

TIMBER QUEENSLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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Festive Parliamentary pine Christmas tree “unveiled”

Last night almost 80 members of Queensland’s Parliamentary Friends of the Forest and Timber Industry and invited industry stakeholders celebrated the start of the festive season with the tradition of unveiling a “live” Christmas tree in the Queensland Parliamentary Annexe.

Grown in Stanthorpe, the radiata pine (*Pinus radiata*) is the most common form of Christmas tree and has been adorned with locally grown and processed hoop pine plywood decorations in the shape of a tree - signifying the growth of the state’s \$3.8 billion timber industry and the 25 000 jobs it supports.

Timber Queensland’s Strategic Relations and Communications Manager Clarissa Brandt said the custom of bringing a tree indoors for decoration and to brighten spirits is a long-standing tradition around the world.

“In the 16th century, the decoration of trees at Christmas time started in Germany with gingerbread, nuts and apples, a century later decorations like gold leaf, paper decorations and candles paved the way for the tinsel and electric lights we use today,” said Mrs Brandt.

“These historical influences continue today and we are pleased to donate a live pine Christmas tree for Parliamentarians and visitors alike as they enter the building,” she said.

Of all of Queensland’s natural resources, forests and timber were one of the most visible and abundant to the state’s early development. By 1901 the number of sawmills exceeded the number of meat, butter, sugar, leather or flour factories.

“This track record continues, with 52.5 million hectares of native forests and around 200,000 hectares of plantations, Queensland has the largest forested area in the country and timber is the state’s third largest agricultural processing industry by value,” said Mrs Brandt.

“We acknowledge the support of the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament, Curtis Pitt, and the Parliamentary Friends co-chairs Bruce Saunders, Member for Maryborough and Tony Perrett, Member for Gympie, in promoting the tradition of a live tree in Parliament, and reminder of the significant role of forests to the state’s economic future.

“The forest and timber industry is a truly renewable industry worth celebrating. Every five minutes in Queensland we grow enough plantation softwood to build another timber framed home”.

“Our industry is the gift that keeps on giving to Queensland,” said Mrs Brandt.

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For further information contact:

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IMAGE ATTACHED

Members of Parliament and Industry Representatives Celebrate the Launch of the Christmas Tree (L- R Joan Pease Member for Lytton, Tony Perrett Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Linus Power Member for Logan, Mick Stephens Timber Queensland, Mark Furner Minister for Agriculture & Fisheries, Les Walker Member for Mundingburra, Charis Mullen Assistant Minister for Treasury.)

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