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Edition 300

### **Congratulations “Tatong Tattler” on your 300<sup>th</sup> Birthday!**

May you prosper and continue to capture a snapshot of the local area for future generations. It is an inspiration to the Tatong Heritage Group to see your dedication to recording the local history.

#### **Tatong Heritage Group**

was formed at a public meeting at the Tatong Tavern on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2004.

**Present at the Inaugural Meeting:** Elaine Brogan (President), Greg Kirk (Vice President), Mary-Ann Hatters, Geoff Rintala (Public Officer), Pat Manser (Secretary), Bill Dewing, Charlee Campbell-Nifin, Kevin Smith (Treasurer), Andrea Stevenson, Max Jones, Ann Doherty, Evan Lewis and Andy Varnik.

**Apologies:-** Jill Lloyd, Carol Lewis, Les MacLean, Margaret and Brian McRohan, Andrew Wallace and John Brogan.



**Back row L – R:** Joe Hakkennes, Rod Lindsay, Bill Dewing, Greg Kirk, John Manser, Pat Manser, Kevin Smith

**Middle row:** Evan Lewis, Bev Hakkennes, Elaine Brogan

**Front row:** Geoff Rintala, Andrea Stevenson, Mary-Ann Hatters, Charlee Campbell-Nifin

Over the years, the wealth of talent and skills in the local area have benefited the Tatong Heritage Group, as numerous people have contributed in so many ways to acquiring knowledge and preserving our history. We are grateful to everyone who has given countless hours of their time over the past 13 years, to construct, research, and document our local history.

For current projects and further information, please visit our website to view a collage of pictures and events.

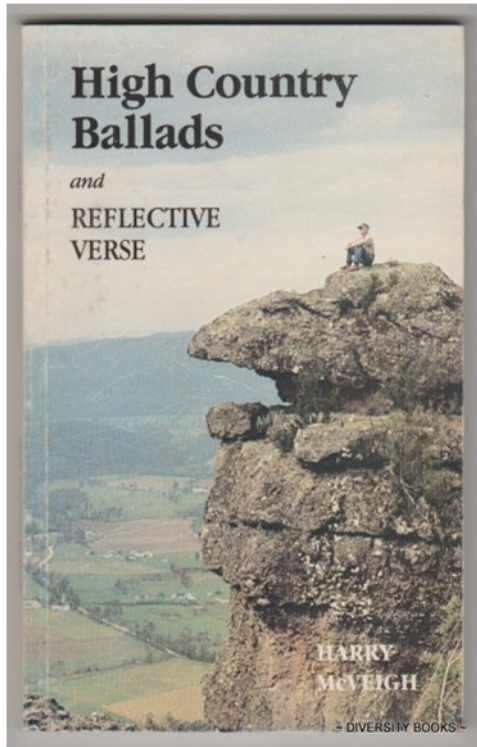
Meetings are held at the Tatong Memorial Hall on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every odd month commencing at 4.00pm. Visitors and new members are most welcome.

E-mail: [tatongheritage@yahoo.com.au](mailto:tatongheritage@yahoo.com.au)

Website: [www.vicnet.net.au/~tathg](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~tathg)

## A DAY TO REMEMBER Sharyn Harrison

Harry McVeigh was a writer of prose and poetry. A resident of Tolmie, he wrote about what was familiar. High Country Ballads and Reflective Verse, was self-published by Harry in 1986. One of his poems tells a story about Howard (Howie) Lewis, of Tatong, father of Wayne, Sharyn and Leonie.



By the timbered hills of Tatong,  
A smallish country town,  
On a sheep and cattle station  
Lives a man of some renown.

He farms the wide broadacres  
With Wayne, his right hand man.  
They cleared the slopes of timber  
To where the pastures ran.

One cold and frosty morning  
They stoked the burning rows  
The dogs had gone off hunting  
Where the scrub and bracken grows.

A 'roo came bounding from the scrub  
And headed for the dam.  
The safest place to end a chase  
When 'roos are in a jam.



So standing nigh on six feet high,  
With water to his chest,  
He lured the hounds with taunting sounds –  
'Swim out and be my guest'.

Now Sam the collie knew 'twas folly  
But made the greatest blunder,  
Swam to the 'roo who took the cue  
And promptly held him under.

'Twas Howard's turn to show concern –  
"He'll drown my ruddy dog that way."  
He yelled, and grabbed a hefty pole  
And dashed into the fray.  
His swing went wide, although he tried

To hit it on the chin.  
The hefty stick then made him flip –  
He yelled and tumbled in.

Excitement grabbed the other dogs  
Who'd waited on the bank,  
With gay abandon launched themselves  
To where their master sank.

The water it was icy cold  
The spray rose thick and fast –  
As Howard, dogs and kangaroo  
Made for the bank at last.



They clambered up the slippery slope  
Amidst the freezing mist and spray –  
With bedlam at its very best,  
The kangaroo had slipped away.

Now friends, we'll pause awhile to view  
This most hilarious scene:  
The hunters shivering on the bank –  
The prey no longer seen!

The dogs now shook themselves to shed  
The water, mud and foam,  
While Howie shivered in his boots  
Full half a mile from home.

"I'll have to shed these freezing pants  
And dry them by the fire –  
Now Wayne if you would loan me yours,  
Your undies would be drier".

"No way," said Wayne, "I'd freeze to death,  
I'll let you have my Guernsey though,  
Just hang your clothes beside the fire  
And help me stack this other row".

Poor Howie shed his clothes, and said  
"I feel it is a sin"  
He pulled the Guernsey through his legs  
And fixed a safety pin.

They toiled awhile but all in vain  
For Howie really froze,  
He picked his way around the slope  
To reach his drying clothes.

Now friends, I speak in muted tones,  
He almost stripped a cog –  
For outward from the blazing fire  
Had rolled a burning log!

They say that we should trust in fate,  
But fate's not always kind –  
Some buttons and a pocket knife  
Was all that he could find!

Pneumonia, or a worsening fate  
Now stared him in the face,  
Or, could he make it to the house,  
Unseen, in his disgrace?

No Indian warrior had the stealth,  
The eye could barely see  
The shadow and the safety pin  
That fled from tree to tree!

And so at last he reached the house  
And quickly slipped inside,  
To find some clothes and slip them on,  
His nakedness to hide!

The neighbours think a U.F.O.  
Flashed through the trees that day.  
He quickly nods his head and smiles –  
And looks the other way!

HARRY McVEIGH

**White  
Gate**



**Dates**

### White Gate Dinner @ the Tavern

- will be Wednesday August 2nd. Book yourself in (don't forget that bit) & arrive 6:30/7-ish.

Next month (September), the Table Tennis talent have booked the pub for the 1st Wednesday. I think the favoured alternative destination for the White Gate dinner was Benalla..? The issue ought be decided at the August dinner.

It will then be a most August decision....

### Breakfast @ Samaria

Breakfast (or brunch) at Samaria Farm is next due on August Saturday 19th. It is a bit of a rolling timetable. Be there anywhere between 9 & 11.

### White Gate Fire Brigade Roster:

Bill Ferguson	6 Aug	Geoff Boyd	3 Sep
Norton Grimwade	13 Aug	Les MacLean	10 Sep
Terry Ryan	20 Aug	Terry Ryan	17 Sep
Angus McMillan	27 Aug	Noel Hutchens	24 Sep

### Thoughts for the 300th

We had barely landed in White Gate, when Mike Larkin roped me into the Tattler. The first input I can find under the "Whitegate Woof" was for the March 2004 issue. A report on a mighty windstorm that came through Karn & White Gate, leaving rather a lot of firewood & fencing work behind it. It is just wonderful to see the Tattler continuing from strength to strength. Long live the Tattler!  
- Andrea Stevenson, downstream of Tatong.

## HISTORY IN THE MAKING



This year marks the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tatong Art Show – hence the title of this article ‘History in the Making’! This popular event has attracted artists from far and wide, with the overwhelming majority of artists hailing from the Benalla Rural City. It is immensely gratifying to see there is so much talent in our neck of the woods and I congratulate each of the artists who have displayed their work, many of whom have participated each year of the show!

Over the years, and as the coordinator of this event, I have been asked numerous questions about the show and of course I have answered them as they were asked! However, I thought for this, the 300<sup>th</sup> edition of the Tatong Tattler, it would be appropriate to combine some of these questions, so that the community has a good sense of what goes on behind the scenes to make our Art Show work. So here are some of the questions that have been raised – and as is often said, “In no particular order”!

### **How did the art show come about?**

I was approached in 2013 by Benalla Festival Committee of Management (COM) and asked if the community of Tatong would be interested in sponsoring an Art Show as part of the Benalla Festival, which as you know is held on a yearly basis. I found this invitation intriguing and during discussion with the COM it was identified that this event would provide a good opportunity to raise funds for the community, as well as to showcase the work of the many wonderful artists who live in and around Tatong. We felt confident that we had an ideal venue in the Memorial Hall to mount the show, and the enthusiasm of the COM was contagious! However, before committing our community to sponsoring this event, I spoke with various people to see if I could garner in-principal support. After kicking around some ideas it was decided to ‘give it a go’ – and ad was placed in the Tattler calling for volunteers to form a COM. The response was great, and the rest is history! We are now in our 5<sup>th</sup> year and the show is going strong. From small beginnings we now have a well respected and well attended show, and we are strongly supported by community volunteers that enable this wonderful event to happen.

## **What resources are required to run the art show?**

### **Committee of Management:**

Fundamentally, the requirements for the Art Show are (now) minimal. We have a COM, the membership of which has changed over time. Each year we have worked to create a formula that 'works' for preparing for and running the show, and not surprisingly, picking up the jobs required is not that hard! Through trial-and-error we have discovered things that work well for us and things that do not. When it is time to prepare for the Show (around June of each year) the COM meets; we discuss changes we want to make (based on our experiences and evaluation feedback from previous years); we review our finances and ability to meet our commitments; and we work out who wants to do what! Then bingo – it all happens! Because we support one another things work well.

### **Venue:**

Of course to run the show you need a good venue – which we have! The Tatong Memorial Hall is an ideal venue for mounting the show because it has a wide open space, good lighting, good facilities and good amenities. Each year we negotiate our rental fee, make our booking, and then get the Hall ready for our use! On the Wednesday prior to the show artists deliver their work, and it is hung by our curator Louise Carlisle (together with a team of volunteers). The next day (Thursday), the work is judged by invited artists, and they determine the winning works. Then on Friday night we have a gala opening for which we charge a minimal fee of \$5 per person. This year for the first time we will have a limited number of days we will be open, and further information about this will be forthcoming in the next edition of the Tattler.

Now here is an interesting fact – each year the number of applications from artists has increased and we **think** that a day will come when we will need to rent 2 venues to host the show. But, no sweat – if it happens this year we have already discussed this possibility with the Community Centre (formerly known as the Recreation Reserve). They have agreed to be our stand-by venue in case we need to display the art in 2 separate venues, which could be rather exciting!

### **Volunteers:**

Apart from the COM we have a separate set-up committee and bump-out committee, who each year pick-up the art display frames (which we rent from Carlisle Art), assemble them on site, and then reverse the process at the end of the show. The show's curator is Louise from Carlisle Art and she does a superb job in hanging the work and making the show aesthetically appealing – we are grateful for her support!

During opening hours we have a host of community volunteers, who do things like greet visitors, collect entry fees, sell raffle tickets, have fun, and ensure the environment is safe and tidy. You know, each year our volunteers keep coming back and they tell us that they really enjoy taking part – they are a real credit to us and our community. Without their help the show could not go on and we sincerely thank them for the work that they do.

### **Sound financial support**

When we ran the show for the first time in 2013 this was made possible through securing a Benalla Rural City Community Development Grant; as well as through a most generous offer of a \$2,000 grant, given by GMCU, to enable us to award a prize for the Best in Show painting. Whew, these grants covered all of our expenses and we had a small profit, which meant that our profit could be used to partially seed the event in the ensuing year! As an aside, this prize was won by Gill Sawry, local resident of Benalla.

In 2014 we again applied for and won another grant to cover our projected short fall for running the Art Show that year. At the end of the show we were profitable, and knew we had enough funds to run the show in the following year. However, we realized that we needed to apply for funding from other sources for the 2015 show, so that we could realize our dream of having funds available to support community organisations. So we struck out and sought funding from a variety of community businesses, which have been incredibly generous in supporting us. There will be more information about those organisations in the next edition of the Tattler!

Throughout the 5 year history of the Tatong Art Show, we have secured the FANTASTIC sponsorship of GMCU, who each year make \$2,000 available to us to award, as negotiated with GMCU, various artist prizes. This year, courtesy of GMCU we will award a \$1,000 Best in Show prize; a \$500 Honourable Mention prize; a



\$250 best Local Artist prize and a \$250 Best Young Artist prize! This is incredibly generous – over a 5 year period we have received \$10,000 from GMCU. I can't begin to describe how grateful I am to GMCU for their continued generosity and faith in us. Also, by way of support, this year for the first time our People's Choice Award of \$500 is being sponsored by LS Quarry, for which we are very grateful. I hope this will commence an era of support for this award as well!

In addition to securing sponsorship for our show, we also ask local businesses to donate raffle prizes, and we sell raffle tickets to visitors to the show. While you might think that this is overkill consider this – in addition to running a self-supported art show from 2015 onwards, we have realized our dream to give back to our community, by way of grants to organisations what need our help. This is a SIGNIFICANT contribution to our community and we feel humbled that through money raised from our Art Show we can help to contribute to the aspirations of community groups in our community.

### **Why do you need to charge for admission to the show and sell raffle tickets?**

I hope that it is self-evident from the dialogue above that running an Art Show is not expense free! In addition to paying for the expenses mentioned above, we have to pay for insurance for the event (not cheap), sundries, advertising, catering, and numerous expenses that are part and parcel of running an event. One local organisation that has supported us each year is the RHC Good Friday Appeal, who supply morning and afternoon tea on each day of the event. We are grateful for their contribution and on a personal note I am not so happy about the weight that I gain each year – my choice of course!

So as you can see this is a genuine community event, which is supported by MANY! How great is it that we live in a community that has a GENEROUS HEART, strives to be self-sustaining and fiercely independent. I will close by saying that I AM LUKLY TO LIVE IN THIS GREAT COMMUNITY and I am proud to report a snippet of the history of Tatong!

If you would like to talk to me about history in the making and our Art Show please call me on 5767 2124. Warm regards, deSales Turner.



Kerryn Gaudian was the Tattler's producer in the late 1990s. She collected the notices and articles from the school, shop or Tavern and typed and arranged the pages then got it to the school for printing. She also delivered Tattlers. With about 120 copies each month, Kerryn was kept very busy.

Many other people helped too. Such as the Hakkennes's.

Thank you to everyone who assisted the production and distribution of the Tatong Tattler. I apologise to those who have not been named. Our memories of those days are quite sketchy. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

### **FERNHLLS**

A tree change with a difference was the way that John and I had imagined our life to be after moving from the city to our newly purchased country property. I was not as excited about this move as John. I would be leaving a beautiful home and garden that our three kids had called home for decades, friends and family, business associates and our home for over thirty years. However, John wanted to be his own boss and he loved the country lifestyle that he had gotten to know when my parents were dairy farmers in East Gippsland. John wanted to live a life where things moved at a slower pace and people are kindly.

As we drove away from Benalla out towards the hills of Tatong and Wrightly I kept asking how much further is this place? I felt that I would be isolated and lonely on this property that we would name Brogan's Run, this title has gone down in history, namely on the census documentation as I noticed the form collector write on his papers after seeing the sign that John had proudly erected. After weeks of moving thirty plus years of hoarding numerous priceless possessions, boxes and boxes of our bits and pieces from many years together not to mention three kids who also seem to leave their treasures with us, John was first to stay at old Tolmie road. Our youngest daughter was in her final year at university and I stayed in Melbourne until the December of 2003 renting our own home for her convenience which suited me. John was already in his element on his own bit of dirt in the country, the beginning of his dream.

As time went on both John and I got involved with the local community as we had done for many years in Strathmore. With John's expertise in the football it wasn't long before he was involved with the local footy club, even goal umpiring. Sadly they wore Collingwood colours and John made the change to support the Tatong Magpies. It was not long before he made many friends. Our neighbours, Danny and Clare Grima were to become our very good friends, each helping one and another along the way. We watched their beautiful children grow and I even had the pleasure of minding them on numerous occasions. I had the best of both, country life and my interests in heritage and history in Melbourne as I spent many hours up and down that Hume freeway. I imagined our property with a beautiful garden, a garden that I would be able to open for the public as a fund raiser similar to others in the district, namely Gayle and Dennis Scott. I joined the Benalla gardening club and was soon enjoying the outings to other picturesque gardens in the district and was given the job of writing up our trips for the newsletter and then was asked to be vice president of the club. It was very trying finding plants suitable to the cold and frosty winters and very hot dry summers and the local wild life seemed to think I had planted for them. Our chooks that we inherited enjoyed aerating my newly planted garden beds, the wind that never lets up and the heat from the summer suns burning even the hardiest of plants. The goats that were supposed to be our income even broke out and destroyed my newly planted shrubs, trees and flowers, everything had to be protected. Snakes, mice and an array of birds which I eventually came to know their species, all made themselves at home on Brogan's run.

As we settled in and became familiar with the district our visitors were taken to the famous spot where Ned Kelly had the shoot out with the police, stopping at the Tolmie pub for meals, driving to Powers lookout and then back to the Tatong Tavern. These sites were to become our surprise for the numerous city visitors, the spare beds never got cold. Even today long after the Brogans left the Valley our city friends still talk about how proud John was to be a goat farmer. Mary and Des Barrett, Ray Peterson and his partner Effie, Margaret and Brian McCrohan Dennis and Gerry Hevey and many others all went out of their way to make us welcome.

We soon learned to operate the electric fences as the goats knew after the winds they had a free escape up in the hills a job that was not fun to do. Wearing rubber boots that rubbed my legs and were so very heavy and not at all suitable for the rocky rugged bush tracks where I knew our goats loved to go. John took things a little easier as he used the quad bike but not being accustomed to such a machine I opted to walk. We soon learned that these electric fences do a good job. When they were working they even managed to give me a few tickles, with the joke being on me as John thought it was hilarious to see his princess jump and use language she was not accustomed to using. We then spent heavily on buying cattle and I loved them dearly as I was a dairy farmer's daughter and was not afraid of these huge gentle beasts and they didn't smell like the goats.

As time went by and another year rolled in I joined the community in some protesting, the Toxic Dump, who could forget the government wanting to pollute the country nearby with such a thing. Save Lake Mokoan - any water that can be stored is common sense but again the darn Government choose otherwise. Never mind the farmer needing water, tourism is more important. The Tatong primary school, where generations of locals were educated was to close and the children bussed into town. Again I was there to try and put my opinions across on why it should remain open. That closure took place in 2005. In the months that followed I was able to have returned to the Tatong community most of the school's history including photos and a precious Albert Namatjira painting. I recall the mobile library coming and parking outside the school. What a great service that was for country people. In August 2005 I applied on behalf of the Tatong Heritage group and received a grant to have the Tatong School World War One honour board restored and we held a rededication ceremony at the hall. The traffic noise on the Tatong Tolmie road increased as the log trucks headed into town with the pine logs that were growing in the hills, the hills that for hundreds of years were Australian native forests with prestige creeks and waterway now being destroyed. Our roads were becoming pitted with pot holes from the heavy haulage using them many times each day. John joined the local land care group and spent time and effort going to school in Bendigo to complete a course to get the best out of our property, soil testing and removing rock which seemed to grow overnight. He wanted his place to be as good as he could make it.

In March of 2004 Danny Grima had an unfortunate leg injury while playing footy and John put his skills to work, under supervision of course, and milked the cows for a few days until Danny was able to return to the dairy. John came home smelling like a farmer but was as happy as. Des and Mary Barrett moved away and a new family the Conway's moved in down the lane. That little house down the lane had many owners during our time and has been sold many times since. The dust from the lane up to our place and beyond filled our house constantly in dust, can't imagine what theirs was like being so close to the road. Even though it was a no through road, there was always someone using it, some not returning. We soon learnt that if you had a four wheel drive you could go anywhere. We then put a solid gate with sign no thru road, but of course that only made people angry and drove through it. Our elderly neighbour Fred Crowe was a character. He told us if we didn't see any smoke coming out of this chimney he'd be gone to a better place. He told us many stories and he was impressed that I would want to live in the bush as he told John he thought I looked too much of a lady. He also told John to remove the goats if and when they wandered onto his property which wasn't that often thankfully. Fred was different, full of yarns and I wondered why he lived in that old tumble down house alone and unwell. He told us frequently why he had a limp.

I was still unsure about the big move. John spent many nights at footy training. When footy had finished for the season, quoits took over. Friday nights, John used to pick up fish and chips from the pub, perhaps an excuse to get to the local watering hole for a chat and to contribute to the children's hospital appeal, a hospital that our kids had spent time at when they were young. Champ and Wardie, two locals, made John very welcome at the pub, not to mention the publican Andy and his wife Leanne. He even got a few bob by supplying cut wood to the pub which he did for some

time. I think the Brogans kept the tavern going with their visitors especially enjoying the famous Ploughman's platter. My father in law who was a business man said it was as good if not better than he had tasted in Melbourne.

We were becoming locals. Well, at least we thought we were. I attended my first Tattler meeting at Maeve and Mike Larkin's home 7/8/2004 as there was talk in the valley of this little newspaper being disbanded for the lack of support. Couldn't let that happen without offering to help. John and I delivered these newsletters taking my two white city dogs with us. A farmer once said to John, "what have you got there, a couple of border leisters." (Ha Ha my darling fur babies.) Vickie chewed through the chook wire fence on numerous occasions and she and Aussie escaped running madly up in the hills. Snakes and wombat holes worried me and I was concerned for their safety and ants as big as a twenty cent coins. We lost valuable stock to snake bites and wild dogs ate our goat kids. The winds were extreme and never seemed to let up. Lightning was a regular occurrence with its magical light shows. They looked wonderful but of course, lightning does start bush fires, the stars flashing white and yellow like diamonds covered the black sky, the full moons that shone like beacons, the sunsets so beautiful. The mist in the hills reminded me of our trip to Ireland prior to purchasing the property. Shooters in the hills I couldn't cope with and made my dogs as anxious as me. I recall walking to the stockyards carrying a wicker basket with a thermos and sandwiches for John and our neighbour Ray who was helping John erect stockyards made from our own timber. The dogs trotting beside me thinking it was just like the women did in the olden days. Hmm I was beginning to adjust to the country life. While the men enjoyed their lunch I picked up rocks and put them in John's ute for my garden which was developing into a real botanical display. The roses were so pretty and the perfume to die for. I shared our fruit trees with the wild life as I really didn't have a choice and there was enough for all of us. The chooks were just as bad. The nights came and went and the foxes tried to help themselves and they succeeded a few times when the gate was not closed by a certain individual who just forgot. Can you imagine the look that I got when I sat crying in the vet clutching my daughter's pet duck that had been mauled by a fox? The farmers must have thought what the hell. Tears galore for the sad loss of our pets, kids and calves from foxes, snakes bites and crows that thought they could pick the eyes out of those darling babies even though their mums tried desperately to chase them away. Wood - I reckon we burned enough wood to cover a few acres on the property many times over during the winter in the hills with temperatures below freezing.

John would laugh at me when I rescued a bug or spider from the burning fire wood. I couldn't stand to think of these critters being burned alive. I used to wear gloves when picking up wood and stacking it in shed ready for winter but soon discovered that they were a hindrance more than a help. Splinters were numerous and the sap looked dirty on my hands. No lovely coloured nails. My friends in Melbourne couldn't understand us leaving asking what do you do up there. After a visit or three they, too, thought it wonderful. Hmm well sort of. I was asked to sit on the Benalla tourism advisory committee which I did for several terms. I thought it is so Country when we had to vote. That was done at the Tatong hall and it was like a community get together. Bill Sykes, who I had gotten to know was the local member who was very supportive in the Tatong community. I sat up at the Tolmie Hall one year handing out how to vote cards for him unbeknown to me that there was a severe bush fire burning in the hills. John and I both picked up our elderly neighbour, namely Mike Carter to take him to vote and for some of his medical appointments. He was a character in himself, living alone in an old house on Jones Creek and with blindness taking over his once active life. I was very impressed when he wrote and published his own kid's book. I was talked into participating in the yearly Christmas concerts that were held in the hall. Mike Larkin and I won dancing with the stars can you believe it? At rehearsals, just as we were about to take to the stage the fire siren went off and most participants left the room to attend a hay stack fire nearby. I will always remember Brian Ritchie, a Tatong local, who sang a song that moved me to tears. What a voice. What a talent. Our Australian flag was used at the Australia day function at the recreation reserve. Danny Grima and John organized a cricket match for those aged eight to eighty. After the match we organized a movie under the stars in the garden at the Tavern. We swapped our eggs for vegetables which Ray and Effie grew beside the Holland's creek on their small acreage. The locals were amazing in welcoming these two city people to the valley. As time went on the Tatong heritage group was set up. Greg Kirk was collecting his own history especially railway history. I couldn't believe there was a train at Tatong. That was the beginning of the THG and I couldn't get enough of this place in the bush and its history. We got a group of locals together. One job was the cleaning of the Hume and Hovel monument with her ladyship (as John referred to me) bucketing water from the Holland's creek behind Conti's old dairy to wash the monument down using horse soap and scrubbing brushes. John chaired the recreation reserve committee almost up until his untimely demise. The THG Railway precinct was nominated for an award. It was not all good. The fire on mount joy 9/2/2006 was very disturbing for me and John I guess but he never showed it. I went to Melbourne with my dogs and left him to it with the CFA, fire fighting helicopters scooping water from dams that were almost empty, the smoke and smell was enough for me. The meeting that was called for all residents at the Tatong hall the following day put the fear of god into me. In July of 23/7/2006 I was elected chair of the tattler group as well as the chair of the Tatong heritage group. During our time at Tatong there were three centenary celebrations and John and I wrote the books for the footy netball club and also 6/12/2008 for the CFA. The third centenary celebration was for the Tennis club. On the 7/7/2005 we organized and celebrated fifty years since the power was switched on with a memorial night with Bev Hakkennes receiving a sash especially made for the historic evening. I think she may have been Belle. On the 18/7/2006 Danny Grima took John up to Tolmie to see snow. We didn't believe it snowed at Tatong. On the 11/3/2006 saw the launch of the railway precinct. In October of 2006 Bill Sykes, member for Benalla planted a tree near the hall to commemorate 150 years of State Parliament. The women of Tatong signed their names during the commemorations of Suffrage and bonnets were made for convict women being another project. A metal rubbish collection was held using Johns truck to raise money for the local Football Netball club. Tattler garage sale held at Maeve and Mike Larkin's home on 4/10.2008. During 2009 the Holland's Creeks fish protection group was set up. I attended many Neighbourhood watch meetings.



These took place at the Tavern. On 14/9/2008 Tatong B grade Football team were premiers over Bonnie Doon. Who could forget the once off Tour de Tatong with its original way out trophy? During our few short years at Tatong the community held many historic events and I am very proud that we were part of them. John lost his two year battle with renal cancer in 2008, and again the community rallied in my support. What a place to belong. Unfortunately I could not stay without my soul mate. It was his dream. I moved away with a sad heart. I will be forever grateful to the many people who helped me after John's death. Tatong and Fern Hills will be always part of my life.

Elaine Brogan OAM

### **Credit where ..**

With this, the 300<sup>th</sup> issue of the Tatong Tattler (and it deserves its full title) it appears to mark, by convention, a social milestone which, also by convention, brings credit to all who have contributed to the paper over, what would it be? three hundred monthly issues divided by twelve issues per year equals twenty-five; ergo, twenty-five years (E and O E). Credit must go, firstly, to the advertisers who have undoubtedly kept the Tattler production going, and thereby prompted others to join in with their own contributions. And judging by the responses those contributors also deserve our thanks and good wishes.

My interest was piqued, many issues ago, by Mr. Larkin and his occasional anecdotes, usually with social comment about changes in our ways of living, that were often drifting away from best practice. I hope that no-one among this readership has experienced road rage, or anything worse. Apparently political correctness (an oxymoron) has to be tolerated.

Somewhat analogous to this theme of questionable change, Mr. Knapper brought our attention to our language, beefing about changes to the meanings of words, thereby bringing obfuscation, even confusion; but his comments also bringing a touch of humour to sugar the medicine, as it were. To add to these meaty thoughts I have since heard that he also has beef on his property.

We can thank him, at least I can thank him for listing the laws, sorry, Laws, of Murphy and his fictitious co-hort, although I am not sure that John should be included among them. Perhaps we have been emulating the incisive humour of Bryan Dawe and the late John Clarke, but on their behalf I would like to claim that they and I have been disconcerted by the shifts in meaning and loss of clarity in our language, since we were brought to appreciate its value by our English teachers many years ago, and to whom both Mr. Knapper and I have acknowledged our gratitude in a previous Tattler.

Despite being congenial in thought with Messrs Clarke and Dawe there has been neither collusion nor coincidence. Although, it would have been enlightening for them and us to have conversed as C S Lewis did with his fellow Inklings. While offering thanks to regular contributors Kathy and Carla, we are pleased to welcome Mrs. Stevenson and Mrs. Gregory to the discussion. And if I have missed anyone by not paying attention (I will not make excuses with the old 'seniors' moment' ploy) let us know. To quote the editorial in number 299, 'Share your story. Don't worry about complaints.' Also; would some-one please answer their questions?

The news bulletins, so overloaded with calamity, tout the search for justice, which is not satisfied anywhere. May that search never cease. And never should we relinquish our efforts to find, and exercise compassion, empathy, understanding and humanity, which are components of the love for our fellow man. While justice and equality should be sought by every-one the world over, I can confidently aver that compassion, empathy, understanding and humanity have not been abandoned entirely because they are here, in our community. There has been no dearth of good deeds done generously and quietly, epitomising the ethic of the good Samaritan which Adam Lindsay Gordon defined as 'Kindness in another's trouble, Courage in your own.' Just recently, while discussing some work with one of Darrel's Diggers he remarked that we are here on earth to try and make other people happy. That simple thought made my day, echoing, as it did, the Golden Rule which I am sure, was brought to the attention of all of us in our early years. May its principle strengthen our resolve for good, and may we, by example, be successful in passing it and its value on to our children.

For as long as we remember to apply it to the trials of each day, it trumps (sorry; no Presidential Implication intended) all the laws of Murphy and his pseudo-miscreants (Mr. Knapper definitely excluded). But we can empathise with their humour, so expressed, which is one aspect of the richness of our language, neologisms carefully considered.

Vin Masters

Anyway: what's so important about number 300? Surely the next one is just as important!

## THE TATONG TATTLER - IN GOOD COMPANY

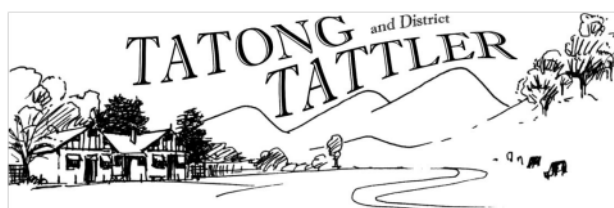
**Tattler**, *n.* 1. One who tattles; an idle talker; one who tells tales.

2. (Zööl.) Any one of several species of large, long-legged sandpipers belonging to the genus *Totanus*.

The Tatong Tattler is in good company. A search on the net will quickly show that there are what looks like tens, if not hundreds, of publications called 'Tattler'. It seems that many are by one publisher but titled to suit the country in which they are to be marketed. Many in America appear to be school, college or university publications. As best I can tell, most are spelt with a single 't' in the middle – 'Tatler', whereas ours has a double 't' in the middle. There are two others (pictured) spelt with a double 't'. The earliest record of a 'Tattler' that I could find is 1709 in London.

**The Tatler**, a periodical launched in London by the essayist Sir Richard Steele in April 1709, appearing three times weekly until January 1711. At first its avowed intention was to present accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment, of poetry, and of foreign and domestic news. These all were reported and "issued" from various London coffee and chocolate houses. In time The Tatler began to investigate manners and society, establishing its principles of ideal behaviour, its concepts of a perfect gentleman and gentlewoman, and its standards of good taste. Dueling, gambling, rakish behaviour, and coquettishness were criticized, and virtuous action was admired.

Numerous anecdotes and stories gave point to the moral codes advanced.



Happy 300<sup>th</sup> John Knapper.

Dear Tattler Readers,

As our editor, Geoff Rintala, is on holidays, I have had the pleasure of editing this, the 300th, edition of the Tatong Tattler. I hope you have had as much enjoyment reading it as I did putting it together. How many of the faces in the "Memories" section did you recognise?

Thank you to everyone who contributed articles and advertisements. I couldn't fit everything into the special A3 booklet and had to produce the slip in supplement.

Regards,

Rick Hann