



The Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria Inc.

AFFILIATED WITH
THE VICTORIAN FARMERS' AND GRAZIERS' ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

POST OFFICE,
ENSAY, VIC. 3895

7th October, 1985.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

I have to report a busy time during the past 12 months but now after years of endeavour I feel that we are at last having some impact where it counts.

The turning point was the rally in Melbourne when we rode up the streets to Parliament House to present a petition signed by over 1200 people. That exercise proved to be just at the right time to raise ongoing support for mountain cattlemen that the wonderfully popular film "The Man From Snowy River" had initiated.

There have been a number of very successful mounted rallies since, including the Moomba festival, several country towns, and in support of the Royal Melbourne Show. The last and most successful of all was at Ringwood during the recent Nunawading by-election.

The most outstanding development that we have experienced during the past year has been the growth and support of Associate Membership that followed a very well attended meeting on October 25th at the Exhibition Buildings in Melbourne.

While I sincerely thank our members that have responded to all the calls for support in our public appearances, I am left without adequate expression to convey gratitude due to so many of our Associate Members, especially those who were so heavily involved in supporting activities. At the top of the list is Sue Silvers who has literally slaved to get no end of jobs done for us and I must now thank her for the most comprehensive report of Associate Members activities during the year that she recently posted to all members.

Get-together in February was a resounding success at Junction Plain. Thanks to Dr Richardson of Cobungra Station for allowing us the use of such a delightful place. Thanks also to all helpers and to our guy Tom Barry who came from Jindabyne in N.S.W. and made such a masterful speech.

We are deeply indebted to the donors of very substantial sponsorships that have been so helpful in overcoming expenses associated with our various activities. Without friends and supporters we could not possibly succeed against the forces opposing us.

It was with great reluctance that we entered the political campaign to contest the seat of Nunawading. However, our decision was made easy when the Australian Conservation Foundation, together with the National Democrats began campaigning very strongly in support of the National Park Bill that the Government had already introduced. We could not take that lying down, for had the ALP candidate been successful and the passage of the Bill assured, then the ACF would have undoubtedly strengthened its hand in National Park management planning.

Apart from the National Parks quite a lot of unresolved matter lies between us and the Department of Conservation, Forests and Land and uppermost of these is the question of grazing fees. Several meetings have taken place with the Ministers representatives, but as yet we have got no closer to resolving the issue.

An exciting project is underway in the form of a book that we have organised the production of. Journalist and former parliamentary press secretary, Bryan Jameson has been engaged to write and compile the book that will present our case and it will include several chapters by other contributors.

During the year some of our Executive members and myself have been called upon to give talks to various organisations and the requests for this service are increasing.

A special note of appreciation is due to Graeme Stoney for his outstanding work as co-ordinator of our appearances in public, his diligent liaison with the news media and general lobbying. It has been a demanding task involving much time, skill and attention.

Joanne Rogers is retiring from the position of Marketing Officer that she was dropped into at the deep end 2 years ago when the sale of our wares was suddenly becoming a much greater task. She too applied herself diligently to the many difficulties of distance and distribution. We welcome Joanne and many thanks.

In closing I must thank the vast number of people who have assisted in many ways at branch level and in the wider community and a special thanks to Secretary, Coral for the valuable assistance that she has provided for so long.