

Presidents Report to the 2015 Tallong Community Focus Group AGM

What a momentous year for Tallong, 2015 is proving to be! Most notable is the staging of the 10th Apple Day Festival which was achieved by the active participation of local volunteers and organisations working together to hold an enjoyable event that promotes Tallong as a village with people proud of its identity related to an apple orchard heritage. Congratulations to all volunteers who performed the necessary tasks like donation collecting or selling apples from the cart. Many residents contribute through their membership of local organisations that support Apple Day. Congratulations also to others, who volunteer for the Apple Day Organising Committee, deliver and put together the Tallong Newsletter and those who contribute to the Tallong web site. Well done Tallong for this collaborative effort that brings about this iconic event, Apple Day.

Earlier in 2015 a great number of Tallong residents attended the ANZAC Centenary Service, at which Janet Black's research into Tallong's WW1 veterans was displayed. John Lombard's book *Tales of Tallong* contained research into the circumstances whereby four Tallong boys who did not come back were buried in Belgium and France by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The ANZAC Centenary and the research attempted prompted the commissioning of the Tallong ANZAC Centenary Plaques to be placed at the entrance to Memorial Drive on which the Memorial Hall was built by the war time community. The focus on the first world war heightened awareness of the damage done to the metal plaques on the war memorial and initiated a project to restore and enhance the War Memorial. Village planning for the Kangaroo March visit on the 29th September 2015 is well underway for a picnic lunch at which locals can mingle with the marchers and see the display of the Tallong community's war effort and take part in a dedication ceremony for the recently installed ANZAC Centenary Plaques. In October 2014, Villagers joined in with Tallong Public School to celebrate their Centenary at the current site and the 1865 beginnings of schooling in the Tallong District.

Throughout this year of celebration and commemoration, projects were initiated to improve facilities for staging the Apple Festival, the ANZAC Service and to enhance the appearance of the Village. At last year's AGM members discussed these projects and nominated the principles they valued. Promotion of heritage, safety, developing tourist potential, improving village appearance and improving village amenities were guiding principles they would use when turning plans into projects. To make these improvements the village has attracted funds and in kind support from the Goulburn Mulwaree Council, Southern Phone Company and Boral as well as help from individuals with practical aspects of each project.

To finish, I applaud the work that is done by the TCFG committee, by members and by the other organisations that make up the Tallong community, by their combined efforts all these events and projects enhance our shared life in Tallong.

Margaret Botticchio - President TCFG

