 *Voice of the Mountains*  
JOURNAL OF  
THE MOUNTAIN CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC.  
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# Voice of the Mountains

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

No. 36 (2013)

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**COVER IMAGES:** The front cover shows one of the entrants in the Packhorse event demonstrating the skills needed to maintain a controlled pace with a balanced pack in place. On the reverse is Tom King applying the airbrakes as his horse "Sunny" is about to plunge into the water during the Open Stockman's Race. These three photographs were all taken at the Merrijig Get-Together 2012 by James Vereker of *James Vereker Photographics*. These, plus hundreds of others, are available from [www.horsephotographics.com.au](http://www.horsephotographics.com.au). The centre image on the back is of Buff Rogers and President Charlie Lovick was taken during a break in filming of the documentary. The background image of brumbies out the back of Beloka was taken by Sharna Dyson.

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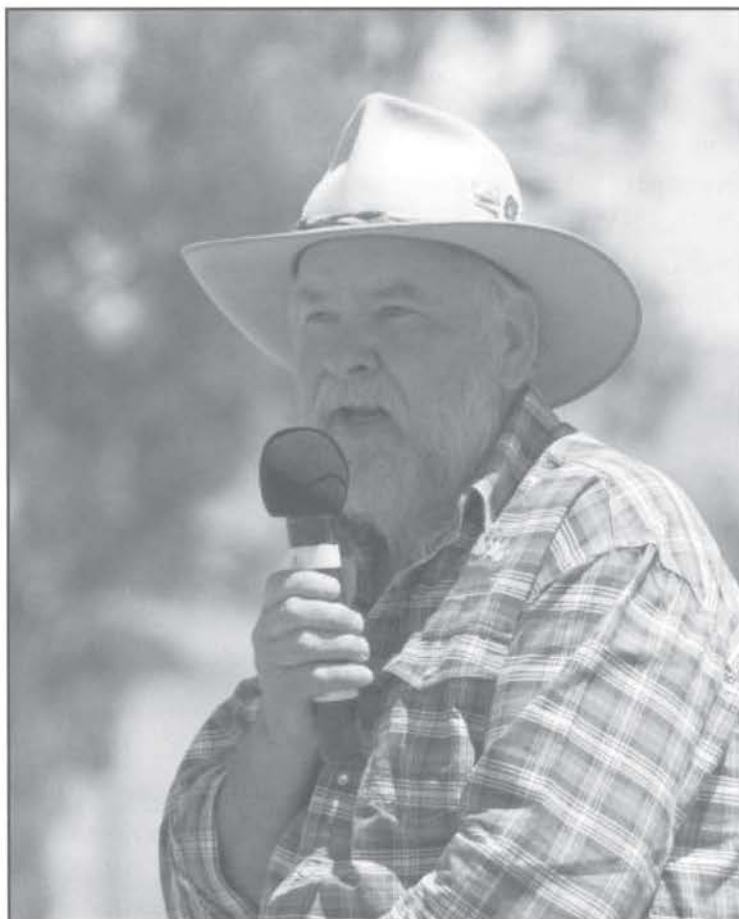
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# President's Message 2013

CHARLIE LOVICK



*MCAV President Charlie Lovick is a passionate advocate for the benefits of grazing the high plains and sustaining the cattlemen's living heritage. James Vereker photographer.*

*Well known Mountain Cattleman Charlie Lovick was elected President of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria (MCAV) at its annual meeting. Charlie Lovick succeeds Mark "Nook" Coleman who held the position for two years. He has been a strong and very public advocate for good public land management for many years and his family have grazed cattle in the High Country since the early 1900s. He received a Churchill Fellowship in 2008 to study how Public Land and National Parks are managed overseas, and how other countries are moving to recognise and protect their own living heritage. "The management of the High Country has been heading in the wrong direction for many years now and the Mountain Cattlemen's knowledge should be utilized to change direction before the land is ruined forever" Mr Lovick said after his election. "I intend to continue raising management issues, which also includes the strategic use of Alpine grazing, at both a State and Federal level on behalf of the MCAV. "I am a passionate protector and advocate of the Mountain Cattlemen's living culture and heritage which is the property of all Australians. This unique heritage is in grave*

*danger of being lost forever unless Governments move to ensure it is protected for future generations," Mr Lovick concluded at the annual general meeting.*

I am privileged to have been elected as President of the MCAV and I look forward to the challenges that position holds. I especially wish to recognize the magnificent effort of past President Mark Coleman who led the MCAV well through two extraordinary years.

Over the past few months there has been a ground swell of public and scientific support for grazing to be used as a management tool within National Parks across the country. This strategy has been the position of the MCAV for decades and coupled together with strategic fuel reduction burning is the most practical and efficient method of fuel management on our public land.

It is time to re-think management strategies of Victoria's public lands and embrace a balanced, practical and efficient method of fuel management. The MCAV is very well placed to assist Government departments to implement change because of our vast experiential knowledge, bush skills and large enthusiastic supporter base.

I personally have seen the bush revert back to impenetrable scrub and regrowth from the 2003, 2006 and 2009 fires. I am regularly told by a range of bush users including horse riders, bush walkers, fishermen, four wheel drivers and family campers of their frustration at the poor state of National Parks and "it's not the fantastic experience it used to be."

Our mountains in particular, are in imminent danger of irreversible damage from extreme fire, feral animals, weed spread and poor maintenance. For many years the Mountain Cattlemen have been incorrectly labelled as part of the problem by the Green Movement. The reality is, the Mountain Cattlemen are actually part of the answer!

The Mountain Cattlemen have a policy of returning Alpine grazing as a management tool in the High Country and this will also ensure the protection of the unique culture and heritage of our families. One hundred and eighty years of heritage, history, knowledge and tradition should not, and cannot, be ignored.

Remember the Parks are for the people. Let's manage and maintain it for all. Thank you to our many supporters for their ongoing belief in what we stand for.

Charlie Lovick  
President  
Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria  
December 2012  
president@mcaav.com.au  
0429 775 510

---

# The Alpine Grazing Trials : Bogged down in Politics and the Courts

GRAEME STONEY, Executive Officer MCAV

As recorded in last year's *Voice of the Mountains*, the Victorian State Government had lodged an application to conduct grazing trials in the Alpine National Park to scientifically and independently assess how grazing can reduce fuel loads. This followed the 2011 season where six grazing trial sites had been established by the Government. Immediately, the Federal Minister Tony Burke seized on the issue to play dirty politics. The Minister displayed a basic lack of knowledge about the issue and made some inaccurate and unforgivable remarks about the Mountain Cattlemen.

The Federal Minister required the Victorian Government to make an application to him to conduct further trials under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC). With that, the State Government's planned second year of the trials was suspended.

The time allowed by the Act for Minister Tony Burke to give his decision on the application ran out but still nothing was heard at the time of the 2012 Get-Together at Merrijig. He was invited to the Merrijig event to explain his position, but declined.

Over the previous months the Minister had kept up a derogatory and running commentary on the proposal, using the same phrases as some environmental organizations, so nothing positive was expected. He made his decision known just a few days after the Get-Together and surprise, surprise .... Victoria's application was refused. The MCAV believes it was a display of politics of the worst kind and an abuse of the spirit of the EPBC Act.

The Victorian Government announced it would appeal the decision in the Federal Court and the initial hearing was set down for March

2012. The MCAV considered if it should become involved but after taking advice, decided not to and instead let the two Governments slug it out.

The March hearing was deferred until August 3, 2012. The one day hearing was attended by representatives of the MCAV as well as the VNPA and other interested parties. The decision was reserved. It is an extraordinary feature of the court system that the decision was only handed down on Friday 4 January 2013, as we went to press for this edition of the *Voice of the Mountains*.

## The result

**The Victorian Government lost the Federal Court case on all grounds. It appears that a Federal Minister can use the EPBC act to stop any activity he doesn't personally like. If this is correct, it opens the way for the politicisation of environmental issues to suit any Governments wider agenda. Clearly there is a strong case for the overhaul of the EPBC act and especially its intent.**

As I wrote in last year's *Voice of the Mountains*, 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 is seriously 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.*

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Oh what a feeling!

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## Proposed Documentary : The Story of the Mountain Cattlemen

Early in 2012 a proposal was discussed as to the various ways to preserve the story of the Mountain Cattlemen. It was decided to investigate ways to produce a moving image documentary. Already a book on the same theme is being written.

Charlie Lovick, Bruce McCormack, Geoff Burrowes, Graeme Stoney, Mark Coleman and others were involved in the discussions.

Coupled with that it was decided to have all the available VHS tapes, which contain images of the Cattlemen's protests and other activities, transferred to a digital format and hopefully have them enhanced where possible. This will preserve some irreplaceable records of the historic fight to retain Alpine Grazing.

Two supporters have come forward with significant donations to kick start the project and the MCAV is hoping to attract more financial support as the project progresses.

In the Autumn of 2012, it was decided to travel to Buff Rogers property at Black Mountain

to interview Buff in order to start the project. Buff, Chris and Janine Cooper and Dick Rogers hosted the expedition which based itself at the Rogers property at Black Mountain. Filming was conducted at Suggan Buggan, McFarlanes and Cowombat Flats. Along with Buff, Chris Commins, Simon Turner and Charlie Lovick were also interviewed.

Geoff Burrowes directed the shoot and the project obtained some priceless footage, as Buff has now passed on.

The project was lucky to enlist the services of Jarod Pinder a professional cameraman, and sound recordist Darren Shine.

A story line for the documentary is now being developed. Anyone who possesses early VHS tapes of Cattlemen's events and protests is invited to make them available to the MCAV for copying to digital format.

Graeme Stoney is co-ordinating this project and can be contacted on [graeme@stoney.com.au](mailto:graeme@stoney.com.au) (0428 576 090) if you feel you can contribute.



*The documentary crew  
prepare to interview  
Buff Rogers and  
Charlie Lovick at  
Suggan Buggan.*



# A letter to Fitzroy North

---

You can tell our town's tradition by the silos standing tall.  
Rupanyup's a wheat town, but now there ain't no wheat at all.  
And what's a bloke to do all day when there ain't no crop to cut,  
when drought sits like an overdraft and your only pub is shut?

The shutting of our only pub was like the tolling of a bell,  
the heart's been ripped out of our town, and most of the liver as well.  
We just keep on keeping on because we know no other way,  
instead of bagging grain we're baling sorry looking hay.

Then glad news was spread about, more blessed than the rain,  
two new women reopened our pub, we could socialise again!  
One girl was from the city and she's as pretty as a peach,  
she charmed the cockies from the field and grace and manners teach.

Her mate was strong and worked back-stage, she once moved props for thespians,  
and then we got the bombshell, our blokey pub was run by lesbians!  
We were rocked down to our holeproofs by the scandal about town,  
you'd got to admit for gossip it was hard to put it down,

Still we kept on keeping on because our pub is still our pub,  
and to tell the honest truth they served some pretty decent grub.  
their pride was chicken parma, garlic prawns, it had the lot,  
which Bill ordered as cholesterol with more cholesterol on top.

My missus liked the pretty barmaid, she knew I didn't have a chance,  
we laughed as blokes from out of town got led a merry dance.  
Through hard work and perseverance, which we all related to,  
they sort of won a place with us, a place that's held by very few.

We got to meet their funny friends who came up from the smoke,  
we shared a different language but we could always share a joke.  
Even the arch conservative, a battered old farmer called Hogan,  
was proud to say his new best friend was a pierced nosed, cropped haired bogan.

I guess we knew our look on life was staid and kind of narrow,  
we could do with more broadacre view instead of same old rut and harrow.  
That dismal drought was broken by a three-foot flood of rain,  
and all our bales of crappy hay went floating down the drain.

They say that bad things come in threes and we were out of luck,  
to follow drought and flooding rain our bloomin' pub went shut!  
For a business run on partnership is only as strong as the pair,  
our barmaid fell for a city chick with a BMW and purple hair.

So now we're just a poor wheat town bereft of charm and culture,  
Bill said the food at the footy club would scarce attract a vulture.  
So when you read this letter put our sign on walls and stairs,  
in trendy North Fitzroy where girls we want all sit in pairs.

It says "Wanted, two good lesbians, we won't take anything but,  
to bring taste and life and culture back to our pub at Rupanyup!"

*Laurie Webb*



*The flooded streets of Rupanyup*

---

## Among the Cattlemen and the Everlasting Hills

Sol! Sol! Sol! The call echoes down the valleys and far into the hilltops. And the cattle come crashing down through the tangled undergrowth in response to the familiar cry.

It is the call of the cattle man distributing salt, and the cattle have learnt to know it. The beasts have also learnt to relish the salt which supplies to them a natural craving not found in the pastures.

It serves, too, as an introduction between the young cattle and the human form and movements, and a bridge between the wild shyness of the bush born animal and the settlements. The salt is placed in troughs made from hewn out logs and covered from the rain, and they may be seen in the cattle runs of the mountain areas of East Gippsland, and it is in this country that our observations are made.

Contrast the handling of cattle bred on the cattle runs of Queensland, where it is necessary to use tamed beasts as decoys to lure them from the scrub to the open country, where they are surrounded by stockmen, and skilfully driven to the station yards. The handling they receive is of necessity much rougher than those of Gippsland.

It was our recent privilege to join a small party that attended cattle sales held by A. Macarthur and Co., at Benambra and Omeo, with Cr S. H. Riggall as "guide, philosopher and friend," than whom it could not be possible to have a better. From his youth he has been intimate with the district, and knows the cattle business equally as well as the cattlemen know him. Everywhere residents of that wonderful and interesting colony are glad to greet him and extend favours to him and his friends. His brother, the late Mr Richard Riggall, was immensely popular there when he held Cobungra Station, by reason of his good citizenship, his unbounded hospitality and his far-famed humour.

"I've a couple of weak poddies and their mother I want you to give a couple of day's rest to, on good grass," he once requested a hotelkeeper at Ensay. "Certainly, Mr Riggall," agreed the boniface, "there is a very good paddock just across the road. I'll help you put them in." The two weak poddies and their mother were two huge Hereford bullocks and a cow that were returning from a district show where they had gained prizes in the fat stock sections!

He practised good and clean humor of this kind for many years, and now 'that he is gone (poor chap died from cancer), he leaves behind him a name that will be revered for generations. No better introduction into the district could one have than through a Riggall, and especially by one who is a large and consistent buyer of their productions.

In such company, with Mr Will Shaw, of Tinamba (who has also established a reputation as a buyer in these parts for quality cattle) at the wheel of a powerful English car, we made our maiden trip into the mountain vastness in comfortable conditions and in beautiful weather.

Beyond Bruthen the road commences to skirt the hills, which as we proceed, rear up as mountains. And on and up we went into the heart and everlasting beauty of the ranges, riding upon the ledge that constitutes the road, with precipitous falls to the watercourse far below. The grade is splendid and easily negotiated, and the surface excellent—all the work of the Country Roads Board. It is difficult to realise that we are changing our altitude to thousands of feet. What a glorious approach to the far-famed City of the Alps. Stone for the roadway is obtained by merely cutting into the hillside, although at many places the cutting has only been accomplished by blasting, and already is not the bed of the road of rock.



*The men who bring the cattle in during a sale day in Omeo, July 1920.  
Frank Johnson photograph: East Gippsland Historical Society Inc. collection.*

We run along the Tambo River for miles looking down upon its bed of outcropped rock. For many and many a mile the stream rambles along through and over these rocks, at present but a modest flow of inconsiderable depth, but with confines extending widely to cope with the enormous rush of water that must be carried at seasons of heavy rainfall and melted snow. Think of the huge catchment and precipitate fall of rain water to the natural drainage route.

The mountains themselves do not attract so far, as production of anything but inferior timber and scrub. Here and there is a fertile flat of limited dimensions, while along the river miles of blackberry bushes have taken charge. It is recalled that pretty well all the pests of Australia were originally imported, and we wonder where this curse started. The prickly pear in Queensland, the blackberry of Victoria, the rabbit, the fox, the sparrow - all imported - and one can do little more than regret it.

Before passing Swift's Creek where evidence of good land is in the fact that the centre supports a butter factory, our first important stop is at Little River or better known as Ensay.

Through the good graces of Mr Arthur Newcomen, brother of Mr Hubert Newcomen, well known in the pastoral industry, we were privileged to inspect some of the surrounding country. At once it is apparent that the season is a good one. An abundance of grass is growing, indicating the quality of the soil in the hills for here we have rested from the mountain peaks for a while-and no reason is asked as to how or why a soldier settlement area was made available here. Mr Newcomen conveyed us in one of those boundary riding, mustering Fords; up the slopes and down again, over crossings and under trees it twisted and contorted in a manner that deposed that even remote as this from commercial centres time was valuable.



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But the reward was two-fold, for we were given a demonstration of the working of his wonderful dog, Darkie, the winner of several prizes for mustering. Darkie was sent on to a neighbouring hill almost beyond earshot of his master's shrill whistle. By the whistle his attention was drawn, and by signs he first brought up the sheep, and then the cattle, both of which were grazing in the same wide area. Is it any wonder that the car is used when intelligent animals as this are available? But there are few Darkies.

We must push on, however, for the cattle sale at Benambra will not await long our convenience. We have left the Tambo and now follow the course to Swift's Creek. Soon we break upon what, by comparison, may be called extensive river flats. Growing lucerne, maize, pumpkins and tobacco testify to the fertility of the soil, and several reserve stacks of oaten hay are to be seen. On the river bank are old time and deserted gold dredges. Without delay we pass on and again commence an ascent as gradual as it has been upon perfect roads. We pass through mountains and one panorama after another unfolds itself to our view, while against the mountainous background hangs a black and a blue opal curtain, the capture of which upon canvas made the artist Arthur Streeton famous for his Australian bush scenes.

With Benamba as our destination, we leave Swift's Creek far behind and skirting Omeo we run along the Livingstone, and again into more open country, which brings to us a further understanding of the beautiful mountain bred bullocks we find being "topped" on the Newry and Tinamba flats. All the cattlemen of the district are gathered for this sale, which is an event of some consequence. The firm whose sale it is, is well staffed. James Webster is there, also Archie Macarthur, Jr., Hubert Newcomen, Bryan Campbell, D. Potter and others, with buyers from both sides of the ranges.

Vendors are anxious as to prices. They have held the cattle for one, two, three, perhaps four years for this day of disposal. Buyers are likewise

intent upon their missions. Social amenities are briefly gone through until the auctioneer with his "Now, Gentlemen," calls everyone to attention.

He extols the quality of the cattle presented for sale. He would do this under any circumstances, but here he is justified, and cannot overdo it. What a relief to his conscience, or what remains of it after years of concentration in that vocation. What a pleasure to speak what he really thinks, and please all parties. There is a splendid assortment in the yarding - calves, yearlings, cows and grown bullocks, and all in excellent condition. All purebred Herefords, or practically so; white-faced, straight horned, curly haired, big boned, healthy looking beasts, and nearly a thousand of them.

The first pen of three-year-olds is submitted. "Eight pounds" suggests the auctioneer, but there is no response. "Well, seven-fifteen?" There is still silence. "Give me an offer then? Thank you. Six-ten it is," and the bidding runs on to seven pounds twelve shillings, the purchasers being Brownlow Bros., of Bairnsdale.

The second pen of bigger bullocks is knocked down to Messrs S. H. Riggall and W. Shaw, of Tinamba, neighbours who are buying in conjunction, at seven pounds nineteen shillings. They are, by comparison, cheaper than the first pen, after which the market price increases. The early buyers have done well.

Cows with calves at foot sell to ten guineas. A beautiful and uniform line of yearlings or barely yearlings realise four pounds. Yearlings at four pounds, and then three to three-and-a-half-year-old brothers at seven pounds nineteen shillings or better. What is the reason that the young stock should bring so much higher prices in comparison to the older? It is the case of supply and demand; demand for "filling" for well grassed holdings following upon the unprolific season of one to two years ago.

The smaller cattle have been bred in the timbered country of the mountain slopes, where

they have survived the weather and the dingoes. It reminds one of the ancient Spartan custom of exposing the very young children on the mountains to ensure a hardy race. The immense horns of the Herefords have often been commented upon, but here the mother cow finds them of service in defending her off-spring from the dingo.

As they age the cattle are brought to the open country, but as fat stock markets are so distant, the practice of selling them to lowland fatteners is more practicable. From here it would take well over a week to drive cattle by the accepted route to the rail head, and sustenance on the journey is not abundant.

The purchase of "our party" would join those obtained on a previous occasion, and will travel to the Macalister flats by a favored route, through Dargo, privileged through the relationship of one of the buyers. In addition, Mr Riggall knows very nook and corner, flat and crossing in these mountains, and is able to thoroughly instruct the drovers.

Droving the cattle across is no mean undertaking. A hundred percent delivery is looked for, which means that at the outset all the cattle must be in good health, and sound of foot. In the long daily stretches that must be of necessity undertaken, it is unprofitable to have to waylay even one bullock because he cannot keep pace with his mates, as it means to lose him for ever.

At the sale the ladies of the district provide afternoon tea, the proceeds of which support the Bush Nursing Centre. It is enjoyed by those who come a long journey, and the ladies enjoy the outing, and the appreciation of their excellent home made cakes.

We had the pleasure of meeting the young lady at Ensay appointed by that body. The worthiness of the stitution is borne out by the fact that she is kept busy. Sister Owen would be popular under any conditions, however, and, it is stated, is to remain thereabouts, unofficially, shortly under altered circumstances.

That night we made back to Omeo where we stayed at the Golden Age Hotel, a large three-storied hotel built we were informed, in the "boom period," and was the cause of one or two bankruptcies. Of the latter, however, we have only heresay to depend upon. It is a prettily situated town along the Livingstone River and at the very foot of a high mountain which, on the following morning, towered above the floating cloud. Omeo, we would say, is well drained and a health-giving centre. It is a popular tourist rendezvous, and one that encourages a return visit. It possesses some splendid buildings, and is nicely laid out. We cannot dwell upon the attractions of the town, however, in this narrative.

.....

On the morning of the Omeo cattle sale, through the courtesy of Mr James Webster, we were privileged to be taken about ten miles out to the Hinnomunjie Station to view the land there. Mr Webster owned this station for some years, having bought it from Mr J. Scott to whom he resold it not very long ago. The station has a beautiful stream, the Mitta Mitta River, running through it and also the Livingstone. The two join near the homestead in fact. About four hundred acres of the flats along the river are magnificent, and comparable only to the Newry flats in our district, and which we are not prepared to say are any better in quality. The grass area was luxuriant, while the lucerne subdivisions are worthy of any lucerne growing country. The one apparent drawback to living in such a locality is its loneliness, but this has been largely overcome by the installation of wireless sets.

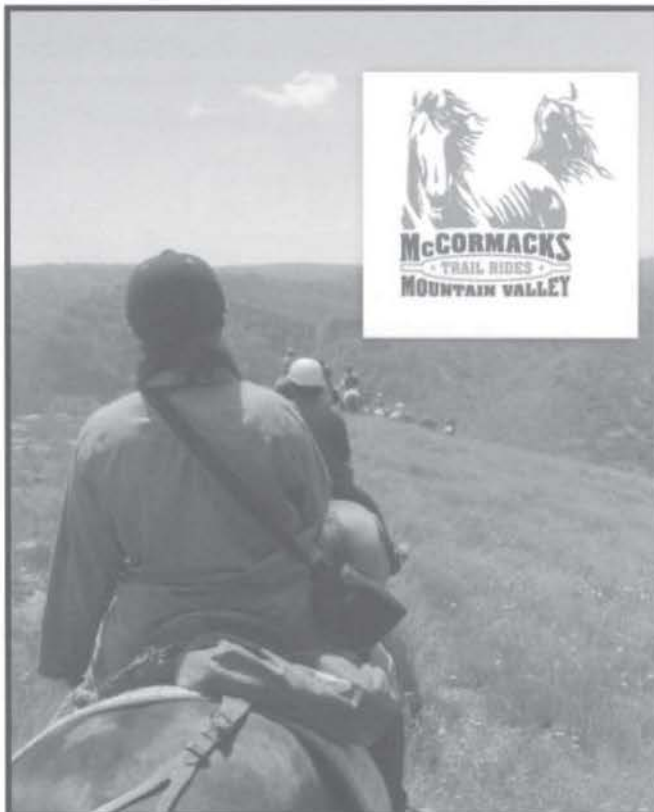
On the journey up the valleys one is deeply impressed by the McMillan Cairns, with their inscriptions that Angus McMillan passed that way into Central Gippsland in September, 1839. One has to journey into those mountains to realise what a wonderful man he was to force his way through the then almost impenetrable mountains and rough valleys. The courage of the man is not easily realised at this distance of space or

time. But there also arises the thought that it is not so very long ago that McMillan made his excursion here. There yet is alive in Sale a man who was a boy when the great man came this way - Mr Charles Napper, though not in Australia then. About nineteen miles from Omeo in a place most difficult to access and egress, is a Mr MacNamara, who was likewise born shortly before that time. Mr MacNamara is one of those wonderfully hardy pioneers of the mountains, who at the age of 92 years mounts his horse and rides into Omeo frequently. His son relates that the eyesight of the old man is not as good as it was. Mr John Gibson related that the Benambra district contained settlers when McMillan entered it from New South Wales notably Messrs Macfarlane, Prendergast and Hyland. Count Strezlecki also came down this track some time after McMillan and it was he that called this part of the State Gippsland, after Governor Gipps.

Wherever civilisation has penetrated a country, and occupied it, the immediate and lasting trouble has been to pacify the blacks in a manner to live quietly amongst them. The Zulus of Africa, the Maoris of New Zealand, Red Indians in America all resisted colonising, but there is only limited evidence of resistance of the Omeo blacks or Gippsland blacks to the white man's penetration. By now all traces of black inhabitants have disappeared from the mountains and little is heard of them even in tradition.

The Province was peacefully settled by true and deserving Australians, either by birth or adoption, who dwell in that contented and harmonious condition, giving ample scope to that hospitality which is so characteristic of our outback.




*Reprinted from the Gippsland Times  
7 April 1932.*



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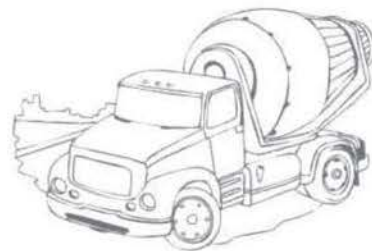


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# Why can't you listen?

---

You think you know the high country well enough to be its spokesman.  
You've read the reports of educated scientific folk.  
You went up to the mountains for an afternoon one summer  
when the axle on your 'Toorak Tractor' broke.  
So you had to camp there for the night until you were rescued  
next day by passing horsemen who were mustering their stock.  
It was then you saw the cattle that were grazing on the high plains,  
you thought to yourself, "This land abuse must stop".

So you went back to the city and you started telling stories  
about bandit stockmen ruining the mountains with their cows.  
You agitated with your band of inner city greenies  
who didn't know alpine grazing had existed until now.  
Is this the way to thank the men who saved you from your troubles?  
They didn't call you stupid when you went up unprepared,  
they made you feel welcome in their huts, and on their leases  
you'd still be there if those men hadn't cared.

((chorus))        *So... why can't you listen to the cattlemen of the mountains?  
They could teach you more about the Alps than you could hope to know.  
They may not have a PhD from Monash or La Trobe,  
they've learnt what they know doing hard yards on the road,  
with a saddle, swag and open sky, no cosy warm abode  
and a faithful horse to help them through the snow.*

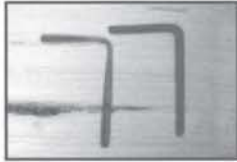
They were out there fighting fires that resulted from your actions  
of locking up the land and keeping everyone outside.  
They donned their yellow overalls, swapped saddles for a knapsack  
and bravely fought the holocaust; were you at their side?  
Were you choked by the smoke? Did you feel the searing heat?  
Do you know the mountains really burnt, it wasn't just on TV?  
Have you been there since the fires and seen forests of dead snow gums?  
Like Agent Orange hit the place; it's very sad to see.

Before the white man came the Koori People worked the mountains  
without legislation, bureaucrats or political debates.  
When the cattlemen came, they listened, and did what the Koori taught them  
and carried on the practices of thousands of decades.  
They burnt off in the Autumn when the grazing season finished  
and left the mountains safer when the summer came again  
then you came with little knowledge, and full of rhetoric theories,  
and all you've done is caused the mountains pain. (chorus x 2)

*Lyrics and music © Howard James  
Winner of the Don Kneebone Mountain Heritage Award 2012.*

---

# The Brands on the Burgoyne Bar 2013



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**David Treasure (ribs)**  
Doug Treasure (hind leg)



**Mark "Nook" Coleman**



**Ryder**



**Guy Family**  
Wonnangatta



**Peter Long family**



**Lennie Phelan**



**Christa Treasure**



**Diana Hurley**



**Brian Higgins**

*Don and Valda Duncan have again put in many, many hours of work to produce the bar boards again this year with assistance from Brian Higgins.*

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## SALTING: A Lifelong Practice of the Cattlemen

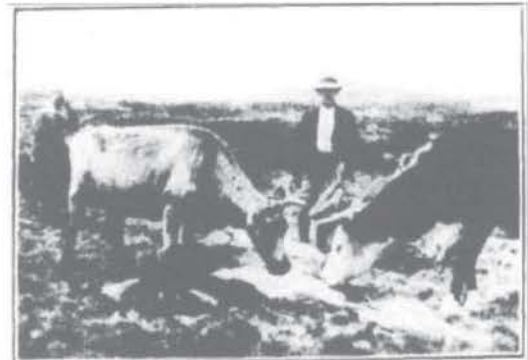


CATTLE PUPPED IN THE MOUNTAINS

On the runs in the main Divide the salting of cattle, which forms the subject of our illustration, is a frequent and necessary duty, as it is a peculiarity of the ranges that the earth contains little or no saline matter. To keep cattle in good condition, therefore, as even the tyro knows, they must have a sufficient quantity of salt, without which they become subject to certain diseases, similar to fluke in sheep &c. They also become thin, and there is a difficulty in getting them into good condition even on the best of feed. Very often a beast will take to eating dust, and show symptoms of a depraved appetite, all of which arise from this cause. The usual way of supplying the salt is either to cut a deep notch into a standing tree and then put in the salt, which is kept in its place by a couple of sticks morticed into the tree. Coming on one of these salt licks in the bush, one is at a loss at first to make out what they are. All that can be seen is three or four trees with holes cut in them worn smooth as can be, while the ground shows signs of being trampled by many feet. Your horse, if he is brought up in the district, soon gives a cue by going up to see if he can get a taste of the much-coveted salt. Another plan is to have station troughs cut in logs round either the head or the out station. These are filled with salt, and the cattle eat out of them.

The advantage of conducting the operation at the home station is that after once getting the salt the cattle will come back regularly when they want it, and there is not much trouble in mustering. As a rule salt is given about every three weeks or thereabouts, but it can be easily seen when they want it by the mud on their muzzles, caused by their trying to make up for the deficiency by eating earth.

*from the Illustrated Australian News 9 February 1889, page 26*



Above is another illustration, from the *Argus*, that in 1932 showed Mr George Fitzgerald of Glen Wills "salting" his cattle on Bogong High Plains, 5000ft above sea level.

# A Bit on Conservation

---

We're camping high up on the Bluff, it's Clem's idea of paradise,  
for no-one's here to interfere with foolish words or false advise.  
The glowing fire bathes the bush in gentle flickering light,  
caressing twisted snow gums, they're our guardians of the night.  
It is the hour before the dawn the reign of dark is almost through,  
Old Clem has put the kettle on to make our early morning brew.

And as he pours the billy tea he's cursing greenies near and far.  
"This conservation sounds all right but, ah those greenies go too far".  
"They wanna' close it down you know those flamin' greenies from 'The Smoke',  
yeah close it off for everyone it has to be some kind of joke".  
"I really don't know where I stand I s'pose I've never thought it through,  
you've got those ratbag greenies but there's other ratbags too".  
"I'd like to see it opened up so everyone could have a look,  
but then there'd always be the fool who'd leave the whole place lookin' crook".

And yes some governments are saying it's the bush they care about,  
and then proclaim to one and all we need to kick the cattle out.  
"While hoons that tear around the bush make muddy tracks among the trees,  
there's endless miles of them elsewhere to set their craving hearts at ease".  
"But if the bush was in their hearts they'd feel the urge to heed her call,  
to witness all that she holds dear and they'd not mind the walk at all."

\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*

The dawn is drawing closer now the sky is slowly turning grey,  
out in the east it's almost white as if to show the sun the way.  
The bush is bursting into life to show the dawn is on the brink,  
and every mountain, every tree has turned a fancy shade of pink.  
While down along the valley lies a silent gown of silken mist,  
it's swirling o'er the valley floor in gentle curls it turns and twists.

Then golden glows the highest peaks amid the first rays of the sun,  
they burst above the mountain range and break of day and bush are one.  
Now early sun and morning dew on shimmering gum leaves play.  
Walk a mile to witness this? Ah, it's a minor price to pay.

*Col Milligan*

*This was Col's award winning effort for the  
Bill Hicks Bush Minstrel Award 2012.*

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## Mustering Cattle on the Bogong High Plain

Tawonga, situated at the foot of Mt Bogong, 6508 feet, the highest mountain in Victoria, was the scene of much activity on Tuesday morning the 6th April, the commencement of the trip to Bogong High Plains to muster the cattle. Mr and Mrs S. Ryder, of Tawonga, who had previously made all preparations for the trip were accompanied by Misses B. and S. Bellnir and R. Mitchell (Benalla). The cattlemen met at the Bogong Hotel all bustle and excitement. At last we were ready and away we went, most of the riders wearing spurs and carrying stockwhips. The packhorses were heavily laden and the dogs, too, were eager to be off.

Leaving Tawonga we crossed the Kiewa and soon began to climb steep spurs. We had lunch at the Springs. Still climbing we reached Bogong Jack's hut, where Hollands were mustering their cattle. Then began the steep ascent to Mt Fainter, 6000 feet - wonderful views of Mt Bogong, Mt Feathertop and Mt McKay. Once over Mt Fainter we soon reached Tawonga Hut on Fainter Creek, where we left the horses and walked to our camp. We quickly made a fire and boiled the billy. After eating hot curry and plum pudding we talked and laughed around the fire.







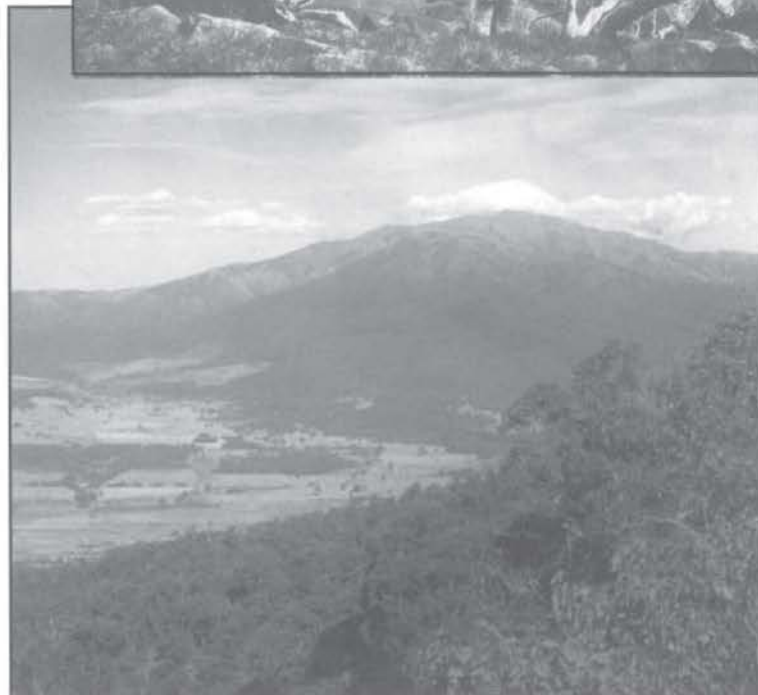
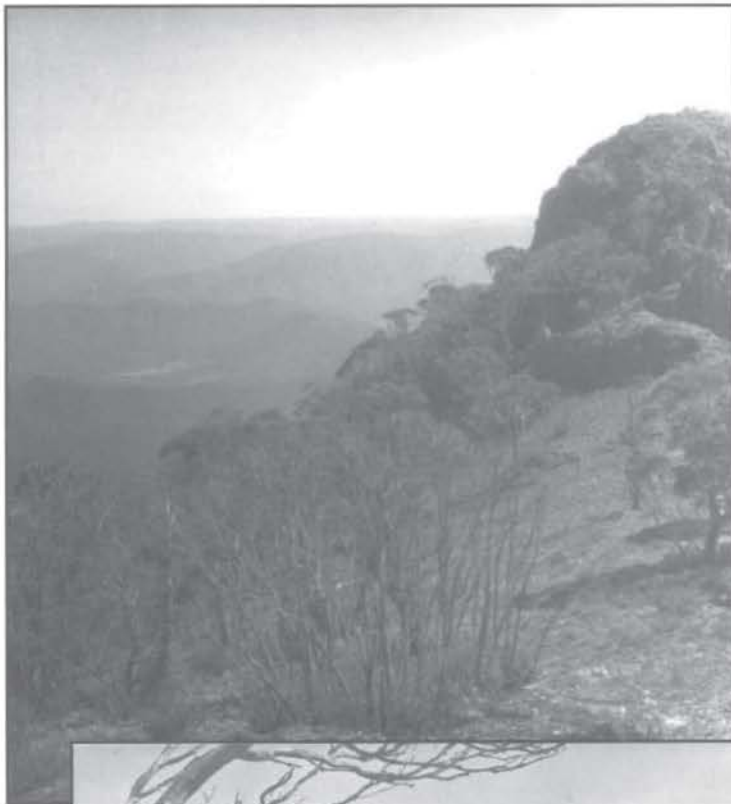
Wednesday! Raining! How disappointed we were. This was to have been the commencement of the great muster. Still raining at mid-day we rode 6 miles and stayed the night at Cope Hut, 1<sup>1/2</sup> miles from Mt Cope, 6027 feet. This hut is well equipped with bunks, cooking and eating utensils, and all conveniences for the welfare of the traveller.

Thursday! Bogong High Plains the height of which is from 5300 feet to 5900 feet is an area of lovely undulating country. The exhilaration enjoyed at such a high level is most remarkable. On the morning of the mustering when the sun shone through the dense clouds never will I forget the magnificent and fascinating panorama which stretched for miles around us. The variety of colour on the distant mountains covered with snow drifts, the rich green of the valleys winding through the plain, the white trunks of snow gums with glorious shades of red, yellow, russet and gold all along their gnarled and twisted branches, and hundreds of well-conditioned Hereford cattle coming from all directions down the slopes of the ranges into Pretty

Valley was wonderful. Cattlemen were there from Tawonga, Omeo, Bright, Freeburgh and Porepunkah. Now in earnest the hard work began. Whips cracked and the dogs always knew what was expected of them. While some drovers kept the cattle in a ring, several cut out the cattle from other districts leaving only Tawonga cattle.

We of course helped or thought we did. After the cutting out was finished the Tawonga men drove their cattle up the steep slopes to the yards situated on the side of a hill amidst snow gums near the Tawonga Hut, where they were all locked up for the night. How the poor brutes bellowed, never ceasing throughout the whole night - cows looking mainly for their calves.

Friday - Ryder Bros. (3) and P. Dunne's cattle were then drafted from Cooper Bros and Higginson Bros into a fenced enclosure. The others grazed their cattle on the plains for the rest of the afternoon when they were again locked up ready for an early start next morning. In the afternoon we rode to look



for horses, passing around Mt Jim, 5900 feet, the source of the Bundarra River. We saw trout in the river and found some petrified wood.

Saturday - The rest of the party rode to see the cattle being pushed over Mt Fainter while I went with S. and W. Ryder to bring some of their cattle which had been left by the Bright cattlement at Dibbin's hut. For miles we had Mt Feathertop, 6306 feet, on our left, grand and stately. We had a look at the new hut of Weston's and Briggs', also the new hut of Blair's in the Kiewa Valley. We then proceeded along Dungey's track passing over the low divide at the heads of the Kiewa and Cobungra Rivers - Kiewa on the left and Cobungra on the right at Dibbin's Hut.

Sunday - We left Twaonga Hut in heavy rain taking the pack horses as far as Bogong Jack's. There was terrific wind and rain all the way till within a few miles of Tawonga. We met and passed the cattle which had left the previous day and crossed the Kiewa rising rapidly. We reached the Bogong Hotel about 4 pm, fed the pony and left for Bright, 20 miles, going through Tawonga Gap noted for its scenic beauty. Although I have ridden over most of the mountains this was the most wonderful and interesting trip of all. When we read in the papers of the mustering of cattle, how many realise the arduous toll and hardships of the cattlemen who yearly make the journey to and from the High Plain. Seeing pictures of the American cowboys, it is hard to believe they could be better riders than these men who muster cattle on the Bogong High Plains.

Reprinted from *The North Eastern Ensign*  
(Benalla, Vic: 1872-1938) Friday 29 April  
1932, page 2

# The Last Muster

---

The stockman rode through the tight gum trees, his hat pulled to his brow,  
his sturdy stockhorse ran through the scrub as he chased the old stray cow.  
That battered felt akubra hid the pain in his brown eyes,  
for this would be the last muster the stockman would ever ride.

He wheeled the chestnut to one side, and stopped the cow in its tracks,  
then quietly pointed it towards the mob, "c'mon mate, time to go back."  
As the beast quickly re-joined the herd they came onto a plain,  
and the sky suddenly opened above them, and downward poured the rain.

The stockman gazed up to the black clouds, felt the rain run down his face,  
it took him back to his childhood, in a not so distant place.

"Daddy, daddy, can I come too?" the little boy asked with glee,  
his father looked to his wife, who nodded, "Sure son, but you'll have to ride with me."  
"Thankyou daddy, I love you so much," the young lad squealed with delight,  
"That's okay fella, but now off to bed, we'll get cracking before first light."

They woke the next morning to a frost on the ground, a decided chill in the air,  
"You ready buddy?" his dad asked him, and threw a hat on his sandy blonde hair.  
The boy held out his hand to his father, who grasped it tightly in his own,  
uniting generations of cattlemen, another seed had been sown.

His father jumped up on his horse, and the boy sat on the front of the saddle,  
all the stockmen cheered and tipped their hats, then began to push the cattle.  
They rode off up that worn cattle pad that'd been used for over a hundred years,  
the boy looked up to the sky now pouring with rain, and it fell down his cheeks like tears.

The stockman shook his head and breathed in, smelling the sweet Autumn air,  
he ran his hand 'cross his chestnut's neck and stroked its sweaty hair.

The stars had come and started to play as they pulled up for the night,  
the young boy said, "Can I keep watch?" but his dad said, "No, you sleep tight."  
Well he puffed out his chest, "I'll stay up an' keep watch, I don't need a nap!"  
But a few hours later there he was, asleep on his father's lap.

The stockman lay back against a tree and watched the cattle graze,  
he closed his eyes and fell asleep, and dreamt of his childhood days.  
A single teardrop slipped from his eye and fell onto the bed,  
his now strong hands were gently, softly stroking his father's head.  
"Son," his father croaked to him, "you've grown into a man,  
seems like only yesterday you were clinging to my hand.

I just wanted to say no bloke could be luckier than to have a son like you,  
you're a real man substance, of which there are very few.  
Now it's time for me to go, I think I've done my dash,  
be strong and true and loyal; and don't do anything rash."

The stockman woke with tears in his eyes and stared up to the sky,  
"Oh dad," he cried as he fell to his knees, "why did you have to die?"  
His words echoed around the open plain as he held his heavy heart,  
"The government have broken us, they've ripped us all apart.

Soon the high plains will be a weedy mess, and fire will strike hotter than ever,  
'tis a bureaucratic bungle what's been done to us, I'll never trust them, never!"  
He stood from the grass, grabbed his things, and tied them in a cluster,  
then he rode away to the rising sun and whispered, "Goodbye dad, this is the last muster."

*Kate Crombie*



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## Across the mountains with girl cattle drovers

This article originally appeared in *Herald-Sun*, October 1948 by journalist Lynette Walker



Five girls aged between 18-23, from the little north Gippsland township of Dargo and its environs last week drove 600 head of cattle north from there to the Dargo High Plains for summer grazing.

From left (above) they are Freda Treasure, of Castleburn, 16 miles south of Dargo, oldest in years and droving experience and the leader of the party; Dawn Phelan, Francie Traill, Marj. Scott and Merle Scott. Travelling with the girls on horseback through rugged timber country for portion of their three-day journey proved an interesting experience.

To Freda, who for many years has helped her father, Harry Treasure, and her brothers – Don, Jim and Jack – with droving and mustering around these parts, the only novelty about the trip was the responsibility. She shouldered it as you would expect of a tallish, strong-limbed lass with seemingly boundless energy and drive whom, so they tell you in Dargo, her father describes as “the best man he has.”

Two of the others had also been along the route with cattle before, assisting the men, but this was the first time a group of girls had tackled the job on their own.

The mob of Herefords was brought up from Castleburn on the first day by Freda. She camped with them in Dargo that night, joining the rest of the party for a dawn breakfast before moving off on the next stage of the journey to Treasure’s Station, 30 miles away on the southern fringe of the High Plains. From this headquarters, two days later, the cattle were dispersed in small mobs on the Plains with those brought in by Jack Treasure from Harrierville and St Bernard.

By six o’clock on a hot, windy dusty morning, the party was on the road out of Dargo, headed for Mt Ewan, 15 miles away. Soon after leaving the township, the track began a long, steep ascent of timbered spurs to the top of the ridge.

The going was slow, particularly in the cuttings, through which each girl took a small mob.



*Hereford cattle moving along a wooded valley after leaving Dargo on the second stage of the drive to the hills. The cattle moved at the rate of one mile an hour and the girls had to be up at 4.00am to cover the daily distance. East Gippsland Historical Society Inc. collection.*



*The party preparing to leave the Mt Ewan but on the last stage of their journey to the High Plains.  
East Gippsland Historical Society Inc. collection.*

It was hot, too, and the bottles of tea carried in saddle bags along with personal gear for the trip, were worth their weight in gold during the day.

For the most part Freda was up in front with Bluey the packhorse and her two border collies, Ponty and Tab, cracking her stockwhip and giving her stockwhip and giving shrill whistles to the dogs. As intervals she rode back to check the going or cantered off into the scrub – as every time one did from time to time – rounding the straying cows and yearlings with loud calls of “Ho! Ho!”

### **Overnight camp on the trail**

After nearly 12 hours in the saddle no one was sorry to see the yard at Mt Ewan and the cattle safely inside for the night. The log hut built by Mr Treasure in a clearing a few hundred yard away was also a welcome sight, and the first thought and action were for boiling the billy.

But there was still work to be done – horses to be watered, fed and corralled and dogs to be fed – before the evening meal, by which time the stars were well out. Water from a nearby spring was cold and crystal clear – refreshing for both washing and drinking.

Fireside chatter that night revealed much about the girls themselves. Freda, unexpectedly shy on such occasion, was born to a life of horses

and cattle, and has been away from them only during four years at boarding school in Melbourne after education by correspondence until she was 13. She is of the third generation of cattle owners in the district. Her grandfather built the original homestead up near the High Plains more than 70 years ago.

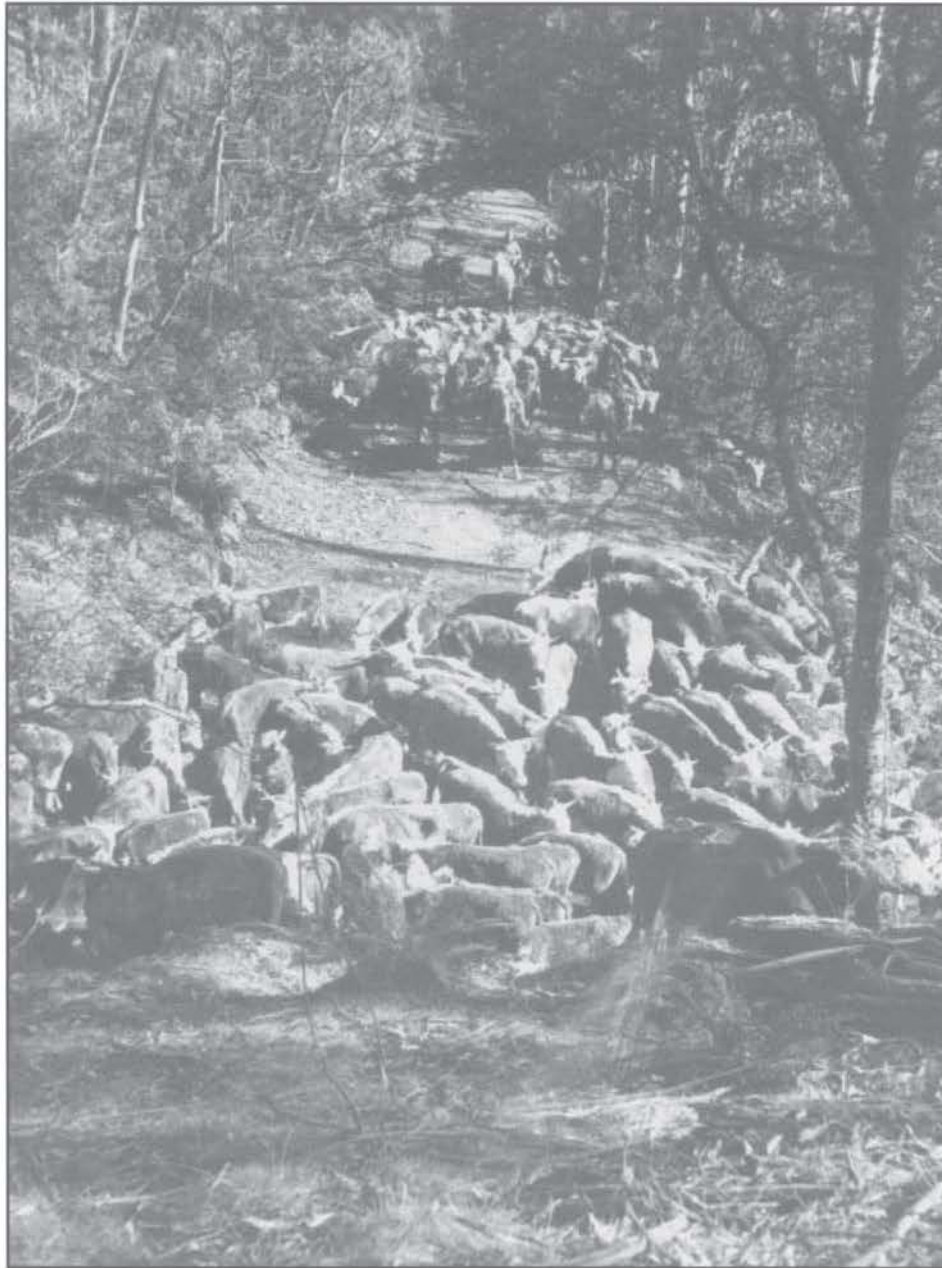
Freda was first put on a horse alone when she was four years old and about the same time was given her first poddy calf. Now she is branding 100 cattle of her own a year.

As well as riding and shooting her other outdoor love is skiing, and she goes every year to Hotham or the Bogong High Plains.

Her accomplishments extend to the domestic sphere, too. She knits, sews and cooks, and intends to join the Dargo branch of the Country Women’s Association which was formed only in August. Marj Scott is its treasurer, and her cousin Merle, and Francie Trail, another cousin, are all members. These three live right in Dargo.

Dawn Phelan’s home is about nine miles out of the town along the Dargo river, where her father has a walnut farm.

They live a fairly quiet life in Dargo, where the population is only a little over 100. But there are occasional big events like the ball that hand



*A halt for water on the way for the second night stop at Mt Ewan. The girls had to hold back part of the herd while other cattle were drinking to prevent panic at the water. At night the cattle had to be yarded to keep them from wandering off into the heavily timbered country which lines the trail to the Plains. East Gippsland Historical Society Inc. collection.*

been held in the local hall the previous Saturday, and the girls were still talking about it in the hut as preparations were being made for “turning in.”

Freda was up at crack o’ dawn next morning and had a good fire going before she wakened the party as the first morning light came through the timber tops. Horses were again the first to be fed, and then the chops and eggs were sizzling and the billy a-boil.

Breakfast over, mattresses and blankets were put away, the hut was cleared up, gear and

provisions were packed and loaded on Bluey (whose loose shoes received emergency treatment from Freda, using a rock as a hammer), and cattle were rounded out of the yard with Freda “counting heads” at the sliprails.

This day’s trip, through timbered country again, offered less of a climb than the previous day, so a start between 9 and 9.30 left plenty of time for the 15 miles to the homestead and achievement of the major portion of a man-sized job that originated for four of the girls as an alternative to a long-planned riding holiday.



They must have been a brave and hardy lot, the early women of the High Plains. With their families they ventured into the bush, never complaining about the loneliness or the hardship, accepting it as it came. In many instances raising their family in tents structures until more solid buildings were erected. For some of these women, like Susan Burgoyne, their only memorials are piles of chimney stones and gnarled fruit trees. A clearing may have once held a family home which brought the bush alive with the sound of laughter and children's voices. In too many cases even their names have been forgotten, for while a man's name may live on in our lore the women who made the bush houses homes, in every sense of the word, are allowed to slip away from us through time.

Some have been remembered. One of the earliest was Mrs Denny Connolly, who was born Margaret Scott. She was the daughter of John Scott, an early settler at Delvine near Bairnsdale, and arrived with her family in the 1840s after an epic wagon trek from the Monaro. She married Denny Connolly at Cooma in 1851, and they lived at Lindenow before moving to Dargo a few years later. There they a hotel providing supplies for the miners on the Upper Dargo diggings. Their children were to include another Denny Connolly, who is still remembered today as a bushman, and Catherine who married Alexander Guy. After a long life around Dargo, Denny and Margaret Connolly retired to Lindenow, where Margaret died in 1922 aged 90 years.

One of her contemporaries at Dargo was Mrs Emily Treasure, who came to Dargo with her husband George, in 1878, carrying her nine month old son Harry in front of her on the saddle. Two of her children were carried in on armchairs on another

horse, these chairs being the first furniture in their two-roomed hut. The former Emily Langford had been born in Berkenshire in England, and came to Australia with her parents when she was fifteen years old. She married George Treasure in the Blue Mountains in 1869, and went with him to the minefields of Beechworth and Wandiligong before coming to the High Plains. It was in 1889 that

they acquired Cowra, a portion of the Dargo High Plains Station, that was later owned by their son Harry. It was from here that she supplied goods to the goldminers on the Upper Dargo diggings.

During the years they were there her home became the centre around which the High Plains gold rush revolved. With her family she managed the general store, butchery,

## They must have been



*Mrs Harry Treasure at 80 still rides up to the plains in nine hours and Mrs W. Ryder (formerly Freda Treasure) with fourteen month old Harry who goes along with her, rugged up on the droving out mustering, Woman's Day 30 May 1960: East Gippsland Historical Society Inc. collection.*

## brave and hardy lot



hotel and post office, supplying a population of up to 1,000 inhabitants when all provisions had to be brought by pack-horse from Harrierville, 32 miles away, before being packed out to customers up and down the creeks and rivers during summer and winter, often through snow, rain and floods.

She reared a family of nine boys and two girls there, moving with her husband and the younger children to

Lindenow in 1900 due to her husband's health. After his death in 1901 she brought the family up alone until she remarried in 1911 to Henry Giles Browne who died a few years later. In her later years she married again, to Mr Walter Ives of Lindenow in 1933 and died in 1939 aged 89 years. Just nine years before her death she was still making the long ride to the plains.

Her son Harry's wife, Mrs Clara Victoria Treasure, was to be another lady of the High Plains who will long be remembered for the spontaneous and gracious welcome she accorded to all at her homes at "Rockalpine" and "Castleburn". A school teacher before going to Dargo, she was as at home on a horse as she was in her kitchen, and still following the muster until a short time before her death in 1967.

Elsewhere in this edition of *Voice of the Mountains*, Freda Treasure who married Wally Ryder from the other side of the mountains, is remembered as a strong and capable woman, "my best man" according to her father. It was Freda's devotion to her family that saw a young fourteen month old Harry bundled up and taken on muster when she and Wally rode up to the plains.

That spirit of belonging to the high country continues today. The seventh generation of the McCormack family, young Jaxon McCormack was introduced to the smell of the snowgums in 2008 while still a babe in arms.

The women of the High Plains should be remembered, be they the first ones like Margaret Connolly and Emily Treasure, or those who came later, such as Mrs Emily Gregory. She rode sidesaddle across the top from Mansfield to Glenmaggie in the 1920s, accompanied only by a fourteen year old boy, to register a claim to land at Glencairn. Theirs would have been a lonely life, in the glorious country where they were to live, love, and bring up the families which are still there today.

This is an expanded version of an article written by Linda Barraclough which appeared in *Voice of the Mountains* No. 8

# Elephants could help prevent bushfires, expert says

ANNA SALLEH, ABC REPORTER

## Ecological Rethink

Australia could introduce large herbivores such as elephants as part of a radical biological solution to the problem of wild fires and invasive species, says one expert.

The argument is laid out in a provocative commentary published in the February 2012 issue of *Nature*.

"I'm being as provocative as possible to try and wake everybody up to say: 'Look, what is currently happening is not sustainable. We have to think outside the square,'" says Dr David Bowman, a professor of environmental change biology at the University of Tasmania. Bowman says the short-term programs designed to address Australia's serious problems with wild fires and invasive species are piecemeal, costly and ineffective.

For example, he says, they are not succeeding in controlling the invasive gamba grass that leads to frequent intense fires in Australia's north.

"It's out of control," says Bowman. "Last year we had a fire in the outback in Central Australia the size of Tasmania. These things are very bad." He says the sheer magnitude of the landscape makes short-term slashing and aerial spraying programs impractical, and biological solutions are needed instead.

"Biology doesn't sleep. Biology is a 24/7 program," says Bowman. He says large herbivores like elephants could be used as "grass-eating machines" and together with traditional Aboriginal patch burning could help manage fire risk in the north. Bowman also says short-term programs designed to poison feral animals, fence them out of sensitive areas or shoot them from helicopters are also expensive and ineffective.

He says instead, top predators, like dingoes, could be reinstated to control foxes and cats. ... He spent 20 years working as a wildlife biologist in northern Australia, often with Aboriginal people, managing weeds, fire and feral animals.

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## Stupid idea?

Bowman acknowledges many will think his idea is stupid and says he's not committed to elephants per se, but says the challenge is on to find a more holistic solution to problems like grass fires. Bowman says the mistakes we've made in the past call for confronting solutions that need to be based on science not emotion and cultural prejudice.

People need to ask themselves why it's okay to shoot donkeys and camels but not horses, he says. And, he adds, they need to accept that there is no such thing as 'pristine nature' in the so-called 'anthropocene'. "Buffalo, pigs and cane toads are now part of the landscape and we need to work with them," says Bowman. In fact, he says, evidence suggests low levels of camel and buffalo are beneficial because their tracks form firebreaks.

Bowman emphasises any animals introduced would need to be managed properly with their spread controlled by, for example, GPS collars, sterilisation or contraceptives. "I'm not saying let's pull up with a barge and randomly release a whole lot of African animals," he says. Bowman says while the case of the cane toads is used to scare people about biological control, adaption of wildlife suggests reactions to biological controls may not be as bad

as we expect. "If we stand back and do nothing, it's just as bad as making a mistake," he says.

## Mixed response

According to some, Bowman's idea of introducing elephants will be unpopular because the animals are a threat to trees and because it would be difficult to fence them in. "Introducing elephants to Australia would likely be rather quickly rejected as a method for controlling invasive gamba grass," says Dr Don Driscoll, a Fellow at The Australian National University's Fenner School of Environment and Society. But Bowman's proposal to reinstate dingoes appears to have met mixed responses.

"Evidence is mounting that dingoes have enormous environmental benefits with little increased risk to the cattle industry," says Driscoll. "It is crucial to consider all of the management options for dealing with invasive species (even ideas that might seem crazy at first)."

On the other hand, Dr Ricky Spencer of the Native and Pest Animal Unit at the University of Western Sydney describes the dingo proposal as "irresponsible" as there is not enough evidence available to support it.

Most ecologists emphasise the need for caution in the face of Bowman's "interesting" suggestions. "Beware the law of unintended consequences," says Dr Charles Krebs from the University of Canberra's Institute for Applied Ecology.

He and others say we should try harder to make current approaches more effective. Others, suggest maybe letting well enough alone.

"Maybe we need to come to terms with the fact that some of our ecosystems may remain changed because of the species we've already introduced, rather than introducing more in the hope that they can fix things for us," says Professor Richard Hobbs, an Australian Laureate Fellow with the School of Plant Biology at The University of Western Australia.



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## Douglas Harry "Doug" Treasure

15 April 1946 - 3 January 2012

Doug Treasure is gone. Gippsland has lost one of its favourite sons, the mountain cattlemen have lost a warrior, and we have all lost a good mate. The Treasure family have been a central part of the MCAV since it was formed in the 1960s. Doug threw his heart and soul into the cause. He never put down the torch, consistently arguing for sustainable use of our public land. As Christa said - he was President of the MCAV three times and at every opportunity he raised its profile. Doug always had a knack of giving a colourful media grab.

In fact he was a colourful personality. "How are you Doug?" "I'm good," he would say, "seasonally adjusted that is." In later years we would know he wasn't that good, just making the best of a bad situation.

Doug loved to visit new places and try new ideas. As mentioned earlier he dabbled in politics and would have been a brilliant independent MP if he had been elected. Doug would have been Gippsland's Bob Katter - in fact he would have been better than Bob Katter!

Doug was generous and he was witty. A while back he purchased a new Ford Ranger. He really wasn't happy with it. He asked me a question, "If I put a big sign on my ranger and drove it through Melbourne would people get the wrong idea?" he said. "Well," I said, "it depends on what you put on the sign." Doug said, "Well, thought something along the lines

'You can't trust a ranger, even out of the park.'

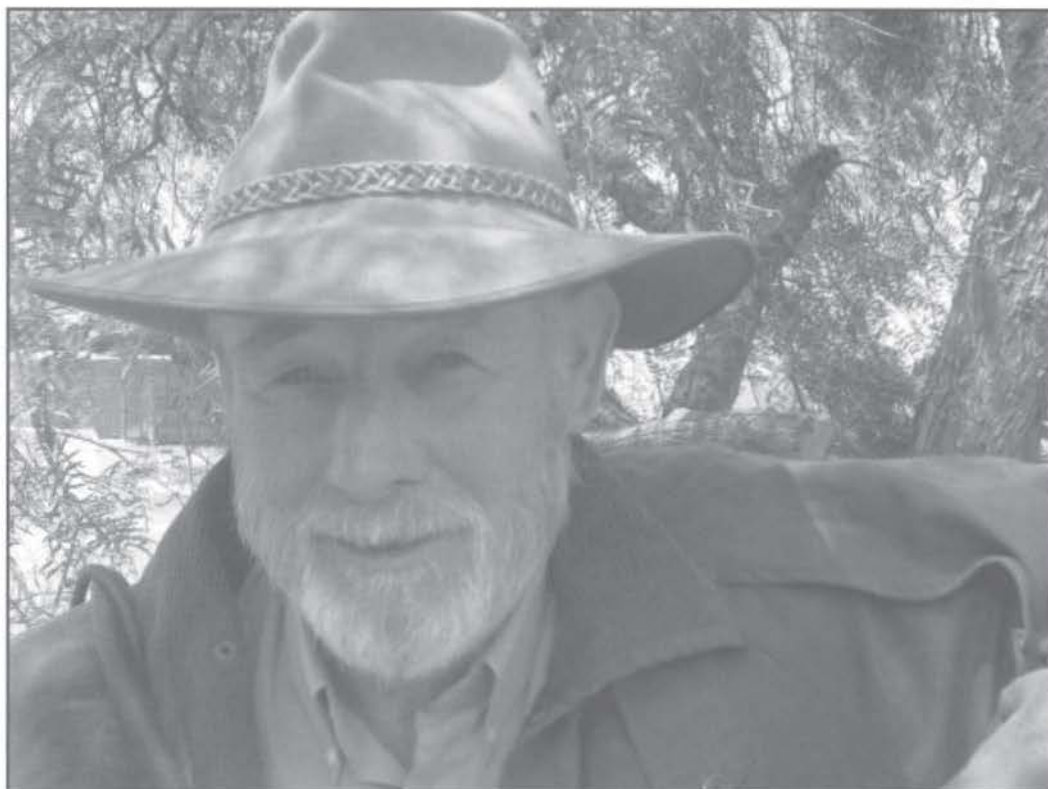
Doug was elected president of the MCAV for the second time just after the cattle had been removed from the park. It was 2005/2006, the MCAV darkest hour. Many cattlemen lost all their runs. They had to look for other things to do and the MCAV was reeling from this mortal blow.

Doug set out to salvage what was left of the MCAV and rebuild it. He lifted morale and formulated a policy of returning the cattle to the park. He got himself in the media often so the public would understand the cattlemen weren't beaten.

Philip Davis recalls that in the middle of Doug's 60th birthday, proceedings were suspended when Doug suddenly called a cattlemen's strategy meeting. Guests other than the cattlemen had to talk among themselves while Doug showed his priorities for the MCAV by calling an opportunistic meeting in a back shed. "Well everyone was there, to good an opportunity to miss," he said.

In 2006, Doug, Christa, Rhonda, Jim, Lyric and families and friends such as the Nobles, drove a mob of protest cattle from Dargo to Wonnangatta. There they met up with the Merrijig cattle which had been driven over Howitt for a major protest in the valley. Doug and Charlie Lovick gave extensive media interviews. Doug was in his element and wanted to do it again. So we did.

This time on the Dargo High Plains and we put the cattle back in the park, in the snow.



Doug led the protest and got the television and daily newspapers. If you look at the photo of Doug at the 2006 Parliament House protest in your program, you can see Doug in his element making a speech and shoving it right up them. He was loving it! The whole protest effort at the time lifted the morale of the MCAV members and supporters and the public realised that the cattlemen were not going to give up and just lie down.

Just three years ago, Doug and Mary and others rode to the Merrijig Get-Together. Doug then rode back over The Bluff to Howitt leading two horses - and at a fast jog all the way.

Two years ago Doug, Christa and the families rode from Howitt to The Bluff hut for the birthday of an old mate, namely me. Along with Chris Commins and others we rode out onto The Bluff end and had a great time.

The Dargo High Plains were Doug's first love along with all the Treasure clan. The flowers here at the service are from the plains. The snow gum in flower, the daisies and the lupins from the homestead. It was the lupins that nearly brought me undone when I saw them - someone has done a great job with this tribute to Doug.

Doug knew then things weren't too good and he was determined to beat it. Camping with him you

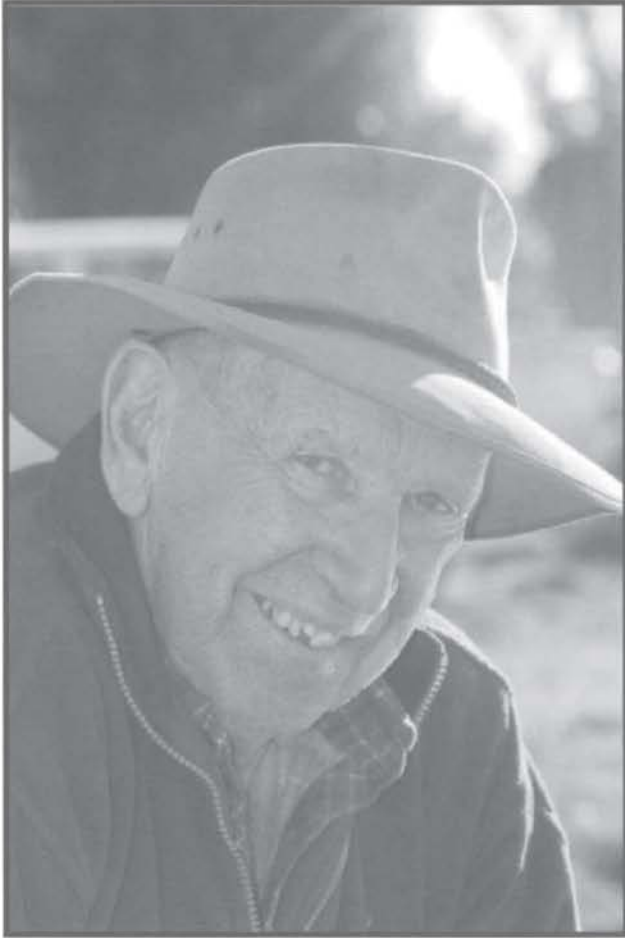
could see he was an old fashioned bushman in a modern era. Like all bushman he thought ahead. There is an old saying that goes something like this *'you always cut your lunch before you have breakfast.'* After tea in the hut, Doug would carefully wrap the left overs in newspaper and put them in his saddlebag for next day. "One never knows what's ahead," he would say. I only found out today that the reason he did that was to avoid the three day old jam sandwiches mentioned earlier.

After a few years in his second term as President, Doug mentored his sister Christa to take over and continue the fight to reinstate alpine grazing, which she did. Two years after that, Doug took back the presidency and only gave it up when ill health prevailed. What a fighter for the cause! He never gave up the struggle and the MCAV recognized that when Doug was awarded life membership of the association.

Mary has been the rock that kept Doug going and especially lately when the going got really tough. So to Mary, and all the immediate family, to the wider family and to Doug's many, many friends the sympathy of the MCAV goes to you all at this very sad time. The mountain cattlemen mourn Doug's passing. It just somehow won't be the same.

*This eulogy was delivered by Graeme Stoney at Doug's funeral service held at Stratford. Photographs by The Gippsland Times.*





## John Kevin "Buff" Rogers

6 May 1934 - 21 October 2012

From the time of his birth in 1934, Keith and Janet Rogers instilled in their son an appreciation of the environment around him. He grew up a carefree child who created his own fun - trapping rabbits for their skins to sell, breaking in poddy calves to pull a billy cart, and of course riding his pony. As a young man Buff worked on the family property and soon learnt to break-in and shoe his own horses, drive tractors, fence and general work on the property. Then there was the cattle work which involved taking cattle to the high country for the summer in the vicinity of the Cobberas on the Great Dividing Range, mustering in the autumn and taking the dry cattle to the winter

runs in the valley of the Snowy River. Buff spent his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday on the road with a mob of cattle going to Bairnsdale. About 1959 Buff selected a 1200 acre block of Crown land in Suggan Buggan which he fenced, gradually ringbarked and cleared as finances would permit.

Buff's pleasures were: good Hereford cattle, good horses (including a race horse or two with moderate success), good working dogs, the high country and a yarn with fellow bushmen/cattlemen. His dedication to breeding top class cattle showed at the annual sales in Bairnsdale with his stock regularly topping the sale and being sought by repeat buyers. Many a lifelong friendship came about from these sales.

Buff had a mischievous side. When N.S.W parks impounded some of his cattle that had strayed across the border he was told that he would only get them back after they saw him in court. Buff and his brother David mounted a recovery mission albeit under the cover of darkness. Cattle back over the border, problem solved!! Remember the rooster chase run held at the Wulgulmerang sports day? The RSPCA claimed the chase was stressful to the rooster and wanted it stopped but Buff was adamant it was going ahead. The media got involved and on the day a Channel 7 helicopter landing at Rockbank. The animal liberationist, RSPCA and police all turned up with threats of charges if the chase went ahead but still Buff stood his ground. The time of the chase arrived and fifty kids were ready. The RSPCA and police waited with pens and books ready with Buff poised at the float door. At the countdown Buff flung it open and out shot ..... Billy King dressed up in a rooster suit!

Buff had an obsession with weeds. He spent thousands of dollars and hours over the years spraying both at Rockbank and Suggan Buggan and park boundaries meant nothing. He would often spray weeds in the park to try and stem the flow into his freehold.

Buff's ideals were simple. If things worked in the old days, there was no need to change it. "No need for swinging fenders, the old stock saddle was good enough for everyone in the past". "Sun glasses are



useless, just put a hat on”, and “a waste of money having an air conditioner in the car up here for the three hot days a year”, were comments we would hear from time to time. A classic comment was that wide tyres were only for larrikins and show-offs. Well, the tables turned when the Nissan turned up at Rockbank with a set of wide wheels and tyres - many a jibe from the “larrikins” followed.

Buff became a member of the MCAV and remained a staunch and active member. In 2010 he was inducted in to the Stockman’s Hall of Fame and earlier this year he was awarded life membership of the MCAV in appreciation for his unwavering support.

The last fifteen years handed Buff a series of hard knocks from which he never really recovered. The 1997-98 drought brought about a decision to reduce his cow herd to a bare fraction of what it was. To see the man’s face as he watched his life’s work leave in the back of a stock truck is a sight you never forget. Then

in 2003 fires decimated the district after numerous warnings from Buff and other local bushmen - his saddest days during this bleak time were when all the grazing leases and his huts along with all his freehold properties were burnt and then bringing cattle back home knowing it would be for the last time. And finally - the loss of the high country grazing runs in 2005. Buff’s life revolved around the runs; his father Keith, brother David and Buff would spend the summer months taking cattle up and mustering the mountains and high country plains. This was all lost after a list of broken political promises and with the stroke of a pen. The past few years saw Buff’s health deteriorate, although he never admitted to the extent. “Just a bit ordinary” was the most he would say.

The life may have ended, but the legend will live on.

*This is tribute formed part of the eulogy presented by Chris Commins at Buff’s funeral.*



## David Churchill Rogers

1 January 1927 - 29 November 2012

David was the first born son of Keith and Beryl Rogers with siblings June and John following over the next seven years. The family lived at Black Mountain until David was seven then they moved across the river to Rockbank. David was a very independent child and would often wander away from the house for miles. His mother resorted to dressing him in a bright red jumper so he could be seen from a distance!! When he was about four years old, he told his mother he was going to walk to Wulgulmerang, a distance of six miles. Thinking nothing of it, she replied "well off you go then". Being used to him wandering around the property, no thought was given to him being away, but after a while, they followed him in the car. He had crossed the river, somehow either opened or climbed over about six gates and, after following his little footprints, he had indeed ended up at his intended destination!!

David was around eight or nine when the surveyors arrived to start surveying the road from Black Mountain, through Suggan Buggan and on to link up with the road from Jindabyne. David had the job

to deliver supplies and mail to the surveyors with his pack horse. One night, he was late returning when a brumby foal followed behind. The foal had become separated from its mother and when coming across David and his horses, decided to follow them. David poddied the foal and named it Topsy, who grew to be quite cheeky. One day, while David was leaning through the chute into the chaff house, Topsy bit him on the backside causing him to fly through the opening with his hob nailed boots connecting with the prop on the way through. This inturn allowed the door to slam shut behind him, locking him in. Apparently, it was a fair while before his cries for help were heard. His early schooling was with a couple of governesses who found him hard to handle as all he wanted to do was to go with his father mustering, droving and carrying out the everyday farm chores. Eventually he was sent to Caulfield Grammar until he reached school leaving age.

During his teenage years, rabbits had virtually taken over the country so he would camp out for days at a time trapping them for their skins. Skin buyers from NSW would buy the skins from him and other trappers working the district. He learnt to shear and worked in a number of sheds in the district. For a man of his size, this would have made a hard job even harder. Along with working at home, he finally made enough money to buy his first International truck when he was 18 years old. Cattle, horses and trucks were David's passion and he was fortunate to be able to combine them into his everyday life.

In 1952, David married Margaret, Peg to us all, and in turn raised five children: Gail, Janine, Richard, Sally and Joanne, in their home, Springs, located just to the east of Black Mountain. David patiently taught all of the kids to ride as soon as they were old enough. Setting rabbit traps was another lesson that apparently caused a bit of humour with more fingers getting caught than rabbits. They were also heavily involved in running Hereford cattle on the family's High country runs that spanned from the Snowy River in the east, the Buchan River to the west and the NSW border to the north. Cattle often strayed over the border into the Kosciusko Park and frequent trips were made to bring them back. More than one confrontation with the NSW park authorities occurred. It was around this

time that the Mountain Cattleman's Association was formed. David and John were two of the association's early members and continued to be active and supportive to the end.

In 1967 David purchased from his father, the wire paddock, named because it was the first property in the district to have wire fencing. This was beautiful basalt country, capable of greater carrying capacity and David produced some of the best Hereford cattle available here. In the drought years of 1968, David flew to Tamworth to look for agistment for his cattle. Grass was found and an epic journey eventuated in David's old 180 Inter, Abby Langskaill who also had a 180 but a semi, and Bill Jaques's red Ford. They took their trucks loaded with David's cattle along the Snowy River and up Jacobs ladder to Jindabyne.

Polocrosse was becoming quite popular and David, along with his brother John, brother-in-law Archie Moon, Norm Woodhouse, Ian and Alan Minchin, Charlie Hodge, Leo Dignan, Pip Richter and Bobby Stokes formed the Wulgulmerang team which frequently played against Gelantipy. Buchan soon followed with a team and soon tournaments were being played in various areas around the state. The saying went that the Wulgulmerang players started their day with a whisky for breakfast.

David loved breeding and showing stock horses and was deeply involved with the Australian Stockhorse Society right up until his later years. He and his good friend Ken Howlett shared much success with horses that David had bred.

In 1978, "Springs" was sold and David, Peg and Joanne, who was still at school, moved to Johnsonville for a few months and then on to "Moondarra", Nicholson, where David managed a property for Ken Williams. Three years later, they purchased a property at Goon Nure. While they were here, David started his stock transporting business with the purchase of the blue 3070 international. Along with all this, he still took his cattle out to the high country every year. A couple more moves and the purchase of a second truck occurred over the years until David retired in 2000 from both cattle and trucks and took up caravanning which he and Peg enjoyed a great deal. He loved family gatherings and the growing number of grand children and great grand children dearly. He truly was the most patient man with them all.

A number of hip replacements and a major vehicle accident never slowed him down, but eventually time takes its toll and David passed away peacefully in his sleep a month before his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday. A great man, in both stature and presence.

*This is tribute formed part of the eulogy presented by Chris Commins at David's funeral.*





## John "Goughy" Gough

20 November 1940 - 16 August 2012

We sadly record the passing of highly regarded mountain cattleman John Gough, fondly known as "Goughy". John and his father Jim ran cattle in the Upper Howqua with Col Murphy in the late 1940s. In the mid 1970s, John (and later with his four children: Murray, Robert, Jenny and Lisa) moved to No3 Clear Hills and the King River working in with Peter and Bruce McCormack.

John also mustered for many years on the Bluff with the Stoney family. He also took part in the famous cattlemen protests in the 1980s against the creation of the Alpine National Park which threatened the continuation of Alpine grazing.

A bush poet in his own right, he wrote *Smokey* which was about a champion mustering horse owned by Graeme Stoney and often ridden by John. The poem was published in both *Voice* and *The Howqua Hills Story*.

John had not been in good health for some time and was lovingly cared for at home by his family.

*This eulogy is reproduced from The Yarnier No. 10.*



## Judith Helen "Jude" McCormack

31 August 1933 - 30 May 2012

The year 2012 was an incredibly sad one for the locals of Merrijig when they farewelled the last of the older generation, Judith Helen McCormack (nee Reardon).

Jude joined her beloved husband Peter on 30 May after a short stay in hospital. She was, to the end, quick to get the job done.

Jude was born in Mansfield on 31 August 1933. Her parents were Winifred and Denis Reardon. She was the youngest of a family of six with her siblings being John, Betty, Joy, Bill and Denise.

Judy grew up at 'Stoneleigh' on the Howes Creek Road in Mansfield and she completed her hairdressing apprenticeship in Seymour before returning to Mansfield to work.

However, life for Jude really began after she married the love of her life, Peter McCormack. Although Peter and Jude grew up together in Mansfield, they became close friends in their late teens before marrying in June 1957. It was the start of a love that would last them a lifetime.



Together Jude and Peter built their family home on the land settled by earlier McCormack generations at Merrijig. They named their own personal piece of paradise 'Leonora', and it was there they raised their family - son Bruce and three daughters Jan, Leanne (known as Dot) and Tracey (Lou) – Lou tragically died when ten years old.

There were a lot of things in life that Jude treasured. Her garden, her friends, her books, her cooking talents, but above it all was her unfaltering love of family. Not just her four children, but their friends and even the family of friends. Everyone was welcome at 'Leonora'.

Despite being born and bred a farmer's daughter and wife, Jude never took to horses after being unloaded by the family Shetland as a youngster. Despite this, there was always any number of horses in her backyard. Despite her frustration at her constantly "pruned" trees, Jude was always the first one to offer to help her children mend the horses cuts and bruises, and later in life, when her son Bruce started up his trail riding business at Jude's backdoor, she was in charge of returning those down-and-out horses back to health.

It was also through the trail rides that Jude's cooking talents came to the fore. She produced a delicious range of chocolate cakes, biscuits and her famous lemon slice. Jude was a great story teller with a magical imagination.

After her own children were grown, she concentrated on spending time with her beloved grandchildren and later again, her seven great grandchildren.

One of her grandchildren, Rhonda McMillan, remembers many an outing spent at the football or on weekends at the farm with Jude. "Poor Nan she was so good to us kids taking us to playgrounds and on fun outings. There was nothing she wouldn't do for us all. But then, kids are kids and so how did we repay her? One day at Swanpool she had to go to the toilet. It was an outhouse behind the hall. Nan was worried about leaving us outside whilst she was using the toilet... *and so she should have been...* the door had a

lock on the outside and we locked it behind her and threw rocks on the roof! I've never heard Nan yell so loud or so long, but we were kids, and that just made it all the funnier!"

As the years passed Jude was able to spend more time in the garden, or would regularly pass the afternoon with her nose buried deep in a book, something she thoroughly enjoyed.

Judy and Peter have now been re-united for their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Rest in peace Jude - the high country won't be the same without you.



## Bruce Evans MLA

The MCAV also acknowledges the death of Mr Bruce Evans, the former MLA for Gippsland East. Bruce died on the 8 November 2012 after 31 years in parliamentary life during which time he supported the MCAV at every opportunity.

When the East Gippsland Branch of the MCAV was formed in 1973 Bruce was there and warned those present that there was a lot of emotionalism associated with the present urge for "conservation." He said then that local people should have more say in land usage before the Land Conservation Council made up its mind. His support will be missed.

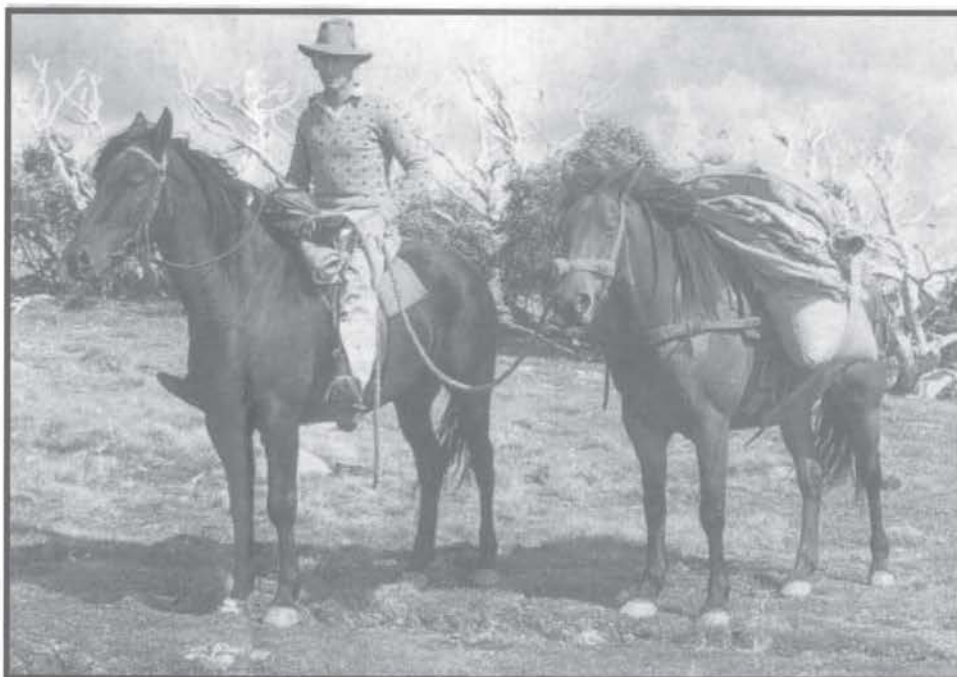


## John "Carl" George Fletcher

Born 1925 - 9 June 2012

Carl Fletcher was one of the remaining high country cattlemen to grace the North East area. Born in 1925 he was the only son of George and Amy Fletcher of Growlers Creek, Wandiligong. He had three sisters, one of which was his twin. Carl was only fourteen years old when he first went out to the Bogong High Plains. His great grandfather was a miner

in the Harrietville area in the gold rush days and his grandfather raised a few cattle, and his father continued the tradition. Carl was one of the few cattlemen to own freehold land on the plains, known as Horsehair Plain on the Omeo side of Mt Hotham where the airport is now located. His passion in life was breeding hereford cattle and he loved the wide open spaces and freedom of the high country. He started with a few head and 100 acres of land which grew to more than 2000 acres at Wandiligong, Bowman's Forest, Freeburgh, Smoko and Harrietville. In late November or early December each year he would make the journey with his stock from Bowman's Forest to Wandiligong, then to Harrietville and beyond Mt Hotham to Horsehair Plain where they would graze the high country summer. The journey over Hotham took about three days, and the huts used were St Bernard Hut, Wire Palin Hut and Horsehair Hut all of which have since been destroyed by bushfires. Carl's story has been recorded in books and photographs of him have appeared in internationally distributed pictorial calendars. He was regarded as a kind and caring man. He loved a yarn and a joke and would befriend anyone he met. He would smile easily and laughed his way through, what at sometimes, was not an easy life



## First Air Mail Comes to Cattle Plain



It seems that in March 1938, when the new Australian National Airways was less than two years old, they struck upon a rather impressive publicity stunt involving the mountain cattlemen. The one (and only known) airmail drop took place at Lankey's Plain, with a reliable photographer cued and ready for the shots that appeared in the *Argus* and other national papers shortly after.

*Airmail for cattlemen mustering cattle on the Dargo High Plains, in the Australian Alps, was dropped from the Douglas airliner Kyeema of Australian National Airways yesterday on the morning flight from Essendon to Sydney.*

*Captain P.I. Taylor, the chief pilot dropped the mail from a height of between 500ft and 800 ft.*

*The fourteen passengers had a clear view of the cattle and cattlemen. The men waved as the great plane dipped. They quickly recovered the mail.*

The stunt caused quite a stir as similar articles and slightly different images appeared in national papers Australia wide, the *Mail* in Adelaide and the *Daily News* in Perth being just two of them.

The *Mail* described it as "mail by air for lonely cattle musteres" and that "it was a thrilling and friendly call of the air liner Kyeema. Normally the cattlemen wait two or three weeks for mail." Some editions ran a second photograph showing individuals "eagerly examining the contents of the mailbag. ... Miss Freda Treasure, Jack Treasure, Mr and Mrs E.E. Treasure, Carl Wraith, Jim Treasure, and T. Evans."

Sadly, the Kyeema, a DC2, crashed later that year in October when it overshot the runway at Essendon and struck Mt Dandenong. All four crew and fourteen passengers perished. It was, at the time, the greatest loss of life in a civil air disaster in Australia.



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## Burgoyne's at Basin Flat



*Tom and Mary Burgoyne*

Burgoyne's on Basin Flat holds a somewhat sad history. In November 1987, Arthur McMichael, a descendent of the McMichael family visited the area for the last time and recorded his feelings on seeing once more the remains of the Burgoyne home.

*What remains is the shell of a house, which is on elevated ground overlooking a small area of rich river land. The valley here funnels down from the north to the Gap. It lies between what I would almost construe as the jaws of the steep-sided, heavily vegetated hills grasping the Macalister as it rushes and swirls into the narrower gorge-like country to the south.*

*Nowhere else in the valley did I see better physical expression of symbiotic relationship between mountains, the river and the flat flood plain as here. It was so striking because the contrasts themselves were so dramatic. It is a really beautiful place, but so very remote, and even today the life of the world, measured in human terms, goes by without touching it. It did for only a brief space at the turn of the century. The construction of the Burgoyne home must have been a back-breaking exercise. The walls, two feet thick, are built entirely of flat rock without any binding. And there, what is left of it, namely four walls, it sits today as a monument of what was attempted, what succeeded, but what failed as any long-term development. Somewhere there may lie the body of Mary, who died in 1909 of tuberculosis in the total solitude, peace and tranquility of a place that to me had an ethereal feel about it. It was there that I felt I got closer to understanding something of the hardships, disappointments and frustrations of the Clan McMichael than anywhere else in the valley.*

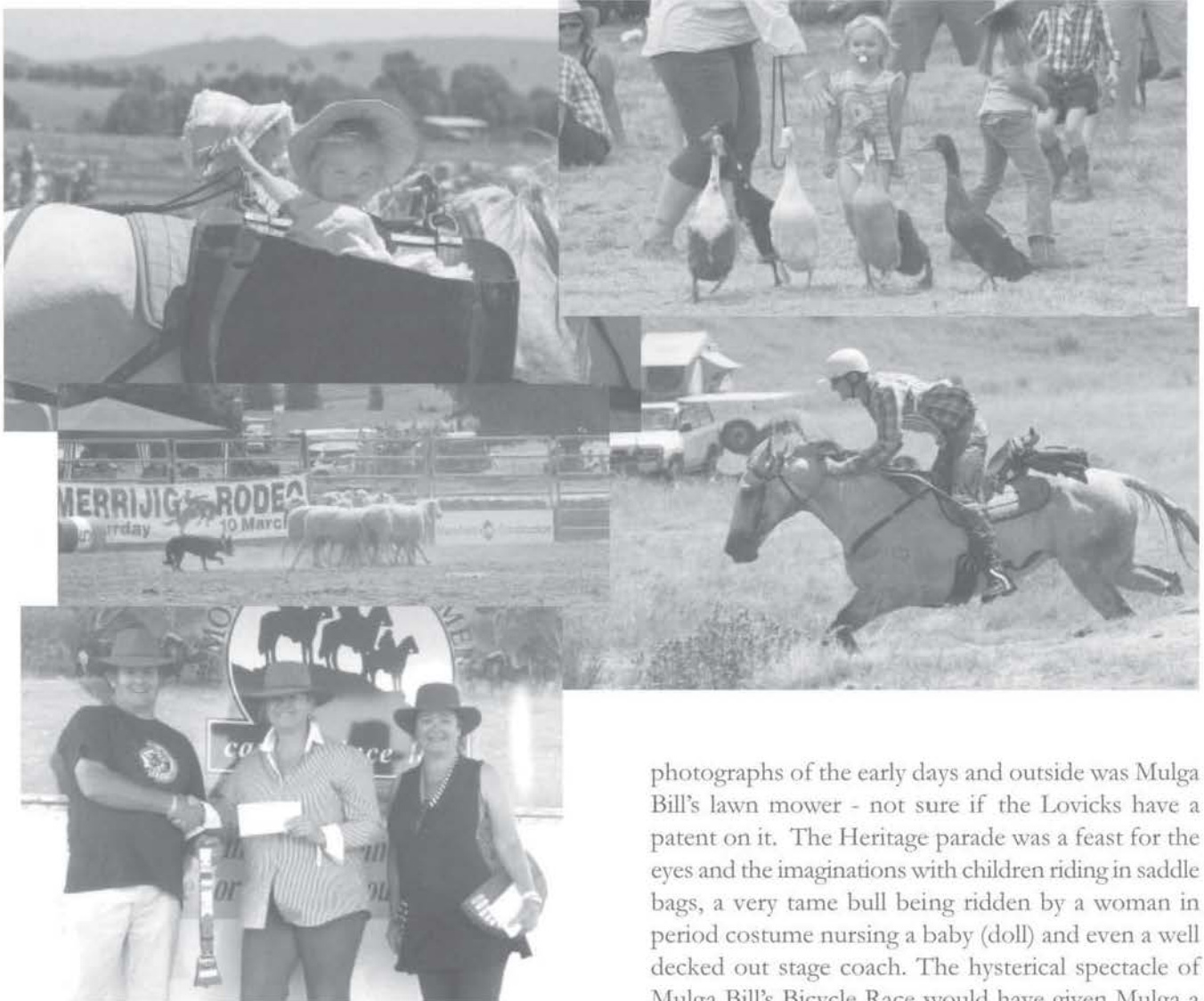
Arthur had been the Director of Australia's Joint Intelligence Organisation and passed away just four months after writing these thoughts.

Mary Margaret McMichael was the oldest daughter of James Cunningham and Hannah McMichael and was born in 1864. She married Tom Burgoyne in 1900 but the marriage was not blessed with children. Tom and Mary took up this site and worked the land until her death when Tom sold up and moved to Tinamba. For many years it was thought that Mary was buried here near the home however her funeral took place on Christmas Eve in 1909 and Mary was interred at the Glenmaggie Cemetery. At the time of her death a great gloom passed over the little community of Licola as she was renowned for her unselfishness, genial and sprightly disposition and she was loved by all who knew her. Tom was born at Ballarat in 1856, the son of Thomas and Mary Ann Burgoyne. He died at Sale in 1940.

Extracts from *Macalister Landscapes* and *From Glenmaggie to Glencairn* have been used in this article.



## 38th Annual Get-Together McCormack Park, Merrijig



The 38<sup>th</sup> Mountain Cattlemen's Get together was held at McCormack Park, Merrijig. Shade was scarce, the summer sun beat down relentlessly with no river or running creek in sight but none of this withered the spirits and enthusiasm of those dedicated cattlemen and women and supportive visitors whom attended. Cattlemen from near and far gathered swapping expertise, talents and tall tales.

The heritage theme was a resounding success, with the three roomed heritage tent proving to be very popular. It gave those who ventured in a *window back in time*. Demonstrations of carding and wool spinning, the 'wash house' (complete with copper and wringer washing machine), the Wonnangatta Saddle, (on loan from the Mansfield Historical Society), displays of

photographs of the early days and outside was Mulga Bill's lawn mower - not sure if the Lovicks have a patent on it. The Heritage parade was a feast for the eyes and the imaginations with children riding in saddle bags, a very tame bull being ridden by a woman in period costume nursing a baby (doll) and even a well decked out stage coach. The hysterical spectacle of Mulga Bill's Bicycle Race would have given Mulga a challenge, as for the trusty steeds being ridden, well, Mulga may well have avoided embarrassment if he had been riding one of those new - fangled contraptions. A very skilled Kelpie also showed his prowess at herding ducks.

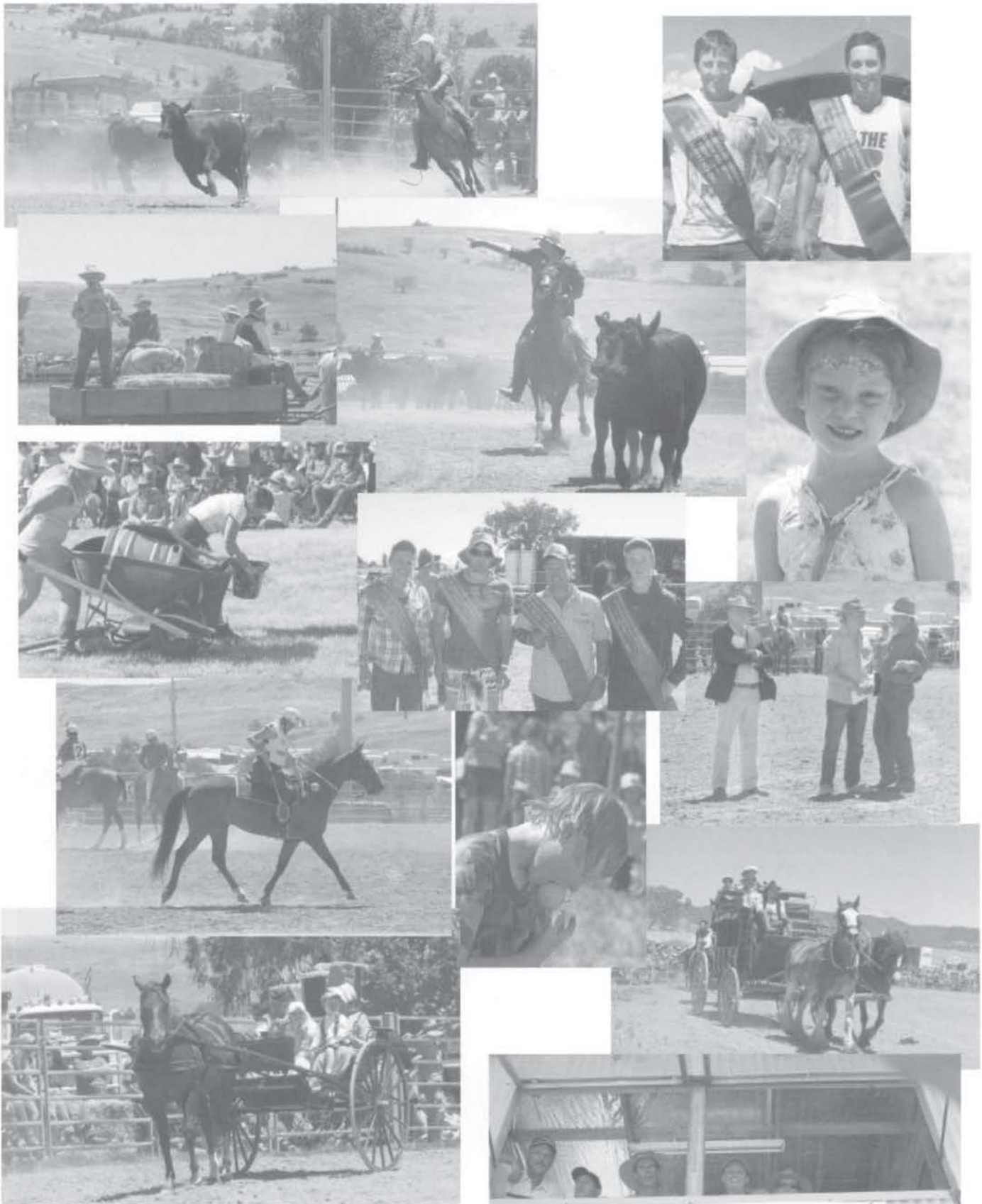
The regular horse events of relay, open, sprint, pack horse races; the Cattlemen's Cup and of course the whip cracking and the ever popular dog high jump were as eventful and exciting as always. The Don Kneebone heritage award, bush laureate and the minstrel award proved once again that words do make a difference.

The Get-Together is always an experience to be had and savoured, once you've been to one, it's near on impossible not to go to the next.



**Merrijig  
2012**





**Merrijig  
2012**



**Results for 2012 were -**

***Junior Whipcracking 10 yrs and under***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Kate Faithfull
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Jade Clark
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sarah Faithfull

***Juvenile Whipcracking***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Emi East
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Jacqueline Davies
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Paige Williams

***Ladies Whipcracking***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Diana Hurley
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Emma Higgins
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Emi East

***Open Whipcracking***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Diana Hurley
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Paige Williams
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Andrea Cook

***Dog High Jump***

- 1<sup>st</sup> "George" and Hugh Mawhinney
- 2<sup>nd</sup> "Barkley" and Shonnie Malfroy

***Open Bushman's Challenge***

- 1<sup>st</sup> John Conroy and Ben Kneebone
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Reiley Murtagh and Todd
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Ducky and Hugh

***Ladies Bushman's Challenge***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Tania and Lauren Seymour
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Jacqueline Davies and Emi East
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Diana Hurley and Kathy Gabriel

***Ladies Haystacking***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Zan and Kass

***Men's Haystacking***

- 1<sup>st</sup> John Conroy and Jake Lowe

***Open Tug-O-War***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Raw Meat

***Ladies Tug-O-War***

- 1<sup>st</sup> A & A's

***Walking Race***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ross Hodgkin on "Hooker"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Don Evendon on "Belgo Boy"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Darren Williams on "Indi"
- 4<sup>th</sup> Ethan Ryan on "Apache"





**Merrijig  
2012**



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

### **Relay Race**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Team Tulla
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Forge Family
- 3<sup>rd</sup> The "A" Team

### **Open Race**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Tom King on "Sunny"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> B.J. Britton on "Amaroo"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Kate Lovick on "Kip"
- 4<sup>th</sup> Ross Hodgkin on "Tom"

### **Sprint Race**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Jo Stevens on "Doolan Gem"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Tina Eason on "Irish Affection"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Jessica Eason on "Bell"

### **Rescue Race**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Jo Stevens and Tom King

### **Double Trouble**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Teagan
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sophie Clark

### **Mulga Bill Bicycle Race**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Nathan Johnson
- 2<sup>nd</sup> John Gramlick
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Joe Bolton

### **Frank Ryan Memorial Australian Packhorse Championship**

#### **Open**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Graham Forge with "Morrie" and "Sebastian"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> David Olsson
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Mitchell Ward
- 4<sup>th</sup> Darren Williams with "Indi" and "Middy"

#### **Ladies**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ellen Forge with "Darby" and "Big Fella"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Anne-Maree Forge with "Merrie" and "Red"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sharlee Connley with "Cody" and "Charlie"

#### **Junior**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Kerrie Anne Forge with "Darby" and "Red"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Tahnee Olsson
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sophie Clark with "Vick" and "Cougar"
- 4<sup>th</sup> Jade Clark with "Rossco" and "Spirit"

### **Mazda Junior Cattlemen's Cup**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ross Welheshley on "Maz"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Lachie Culcain on "Ironbark"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Jye Hodgkin on "Tom"
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sophie Clark on "Musical Bree"





**Mazda Mountain Cattlemen's Cup**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Chris Connley on "Seaspray"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Anthony Gilbert on "Trouble"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Brett Lancaster on "Fatty"
- 4<sup>th</sup> Jess Marchinton on "Tonka"

**Photographic Competiton**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Laura Savige :  
*Rider and Packhorse*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Deb McCormack :  
*Cattle coming down in the snow*
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Howard James  
*Stockyard Creek*

**Don Kneebone Heritage Award**

Howard James

**Laurence Webb Junior Award**

Kate Crombie

**Peter McCormack Bush Laureate**

Nerallie Teese

**Jack Treasure Award**

Nerallie Teese

**Bill Hicks Bush Minstrel Award**

Col Millican

**Jim Commins Oration Award**

Sally Commins

**GTG Raffle**

- 1<sup>st</sup> MCAV Branded Bar Top donated by the cattlemen won by Penny Wallace
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend Trail Ride for two people donated by McCormack Mountain Valley Trail Rides won by Bayden and Jackson Hill
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Two nights accomodation in cattleman's hut incl. half day ride donated by Packers High Country Horse Riding won by John Wright
- 4<sup>th</sup> MCAV number plate 075MCA donated by the MCAV won by Matt V
- 5<sup>th</sup> Two nights accomodation (inc. spa) for two people donated by the Golden Age Hotel, Omeo won by L. Pettigrew





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Congratulations to the  
organising committee  
from the  
2011 Get-Together  
being awarded the  
Community Event  
Award at the Australia  
Day Award in 2012.  
Job well done.



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**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the  
Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria held on  
Friday 21 September 2012 at Akoonah Park, Berwick  
commencing at 11.34am.**

**1. Present**

Mark Coleman; Chris Commins, Chris Cooper; Wendy JubbStoney; Graeme Stoney; David Hurley; Charlie Lovick, Kellie Lovick, Tania Coleman; Danny Cook; Glenn Chalwell; Ben Treasure, Brian Higgins; Christa Treasure; Ray Anderson; Rhonda Treasure; John Cook; Danny Cook, Bruce McCormack; Neville Wright; Rosemary and Graham Osborne, Mary Treasure, Ray Boys, Mathew Jameson, Roger Hollis, Paul Davenport, Emma Commins, Sarah Commins, Michelle Kirk and Georgie Connan.

**2. Apologies**

Anne Faithfull; Richard Faithfull; Bruce Commins, Kathy Junor, Simon Turner, Ken Heywood; P.Commins; Rose and Tim Faithfull; Philip Davis MP, Ray Thomas, Diana Cameron; Froggy and Rita McMahon; Susan Noble; Anthony Higgins; Peter Monds; Elizabeth Jackson, Ross and Magda Brown; Pat Coleman; Stephen and Mel Kerr; Buff Rogers; Janine Cooper; Joe Connley; Andrew Kee, Fiona Treasure, B. Treasure, Pat Woolmer; Frances Westbury; Bill Gear; David Evans, Scott Jennison; Sarah Jennison, Bryan Bassett; Leonie Phelan; Andrew Jackson; Jane Tait, Cath Noble, K. Goldsworthy, David Evans, Harry Ryder, J. Hicks.

**3. Confirmation of Official Proxies**

Ross and Magda Brown nominated Brian Higgins as their official proxy.

Rose and Diana Hurley nominated David Hurley as their official proxy.

Simon Turner and Harry Ryder nominated Mark Coleman as their official proxy.

Chris Commins, Richard Faithfull, Bruce Commins and Joe Connley nominated Graeme Stoney as their official proxy.

Buff Rogers nominated Chris Cooper as his official proxy.

Bruce Treasure nominated Christa Treasure as his official proxy.

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

It was agreed that the minutes as circulated of the Annual General Meeting dated 24th September 2011 held at Akoonah Park, Berwick are a true and correct record of proceedings.

*Chris Cooper / Graeme Stoney Carried*

**5. Business arising from the Minutes**

Debbie Squires honorarium to recognise work on *Voice of the Mountains* will be actioned in Central Council meeting.

**6. Reports**

**President's Report**

Mark Coleman then presented his annual report.

First of all I must thank my wife Tania and children Molly, Bonnie and Jack, for their support. I apologize for time that I have not been able to spend with them over the last two years.

I believe the role of President is to work for everyone in the organization and not just for some. I have measured my decisions over the last two years on what is best for the Mountain Cattlemen's Association and for the betterment of land management as a whole. I have never been one to entertain egos or personal interests in carrying out the role and if I have offended anybody in carrying out this task all I ask is please have a look at the big picture. At the end of the day, what is done and achieved is more important than what is said.

The annual Get-Together was a great success with thanks to the Mansfield branch for putting on a fantastic display. Scott Jenison and his crew behind the scenes also make these events a great success. Dave and Leonie for another well run bar, Jane for the outstanding results achieved in the marketing tent and Wendy with a great job on the heritage activities and displays. The main heritage parade was certainly one of the highlights; the fantastic media exposure, support from a dozen politicians and the VFF president and representatives all combined to round out the event.

On a political front, this year was quieter but it must be noted, still very active behind the scenes. Back in the autumn the grazing issue was voted on in Federal Parliament with a tally of 71 against and 70 for, missing out by one vote. The positive in this is that our cause is on the national radar and if there is a change of government federally we could definitely see some change for the better.

We have four members nominated for life membership through Central Council this year - Buff Rogers, Rita and Froggy McMahon and John Cook. These four people are great examples of the no bull dust approach of getting in and getting the job done. Congratulations to each of them.



*Life member John "Cookie" Cook with immediate past President Mark "Nook" Coleman and his wife Tania at the 2012 Get-Together.*

Just recently, in manning the stall at the Melbourne 4x4 show it was confirmed to me, that the MCAV is very well respected as an organization and is on the right track in the public eye. With tens of thousands of people attending the 4x4 show many acknowledge our major contribution to keeping the bush open and managed well for all users. This show for us has grown from strength to strength. It is a great public relations exercise for the MCAV and an avenue to promote our cause as well as the up and coming Get Together with 4,000 flyers handed out and just shy of 10,000 yellow Mountain Cattlemen's stickers many that were seen to go straight onto vehicles in the car park!

The Future: The book is well underway and a pilot has been started for the documentary. Both do not come cheap although they will be invaluable as a resource for the next generation.

The number of young people attending our Get-Togethers has grown and this can only be seen

as a positive. The emails and calls that come in from complete strangers with useful information has been a fantastic help to the cause. One in particular made me aware of the 'Wildlands project' in the USA, also known as the 'The Wild Country Project' in Australia. The ideology of this agreement is frightening to anyone who lives in rural Australia. This information gives you an indication of what we as an organization are fighting against

In closing I must acknowledge and thank the work that Anne Faithfull has put in as Treasurer and also on the constitution and Georgie for coming in and picking up the secretary position, she has been a breath of fresh air to the organization. My heartfelt gratitude must go out to Graeme Stoney for his support, guidance and constant motivation to keep moving forward. Others that I'd like to thank are Neville Wright, Susan and Cath Noble, Simon Turner, Chris Cooper and Chris Commins for being a great sounding board on numerous issues. Thanks also to all the Central Council members for working together and still being able to have a beer together at the end of the day, and to all their families, that support them and put up with everything that goes with the job. Lastly to Brian Higgins for the 100s of man hours that go into the bar tops every year.

#### **Financial Report**

The financial report for the year ending 30th June 2012 as tabled.

*John Cook / David Hurley*                      *Carried*

#### **Marketing Report**

Mark Coleman presented Jane Tait's annual report as tabled.

#### **7. Election of Office Bearers**

All office bearers vacated their positions and the chair was occupied by Graeme Stoney. With the decision to act under the new constitution, the roles of Secretary, Executive Officer, Treasurer and Merchandising are now appointed rather than elected. This will be discussed further in Central Council.

#### *President*

Charlie Lovick was nominated by Chris Commins Graeme Stoney and accepted the nomination. There being no further nominations Charlie Lovick was declared elected to the position of President.

---

## Acknowledgments



*Scotty's mob ....  
relaxing at Craig's Hut where  
they "stopped over" after the  
successful Get-Toogether at  
Merrijig.*

Somehow *Voice of the Mountains* comes together every year to the amazement of most involved, none more so than myself. This year thanks go to Tania and Nook Coleman, Graeme Stoney and Wendy Jubb Stoney, Charlie Lovick, Bruce and Deb McCormack, Harry and Sue Ryder, Brian and Sandy Higgins, Don and Valda Duncan, Chris and Janine Cooper, Sally Veenstra and the Rogers family for responding to my requests for information, emails and photographs.

Georgie Coonan has had a baptism by fire in learning how I put *Voice* together and probably doesn't ever want to know about it again!!! Just quietly Georgie, thank you, I hope it hasn't put you off the "once a year" mayhem for life.

Our photographic contributions go from strength to strength. Again, Frances Westbury has thoroughly documented the activities of the weekend with her photographs and Mel Kerr and Marg Davies stepped in and helped out also. James Vereker has again provided some amazing images (including the cover) which are all commercially available from [www.horsephotographics.com.au](http://www.horsephotographics.com.au) together with hundreds of others. Sharna Dyson contributed the cover background shot and Leanne Dyson provided other images used. There is a high concentration of historic images in this issue and we were fortunate that the East Gippsland Historical Society gave me access to their collection which has supplemented this issue evocatively.

Leanne and Neil Cox once again put in a very solid night of reading and proofing on the final *Voice* before it went to press. 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 allow me work time to focus 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.

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

