

ACCESS FOR ALL Inc NEWSLETTER



Christmas 2006 EDITION NO. 6 : 8

While Joan Webb is pouring hours into preparing the AFA submission on the South East Escarpment Plans I will attempt to fill her role for this addition of the newsletter. Please don't expect the usual high standard! It is gently raining on the roof outside. Hopefully it will continue and spread.

The weekend before last John and I were fortunate to spend three days riding in the Deua River area with Terry Hart and Joan and Reg Webb. For those of you who ride these areas often I now understand why you are fighting so hard to protect them from mindless bureaucracy. To ride along a bridle path over a hundred years old overlooking a crystal clear river and listen to the stories of how the early pioneers used these incredible networks of trails brings home to you how fragile our grasp on them is. To picture men and women on horseback herding pigs and even tar-footed turkeys along these narrow and sometimes treacherous paths was poignant for me.

There are two major heritage issues at stake here. The first is the actual loss of the paths themselves but equally as important is the possible loss of the human heritage. We currently have a group of people who not only know the trails and tend to them but who tell the stories about the people who used them long ago. If these paths are locked up we not only risk losing them to our relentless bush but within a generation the stories will fade too. Unless our current riders can take the next generation on horseback along these trails and share these stories a passion for them and their history will not be lodged in the psyche of our young.

It is nothing short of cultural vandalism to put a padlock on such an integral part of our bush heritage.

• SEEMP SUBMISSIONS

Sincere thanks to the committee for the preparation of our AFA submission to the NPWL regarding the

South East Escarpment Management Plan. They have produced fourteen pages of valuable response on our behalf. The final draft will be reviewed by Neil Waddell and delivered this week.

However there is impact in numbers where the government is concerned. If you have put yours aside please dig it out and get it in. If you need more time contact the NPWL Office Narooma on 44762888 and request an extension. In light of some difficulties with misplaced documents in the past it would be advisable to request a "delivery" and "read" receipt. It may be even worth backing up an electronic submission with a hard copy.

Peter has suggested we hand deliver the AFA document. There may be some wisdom in that. Regardless of whether your particular interest is horse riding, 4wheel driving or fishing we are talking about the heritage of countless generations to come. This is our opportunity to have our say. **Do it!!**

• HERITAGE

Congratulations to Peter Smith and Terry Hart who were successful in their application for a \$1000 dollar Heritage grant towards the research phase of mapping bridle tracks. Peter kindly represented AFA and was presented with the award at the recent Royal Australian Historic Society State History Conference by Mr Michael Collins, the chairman of the Heritage Council of NSW. Whilst the amount is not grand we can assume it signifies recognition by the Heritage Council of the importance of these bridle paths in the cultural fabric of our history. After considerable discussion at the September AFA meeting it was decided that because of the natural limits set by the small amount of funds, one track should be mapped in detail with the others to be identified for future mapping. As with everything involving a grant the forms required to be completed for this were worthy of hundreds of thousands rather than one so we thank Terry and Peter for all the work required to gain this recognition of one facet of AFA's cause.

• NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

The last meeting was held at the Araluen Hotel on

October 28. Thanks to the twenty or so members who attended a productive session which predominately focussed on the SEEMP submission.

TREASURERS REPORT

As at the end of October AFA has at bank \$7002:60 with no outstanding debts.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- Horse-riding Code of Practice – this was discussed and the sub committee (Reg Webb, Gary Gowen, Terry Hart, Peter Kneen and Neil Waddell) will meet with NPWS later this month to further this and other issues.
- Calendars – thanks to all those who forwarded suitable photos for next year's edition. Because of your generous response there will be two editions –one for the coast and another for the tablelands. Out of regard for their involvement in the respective areas Merv Innes will be featured on the Coast edition and Neta and Vern Davies on the tablelands version. We all look forward to hanging this practical historic record in the kitchen to enjoy- now however as they will become collectors items we will all have to have one of each!! Where else will you find such an amazing collection of private historic photos.
- Christmas Meeting – this will be held at the **Araluen Hotel on 2 December commencing with a meeting at 10:30am and an outdoor pub barbeque at 12:00noon. Come and experience great country hospitality and food. Children are welcome and it would be great to see all members there to catch up, share some Christmas cheer and celebrate a very successful year. The cost will be minimal.** RSVP-28Nov – Neil Waddell



HO! HO!

• **MEMBERSHIP**

We can never rest on our laurels about membership. You may have an opportunity during the festive season to catch up with friends and family who may be interested in joining our group. Remember all you need to do is nominate them so they can be accepted for membership by the committee.

• **WEBSITE**

If you have not been into our website lately please do so. You are in for a treat. If you are not computer aware, during the holidays the children or grandchildren will get you in on -

www.accessforall.asn.au Just ask them. Sincere thanks to Peter Kneen for his hard work and professional approach to this vital and most influential tool for our cause.

It is pleasing to hear that the Waddell family who have suffered some ill health this year are all feeling better and the Committee wish them, along with all members, a very happy and relaxed Christmas.

Mary Mathias filling in for Joan



Merry Christmas to All

• **COMMITTEE CONTACTS**

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