

NOVEMBER 1990

Wollangarra,
Licola,
Vic.

480492.

Hello again! In the interests of trees & finances, I am going to try and keep this edition to just the one sheet of paper so no waffle!

Heaps has happened since we last sent out some news, so firstly to bring you up to date with at least some of it. Firstly our big night at the Camberwell Civic Centre was a huge success, (from our point of view anyway!) There were close to 1000 people there, when we finally got underway, and I happily admit to being terrified! But all seemed to go well, except for some upside down slides, a sticky projector and a very nervous speaker, and all those who I have spoken to since seemed happy with what we provided (not that they would tell me if they weren't, I spose), and pleased that they had gone. Thankyou very much to all of you who took the time and trouble to attend, and especially to those who brought others along. It was a fantastic turn-up, and we raised over twelve thousand dollars, and paid for the Land Rovers in one night. We also told a whole lot of good new people about Wollangarra, in the process. Thanks must go to the organising committee of course, and to Antoin & Kodar Lucas for their sponsorship of the hall, and to all those who made extra donations as well. Jim Boyle was the lucky winner of the Gerry Egan clock, and our apologies to the bloke who claimed to have the same number on his ticket too - not sure how that happened!

The cause of the whole event, three second-hand, ex-army, re-cycled Land Rovers, are now sitting proudly on the other side of the river. Our thanks to W.O. Brian Mackenzie & his team from Bandiana, who not only delivered them to the door, and fed me like a king for the night that they spent with us, but also made sure that our three were the most carefully prepared Land Rovers to ever leave their base, I'm sure! Since the Camberwell night several other people have made generous donations towards the preparation of the Land Rovers for civilian use carting kids, and normal registration. Such things as seat belts, hard-tops, Holden engine conversions and the cost of registration itself, all soak up money, and to people like Vic Ruth, The Carey family, John and Judy Pearse (& their son Anthony), Hope Stewart, and others, all long-time supporters of our cause, must go our grateful thanks. One more rather large hurdle has been overcome. Let's hope that the old machines last as long & well as the old Mittergundi ones did! Here's to 'Charlie' and 'Cath' for a long and uneventful life! (The third one is to be sold to help fund a few other things - the army don't know about that yet!)

Up here at Wollangarra the building is getting closer to completion every week. It is now completely lined inside, the bunks in the bunkrooms are all complete, nearly all the staff rooms are finished, the kitchen is well underway, the shower is not far away from a grand opening, the fruit trees and box trees are all still alive, and the clearing program is steadily hammering away at the blackberries. The Heyfield Lions Club demolished several chimneys for us that the Neville Smith Timber Mill made available to us, & good old John Ferguson carted them out here in his truck. They are now nearly all cleaned and across the river, and they will be the start of the paving of the verandah. (Approximately 8000 bricks to go after that!) It was great to be able to host about 150 of the mighty team of local people who have helped us over the last 2 years to a bar-b-que at Wollangarra recently - a great day, and a terrific bunch. Thankyou all for all you have done to help & befriend us.

By far the dominating feature of life up here since the last newsletter though, has been the writing of the Wollangarra book. At last it is finished, and as I write this, 5000 copies of it are being churned out on the printing press. Never again! And this time I mean it! I just don't seem to be suited to writing books. But I think that the result will be good. There is so much about what we have done up here together over the past 2 years that is so important to

share with the rest of the community. And apart from anything else, the proceeds of this book are likely to play a large part in the on-going funding of the operations of Wollangarra.

Thankyou to all who pre-ordered copies - a great help when there is a \$34,000 bill to pay. If you haven't pre-ordered by now, you have missed your chance! But if you have, you scored a great deal - the book is hard covered after all, and will sell at \$20 (+\$5 P&P). So all of you who ordered early got away with a \$20 book for \$15! It is called 'Secondhand & Solid' now, it is 256 pages (incl 12 colour ones), it is printed on re-cycled paper, and it is looking really good! The dust jacket is a perfect match for 'Something Small' - so they will make a great pair. I hope to have mailed out all the pre-orders by mid December, and it is very likely that copies will be available to everyone by then too. At Heyfield they will be for sale in Ken Tryhorn's Supermarket, or from me. In Melbourne you would be best to contact Chris and Kym (376 5013), or Gerry (386 9212). If you liked Something Small, I'm sure you will like this one, and the quality of the printing is considerably better too. At \$20 it is really good value, and a PERFECT XMAS PRESENT!

My thanks to all who helped me with the book, especially John & Ros Steel with the typesetting, Tom Fehily with the photos, Nigel Wettenhall for a trip in his aeroplane to take the aerial photo, and a whole army of financiers, photographers, editors and advisors. I hope that the finished product is something that you are all proud of. It will not be circulated to book shops (they are mostly far too greedy!) but will be available from us just as Something Small was. (Order form enclosed here). And the \$15 deal is now off!

Ronald MacDonald on 3LO will hopefully be able to help us publicise it a bit (Ronald was a huge help with the Camberwell night too), but I urge you all to spread the word about it in whatever way you can. We sold 5000 copies of Something Small that way, and without that effort, Wollangarra would not exist. That book has raised us nearly \$72,000, quite apart from untold PR and spreading of the word. I hope that Secondhand & Solid, can do the same thing. Please help if you possibly can.

I will return all the photos that people sent me for inclusion in the book, and repay all loans that various people made to me for the book, as soon as I possibly can. My thanks to you all.

Sadly though, the printer of Something Small has gone broke, and lost all the plates in the process. This makes another edition of it very unlikely. It is still selling steadily so this is a great pity, but with only a handful left, it looks destined to become a collectors item! We must now concentrate on Secondhand & Solid, and go all out to make it as big a success as Something Small was. For that to happen we really do need your help.

If you pre-ordered a soft cover copy of SS, you will receive a hard cover copy for the same price.

Back to Wollangarra! Some other bits of news. No sign of the mites returning yet, as the weather warms up again. I live in fear of it happening though, and spend a good percentage of my life destroying swallows nests & airing my bedding! I think I am getting paranoid!

No sign of 'Fungus' yet either! All in good time! You can't rush these things! The rucksacks are all here and paid for (thanks to Des Sinnot and Outgear). The boots are all here and paid for (thanks largely to the Aust. Geo. Society), and the tents are on order and paid for (thanks to the Year 7 class at Scotch College who have been toiling away all year to raise \$3000 to pay for them - a mighty effort - by any standards.) We also have the parkas, the water bottles, mittens, balaclavas, whistles and a whole lot more. The only things still to go are mugs and bowls, and sleeping mats. The sleeping bags are all organised, and the storeroom is starting to look quite full. More hurdles crossed. Bit by bit we are getting there.

Gerry Egan has donated a fantastic cast iron water fountain for the stove, the Maffra Strolling Players have offered to make and fund all the necessary curtains, the Dining Room tables are almost a reality thanks to a very successful night up at Tolmie run by Jan Purcell and the Merrifig crew, and the newsletter is at last registered as a bulk mail item with Aust. Post, and hence a good deal cheaper to send out!

Congratulations are in order for Debbie Dunwoody who has scored the job of running MLC's new outdoor Centre at Mallacoota. A huge job, which I'm sure she will excell at. Debbie & Cam will move up there early in 1991.

Congratulations too to Janet Morley, Graham Green and Andrew Wirtz, who have all scored positions on the 1991 full-time staff team at Wollangarra, starting in April, and running through till the end of the year. I feel we should thank them rather than congratulate them though, as the positions are virtually voluntary, and the job of getting our program of expeditions and work parties in the mountains off the ground, will be a huge one. But I am delighted with the opportunity to work with these three fine young people, and I am sure that they will do a fine job in our first exciting year. A small pamphlet about our program and courses, will be with the next newsletter.

It is soon going to be time for Wollangarra to move out of its building stage and into it's full time operation. A difficult time for many who have been heavily involved, as it was at Mittagundi, as the need to hand it all over to a full-time staff and regular groups of young people on courses becomes obvious. With the building nearly done, there will not be huge amounts of work for volunteers to do any more. In fact, every job that is done by us now, is one that we have taken from the kids involved. We must be prepared to stand back with some pride, and watch a young staff with groups of kids take over. I too, over the coming years, must give serious thought as to the best time for me to pull out and let Wollangarra stand on it's own. Don't worry though, I doubt it will be for a year or two yet. But it will happen.

As Wollangarra becomes the permanent home for it's staff, and as it becomes the base for a regular program of courses, we must also realise that some degree of organisation must also be brought in for visitors, who will always be welcome parts of life up here (and always likely to be gainfully employed too, don't worry!) But we will not be able to have visitors whilst courses are on during the weekdays, and we will have to declare Friday and Sunday nights, times for the staff to recover and prepare without others about, or else being so close to Melbourne, they will be constantly overrun with people in a never ending stream. We may have to declare the odd weekend to be a staff rest time too, and announce these in advance.

Please don't take all this as saying 'stay away'. Far from it. We want you to visit and stay involved with the place. But we need to be practical too, and balance the program, the visitors and the needs of the staff in a sensible way. And we must remember that we built the place for kids, and it would be pointless to keep on doing everything ourselves, and never be prepared to stand back and let it run itself. It will all work out in it's own way as time goes by, but I am really keen to make these points now, and hopefully avoid any ill feeling at all later on. It is simply that as the place grows, it's needs and priorities must change too, and we all need to make the effort to fit in with that, whilst still being involved and keen supporters of it's program and community.

One rule though, which I am determined to bring in from 1991 on: No more bloody dogs on overnight visits! Yours might be OK (in your opinion!) but it is almost certain to want to fight with whoever else's is up here at the time, and it just does not work. Please, if you are staying overnight, leave Fido at home, and warn him to expect a fairly cool reception if he arrives. Two years of life dominated by other people's dogs is enough for anyone!

Having said all of that, and now that the book is at last out of the way, could I extend a warm welcome to anyone to come and visit.

over the Dec./Jan holiday period and join in with all the things that will be going on. I must warn you that they are all likely to be fairly physical though! The dugout has to be lined with sleepers and roofed, the water system has to be completed, the verandah lined with bricks, the new dunny holes dug (on Xmas Day usually!), the roof re-painted (second coat of the same colour), and a whole host of other things. Or perhaps you would like to just come up and be here, and relax in the river. This is our last Xmas holiday which won't be busy with kids and work parties, so I would really like to show as many of you as possible what has been achieved over the past two years. And the place really is looking great. Even if you can only pop in for a few hours, or half a day, we would love to see you and have a yarn. It will always be that sort of place, don't worry. So please come up, and if you can, ring us the night before - it really helps.

Wollangarra really has turned into something for us all to be very proud of, and as it now moves into gear and is about to start, it's work. I often find myself thinking back over all the great times of we have had putting it all together. Thankyou all for thousands of different contributions. I hope that the book will bring it all together for you as a permanent reminder of a special place.

I hope you all have a great Xmas too. Perhaps especially to our old friend Minnie Higgins, who has just moved to a hospital in Finley after a lifetime in this area. Good luck up there Minnie, and our thanks for all your friendship and support.

I hope you all get your 'Secondhand & Solid' (we decided that 'Another Small Thing' was not a very good name!) in time for Xmas presents. Please try to sell a few copies for us if you possibly can. And if you have any copies of Something Small about the place, please try and get them to me ASAP - they are really in short supply now.

Its two pages longer than I hoped for - sorry! I did try! Just room for a book order form.

All the best for now.

Ian.

ORDER FORM FOR COPIES OF SECONDHAND AND SOLID

Please send copy/copies of Secondhand and Solid to:

Name:

Address:

Price: \$20 per copy, plus \$5 P&P for up to 3 copies, and \$10 P&P for over 3 copies. (Please add extra for postage outside Victoria which can be more than double).

Cheques: Made out to Wollangarra.

Allow a week or more for the books to arrive - only two mail deliveries a week at Wollangarra.

Please send this form and your cheque to: Ian Stapleton, Wollangarra, Licolia, Vic., 3858.