



# Jesus Lives: message from heaven spelled out in trees on Adelaide Hills property

Meagan Dillon, The Advertiser

February 16, 2015 - 10:22PM

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/jesus-lives-message-from-heaven-spelled-out-in-trees-on-adelaide-hills-property/news-story/027c5adfde14cbc404530849f1e35a15>



IT HAS taken decades for more than 1000 trees on an Adelaide Hills property to become mature enough for the words “Jesus Lives” to be clearly visible from planes overhead.

But retired environmental scientist Brendan Lay, 67, says the message made of trees is as visible now as it ever will be.

He and wife Elizabeth, 58, planted the unique tree formation on their 38ha property at Harrogate before their wedding in the 1970s.

“It interested us a bit that when you fly over the landscape, you don’t see any signage but when you’re on the ground, you’re bombarded with it everywhere,” Mr Lay said.

The couple would visit the Uniting Church regularly and decided to make the phrase “Jesus Lives” visible from the sky.

“We thought a Christian message was as good as any so we put ‘Jesus Lives’ up there — to us, it was a good message,” he said.

But it was not an easy process to get the message on the hillside.

They used old car tyres to “join the dots” of the letters to make out the phrase before going up in a plane owned by Mrs Lay’s father to have a look at the layout.

Photos were taken from the sky of the proposed layout before an assessment was done back on the ground.

The phrase needed some tweaking before the couple started to plant native trees to create the letters.

Native trees such as pines, blue gums and local wattle were among up to 15 different species of trees planted in the formation.

“For many years, the message did not show up,” Mr Lay, a former SA Pastoral Board scientist, said.

“It has taken a long time for the trees to become big enough for the message to become obvious.

“It was quite an interesting exercise deciding what trees to plant so when they matured, they would have a dense canopy.”

He said each letter was about 100m in length and was made up of between 100 and 150 trees.

Mr Lay said the message was directly under the flight path between Adelaide and eastern cities, Melbourne and Sydney.

“A lot of people have seen it, if you’re looking in the right place,” he said.

“It’s as visible as it ever will be.”



The words "Jesus Lives" written in trees at Harrogate, in the Adelaide Hills. Picture: Dino Pasqualini