

## **Growing the next generation of trees, buildings and families**

**27 May 2019**

When people talk about someone who's come a long way Peh Boo could be that person. A refugee from Burma, now working at OneFortyOne's nursery at Glencoe. For Peh Boo it's not just the opportunity to work with nature, outside in the fresh air, doing a good day's work. It's the chance to be free and build a life for him and his family.

Peh Boo sees it as a great place to work. And it's easy to see why when you're at the nursery on a sunny day in May. Set on over 90ha and surrounded by gum trees, for over 35 years the Glencoe nursery has grown the millions of pine trees used to replant the region's forests.

This year the nursery team has grown nearly 8 million trees to be replanted across OneFortyOne's and other Green Triangle forests during winter. In approximately 32 years-time, by 2053, these trees will be harvested and turned into timber used to build the houses of future.

And yet the nursery is more than just the start of the renewable forestry cycle, it does more than create jobs for people in the forestry supply chain – forestry, harvesting and mill workers, log truck drivers and everyone in between – it has also played an important role helping refugees comfortably settle into the Green Triangle region.

For Peh Boo working at the Nursery for the past 10 years has given him more than just a job. It has given him the opportunity to learn new skills, a new language, a new way of life and to feel like he and his family truly belong in this region.

"I came to Australia when I was 33 with my parents. I had spent 25 years living in a refugee camp in Burma.

I had to learn English. I had to get a job. Living in a refugee camp all that time meant I didn't have skills needed for working, so I had to learn", he said.

Peh Boo came to Australia in 2009 and has worked at OneFortyOne's nursery every year since then during the planting season. Like many of the other refugee workers at the nursery, this regular seasonal employment has enabled him to create a bright future here in the Green Triangle and feel part of the community.

After 10 years in Mt Gambier, Pee Boh knows that working outdoors at the nursery is not always sunny May days, and there are plenty of rain filled winter days to come, but he doesn't mind at all. In fact, he is happy to be part of the nursery team. His reason is simple, "Here, I am free."

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