

# Tallong Community Focus Group Newsletter Dec 2013

## GREETINGS OF THE SEASON FROM THE TCFG TO THE TALLONG COMMUNITY

Diary note: the Tallong Community Christmas Party is on at the Memorial Hall from **12 noon till 3pm Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December**. We've changed it this year to a lunchtime party with barbecue, which will be provided as usual by the Tallong RFS Brigade, with games for the children.

And, of course, Santa will arrive on an RFS fire truck with a sack load of goodies. So please come and celebrate a Community Christmas in Tallong. Kids, make sure you bring your parents and grandparents along for a good time. Tell them it's BYO with the BBQ but there will be lots of soft drinks as well. For catering purposes, please fill out the form at the bottom of this newsletter and hand it in to the Tallong General Store or email it to [secretary@tallong.com.au](mailto:secretary@tallong.com.au) or [president@tallong.com.au](mailto:president@tallong.com.au) or phone Lionel on 0418 609 572. So, book early & often! Closing date is Wed 11<sup>th</sup> December. Entry is by a gold coin donation which will go to the Red Cross.

### Bus or Train?

Public transport has been a contentious issue for a long time, in particular the demand for increased and better services and connections between Goulburn and Sydney that include the many villages of the Southern Highlands. A recent meeting of Southern Villages Group, hosted by the Tallong Community Focus Group, heard strong arguments for and against buses and trains.

Local Goulburn MP Pru Goward told the meeting the biggest issue for the State Government was the capital cost of tracks and trains and the recurrent costs of maintenance and crews. She undertook to get comparative costs for the use of bus and train services but urged local communities to use their websites and newsletters to communicate better with residents about what is currently available. People can also either phone 131500 or visit the Department's website on [www.131500.com.au](http://www.131500.com.au).

The big question is whether there is enough demand. As an example, a free bus trial service between Tallong and Moss Vale over a three month period was enjoyed by only seven passengers! By contrast, there are now five services a day between Bundanoon and Moss Vale, the bus company's hub.

Pru Goward said there were no plans for any changes to the current rail services or schedules, but any future services would have to be justified on the basis of patronage. Buses are a more economical proposition but the meeting was told that in the small Southern Highland villages such as Tallong about 90 per cent of residents make their own arrangements to drive to Moss Vale or Campbelltown if they are travelling to Sydney. Pru has invited local communities to let her know of their wishes for rail and bus services.

### Tallong Community Christmas Party - 12 noon Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December.

Name: ..... No of adults: ..... No of children: .....  
Contact phone number .....or email address: .....

### **Apple Day latest...**

TCFG President Margaret Botticchio reports there has been a good response from the many primary and secondary schools in the region to the large sculpture competition that will be the feature event of the Apple Day Festival on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May. The winning primary school and secondary school will receive \$500 in cash each, generously donated by Boral.

All the sculptures must follow the apple theme and be at least 1.5m high (which may include the plinth) and not more than 2.5m wide/deep. They will have to be able to withstand at least one month in all weather and must be able to be placed without the use of heavy machinery.

There is wide scope for budding sculptors to feature an apple. It could be a simple theme as the enjoyment of eating an apple or it could represent aspects of life in Tallong that the apple symbolises. Early European settlement in the Tallong district was deeply involved in the growing, harvesting and marketing of apples.

All entries will be placed onsite no later than the closing date of Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April. The winners will be announced at the Apple Day Festival at 1pm.

### **Granny Smith Apples...**

Also on the apple theme is the Granny Apple art competition open to infants and pre-schoolers who are invited to do an A4 portrait of their Granny. This competition is to commemorate Maria Anne Smith, the granny who originated the Granny Smith apple in 1868 in Eastwood, NSW, from a chance seedling.

Entry forms will be distributed in First Term next year.

### **Reducing Fire Hazards...**

President of the Tallong RFS Chris Boland says there are three ways to suppress a bushfire.

1. Remove the fuel:
2. Remove the oxygen:
3. Cool the fire:

“If you consider these three options you will realise that there is only one step we can take **before** the onset of a fire - we can reduce or remove the fuel,” Chris says.

Hazard reduction is the practise of reducing or removing fuel in order to minimise the damage by a bushfire.

Chris suggests that as we move into the hotter months it is worth looking around your home to identify where you can best employ your own hazard reduction plan. Usually it means simply clearing under and around trees, moving piles of winter firewood away from the home, and lopping or trimming branches away from the eaves.

Once again the RFS asks everybody to observe Total Fire Ban days as they occur during summer. And a reminder that until March next year, absolutely no burn-offs are allowed without a Permit issued by Captain Kevin Roberts. You can phone Kevin on 0418-221-019 or Bushfire Control Centre (Yass) on 6226-3100.