



'The Yarner'

EDITION SIX

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MCAV president's report 2010

After consistent lobbying by the MCAV, at the 2010 Get Together, the Victorian Liberal/National party announced as policy the return of cattle grazing to national parks as a fire fuel mitigation strategy.

The acknowledgement of grazing as a fire mitigation tool by the opposition is to be commended and it will be a significant step forward in improving public land management and safety.

This policy direction needs continuing support and promotion by Mountain Cattlemen and supporters.

A series of high level meetings have been held to resolve a number of issues affecting Mountain Cattlemen.

The prime issues included improving the working relationship between Parks Victoria, DSE and Cattlemen whose State Forest Licences adjoined the Alpine Park; resolving boundary and containment problems between Parks and State Forest, protecting the heritage of the cattlemen and dealing with the Spotted Tree Frog issue on Max Blair's West Kiewa run

Resolving these issues began with a meeting with the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Gavin Jennings, and subsequent meetings with Forests and Parks executive director Dr Peter Appleford and DSE senior policy officer Doug Hooley.

As a result we have undertaken in conjunction with DSE a review of State Licence areas adjoining the Alpine National Park that will help resolve some of these issues.

In May the MCAV instigated a process with Parks Victoria that I feel will improve our working relationship.

It will also ensure our heritage is preserved and that interpretation boards in the Alpine Park convey an accurate account of our history.

DATE CLAIMER:

MCAV Get-Together Junction Plain 2011

January 14th, 15th and 16th

Gate Open – 9am Friday, 14th January

Entry: under 14 years FREE

Adults \$70

15yo + \$40

Midnight Saturday \$40

** Helmets must be worn by equestrians at all times while riding horses at the Get Together, as well as proper footwear.

COORDINATORS

John Cook 03 5159 9276 or 0427 599 276

Scott Jennison 03 5145 8208

or 0429 854 797

Max Blair and his family have been precluded from their West Kiewa run, originally on the pretext that the area needed two years to 'recover' from the 2006 fires, then it became a cattle containment issue and now it is the Spotted Tree Frog issue.

The tree frog is listed as an endangered species and cattle were deemed by a frog expert as a threatening process under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.

This is a spurious assertion to make given for 140 years the Blairs ran about 1000 head of cattle in the area 12 months of the year until seasonal licenses were introduced in recent years.

The frog was only discovered in 1999 in this area and disappeared after the 2006 fires. A colony of frogs was re-discovered last year.

The frog expert told us these frogs do not like silt, therefore cattle were in the spotlight as a threatening process.

Notice of upcoming AGM

**The MCAV AGM
will be held at Berwick
showground**

October 29, 2010

A site visit in May with Dr Appleford, Doug Hooley, PV and other DSE staff resulted in an independent assessment of the potential impacts on the Spotted Tree Frog of permitting cattle grazing.

The report was undertaken by a geomorphologist who has found that 'no significant impact on the population appears likely'.

As the tree frog is listed as an endangered species, we now have to deal with the State and Federal Environment Ministries.

We are currently following this long process through.

The 'threatening process' has state wide ramifications as it can easily be applied with no bases in fact.

That is why the MCAV have taken a strong stand on this issue.

The likely demise of the Spotted Tree Frog is not only the toxic run off after the 2006 fires, but a Chytrid fungus that has been reported in 52 per cent of threatened Australian Amphibian species.

Also in May, Graeme Stoney and I addressed a Senate Select in Canberra on 'The Incidence of Bush Fires Across Australia.'

It was an opportunity under Parliamentary privilege to question the integrity and veracity of the 'science' that has been used to the detriment of Mountain Cattlemen.

We were also able to present the link between cattle grazing and fuel reduction in the grazing zones of the High Country.

The MCAV is currently negotiating with a publisher to assist in the production of a book on the history of the Mountain Cattlemen.

The author will be Roger Franklin who already has a good knowledge of public land issues.

His most recent book is 'Inferno,' an account of the Black Saturday Fire which is well worth reading.

Finally, the Royal Commission.

I would like to thank Graeme Stoney for the enormous amount of work involved in collating and submitting the MCAV's submission.

Unfortunately it seems the Royal Commission was not focused past the urban fringe.

Although I welcome the increase in prescribed burning and more research I am disappointed the Royal Commission has left out of the equation one of the most cost effective, and efficient ways to reduce fuel loads, that is grazing.

It is negligent and blinkered of the Royal Commission to not acknowledge this fact.

I encourage all to visit the MCAV website www.mcav.com.au to read our paper on The Link between Cattle Grazing and Fuel Reduction in the Grazing Zones of the High Country.

**- Chris Commins
MCAV President**

MCAV GTG Photography Competition 2011

Entries taken on the day
Saturday, 15th January. 2011.

SECTIONS:

- * Junior 14 years and under
- * Open Landscape - pertaining to cattlemen, alpine cattle grazing, cattle grazing, fire or fire fuel reduction.
- * Open Portrait/study Human
- * Open Portrait/study Animal

Get-Together wrap up

The 2010 Get Together on January 8, 9 and 10 at Howson's property on the Avon River, Boisdale, was a tremendous success, locally, domestically and internationally. The GTG was held on the beautiful, undulating Avon river hill country.

The Cattlemen's Get Together celebrates the heritage and history of grazing in the high country and was originally set up for

cattlemen from the different grazing areas to meet and discuss common issues.

MCAV NUMBER PLATES

The plates feature the MCAV logo, a yellow background and green writing



Contact Anne Faithfull 03 5159 9243

Cost: members and associates: \$250

Non-members: \$350

Despite the heat, numbers wise the GTG was a strong 4000-plus crowd over the weekend and many kid's activities were well received. The Don Kneebone Poetry Award, the Bush Minstrel Section, Poet Laurettes Section, and Junior Poets Section was very well received and definitely highlighted the importance of this event to the cultural heritage of the mountain cattlemen's life.

Horse events including the famous Cattleman's Cup, junior and senior, the Frank Ryan Packhorse Championship, Open sprint races, polocrosse, whipcracking, fun novelty events were held and were extremely successful.

The Bush Poetry is a critical part of the Get Together, and is a major drawcard and experience, and anyone interested or who has friends who are interested should be strongly encouraged to take part. The local community has been extremely generous in donating their time resources and experience.

The MCAV wishes to gratefully thank the Howson family for the generous use of their wonderful property for the GetTogether and the hardworking Get Together committee organisers. The MCAV also wishes to wholeheartedly thank all the wonderful people who gave their time, and our terrific sponsors including the Wellington Shire, Dyers Distribution, Mazda, ARB, Richards Harvesting and Haulage, Brown Wigg Maffra, McCormack Mountain Valley Trailrides, Gunns Timber Heyfield,

Johnstons Busted Arse Logging, Heywoods Yowie Logging, McInnes Earthmoving, Metung, Kerr Brothers Excavations, Lang Lang, Maffra PreMix Concrete, Pine Freighters, Transedel Livestock Carriers, Whites Fertiliser Service, Landmark Sale, Workhire Australia, Bundy Ag, Newry Fencing Contractors, Smiths Livestock Cartage, Richard Bell Excavation, H and H Contracting, Jorgensen Livestock Carriers, Office National Bairnsdale, Ollie Electrical Services, Mooroolbark, Briagolong Hotel, Newry Hotel, Tatts General Store, Boisdale, Eskdale Hotel, Off Mountain Accommodation-Mansfield - and especially the ones who assist year-in year-out.

**Roll up, roll up, roll up!
The Don Kneebone poetry
competition awaits your
contribution at the Junction
Plain Get Together 2011.**

You too could gain the confidence to stand for parliament!
Last year's winner was Sonia Buckley, the Liberal Candidate for Gippsland!

The MCAV Get Together was also attended by a number of politicians. The exciting announcement by the State Coalition in the re-introduction of cattle grazing in the Victorian High Country, if re-elected at the next state election, was a feature of one of the keynote speakers - Peter Ryan, leader of the Nationals.

Behind the scenes the president Doug Treasure, among others, spoke with politicians regarding issues still affecting the mountain graziers like the 'unworkable invisible boundaries between grazeable areas and alpine national parks', and the careful management of the alpine areas, utilising grazing as a management tool, to prevent another holocaust.

Plenty of good food to eat, merchandise, and fellowship was had over the weekend and we look forward to seeing everyone again at Junction Plain, Cobungra Station.

**Thanks again, Ben Treasure
2010 MCAV G2G Co-ordinator.**

Weston's hut rebuild

With ominous weather forecast over the March long weekend, 18 people headed up to Bogong for the start for the Weston's Hut rebuild.

In the week previously Parks Victoria had flown in 28 helicopter loads of materials including a slow combustion stove, insulation, scaffolding, bags of rocks for the fireplace, a generator and all the timber.

Using Blair Hut as a base camp supported by Victorian Mobile Landcare Group and under the project management of Andrew Cross, PV, the team achieved outstanding progress in spite of the varied weather conditions.

On Saturday, while dodging sunburn, the foundations for the fireplace were done, the holes for the stumps dug and stumps in place.

The showers started on Saturday night. Sunday began cold and wet and didn't improve. By the time the soaked team retreated from the bleakness back to the warmth and shelter of Blairs for the rest of the afternoon, all the bearers were on the stumps and the slab had been laid for the fireplace.

Meanwhile, nearby Mt Hotham recorded approximately 150 millimetres of rain.

By the time it came to call lunch and pack up on Monday for everyone to drive home, all the floor joists were completed. Great work everyone.

Great progress was achieved with second and third working parties held in March and April with much kinder working conditions.

On the fourth working party held on the weekend of May 22-23 the hut progressed to 'lock-up' stage. The palings were attached to the west end and the back of the hut.

The under roofing iron and ridge cap was also attached and the door and windows all fitted.

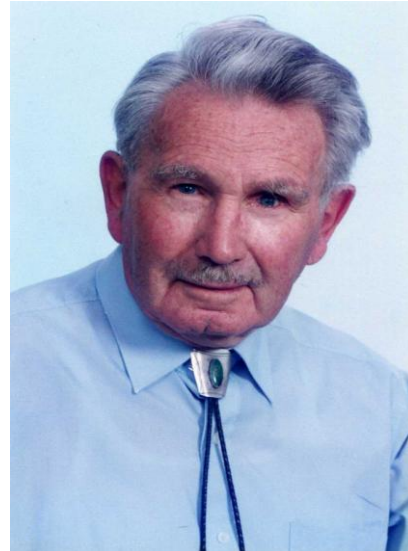
All materials not so far used were stored in the hut for protection from the winter weather. Bill Goldsworthy, Brendan Weston, the draftsman and Mary Goldsworthy walked into the hut to check on progress and thank all the hardworking volunteers for their sterling efforts.

Work will recommence on Weston's Hut on the November long weekend.

- **notes from Barry Hazeldine, NEFTF and Mary Goldsworthy.**

VALE - RW (Dick) Condon OAM, B.Sc.Agr, FAIAS 1924 – 2010

Mr Condon, who died on March 8, aged 85, was best known for his 10-year tenure as Western Lands Commissioner NSW from 1974 to 1984.



But that came after a successful career as Special Soil Conservationist with the then NSW Soil Conservation Service (SCS) as a research officer and botanist, and was followed by a later stint as a much-in-demand rangeland and environmental consultant.

Mr Condon had a long career in the ecology of difficult environments. He was responsible for ensuring the satisfactory stabilisation of the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electricity Authority construction works.

He also had responsibility for directing the reclamation program carried out by the SCS in the summit area of the NSW Snowy Mountains.

Mr Condon had been a keen proponent of National Parks as repositories of the natural environment however he had serious second thoughts about the wisdom of total protection from man-made influences and saw it having an adverse influence, creating a false environment which, in the case of Kosciusko National Park, could only lead to disaster.

Mr Condon was a strong supporter of the Mountain Cattlemen Association of Victoria and was an ardent advocate for the use of grazing and cool fire as management tools.

Dick Condon is survived by his wife, Dorothy, sons Greg, John, Tony and Peter, and a daughter, Jane (Rogers) and their families. - **Chris Commins**

VOM back issues – please order!

So, who has the complete set of Voice of the Mountain (VOM) magazines?

Every year I hear people enquire about the missing few from their set and discuss which volume they need, and how they enjoy looking through the old ones for a walk down memory lane.

Who remembers the cover with the Dog's Grave on the front? What year was that printed?

Or what about the photos of all of these young Cattlemen who are now our senior members of the Association?

The Journals are a vital part of our history and play an important part of our Australian Heritage.

We are asking for orders for back issues of VOM, volumes 1 to 9.

They will be available (if we have enough orders) before Christmas and at the next Get Together in 2011.

The price will be \$15 per book or \$125 for the complete set of 9.

Postage will be extra, please contact us for postage prices. Call 03 5145 4306 or email merchandise@mcav.com.au

- **Susan Noble**

Gippsland Branch AGM and general meeting - June 8, 2010

The Gippsland branch AGM and general meeting was extremely well attended with over 30 people braving the cold to meet in the Mechanics Hall in Stratford.

Outgoing chairman David Treasure opened proceedings by welcoming everyone and declaring the executive positions vacant. Ross Brown was elected branch chairman while Brian Higgins was elected vice.

Tania Coleman was elected as secretary. Also elected on the evening was David Hurley as the new Central Council representative.

The traditional MCAV enamel tin mug -
approx \$9

Order yours now!

(postage additional)

Please contact Susan Noble on

03 5145 4036 or email

merchandise@mcav.com.au

David will replace Doug Treasure whose three-year term as CC representative finishes at the MCAV AGM, and he will join Chris Cooper and Brian Higgins to make up the three members who sit on Central Council for Gippsland.

Before closing the meeting, David Treasure was congratulated on his term, thanked for his efforts and presented with some beautiful glassware as a token of appreciation from the branch.

New chairman Ross Brown then held the general meeting. Ross started by introducing himself to those who may not have met him and said it was encouraging to have so many turn out to support the branch.

Much of the discussion within the meeting centred around the up and coming State and Federal elections and what we can do to contribute to parties and individual politicians that show support to the MCAV and our aim of re-introducing cattle to the high plains.

Who are the new Gippsland branch chairman and secretary?

Ross Brown and his wife Magda, purchased their property on the Maroka Road, 12km north of Valencia Creek, in 1979. They commenced running Hereford cows and calves and obtained a grazing licence in 1982, joining the MCAV the following year in 1983. Soon after Ross began serving on the executive committee as marketing officer a role he held for four years.

Ross also served as a delegate to Central Council a number of times in this period. From 1990 to 2000, Ross was chairman of the Gippsland Branch. During this time he co-ordinated four Gippsland Get-Togethers. After resigning as president, Ross

maintained his involvement in one form or another.

Outside of the MCAV, Ross ran horseback tours for 20 years, covering areas right through the Alpine region. Now semi-retired, Ross spends time at his home in Traralgon and properties at Valencia Creek and on the Gippsland Lakes.

His interests include anything involving adventure, travelling to remote places in Australia and fishing.

Devoted to his wife Magda, two sons, daughter and eight grandchildren, Ross is passionate about promoting the Mountain Cattlemen's Association and the return of cattle grazing to the Victorian High country. Tania Coleman lives with her husband Mark and three children on the outskirts of Heyfield and works part-time as a medical receptionist in Sale.

Although she grew up on dairy farms, Tania prefers beef farming and does not miss milking cows at all.

If you would like information on meetings or would like to become involved in the Gippsland Branch you can contact Ross by emailing rwbrown@netspace.net.au or Tania on 03 5145 1177 or on email: primrosegap@wideband.net.au.

Wanted:

Editorial person to produce 'The Yarnier' a few times a year. Most content is emailed through and the role only requires patience/persistence in chasing people to send it!! Please email lyricalanswers@westnet.com.au if you're interested

Profile – Mark Coleman

Mark Coleman was recently elected vice president of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association.

Mark lives with his wife Tania and three children on 30 acres at Heyfield, and with his mother Pat, he manages the family property 'Primrose Gap' which is situated just north of Licola.

Mark left school at 15 and started a coppersmithing trade with the SEC, during this time Mark's father, Kevin Coleman a third generation mountain cattleman, passed away. Mark remembers his father gave him and his brothers a fantastic grounding in farming, mechanical and engineering fields, and one of his few rules was "there is no such word as can't and

none of you boys are going farming till you have a trade."



A content cow grazes next to the cool burning White Timber fire on the Dargo High Plains during the Black Saturday fires, February 10, 2010.

On completion of his apprenticeship, Mark rode his motorbike to the Gulf of Carpentaria in the Northern Territory to work in stock camps as a ringer living with 13 aboriginals and their families as well as two other white stockmen.

He feels he learnt more then, than at any other stage of his life. In 1988 he graduated from Marcus Oldham College with a Diploma in Farm Management then went home to manage the farm at Licola.

Mark sold his ute and wife's car and bought a dual-cab ute and was in the Northern Territory two weeks later broad-acre cropping.

Mark came home in 1989 with the decision to work full time off farm and manage the farm part time.

In December 2006 the Great Divide fire ripped through the Licola area taking almost 32kms of fencing, stockyards, 800 acres of timber, 140 cows and 120 calves (all were grazing on the Conner's Plain lease hold at the time).

Almost 1100 acres of topsoil and pasture was destroyed. And so, back to the farm full-time to rebuild what was lost. At that time Mark and Tania welcomed their son Jack to the family.

Following the fire was the February 2007 flash flood in which some of the new fencing was washed away and all but 2 dams filled with silt. Then in June of that year an east-coast low and resulting flood made access to the farm almost impossible with Licola cut off for over a month.

In October 2009, with the farm almost back together, Mark accepted a job re-skilling farmers in Eastern Victoria and he continues to run the farm part-time.



Anne Faithfull and Susan Noble man the merchandise tent at Omeo at Easter time.

Merchandise - marketing report...

Susan, Erica and all their wonderful staff enjoyed a very busy and successful weekend at Wombat 2010.

It was a terrific year to order 70 straw hats and lots of peak caps in various colours. Other popular sellers were, as usual, our famous shearers singlets and both men's and ladies polo shirts.

We are asking for orders for pannikins, the enamel tin mug. It has been some years since our last order and we had many requests at the Get Together.

Depending on numbers ordered, the price will be about \$9 each.

Mugs will be available to be picked up at the Get Together, January 2011 or by mail but postage will be additional.

The mugs would make a terrific present for any member of the family, both young and old, near and far.

Remember to keep an eye on the website, www.mcav.com.au as we are often updating the stock and have the occasional special!

The marketing team spent Easter in Omeo, a terrific weekend, I would recommend for families.

We were very busy attending the market in the main street, rodeo in town then up to the polo at Hotham airport.

It was a terrifically successful time - we didn't even get unpacked at the rodeo and people were queuing up!!!

Overall we generated a lot of interest in the Cattlemen and our cause so we had a very worthwhile weekend.

Contact Susan on 03 5145 4306 or email merchandise@mcav.com.au.

A huge thank-you to our wonderful helpers, Erica and I couldn't do any of these weekends without you all, thank-you.

- Susan Noble



Happy patrons perusing the stock during the 2010 Get-Together.

*******NEWSFLASH*******

The Honourable Philip Davis, Member for Gippsland, has offered to sponsor the winner of the Don Kneebone Award - \$1000 for 2011.

In addition to being the Local Member of Parliament, he has attended each MCAV Get Together and is a long time supporter, particularly for the return of grazing. Philip Davis co-sponsored last year's first prize with Ralph's Meats.



2011 Advance port order request

Orders are being taken for the 2010 port crocks. Limited quantities of "Old Cattlemen's Port" will be purchased by the MCAV.

The cost per crock is \$40. The crocks make a great collector's item and the port is vintage, bottled and wax sealed at St Annes Vineyard.

Orders can be collected and paid for at the *Get-Together* or can be sent via Australia Post at an additional cost of \$12 per unit. Orders dispatched via post will require payment at the time of ordering.

Crocks ordered, and nominated for collection, that remain unclaimed after midday on the Sunday of the *Get-Together* will be returned to stock and offered for sale.

Please note, the port will not be available until the 2011 *Get-Together*.

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ORDER FORM

To: Susan Noble
578 Boisdale-Valencia Creek Road
Maffra Vic 3860

ph 03 5145 4306 or
email merchandise@mcav.com.au

Please tick appropriate box:-

Quantity required @ \$40 per unit

I will collect and pay for my port at the 2011 *Get-Together*

I am unable to attend the *Get-Together* and enclose \$ _____
including postage. My address is

Name: _____ contact number _____