



# THE WITCHIPOOL WORKERS

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## RAINFALL

After 18 inches or so last year, the only description of the quantity of rainfall received for this year is “bugger all”.

Less than 2 inches to date.

## CROPPING/LEASE

John and Bern Downes are leasing the arable areas of the farm for twelve months from 1<sup>st</sup> March. We will still be responsible for the upkeep of the revegetated/remnant areas and around the house.

The lads have been undertaking some live goat exports to Malaysia with a shipment of 1,000 air freighted in late February. They have at least two more shipments planned with the possibility of more to follow. They will be running stock and undertaking some cropping over the winter.

As most of the fences are now in good repair they will be able to run stock without them escaping.

## REVEGETATION

There are no plans to undertake any revegetation this year other than possibly to plant some understorey species in the remnant at the end of the Old Paddock and The Paddock Behind the Dam.

There are a number of smaller plants from the direct seeding in the School Paddock which have survived the summer. Hopefully with an early break these should kick on with the introduction of some much needed moisture.

The planting in Jerimiahs is looking well with some very good growth on most trees with some up to two metres high. A significant number in the Timber Paddock are also doing well.

To date the revegetated and remnant areas fenced is approximately 32.5 acres. This represents only 3.5% of the total area of the farm.

## FENCING

The fencing of the perimeter of the House Block is finished with the last section of almost 2km along Melican Road being completed in October last year. Works were continued until almost dark on the Saturday to complete this section. A good effort to get it completed in one day.

Two large snakes were encountered during the works. They were given a reprieve and were allowed to continue on their way.

The fencing of the School Paddock is almost complete with only gates to be hung. It has been a protracted undertaking in difficult circumstances.

The strainer and gate posts were installed on the Sunday in October after the Melican Road section of fencing was completed. The work team presented in a less than enthusiastic manner after the socialising and re-hydration activities of the previous evening but managed to install all the posts



*“Jack Death” and grader in the School Paddock*

The blocks and stays and steel posts were installed in early March under trying weather conditions. Two hot days resulted in an early cessation of works on both Saturday and Sunday. On Sunday afternoon the temperature reached 40°.

The last weekend in March saw another team installing the cyclone to complete the task. Saturday was a long and warm one with the Laen Litchfield Road section being completed just before 7 p.m. After a refreshing swim in the dam the team members retired to the lawns at Litchfield to dine, re-hydrate and socialise.



*The works team re hydrating at Litchfield around  
“The Gerry Melican Table of Truth”*

The two short runs either side of the gate on McNamaras Road were completed on Sunday.



*Weary workers (Larry, Doobs, Andrew) resting in the  
shade after completion of the works on Sunday*

Catering for the weekend was capably undertaken by Jean and Céle.

## **FUTURE WORKS**

### **Fencing.**

In order to exclude stock from the house yard and shed area a fencing weekend is proposed for early May.

Although the area is not large it involves installing;

- 13 strainer / gate posts,
- 20 blocks and stays,
- 6 gates and
- 1,450 metres of fence in 8 runs.

Unless there is a large roll up, good weather and co-ordinated work teams it is highly unlikely we will be able to complete all these works in one weekend.

Could you please let me know of your availability from May onwards.

### **General Cleaning Up**

Ongoing.