

FRIENDS OF CRADLE VALLEY BULLETIN

14th NOVEMBER 2011

I wonder how many motorists noticed the traffic speed camera located on the Cradle Valley Tourist Highway at Middlesex Plains, coinciding with the International Lea River Challenge (and our AGM!) last month? The local residents certainly did, and they mostly smiled with delight, having lobbied for years for traffic calming measures such as this to be extended to these wild parts!

1. NEW MEMBERS: Welcome to new FoCV Members Dr.Gary and Suzanne Clark, residents of Victoria (and Daisy Dell!), and to Launcestonians Chris and Marissa King, and Helen and Mick Statham. Welcome all!

2. BLANDFORDIA VENUE A SUCCESS: There were 20 hardy souls who braved the unseasonably bleak conditions to attend the Friends' annual weekend gathering and AGM at Blandfordia Alpine Lodge (see Minutes attached). The Valley vista looked more beautiful than ever in black and white from the lodge's big picture windows. Incidentally, all the party of intrepid Overland Track walkers who left Blandfordia Lodge during the blizzard on Sunday morning returned safely, having turned back from Marion's Lookout because of high winds and heavy snow. A very wise decision!

3 CONGRATULATIONS ALL ROUND: We warmly congratulate the Parks & Wildlife Service on its 40th anniversary, and read with interest the impressive, special edition of "*Buttongrass*" that commemorates this important milestone for Tasmania (our organisation is only half its age!). Still, we do think it's important to emphasize that none of this would be here today if it were not for some key people who laid the foundation for Tasmania's National Parks and World Heritage Areas long before that! For instance, from the following article which appeared in *The Examiner* newspaper in 1935, there's the confluence of Messers Fred Smithies and Arch Meston, whose foundation work is well known to us: "*With the aid of a magnificent collection of coloured slides, Mr.F.Smithies in the Public Library Hall last evening took his crowded audience on a most interesting trip over that little known but decidedly beautiful tract of country from Cradle Mountain to Lake St.Clair. The lecture was conducted under the auspices of the Royal Society of Tasmania (northern branch) and was rich in its educational quality. The Minister for Lands and Works (Major T.H.Davies) presided, and the lantern was operated by Mr.A.L.Meston. The Government was ready to action as far as its finances would permit the development of these national reserves. The sum of 1500 pounds had been spent during the last 12 months on the Cradle Mountain reserve to make it easier of access for tourists. About the same amount had been spent on the National Park reserve. The Government realized what a great asset the tourist industry was to the state and was anxious to assist in its development. "You will find no lack of co-operation on our part", said Major Davies, "provided our finances permit, and this year we hope to do a great deal more for the tourist industry".*

We also congratulate our Wilderness Gallery at Cradle Village on its Tasmanian Tourism Award 2011 (Specialized Tourism Services), and Australia Post for choosing Cradle Mountain for its new \$2 stamp! Did they pay a fee to P&WS?



4. NOT SO HAPPY ABOUT BUDGET CUTS: State Environment Minister Hon. Brian Wightman MHA (*Mercury* 2/11/11) has advised that 10 full-time equivalent positions have been cut so far this year by way of attrition (retirements), but the Service is still looking to cut 20 more full-time equivalent positions to achieve its revised budget target. “*The P&WS has been reviewing positions across the board to identify where these cuts can be made without impacting on core business*”, the Minister said. I do hope that tweaking rosters, judicious secondments and interdepartmental redeployments help ease the pain.

5. DER VISIONAR VON CRADLE MOUNTAIN: Austrian journalist and Overland Track bushwalker Stefan Spath has now published her promised article about Gustav Weindorfer in the *2012 Yearbook of the Austrian and German Alpenverein*, the largest mountaineering association in the European Alps. I've circulate the article to you already because of our involvement in developing it (“... *Die Friends of Cradle Valley wiederun haben bewirkt, dass das van Wind and Wetter zerzauste Waldheim ...* ”) and as it provides some excellent targeted exposure of our National Park, its heritage places, natural attractions and visitor facilities. You'll need to brush up on your Germanic to read it.

6. HONOURS LIST: As you may have seen in the 2011 AGM Minutes, our members have resolved to establish a *Friends of Cradle Valley Honours List*, along the lines of the ‘Emily’s List’ (which honours the achievements of outstanding women, and which is named after Emily Pankhurst, the great suffragette). Our proposed Honours List for conservationists / bushwalkers / parks rangers / community leaders (perhaps named after Kate & Gustav Weindorfer to ensure gender equity) would be a grassroots affair, community-driven, and apply to people associated with the Valley, who have made outstanding contributions to conservation and/or the environment. As this idea is still in its formative stages, I am now calling for ideas and suggestions from all of you regarding possible selection criteria, administration, verification and processes of delivery for it. Please forward all of your ideas and thoughts to the Secretary on johnwilson@friendsofcradlevalley.org as you think of them. Remember, it will be your List. So all ideas are welcome.

7. PEDDER STILL CAPTIVATES: If you're looking for a special Christmas present this year to give to someone you love or maybe just to give to yourself, then might I suggest Natasha Cica's *Pedder Dreaming: Olegas Truchanas and a Lost Tasmanian Wilderness* published recently by The University of Queensland Press, 258pp. RRP \$59.95. Lake Pedder is a little natural lake in the Tasmanian South West Wilderness World Heritage Area that was drowned by the Hydro-Electric Commission in 1972 to form the Huon-Serpentine impoundment. For the Green movement all around the world, the loss of this jewel in the South West Wilderness represents an a great unforgivable tragedy, and so the hope of its eventual restoration lingers on.

8. INVITATION TO WALDHEIM ON NEW YEAR'S DAY 2012: Do come along to the Weindorfer Memorial Service that's held at Waldheim on New Year's Day. The programme begins after lunch. If the weather permits and you're feeling playful, try dressing up in your very best historic outfit. I'm sure Kate and Gustav would approve!

That's all for now.

Best wishes,
John Wilson (Hon. Secretary FoCV)