

Christmas is coming again - what a scary thought!

1. WEINDORFER CENTENNIAL: The President and members of the Weindorfer Memorial Service Committee are inviting FoCV members, their families and friends to Waldheim to participate in the Weindorfer Centennial programme on New Years Day, commencing 1.30pm. Do try to dress up in period costume if you can, but remember to stay warm. Just occasionally, it snows at Waldheim on New Years Day.

2. RESPONSE FROM MINISTER: We have a response from Minister Michelle O'Byrne regarding our letter of complaint (20/10) about roadside slashing in the Cradle Mountain National Park. On 30th November, Minister O'Byrne wrote: "*I am writing in response to a letter addressed to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Consultative Committee on 20 October and copied to myself. The Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) carries the responsibility for maintenance of the road at Cradle Mountain. Earlier this year Parks and Wildlife Service (PSW) staff at Cradle Mountain advised DIER that some of the brush and branches along the roadside needed clearing as it was interfering with the safe flow of traffic. Unfortunately the DIER contractor doing the roadside slashing along the Dove Lake Road made an error and began the work unsupervised. As a result there was damage done to the roadside vegetation, which should never have occurred. DIER has taken action to ensure that it will not occur again and PSW staff will continue to work closely with DIER staff with all aspects of road maintenance in the National Park.*" Well, there's a rare admission for you!

3. MIA-MIA FURORE: Members may have been following the media furore that broke after our discovery of an Aboriginal '*mia-mia*' in a forest coupe being developed on privately-owned land at Daisy Dell by Forest Enterprises Australia Ltd. Tasmanian Greens Leader Nick McKim was spot on in saying that the destruction of this indigenous relic by vandals within days of our media coverage was a direct result of the cuts to Parks and Wildlife Services funding. We say it's also a terrible indictment on the State Government which is maintaining a stoney silence. The pages and pages of public comments on the Mercury's blogsites have been interesting to say the least. Google "*Mercury mia-mia*" and see for yourself.

4. A LETTER FROM BOB: FOCV has also received a lovely hand-written letter from Senator Bob Brown, which we are thinking about auctioning off one day to raise funds. Bob writes: "*Dear Cathy and John and Friends of Cradle Valley, I was very touched by your singular letter - of dozens of heritage projects funded by the Greens' \$60 million negotiated arrangement, we have been invited to no announcements or launches nor heard from recipients before. It is specially good that the \$490,000 is going to the Chalet and trackwork near Cradle - because people such as 'Friends' made it happen. Congratulations and best wishes!*"

5. MIDDLESEX GOES UP FOR SALE: Just a few days ago, an Elders Real Estate sign went up at Leary's Corner announcing that the 9,470 acre (3,834 Ha) historic cattle property 'Middlesex Plains' near Cradle Mountain is for sale by tender (tenders closing at close of trading 20th January 2010 at Elders Office, 50 Invermay Road, Launceston). This privately owned property directly borders the Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair National Park, and includes a large forest of mature King Billy Pines on the Northern side of Mount Kate. The Middlesex Plains property would make an excellent addition to our National Park, and the old Middlesex Plains homestead which was attacked by tribal Aborigines in 1843 could become another popular historic precinct within the Park. FoCV President Cathy Clayton will be writing to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd tonight (indeed, as you read this Bulletin) to request that the Australian Government purchase the historic property forthwith, and I suggest that everyone of us can help this idea to grow to fruition by writing their own personal letters to the Prime Minister, the Federal Environment Minister, and to newspaper Editors. Please see the Elders website www.elders.com.au/tas for additional details.

6. HISTORIC HATS: The Secretary's collection of ladies hats will now be housed at FoCV President Cathy Clayton's residence '*Tanglewood*' at Tarleton, near Latrobe. FoCV ladies wishing to avail themselves of a nice ladies hat to wear at the Waldheim celebrations on New Years Day can pick one up on loan from Cathy. First in best dressed.

Our commiserations to Ranger Andrew Hamilton who is enduring 3 more months in far away Canada.

May we all have a safe and happy Christmas.

John Wilson
Hon. Sec. FoCV