

From your local alderman

Council for the last two months has concerned itself with the Budget. Yes, those horror words, rate increases. At 3.5 percent, this is bangs for bucks (and I don't mean the kind of bangs experienced by all lucky enough to attend the wonderful Fern Tree Winter Festival - Werner Ihrenfeld is truly a pyrotechnics artist!).

A number of small, but long awaited, community projects finally got funding. After some years of the big projects (Concert Halls, Aquatic Centres, the HCC Centre, Mawson Place) the residents in the suburbs have got the guernsey.

The residents of Ingram Street in South Hobart will, after almost nine years of waiting, get a turning head to improve traffic safety. Bushcare Management Plans will be funded so volunteers are better looked after. Local Area Traffic Management plans can now proceed throughout the suburbs to improve pedestrian and traffic amenity. The residents of Loudon Street finally get their road widening. Disability works around the City are now appearing on the agenda and getting much needed funding.

The big cost on Council is the increasing need to attend to environmental issues. Items such as the

gas flaring and surface water management at McRobies Gully, a trickling filter to improve odours at Macquarie Point Sewage Plant, Selfs Point bypass monitoring, the New Town and Sandy Bay Rivulets flood warning works. Such costs are likely to increase in the future. Not only from residents and businesses expecting a better level of service from local government, but also from higher levels of regulation from the State and Federal governments.

Parks also got some funding with the Cornelian Bay Landscape and Foreshore Walk, money to develop Finlay Street Park, to further upgrade the TCA ground, undertake Long Beach-Long Point Car park landscaping and to implement the Lambert Park management plan. Best of all, a personal favourite was the setting aside of Council funds in a Bushland Fund to purchase bushland identified in Council's Open Space Strategy.

Hopefully the Huon Road/Pillinger Drive intersection will also get a guernsey at the Half-Yearly Budget Review when budget savings may be available.

May I remind all residents we are still in Stage 2 Water Restrictions. This must be some sort of record. Keep well all of you, and best regards

— *Alderman Eva Ruzicka*

Town Hall, Macquarie Street, HOBART TAS 7000.
Mobile 0407 391 317. Fax 03 6239 1738

Weed Alert Network: A strategy to improve weed detection

Tasmania's Weed Alert Network seeks to prevent future weed problems in Tasmania by increasing chances of finding newly introduced or recently established pest plant species. Early detection reduces the likelihood of small, isolated populations expanding to degrade Tasmania's precious natural resources.

Who's in the Network? We're from many walks of life—professional land managers with agricultural and/or conservation agencies or businesses, members of community groups with an environmental focus, or horticultural and gardening clubs. Common threads are good botanical skills, time out in the field and a commitment to keeping Tasmania free of new weeds.

Who coordinates the network? The Weed Alert Taskforce, a working group of the Tasmanian Weed Management Committee, offers an initial induction session for members. The function of the network is explained, target plants are discussed and a field kit is disseminated. Network members communicate via a newsletter, *Spotter*, and *Weed Alert Bulletins*—short descriptions of plants that pose significant weed risks to Tasmania. Scientific risk assessment procedures are used to make these assessments. *Spotter*, produced twice yearly, highlights issues related to new weed threats

in Tasmania but also gives national and international perspectives on preventative weed management.

Plants to look out for in Tasmania: Small infestations of the following plants have been found recently (within the last 5 years) in Tasmania. Whilst all known infestations have been, or are, being addressed, the Weed Alert Network is keeping an eye open for further occurrences. Visit the website at www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au for more information on each of these plants: **Alligator Weed** *Alternanthera philoxeroides*, **Tumbleweed** *Amaranthus albus*, **Spiny Amaranth** *Amaranthus spinosus*, **Kochia** *Bassia scoparia*, **Dodder** *Cuscuta suaveolens*, **Nut Grass** *Cyperus rotundus*, **Oxygen Weed** *Lagarosiphon major*, **Chilean Needle Grass** *Nassella neesiana*, **Three Flowered Nightshade** *Solanum triflorum*.

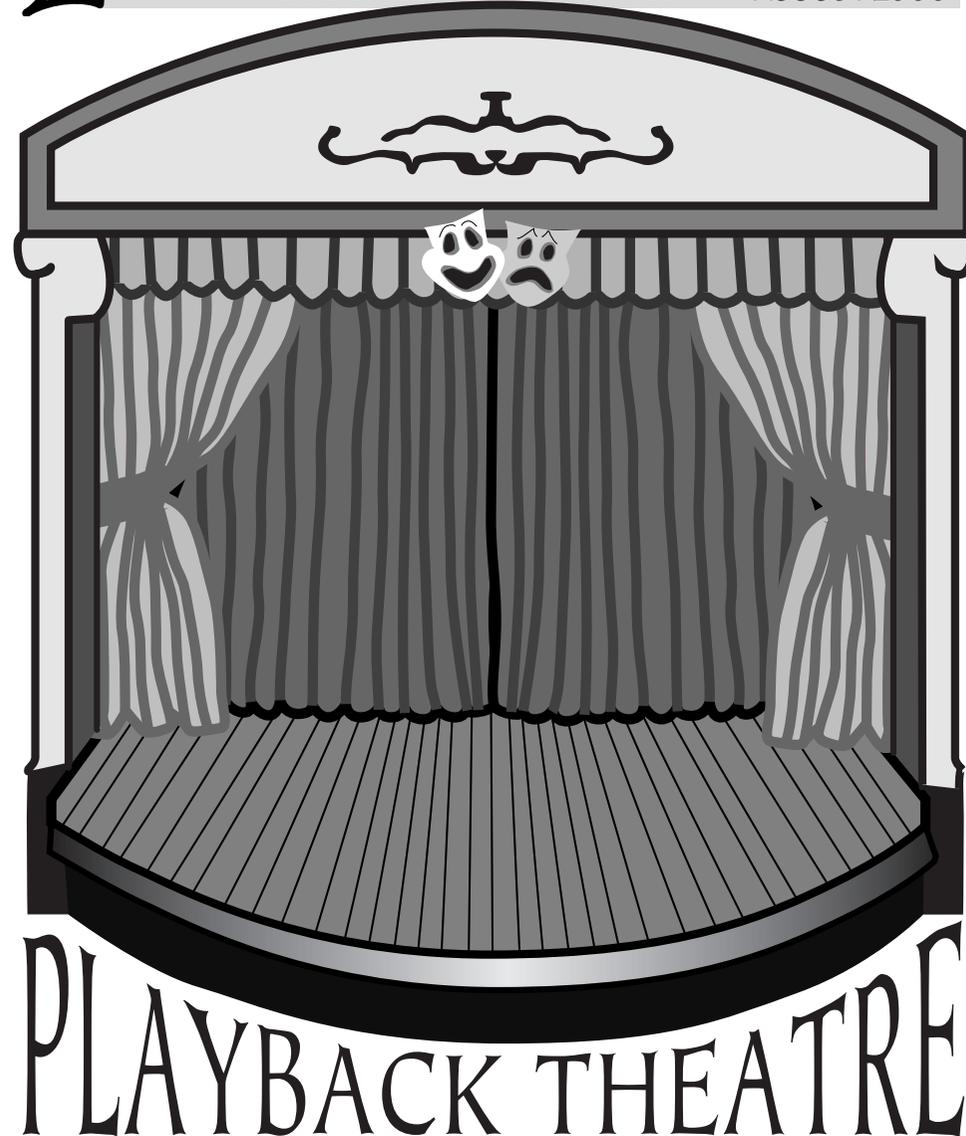
Plants with invasive potential in Tasmania that have been spotted recently on sale here include **Frosted Curls** *Carex comans* (ornamental), **Swamp foxtails** *Pennisetum alpecuroides* (ornamental), **Horsetails** *Equisetum hyemale* (medicinal herb and unusual garden plant).

If you're interested in becoming a member, contact Cindy Hanson, Weed Plan Education Officer, PO BOX 46, KINGS MEADOWS TAS 7249. Phone (03) 63365414. Email: Cindy.Hanson@dpiwe.tas.gov.au

Fern Tree Community Association Inc. Newsletter

www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/ferntree

AUGUST 2000



AT THE FERN TREE TAVERN, SATURDAY 12 AUGUST, 7.00 PM

Book now at the Tavern

See page
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Fern Tree Community Association Inc., 8 Stephenson Place, Fern Tree. GST Registered. ABN 88 577 475 907.

The Fern Tree Community Association is a non-profit group set up to serve and represent the community of Fern Tree. Meetings open to all residents elect a committee each year to conduct the Association's business. Address all correspondence to: *The Secretary, Fern Tree Community Association, 8 Stephenson Place, Fern Tree 7054.* Find us on the Web at <http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/ferntree>

Residents' Annual General Meeting Your Committee for 2000

The Annual General Meeting of residents on 26 April elected the following Committee to conduct the business of the Association for the coming year:

President... Torquil Canning (tel. 6239 1570)

Vice-president..... Peter Boyer (6239 1181)

Secretary Bruce Wilson (6239 1028)

Treasurer Brian Marriott

Committee Trudi Disney, Mike Emery,

Robin Errey, Cynthia Johnson, Melissa

McDonald, Karen Phillips, Prue

Quarmby, Dave Roberts

Other positions filled were —

Public Officer..... Dave Roberts

Auditor..... Rendell Ridge

Contributing to your community Newsletter

The Fern Tree Community Association *Newsletter* is the voice of Fern Tree and the adjacent communities of Neika, Ridgeway and South Hobart (upper Strickland Ave—Huon Road). The *Newsletter* is published every two months:

— February (submit material by 3rd Saturday in January)

— April (deadline 3rd Saturday in March)

— June (deadline 3rd Saturday in May)

— August (deadline 3rd Saturday in July)

— October (deadline 3rd Saturday in September)

— December (deadline 3rd Saturday in November)

Your contribution — a community announcement, a news item or a letter to the editor — will be very welcome. All contributions must be signed with your name and should include your telephone number.

Paid advertisements are accepted: \$20 for a full page, \$10 per ½-page, \$5 per ¼-page, payable on placement of the advertisement. Contributions, advertisements and offers of assistance with distribution should be sent to the Editor, 8 Stephenson Place, Fern Tree 7054.

For the next newsletter, get your contribution or advertisement to us by Saturday 16 September.

Spring events

Playback Theatre..... 12 August

FTCA General Meeting..... October*

Fern Tree Trivia Night..... October*

The Book Fair..... October*

Fern Tree Carols by Candlelight

.....Sunday 17 December

*Dates to be notified in next Newsletter. And don't forget our monthly working bees at the Community Centre, resuming on the first Sunday in September. You can help transform these facilities into an even more valuable community asset.

Bus shelters: thanks to Peter, Torquil, but help still welcome

Peter Fawcett and Torquil Canning have taken the first huge step toward getting our mountain bus shelters into shape. The Stop 25 shelter opposite Chimney Pot Hill Road has been made safe after a long period of disrepair. Peter has itemised what needs doing elsewhere. If you'd like to help, he can be contacted on 6239 1422.

Public meeting

7.30 pm on Tuesday 19 September
Fern Tree Community Centre

Issues concerning domestic and companion animals in Fern Tree Are there problems? What can we do?

A meeting to air concerns about animals, to hear about what can be done to reduce any problems they cause, and to set directions for future animal policy in Fern Tree.

If you have any queries, please contact Bruce Wilson on 6239 1028 or via email at <kmolteb@tassie.net.au>.

DIER

Our response: lower-cost road safety
Following is a summary of the FTCA response:

Paragraph 2: Beach Road, Kingston, and Cremorne Road are straight, have good vision and have footpaths. Peak pedestrian activity is in daylight and in good weather. Summerleas Road is winding and narrow with no footpaths, and pedestrians use it throughout the year, often in darkness. It should have a speed limit at least as low as (Kingston) Beach, Cremorne and Spring Beach Roads.

Paragraph 3: The present 60 km/h speed limit is understood to extend from Fern Tree to Kingston as there is no derstriction sign at either end. Raising or removing that speed limit would be irresponsible. Speed restrictions surely exist to keep speeds down where motorists might misjudge what is safe. This is easy to do for drivers unaccustomed to narrow, poorly-built gravel roads such as Summerleas Road.

Paragraph 4: Why impose a load limit for coaches but not for other heavy vehicle through traffic? At least there should be warning signs at each end of Summerleas Road. At present there is nothing to prevent a semi-trailer driver innocently entering the road only to find himself unable to go forward or back, as has happened to at least one semi-trailer.

Paragraph 5: You say motorists "generally travel at a safe speed", but we live here and know that many don't. A recent general meeting of Fern Tree residents voted unanimously to press for a 40 km/h speed limit for Summerleas Road. Would you be prepared to justify the statement "The geometry and accident history of the roads are secondary considerations" in court if an accident victim accused you of setting misleading speed limits?

Paragraph 6: Thank you for your offer to liaise with councils and to include Summerleas Road in the next Federal Black Spot Program assessment. We would like to have input at the appropriate time. We will welcome money spent on improvements but want to be reasonable about costs. A tight speed limit with explanatory signs would be a major improvement, which combined with work at specific places should be generally satisfactory. We are not seeking a major upgrade and cannot understand your Department's opposition to a real-

istic speed limit. We would appreciate a chance to discuss these matters with you directly, and to show you the problems on site.

Mike Emery, on behalf of the Committee of the Fern Tree Community Association

Help us in our campaign for a safer Summerleas Road. If you hear of any accidents, contact Mike Emery on 6239 1518, or any member of the FTCA Committee. We don't need personal details, just place and date, an idea of the severity of the accident, and comments on whether the road was a factor.

Letter to the Editor

A safer Huon Road crossing

I have serious concerns about the safety of the Huon Road traffic islands in respect to pedestrians. A pedestrian laneway crosses the island between the bus stop and the church. When crossing the city-bound lane from the church, visibility to the right is nil due to the bend and the bank. It seems an inappropriate place for a crossing. The second pedestrian island—I'll call it the south island—originally was to have had a pedestrian lane across it but this has been omitted. A fence along the park footpath now prevents pedestrians crossing from the park ramp to that island, yet at that point there is a good view to the right. I regard that ramp as the only safe place to cross Huon Road to get to Stephenson Place, but the island doesn't extend that far south. The combination of the fence and the lack of any pedestrian lane across the island are a powerful incentive to use the north island where visibility to the right is awful.

A solution isn't obvious. Transport authorities say zebra crossings don't work in non-urban areas. A pedestrian footbridge would be excellent but no-one is likely to pay for it. Another solution, not so tidy, would be to extend the south island southwards to make it possible to cross directly to it from the pipeline ramp. It would be a bit tight for buses turning right out of Summerleas Road, but this could be overcome by paving the southern end with very low flagstones which can be driven over if necessary.

In going for the cheaper solution, authorities seem to have placed the convenience of drivers above the safety of pedestrians.

The hazards of Summerleas Road: the continuing battle to get government to treat it seriously

In our June issue we reported on correspondence between Committee member Mike Emery and officers of the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) about the safety of pedestrians and motorists on the road from Fern Tree to Kingston. Mike has been asked by the FTCA Committee to continue his efforts to have the Department's Zoning Committee reduce the present 60 km/h speed limit to the Hobart City boundary (the end of the bitumen) down to 40 km/h and to have a similar limit imposed along the rest of the road to the Huon Highway at Kingston. Readers may recall the Department's reply that "following a recent speed zone survey, the reduction of the existing 60 km/h speed limit on Summerleas Road to a 40 km/h limit is not supported" and that area speed limits were "not designed to cover a semi-rural environment."

At the request of the FTCA Committee, Mike continued to press the case for DIER action to improve safety for road users, including limits to heavy vehicle use. Following is continuing correspondence between Mike and the Department.

"Summerleas Road does not satisfy the Department's criteria"

8 June 2000

Dear Mr Emery

I refer to your letter of 19 April 2000 to the Department raising concerns about speed limits and safety hazards on Summerleas Road, from Huon Road to Brown's River.

It is the Department's current policy to provide 40 km/h linear speed limits in local streets within beach resorts, sports ground areas and schools where a high level of pedestrian movements and traffic conflicts are involved. As from 1 December 1999, the 40 km/h school zones are now confined to certain defined time periods. The two examples of the 40 km/h limit, on Beach Road in Kingston and Cremorne Road, you mentioned are consistent with this policy, although we propose to change the signing in Cremorne to reduce the extent of the 40 km/h speed limit.

The section of Summerleas Road from Huon Road to the Hobart City Council's boundary is regulated by a 60 km/h linear speed limit and the remaining section to the Southern Outlet is open to motorists to travel at a speed considered to be safe for the circumstances. These speed limits are based upon current Tasmanian speed zoning selection criteria. Summerleas Road therefore does not satisfy the Department's speed zoning selection criteria for the lower 40 km/h speed limit you have suggested.

A gross load limit to 10 ton for coaches currently applies to Summerleas Road from the Council's boundary to Leslie Road. The Department does not intend to impose further load limit restrictions to other vehicles using Summerleas Road.

It is acknowledged that a significant section of Summerleas Road is unsealed, narrow and winding and that there have been a number of accidents over the years. However, experience indicates that motorists tend to generally drive at a safe travel speed after taking into considerations the road geometry and the surrounding environments. The Tasmanian speed zoning selection criteria are also primarily determined by the road function classification and roadside development density. The geometry and accident history of the roads are secondary considerations.

The long-term solution is to improve the geometrical alignments and road surface conditions of the road. With the accident statistics over the past five years on Summerleas Road mentioned in your letter, the Department intends to liaise with Hobart City Council and Kingborough Council and to include Summerleas Road for road works improvement in the next assessment of 2001/2002 Federal Black Spot Program.

Whilst I cannot accede to your various requests, I trust the above information may be of assistance to you.

Milan Prodanovic
Chief Traffic Engineer
Traffic Standards Branch

Playback Theatre

In response to popular demand, the Association has arranged for another fun evening with the Playback Theatre on 12 August. For those who attended last year, the format will be more or less the same although we can't promise a sequel to the snake in the vacuum cleaner episode.



Intrigued, or perhaps wanting to find out more secrets from Fern Tree's murky past, well get a table together and arrange to be at the Tavern on Saturday 12 August at 7.00 pm.

There will be a buffet dinner at 7.30 followed by the entertainment provided by yourselves, ably assisted by the Playback Theatre crew.

Table bookings can be made at the Tavern and tickets (at \$18 a head) will be available from Trudi Disney 6239 1353 or Dave Roberts 6239 1163.

We would also like to hear from anyone who would be able to prepare a dish (main course or dessert) for the buffet dinner. Please contact Dave Roberts if you can help.

FTCA + GST = we're in business

As we're all aware by now, the GST reaches its tentacles everywhere, not least into your local Community Association. The executive committee has taken advice on how best to handle GST within its operations and we chose to register both for an ABN and for GST. We could not avoid registering for an ABN without having any funds which are raised or donated from other organisations reduced by 48.5%. We could, however, have chosen not to register for GST, but this would have cost us a lot of money during the two large projects that we have coming up. These projects are the upgrade of the Community Hall and the Federation Fund project to provide interpretation panels along the Pipeline Track.

We now have an ABN. It is 88 577 475 907.

GST will now have to be included in many of our prices. In particular, rental of the Community Hall and its facilities will include GST. We will absorb the GST, initially, so that prices to residents won't change. We will review

these prices after the Hall upgrade is completed. We're sure that you will be so pleased with the new, deluxe facilities that you won't mind a small increase in rental!

We will also have to include GST in the prices of some of our fund-raising activities. Events, such as the Playback Theatre, which have a fixed entrance fee will now include GST. In the case of events where we're selling things, GST will have to be charged on some items and not on others. For example, secondhand goods and ready-to-eat food will include GST, but produce stalls won't. This will mean, in practice, that will have separate stalls for taxed and GST free items.

This whole process has been and will continue to be a learning process. We may in future years (when there are no major projects) decide that it is easier to choose not to be registered for GST. We have that option, and will decide after our first year's experience.

Brian Marriott, Honorary Treasurer

Tom Errey's tribute to a great Australian Judith Wright and "Reconciliation"

"Old age is not for sissies". In her last years, beset with deafness, defective vision, severe arthritis and a diseased heart, Judith Wright liked to quote that phrase from her old mentor and friend, Dorothy Auchterlone Green. Last month, the end came for Judith, just after her 85th birthday.

In her abhorrence of spreading cities, with all their environmental dysfunction, Judith would find a place like Fern Tree appealing, because still set in the bush. Born in pastoral NSW, she spent most of her adult life at Mt Tambourine in Queensland and Mongarlowe – an hour's drive from Canberra. Her affinities with nature, evident from her earliest published verse, emerged also in her public stance for safeguarding the environment. As a co-founder for the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, she sounded early warnings over the threats to the Great Barrier Reef and other natural treasures.

Those activities were at the very inception of what is now seen as the "green" movement, before the main advocacy bodies were formed. And they led to her serving on the Committee of the National Estate in the early '70s, the first government initiative to appraise what we now know as the National Heritage. Upon her move to the Canberra area some twenty years ago, she joined with Nugget Coombs and a distinguished group of scientists to form the Aboriginal Treaty Committee, becoming as its secretary an ardent champion of the rights of Aboriginal people, in and beyond Australia.

This deep involvement in contentious public issues was the more remarkable because severely impaired hearing – from a childhood riding accident – handicapped her on the platform, even though she didn't shirk that exposure when the emergency demanded. Usually, however, it was in organizational activity and especially in writing letters to the press and articles for influential journals that her time and energy were invested.

At the same time she was active in behalf of her fellow writers – most of them far less financially successful through their works – in upholding publication rights and royalties. In no less vigorous fashion she campaigned for arms control, against nuclear arms testing, atmospheric gas emissions, and a host of other causes of a more occasional kind.

While it was in her poetry that Judith won distinction, and indeed honour far beyond Australia's shores, it was this character of her as "the good

citizen", wholly engaged with the problems confronting our national society, that has tended to be rather overlooked. Mainly this might be put down to the circumstance that on so many salients she was ahead of her time, and notoriously prophets are dismissed with some degree of embarrassment by the rulers of the land when they are not roundly condemned, as Judith sometimes was.

In a radio interview made last year with difficulties attendant on her deafness, Judith when asked about her attitude to "RECONCILIATION" said she'd never liked the word in its present framework. That was consistent with sheaves of her writing directed to making White Australians aware of their Black history. To her, what signified most was the thing from our side, recognition. Yet she made her support known for the present "Corroboree 2000" movement, sponsored by the Reconciliation Council, and in her frail condition joined the public witness to greater understanding of this burden on the national conscience.

To friends in Fern Tree with whom she exchanged letters over twenty years (and called on once when touring Tasmania), Judith recounted – in a note written only three weeks before her death – how, pushed in a wheel chair, she had taken part with 5000 other people in Canberra's recent celebration of the "Corroboree", and hoped we in Hobart would do a similar thing, symbolically crossing the bridge beside the city. (We censor here her characteristically vinegary comment about the Prime Minister, in his well-advertised aversion to such demonstrations.)

Our observance of Corroboree 2000, the Tasman Bridge Walk on 23rd July, will undoubtedly have included numbers of Fern Tree folk. Following in the wake of one of our 'brightest and best' is further inspiration for joyous celebration. Although the individual light of Judith Wright has now been snuffed out, in her verse and in her public testaments this paragon of a citizen has bequeathed us a beacon by which we can find our way forward to a more convivial Australia for all of its members.

Bring out your books!



Remember the Great Fern Tree Book Fair of 1998? And 1997? It's on again in October (date to be notified next Newsletter), and **we need your surplus books**. Put them in a box and call Peter Boyer (6239 1181) or any other Committee member and we'll come round at the weekend or evening and collect them from you for the big event.

A lively crowd enjoys another dazzling Fern Tree Winter Festival

Fern Tree's second Winter Festival has again brightened up our darkest night with a fine night's entertainment for an excellent crowd of mountain folk and visitors.

The evening began with the usual bonfire, lit by our Lord Mayor Rob Valentine. We had pruned surrounding gum trees to avoid lower branches getting singed, but the fire reached unexpected heights. Our ever-watchful Fire Brigade was equal to the task, protecting the trees with a stream of water. Ten minutes of



conflagration and it was back to the soup and gossip to get ready for the main show.

The customers, young and old, were not disappointed. Fern Tree's own pyrotechnician Werner Ihlenfeld, of Flaming Eye Productions, ably assisted by fellow-fireworks wizz Graham Norris, crafted a show that if anything surpassed last year's memorable event. They put together an enormous array of sparkling showers, spiralling wheels, soaring skyrockets and screaming, crackling, kaleidoscopic explosions in the night sky that kept everyone gazing skyward in amazement for 20 minutes or so, punctuated by applause for the most spectacular fire-bursts. The noise would have been deafening but for earplugs supplied by a generous mining benefactor.

The evening ended with coffee, cake and biscuits — and the drawing by Alderman Eva Ruzicka of the winning ticket in the Festival Hamper Raffle. The prize, a basket of goodies donated over preceding weeks by customers of Melissa and Doug McDonald, was won by Melissa's sister Tamioka Smith, visiting for the evening.

Our thanks are due to the Hobart City Council, which again was the Festival's major sponsor, to the Lord Mayor for again lighting the bonfire, to Werner and Graham, to our Fire Brigade for watching over the event, to the committee members and others who prepared for the night (including donors of rubbish for the bonfire and those who prepared food) and to all those who came out on a chilly night and helped make the event so enjoyable. With guests' donations we were able to turn a small surplus, which will be going toward the renovations to our Community Centre.



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