

Vale Meinhard Holtz

Meinhard Holtz, President of the Friends of Kurth Kiln Group since its inauguration on 8th June 1999, passed away on Friday March 31st after a brave battle with cancer. Meinhard had been an untiring worker during those years on numerous projects. He tackled the environmental aspect around the Kiln site with vigour. Under his guidance tree planting sessions were carried out by both the Gembrook State School and the Hoddles Creek State School. After the re-vegetation he watered the plants on hot days. They are now growing well.

However, Meinhard will be remembered by us mainly for creating almost single handedly the Ron Thornton track. For many weeks he toiled with hand-tools cutting a track through the bush, through the under-story of Dusty Miller, Banksia, Hakea, Sedge etc. beneath the canopy of majestic tall Mountain Grey, Mountain Ash, Manna Gum, Messmate and Peppermint trees. He discovered the tranquil Hazel Pomaderris forest, the Lyrebird Gully and a historic tramline track. He loved hearing and watching the variety of bush birds as he worked.

Meinhard was instrumental in the construction of a bridge crossing the Tomahawk Creek at the end of the Track. The bridge never had an official name and the Friends Group call it Meinhard Bridge.

On Sunday 9th March the Holtz family invited the Friends of Kurth Kiln, along with other Friends Groups Meinhard was involved in, to a "Celebration of Life Ceremony" and sausage sizzle in the Gembrook Park. More than 100 people attended. Hearing the numerous eulogies one became aware again of Meinhard's extraordinary energy and drive in so many environmental issues.

True to Meinhard's last wish his ashes were scattered in Gembrook Park, a place dear to his heart.

Three new trees were planted in his honour.

