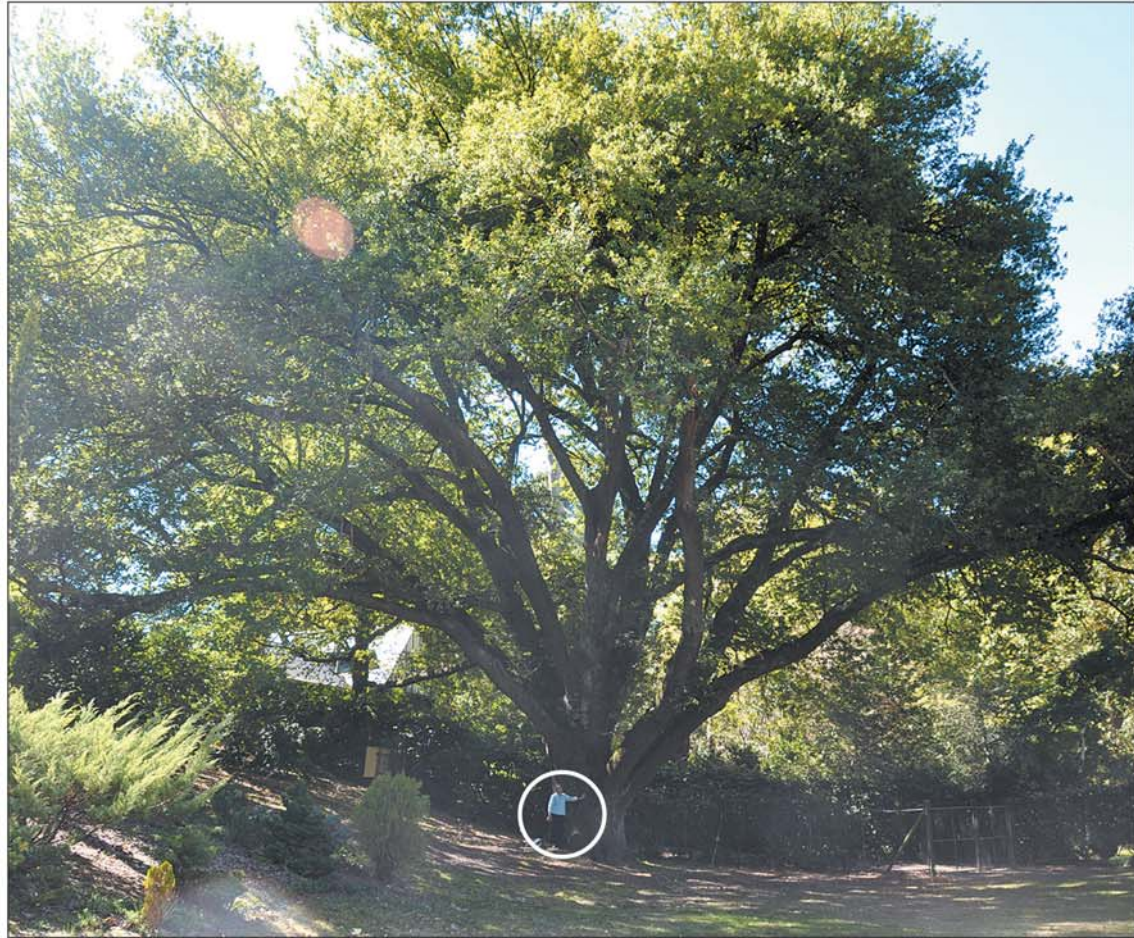




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The Newspaper of the Adelaide Hills

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# OUR MIGHTY OAK



The old oak tree at Stangate House in Aldgate has been crowned Australia's largest oak. Former chairperson of the Mt Lofty Branch of the National Trust, Anita Aspinall, stands beneath its vast canopy (circled).

## Stangate home to Australia's biggest

By **Genevieve Cooper**

The old oak tree at Stangate House in Aldgate has been crowned Australia's biggest English oak.

The tree, which is a much-loved feature of the heritage-listed garden, has been assessed by the National Register of Big Trees as the largest *Quercus robur* in the country.

The volunteer-run register determines how large a tree is on a points system – calculating girth, height and crown.

Stangate's oak was nominated by arborist Kim Knight and with a circumference of 6.24m, a height of 26m and a crown of 40m it accumulated 364 points.

The runner-up is a tree at Valencia Creek in Victoria which is 23m tall.

In third place is an oak at Bridgetown in WA which is 36.5m tall but it only has a crown of 30m so it only accumulates 355 points.

Derek McIntosh, the co-ordinator of the National Register of Big Trees, said the lists were constantly

changing as new trees were nominated and measured.

A previous winner of the big oak title was a tree at the Stirling East Primary School back in 2009.

"The register is a self-funded not-for-profit project," he said.

"Thanks to great media support, many people have heard about the register and most stories result in people nominating some very big trees that are hidden away on private property or not fully appreciated in public parks and gardens."

### Recognition

Stangate House is a National Trust property and has been managed by the trust's Mt Lofty branch for more than 40 years.

Branch chairperson Lyn Radzevicius said members were "very pleased" with the recognition their oak tree had received on the register.

"The oak tree is one of the most cherished parts of the Stangate story," she said.

"Legend has it that a homesick English miner, on his way to the diggings at Echunga, buried the acorn from which our glorious oak tree grew.



Stirling East Primary School acting principal Chris Bennie with students James Cartwright, left, Emma Brennan and Lucy Curtis at the huge oak tree in the school grounds which is believed to be the State's largest tree.

### Mighty oak the top tree ... for now

By **Caillin Carey**

The Stirling East Primary school is the home of the State's biggest tree. The list of big trees in the register ... until a bigger tree is registered.

*The Courier, July 7, 2010.*

"A stitched sampler in Stangate House has 1838 as the date but some experts have assessed the tree as estimated to have been planted in the 1860s."

"... As part of the wider National Trust organisation, we are proud to do our part in conserving and promoting the natural and built heritage of our State and in particular the magnificent gardens and house at Stangate."

Last year the branch spent more than \$5000 on a specialist arborist to trim the dead branches from the old oak.

The then branch chairperson Anita Aspinall said members wanted to ensure the health and safety of the tree into the future.

To see the full list of *Quercus robur* oaks and other varieties visit [www.nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au](http://www.nationalregisterofbigtrees.com.au).