

Presidents Report to the 2012 TCFG AGM

I begin this report on the activities that have kept the TCFG committee busy over the past year with a brief look at the purpose of forming this committee. The work of the committee was, at the time of incorporation, set in written form as objectives which would allow the TCFG to facilitate an active community life in Tallong. The objectives, in simple form are as follows:

To regularly consult with and inform the Tallong community

To stage social and cultural events

To improve community facilities

To liaise with Goulburn Mulwaree Council and other public and business bodies

To address, as far as we are able, issues of common concern

To care for our natural and historical heritage

To hold regular meetings, conducted in an organised and ethical manner and be financially responsible

The committee meets regularly, once a month, in a friendly atmosphere. Some members have taken on responsibilities that inturn allow the meetings to run efficiently and aids committee decision making. In this, our 7th year of staging Apple Day, Geoff Clark, our Secretary has taken care of correspondence, minuted meetings and constructed agenda as well as being the first point of contact for any community member who wanted to return an RSVP or simply to raise an issue of general concern. Dugald Black, our Treasurer reported our financial position monthly and yearly as you see at this AGM. The committee, on these figures determined to generate an income sufficient to cover running costs and planned events and projects, to apply for grants and to distribute excess funds in the community.

This year, the most significant event in terms of income and complexity is Apple Day and it was decided some years ago that a separate subcommittee with a different structure should be formed to organise this important event. Apple Day organisation was headed by Mike Kennedy who has done a superb job of assembling all the tasks, contacts and personnel required for the Day to run smoothly. I particularly noticed the volunteers at the entry points, wearing their name tags, and welcoming our visitors. The program of events, layout of a larger number of stalls, exhibitions, competitions and entertainments, not forgetting the food, kept a variety of people of different ages engaged over the day. This to me was a very visible example of how well Tallongites work together and relate to other people. One realises how much we have learnt from staging past Apple Days.

To stage Apple Day requires our biggest annual expense, our insurance policy, and in this year we managed to pay for two. With attendance numbers increasing we also have increased expense but on the other side of this ledger we have managed to distribute over three thousand dollars amongst local organisations and attract an impressive amount of sponsorship from local businesses who by

their donation give us the feedback that Apple Day is a successful community event worthy of their support.

As you can see both committees this year have functioned on your behalf very well indeed but as every community organisation finds, vacancies must be filled, memberships renewed and new members encouraged. Next year both committees will need new participants, and I take this opportunity of asking you to join either committee, you will certainly be made welcome. Speaking for others on these committees we all find the tasks we do enjoyable, no one person is burdened with too much and there is a great deal of personal satisfaction to be gained from working together and achieving a worthwhile result for the community.

In this last year the TCFG has extended its social/cultural agenda, the most ambitious being a dinner in March which came out of discussions at the last AGM when interest in our bushland heritage emerged. Santa Sabina Tallong campus was offered as a venue and the evening developed into a twilight walk through bushland trails, refreshments on the veranda, an enjoyable meal and a speaker between courses. Paul Collins gave a stimulating talk on population pressure and the future of our natural environment. We are pleased that we managed to cater for over seventy and were able to keep the cost reasonably low. The community's prompt response with the RSVP, allowed the catering and setting up to go smoothly. You will also notice that we have adopted the Tallong Midge orchid as an emblem on the community noticeboard and we plan to further develop community interest in our bushland with a Supper Talk on October 4th titled "Little known treasures of Tallong Bushland". Finally, *Tallong: A Heritage* continues to sell and inform.

The committee has informed the community through the distribution of a monthly newsletter. John Lombard has directed this bulletin in a way that invites readers to respond. John also gives regular articles about Tallong happenings to the Goulburn Post. It is pleasing to see local groups like the Tallong Rural Fire Brigade and Tallong Public School making informative contributions. A variety of knowledge about Tallong is available to a wider audience on our redesigned website www.tallong.com.au that is now linked to the Council's new website www.goulburnaustralia.com.au. The purchase with Veolia Mulwaree Trust of our Village Noticeboard brings to a close our "Community Announcement" project. After consultation with Tallong Public School, The Memorial Hall Trust and the Rural Fire Brigade it appeared that all were in unsuitable locations to display public notices. A community announcement sign in a main street position was preferable. An added reason was provided at the recent community meeting where we were urged to plan for emergency situations and encourage community preparedness.

In past years we have built a workable relationship with Goulburn Mulwaree Council. At the Council's Outreach Meeting we continued to notify Council about local issues of road safety, railway problems and dangerous road numbering and naming practices that have developed over time. Following on from information we received about the Council's new budgeting process the TCFG put in a submission for the completion of two footpaths. One at the school was passed by council vote and is currently well used by the school community. The other on Highland Street will have to be resubmitted next year. Council collaboration ensured the operation of a group of residents we have named the "Streetscape Group". This group of volunteers work independently of the TCFG. They have improved the roadside appearance by weeding, mowing and removing accumulated detritus

and have created cleared verges for those of us who like to walk about our village. To do this work the Streetscape Group have observed Council guidelines and undergone official safety training.

This year was characterised by an unprecedented cooperation between community organisations. In past years we have donated funds to improve community infrastructure, to the Memorial Hall Trust and to the Recreational Reserve Trust. It was pleasing to see at Apple Day and at meetings and events like the Bush Dance just how much the Hall amenities have improved. Indeed at the Bush Dance we seemed to have attracted a group of young bush dancers who energetically appreciated the renovated dance floor. This year the TCFG, in consultation with school principal Sue Mathews, supported the schools drive to attract new enrolments. At first we advertised the school's before and after school care program, found volunteers to supervise the breakfast club, have set up an annual award for Community Awareness and we have more people from the Tallong community attending special assemblies and prize giving ceremonies. Of course at Christmas time members of the Tallong Rural Fire Brigade along with members of the TCFG helped with a community celebration of the season and raised a donation for the Red Cross which actively sponsors the school's breakfast club.

I think you will agree that the TCFG Committee and the Apple Day subcommittee have had an outstanding year. On behalf of the Tallong community I say well done indeed to Dugald, Geoff, Janet, John, Lionel and Sharyn and to Mike and all Apple Day volunteers. Please take the opportunity provided by the AGM to volunteer for either committee and don't forget to renew your membership. After all, it is the membership that sets the goals and maintains our existence.

Margaret Botticchio TCFG President