

THURSDAY MAY 29^H

TREES CUT DOWN TUES 20TH MAY.

PETRIE

History gets the chop

ANGER AS COUNCIL CUTS DOWN ORIGINAL MEMORIAL TREES - BY MISTAKE

Bernie Dowling

OOPS! Two 90-year-old palms, the first trees planted as war memorials along Anzac Ave, have been sliced to the ground by Moreton Bay Regional Council.

Barely two metres from the site of the error, outside North Pine School of Arts in Petrie, is a plaque explaining the cultural significance of the trees.

North Pine Historical Society president Judy Dohle described the felling of the trees a year before the Anzac centenary as "desecration".

A council spokesman said the cocos palms were mistakenly removed by tree maintenance staff unaware of the trees' significance.

Cr David Dwyer (Div7), chairman of the Anzac Memorial Avenue Centenary Committee (AMACC), said: "I am disgusted."

Brent Ledez from AMACC said if the tree fellers read the plaque, the felling would not have happened.

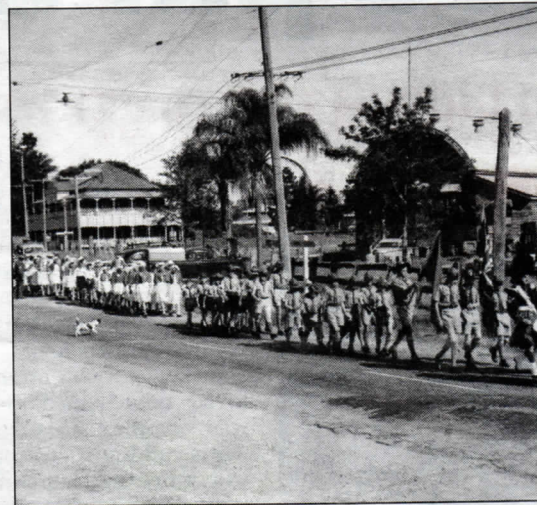
"The lesson is people should be made more aware of the important objects of Pine Rivers history," he said

The plaque tells how Tom Petrie's widow, Elizabeth, donated the two palms from the garden of her Murrumba homestead.

Governor Sir Matthew Nathan dedicated the trees in 1925 as the first to be planted as World War I memorials on then Anzac Mem-



Judy Kranen, Judy Dohle and Brent Ledez by one of the palm tree stumps, near the Pine School of Arts in Petrie, after the historic cocos palms were cut down. Right: The nearby plaque.



This early 1950s Anzac Day march shows the culturally significant cocos palms to the left of North Pine School of Arts.



orial Ave. Hundreds more were planted all the way to Redcliffe where Australia Governor-General Lord Stonehaven presided over one planting ceremony and said of the number of children present: "I hope they will become the guardians

of the trees that have been planted."

The 2009 State Government heritage registration of the (former) Anzac Memorial Avenue mentions the culturally significant trees.

The council spokesman said new procedures would

be introduced "to ensure tree maintenance staff and contractors consult council registers prior to the removal of trees or other items of potential historical significance".

He said the felled palms would be replaced with ma-

ture palms. Seedlings from the original palms will be planted and protected at the site.

The planting of cocos palms is not recommended, says council's website, though the Brazilian nut is not a declared weed.

Picture: PATRIA JANN