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Forestry boss takes Boss Lift experience. Read more on page 21.

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# AUSTimber Profile

## Libby Ditcham, Administration Manager

**L**IBBY DITCHAM returns for AUSTimber 2012 and is looking forward to building on the success of the 2008 event and to re-connect with the many interesting and energetic people she met from the Australian and international forestry industries through AUSTimber 2008.

Libby is AUSTimber 2012's administration manager and was an integral member of the very small team, led by David Quill, that implemented the successful AUSTimber2008 in Mount Gambier. AUSTimber 2008 brought 8,000 people to the town and showcased the diversity and innovation of the forestry industries to Australia and the world.

Libby has been working in Australia's forestry industry for over 20 years in a variety of sectors. She has worked in Local Government, CSR Softwoods as Resources Division secretary to the then Manager of Harvesting and Haulage division and currently with Eumeralla Pty Ltd, David Quill's consultancy business. Libby performs a multitude of roles including administration, accounting, client liaison, developing

presentations and compiling reports. And, as David Quill says "Libby has immense organisational capabilities, is a valuable contributor of ideas and solving problems and is a dedicated and extremely important member of the team, on whom we all rely."

AUSTimber 2012 will build upon the success of 2008 and implement strategies and systems from the analysis of that event and the feedback from sponsors, exhibitors and other stakeholders. Libby is integral to developing and implementing the systems and process to support the growth of the event.

"The lead-up to AUSTimber 2008 was a whirlwind of activity and I am preparing for the excitement and demands to bring together a successful AUSTimber 2012 with David and his team," said Libby.

Libby leads a very busy life, not only professionally with Eumeralla and AUSTimber 2012 but also with her very important role as a busy mum with two boys now 12 and 15, both of whom are very keen sportsmen and jazz musicians. Libby values her community and plays an active role. She has been a long term member and chairwoman of her local



■ Libby Ditcham

primary school Governing Council and she is president of the South East Show Band Committee. Libby also volunteers for her children's' football, cricket and hockey clubs but had to relinquish her role as a hockey star when a certain age beckoned and determined that it was time to watch from the sidelines, albeit as a star support volunteer. Libby

and her husband Gavin live on a five acre rural block just outside Mount Gambier and she would love to have more time to enjoy the garden they have created... perhaps after AUSTimber 2012.

Give a busy person a job and it will get done – Libby's that person and AUSTimber 2012 is that job.

## That's what you call a welcome 're-leaf'

A GIVE-AWAY of thousands of seedlings marked this year's Arbor Day celebrations in Western Australia

WA's Forest Products Commission general manager operations Gavin Butcher said more than 5,000 seedlings had been made available to householders, schools and community-based organisations as part of the commission's 're-Leaf WA' program.

"re-Leaf WA' helps the public to make important connections between WA's sustainable forestry industry and our shared environmental future.

"The program cuts through complex terminology to explain forestry's most important messages such as sustainability, regeneration, carbon sequestration and water catchment protection. The 're-Leaf WA' program also encourages direct involvement with trees by motivating the public to plant a native species on their property.

"It made sense for 're-Leaf WA' to promote opportunities for tree planting and at the same time enhance Arbor Day festivities on 11 June.

"Stocks of red flowering gum, claw honey myrtle, York gum, coastal moort, granite honey myrtle, blue mallee and bottle brush were available free-of-charge," Gavin said.

"The role of trees in absorbing carbon dioxide is acknowledged around the world; however, the role of wood products as long-term carbon vaults deserves more recognition.

"Trees at the mature growth stage have greater capacity to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than young trees or post-mature trees, because the growth rates of the latter slow considerably after reaching maturity.

"Timber products used in housing construction can store carbon for as long as the material remains in use. Many stately homes in Europe proudly exhibit panelling, furniture

and staircases that originated in Western Australian native forests more than 100 years ago.

"Those items are still in service and they continue to store carbon," he said.

Sustainable forestry operations required the FPC to replant and monitor post-harvest regeneration activities in publicly-owned native forests.

Research has shown that by using wood products in housing construction, greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced by up to 25 tonnes of carbon dioxide per house. "There is a timeless beauty about fine timber products. In fact, they are essential to sustainability because without them the world would be wholly reliant on non-renewable substitutes like plastics or metals which require massive amounts of energy to manufacture.

"FPC's world-class forestry practices bear testimony to the sustainability of our timber industry so naturally, Arbor Day was a symbolic annual event which we were pleased to observe."

## Innovative plan to support forestry jobs

**T**HE TASMANIAN Government's \$3.6million assistance package for the struggling forestry industry has been described as a "hand up and not a hand out".

Minister for Energy and Resources Bryan Green said the Government had agreed to an innovative plan by the forest industry to maintain supplies to the State's sawmillers and keep harvesting and cartage contractors working.

"The solution that industry has put forward will maximise the economic and employment benefits from the Government's \$3.6 million package to help contractors," the Minister said.

"The assistance will keep contractors' employees in a job and provide the sawlogs that sawmillers need to keep operating. This is a hand up not a hand out and will see

a significant economic return to the State."

The Minister said the package would help inject about \$20 million into the economy, generating around \$9 million worth of business for contractors.

He added that low pulpwood prices had meant forestry companies had been harvesting as close as possible to mills and ports to keep costs down.

"Using the \$3 million assistance package, forestry contractors will be able to work in outlying coupes that have a higher percentage of sawlog and wood suitable for rotary peeling.

The remaining \$600,000 will be provided to assist silviculture contractors whose businesses have been heavily affected particularly by the collapse of the Managed Investment Scheme companies.

"Consultation with the silvicultural sector is progressing to determine the best way to apply assistance to this sector.

Minister Green said the Contractor Assistance Package would mean that most harvesting and cartage contractors would be working for the next six to 10 months at around 70% capacity.

"About half of the contractors who had previously been delivering to woodchip mills will now take on the new work and the remaining half will continue to supply the woodchip mills.

"We expect the new arrangement will deliver an additional 25,000 cubic metres of sliced veneer logs, sawlogs and rotary peeled veneer logs to Tasmanian manufacturers.

"The lower quality wood will be used by Forestry Tasmania to

supply growing markets in China, especially for peeler logs," he said. Forestry Tasmania will manage the new program on behalf of the Government.

Tasmanian Forest Contractors Association chief executive Ed Vincent said he was delighted the Government agreed to the new plan.

"It isn't often that a \$3m investment will net a \$20 million return within months. More importantly, contractors are proud people who would much prefer to be doing a good honest day's work.

"Obviously, they all would prefer to be working at 100% capacity, but this package is a big step in the right direction."

However, he said that while this was a resourceful solution and a positive move forward, it was not an industry cure-all.