

THE YARNER

The official newsletter of the **MCAV**

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Mountain Cattlemen to publish children's book

A CHILDREN'S story about bushfire, that's the focus of a new book being released by the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria (MCAV).

To be donated to hundreds of primary schools across the state, the campaign is set to raise bushfire awareness – and its emotional toll – in a child-friendly format.

Best of all the, MCAV estimates there will be upwards of 1000 books to donate, thanks to a grant from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

"We are really excited about this project," MCAV president, Bruce McCormack, said.

"It's something we have had in the pipeline for a little while and we can't wait to get it onto the shelves at libraries, schools and kindergartens all across Victoria."

With priority to be given to education providers in towns impacted by the 2019/2020 bushfires, Mr. McCormack warned students should be prepared for a realistic look at bushfire and its impact.

"We have tried to create a story that is educational, but realistic," he said.

"It's about the Mountain Cattlemen – and farmers in general – with their long history with the land, and how that history was impacted by the 19/20 bushfires.

"There are illustrations picturing dead stock and the mental affects felt by older members in the story – but ultimately it is a story of family connection, love and the continuation of life."

To encourage primary schools to get involved with the project the MCAV has launched a 'Name this Book' competition, inviting students from across Australia to submit title suggestions.

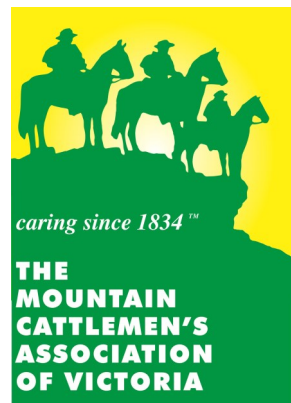
"We have created learning packs that will be sent to all shires impacted by the 19/20 bushfires – inside there will be information on the book itself, along with topics for discussion, craft activities and how it can be related back to the educational curriculum," Mr. McCormack said.

"But we would also love to hear from educational providers – from early childhood to high schools – from around Australia; we want this book to become an engaging, educational resource and think letting students come up with a name is a great start."

Each student from the class with the winning entry will receive a signed copy of the book, along with the opportunity to provide a class photo and spiel about the impact bushfire has had on Victoria – to be included in the final publication.

Mr. McCormack will also visit the winning school to read the story aloud.

NAME THIS CLASSIC: The Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria is calling on primary schools from across the country to name their children's book – a true story that looks at the impact of the 19/20 bushfires on farming families. Pictured is MCAV president, Bruce McCormack.



Get Ready !

It's time for the 2021 G2G

Planning is under-way for our best Get Together yet.

To be held at McCormack Park in Merrijig, we have lots of new events, plenty of entertainment and a guaranteed good time.

So dust off your boots, prepare the swag and mark October 1—3 in your calendar.

Get Together tickets are available at discounted prices online—and all tickets will be refunded if there is a Covid cancellation.

Head to www.mcav.com.au to grab yours now.

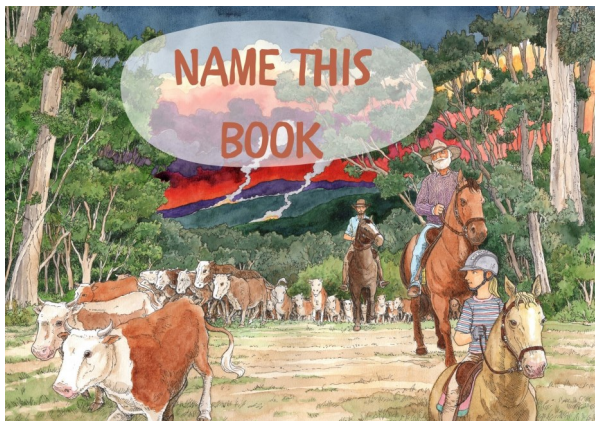
See you there!

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"We are creating online content to compliment the story, to further help students engage," Mr. McCormack said.

The book is written by journalist and MCAV Office Manager, Rhyll McCormack, and illustrated by award winning artist Timothy Ide – of Tom the Outback Mailman fame.



For more information on the book and to access educational resources online, visit www.mcav.com.au.

To receive an education learning pack, or submit an entry into the competition, email book@mcav.com.au

Entries will be open until the end of August.

A word from our president —

I was one of the lucky ones who managed to get away (however briefly) for a few days of sunshine before we found ourselves in lockdown again—escaping to Darwin for a spot of fishing and catching up with some old friends and family.

Now that we are back in Vic with fully charged batteries it is non stop action getting ready for the Get Together—I know many of you will have reservations about purchasing tickets given Covid, but if for whatever reason we are unable to go ahead all ticket costs will be refunded. There is no reason not to buy!

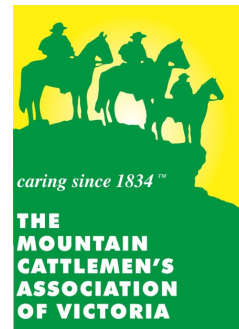
As for the Get Together itself, we have a great weekend planned. We have got the Phegan's performing Saturday night, and they are always a crowd favourite—plus the amazing Jade Gibson taking the stage on Friday. It's the first time Jade will have performed at the G2G and we are really excited to welcome her to the line up. You can watch videos of all our live performers on the MCAV website.

We have also changed the way we are running the horse competition this year—after much deliberation and discussion, it has been decided to make the event a Cattlemen's Challenge, as opposed to a Cattlemen's Cup, with the final race to be replaced with a timed event.

I remember the days when you could buy a good horse for a slab of beer or a load of wood, but not anymore. Over the years we have found that many competitors do not want to race their horses—worth tens of thousands in some cases—and so we are trying something new this year. Please support our riders, their horses and our event staff as we transition to a new look Challenge in 2021.

There are also a few new events, primarily designed to encourage more people to have a go. So if you feel like you are not up to a complete Challenge, but would still like to have a go, consider entering the Obstacle Challenge. Perfect for those with young horses, or old fellas like me.

Please try and come along if you have the first weekend in October free—see you there!



MCAV Board & People to contact:

President: Bruce McCormack

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Associate Rep: Chris Lewis

Special Projects Officer: Chris Commins

North East Branch reps: Lyric Anderson & Philip Ryder. Emergency: Bruce Treasure

Mansfield Branch reps: Cass & Jack McCormack

Omeo Branch reps: Joe Connley & Darcy Fitzgerald. Emergency: Simon Turner

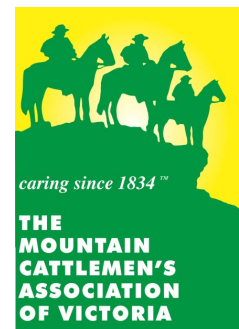
Gippsland Branch reps: Chris Hodge & Rose Faithfull

Office Manager: Rhyll McCormack

Email:

secretary@mcav.com.au

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Get to know a Grazier:

We chat to Duncan McDonald from Tom Groggin Station.

When I first rang Duncan McDonald, owner of Tom Groggin Station, he apologized for the background noise.

"I'm just riding my horse," he explained. "We're doing some dressage moves in the arena."

A quick Google search prior to the phone call had told me Duncan purchased Tom Groggin over 30 years earlier; though math's never been my strong point, it was fair to assume he was past middle age.

"If you don't mind my asking, how old are you?" I asked.

"80," he replied. "I'm in not to bad shape compared to some my age."

And so began a phone conversation with a man who has not only been just about everything, but has excelled at it; a farmer, a tried and true Mountain Cattlemen, a businessman and a historian.

But best of all, Duncan McDonald is a nice guy.

Way back in the 1980s Duncan was working in the corporate world in food manufacturing when the remote Tom Groggin Station came up for sale.

"I'd been there with a friend of mine years ago and just fell in love with the place," Duncan explained.

"I wasn't from the land originally, but I had a guy look at it when it came up for sale and it seemed pretty good."

At the time, the sale was a big deal; owned by the Nicholas family, whose forebears became famous for their pharmaceutical business as much as their World War II aviation heroics, Tom Groggin was 631 hectares with 8,640 hectares of alpine and sub-alpine leases.



Duncan McDonald has owned Tom Groggin Station since the 1980s.

Located between Khancoban and Thredbo, the property borders the Upper Murray River and is completely surrounded by National Park and wilderness.

"It's a beautiful spot," Duncan explained. "It feels very remote, because it is completely surrounded by the Parks."

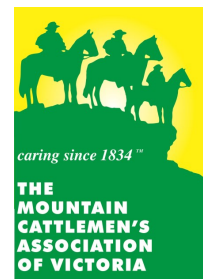
With his property straddling both sides of the border, Duncan first became involved with the Mountain Cattlemen's Association when the Victorian Government of the time refused to transfer over the Tom Groggin grazing leases.

"Victoria had their eye on establishing wilderness areas on Davies Plains," he said.

"I contacted the Mountain Cattlemen and on their advice I got a QC and took the Government to the Supreme Court."

Duncan won his case, and to this day can still remember everyone cheering when he returned to Corryong.

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"It was a pretty good feeling – of course, a few years later the Government changed the laws anyway."

Further grazing land had been taken from Tom Groggin when the New South Wales Government created the Kosciuszko National Park.

Then there have been droughts and of course bushfires.

Despite all this, Duncan and his manager have built the property up to being one of the most recognised in the country; it is home to more than 450 Angus breeders, along with an accommodation business.

Tom Groggin turns off calves to the store market – selling through Auctions Plus - at around 10 months to save carrying them through winter.

"We are only 500 or 600 metres above sea level because we are in a valley, but the cattle still tend to go backwards over winter," Duncan explained.

Although he doesn't live there full time, Duncan has always been a regular visitor – travelling down from Sydney whenever able.

To hear him talk about 'working on some moves' on his horse at 80, it is easy to assume Duncan has always been a country lad and a horseman.

Not so. The first time he rode a horse was after he had purchased the station – but has since fallen in love with the pursuit.

"It's become something I really enjoy – I take them to Tom Groggin to ride around the stock, and then bring them back to Sydney with me as well."

Duncan is also a keen participant in the annual Riley's Ride, part of the Corryong Man From Snowy River Bush Festival.

"When I bought the property," he said, "I knew nothing about the historical links.

"I've done quite a bit of research since though."

Tom Groggin was formerly managed by Jack Riley, the man believed to be the inspiration for Banjo Paterson's 'Man From Snowy River'.

Although Patterson never named his hero, Riley would often tell people he and Banjo had gone riding through Tom Groggin together and that he believed the 'Man' was based on the stories he told.

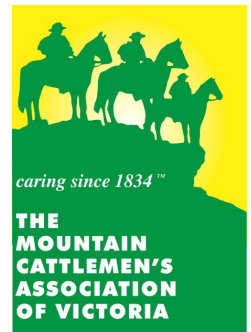
Only a few months ago Duncan was back in the saddle for Riley's Ride – the smile on his face evident of his enjoyment.

"Of course", he adds to me on the phone, "the horses have been with me for a few years now – easily in their 20s I would guess."

And if that isn't the mark of a true Mountain Cattlemen I don't know what is; there are no updated blood lines and fancy breeding in Duncan's stable – instead, it's his old faithful companions, those that have been with him every step of the way, carried him safely through the bush and across the arena day in and day out.

That's the kind of loyalty you find in a Mountain Cattlemen, regardless of whether he lives in the hills beyond Corryong or the suburbs of Sydney.

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The following information has kindly been provided by MCAV member, Melissa Gillespie, who runs the Snowy Mountains Brumby Registry. For more information on the organization, or to read additional stories visit the groups website at

<https://snowymountainsbrumbyregistry.weebly.com/> or You Tube channel <https://youtu.be/hww12KKMfTo>

Lets talk about brumbies—a note from Melissa Gillespie

I'm acting President of the Snowy Mountains Brumby Registry. We are a community organisation in the Snowy Mountains, who are collecting Brumby DNA from Kosciuszko National Park and also a registry for Brumby owners wishing to show their brumbies.

The DNA collected in the past was mainly via deceased brumbies and now majority is taken from Brumbies that have been re-homed through the trapping program. DNA Samples are sent to Texas A&M University, which has the world's largest Horse genetic database, through their Equine Genome project.

Our intention is to show the genetic diversity of our Brumbies, not just in Kosciuszko, but eventually across the Australian Alps. We would like to be able to expand our efforts into the Victorian alps in the future.

The registry recently gave one of the more famous and photographed Brumby Stallions from Long Plain a forever home after he was captured by NPWS through the trapping program. Splash is now the Snow Mountains Brumby Registry Ambassador and will attend shows with us to raise awareness.



Splash the brumby has become the poster boy for the Snowy Mountains Brumby Registry.

Quadbike study underway

National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) student researcher Jordan Walker wants to understand the use of quadbikes for spraying on the farm.

The rise in quadbike related fatalities in Australia last year, combined with minimal quadbike spraying research in Australia, makes this new research particularly vital.

For many Victorian farmers, the quadbike is vital to everyday farm operations, with their use in tasks such as mustering, transport, hunting and spraying. However, whilst quadbikes can be incredibly helpful on the farm, they can also be a dangerous vehicle that has the potential to cause injury.

NCFH is seeking farmers and agricultural workers around Victoria to participate in an online survey. The survey will only take 5 – 10 minutes, with questions about your farm, quadbike use and agrichemical use.

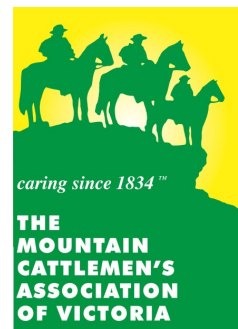
The Quadbike spraying and injury surveillance project (QuadSIS) aims to help researchers understand:

- The extent to which quadbikes are used for spraying on the farm
- The types of agrichemicals applied using quadbikes; and
- Whether spraying on a quadbike creates increased risks that may lead to injury.

Participation in the QuadSIS project will help inform more targeted education into how farmers can use their quadbike to safely apply agrichemicals without putting their health and safety at risk.

To participate in the study go to https://researchsurveys.deakin.edu.au/jfe/form/SV_ezyqAP5WaO751TE

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Keeping children safe on farms

The MCAV is trying to reach the next generation, whether through the creation of a children's book (see page one) or by including new horse events for younger riders at the Get Together.

The Victorian Government is doing the same, working with Kidsafe Victoria to deliver farm safety education to early learning centres and primary schools across the state.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas launched the second annual Kidsafe Victoria Farm Safety Creative Competition recently, with an aim to encourage kids to think about solutions to farm safety issues.

The theme for this year's competition 'Think Farm Safe, Be Farm Safe,' is about teaching children to stop and think about the potential injury risks on farms and to ensure that safety is always front of mind in the farm environment.

The competition provides children with the opportunity to take an active role in investigating farm safety issues, empowering them to become part of the solution. Participants can submit a video they have created, an illustrated story, poster or collage, a radio advertisement, or an invention.



Keeping kids safe on the farm is a new Victorian Government campaign with school kids able to win prizes for participating in the program.

The winning entries will feature in a statewide farm safety education campaign designed to increase farm safety awareness among Victorian parents and carers.

According to the Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit, children under the age of 15 in Victoria's outer regional areas are four times more likely to die due to injury than children in major cities.

In 2019-20, almost 400 Victorian children under the age of 15 were treated in hospital as a result of an injury on farm.

Common injury hazards for children on farms include vehicles such as quad bikes, motorbikes and tractors, accidents involving animals, water hazards, machinery and poisons.

The Farm Safety in Schools Campaign and Creative Competition is funded by Smarter, Safer Farms, a \$20 million state government initiative to improve safety outcomes for Victorian farmers, their families, farm workers and visitors.

For more information on the Kidsafe Victoria's Farm Safety Creative Competition and other learning resources, visit the Kidsafe Victoria website, with entries open until 5 November 2021.

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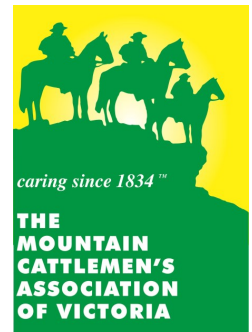
Got a good story to tell ?

We love it when members send in a
'good yarn' for the Yarnar.

If you have something to say, have
written a cracker poem or just have a
great idea for a story send it to

secretary@mcav.com.au

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Note: This issue first came to the attention of the MCAV at a Board meeting in Maffra, and it was resolved the association would do it all it could to help raise awareness and support for the plight of those set to be impacted by the change in legislation. However, there has been some confusion in regards to the regulations. Following the release of this story, the Weekly Times published an article saying the Government had agreed to backdown on the proposal. However, since then additional sources have reported the Weekly Times were incorrect. We are still trying to ascertain where landowners stand.

Leaks in waterfront camping amendment

- MCAV call for extension to public consultation

IN just two months Bruce McCormack's property in North East Victoria could be home to hundreds of campers.

That is, at least, if things go unchanged between now and September.

As of September first camping on licensed riverfronts will become a legal right, regardless of who owns the land, after amendments to the Lands Act 1958 were passed in November.

Mr McCormack, who is president of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria, has the Delatite River running along his boundary on the family farm in Merrijig.

Like others, the draft regulations have left him flabbergasted – allowing the public to camp within 20 metres of a waterway for up to 28 days.

"The amendment has been passed but we have until September to sort out the details," he said.

"The regulations weren't released when they were calling for public feedback meaning they wanted us to have an opinion on rules we weren't aware of – how ridiculous is that."

Mr McCormack said his concerns were many; from liability insurance to stock management, bio security to personal safety.

Like many farmers he also had to diversify income and has run trail rides from his Delatite River paddocks for thirty years.

But what that means for the new rules he couldn't say.

"Imagine if campers were down on the river and we had horses come up only to have someone kicked – am I responsible for their safety on my own property?"

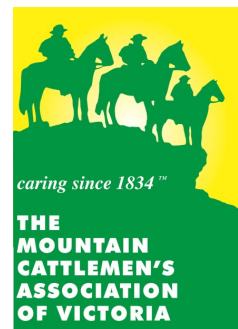
"What if your bull paddock is on the river; no one is able to answer these questions and yet they want us to provide feedback."

"I understand people want places to camp and fish, but why does their leisure come before my livelihood?"

GlenFalloch Station sits on the Macalister River in Gippsland, with some 27 kilometres of river frontage set to be affected by the new regulations.

Recently, Nationals Member for Eastern Victoria Melina Bath visited GlenFalloch, taking the opportunity to call on the Government to extend their public consultation period.

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"Farmers are agricultural businesses: they are not campground caretakers or park rangers," Ms Bath said.

"GlenFalloch Station has a large amount of river frontage – managing camping activities along the river is ... sheer impossibility."

Ms Bath wants the Victorian Government to listen to both those affected and the National party.

"Based on feedback the public consultation has been insufficient – this is too critical to get wrong," she said.

"The consequences are quite dire for both the farmer and the environment if we don't get it right."

Another member of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria, with a remote property in the North East, has similar concerns.

"All consultation has been done online – so for those of us who aren't good on a computer it means there is no consultation; what happened to phone calls," he said.

Requesting his name be withheld, the farmer has concerns talking publicly about his property will only increase problems.

"I have several kilometres of river frontage and I am now concerned that advertising that fact will mean I end up with campers on my banks," he said.

"I'm trying to make a living here, not provide a place for family weekends; if they want to go camping there are plenty of public places to visit without coming onto my property, compromising my biosecurity and stock management.

"Campers are going to have a legal right to drive through my property, through my closed gates and my stock, to access spots to camp," he said.

**MEMBER
SALE**

**ALL KIDS
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"Everyone tells me 'don't worry, they will shut the gates', but I'll be the one sorting stock out when that doesn't happen."

It is understood the draft regulations will also see campers able to collect up to half a cubic metre of fallen timber per person per day, despite farmers not being able to do so, with no consideration for environmental consequences or cultural sensitivity.

MEMBER ONLY

That's the code you need to use when purchasing Get Together tickets. This will ensure you get a discount that is not available to the general public.

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This request comes in from MCAV member, Clive Barton.

Hunting for a Kinnear

I am trying to contact someone who has a good knowledge of Kinnear stock saddles.

The Kinnear stock saddles have not been made for approximately 60 years now, but in their time were undoubtedly the best Australian stock saddle available.

They were the saddle that was used in Thorpe McConville's early famous Rough –Riding show called "Wild Australia".

A special saddle was made by Kinnear called the "Star" for Alan McPhee who won an international rough riding competition in Canada as well as 3 Australian championships

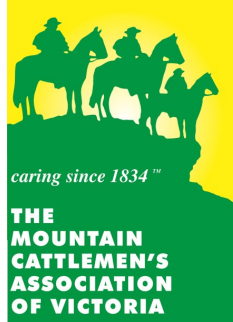
Kinnear made at least 9 different main saddles as well as some cheaper saddles which were available off the rack. I think they started around 1870.



If there is anyone who may have a well looked after saddle I would be interested in seeing photos as I am trying to piece together all the different brands and as years go by many are getting patched up and losing their identity.

I have always ridden in Kinnear's and my father had a collection of them but is no longer with us and his mother and father had one each also.

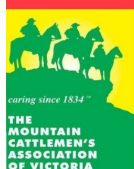
If you can help Clive please send an email to suebarton@westnet.com.au



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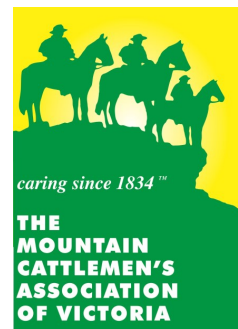
SECRETARY@MCAV.COM.AU



Alan McPhee, below, won an international rough-riding competition in a Kinnear saddle



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Coming Together: RB Sellars partner with MCAV for the second year running

The Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria and RB Sellars have come together to offer an exclusive line of workwear and country clothing, designed to fit in with every Australian lifestyle.

The Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria have signed a major sponsorship deal with Australia's rural outfitter of choice, RB Sellars.

"MCAV have been synonymous with country living since we first entered the High Country in 1835", Bruce McCormack, said.

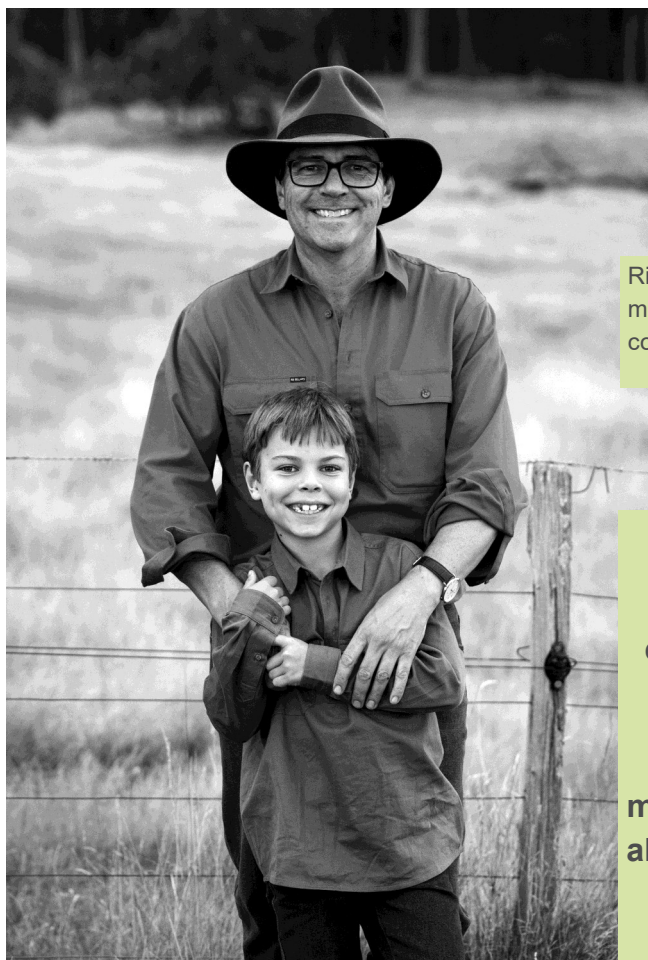
Since then, the image of a horsemen perched high on a plateau has come to resonate with millions of Australians. It is fitting, therefore, that the MCAV has now partnered with RB Sellars - the clothing brand that brought quality country to the mainstream.

"As a group that represents the average farmer, we are humbled that RB Sellars want to be a part of our history," Mr McCormack said. "We are even more excited that they also want to be a part of our future."

RB Sellars is a family-owned Australian brand, formed in 1996 "- the year the famous Burton Half Button Workshirt was released. RB Sellars knows the importance of family values and community and has become a household name across Australia.

Together, the MCAV and RB Sellars want to promote a country lifestyle, support farmers nationwide and remind everyone that sticking together through the good and bad, drought and flooding rains, is what makes Australians great.

RB Sellars merchandise is now available through the MCAV website and will make their official debut at the upcoming Merrijig Get Together with a full display of co-branded RB Sellars x MCAV products.



RB Sellars are also sponsoring the main cup events over the weekend, along with many novelties and fun family competitions.

On behalf of the RB Sellars team, Richard Sellars thanks all our loyal customers from across Australia for their continued support – "we're thrilled to be partnering with the MCAV and look forward to meeting you at the Get Together".

Richard Sellars, pictured left, has signed on with the MCAV as a major sponsor and is looking forward to a great Get Together come October.

COVID Get Together tickets

We are receiving lots of emails from people concerned that, given the lockdown, the Get Together may not go ahead.

Unfortunately we only have the same information as everyone else—but if the G2G is unable to go ahead all tickets will be fully refunded.