to the top of Specimen Lookout was too steep and dangerous to try and take a tandem trailer up. We would load the ute up twice a day and drive up, the four-wheel bike then became essential to distribute the biscutts out four at a time.

The jute was horrible to breath in when unrolling out and once it got wet and mouldy it became worse. Masks were a must. In all seriousness we did not use them enough. We had to take turns getting up-wind of it as we worked as a team to roll it out. If there is one thing I will not miss about the job, it will be the smell of the jute.

The Crew

To begin with we had five men on the ground at Balfour. This was reduced to four once the kelp and seed had been spread. We also thought we were going to cover the entire hill with jute and we wanted to get all the wet areas done before too much rain fell.

The crew comprised Harvey Grey, Chris Nunn, Martin Laan and Quentin Bye.

We used five men for ten days and four men for 23 days.

The crew were great. They all enjoyed being there and it was a real team effort. Martin Laan's knowledge and warm fire on a couple of days were a real bonus; he was a good pick up.

We started at the bottom of Specimen Hill and worked back up. I always kept the crew together on the one site: two rolling out, and two pegging, placing stones back on and throwing slash back over. This process was slower but the job was done more thoroughly at the end of the day, it was

definitely the way to go. The slash was put aside for us by the excavator driver and we also cut some green slash where the excavator driver had widened the road. This was spread on as thick as we could.

It is important to use plenty of rock and slash for weight. The slash protects young trees, and it prevents people from driving over the areas.

KELP

20 x 25 kg bags of Cast Bull Kelp

SEED

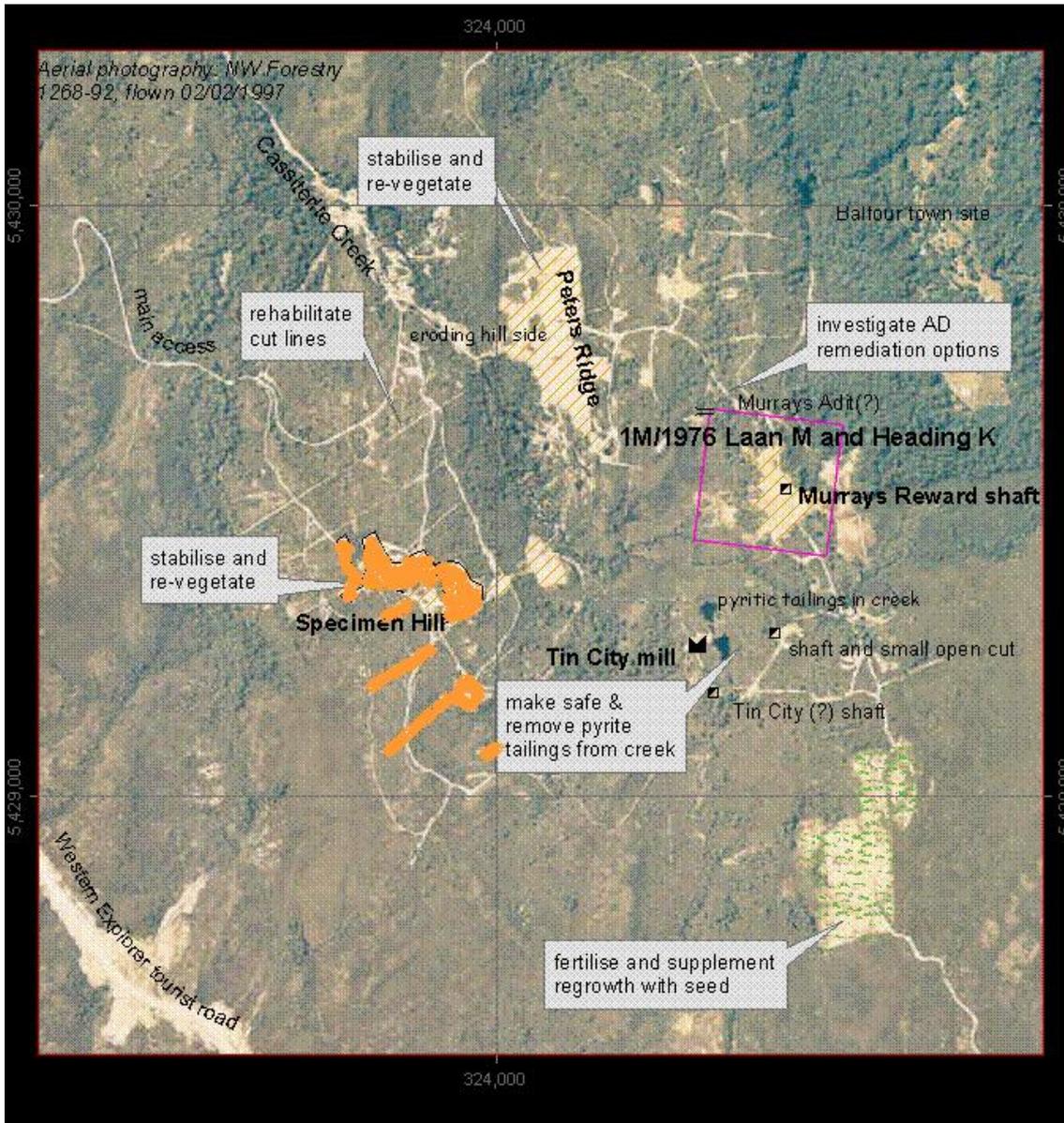
1.	<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i>	500 g
2.	<i>Salicornia quinqueflora</i>	250 g
3.	<i>Melaleuca squarrosa</i>	500 g
4.	<i>Allocasuarina monilifera</i>	500 g
5.	<i>Phragmites australis</i>	250 g
6.	<i>Melaleuca squamea</i>	500 g
7.	<i>Leptospermum glaucescens</i>	250 g
8.	<i>Acacia mucronata</i>	750 g
9.	<i>Leptospermum nitidum</i>	250 g
10.	<i>Eucalyptus nitida</i> (Endemic Smithton peppermint)	1.50 kg
11.	<i>Kunzea ambigua</i>	250 kg
12.	<i>Acacia verticillata</i>	1.00 kg
13.	<i>Leptospermum lanigerum</i>	750 kg

There seems to be no *Banksia*, I think that may have been included but I may have lost the bag after we seeded. I certainly hope so because it is one floral species that is very prolific in that area.

Original text supplied by Rob Saltmarsh.

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Plan showing area of works on Specimen Hill–Balfour



Map derived from original project proposal. Scale 1:10 000

Area seeded and kelp

Selection of a dozen seed types of Coastal Heath Eucalyptus variety mixed with Blackwood saw dust and scattered over re-habilitated area.

2 tonne of Cast Bulk Kelp in dry chip form.

Specimen Hill — Western Face. Rehabilitation works 2003/2004 financial year



Specimen Hill — Eastern Face. Rehabilitation works 2003/2004 financial year



Various rehabilitation works, 2003/2004 financial year



Plan showing location of recent works, plus targetted site of forthcoming year's works
Scale:1:25 000

