

Tallong Twitterings



The momentum for recovery is gathering in Tallong after successive crises that first caused the cancelation of our annual Apple Day Festival and later shutdown all public events. When Tallong's community organization TCFG successfully applied to extend the size and heritage relevance of the Memorial Park at a Goulburn Mulwaree Council meeting on the 7th of April 2015, it was not envisaged that the project's completion would spearhead such a recovery. The concept plan originally presented added two themes to the Memorial Hall's World War 1 dedication. First, Tallong's apple orchard past with the Jim Watling Walkway, the second being a nature reserve dedicated to the flora and fauna of our unique bushland. The works were to be carried out in stages by local tradesmen, the nature reserve being the last and presently nears completion.

Unfortunately, the first attempt to schedule a public event on ANZAC Day in April 2020 was cancelled due to the Covid 19 restrictions. So people of Tallong at midyear look forward to and prepare for a community event which will not only cover the opening of the completed nature reserve but add a celebration of 100 years since the Memorial Hall was open, a Remembrance Day Ceremony and a delayed thank you to our RFS Brigade on the 14th November 2020.

Since 2015 the Nature Reserve works were financed largely by Council's village funds and the public opening and finishing off were achieved with a NSW bushfire recovery grant. The grant was to be used to revive local businesses by engaging them in all levels of the project. The reserve works involved extensive clearing, drainage and earthworks, creating a walk way through plantings of native species including *Alocasuarina littoralis*, the habitat of our endangered Glossy Black Cockatoos. Sculptures of 10 local fauna species, some of which are endangered and others simply present, are placed along the path for walkers to discover. Additionally the nature reserve houses a sculpture dedicated to the Tallong Rural Fire Brigade. The Tallong Community is grateful to all the emergency services that contributed to overcoming the dangers imposed by the summer fires and hopes to thank them with a lunch on the day.

As winter approaches in large tracts of bushland in the Morton National Park and along the Shoalhaven Gorge damaged after the long drought and ferocious bushfires we can see the first signs of rejuvenation in nature's miraculous process of recovery. Blackened eucalypt forests are sprouting new growth, grass trees also release new foliage and new fern fronds are unfolding.

For some species like Banksias and Wattles the process of recovery takes longer as seed banks need to be replenished and rehabilitating the wildlife will take even longer. Indeed the long road to bringing our scorched bushland back to health is just starting and these first signs of rejuvenation are positively encouraging especially to a population suffering the after effects of these crises.

Of course as nature has shown us this planned event is only one aspect of a full recovery. This year the community has been impacted by several crises, the district has suffered property damage as well as destruction of Tallong's once scenic bushland. The health impacts from being subjected to heightened levels of anxiety and smoke pollution are slow to manifest and will take a long time to alleviate. Hopefully, an important part of recovery is that we have learnt a lot about how we respond to these various crises and this understanding will inform our preparations for next summer's bushfire season.



Photo courtesy Sonya Szczur, Cumburmurra Sanctuary, Tallong