

Tallong Twitterings

Fifty years ago this week, the district of Tallong suffered its worst disaster since Europeans first trudged through the area in 1818 on an official expedition established by Governor Lachlan Macquarie.

This was the excruciating experience of the 1965 bushfires that destroyed Tallong and much of the surrounding district.

In the early part of the 20th century, Tallong was the centre of a major fruit-growing area. In 1917, for example, the apple crop was estimated at 10,000 cases.

But the terrible fires that began on 5th March 1965 ended all that: about 250,000 hectares were burned and 28 homes were destroyed in Tallong, 31 in Wingello.

The worst was the annihilation of most of the orchards in the area.

On Sunday 3rd May, the Tallong Apple Festival that commemorates the apple tradition will celebrate its tenth anniversary and there will be a special emphasis on the 50th anniversary of the bushfires.

Another feature of this year's Festival will be the Fleece to Garment competition that is already creating much interest. Visitors will be able to see many teams competing to make a garment from a raw fleece in different ways.

Goulburn Handweavers and Spinners, who were the winners last year, will send two teams to take part. One person will knit straight from the fleece while another will have a loom prepared to weave a garment.

Two groups of felt makers will join in working against the clock to make berets.

Best Foot Forward...

In September, a major First World War recruiting effort known as the Kangaroo March will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The march is being recreated from Wagga Wagga to Campbelltown, a distance of 520-kms. The marchers will arrive in Marulan on Monday 28th September for an overnight stay.

Next morning, the marchers will travel down Old Tallong Road to Tallong where they will stop for lunch. In the afternoon, they will continue along Old Wingello Road to Wingello for the night.

In spite of the distance from the war front, nearly 40 per cent of eligible Australian males (aged 18-44) volunteered to fight for King and Country.

Signs R Us...

To better promote the Southern Tablelands area, the Tallong Community Focus Group wants to improve road and rail signage. The Focus Group has approached the Goulburn Mulwaree Council for assistance.

Specifically, we want to erect signs on the Tallong railway platform to alert passengers that Tallong hosts the annual Apple Festival, and is home to the rare Tallong Midge Orchid and the habitat of the Glossy Black Cockatoo.

The Focus Group is also seeking to promote Highland Way as an alternate and leisurely tourist route from the Hume Motorway to Moss Vale via Tallong, Wingello, Penrose, Bundanoon, Exeter and Sutton Forest. We would like to see appropriate signs north and south on the Hume Motorway pointing to the entrance on Highland Way.

GMC General Manager Warwick Bennett has undertaken to seek approval from the Australian Rail Track Corporation that has responsibility for railway station platforms. And he has offered to seek a response from the Roads & Maritime Services for the road signs.