



Voice of the Mountains

JOURNAL OF
THE MOUNTAIN CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC.

caring since 1835

No.35 (2012)

Voice of the Mountains

Journal of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria Inc.

No. 35 (2012)

CONTENTS

ISSN 0816-9764

Office Bearers 2011/12.....	2
President's Message 2012	
A word from Mark "Nook" Coleman	3
The Alpine Grazing Scientific Trials:	
Twelve months of tumultuous events <i>Graeme Stoney</i>	6
They'd be turning in their graves <i>George A. Knights</i>	8
The Call of the Auctioneer <i>Cath Noble</i>	10
Minister for Hypocrisy :	
VNPA caughte redhanded destroying the environment	17
Listen to our cries <i>Kate Crombie</i>	21
Tim Barker : a man of stature and a life member <i>Simon Turner</i>	22
The best thing about the Cattlemen's <i>Jared Tuffen</i>	24
The Brands on the Merrijig Bar 2012.....	25
The Packhorse <i>John Wilson</i>	26
The Packhorse:	
Then and Now : Ordeal in the Snow	28
Trapped in the Snow <i>Syd Ryder</i>	30
Frank Ryan's Memorial Ride : 21 March 2009 <i>Wendy Jubb Stoney</i>	33
Bogong High Plains Cattlemen's heritage weekend <i>Wendy Jubb Stoney</i>	34
The blood of his family <i>Howard James</i>	37
Tributes:	
Laurie Hodge	38
Robert Sykes	39
Political games cloud Alpine grazing debate <i>Mark Coleman</i>	40
McCormak Park, Merrijig.....	40
The handy horse <i>Kate Crombie</i>	42
37th Annual Get-Together Hinnomunjie 2011	43
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting	51
Our Sponsors	55
Back Issues	56
Acknowledgments	56

Office Bearers for 2011/2012

President: Mark "Nook" Coleman president@mcav.com.au
Vice Presidents: Simon Turner and Chris Cooper vicepresident@mcav.com.au
Secretary: Janelle Coles secretary@mcav.com.au
Treasurer: Anne Faithfull treasurer@mcav.com.au
Membership Officer: Anne Faithfull membership@mcav.com.au
Executive Officer: Graeme Stoney executiveofficer@mcav.com.au
Special Project Officer: Chris Commins projectofficer@mcav.com.au
Marketing: Jane Tait merchandise@mcav.com.au
Get-Together Co-Ordinators: Bruce McCormack and Scott Jennison g2g@mcav.com.au

PO Box 1840, Bairnsdale
Phone 03 5152 7605
www.mcav.com.au

ABN 2534 2519 237
Reg. No. A0002117P

Branch Office Bearers 2011/2012

Gippsland Branch

President: Ross Brown
Vice-President: Brian Higgins
Secretary: Tania Coleman
Council: David Hurley,
Chris Cooper, Brian Higgins

North East Branch

President: Ken Heyward
Vice-President: Christa Treasure
Secretary: Fiona Treasure
Special Event Co-Ordinator: Neville Wright
Council: Christa Treasure,
Glen Chalwell, Ken Heyward

Mansfield Branch

President: Bruce McCormack
Secretary: Graeme Stoney
Council: Bruce McCormack,
Charlie Lovick, Graeme Stoney

Omeo Branch

President: Bruce Commins
Vice-President: Wayne "Joe" Connley
Secretary: Chris Commins
Council: Simon Turner,
Danny Cook, Wayne "Joe" Connley

Correspondence and contributions for *Voice of the Mountains* should be addressed to
P.O. Box 816, Bairnsdale 3875 or phone Debbie Squires 0438 522378 (AH preferable)

All material in *Voice of the Mountains* is copyright, and may not be copied or further reproduced in any way whatsoever without the written permission of the individual contributor, or where no contributor is stated, the written permission of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria Inc. The views expressed by individual authors are not necessarily those of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria Inc.

COVER IMAGES: The front cover shows "George", the highest jumping dog at the Get-Together, who won the Dog High Jump for the second year. On the reverse are Sharlee Connley and Sarah Cavil having fun in the Ladies' Bush Challenge; Chris Connley and Jacob Petrac about to crash in the Mens' Bush Challenge and Emiliqua East who placed third in the Open Whipcracking. All photographs by James Vereker of *James Vereker Photographics*.

These, plus hundreds of others, are available from www.horsephotographics.com.au

Printed by E-Gee Printers Pty. Ltd., 45 Macleod Street, Bairnsdale 3875

Phone 03 5152 5055: Fax 03 5152 1387

www.egee.com.au

President's Message 2012

MARK "NOOK" COLEMAN



MCAV President Mark "Nook" Coleman

Welcome everyone to Merrijig for the 2012 MCAV Get Together. A huge thankyou must go to the McCormack Family for the venue and to Bruce, Debbie and their team for organising the event. The site looks fantastic and I hope everyone enjoys the weekend's events and catching up with old friends. The Get-Together is a great opportunity to promote the MCAV and all that we stand for, as well as taking the time to reflect on all we have achieved in the past year. It has been a very busy year with many successes and positives. To find out more please take the time to read my Annual Report included with the recent AGM minutes.

Since the Victorian State election, you could be forgiven for thinking that the Alpine Grazing issue is all about politics. As opposing sides throw opinions about, environmental groups and the media weigh in to the argument with quotes from various scientific studies and bamboozle the general public with misleading 'facts'. The Federal Government in all its wisdom believes that it knows what is best for Victoria's high country and yet history shows that centralised management of natural resources does not work. Where do the Mountain Cattlemen of Victoria fit into this debate? They stand quietly in the background doing what they do best, caring for the high country with the confidence that generations of experience will bring.

Historically the Mountain Cattlemen were the first pioneers to enter the tough Alpine environment and make a living from farming their stock. Both

Want to keep in touch with the
MCAV and know what's going on?

Visit www.mcav.com.au

There you will find the current happenings, news and views,
merchandise catalogue (so you don't have to wait to buy at
the Get-Together) and a link to our blog at

www.cowpad.info

Omeo Rural & Hardware Supplies Pty Ltd

CRT LOCAL BLOKE

THRIFTY LINK HARDWARE, TIMBER AND PLUMBING

SERVICING THE HIGH COUNTRY FOR 25 YEARS

Mono solar pumps
Plastek Poly Tanks
Sheds of any size
Wide range of farm merchandise

Tony, Leonie, Damian, Katrina, Jenny and Jackie

DAY AVENUE, OMEO

PHONE 03 5159 1271

sheep and cattle were run seasonally to the benefit of the farmer and his family, but also to the benefit of the land. Weeds were controlled, tracks were maintained, and the lush mountain grasses were grazed and then burnt at the end of each grazing season.

As each generation handed on to the next, the knowledge of how to best care for the high country was passed on. It is my opinion that this knowledge base is the best asset the Government and its departments could have. The current Victorian Liberal/National Coalition Government, in making a promise to return cattle grazing to the Alpine National Park, recognises this and chooses to work with the cattlemen to find a better management solution. Finally a common sense approach prevails.

We as a group prefer not to be politically motivated, our goals are simple. We aim to return positive management of the Victorian High Country. We aim to pass our knowledge on to future generations to preserve our history and our heritage. We aim to educate as many people as we can about the realities of the alpine environment. Finally, we aim to leave the environment for our children in an even better state than what it was handed to us. When the Victorian Liberal/National Coalition approached us with the idea of returning cattle grazing as part of an overall management strategy we jumped at the chance because their ideals reflected our own. We made the decision to support their campaign because we believe that their strategies will benefit all Victorians. Over a century and a half has shown that cattle grazing and all that goes with it, has a part to play in preserving the natural environment of the Victorian Alps.

In closing I will make the offer that I make to all politicians, media and our environmentalist opponents; “do not take my word for it, come and see it for yourself”. All members of the MCAV stand ready to take any interested parties into the areas we know best. We will show you the difference between grazed areas and non-grazed areas post fire. We will show you areas overgrown by weeds and now inaccessible that were once perfect. We are ready to listen and to talk, to learn and to try new ideas, to work together with all bush users and to make a positive change to an area that belongs to all of us and most importantly belongs to our children.

Best wishes to all our members and supporters for 2012. If you would like to become a MCAV member please contact us, or visit the Secretary’s tent this weekend. We need your support now more than ever as we continue the fight to return cattle grazing to the High Country.

Mark (Nook) Coleman
President
Mountain Cattlemen’s Association of Victoria
December 2011

president@mcaav.com.au
0437 841 104

The Alpine Grazing Scientific Trials: Twelve months of tumultuous events

GRAEME STONEY

In last year's *Voice of the Mountains*, I outlined a brief history of alpine grazing and politics over past years that included the granting of legislated seven year licences as part of the creation of the Alpine National Park and the subsequent breaking of the deal by the Labor Government in 2005.

I identified that subsequent political developments led to the point that there was a new State Government and we were awaiting an announcement from it about its promise to reinstate Alpine grazing. I also mentioned in my piece that the Federal Government may intervene.

We didn't have long to wait and the announcement that the new Government would instigate alpine grazing trials was made by Minister Peter Walsh at the 2011 Get-Together held at Benambra.

In January 2011, 400 cattle went in to six grazing trial sites under a six year program to assess how cattle grazing can reduce fuel loads. Six families took part at their own expense. The move caused widespread interest and triggered a major and misleading campaign by the environmental groups and some scientists. Of course the environmental groups used the issue to raise their profile and campaign for fighting funds. The situation became very tense.

So-called endangered frogs, flowers and species which actually exist in great numbers all through the High Country and as far away as Canberra were trotted out by the usual suspects against Alpine grazing.

The Federal Minister Tony Burke flew from Canberra in February to spend one hour at one grazing site with invited guests including the Victorian National Parks Association. Within minutes Mr Burke who lives in Sydney and has

no experience in the Victorian High Country was able to claim to selected invited media that he had observed "damage".

What Mr Burke actually saw without realizing it, was a pond of water in an old Deer wallow and which was full of happy Alpine Tree Frogs. There was grass all around that had been eaten down by cattle. This shows the cattle were doing what we expected - reducing fuel.

Mr Burke's comments over the summer about the grazing trials showed he totally failed to understand that the Alpine National Park is a huge area with many different altitudes and vegetation types. His comments indicated he seems to believe that one management regime (closing it down?) can be applied to 650,000 ha of bush. He also seems to believe that any new science to discover if there are better ways to manage the land and reduce fuel loads should not be undertaken.

Mr Burke's mock outrage at a very small number of cattle in an isolated area was *not* about Alpine Grazing or protecting frogs.

It was about the Government keeping the support of the Greens in Canberra.

The going became harder over the rest of the summer with eco-warriors masquerading as journalists from one daily newspaper working in league with environmental groups. A series of stories appeared, criticizing any scientist who dared to support the principle of the trials and the same themed stories were sometimes reinvented with a slightly different twist. Amazingly *The Age* newspaper kept publishing this one sided barrage until the public became bemused at the antics. Even some senior editors must have been embarrassed at the unprofessional behavior and its one sided coverage of a complex issue.



Charlie Lovick and crew drive the Lovick cattle towards the alpine grazing trial site on King Billy January 2011.

In due course, with an early Winter looming, the cattle in the trial sites were mustered and brought home which allowed Mr Burke to claim he had ‘ordered them out’.

The campaign became personal and one recent *Age* article unfairly and inaccurately damaged my reputation by implying I was somehow illegally working with the State Government. It totally ignored the fact I had been undertaking the same type of administrative activities on behalf of the MCAV when I dealt regularly with the Bracks and the Brumby Government. It seems that the smear story was meant to undermine the MCAV administration and therefore discredit alpine grazing.

That tactic failed and we await the next assault.

So where are we at?

As required under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC) the State Government has lodged a comprehensive application to conduct the grazing trials with the Federal Government Minister (Tony Burke).

Until this application is resolved, the cattle will not be taken back to the grazing trial sites and so probably will not be there this season. The

State Government has repeated its determination to conduct alpine grazing trials.

Under law, the Federal Government only has a certain time to respond to the State Government application and it must respond in a required manner, not just with bluster as the Minister has been doing until now.

Our president has written to Mr Burke and invited him to the Merrijig Get-Together.

The MCAV would like to hear from him directly so our president has invited him to speak at the official part of the weekend.

We aren’t holding our breath for an acceptance but who knows!

The MCAV is determined to see this through and has committed to continue to work towards the return of grazing in the Alpine National Park. It is also committed to protecting the culture and heritage of the Mountain Cattlemen which are endangered by the attempts to ban alpine grazing.

Graeme Stoney was executive officer of the MCAV from 1983 to 1991 and was appointed to the position again in 2007 when he left Parliament.

They'd be turning in their graves



We are trotted out regularly, every year or so
whenever it's convenient to put us all on show.
They love to see the image, the rider and the horse;
we are pure Australian history, they are proud of us – of course!

We were there at the Olympics when Australia was on show,
we were the choice to start the thing, to get it on the go.
They had us at Royal Melbourne, at a golfing club, no less
to deliver up Obama's Cup – you only use the best.

We make them proud, they all stand tall, we're everybody's mate
as long as we keep all our stock behind the weldmesh gate.
They're more Aussie when they see us, they endorse our way of life,
what a pity it's not remembered when we're knee deep in strife.

But ask if we should have the right to live the life we've lived
to care for stock and mountains and do the things we did
and some will surely tell you, "Well, all that's in the past,
you're not allowed to live that life, be off the mountains – fast!"

What did we do that was so wrong, what damage did we do?
All we did was open up the Alps, for the likes of all of you.
We maintained the tracks, (when no-one did), we kept the mountains clean,
no blackberries or nettles; just pure, cold mountain streams.

If we are such a horrid lot, I'd like to ask one question,
"How come the alps are so dammed good, not wrecked beyond redemption?"
If we have done it all so wrong, it should be a wretched mess –
for up till now it has been one pure tract of wilderness.

Until you got your hands on it, the "ferals" were controlled,
now it's full of no good vermin, noxious weeds and deer untold.
I think the men who showed you in, who helped you on your ways,
no doubt if they could see it now, they'd be turning in their graves.

I bet they'd say "I'm sorry son", I bet they'd rue the day
they showed those early walkers how to go the safest way.
I bet they wished that they had said, "It's much too harsh for you,
go back down to the lowlands and just do what you do.

Now some go up the mountains, and ride around the tracks
or walk amongst the snowgums with their gear upon their backs.
They look at all the flora - the frogs and huts they see
when all the time, we know - it's "The Man" they wish to be.

Others mimic the original, don Akubras, oilskin coats
or ride a horse and crack a whip, might even tow a float.
Those who want to be like us, they know how much we care
they want the alps for everyone, like us, they want to share.

On a weekly basis, with more threats we are issued,
stop trying to take the mountains - we're not reaching for the tissues!
We'll fight the fight, we'll stand together, whatever you may throw;
try to get us off our mountains I'm sorry but we just won't go.

You need us in the mountains, for you are still to learn
if you take us from the mountains, the fiercer they will burn.
"The Man" and all he stands for, is how Aussies are perceived.
So come on - just accept it - there are different shades of green.

George A. Knights

The Call of the Auctioneer

CATH NOBLE

Auctioneers the difference between a good auctioneer and a poor one can mean thousands of dollars to the mountain cattlemen when it comes to selling their calves. In our history there have been several that stand out in the memories of the cattlemen here are some from the past and the next generation.

Norman Chester

Norman Chester was born on 23 September, 1903 at Glenmaggie. After schooling at Glenmaggie and Melbourne High School, he attended Zerchos Business College. Theo B. Little & Company gave Norman his first job in 1918, where he met T. Shaw Logan, which was to become a lifetime association.

Tommy Logan later formed the company T. Shaw Logan & Co., and Norman became one of his employees. At the age of nineteen, Norman obtained his auctioneer's licence, after a special Magistrate's court sitting, as a person had to be twenty one years old before obtaining such a licence. His first auction was to sell five hundred pigs at the old Melbourne Pig Market.

After eight years, T. Shaw Logan joined Mathieson, Davis and he became the manager of the pig business and after twelve months, the business became Mathieson, Chester and Davis. After the death of one of the senior partners, the business was sold to Goldsborough Mort & Co.

Norman returned to the Glenmaggie property and at the same time, with Mathieson, Davis, Macarthur & Co., they opened the Heyfield Fat Cattle Market. The day of the first sale, they sold fifteen to twenty head; the second sale they sold one hundred and fifty; and at the third sale - 827 head were sold.

Dalgety's took over the stock agency in Heyfield in 1950. The reputation of that market

quickly spread, especially when they held the Annual 'Snow Lease Store Sale' when all the vendors were run holders in the mountains. These store sales became 'the place' to purchase top quality mountain bred cattle and many of these cattle went to South Gippsland buyers to fatten and on-sell. Norman recalled that some years it was known to yard up to 3,000 head. There were cattle held everywhere, including the back yard of the pub.

As well as his stock agency work, Norman was running the family property at "Chesterfield", Glenmaggie which continues in the family being run by his son Dick and his wife, Betty. With his cousin, Merton 'Scotty' Chester, they ran up to 600 head of cattle on Holmes Plain.

Although Norman retired as manager of Dalgety's in the early 1970s, he still attended the saleyards and the Saturday morning gathering of fellow cattlemen in the office where no doubt many sales and droving feats were shared.

Norman held his auctioneer's licence for over sixty years - not many auctioneers can equal that record.

Norman was active till his passing in 1986 and he was laid to rest at the Heyfield Cemetery, with his wife, Alma, who had passed away in 1965.

Lang Peterkin

When Lang Peterkin left school at fifteen years of age he did not plan to become a well known auctioneer at Wodonga and the surrounding areas.

Lang's father asked the then Gippsland and Northern Tallangatta Manager, Laurie Renfree, to give the young lad a job.



Bob Andrews, Norman Chester and Barry Sharp at the Gelantipy Sale c1984. (Photo courtesy Graeme McGillivray)

Lang's first job was to drive a mob of sheep to the rail yards in Tallangatta. He was told to start at the pig sales on a three month trial at thirty shillings a week. That was the start of a fifty year association with Gippsland and Northern Stock & Station Agency.

Clearing sales were where 22 year old Lang started his auctioneering career in 1950; he later graduated to selling cattle, sheep and pigs, but he has never auctioned horses. Wodonga held pig sales each Monday, cattle on Tuesday and sheep on Wednesday at Albury. Corryong held monthly cattle sales plus regular 'special' sales. It was at Corryong that Lang sold 2,000 head as a single auctioneer, his biggest sale.

Lang believes there is not a big difference in the auction system today, compared with when he started. All auctioneers must know the stock, their value, and be honest. He believes a quick sale is a good sale, and to keep the auction going and don't hesitate. Agents (and auctioneers) travelled

similar distances as today but the mobile phone has made the job so much easier.

Corryong held store sales in the 1940s, 50s and 60s with regular vendors like Arthur Cochran, Yaouk Station, Adaminaby area and the Bradley family from Tumbarumba who held a lease on Mt Kosciusko and sold 300-400 head, mainly store bullocks and steers. The Flanigan family of Berridale were also big vendors, selling mainly Herefords, the others selling Angus and Shorthorns.

All these cattle were walked to Corryong from the various home properties, taking up to ten days for the more distant properties. Many buyers came from the local Corryong area and also Mr Buchanan, Tallangatta was a volume buyer.

A big number of fat bullocks came out of the Upper Murray region and many were sold in the paddock - age of the bullocks was not as



IT'S GOT GRUNT.

3.0 LITRE TURBO DIESEL ENGINE.
3.0 TONNE TOWING CAPACITY. BUILT TOUGH.



Mazda **BT-50 4X4** **TURBO DIESEL** **DUAL CAB SDX**

BT-50 turbo diesel range includes:
Single Cab, Freestyle Cab and Dual Cab.

Call 1800 004 671 for your local Mazda dealership www.mazda.com.au

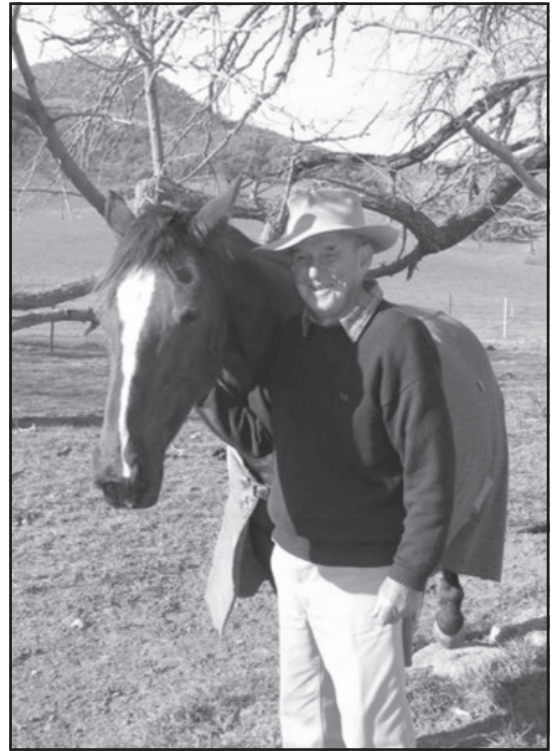
important as the condition. The agent negotiated the price between the buyer and the vendor which could take some time. After liveweight selling, which started in the 1980s, all that changed. When the weight and the price per kilogram were known, the deal was quickly settled. The buyers were usually butchers or processors.

Before the days of road transport, stock sales were based on the number of head per rail truck, and cattle were delivered by the drovers to the railyards. The fat bullocks, destined for Newmarket, were walked to Cudgewa, loaded into rail trucks and the engine pulled the trucks, ten at a time, to Shelley, being the highest rail station in Victoria. The engine would return to Cudgewa, collect another ten rail trucks and return to Shelley. That process was repeated till all the rail trucks were at Shelley and ready to commence the journey to Newmarket, but not before the guard had applied the brakes to every cattle rail truck because of the steep descent. The rail trucks held ten bullocks, fourteen cows or twenty vealers per truck. The trip to Melbourne via Wodonga, took ten to twelve hours.

Lang retired as an auctioneer in 1974 and now, in his 84th year, he runs four to five hundred steers that he grows on for the feedlot trade at his Tallangatta South property. These cattle are purchased at sales at Wodonga and are either locally or Riverina bred cattle.

Lang is a very fit, active person. He does all his own stockwork, riding "Spider", and with his two dogs. He is well known for his horsemanship but has also hunted and been the pick up rider at local rodeos. He and his late wife, Olive, have shown harness ponies and helped at Pony Club and other horse events when their daughters competed. The family had thoroughbred racing interests and were successful in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane as well as on country tracks.

Lang also enjoys an annual trip into the mountains with a local lease holder when the cattle are returned to the high country. He keeps in constant contact with his daughters and their



*Lang at his Tallangatta home.
(Photo courtesy Susan Noble)*

families, as well as the many friends he has made through his involvement in the livestock industry.

John Murray

In John's own words: "I came to Mansfield as branch Manager for Elders in 1973 at twenty seven years of age. In those days we had five store sales a year, with the 'Mountain Sale' the highlight in late May, early June. A lot of the cattle from the mountain sales were purchased by people from the Yarra Valley area (which is now under vines), and the Goulburn Valley and the north-east regions. We would yard and sell up to 2,000 head.

I was only a relatively new auctioneer in those days, having started my auctioneering career in Horsham prior to coming to Mansfield. The opportunity to come to Mansfield happened in a pub (where else!) in Horsham when I was asked by some of the Elders 'heavies' if I was happy in Horsham and where else would I like to be. My

answer was that I liked the north-east area - Yea, Alexandra, Mansfield - and within two weeks I was branch manager in Mansfield.

I had a long association with the likes of Peter and Judy McCormack and later Bruce and Debbie; the Lovicks, Jack and Keith and their families; Jack Klingsporn and his family and the Kellys, Pat and John, who ran cattle in the bush.

Jack Lovick was my biggest client and also a good friend. We had some wonderful times together travelling to find agistment, selling cattle, buying cattle and a lot of socializing. Jack had some of the best Hereford cattle you would see in the early days. His weaners were always at the top end of the weaner sales. For colour, hair and bone, quiet nature, there were none better.

One of the greatest compliments I ever had was from Jack after one of my early auctioneering efforts; he did not usually hand out compliments freely. I am sure Jack and I had a mutual respect for each other, but we also had that odd cross word which was soon forgotten.

Peter and Judy McCormack have always been very good friends and clients. When I first met them they had Galloway cross cattle which were not real popular. Realizing this they moved into Angus and have been producing quality weaners with great temperament and doing ability. Bruce and Debbie continue to carry on the tradition.

In the early days of my career, the pub was the social hub and often referred to as 'the office' because a lot of client contact happened there. After the Mansfield sales, buyers, clients and agents would head to the "Delatite" or "Commercial" in Mansfield and then to "The Jig" - the Hunt Club Hotel at Merrijig. There is nothing like it today - thank goodness - but those occasions were some of the best. There was plenty of bragging; plenty of lies and lots of laughter, and some magic yarns told. Those days were full of mateship, hard work and great memories and much too much beer drinking. Now forty years on, I still enjoy living as a 'part time' stock agent and still enjoy dealing with

friends I have made over the years. Sadly some of those people I have mentioned are no longer with us, but the special memories remain.

Some of the things I particularly recall:

- The selling rail was a single plank of 8" x 2", covered in moss and slime. No OH&S then, no handrails etc., but that was how it was in the 1970s.

- At Mansfield the cows and calves were often sold across the road in the railway trucking yards.

- Even though Jack Lovick was the major vendor, he would bring his cattle down the stock route as late as possible because "he liked a bit of sweat on them". It was frustrating for myself and the other agents waiting to 'pen-up', but Jack was Jack, and nothing would change that.

- In the 1970s and more so before, the big mobs of cattle were walked into the saleyards.

- Some other cattlemen families were the Goughs, Murphys, Stoneys, Purcells, Wares and Fred and Murray Ross, no doubt others I have forgotten and/or did not deal with.

- Not long after I came to Mansfield, the drought hit hard and cattle were being shot at the pit as they were worthless. Jack Lovick and I headed off to look for grass and ended up at Brewarrina, N.S.W. From memory I think we sent seven two-decker loads to the Brewarrina property for Jack Lovick, Ethel Coombes and Frank Hearn. Several cattle did not make the distance but they went onto fantastic feed and all came back prime. I took Jack and Charlie Lovick, Ethel Coombes and Frank Hearn to see the cattle midway through the agistment. We drove around the property, "Collendina", in my car, staked two tyres and ended up back at the Brewarrina Pub. We all had more than enough grog by the end of the night. I went up to the room I shared with Frank Hearn and there was Frank with his bushy beard laying back in bed puffing on his 'roll-your-own', cigarette ash all over the pillow. A wonder we weren't burnt out. We left Brewarrina next

day and went via Bourke, Cobar, Booligal, Hay, and Deniliquin and got back to Mansfield about 1.30 a.m.

- Up until the demise of the Newmarket Saleyards, a lot of cattle, lambs and sheep were sent there for sale. I can remember being at the record lamb yarding of 64,000 lambs. Quite a lot of stock were sent by rail. In the lamb season some carriers would do three loads, starting at lunchtime and leaving with their last load around midnight. It was a very social day at Newmarket, always a counter lunch and several watering stops on the way home.

- The characters of Newmarket were unique - the drovers, auctioneers, yardsmen were all a different breed, a lot of them on the 'wrong side' of the law.

- Frank Hearn bought cattle at one of the Mansfield sales in the 1980s and as was the case with some locals, decided to walk them home. The cattle were let out of the saleyards into the main road and they split in all directions of the compass. Some careered straight down the centre of town, others towards Benalla and I am not certain they were all accounted for.

- I was born at Ballarat and spent time in the yards there, mainly on school holidays. The various companies had their own yards in the town area. Agents Crawford Dowling had their yards where the Target store is now. Doveton Street was the livestock area, called 'Haymarket'; that was where the stock were taken to be railed out of town. 'Haymarket' is now the Ballarat Civic centre.

- The stock agents in Mansfield in the early 1970s that I remember were
Australian Mercantile Land & Finance Co., - AML&F.
Australian Estates Co. - Estates
Dalgety New Zealand Loan
Dennys Lascelles Ltd
Elders - (inc. Younghusband Ltd)
Gippsland & Northern Co-op Ltd
- G&N.

Elders took over AML&F, Estates, Dennys Lascelles and had previously bought out Younghusbands. Dalgety New Zealand Loan is now Landmark. G&N ceased trading. Currently Rodwells and Corcoran & Parker are the only Mansfield based agents."

Adam Mountjoy

Adam Mountjoy was born in 1981, at Huntly, north of Bendigo, into a sheep farming family, with his grandparents and parents in the wool industry. His parents conduct "MountJoy Wool" a wool buying business in Bendigo and Ballarat. As a youngster he spent a lot of spare time in the saleyards at Bendigo where he had a keen eye (and mind) regarding sheep.

Adam entered the Stock and Station agency business through a Vocational, Education and Training course in conjunction with the V.C.E., which he completed. As part of the course he had work placement at Rodwell's in Bendigo, under the management of Mick Capper. In October, Adam was working full time in Ballarat as a booking clerk and selling merchandise.

Brian Rodwell sponsored Adam to attend the Greater Western University in Sydney for 3 months, where he completed and gained his full Real Estate licence.

In 2001 he was on his way to become an auctioneer, working at Mansfield under the management of Jamie Beckingsale and selling under Tony Pianto at Shepparton. He received his licence through the Stock Agents Association in 1999.

ALPA - Australian Livestock & Property Agents in Victoria conduct development and training schools from which the top ten students are invited to enter the Young Auctioneer of Victoria Competition. Adam Mountjoy was one of those lucky students.

In 2003, Adam won the Victorian title, held at Wodonga, which entitled him to compete in Sydney for the National title at the Royal Show



*Adam in action.
(Photo courtesy Stock and Land)*

in April 2004 where he came in second. (The competitors must be under thirty years of age.) In 2005, Adam again won the Victorian title and competed at, and won, the National title in April 2006. This allowed him to compete at the international competition at Calgary, Canada.

With family, friends and work colleagues, (eighteen people in all), Adam headed to Canada and spent two weeks touring while auctioning to qualify for the competition. The Canadian auction system is different to the Australian system. The yards are privately/family owned, with the family being the agent. The vendor brings his cattle to the yards on the nominated day, they are auctioned and the vendor is paid as the cattle leave the yards, less a service fee per head. Adam has fond memories of selling with the Brost family at the Oald Saleyards. The Canadian auctioneering system is very rhythmical - the hardest part for Adam was going from selling in dollars per kilogram to Canadian cents per pound.

At the International Competition, there were ten fellow competitors mainly American and Canadian, a South African and Adam.

This was a great experience for the young Aussie. He was asked to auction a cryovaced strip loin (of beef) from the Cargill Meat Company in front of about 2,000 people. Adam was caught without bids and knocked the meat down to his fellow traveller, Clarke Skinner, inaugural winner

of the Mike Nixon award. (The Mike Nixon Award is for “showing excellence in the Stock & Station Agency Business.) Despite his mistake Adam was placed second in the novice division of the young auctioneer competition. A great effort and the group had an enjoyable barbeque at Banff.

Back in Australia, Adam was made Manager of the Yea and Alexandra branches for Rodwells. He feels fortunate to be based in an area which is a top cattle breeding area in Victoria.

The Shire owned yards at Yea are about to undergo a major upgrade which will see the yards covered, the cost being met by the Shire and State Government. The yards hold 3,000 weaners with sales in December, January and May . There are also store sales of one to two thousand head every second fortnight throughout the year.

Adam now enjoys working alongside five other members on the professional devolpment and education committee, part of ALPA. He is also a mentor for young auctioneers within the Rodwell Company.

Adam Mountjoy is a young auctioneer who has appreciated the opportunities he has had and is putting back into the industry he enjoys.

Minister for Hypocrisy: VNPA caught redhanded destroying the environment

Comment by the Mountain Cattlemen's Association on Minister Burke and the VNPA's March inspection trip to one grazing trial site on the Dargo High Plains.



On the left is the VNPA Pajero (in the middle background) and the bog after the inspection party had visited.

On Friday, 26 February, 2011 the Federal Minister for Environment, Tony Burke, invited a hand-picked gaggle of green groups and media representatives to visit the Dargo High Plains alpine grazing trial site.

It was a very quick and highly political visit designed to curry favour with the Greens, who control the fate of the Gillard Government. Canberra has no power to enforce decisions about State management of National Parks, but in order to keep Bob Brown's army of inner-city zealots on side, Burke debased himself and his office by flying from Canberra, enlarging the carbon footprint he claims to care so much about,

in order to serve as the showpiece and front man of a cynical and environmentally damaging publicity stunt.

The trip was not about alpine grazing or concern for the Alpine Tree Frog as claimed. It was about the Federal Government holding onto power by keeping the Green Member for Melbourne, Adam Bandt, happy.

The MCAV understands that among those invited there were a least two senior executives of the Victorian National Parks Association including Phil Ingamells the VNPA alpine activist. The MCAV has been told that it is



The bog destroyed by the convoy. The large rock (left foreground) the Minister's four wheel drive hit is obvious. The pictured vehicle (not in the convoy) is on the drier bypass.

likely that Matt Ruchel, Executive Director of the VNPA was also present. Also along for the ride were representatives of other green groups that have been working against Alpine grazing. The owners of the cattle or the MCAV were not invited.

Recently, Mr Ruchel modestly put his photo on a begging letter sent out by the VNPA asking people to donate to their Alpine appeal – using the recent reintroduction of four hundred cattle to six small areas as an excuse to launch a massive fund-raising campaign. Hundreds of begging letters asking for donations to fight Alpine grazing have been sent out. If you are silly enough to believe the VNPA's propaganda and would like to donate, don't bother unless you are prepared to cough up a minimum of \$20 – the smallest amount the organization appears prepared to accept.

On Friday, the Minister's convoy, including the VNPA vehicle, spared no horsepower as it powered towards one grazing trial site through more than two kilometers of muddy black soil across the Dargo Plains in the Alpine National Park. The entrance to the site is about four kilometres from the Dargo High Plains Road.

In the previous few weeks, record rainfall had fallen in the area, leaving the track boggy, soggy and unable to survive the churning wheels of the convoy's four-wheel drives. Any fool could

see that a convoy such as the Minister's should not have gone in. More to the point, self-appointed "defenders" of the high country's health, such as the VNPA, should have done so on horseback, walked or cancelled the visit altogether.

Since the return of grazing to assess its value in reducing fuel loads was announced on January 12, a constant procession of activists' vehicles has used this track to this grazing trial site. The track was showing signs of wear and tear, but until 11.30am on Friday it remained quite passable, despite the wet weather.

By the time the convoy had entered and left the grazing site, the track was destroyed. To all intents and purposes it is now technically impassable.

Representatives of the MCAV inspected the damage after the convoy had ripped up the Plains and Burke had returned to Canberra. The damage and impact of the PR jaunt was appalling – not least the pile of used and discarded toilet paper left beside one section of the track. Don't spare another thought for the discarded Sorbent. One of our members scraped it into a pile and burned it, as is usual practice in the bush throughout Australia.

But it gets worse, much worse.

Just within the grazing trial site is a black, deep, wet bog. There is a short bypass track, carefully constructed by the mountain cattlemen years ago, around the quagmire. That route is dry and carefully made so traffic will not damage the bog during wet times. It is highly visible to anyone familiar with the bush and used to dealing with such situations.

The Minister's convoy, including the VNPA vehicle, chose not to take the bypass but instead ploughed through the mud at such speed – and with so little skill – that the Minister's vehicle ended up with a flat tyre after striking the one large rock sticking out of the giant quagmire. We understand that the driver of the Minister's white Prado was a Canberra based National Parks officer. The driver of one media four wheel drive, which was not officially part of the formal convoy, was the only one who observed the bog bypass and used it several times. It emerged later that the driver is experienced in the bush, unlike the other drivers – obviously including the VNPA.

Yet to come out is the truth about what happened when the convoy reached its destination on Shepherd's Plain. The creek on Shepherd's Plain has received some publicity generated by Alpine ecologist Henrik Wahren, who has made improbable claims that cattle are trampling to death the Alpine Tree frog. Despite the claims, the pond is alive with frogs and tadpoles.

Suffice to say, the media's information on the Alpine Tree frog issue was completely controlled by the Minister and his staff, aided and abetted by the VNPA. The ironic thing about this whole charade is that the Minister's party was instructed to spray their shoes to protect flora and fauna before entering the National Park. What a nice touch to impress the media and dumb down any potential hard questions.

On the return trip we understand that the VNPA vehicle stopped for lunch at the Dargo High Plains escarpment. The lunch spot provided extensive views of the pristine Mt Hotham Ski

village and the thousands of hectares of dead trees killed by the fierce bushfires that scoured the Dargo River Valley. No doubt over lunch the occupants congratulated each other on another job well done!

Conclusion

The VNPA has much on its website about the impact of cattle. The begging letter includes ten points listing the alleged damage it insists cattle are doing. It claims, for example, cattle "create tracks", "cause soil erosion", and it also insists that cattle "make it difficult to repair damaged Alpine areas".

Given this revelation, those charges sound familiar don't they. The actions of the VNPA, being part of that convoy, inflicted more impact on the Alpine environment in one afternoon than all the cattle on all the trial sites could do in a decade.

There are six alpine grazing trial sites. If the VNPA are prepared to do this to one site, imagine the damage they may do to the other five.

This year the VNPA has set out to decry the benefits of Alpine grazing, fill its coffers with donations on the back of the issue it created, and destroy the reputation of mountain cattlemen.

Minister Burke proved a useful idiot in this effort, even going so far as to equate cattlemen with Japanese whalers. With the VNPA contingent nodding with approval, he did not even have the decency to blush as he uttered that foul slander of all good people genuinely concerned about the health and future of the High Country.

Now, about the VNPA. It continues to make wild claims about alleged cattle damage, while at the same time its people have been physically doing the very thing it accuses the cattle of doing.

What con artists and hypocrites they all are.

Rodwells

**Stock and Station Agents
18 South Gippsland Highway
Sale**

A RURALCO BUSINESS

Stock Sales

at VLE Sale

every Tuesday - Fat Cattle, Vealers and Cows - 9am
every second Tuesday - Lambs and Sheep - 12noon

Store Cattle Sales as advertised

at VLE Sale

every third Friday of the month
at Heyfield

Annual Sales in March and August

Paddock sales conducted

Merchandise

Full range of merchandise including
Animal Health, Chemical and Agronomy Service

Clearing sales conducted

Property and Real Estate

Insurance

CGU Agents

Financial Services

Wool

For further help and advice contact



A RURALCO BUSINESS

Ph: 5144 2988

Graeme McGillivray - Manager 0427 5817 306

Phil Todd - Merchandise 0428 347 875

Gary Condron - Agronomist 0429 161 409

David Macready - Real Estate 0429 806 044

Aaron Ralph - Livestock 0427 533 003

Livestock Agents

Don McMillan 0428 498 320

Trevor Stothers 0428 656 270

Greg Birss 0417 454 052

Bob Scott 5148 6255

Listen To Our Cries

Winding tracks through dense scrub shining silver in the sun,
it felt as though the droving days had only just begun.
The gentle lowing of cattle echoed throughout the bush,
weeks and weeks of hunger, but still on they would push.

The trees were growing thinner, the grass was getting green,
we came onto the high plains; the cattle would no longer be lean.
Their dull eyes were turning bright, the calves called out with joy,
they ran around after their mothers, who they would no longer annoy.

The high plains were perfection, not a single weed in sight,
crystal clear creeks were throwing rainbows in the light.
The sun was softly setting on the crest upon the hill,
the calves were finally saying goodnight in their high soprano trill.

The cattlemen sat around the fire, sparks flying in the air,
they all cracked open another beer, hoping it wouldn't be the last one they'd share.
The swags were getting rolled out, snores filled up the camp,
moisture settled in the air, morning would be damp.

Half the cattlemen were keeping watch, the others were asleep,
the empty bottles and cans lay next to the fire in a big heap.
The cattle were growing restless, something was going wrong,
their happiness was ending, so was the owl's song.

The moon was engulfed under the wing of a cloud, the stars were fading away,
whispers are all that can be heard from the bed where I now lay.
The cattle are walking skeletons, just frames with skin stretched over,
their paddocks are scuffed up dirt, all that remains; a dead four leafed clover.

Will the government finally realise what they've done to the cattlemen and their allies?
Please would you finally listen, listen to our cries.



Kate Crombie, 2010

This was her award winning effort in the Don Kneebone Poetry section in 2010.

Tim Barker: a man of stature and a life member

TIM BARKER has been given Associate Life Membership of the MCAV in recognition of his work while Secretary and as consultant to the Association.

SIMON TURNER



Tim Barker with Rowena Turner.

At the most recent Annual General Meeting of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria, Tim Barker was awarded life membership of this Association. Tim has given generous amounts of both his personal and professional time to the MCAV which this most recent award attempts to recognise.

Tim completed a Bachelor of Economics and Politics Degree at Monash University in 1969, and later completed further study in agricultural economics at the University of Melbourne.

Tim's first position was as an economist with the Reserve Bank of Australia where he spent several years working in economic liaison.

This involved talking to the leaders of secondary and tertiary industry in Melbourne about future trends in economic activity.

In 1972 Tim joined the Graziers Association of Victoria and began a fifteen year association with the farm lobby. During this time he worked for the farm lobby groups including the Victorian Farmers' Federation, National Farmers' Federation, Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria and other natural resource interests such as miners, four wheel drivers, tour operators, commercial and recreational fishermen, hunters and irrigators.

Major achievements in this part of Tim's career included the introduction of Income Equalisation Deposits (now called Farm Management Deposits) and the establishment of the Primary Industry Bank of Australia. While undoubtedly "*success has a thousand fathers*" these campaigns were commenced as result of Tim's initiative and his involvement was fundamental to the success of these major projects.

It was in these early days with the Graziers Association that Tim developed a close understanding of the issues surrounding Alpine grazing, which progressed to Tim managing the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria as secretary from 2002 to 2007. Prior to taking on the role of secretary, Tim had an advisory role to the MCAV leadership team, which for fifteen years had been ably directed by Sue Reynolds.

These were busy years for the MCAV with the 2003/06/07 Alpine fires and the Victorian Government review of grazing within the Alpine National Park

Working for the farm lobby provided a strong foundation of knowledge about the Parliament and the lobbying processes. In one of



Mark Coleman, Tim Barker and Simon Turner.

Tim's many and varied successes, in conjunction with a colleague from Canberra, he represented farmers in hearings before the Price Justification Tribunal. One case on the wool and livestock selling charges resulted in a saving to farmers of more than \$10 million (in 1980 values) per annum.

When he left the VFF in 1987 he had held positions as Deputy Executive Director and Director of Policy. And in the same year, Tim established "*The Policy Consultants*" with a colleague who had worked for several years in Parliament House as an adviser to a party leader. Over the next 15 years "*The Policy Consultants*" worked on

a wide range of State Government lobbying campaigns. In the mid 2000s Tim initiated and managed a public review of bushfires. This resulted in the report of the *People's Review of Bushfires, 2002-2007, in Victoria* written by Peter Attiwill, David Packham, Tim Barker and Ian Hamilton. (ISBN 9780646510392)

Now that Tim has eased into an easier pace of life, he still holds great interest in public land management, and in particular alpine grazing. Tim is a highly valued consultant to MCAV and we look forward to a continued interaction with the newest life member of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association.



SJK EARTHMOVING PTY LTD T/A
KERR BROS. EXCAVATIONS

P.O. Box 29, Lang Lang VIC 3984

Tel (03) 5997 5580

Fax (03) 5997 5582

Mobile Steve 0419 908 781

Email – kerrbrothers@bigpond.com

For all your excavation needs, including 30 ton Longreach Excavator.
 Proud and long time supporters of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association Victoria.

The best thing about the Cattlemen's



I rode into the Cattlemen's,
my pony was short and fat.
I had to kick him half the way
and at lunch he chewed my hat.

I want to be a policeman,
a pretty police girl at my side,
because they wander about all day
and win the Air Bull ride.

Mum gave me twenty dollars
for breakfast, lunch and tea,
then she told my sister,
they'd seen the last of me.

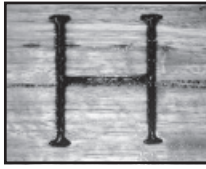
But I charmed the girls at the pancake stall,
who gave me one for free.
So they all saw me for dinner,
pavlova for sister, Mum and me.

It's great when Mum's out dancing
and I play with my mate.
We hope she drinks and gets silly,
so we can stay up late.

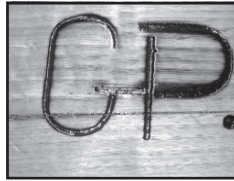
The best thing about the Cattlemen's
is you don't have to wash.
You sleep in your swag with clothes on
and no one gets all posh.

Jared Tuffen, 2011

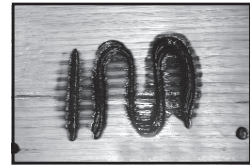
The Brands on the Merrijig Bar 2012



Hearn



Greg Purcell



McCormack



Stoney



Jack & Jim Hearn
(Cobbler)



Richie



Pop Purcell



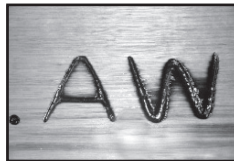
John Gough



Lovicks



Chris Stoney



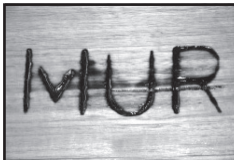
A Weston & Sons



F Ross & Sons



R & T Purcell



Murphy

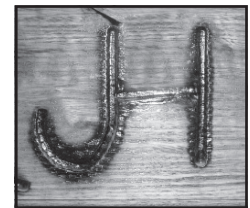


J & R Purcell



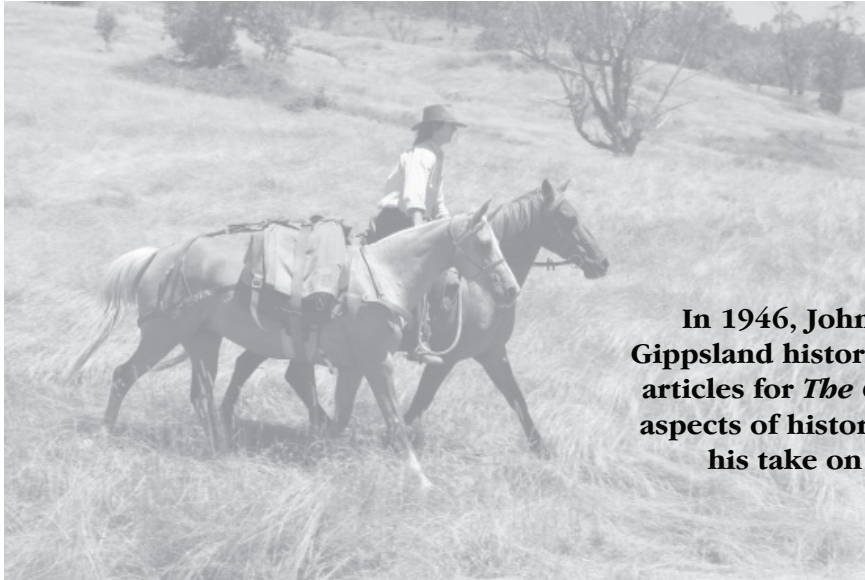
Ware

The boards at Merrijig were proudly crafted by Don and Valda Duncan and the bar tops by Brian Higgins, whose brand appears in the corner of each.



Brian Higgins

The Packhorse



In 1946, John Wilson, an early Gippsland historian, wrote a series of articles for *The Gippsland Times* on aspects of historic interest. This was his take on the packhorse.

“Along the golden road to Samarkand, down the difficult, declivities of the Cordilleras, by gully and by ridge over mountain tracks, and by trackless mountains, the pack trains have moved throughout the ages. The packer and the packhorse of the Gippsland ranges still trail in their wake some of the glory and romance accumulated over all these adventurous years. Gold was early discovered in these mountains, and narrow tracks, thrusting with extraordinary enterprise into the heart of the hills were the ways by which the courageous pack teams carried in the necessaries to the diggings. Today the pack tracks are those of the mountain cattlemen for the most part. Someday, I hope, we shall see somewhere, a monument to the pack horse raised in North Gippsland, so that the memory of this noble pioneer may be kept green in the minds of a people who are becoming completely air-minded if not completely hair-bra_____ well, anyway, I’m hoping for a bronze casting.

There are still places in the mountain hinterlands where no wheeled vehicle can go, and behind the Wellington country the Wonnangatta Station relies absolutely upon the pack horse. Nothing impresses the stranger to the mountains more than these indispensable animals, sure-footed horses slipping and sliding on the sidlings but

always keeping their feet - or nearly always - going on and on over what appears to be impossible places, seemingly as unconcerned as the track itself. Men who spend their lives in the mountains take all this for granted, of course, for they have to some extent lost the sense of distance and magnitude, and, like the horses they employ, they have lost all apprehension of dangerous tracks. There is country in the local ranges over which one may only pass a-foot, and that with the utmost difficulty, yet time out of number the nimble pack horse has been worked over mountain ranges seemingly impassable to both man and horse alike. I have taken pack horses into some queer places myself, and have never had to shoot one because I could not get him out, as I once heard of. It seems to me one can take a pack horse anywhere providing one does not ask him to climb on his hands and knees. The fundamental advantage of the pack horse team over all other means of transport is its flexibility. The load is divided up into small units and each unit is complete in itself, even to the intelligence needed to surmount the obstacles lying in the path of its journey. To watch an old and tried pack horse clambering over fallen logs, treading goat-like along boulder strewn sidlings, and tucking his hind quarters beneath him and sliding down steep places,

is to receive an unforgettable education in the possibilities of equestrian intelligence.

Horses, like men, vary considerably in their capacity for thinking. A good pack horse must think all the time, keeping his mind at work upon the track before him, and a horse which cannot think never makes a good pack animal. A good pack horse never jumps, this shifts the load. Trees often fall across the mountain tracks, and a pack horse will always try and find its own way round, if there is no way he will often spend quite a while deciding the best place to clamber across, eventually getting his forelegs over, and then dragging his hind legs after him. They seldom misjudge what they are capable of. A loaded pack saddle projects from the animal's flank quite a bit, but an old pack horse will never bump it either against rock or timber, or what is worse still, try to pass between two trees that will allow his body through but catch the packs.

It is only on the way out that the mountain pack horses have to be led, or driven ahead, for once their heads are turned homewards they will come out of the hills fast enough and can be left to their own devices. One has to be very careful with horses in this regard, they are very cunning at getting back on one, and once they get away they are more than likely to come right out of the hills altogether to the home yards, and leave one stranded with pack and saddle a-foot. The value of good pack horses is best proved by the handling of green ones - what is there that requires more handling, eats up more time, or makes greater demands on patience! Always doing the very thing they should not do, always in trouble, some members of the team continually hanging up the progress of the rest, it is often a heart breaking job packing with a team of green horses. I recall a trip organised some years ago by the Government Tourist Bureau, which had been described by them as "... this will be a wonderful trip and should be thoroughly enjoyable. We will be taking twelve pack horses. ..." Ha! there was the snag - green pack horses. Some of the elderly city business men who enjoyed the wonderful trip are now dead, and I am of the opinion it hastened their end. Fortunately I was reinforced with the degraded nature of a habitant of the hills, and there was a certain quality in the discomfiture of that trip which caused me no displeasure.

With horses unused to the work of the tracks and the mountains the very flexibility of a pack team constitutes a danger, and many the man who has learned this to his sorrow. A horse will become terrified over some little happening he does not understand, but which his instinct tells him to get away from. The urge of primal instinct is strong within the horse, and unbalanced by usage and thought will make a terror-stricken animal a suicidal maniac. Terror will spread, and before a packer even becomes aware of what is happening there is a general stampede. I recall a pack team scattering gear and tucker all over the Wellington plateau in this fashion, and such a calamity is not remedied in five minutes.

The cattlemen pack gear and provisions over the rugged country of the local ranges in a remarkable way, without miscalculation or delay, so far as their own job is concerned. While up to 300 lbs. may be packed over country that is neither rough or steep, half that is quite enough in the Avon country and about Wellington, and breastplate and breech should be employed in order to keep the saddle in position, as the horse's back is often at an acute angle. Panniers are not used locally, but rolls are made up and hung on the hooks of the saddle, with light hamper strapped on top, and all secured with a surcingle, the main thing being to keep the weight fairly low, but not too low on the horse's ribs. A well-packed saddle makes lighter work for both horse and man, and to pack a saddle properly is something of an art. Hobbles are used very often on the horses when they are turned loose, but here again a proper discrimination has to be used, for some horses that have got used to this hindrance can travel a long way by taking short leaps, and it is asking for trouble to hobble a green horse in rough country. When turned out to graze the horses are always belled, hobbled or not. It is a very sweet music, the little bells pealing in the mountain wilderness as the horses graze, with now and again a small torrent of sound coming as an animal, standing splay-legged, shakes itself from head to foot.

Source:

Gippsland Times (Vic. : 1861 - 1954), 7 February, 1946 p. 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article65417658>

CATLEMEN FIGHT AGAINST SNOW Take 18 Hours To Travel Seven Miles

DRIVEN FROM HUTS BY FOOD SHORTAGE

Dogs Carried On Saddles

MELBOURNE, April 17. Forcing their way through a heavy fall of snow, which lay two feet thick on the mountains, the four Tawonga cattlemen who had been marooned in Mount Fainter hut for three days arrived in the township at 11.30 p.m. yesterday, the seven mile journey having occupied 18 hours. Food supplies in their hut were completely exhausted when they set out to leave the Bogong high plains at 6 a.m. yesterday. A packhorse was frozen to death in the desperate journey home, and Mr. W. Doubleday, 67, one of the cattlemen, was almost exhausted by the ordeal. Taking the 27-mile Snake Valley track home, a second party, also of four men, who were in the Tawonga hut arrived at 6.30 p.m. yesterday. Driving a small herd of stray cattle through the deep snow, the party set out at 6 p.m. on Monday. Their journey occupied 24 hours in the freezing temperatures.

Stories Of Trying Ordeal

Graphic stories of the trying ordeal through which they passed in the three days in which they were imprisoned in the huts on the Bogong high plains were told by the stockmen. Shortage of food forced them to leave the huts in which they had sheltered, and to set out for Tawonga at the height of a snowstorm. A relief party had been arranged at Tawonga and had the cattlemen not returned last night it would have set out to their assistance early today. Fogbound and with their huts almost covered by a snowfall which lay two feet

ORDEAL IN SNOW. Drovers Reach Safety.

PACKHORSE FROZEN TO DEATH.

MELBOURNE. Wednesday. Although further falls of snow occurred in the upper reaches of the Kiewa Valley yesterday, the fogs and low-lying clouds which had kept 12 cattlemen marooned in three mountain huts for about a week cleared and enabled the men to leave for the township of Tawonga. They reached Tawonga last night after a strenuous journey through deep snow.

R. Cooper, J. Ryder, and W. Madison, who were fogbound, were unable to leave the Tawonga hut for three days, and their food supplies, were running short. On Monday, when the fog lifted, they left hut about 6 p.m. Most of the familiar landmarks were covered by snow, but they followed the snow poles, which have been erected as guides. As they moved down the valley through the thick snow, they mustered straggling cattle, which were reluctant to move and had to be driven with stockwhips. The party reached Tawonga about sunset. All the members were exhausted and were suffering from exposure.

Another party left the Mt. Painter Hut at 6 a.m. yesterday, and began their seven-mile journey to Tawonga. Heavy snow was falling and a bitterly cold wind was blowing. They also mustered the straggling cattle as they passed, but driving the cattle was difficult in the snow. One of the pack-horses suffered so severely from the cold that it dropped dead, and its saddle had to be stripped from the carcass and placed on another horse. The cattle dogs suffered greatly, and, when the party reached Tawonga, each man was carrying his dog across the saddle.

A third party reached Tawonga to-day after a difficult trip in the snow.

The Packhorse : Then and Now



Sydney Morning Herald
18 April 1935



Now



thick on the Bogong high plains and the peaks at its edge, the men were afraid to venture out of doors for three days. Led by Mr Ray Cooper, the Tawonga hut party consisted of Messrs J. Ryder, W. Ryder, and W. Maddison. Following the snow guiding poles, the horsemen reached the top of Snake Valley, and continued their ride home through the darkness, mustering stray cattle as they went along. They soon had a small herd in their control, but the beasts refused to move in the snow, and had to be driven forcibly with stock whips. Toiling on through the snow, the horsemen were able to reach the Tawonga township shortly after 6 p.m. yesterday.

Snow Falls Incessantly

The party which made the seven mile trip down the side of Mount Fainter to Tawonga had a trying time. Throughout the whole of the journey of 18 hours the men had to fight their way through the deep snow. From the time the men set out at 5 a.m. from the hut, when their last food supplies had been used, until they reached the Tawonga Hotel at 11.30 p.m., the snowfall did not cease on the mountain. Drenched to the skin and freezing cold, the cattlemen rode into the town after 11 p.m. Each was carrying his cattle dog on the saddle. The dogs were footsore and cold. One of their horses, caught in the storm and frozen by the cold, dropped dead. The saddle was removed to another pack horse. The men are suffering from heavy colds as the result of their adventure. All the cattlemen are now off the Bogong high plains.

Adelaide Advertiser 18 April 1935

Historic images from the Ryder collection; modern images of Ron Connley and Kerrie Anne Forge at Hinnomunjie by James Vereker, 2011



Trapped in the Snow : A Muster to Remember



Some years ago, Syd Ryder spoke of a mustering trip that had taken place many years earlier. A muster that he would never forget - 1200 head of cattle, two feet of snow and an exhausted supply of tucker and horse feed.

It was the 6 May, 1923. It had been a very bad year. Very dry. Much of the lower bush country had been burnt out. No feed. We had this idea we would muster the cattle and hold them around up there until it rained. Fellows from Bright waited until the season broke before they mustered. But, of course, as soon as it broke and rained - it snowed. Dibbins had branded 200 calves that Spring and only about 20 the following Spring.

We had been at Campbell's Yards a couple of weeks tailing the cattle out in the day and yarding them at night, beautiful fine weather. Old Jack Mac came along, "Boys," he said, "this is too good, it can't last" and it didn't last. It really broke. We were getting pretty short of tucker and horse feed. Old George Higginson and Raymond Howman left to come home to get some loads of stuff. She was coming down properly the day they were to come back. It started the day before and snowed all night.

Ben and Raymond Cooper were sort of running the show and they had decided that it was going to be too hard to get over The Fainter with a big mob in the snow so they would go

down Roper's Track. Raymond had been packing up and down there for the surveyors. Of course, the cattle had never been on that track and didn't know anything about it. We set off and battled across with nothing. I had a spare horse, I think I was leading him, I let him go to follow and of course, he stopped on the side of the track and I had to go back that night to get him, but after a big struggle we got down to Roper's Hut (below Falls Creek) and were putting them in the paddock there, and as we found out afterwards there was no fence around the back, the cattle were walking up there trying to go back to where they were used to, getting out.

That horse of mine was up there on the side of the track outside the rails, and wouldn't come, so I jumped on my other mare bareback, it's just getting dark, I came back up and I found him, and just as I found him I heard a cooee and it's old George Higginson cooeing, him and Raymond Howman were coming back down. They'd come to Tawonga Hut, sort of got a brainwave that we'd go that way with the cattle, so they came along and unloaded all their stuff (feed and supplies) into Tawonga Hut what they

had brought up, and come around (to Campbell's Yards) and we'd gone (in the opposite direction via Roper's) and they followed our tracks around and down to Roper's Hut. So we still had nothing to eat, and more men and horses to feed. We got through the rails and I put them up and I'm jumping on again and this flamin' horse I'd went back to get, he'd hooked the rope under my feet as I'm getting on and I landed on the bottom side. There was stars twinklin' everywhere even though it was a dark, black night.

Anyway I get on again and headed down and just before you get to Roper's Hut there's a little creek a fair bit down underground and a hole down through it like you see in those creeks up there, here and there and a cattle track crossing in a solid place. I pulled up and I said to George you want to keep your horse right behind me, I said, I'm right on the track here, if you get off the track you'll get in one of those holes and we'll have a struggle. So away I go. I'm leading the way and this great clonker I'm leading, he doesn't come where I went and next thing he's down in the hole with only his head and his front legs poked out. George strikes a match and looks at the horse and says, "You'll never get him out of there in a month of Sundays".

We went down to the hut and told them the story. Oh Christ! Got a halter or two and we all went back up and got a halter round his head and another round his front legs and we hoisted him out.

Next morning we got no-where near as many cattle as we had the night before and no tucker or horse feed and we set off and come down to the flat where Bogong township is now, there was some chaff in the hut that Ropers had left there so we feed the horses and we got in a row over that afterwards and were told that feed would have to be returned. Anyway, we set off to get down there. We belted away at them all day but we never got the mob down to the Flat so we went back again. Went back again next morning, Jack Briggs' little bay mare knocked up the first day and stopped away down the track.

We're coming back the next day and I picked up this mare of Briggs' and I was going to take her back, she had a rug on her. I'd be the chump taking her along, she'd pull up and wouldn't go. Jack would be poking her with a whip handle and she wouldn't go, he then got as wild as blazes and says if he could find a stick he'd kill the thing where she stood. You were falling over sticks of flaming timber all the way! Anyway we finally got out of there down to the river and no tucker that night, we'd used up what we'd been carrying in a bag with us. I had a 2lb. treacle tin, one I'd had jam in. It was used up but still in the bag, we got down to the river and it's too high to cross (East Kiewa). We weren't game to cross it in the night, anyway we lit a fire and we get this treacle tin and fill it with water and bring it back up to the fire and put some tea in it and have a drink of that. By next morning the tea was finished, but the river had gone down a bit, anyway we go back up the track, walking most of it, the horses weren't good enough to be riding. It was snowing and raining all the time, not much lying in that lower country but still snowing; back up the track next morning and got cattle together and down to the river. Cattle were getting washed downstream but none drowned. We got across and on the other side of the river was a fly Ropers had pitched there and left there. I crawled in under that, and Raymond Howman's going home to get some tucker and horse feed. He'd never been along Roper's track before, he went out pretty early in the morning. We went back up and got more cattle, come down and we got in under the fly again and got a big fire going, wet through. We took most of our clothes off and left them out at the fire trying to dry them a bit had the oilskin coat on and chucked the blankets down and we're lying down there. All at once there's some yahooing, you used to come off up about where that shed was on the road above Bogong Village there was a bit of a track cut around the side a good way before you come down onto the flat. Anyway, this yahooing, it's Howman, the day was pretty late, they'd tried to talk him out of coming back until next morning, but no, he would go, them blokes that were up

there were starving he's going to go so he went! Old Henry Higginson, Howman, and I think there was somebody else, I don't know who it was, but they had one lantern. Anyway, they were coming around this sidling and Howman wasn't too sure where he was, I don't know whether he'd seen our fire or not, and the others had no idea so they started yelling, anyway we started answering and they finally got themselves down to us. It was the middle of the night I didn't want any tucker, I didn't want a feed. That was halfway into the third night. I wasn't the only one that didn't want anything, anyway we got some billies on and got tea made and by crikey after we'd had a drink of tea we ate some tucker I tell you.

Next day, it was blowing, them big old trees were waving about. Old Henry Higginson had been to the war and come back. Looking up at the waving trees above them he said, "By hell, I'd sooner be in France than here."

Anyway we were another day before we got them out, but of course, we only had a small portion of what we started with. You were only picking up next morning what you could find about. The others had gone to buggery. Out of about 1200 head we got about 600. There'd be some fine big bullocks if you could find them. Ha!

We got more, never a lot though, kept finding a few. We were down where Clover Flat is, I think, camped there. Horses were starving hungry, you didn't have to hobble them or anything, they wouldn't go anywhere. Dad had come up and he'd tipped a bit of chaff about and of course, they were scrambling about after it. We were all sleeping on the ground. I was on the outside, George Higginson was next to me. I think he might have saved my life. All at once there's a squeal of that squeally voice of his "Go". That black horse of Jack Briggs', the others must have nipped it, next thing it got it's front foot on the side of my face. George just got his squeal out in time before it got all it's weight down on that foot. I'm lucky to be here, by crikey, it was some trip, I tell ya.

I think it was five or six days from when we left Campbell's Yards till we came out at Tawonga. They wouldn't go you know, they were starving hungry and they wouldn't go. They didn't know the track and they didn't want to go.

I was up there with Raymond Cooper, after we got down we went back again pretty soon to try and find some of them cattle that we'd lost. When we got back up to Roper's Hut (that was down in the river below where Falls Creek is now). We were trying to get back out to the tent at Campbell's Yards (Ryder's Hut). We had a tent pitched there and a yard built there. We had left a fair bit of stuff behind because we took no packhorses when leaving the cattle. We were going to get it and look for cattle. We took back Cooper's black horse but he knocked up, so we tied him to an old snow gum.

We got up into the clear country in Rocky Valley struggling through the snow – we finally got out to the tent and it was a beautiful fine day, and that was the only fine day in six weeks. When we got out on top going along we met old Jack Mac, and another fella, Little Mick, I think that's what they used to call him. They'd come up after horses. We met them out there and told them about where we'd seen horses and then we got talking about the depth of the snow and the old chap, Jack Mac, said it isn't very deep and Ray had said, "Oh, Christ, it's deep all right." Jack Mac had said, "Well there's only a few inches all the way up Young's Top and out to Young's Hut." The snow had all come from the North. They were quite surprised when they got up there and saw all the snow. The weather turned bad next day.

George Higginson, Joe Harvey and Eric Campbell later got back up to Young's Hut via Dungey's Track where they met Macs who were still getting horses eight weeks after it broke.

Frank Ryan's Memorial Ride : 21 March 2009

I stood hatless, squinting through the morning sun -
the Cattlemen and riders mounted to leave one by one.

They went with purpose on the Frank Ryan Memorial Ride, remembering his gentleness with each horse's stride.

Cattle graze on the flat at Bennie's beside the river.
The bridge across the Rose shows water dappled silver.

The tall trees shade the track as I watch the rider's backs,
and wait a few hours listening to barked Eucalypts crack.

They returned in the heat of the day, thirsty and tired -
humbled, sad; revisiting Cattleman's skills that are being denied.

Next, who will know which way to go?
And who will be left to teach against the formidable foe

of ignorance and dogma in the city -
planned by zealots behind their scientists. Fanatics we pity,

who think that the land is managed by their degrees
in Parks management; that gaul the land and kill the trees.

But the riders on the Frank Ryan Memorial Ride, remembering his bush knowledge with each horse's stride,

will soon rally together again, ride and place,
a memorial on his mountain run - the Cattleman's public face.

Wendy Jubb Stoney



The Bogong High Plains Cattlemen's Heritage Weekend

WENDY JUBB STONEY

On the 11 February 2011, I was going up onto the Bogongs for the second of the MCAV Heritage Rides, which recognises the cattlemen of the High Country and their runs. The rain poured down so heavily around Mt Beauty that water at the tops of deep drains had nowhere else to go except to flow over the roads. Further up the mountains, nearly to Falls Creek, the rain thickened into heavy mist, then fog and it was hard to see the road. The Cattlemen's meeting during the day would be over by the time I got there. I heard later that the weather had been atrocious for those driving to the Central Council meeting earlier.

Everyone had a tough time setting up camp at Ryder's Huts against horizontal rain and wind blowing the weather front through - but it was done, as it has been done by the Cattlemen

hundreds of times before. Then the sun came out. Greetings, a drink of whatever each had brought, and the excitement of being camped in their traditional place were good enough reasons to be cheering the swirling mist away as the moon rose.

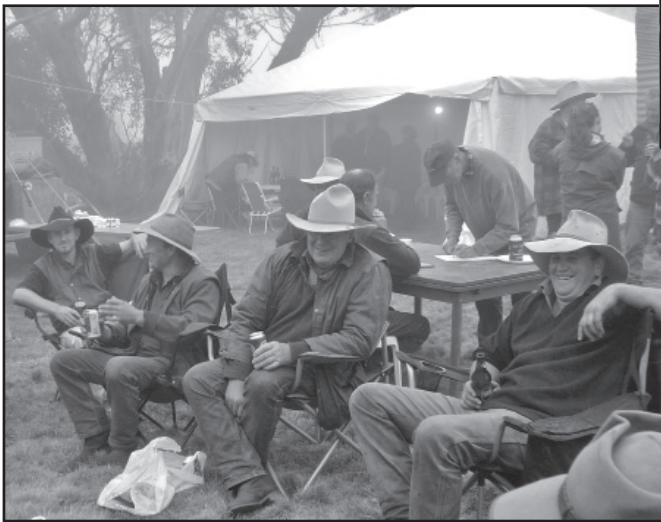
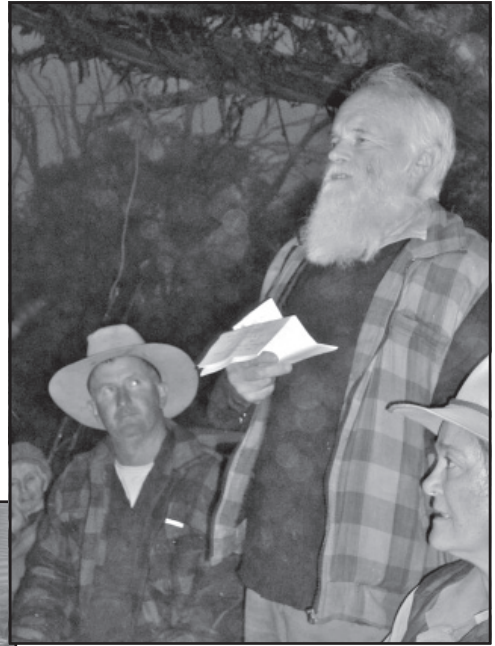
The cold came down as the light faded, people and horses settled into their camps.

The next morning some set off on horseback to re-visit the various cattlemen's huts and other points of interest. Others set up a display of old photographs and documents on the walls of one of the huts. Pieter Arriens from Harrietville carefully chronicled it all. A few cattlemen whiled away time talking about their cattle grazing days, the weather, how they managed their runs – and how the land has degraded since the last of the cattlemen were evicted. They pointed to the ant nests in the long old snowgrass. They explained to the younger ones, how the old snowgrass creates tussocks with deep runnels underneath, causing erosion if there is no grazing or cool burns – and the worst of it was that the ants made it uncomfortable to camp too. Mostly, they were very concerned at the fuel build up of the old grass causing a real fire hazard. The next fire could burn all the remaining ancient snow gums to death.

Of course, who built what hut, and various versions of how and who found the most cattle in a day, increased towards the sunset hour. That evening there were seventy people at the hearty communal dinner provided by organiser and long time cattleman's supporter, Neville Wright and his crew.

Respected chronicler of the High Country, Ian Stapleton was guest speaker. Jane Holth came too. Among the stories Ian told was that of an





Clockwise: Harry Ryder, explaining his family connection with the hut; respected historian Ian Stapleton; and some of the relaxed group in the mist that enveloped the site.

All images by Pieter Arriens

Aboriginal man named Larni, who guided Brown and Wells to the High Plains where they named many places. He went on to tell of the naming of Mt Jim and Mt Jack. Ian also observed that cattlemen had lived in the High Country - they had not just visited or passed through - thereby being the only people ever to have witnessed the Alpine areas in great detail over all seasons.

Representatives of some of the original families and their crews came for the weekend. Harry Ryder made a short and memorable speech about the history of Ryder's Huts and the family's long connection to the Bogong High Plains. He, in common with the Maddisons and the Briggs particularly, told us of their love of their land. The tight throats and stillness of the audience

was evidence enough of the rightness of the Heritage Ride.

The night drew to a close. Mark Coleman made a presentation to Neville Wright who responded on behalf of his crew to the thanks for their efforts. Ross Grant on behalf of Parks Victoria was acknowledged for its co-operation. Young Molly Coleman, a Don Kneebone and a Bill Hicks Bush Minstrel winner, played songs on her guitar while everyone had a warm around the blazing communal campfire before bed.

More such rides are planned in other significant grazing areas to keep the Mountain Cattleman's heritage and culture alive.



Ian and Katrina Einsiedel
52 Locks Road, Boisdale
0418 595 819
5145 4439
transedel@bigpond.com

The welfare of your stock is our priority

All new equipment
Local and Interstate
Custom made cattle crates
6 B Doubles, 1 & 2 deck and tray truck
options available
Free quote any job - big or small

Truck Care BFM and NVHS accredited

Your Local MP

Philip Davis

Member for
Eastern Victoria

Serving the people
of Gippsland and
East Gippsland



Supporting the return
of mountain
cattle grazing
to the Victorian
High Country

Authorised by Philip R. Davis MP
Shop 2, 424 Raymond St, PO Box 9210
Sale Vic 3853 — (03) 5143 1038
philip.davis@parliament.vic.gov.au

DARGO RIVER INN

BAR, MEALS & ACCOMMODATION

Owner & Hosts - Matthew and Susie Humphry
Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 12 noon til late
EVERY SUNDAY

Happy Hours 4pm-6pm \$2.00 Pots and \$4.00 Basics Crazy Wheel 6pm-7pm

*Dargo River Inn proudly sponsoring Dargo CFA, Dargo and District Angling
Club and the Dargo Museum*

***Come and enjoy delicious meals
with icy cold beer all served up with
genuine hospitality @ great value***
Lunch 12-2pm Dinner 6-8pm

13 Lower Dargo Road
Ph: 5140 1330
www.dargoriverinn.com.au

The blood of his family

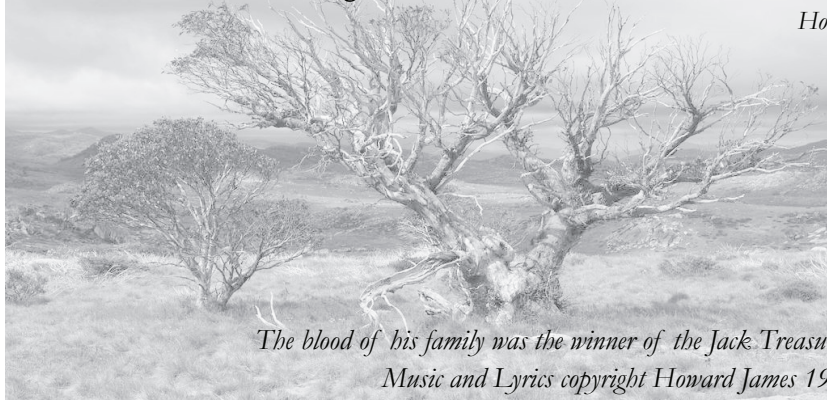
It runs in the blood of his family
born and bred in the Alps.
Running through the snow gums as a kid,
living the life of his forebears.
Born to the saddle and whip,
droving cattle the way his father did.
Up through the narrow passes
to the windswept alpine plains,
He could ride this track before he learned to crawl.
Chasing wild bush brumbies, or the family's cattle herd,
through the snow gums and the mountain ash – so tall.

Living the life of his family, the same way his father did,
tradition and bloodlines always run so deep.
He was born a mountain cattleman, grazing the alpine slopes
and he's proud of his family heritage, his to keep.

All that he has learnt about the mountains
from his Dad and the mountains themselves
has been threatened by those who want to kick the cattle out,
by using bluff and rhetoric
and flawed 'scientific' reports,
they've shown that they don't know what they are talking about.
The way he could tell it was snowing
by hearing the currawong's song,
that can't be learnt by reading academic reports.
We can only learn what they know, by listening to, and living their life
and the best way to learn it is from the back of a horse.

So save the life of the cattleman, and save the knowledge he has,
so future generations won't be denied that wealth;
and we'll save the life of the mountains, and the rivers that flow from them
and that will mean that we'll be saving ourselves.

Howard James



*The blood of his family was the winner of the Jack Treasure Award.
Music and Lyrics copyright Howard James 1994/2011*



Laurie Hodge

19 April 1942 - 8 November 2011

Laurie Hodge's hat was placed on his coffin at the start of his funeral service. Most people only knew Laurie with his hat on, he rarely took it off. It was placed there, brim up, so as to not crease the edges and ruin its shape. Laurie would not have been happy if it was placed any other way.

Laurie was born on the 19 April 1942 in Bairnsdale, the son of Andrew and Mary Hodge. He was an only child and lived with his mother in Bairnsdale whilst his father went to war. Upon his father's return, the family moved to a farm between Cowarr and Toongabbie and Laurie spent his early years enjoying everything that farm life provided.

It was in his early 20s that he met young Diane Marshall. They were both at a dance at the Dargo Hall and soon after became an item. It didn't take them long to realise they wanted to be together and they married in Lindenow in 1966. They moved to Stratford and soon welcomed their first born Kylie in 1967. They moved to Bruthen in 1968. Kim was born in 1969 and Kelly in 1971, thus completing the trio of three beautiful daughters.

Soon after Kim was born, Laurie began working at the Country Roads Board. The drought forced his hand and as the farm couldn't sustain two families, he decided to try his hand at something other than farm work. He was there for eight years before finding work at the Tambo Shire. He worked as a grader operator with the Shire for seventeen years and privately after that. Laurie then discovered a property about fifteen kms out of Benambra, which he promptly fell in love with and purchased. Laurie would live at the property during the week and go home on weekends, and it was here in a little cabin in the middle of the high country that Laurie felt most at home. He was happiest when surrounded by the vast mountains and lush country.

Laurie made many friends in Benambra and the surrounding area. He settled into life in Benambra comfortably and he became an important part of the community. He had his own seat at the pub, which is a sure thing you have been accepted into the fold. He, along with hundreds of other worked tirelessly fighting the 2003 fires that swept through the countryside and he was generous in giving of his time and energy for anyone in need. He was also a member of the Benambra pistol club and involved himself in community activities. He was a long standing associate member of the MCAV assisting whenever able and will be missed by the Omeo branch members.

Around two years ago Laurie was forced to retire after being diagnosed with cancer. He was strong and stoic and decided this wasn't going to slow him down; he continued to live his life fully and made many trips to the farm. He was driving himself up there as recently as two weeks before his death.

In August 2011, when the cancer was advancing, Laurie was unable to transport wood back to their home in Bruthen, and it was important to him that Diane had enough wood to keep warm.

When it became apparent that he couldn't achieve this, his friends in Benambra chopped, stacked and delivered the wood to Bruthen; he was overwhelmed with this act of kindness. For someone who had always given his time and energy it was now his turn to receive some help from good friends.



Robert Sykes

12 October 1939 - 22 September 2011

Hereford cattleman, strong family man and gentleman, Robert Sykes was raised in a simple home in Gelantipy; his success in business and life built through hard work and determination.

One of eight children, Robert Sykes was born on 12 October 1939 in Bairnsdale and lived most of his life in Gelantipy before moving to Bairnsdale in the 1980s and Longford in 2002.

Robert often spoke of his early childhood memories, which included growing up in an isolated area of the High Country, long trips to Bairnsdale with his brothers and sisters in the back of a ute under a tarp, milking the cows early in the morning and then riding a horse bareback with one of his sisters or walking the three miles to school.

Robert had a strong work ethic and was sought after by local farmers for his diligence, reliability and skill. This led him to undertake many jobs including shearing, dipping, branding and various other farm duties. He also made in income from rabbit trapping

and would rise at 4am to accomplish this before commencing his other daily activities. All this was done in addition to working hard on the family farm.

Robert had a strong connection with the land and a vision to own his own property. In his early 20s he used the income from his numerous jobs to purchase “Mawarra”.

Robert married Helen Rogers on 6 March 1964 after Helen re-visited Gelantipy to rekindle childhood memories. About the time they were married, Robert and Helen purchased the Sykes family farm and also purchased seven Hereford cows and the bull Silverton Cyclone from Helen’s father Dick Rogers. These cattle were to form the nucleus of the Mawarra Hereford herd. Robert’s management was progressive and forward looking and when he and Helen visited Canadian Hereford herds in 1973 they purchased the now legendary sire 39D.

Family life revolved around the cattle and the family has many wonderful memories of working alongside their husband, father and grandfather on the farm and at shows, sales and field days.

Robert served on the breed’s Southern Advisory Committee for around twenty years and in 1992 he was elected to the Australian Hereford Society board and served for eleven years.

By this stage Mawarra was a serious force in the Hereford world, selling top quality bulls and competing successfully in the show ring. In 2002 the new property “Tanjil” at Longford was purchased and Gelantipy was sold. Robert was ringside when Mawarra bulls were champions of three age divisions at Wodonga 2011.

Robert Sykes wasn’t just a cattleman. He was active in community organisations such as Gelantipy Bush Nursing, CFA and school committees among other interests.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Helen, three children (Anita, Peter and Andrew) and seven grandchildren.

This eulogy is taken in part from a lengthier article printed in the Bairnsdale Advertiser.

Political games cloud Alpine grazing debate:

Our proud heritage is threatened by silly political games

President Mark Coleman spends much of his time responding to allegations and comments about the MCAV. This "Opinion Piece" appeared in the *Weekly Times* on 14 December 2011.

The Victorian Government's referral of the alpine grazing trials to the federal Environment Minister is an opportunity to study the background to this long-running issue. Cattle grazed the Victorian Alps from the 1830s until 2005, about 170 years. It was an activity as established and as enduring in the state's history as Melbourne itself. For all but the final thirty years, alpine grazing was neither controversial nor political.

That changed in 1982, when the incoming Cain Labor government announced its intention to create a massive National Park, with alpine grazing eradicated. Naturally the mountain cattlemen reacted. Their livelihood and the very purpose behind their existence were threatened. Reluctantly, the cattlemen went political. We lobbied Labor (unsuccessfully), we sought support from the Liberal and National parties (successfully).

We rode our horses through Melbourne several times to raise the issue directly with the people. It was quite clear then and it remains clear now that we have a lot of public support in city, town and bush. When the Labor government eventually legislated the Alpine National Park into existence, in 1989, it required the support of the Liberal and National parties to pass the Bill. It got this support on the strict proviso that alpine grazing would continue in most of the park, with cattlemen issued renewable seven-year licences.

This was the status quo until 2005, when the Bracks government reneged on the deal. With a majority in both houses it could ram a ban on alpine grazing through Parliament; and it did. It dressed up the process with a trumped-up parliamentary inquiry comprised only of Labor MPs, which cited a report from a single scientist who did limited work in one area.

Labor was not worried about the environment. It was chasing the green vote. The Liberal and National parties publicly opposed the ban on alpine grazing and promised to reinstate it. They have maintained this position ever since and took this policy to last year's state election. Once again Labor was trying to destroy

us. The Coalition parties gave us hope. You don't have to be Albert Einstein to work out who we supported in that election. We put a lot of effort and, for us, a considerable amount of money into the bellwether seat of East Gippsland. For the record, we donated \$20,000 to each of Liberal and National campaigns in that seat.

The politics didn't end with the election. We expected the usual rubbish from the Victorian National Parks Association: that the green case is all science and ours is all greed. Then there's Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke's inflammatory, insulting comments. His open hostility to the cattlemen derived, he says, from being appalled at the cattle damage he saw during a one-hour inspection. Pulled up beside a deer wallow, Mr Burke vented his outrage to the assembled media, egged on by VNPA members he had invited along. Nobody present noticed or cared that their convoy had ripped up the access track, rendering it impassible after they left. Mr Burke's concern was not for the environment. It was to keep the Greens in Canberra firmly on side.

Here is the basic problem. Mountain cattlemen see the bush through the prism of their inter-generational experience. They see it as it is. Greenies and the uninitiated see it through the prism of their aspirations and expectations. They see it as they wish it to be. Mountain cattlemen are immensely proud of our 170 year record in caring for and sharing the bush. When it became a national park, it was in excellent shape.

The park is now a disgrace. It is a firetrap, with massive buildup of fuel in formerly grazed areas. It has suffered terribly from preventable and mismanaged wildfire. Its streambeds are choking. It is overrun with feral animals and weeds. It is haven to almost no large native mammals. Much of the park is a soul-less, joyless place now, devoid of history and heritage.

We couldn't give a fig for the politics. We don't want to be at war with Tony Burke, Labor, or even the VNPA. We want what's best for the bush. We'll continue fighting this until the cows come home.

McCormack Park, Merrijig

The McCormack Family welcomes everyone to the 2012 Mountain Cattlemen's Get-together.

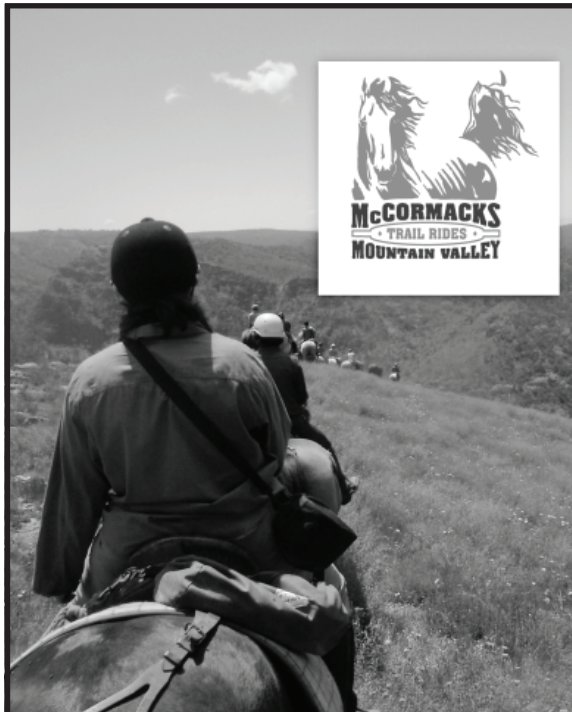
The original McCormack family arrived in Australia after leaving Tipperary, Ireland and their little home town of Bally Patrick in 1864. They first settled on land just out of Melbourne, and two years later, in 1866, they took up a selection in Merrijig (sight unseen) when the government was opening up the new colonies.

They travelled by bullock dray and horse drawn wagons up the Hume Highway to Euroa then across to Mansfield then to Merrijig. It took them fourteen days to complete the journey. They settled on their 640 acre selection. and the property has been added to since then.

The property was named "Bally Patrick" after the town they had left behind in Ireland.

Earliest documentation of cattle being taken to the mountains by the family was on Mt Howitt in 1900, and they also ran sheep in the Mt No 3 Area.

The McCormack family still run their cattle in the King valley area today, with their seventh generation grandchildren hopefully being able to carry on the tradition. This year's Get-Together is being held on part of the property which the family has made available for community use, named McCormack Park. Enjoy the weekend.



Ride with us through the magnificent Victorian High Country. Breathtaking views from mountain tops, roam through tree ferned valleys, engage in river crossings. Ride to "The Man from Snowy River" Craig's Hut - Mt Stirling - Mt Magdala - Howitt High Plains - Wonnangatta Valley 2 hr - half day - full day - overnight or 3-7 day rides -

Bruce & Debra McCormack, 62 McCormacks Rd, Merrijig 3723

Bookings 03 5777 5542 Mobile 0428 573 708

www.mountainvalleytrailrides.com

The Handy Horse

Well I grabbed my runty bush horse, threw a saddle on his back,
mounted from the dusty ground, and took off up the flintstone track.
Though he had a big heart, he was a bloody mongrel horse,
stocky legs, scruffy fur, and donkey ears of course!

But looks aside, he was my mate; had personality for two.
He once flipped me backwards off my chair; now that, my friends, is true.
I beat the other drovers to the gate, and rounded up the mob,
then I heard hoof beats on the stony track, and called out, "G'day Bob!"

My greeting was responded by, "Sure you're ready for this mate?"
I ignored the taunt and glared at him, but didn't grab the bait.
There were ten of us in total; we got the cattle moving fine,
so I chucked Bob a stubby and yelled, "Stick that where the sun don't shine!"

We were coming out of Trap Yard Gap, when a ute screeched to a stop,
a well preened lad hopped from the ute, sporting a striped pink top.
A green vest was draped over his arm, and a little embroidered bag,
I looked at Bob and shook my head; the ranger was a faaa...a funny lookin' bloke!

He placed his hands upon his hips, and minced over to where we stood.
"Just what do you think you're doing, are the laws not understood?"
"Oh darl," I crooned, "they're understood, but those rules we just won't follow.
We won't next year, next month, next week; we won't even tomorrow."

With a look of utter loathing, he glared up towards me,
then pulled out his fancy notebook, and pondered, "Hmm, let's see..."
The bugger was going to fine us, his pen was poised and ready,
so I muttered under my breath to my horse, "C'mon, let's get him Freddie."

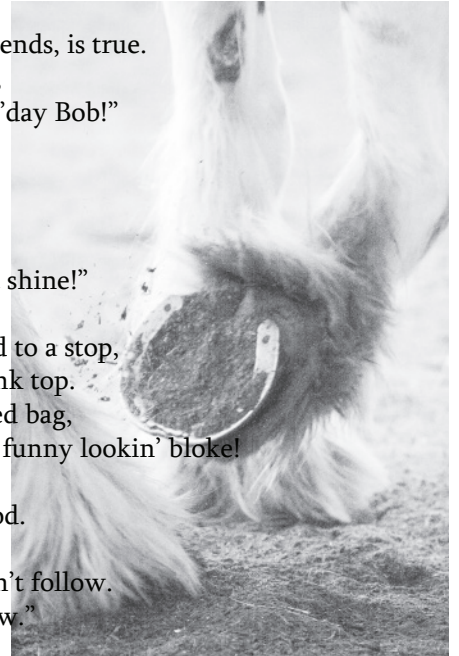
Fred swung around with mighty force; the ranger fell with a thump,
then Fred lined himself over the ranger's head and proceeded to take a dump.
While we all roared with laughter, the ranger got to his feet,
then yelled at us, "You're by far the worst people I've had the misfortune to meet!"

While he continued his riveting speech, me and Fred rode to his ute,
made a few adjustments, then rode back; I winked at Fred, "You beaut."
We made it in time to hear the end of the tirade, "and I'll be sending you the bill!"
Then he turned around in time to see his ute rolling down the hill.

He cried to us, "How dare you! You, you...filthy country folk!"
Bob chuckled and drawled, "I may be filthy, but at least I am a bloke!"
So we herded the cattle and went off on our way, the fun was just beginning.
They can make their laws, and create fights; but we will keep on winning.

Kate Crombie, 2011

Winner of the Don Kneebone Heritage Award 2011



37th Annual Get-Together Hinnomunjie 2011



Originally scheduled for Junction Plain, near Cobungra, the site of the 37th Get-Together was relocated to the Hinnomunjie Racecourse Reserve after Junction Plain was deemed to be far too wet to accommodate the crowd. (Ironically it was steaming hot over the weekend!!). This may have added to the stress for the organisers, but they managed to reorganise everything beautifully. Despite the heat, a strong crowd was in attendance over the weekend and the many kids' activities were well received. The expected events - the Cattleman's Cup (both Senior and Junior), the packhorse race, sprints, whipcracking, wood chopping, haystacking, dog jumping, bushman's challenge and poetry all went down a treat. Feature workshops by trap setters were also well attended, the crowd being amply and capable informed all day/night and day by the microphone fellas. (Sorry guys ... don't know all the names involved....)The variety of

fun events run especially for the youngsters saw them participating with great vigour. The "dance tent" on Saturday evening was enthusiastically attended and suitably exhausted all the little tikes. It seemed that all the food outlets (including the bar) and the merchandise tent had a steady stream of customers.

Again, the local community was extremely generous in donating its time, resources and experience. The MCAV wishes to gratefully thank all those involved in the relocating and additional work involved and the hardworking Get-Together committee organisers. The MCAV also wishes to wholeheartedly thank all the wonderful people who gave their time, and our terrific sponsors that are listed in the last issue of *Voice of the Mountains*. Many of them help us out year after year. Apologies to the woodchopping contingent as results have not been available to publish in *Voice*.





*Main images (page 43)
MCAV executive officer,
Graeme Stony warms the
memorial seat dedicaed
to cattleman Graham
"Rusty" Connley; (page 44)
Zanni McCall and Kassie
Earle won the Ladies'
Haystacking; (page 45)
Aleisha Sievers performs a
double-handed routine in the
Open Whipcracking taken by
James Vereker.*



**Hinnomunjie
2011**



Results for 2011 were -

Junior Whipcracking 10 yrs and under

- 1st Kate Faithfull
- 2nd Jade Clarke
- 3rd Tom Richards
- 4th Clay Davis

Juvenile Whipcracking

- 1st Emma Higgins
- 2nd Emiliqua East
- 3rd Paige Williams
- 4th Megan Rennick

Encouragement Jacqueline Davis

Ladies Whipcracking

- 1st Diana Hurley
- 2nd Emma Higgins
- 3rd Aleisha Sievers
- 4th Maddie Crombie

Encouragement Andrea Cook

Open Whipcracking

- 1st Diana Hurley
- 2nd Aleisha Sievers
- 3rd Emiliqua East

Encouragement Luke Higgins

Dog High Jump

- 1st "George" and Hugh Mawhinney
- Eq. 2nd "Phil" and Amanda Pendergast
- "Barkley" and Shonnie Malfroy
- "99" and Bridgette Milterer

Bushmen's Challenge (Mens)

- 1st Luke Peters and John Conroy
- 2nd Chris Connley and Jacob Petrag
- 3rd Craig Woodgate and Leonie Shepherd

Bushmen's Challenge (Ladies)

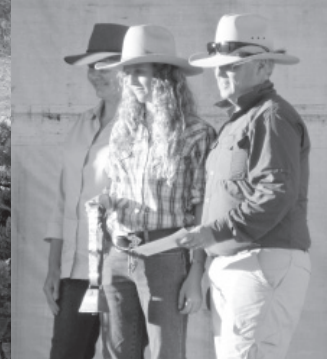
- 1st Diana Hurley and Aleisha Sievers
- 2nd Emma Higgins and Gemma Pilbeam
- 3rd Sharlee Connley and Sarah Cavil

Ladies Haystacking

- 1st Zanni McCall and Kassie Earle
- 2nd Kathy Gabriel and Courtney Simmons
- 3rd Trish Johnson and Chris Richardson

Men's Haystacking

- 1st Rex Bennett and Chris Caston
- 2nd John Conroy and Shane Caston
- 3rd Andrew Neumann and Mathew Broad



Opposite page (top right): Troy Nichols led the field to win the Senior Cattleman's Cup, photo James Vereker.



Hinnomunjie 2011



Photographs of the Get-Together courtesy of Frances Westbury and Leanne Dyson with feature photographs by James Vereker ©(www.horsephotographics.com.au)

Men's Tug-O-War

- 1st Lovick's Men
- 2nd Tinamba Tigers
- 3rd Whitfield Tuggers

Ladies Tug-O-War

- 1st Camp Awesome
- 2nd Dougie Treasures
- 3rd Stuckey's Team

Walking Race

- 1st Don Evendon on "Belgo"
- 2nd Teaghan Stephenson on "Tess"
- 3rd John Douglas on "Cody"
- 4th Fran Jordan on "Tobias"

Relay Race

- 1st Olsson Team
- 2nd Forge Team
- 3rd Hodkin Team
- 4th Rangas

Open Race

- 1st Brett Lancaster on "Fatty"
- 2nd B.J. Hand on "Amaroo"
- 3rd Dale Purdon on "Wrangler"
- 4th Lukas Roberts on "Blue"

Sprint Race

- 1st Jo Stevens on "Doolan Gem"
- 2nd Mark Waite on "Ranga"
- 3rd Rick Munt on "Banjo"

Frank Ryan Memorial Australian Packhorse Championship

Open

- 1st David Olsson
- 2nd Graham Forge
- 3rd Ron Comley

Ladies

- 1st Ann-Maree Forge
- 2nd Brenda Flannagan
- 3rd Gina Talevski

Junior

- 1st Kerrie Anne Forge on "Sebastian", packing "Red"
- 2nd Tahnee Olsson
- 3rd Billy Finn on "Nuggett"
- 4th Ellen Forge on "Bobby", packing "Pete"
- 5th Mason Tait on "Maggie"
- 6th Jake Douglas on "Blue", packing "Dan"



*Middle: Crosscut saw championship men's pairs (l) Mark Parker and Andrew Kelly competing, and above, (l) Bob Munday, 69, and Matt Knightm 15, paired in the same competition to place third.
Photos James Vereker.*

Mazda Junior Cattlemen's Cup

- 1st Jye Hodgkins
- 2nd Thomas Forge
- 3rd Jessica Smith
- 4th Samantha Lizars
- 5th Tahnee Olsson
- 6th Emma Prendergast

Mazda Mountain Cattlemen's Cup

- 1st Troy Nichols
- 2nd J. Marchinton
- 3rd Neil Waite
- 4th Tim Cavill
- 5th M. Ward
- 6th M. Clarke

Don Kneebone Heritage Award

Kate Crombie and her poem "The Handy Horse"

Laurence Webb Junior Award

Emily Webb

Peter McCormack Bush Laureate

Frank Hill

Jack Treasure Award

Howard James

Bill Hicks Bush Minstrel Award

Laurie Webb





Below: Jye Hodgkins on his way to winning the Junior Cattleman's Cup, photo James Vereker.



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the
Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria held on
Saturday 24 September 2011 at Akoonah Park, Berwick
commencing at 10.30am.**

Present

Chris Cooper, Wendy Jubb Stoney, Graeme Stoney, Leonie Phelan, David Hurley, Tania Coleman, Danny Cook, Simon Turner, Bryan Bassett, Glen Chalwell, Ken Heyward, Cath Noble, Scott Jennison, Brian Higgins, Christa Treasure, Ray Anderson, Rhonda Treasure, Andrew Jackson, Keren Taylor, Elizabeth Jackson, Richard Faithfull, Anne Faithfull, Mark Coleman, Janelle Coles, Jane Tait, John Cook, Bruce McCormack and Tim Barker.

Apologies

Rose and Tim Faithfull, Diana Cameron, Froggy and Rita McMahon, Neville Wright, Susan Noble, Anthony Higgins, Peter Monds, Ross and Magda Brown, Ben Treasure, Pat Coleman, Charlie Lovick, Chris Commins, Stephen and Mel Kerr, Buff Rogers, Janine Cooper, Joe Connley, Andreas Seyffer, Pat Woolmer, Frances Westbury, Bill Gear and David Evans.

Confirmation of Official Proxy Votes

Des Green nominated Joe Connley as his official proxy.

Confirmation of Minutes

It was agreed that the minutes as circulated of the Annual General Meeting dated 29th October 2010 held at Akoonah Park, Berwick are a true and correct record of proceedings.

Chris Cooper / Danny Cook

Carried

Reports

President's Report

Mark Coleman then presented his annual report to the meeting.

I would like to thank everybody on Central Council and Associate Members for their assistance throughout the past twelve months. What has been achieved could not have happened without the support of all members and the work that they do behind the scenes. I know that I may not always give accolades and praise for every deed that is done, and I apologize for that, but I

honestly do appreciate every bit of help that is given.

I was driven throughout the year by the many emails and notes of support from all over Australia. There have been many ideas and suggestions, as well as lots of great information that has flowed through to me. Every contact is helpful in some way to the cause.

In taking on the role of the President of the MCAV, I've heard plenty of criticism and negativity from many directions, asking why we are bothering. But now I ask every one of those people to look how far we have come and what we have achieved in the space of a year. I've been honored to work with this group of people, and am proud of what we have achieved together. I believe we will only get stronger from here on in.

This twelve months started with a bang as we jumped straight into the State Election. I would like to offer our thanks to the Coalition government for keeping their promise to us and reinstating cattle grazing to our traditional grazing areas. Special thanks must also go to the Cattlemen families that are managing the six trial sites.

On the other side of the fence sat the Federal government and Tony Burke, appeasing their marginal mates, the Greens. The fight on this front is not over yet, the Federal EPBC legislation will be our focus over the coming months. At times we will have to continue to keep our cards close to our chest. All I can ask is that you put your faith and trust in your Executive as they make difficult decisions daily. Throughout all of this we have maintained our integrity and gained the respect of the politicians, the media and the general public.

In January the Omeo G2G at Hinnomunjie was a pleasure to be involved in. A great team effort ensured that the weekend was a top show and an outstanding success. People forget that it was run whilst two-thirds of Victoria was in flood including the original site. Congratulations to all involved.

The media interest in the cattle grazing issue has been relentless and often on a national level. One afternoon I received over thirty phone calls in the space of an hour and half, from all over Australia. Many thanks go to the people who have fed me useful information along the way. It is not an easy task and I have done the best I can at all times to be a positive representative of the organisation, and to get the message across to the best of my ability. They say that any publicity is good publicity and although we have had some negative news reports from some outlets most has been fair and reasonable.

The Bogong Heritage Ride was a great success. Thanks Neville Wright and his team of helpers for their organisation, also to Ian Stapleton who gave an informative and thoughtful presentation. It was great to see so many of the Bogong families back on the mountain where they belong.

We had great support for our petition that was sent to the Federal Government. Thanks to Darren Chester, Anne and all those who gave their time to collect the signatures.

The new Constitution is all but completed. Unfortunately due to the bigger issues we have faced this year our focus was elsewhere and so we have been unable to present it for voting today. One of the many reforms within the new constitution is to enable the immediate past President to take a place on Central Council. I am going to suggest that we invite the past President, Chris Commins, to attend Central Council in this role. Many thanks to the team that took on the task after the last AGM, it is a long and thankless job that needed to be done.

Thanks to all the members who have taken the time to work with the Consultants over the past twelve months. We now have a living document on how to run cattle in the bush, combining generations of knowledge into one manual.

After a lot of work to complete a Local History Grant application we were unsuccessful this time. It was disappointing in that the money was going to be directed to the MCAV history book. Thankfully work continues on the book with Roger Franklin, our author, meeting with Buff Rogers and visiting Jindabyne and Canberra.

Our history is being added to every day so as we continue to fight we continue to add chapters to our story.

I attended the VNPA meeting in Box Hill and was surprised to hear about their hidden agenda, the nationalisation of the management of our Parks.

The Canberra visit for the 'Vote of No Confidence' Rally, was very rewarding. I met a number of Federal politicians who seem to be on board with our ideas. Also I met the President of the Snowy Mountains Bush User Group.

Throughout the year we have received tremendous support from Andrew Broad and the VFF. It was fantastic to see them standing up for the MCAV in National Media.

Most recently the 4X4 show was once again an excellent PR opportunity for MCAV and the promotion of the G2G. Thanks to the team who attended over the weekend handing out flyers and stickers and generally spreading the word - 36,000 people attend this event over three days and the support from the majority is overwhelming.

Since the state election the MCAV is experiencing the most positive outlook for many years. We are under intense scrutiny. Our opponents are well resourced and have plenty of time on their hands. We must be astute and double check everything. We still have a major battle on our hands and it won't be a short campaign.

I urge you to use your executive. There is no piece of information or idea too small to pass on. I have learnt over this year that the smallest piece of information can lead to a major breakthrough. We are all busy at times, but we all need to work together to reach our goals.

It has been a fair ride to the first holding paddock, we now have to keep the cattle there.

Financial Report

Anne Faithfull presented the financial report for the year ending 30th June 2011 as tabled.

Anne Faithfull / Simon Turner Carried

Marketing Report

Jane Tait presented her annual report as tabled.

Election of Office Bearers

All office bearers vacated their positions and the chair was occupied by Graeme Stoney.

President

Mark Coleman was nominated by David Hurley and Brian Higgins and accepted the nomination. There being no further nominations Mark Coleman was declared elected to the position of President.

Vice President

Simon Turner was nominated by Bruce Commins and Phillip Commins.

Chris Cooper was nominated by Simon Turner and Brian Higgins.

Both nominees indicated that they would only accept the nomination conditional upon it being a joint position. There being no further nominations Simon Turner and Chris Cooper were declared elected jointly to the position of Vice President.

Executive Officer

Graeme Stoney was nominated by Chris Cooper and Bruce McCormack and accepted the nomination. There being no further nominations Graeme Stoney was declared elected to the position of Executive Officer.

Secretary

Janelle Coles was nominated by Richard Faithfull and Danny Cook and accepted the nomination. There being no further nominations Janelle Coles was declared elected to the position of Secretary.

Treasurer

Anne Faithfull was nominated by Danny Cook and Mark Coleman and accepted the nomination. There being no further nominations Anne Faithfull was declared elected to the position of Treasurer.

Marketing Officer

Jane Tait was nominated by Graeme Stoney and Simon Turner and accepted the nomination. There being no further nominations Jane Tait was declared elected to the position of Marketing Officer.

Project Officer

Chris Commins was nominated by Graeme Stoney and Simon Turner and accepted the nomination.

There being no further nominations Chris Commins was declared elected to the position of Project Officer.

Get Together Co-Ordinators

Scott Jennison was nominated by Mark Coleman and Brian Higgins and accepted the nomination. Bruce McCormack was nominated by Graeme Stoney and Simon Turner and accepted the nomination. This being a joint position and there being no further nominations Scott Jennison and Bruce McCormack were declared elected to the position of Get-Together Co-Ordinators.

Branch Annual Reports (including nominations for Central Council delegates)

Gippsland Branch – Brian Higgins

Report as tabled to the meeting was accepted

President Ross Brown

Vice-President Brian Higgins

Secretary Tania Coleman

Central Council Delegates

Dave Hurley, Chris Cooper, Brian Higgins with Ross Brown (reserve).

Omeo – John Cook

The Omeo Branch thanked Phillip Commins for once again organising a very successful Camp draft with proceeds going to the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria.

President Bruce Commins

Vice President Wayne (Joe) Connley

Secretary Chris Commins

Central Council Delegates

Danny Cook, Simon Turner, Wayne (Joe) Connley with John Cook (reserve)

Mansfield – Bruce McCormack

The Mansfield Branch mentioned the DSE trials and covered the G2G report.

President Bruce McCormack

Secretary Graeme Stoney

Central Council Delegates

Graeme Stoney, Bruce McCormack and Charlie Lovick

North East – Ken Heyward

President Ken Heyward

Vice-President Christa Treasure

Secretary Fiona Treasure

Special Events Co-Ordinator Neville Wright

Central Council Delegates

Christa Treasure, Ken Heyward, Glen Chalwell and Ray Anderson (reserve)

Reports accepted as presented and nomination of Central Council delegates accepted.

Graeme Stoney / Simon Turner Carried

Appointment of Auditor

It was agreed that Ken White (Chartered Accountant) from Whites Accounting and Taxation Solutions continue as auditor.

Graeme Stoney / David Hurley Carried

Fixing Honorariums

Honorariums are to be rolled over as per previous year. Graeme Stoney asked that Central Council have the power to review them after the Get-Together.

Graeme Stoney / John Cook Carried

Honorariums

President	\$21,000
Vice President	\$2,500 (each)
Treasurer	\$10,000
Secretary	\$7,000
Marketing Officer	\$3,000
Get Together Coordinator	\$3,000 (each)

Graeme Stoney / Simon Turner Carried

Motion from Gippsland Branch that Central Council favourably consider an honorarium be given to Debbie Squires to compensate her work as Editor of the *Voice of the Mountains* and to cover her ongoing costs.

Action: Central Council to consider this motion and discuss it with Debbie Squires after the 2012 Get-Together.

Setting Membership Subscription Fees

Full membership fees and Associate membership fees to remain the same as last year.

Full Membership

Grazing Members	\$220.00
Non-Grazing Members	\$50.00
Associate Membership	\$30.00 single \$40.00 family

Graeme Stoney / Chris Cooper Carried

Constitution Committee

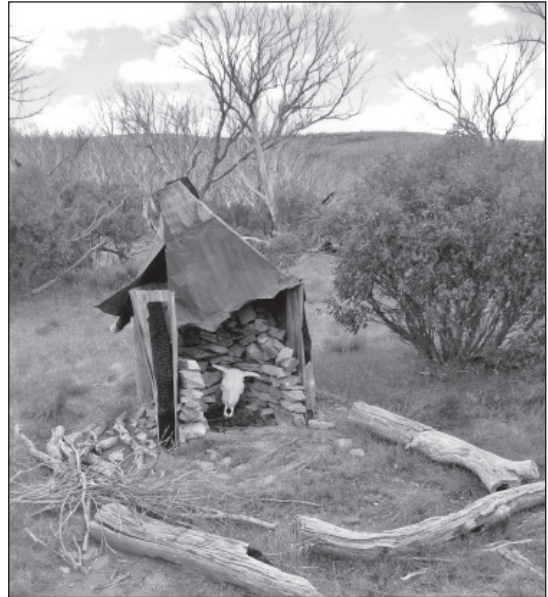
Several meetings have been held over the past twelve months. The new constitution is almost completed - special general meeting is to be held

at the 2012 Get-Together on 14 January 2012 at 4.00pm for consensus.

Action: Anne to forward copy of old constitution to all prior to the meeting for discussion.

The meeting was declared closed at 11.53am.

Date of next AGM to be advised.



Let's hope this is not a monument to the mountain cattlemen : the broken remains of Batty's Hut complete with a skull in the fireplace. Photo Rowena Turner.

WORK HIRE

AUSTRALIA Pty Ltd

Supporting the Community

Like the Cattlemen of the High Country, the staff at WorkHire understand the local area and the needs of local businesses.

*Call us now to discuss
your recruitment needs.*

Ph: 03 51447 488

www.workhireaustralia.com

MCAV Sponsors 2012



MAZDA

Philip Davis MP	Donna Petrovich MP
ARB 4x4 Accessories	Orange Pumps
Kerr Bros. Excavating	IGA
Omeo Rural and Hardware Supplies	Mansfield 4x4 Parts
Ryans Asphalt (Peter Clausen)	Outdoor Pleasure
Workhire Australia	Mansfield Retravision
Transedel Livestock Carriers	Mansfield Vet Clinic
Mazda	Phudleys
Mitta Muster Association	Oakbank Produce and Farm Supplies
Mansfield Bins 'N Skips	Mansfield Real Estate
Cleanaway	Snowy Rug Company
Henry the Third	Delatite Hotel
Wayne Lovick Earthmoving	Betallis Bakery
Mansfield Constructions	Packers High Country Rides
Victoria Trailers	Lovicks
Harvey Norman	Egee Printers Bairnsdale
Norm Pigdon	Gippsland Farmer
Mansfield Toyota	Ancare Australia
Rodwells	Brian and Sandy Higgins
Monster Fish Pty Ltd	Whites Accounting and Taxation Service
Bowhaul Transport	Dargo River Inn
Golden Age Hotel, Omeo	Dyers Transport
Mitta Mitta General Store	Lifeaid
Don and Valda Duncan	Victoria Police
Bunnings	McCormack's Mountain Valley Trail Rides

The Association is indebted to these businesses, organisations and individuals for their loyal support of the Mountain Cattlemen. And if we have overlooked including you in this list our sincere apologies and thanks. This year we owe a special thanks to the McCormack family and the Merrijig community for the use of their facilities and the Get-Together workers who attended working bees and spent untold hours "getting things ready" to ensure a successful weekend.

Thank you all.

Acknowledgments and Back Issues



In the grand scheme of things - it is a very small number of people who actually create *Voice of the Mountains*. A handful of people answer emails and phone calls and we end up with this annual publication. This year the lucky recipients of my pushy phone calls and emails were: President Nook, Cath Noble, Graeme Stoney, Janine Coles, Simon and Rowena Turner, Harry and Sue Ryder, Kelly Crombie, Brian Higgins, Anne Faithfull, Wendy Jubb Stoney, Susan Noble, Bruce and Deb McCormack and the Duncans amongst others.

Thank you everyone - somehow, yet again, we have a *Voice*.

Our photographic contributions go from strength to strength. Again, Frances Westbury has thoroughly documented the activities of the weekend with her photographs and each year she sends the disc to me just when I am just starting to think about images.

James Vereker has also provided some amazing images (including the cover) which are all commercially available from his website www.horsephotographics.com.au together with hundreds of others. Leanne Dyson also contributed photographs this year as well as her usual efforts in the "proof reading" department. Both Leanne and Neil Cox have read, read and read again, until they could read no more looking for errors in the type. Their help is vital to the production. So, again, if there are any typos it is something I changed after they had finished.

Every year my employer - Stephen Baggs - and my fellow staff carry my "workload" so as to enable me to concentrate on *Voice*. Not only do they supply the computing power, facilities, internet, phone and e-mail access that I need but they also critique and offer valuable suggestions. Thank you all.

Wayne and his team at E-Gee Printers continue to support the cattlemen in meeting impossible deadlines with *Voice* and always get the job finished in time. Thanks guys.

The smallest thing, like finding a particular photograph, makes a huge difference to the final result. Thank you to everyone who has assisted in any way. I am always looking for contributions for the next issue: P.O. Box 816, Bairnsdale 3875.

Debbie Squires, Editor

**Limited back copies of some of the past issues are available by post from
MCAV, P.O. Box 1840, Bairnsdale 3875**

