



Campfire

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Fire in the Sky?

All the drama and none of the risk of fire, this sunset display was captured one Friday evening by George Baczocha from the verandah of his cabin. Magnificent!



Don't forget!



***This weekend
May 30 - 31
Working Bee***



If you haven't already done so, call or email Adam and put your name down

Treasurers Report

by Stephen Holdstock

At the Board meeting on Saturday 16th May we discussed a number of financial matters. As a result I thought it appropriate to provide the membership with an update.

Year ended 30 June 2009 Estimates – We are broadly on budget for this year. Consequently, I can confirm that there will be no need for an additional levy for the current year. However, coming into the last two months of the financial year our bank balance is not healthy. You can assist by paying any outstanding accommodation, agistment etc. amounts as soon as possible.

Year ended 30 June 2010 Budgets and Levies – We spent significant time reviewing the draft budgets for next year. These will be finalised shortly. However, the Board did resolve to set the FY10 levies as follows:

- Full members - \$4,550 (including GST of \$363.64). The \$200 increase, compared to 2009, represents an increase of approximately 4.5%. The increase has been applied totally to

accommodation credits. Therefore the levy now includes accommodation credits of \$1,200 (including GST).

- Associates - \$2,275 (including GST of \$206.82) The \$100 increase has also been applied totally to accommodation credits, resulting in accommodation credits of \$600 (including GST)..
- Guest accommodation fees and trail rides – These will be increased – details to be advised shortly.

The next financial year will be a challenge, particularly if there are a number of member resignations over the next few weeks. As with prior years, there is always the risk of an additional levy, particularly if membership numbers were to fall. Any assistance in attracting new members will reduce the chance of an additional levy and potentially allows the Co-Operative to spend money on improvements to the property or other projects. I will provide updates throughout the year.

4.5 Hours to Yarramalong

pics by Alasdair Langridge
story by David Simmonds & George Barkunowicz

Sunday 17 May an intrepid group of 14 Bush Walkers set off from Hidden Valley to follow the Great North Walk to Yarramalong.

In the group were two HV members, Steve McKay and David Simmonds and 12 guests who had stayed overnight at HV.



We followed Toohey's Road for just under 2 km then descended approximately 150 m over 1 km to Dead Horse Creek.



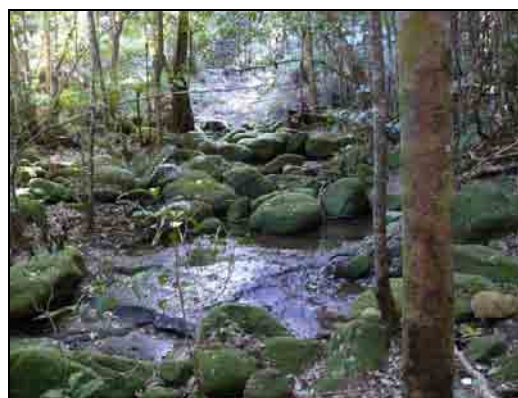
Earlier four vehicles had left HV to drop return vehicles in Cherry Lane which was at the end of our walk. Map reading and co-ordination was such that two vehicles went South on the Freeway to Yarramalong and two vehicles went North on the Freeway to Yarramalong. How do you do that you might ask? We say that we are just good at it.

We then climbed 100 m over the next 1 km to reach a straight path which took us over 1 km of flat terrain to our finishing point at Cherry Lane. We returned to Hidden Valley (via the cafe at Yarramalong).



Initially we followed Ourimbah Creek along Ourimbah Creek Road (gravel section) for approximately 5 km until we got to String Bark Point. (a.k.a Leeches Lair). Up to this point, the walk was fairly flat. After crossing the creek via the walking bridge at Stringy Bark Point, we made a 200m climb for just over 1 km to Milligan's Ridge at which point we met up with Toohey's Road (a very 4 wheel drive gravel road).

The scenery is varied and spectacular.



Effort required to make this trip – I'd call it medium bush walking. The day was glorious, no fine tuning possible. The company – uplifting.

The next bush walk is tentatively planned for July 19.



Pencil it into your diary and stay tuned for updates via the noticeboard and/or Hotmail.

Got something to say?

Got something to sell?

Got something to see?

Please forward any contributions you have for **Campfire** to nell@blackbetty.com.au

June Campfire Deadlines

Contributions: June 19

Publish Date: June 22

Duty Managers & Wranglers Needed

*Please contact Adam,
manager@hiddenvalley.com.au
 or call 4362 1438
 to volunteer*

Manager's Report

by Adam Little

As at the last Board Meeting, Saturday May 16, these dates were presented as weekends requiring volunteer Duty Managers to work, along with a team of wranglers for the horse trails.

It is important to note that a Duty Manager is not necessarily a Wrangler. The Duty Manager is responsible for the 'Management' of the property in the absence of the Manager and is the first point of call for Members with queries. If a Duty Manager is not a Wrangler it is The Duty Managers responsibility to ensure that Wranglers are nominated and available for any scheduled trails and horse management but not necessary that they attend the ride or round company horses.

A comprehensive Duty Managers Manual has been compiled which outlines essential notes on procedures and regulations necessary for running the property in the absence of the Manager. A copy of this document will be posted on the website for access to all Members and several hard copies will be available from the office at Hidden Valley

As such the dates listed here require volunteers for Duty Manager and Wranglers. Please email Adam on manager@hiddenvalley.com.au or call on 4362 1438 to advise your availability.

A further 5 instructors have used the valley's facilities over the last month, with our cross country course being praised about how well it has been kept and the general facilities available here.

Sylvia Gordon, Belinda Bailey, Salina Malerline, Jenny James and Michael Keeting have all hired the course to use our facilities to train on.

Belinda Bailey is also using Hidden Valley as a ride and educational base for the students attending the horse program through TAFE N.S.W., this year. The students have used Hidden Valley twice now and will be back next week to continue to train. I see this as a great highlight for the valley as the students will talk to their friends about the property and come back and use the facilities on offer. We are being paid by TAFE to hold the training at our property.

ET Australia have also recently re-visited the valley twice bringing 20 students to enjoy the challenges thrown at them by riding a horse for the first time. The students enjoyed every minute of our trail rides, with some students coming back twice. Two more visits are planned this year with an income earned of more than \$2,200.00. This is a great use of the horses, along with the extra income when the horses are not used during the week.

George Baczocha and I have worked on an up dated version of the Hidden Valley work plan for 2009-2010, which sees a lot of projects completed on time, while others have had to be put on the back burner through lack of funds and or time. A version of this plan is outlined in this issue of Campfire under a separate property report by George.

Clearing of trees continues on the property with George and Hamish working hard over last weekend to remove dead or fallen trees.

The property is moving forward and a noticeable difference in the quality and quantity of pastures available to the horses this year has certainly helped everyone's hip pocket. The pastures program was started in 2007 – 2008 and we are now seeing the rewards of those programs. Further pasture improvement is targeted for August 2009 to assist the winter species to flourish even more as currently the pastures are C4 summer dominant.

I am about to advertise the second part of the wranglers course on the weekend of the 27th and 28th of June, 2009. The second course will be run over two days. The course will consist of further horse skills and quad bike skills to gain qualification to be able to ride the quad as a Wrangler or Duty Manager.

This weekend will see the official start to horse rugging, which will once again take up a lot of the staff's time. Approximately three and a half hours a day will be taken up with unrugging and rugging horses.

I will be away from the property from the 18th of May, to the 26th of May, 2009 and on holidays from the 17th of July through to the 27th of July, 2009.

As we move towards the second half of the year many projects are planned, but the workshop refurbishment, kitchen and paddock clearing are the three major projects that take priority at the moment.

June 09	
6 th , 7 th & 8 th	Saturday & Sunday Bonfire Weekend
21 st .	Sunday only
28 th	Sunday only
July 09	
4 th and 5 th	Saturday & Sunday
18 th and 19 th	Saturday & Sunday
August 09	
1 st and 2 nd	Saturday & Sunday
15 th and 16 th	Saturday & Sunday
30 th	Sunday only
September 09	
5 th and 6 th	Saturday & Sunday
19 th and 20 th	Saturday & Sunday
October 09	
3 rd and 4 th	Saturday & Sunday
17 th and 18 th	Saturday & Sunday
November 09	
1 st	Sunday only
7 th and 8 th	Saturday & Sunday
21 st and 22 nd	Saturday & Sunday
December 09	
5 th and 6 th	Saturday & Sunday
19 th and 20 th	Saturday & Sunday
January 2010	
2 nd and 3 rd	Saturday & Sunday



Spur Winged Plover

.....David Simmonds

The Spur-winged Plover's range is from Southern Queensland down through most of NSW and VIC into SA - south of the Goyder line. The Spur Winged Plover (*Vanellus miles novaehollandiae*) has a defining black neck-stripe and yellow wattle mask. The more northern similar species of plover (Masked Plover) has a larger yellow wattle mask and no black neck stripe. This is one for the Grey Nomads to check out if you are travelling in the top half of QLD.

The birds have a wide range of vocal calls which can be heard at any time of the day or night. Since this bird lives on the ground it is always alert and even though it rests it never sleeps properly. (Just like a Mum)

Spur Winged Plovers are a shy and harmless bird in summer and autumn but are best known for their bold nesting habits, being quite prepared to make a nest on almost any stretch of open ground. There are a lot down on the Golf paddock and in the area around the Wagon Wheels jump.

Breeding season usually happens after the Winter Solstice (June 21). The nesting pair then defends its territory against all intruders by calling loudly, spreading their wings, and then swooping fast and low. Nearly always two birds are seen together, a male and a female which are almost identical. The chick reaches full height after 4 to 5 months and will often stay with the parents for 1 to 2 years resulting in groups of 3 to 5 birds over the summer months.

Have Fun



Welcome to our new members

Once again we are delighted to welcome some new members to Hidden Valley.

Annett Gröbel and Mark Maddox are not complete newcomers to our Valley. Visiting us a couple of times as guests, Annett and Mark know how good our Valley is and have now decided to take advantage of our TBYB offer.

I took a fabulous shot of Annett and Mark at the round yard after they returned from a morning tail ride a couple of weeks ago. Unfortunately, it remains in my mobile phone and the USB cable to retrieve it remains lost.

Annett graciously agreed that I could include a photo of them next month. Thanks Annett.

Happily, not dependant on my photographic limitations, we can include a family shot of our newest members, **Sharon Le Dan and Ross, Natalie and Zara Ferrier.**

When I met Ross at the round yard after their first visit to Hidden Valley his response was that "Other than the poor mobile reception, Hidden Valley ticks

all the boxes for their family". As a practicing doctor, Ross needs to be contactable. Happily, a new phone, and Telstra's improved coverage was enough to tick that last box!



Left to Right: Ross, Zara, Natalie and Sharon

Sharon says, "Both girls are very interested in horses and have been for years, but have had very little to do with them. We have visited Hidden Valley for three weekends in a row already and we're looking forward to many many more and learning lots about horses."

Welcome to you all

Don't forget!



*June 6 to 8
Long Weekend
Long Trail
Ride*



*And of course we
will have our annual
Bon Fire*



Clear Fire Break behind cabins

Construct new workshop

Rebuild machinery shed

Clear all gutters

Fix electric cable in store room

Paint Cabin decks for protection

Clear all ride trails of timber

Rebuild kitchen

Paint Managers House

Repair manager house Fence

Repair broken Guttering

Repair cabin decks, nails up and timber

Change plumbing for water around property

Redirect water from Cabin Block 2 to Tanks

Monitor and control Salvinia

Re-education of difficult company herd

Reseal Internal Roads

Hidden Valley Work Plan

by George Baczocha

For Hidden Valley to function and grow we require not only effort on the part of those employed but also the ongoing effort of cooperative members.

The past few years have brought many challenges. With floods and flu closing the Valley down for long periods of time it has meant that only essential work was carried out, membership growth has been static and infra structure has been running down. While a large injection of capital would be nice and would solve all our problems it is highly unlikely in the short term; so what can we do to move forward?

For any organisation to succeed it requires commitment from its members and a clear direction of where it wants to go. We now have the latter but still require improvement from the former.

A budgeted work plan for the year has been developed together with the resources needed to achieve the work in an acceptable timeframe. While much of the work required doesn't need large amounts of money, it does need members willing to give some of their time to help the Manager achieve his goals. After all we are a cooperative thus all should willingly chip in rather than be coerced.

Nineteen months of work effort is required totalling

some tens of thousands of dollars, and while some of the work requires skilled labour the majority just needs members and friends to help out.

Your help will reduce the amount of money required to be spent.

Projects depending on the priority and category will be funded either from;

1. General revenue (maintenance & small projects)
2. Special funds ie Social club and fund raising activities (top priority projects)
3. Government grants (where appropriate will be sought)
4. Revenue raised from external groups hiring our facilities (mainly capital works and major equipment replacement - to cover any financial short falls)
5. The priority projects that have been identified for this period are in this list (*see left*)

For the majority of these projects the materials are either already available or only a small cost, the biggest need is for labour and this is where you can all help. So please step forward and show what a cooperative can achieve.

Same cost, more members

In an initiative to encourage members to visit Hidden Valley more often, particularly during winter, the Board is considering widening the definition of 'Members' to include extended family members of a principal member.

In effect this would mean that accommodation credits and membership rights of a single 'full membership' could be shared amongst, grandparents, parents and children of a single family, regardless of whether they 'live under the same roof' or not.

Existing regulations remain such as:

"A members' immediate family is entitled to use Hidden Valley without the member being on the property under the following circumstances:

- a) Over 16 and under 18 years of age – day use only allowed with a limit of two only guests

- b) Over 18 of age – overnight stays permitted with a limit of two
- c) Guests are to be accompanied by a member present at the property for the duration of their visit.

The Board believes the benefits of extending the definition of 'Members' in our By-Laws would benefit several of our current members and encourage occupation of the property in non peak times.

Your feedback is important to us. If you have a comment or an opinion on this, please contact a Board Member or email manager@hiddenvalley.com.au

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Ourimbah

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