



MOUNTAIN CATTLEMENS NEWS

Newsletter of the Mountain Cattlemens Association of Victoria
PO BOX 294, Mansfield Vic 3722

December 1990

Dear Members and Associate Members,

The Annual General Meeting of the Association took place on Monday the 29th October 1990 at the Victorian Farmers Federation. Thirty-three members and friends attended.

The President gave an encouraging address to the meeting and congratulated the Central Council and others for their work during the past year.

The Executive Officer, Secretary Treasurer and Marketing Officer all presented reports showing that once again the year had been busy, although with no 'up front' activities. Hopes for resolution of the 7 year licences and other outstanding matters were expressed.

Jim Commins reported on a Small Business Rally at Bairnsdale, and he and Ian Roper commented on the activities of the Alpine Advisory Committee. Mr Roper said that the Committee did precisely what the Government expected it would, that the members were carefully chosen to come up with a correct result every time, and most votes were won or lost on a 7/8 basis. Jim Commins agreed that the Committee was a shield behind which the Government could hide.

On the Treasurers recommendation it was resolved on motion put by David Treasure that the minimum fee be \$100.00 (to include the first 100 head) with a fee of \$1.00 per head thereafter, to a maximum of \$500.00.

This charge will apply for the 1991/1992 season, not for the current season.

Office bearers for 1990/1991 were elected as follows:

President:	Doug Treasure
Senior Vice President:	Harry Ryder
2nd Vice President:	David Treasure
Executive Officer:	Graeme Stoney
Marketing Officer:	Anne Whittam
Special Projects Officer:	Jim Commins
Secretary/Treasurer:	Sue Silvers
Assistant Secretary:	Anne Whittam
Auditor:	Bill Crump.

Ian Roper was confirmed as representative on the Alpine Advisory Committee.

Alan Brewer was re-elected as Chairman of the Central Council.

Roger Oxley was introduced as a guest and addressed the meeting. Roger is the Rangeland Consultant working with the Association on a scientific assessment of the effects of grazing on the Bogong High Plains. This work is being financed in part, by the Grant from the National Farmers Federation. The draft paper covering a literature review has a number of points in favour of the continuation of grazing, and there is no ecological reason why grazing leases should be withdrawn. Roger finds that the present state of the Bogong High Plains appears to be in good condition from a conservation point of view. Roger also comments briefly on the effects of trampling by people, as well as cattle, and notes, in this respect, that many of the fenced plots on the Plains are in view of the road and attract hundred of tourists each summer who tramp around the outside of the fence! We all know this is true. Haven't you done this!

Following the Annual Meeting a Central Council meeting was held. Various current matters were discussed including the formation and last two meetings of the Alpine Grazing Working Group. This Group comprises the Assistant Director-General of the Department of C&E, the Regional Managers from Alexandra, Wodonga, Bairnsdale and the North East with assistance from Ian Ferguson making up the C&E team, and Doug Treasure, Graeme Stoney, Jim Commins, Harry Ryder, Kevin Kelly and Sue Silvers batting for the M.C.A.V. There are a number of issues being worked out including the 7 year licences, what can/should/will be done about the phase outs, and we are trying to get final decisions on such matters as shared runs and transferability of licences, as well as arrangements to cope with back payment, and over payment of fees. The meetings are lengthy (several hours each session), and I think they will continue to drag on for a long time to come.

CROWN LAND RENTALS

There is not very much more to report on this subject, as negotiations are continuing with the Department of C&E and the V.F.F. The last figure in respect of Alpine grazing asked for by the DC&E was \$8:00 per beast, and this suggestion was rejected outright. Tim Barker reported to the meeting that he thought the Association was wise to go with the V.F.F. on this issue and that, of course, any developments would be reported to the Association immediately. The Association is looking for the creation of an Eastern Forest Zone to take in the Alpine and sub-Alpine areas grazed by members, and

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this proposition is currently being considered by the Department. It is a proposal put forward a year or more ago by Jim Commins in an effort to resolve the almost un-resolveable problems of bush, alpine, bush contiguous and any other grazing lease. The idea is to do away with the DSE charge within the Eastern Forest Zone and have a grazing fee which relates to the licensed area and to be based on average carrying capacity. As yet we have not had a reaction from the Department.

1991 GET TOGETHER.

This year it is the responsibility of the Mansfield Branch to host the Get Together, and an awesome task it is! Especially when you consider that the membership of the Branch amounts to the number of eight. They are urgently asking for Associate members to help in various ways, and I hope that this newsletter will jog your memory or whatever to think about what you might be able to do to help out. For example I know that Bill Hicks and his boys have offered to do the gate for Mansfield, but they will need a deal of assistance. Many of you will know only too well that this is a major task. Max Blair has been approached to organise the whipcracking, and has agreed, and I know that many of the members from other Branches have offered to help Mansfield in the days leading up to, and after the event. Associate members are also always required to help out in the marketing tent to take the pressure off Annie and her team, and we always need trained sisters to help the Doc. We also need slaves, vast numbers of them, who will cheerfully and without question, perform any task they might be ordered to do.

If you can help in any way, please contact the Secretary of the Mansfield Branch:

Bruce McCormack,
12 Reynolds Street
Mansfield.

Phone: After hours: 057 752 886.

If you cant get onto Bruce or prefer to phone during business hours please ring the office and speak to Sue:

Sue Silvers
Phone: Business Hours only 057 751 600
Fax: 057 751 610.

The office address is P O Box 294, Mansfield.

GET TOGETHER DATE: Saturday 2nd and
Sunday 3rd February
1991.

GET TOGETHER SITE: Sheepyard Flat

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STOP PRESS:

WILDERNESS MAY CUT THE GROUND FROM UNDER ALL OF US.

The Land Conservation Council are in the middle of assessing the various impacts that the creation of large tracts of Wilderness will have on the community, and groups such as the M.C.A.V., tour operators and 4WD movement.

We have been told the rough outline of the areas proposed for new Wilderness. At least 10 - 15 of our members are affected, and if the areas suggested are proclaimed, the effect will be as great as the 1991 phase outs.

We are most concerned at this development, and everyone should be aware that we may have an enormous fight on our hands once again to retain access to these areas.

Where will it stop?

URGENT IMPORTANT

In order for the representatives of the Association to put a clear case forward to the Department on the subject of Crown Land Rentals it is important that all members keep detailed records this season of times and costs involved in grazing the leases. This means a log of times it takes to travel up and down for inspections etc, and all costs involved, including costs of fuel etc.

Jim Commins urges all members to remember to keep these records for this season. Believe me, they will be needed to justify the fee for next season.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas, and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Sue Silvers
December 1990