

# MOUNT TERRIBLE



# HUT



**HERITAGE  
HUT  
SERIES**

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# **MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT**

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## **CONTRIBUTORS**

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### **DELWP**

DELWP Construction Team (Darren, Emery, Rob, Xavier)

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Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team

Victorian High Country Huts Association

Fire Towers Downunder

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Kathie Maynes

Mick McEvoy

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HORSE RIDING

ESPLASH



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT

**Name:** Mount Terrible Hut  
**Built:** Mid 1962  
**Location:** Mt Terrible Track, Mt Terrible  
**Burnt:** 8 December 2012  
**Rebuilt:** November-December 2016

The Mount Terrible Hut was built mid 1962 to accommodate fire spotters living on the mountain. The hut was accidently burnt down in December 2012 and rebuilt in late 2016.



## Restoring a past relic Mount Terrible Hut Rebuild

Also known as the Mount Terrible Fire Tower Hut, its original site is located in the Southern Great Dividing Range, south-west of Kevington in Central Victoria. The summit and the Firetower are included in the 100 hectare Mount Terrible Natural Features and Scenic Reserve.



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT

The 22 metre steel firetower was constructed early 1962 at a cost of 750 pound. A 12 foot by 12 foot accommodation hut (Mt Terrible Hut) was constructed mid 1962 at a cost of 330 pound. The hut offered towermen (also known as fire watchers or fire spotters) accommodation during fire seasons and was in use for around five decades. Sadly its condition slowly deteriorated and vandalism took its toll.

Around 1989 a caravan was placed at the hut site to give better accommodation to the towermen. The last towerman to actually stay on the mountain was Mick McEvoy. After his time, towermen travelled to the site each day. Mick told us that he remembers the caravan being brought to the tower site by the Forestry Commission and that it was not in great condition and leaked when it was wet. Local forestry worker Allan Webb would stay at the hut around this period and chose to sleep in the hut instead of the caravan.

Mt Terrible April 2016





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT



Eventually the hut became more of a bush shack for hikers, those with off road vehicles and people walking the Bicentennial National Trail (a 5330 km trail from Healesville to Cooktown opened 1988 and commonly called the BNT).

The associated firetower is 18.28 metres high (9 m to the first landing, 6 m to the second landing and 3 m to the third). The ladder between landings originally had no hand railings, so care had to be taken, especially at night or during periods of high winds. Fire watchers were paid a low wage, though overtime rates (especially on weekends) made the job attractive. Towermen were expected to be in the tower from 10 am to 6 pm and be available to report to the Eildon Tower, who would check in on the hour during summer. During the winter months the hut's water tank was drained so it wouldn't freeze and rupture the pipes. Valuables such as the fridge were removed and the hut then left open as an emergency shelter.



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

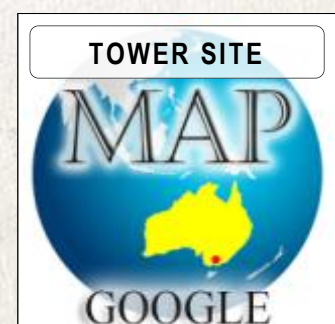
## MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT



In May 2008 a report on the condition of the hut by the High Country Huts Association rated the condition of the hut as poor. Photographs included in the report showed how it had become almost unusable. The report was part of an effort to gain permission from then Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) to rebuild the hut (at no expense to Government). Then on Saturday 9 December 2012, to the dismay of hut lovers and high country travellers, the hut burnt to the ground.

On 7 March 2016 efforts by the Avro Anson Track Clearing team, headed by coordinator Anthony Dykes, began with a request for permission to rebuild the hut (at no expense) submitted to the Department of Environment, Lands, Water and Planning (DELWP). The Department then came onboard along with the Victorian High Country Huts Association (VHCHA) and by October, works on a new hut were well under way.

On 3-4 December the Avro A4-4 Memorial Team held a working bee at the site and helped catch up time lost to inclement weather. The hut was opened to the public on 23 December 2016 and within just one month, two log books had been filled with positive comments regarding the hut, location and those who helped build it. A stove was installed on 27 April 2017.





# TOWERMEN

TOWERMEN WHO HAVE MANNED THE FIRETOWER





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## TOWERMEN

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### MOUNT TERRIBLE TOWERMEN INCLUDED:

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*Also known as FLO's (Fire Lookout Officers)*

**Cyril Boote**

(Forestry employee and first Mt Terrible Towerman 1962-1963)

**Barry Hayes**

(1963-1964)

**Craig Robertson**

(Last two weeks of 1964 - 1967)

**Unknown UNI Student**

**David Horne**

(1966 -1967)

**Colin Myers**

(1967-1969)

**John (Frog) Lowerson**

(1969 - Unknown)

**Kelvin McMurtry**

(unknown - 1979 - 1983)

**Mick McEvoy**

(1983-c1990)

(Mick was the last permanent staff member to live on the mountain)

**Peter McGrath**

**(2012-2015)**

(On duty 8 December 2015 - the night the hut was burnt)

**Brendon Savage**

(Current relief towerman)



# TIMELINE

BASIC TIMELINE OF EVENTS





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE

<b>30 October 1961</b>	A quote for the erection of a 12' x 12' (feet) hut at Mt Terrible was submitted.
<b>March 1962</b>	The construction and erection of the Mt Terrible hut (as per above quote) was approved.
<b>Mid 1962</b>	The Mount Terrible Hut was built.
<b>1968-1969</b>	Colin Myers worked as a towerman after the university student employed quit. Colin said he was a long haired man with a pretty girlfriend, but after walking to the Kevington Hotel from the hut one night, his girlfriend refused to return. So he quit and Colin was then employed.
<b>November 1988</b>	The National Bicentennial Trail (BNT) opened.
<b>Circa 1990</b>	Cliffy Young took part in a horse ride with his wife along the Bicentennial National Trail. His wife rode a horse while he chose to run beside her.
<b>4 May 2008</b>	A report on the condition of the hut by the High Country Huts Association rated the hut as being in poor condition. The report was part of an effort to gain permission from then Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) to rebuild the hut (at no expense to Government).
<b>Late 2008</b>	The Victorian High Country Hut Association (VHCHA) conducted a restoration of the Mt Terrible Hut.
<b>9 December 2012</b>	The Mount Terrible Hut was burnt to the ground.
<b>7 March 2016</b>	Anthony Dykes emailed the Department of Environment, Lands, Water and Planning (DELWP) with a proposal to rebuild the Mt Terrible Hut.
<b>Unknown</b>	The hut site was cleaned up.
<b>4 April 2016</b>	Anthony Dykes made contact with VHCHA Maintenance Coordinator





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE

	Wayne Peterken, who was involved with the 2008 hut restoration.
<b>13 April 2016</b>	Artworkz commenced work on this factsheet.
<b>21 April 2016</b>	Artworkz conducted their first photoshoot at the Firetower.
<b>7 May 2016</b>	Artworkz conducted their second photoshoot at the Firetower.
<b>11 May 2016</b>	Artworkz conducted their third photoshoot at the Firetower.
<b>12 May 2016</b>	Meeting between the Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team, DELWP, Victorian High Country Huts Association and Artworkz was extremely positive with everyone present wishing to see the hut rebuilt.
<b>22 June 2016</b>	Meeting between Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team, DELWP, Victorian High Country Huts Association and Artworkz was extremely positive. Funding options being explored and miscellaneous items sourced. A plan of the hut was presented and suggestions heard.
<b>July 2016</b>	Funding secured and permission to publicise the hut's imminent construction received from the group.
<b>29 July 2016</b>	Artworkz publicised the imminent construction of the new hut in eSplash155.
<b>14 September 2016</b>	Official Media Release announcing that the Mt Terrible Hut was being rebuilt was released to media outlets by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). News.com.au <u>ran the story</u> the same day. Artworkz published it in eSplash158 published on Friday 16 September.
<b>16 September 2016</b>	Meeting between Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team, DELWP, Victorian High Country Huts Association and Artworkz to formalise details pertaining to the reconstruction process of the hut.
<b>14 November 2016</b>	The boxing for the concrete slab was put in place by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE

- 3-4 December 2016** Due to weather delays, the works were running behind, however thanks in part to this large skilled and highly motivated team of volunteers from the A4-4 Memorial Team - work got back on track.
- 16 November 2016** The concrete slab was poured by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).
- 16 November 2016** Artworkz attended the Mt Terrible hut site to conduct a photoshoot of the pouring of the concrete slab.
- 23 December 2016** The hut was opened to the public with works ending around 2 pm Friday 23 December.
- 23 December 2016** DELWP finished works at the site.
- 23 December 2016** Artworkz conducted the opening photoshoot.
- 24 December 2016** The Victorian High Country Huts Association went public about the hut on their facebook site.
- 24 December 2016** Artworkz published eSplash165 - dedicated to the new hut.
- 17 January 2017** The water tank as fitted to the hut.
- 22 January 2017** Anthony Dykes visited the hut and noted that someone had printed out a copy of the eSplash and left it at the hut and two Visitor Logbooks had already been filled, making this possibly the most popular bush hut in the district.
- 28 April 2017** The stove that was donated by the VHCHA was delivered by the Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team and installed by DELWP. The flue and top hat was sourced by the Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team and installed by DELWP.
- Early November 2017** The benches in the hut were cut up and burn for firewood by someone. Repairs by DELWP followed.



# GALLERY

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE HUT AND FIRETOWER



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Tower circa 1968. The photograph was taken by Towerman Colin Myers during the two year period he was employed.**

Photograph © Colin & Jenny Myers 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut circa 1968. The photograph was taken by towerman Colin Myers during the two year period he was employed and is the earliest image of the hut we have seen.**

Photograph © Colin & Jenny Myers 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Colin Myers under the verandah of the Mt Terrible Hut circa 1968. The photograph was taken by towerman Colin Myers during the two year period he was employed and is the earliest image of the hut we have seen. (Inset) Close-up of the sign above Colin's head.**

Photographs © Colin & Jenny Myers 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**The photograph was taken by towerman Colin Myers during the two year period he was employed. The CJ58 jeep was outfitted with a V8 from a 58 ford truck and was easily able to access the Mt Terrible summit.**

**On the left is Colin's sister Sandra Myers who later married Peter Grant. Peter's uncle was forestry officer Don Fry. Sue Edwards on the right later married Trevor Creighton.**

Photograph © Colin & Jenny Myers 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Motorbike trip to the Mt Terrible Hut via Bald Hill Gap in 1975  
by Russell Sturzaker and friends**



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Motorbike trip to the Mt Terrible Hut in 1975 by Russell Sturzaker and friends. The campsite was 100 metres from the hut. After dinner, they walked to the hut and took photos of the sunset.**

Photographs © Russell Sturzaker 2017



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

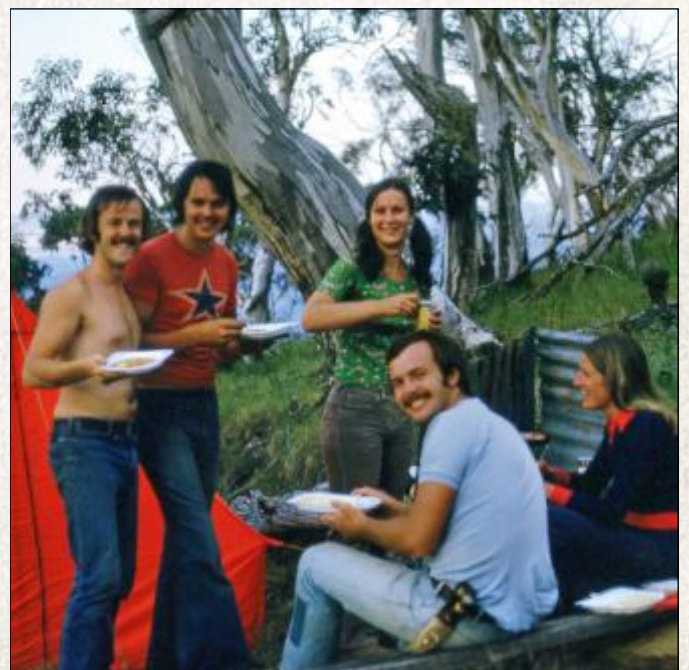
## GALLERY



**The Matlock sign photographed during a motorbike trip to the Mt Terrible Hut in 1975 by Russell Sturzaker and friends.**

**(L-R) Russell Sturzaker, Leigh Faulkner, Prue Garnsworthy, Graeme Danks and Jenny Pratt**

Photographs © Russell Sturzaker 2017





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut in 1979**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



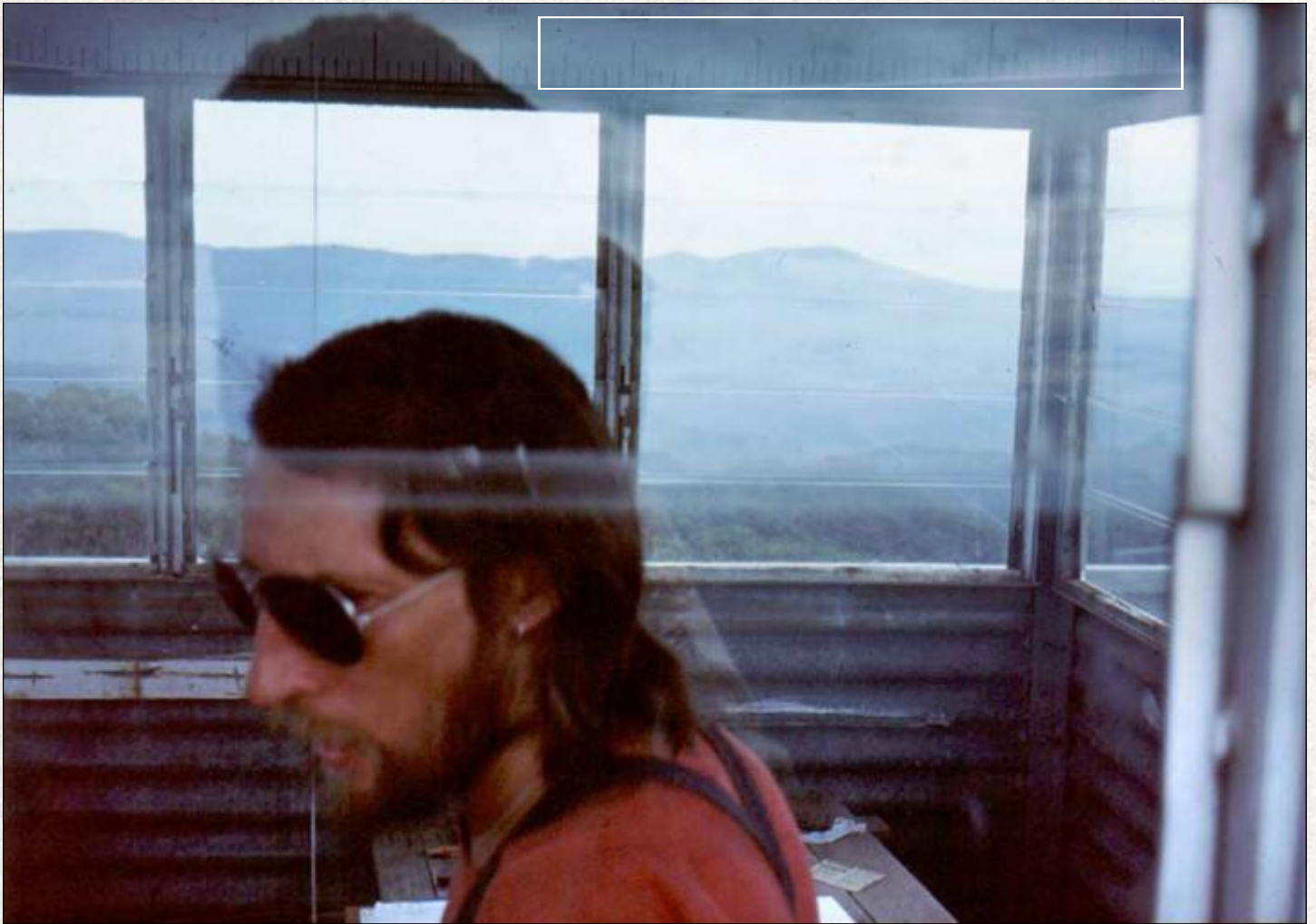
**Mt Terrible Firetower in 1979**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Towerman Kelvin McMurtry in the Mt Terrible Firetower in 1979. The compass markings on the wall (inset) were used to help identify a fire's location.**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY

**NORTH**



**SOUTH**



**EAST**



**WEST**



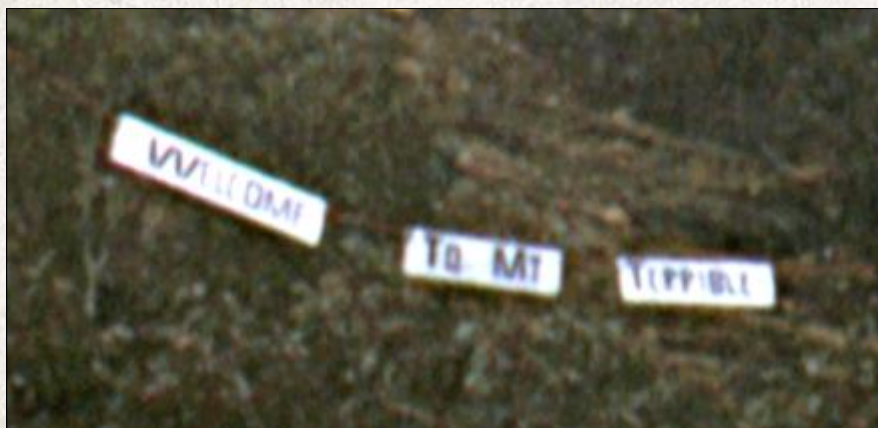
**Towerman's view in 1979**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut as seen from the Tower base circa 1980.  
The Banner reads "Welcome to Mt Terrible."**

Photograph © Sandra Cumming 2010



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Looking out from Mt Terrible circa 1980**

Photograph © Sandra Cumming 2010



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Leaving via Mt Terrible track circa 1980**

Photograph © Sandra Cumming 2010



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Tower in 1983**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**View from the Mt Terrible Tower in 1983**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**View from the Mt Terrible Tower in 1983**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**View from the Mt Terrible Tower in 1983**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Tower circa 1989. The brown radio shed (bottom right) was made from a water tank**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Looking up the tower circa in 1989**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**A storm front moving over the summit**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**The caravan was supplied circa 1989 for towermen to sleep in. Towerman Mick McEvoy who would sleep in the van, told us it leaked and was not in great condition.**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Inside the hut circa 1990**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Shower facilities (steel water bucket) circa 1990**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**The caravan was supplied circa 1989 for towermen to sleep in. Towerman Mick McEvoy who would sleep in the van, told us it leaked and was not in great condition.**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



### **The horse event along the BNT circa 1990**

Cliffy Young (1922-2003) was an Australian potato farmer and athlete from Beech Forest in Victoria when in 1983, aged 61, he became a world sensation by winning the 875 km Inaugural Westfield Sydney to Melbourne Ultra marathon wearing gumboots.

Then around 1990, Cliff took part in a horse ride with his young wife (who was 39 years his junior) along a Victorian section of the Bicentennial National Trail (known as the BNT). The trail opened just a few years earlier in 1988. Cliff's wife rode a horse, while Cliff chose to run beside her. The above photo was taken as they neared the Mt Terrible hut on the day they passed it. Cliff is not in this image.

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



### **The horse event along the BNT circa 1990**

The BNT was established 1988, just a few years before Cliff completed this section of trail and climbed the tower with towerman Mick McEvoy. Mick recalls that Cliff took a good break about half way up the stairs.

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mick McEvoy watching for fires from the tower circa 1990**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**A fire spotted in the distance circa 1990**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Air support at the tower circa 1990**

Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**David Horne at the Mt Terrible Hut in 1993**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Craig Robertson at the Mt Terrible Hut in 1993**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**View of Mt Skene from the Mt Terrible firetower in 1993**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Craig Robertson at the Mt Terrible Hut in 1993**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut in winter**

Photograph © Allan Weeks 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut in winter**

Photographs © Brenton Luke 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut on 19 October 2008**

Photograph © Wayne Peterken 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut on 19 October 2008**

Photograph © Wayne Peterken 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut on 19 October 2008**

Photograph © Wayne Peterken 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut on 9 October 2009**

Photograph © Wayne Peterken 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut on 11 October 2009**

Photograph © Wayne Peterken 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut on 9 October 2009**

Photograph © Wayne Peterken 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible Hut on 10 October 2009**

Photograph © Wayne Peterken 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible hut fireplace on 11 October 2009**

Photograph © Craig Robertson 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible hut 1 April 2012 before the Yarra Valley 4x4 Club commenced repair works**

Photograph © Yarra Valley 4x4 Club



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Repair works to the Mt Terrible hut by the Yarra Valley 4x4 Club on 2 June 2012**

Photograph © Yarra Valley 4x4 Club



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**(Top) Mount Terrible Hut after it accidentally burnt to the ground 9 December 2012**

Photograph © Peter McGrath 2016

**(Bottom) Mt Terrible from a similar vantage point 21 April 2016**





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible sign 21 April 2016**

**It is unknown who mounted the Mt. Terrible sign, though the sign does hold clues that may help us solve the matter. Any help on who this sign is in memory of would be appreciated.  
See next two pages for sign images.**

**Front:**

Mt. Terrible  
Elv (elevation) 1316 M

**Rear:**

13 May 1930 - 1998  
In Memory



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible sign in 2001**  
(Elevation 1316 M)

Photograph © Allan Layton 2013



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY

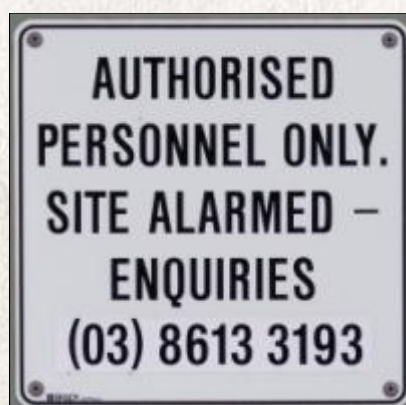


**Mount Terrible sign 21 April 2016**  
(In Memory - 13 May 1930 - 1998)



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



Mount Terrible firetower and signage on 21 April 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mount Terrible firetower on 11 May 2016**



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**The new hut finished and opened to the public on 23 December 2016**



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**The new water tank installed by DELWP  
on 17 January 2017**

© Luke Herd 2017



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**The new stove installed by DELWP  
in March 2017**

© Luke Herd 2017



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut on 7 July 2018**

© Anthony Dykes 2018





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut on 7 July 2018**

© Anthony Dykes 2018





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut on 21 August 2018**

© James Cowell 2018



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut on 21 August 2018**

© James Cowell 2018



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut on 21 August 2018**

© James Cowell 2018



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut on 21 June 2019**

© Anthony Dykes 2019



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## GALLERY



**Mt Terrible Hut on 21 June 2019**

© Anthony Dykes 2019



# THE NIGHT THE HUT BURNT DOWN

BY TOWERMAN © PETER MCGRATH 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF THE HUT BURNING

**9 December 2012**

© *Peter McGrath*

I was working in the tower, but it burnt down overnight when I was off work.

On 8 December 2012 I was working when a white Nissan Patrol came up the Mt Terrible Track early in the afternoon. There were two occupants in it, (or should I say one inside and the other was riding on the running board). They came past the tower and stayed a while, then left. They came back a second time and left again. When I was leaving for the day at 1900 they arrived again.

On 9 December when I arrived back for work, I found the hut on the ground still smouldering. I had to go up the tower to report that the hut had been burnt and then I went back to the hut to see what had happened. There was no one there. I did find a burnt chainsaw, wheel spanner and a number of other things. I was sure that it was the two from the Nissan.



**Mount Terrible Hut after it accidentally burnt to the ground on 9 December 2012**

Photograph © Peter McGrath 2016



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF THE HUT BURNING

When I first began working in the firetower, I started taking a photo of every vehicle that came past the tower. I had taken a photo of the Nissan, but the number plate was not clear. Not long after going back up the tower, the Nissan arrived back. The two occupants were having a look around the burnt hut, so I was now able to get their registration number.

After they left, I was able to give the direction they were headings to the Eildon Police. They were then waiting for them to come down the Eildon Jamieson Road. They told the police it was their first 4x4 and their first weekend away. The day also happened to be a Total Fire Ban. They had decided to sleep in the hut and lit a fire in the fireplace. They got on the *turps* during the night and around two in the morning a log rolled out of the fire. One woke to find the hut on fire, but could not wake his mate, so he dragged him out of the burning hut in his sleeping bag.

There was no water there for them to fight the fire, so they left. The water tank was removed during the Winter after some idiot shot holes in it.

Towerman

© Peter McGrath

**The hut was rebuilt in late 2016**





# MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

BY TOWERMAN © CRAIG ROBERTSON 2008





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

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1964 - 1993

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© *Craig Robertson* 2008

**1963 – 1964:** I first heard of Mt. Terrible in 1963 from Barry Hayes, a fellow geology student at Melbourne University. He was also involved with mountaineering. He told me he would be manning the tower that summer and invited me to come up for a visit. I was then nineteen years old.

After working on an archaeological dig at Port Campbell in January 1964 I set off to visit Barry on my motorbike. I got just up the road on the Jamieson turn-off from Maroondah Highway when I had a breakdown. The drivechain had stripped off the sprocket. I wheeled the bike back down to the Eildon Road and actually pushed it the whole way into Eildon to a garage. I had my father's old army sleeping bag and spent the night sleeping under a truck. I guess the garage couldn't fix the bike. Anyway I hitched back to Melbourne. My father was none too pleased at having to tow a trailer up to Eildon and bring the bike home.

Soon after I did get up to visit Barry, but don't remember how. I think I must have got to Don Fry's (see below) and got a lift with him. I stayed with Barry for a couple of days and returned to Melbourne. He showed me the hut on the tower with the string in the middle and the degrees of the compass marked around above the windows. He also gave me my first lessons in using a Tilley lamp. Also I think it was Barry who first explained to me about different types of smoke. To my surprise, soon after I was rung up and asked if I would like to man the tower for three weeks to finish off the season, as Barry had had enough.

I took the job and got an early morning bus to Taggerty with a suitcase full of gear including food my mother had prepared for me. It was so heavy I could only just get it down off the bus. I met the Forests Commission (FC) staff in Taggerty, where they all lived in a row of houses opposite the FC depot buildings:

Jack Channon: he was the boss, perhaps in his late thirties, and lived there with his wife;  
Brian Vernon: number two; a big red-headed guy who lived with his wife Alison; I got to know him mainly;





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

Harold Tonkin: number three; did clerical work in the office and was the guy that did the hourly radio communication; ex-army signals corps in WWII, he was proud of his 'modulation' on the radio. I think there was also a woman who did clerical work there too, but I can't remember her name.

Brian and Alison took me up to the tower in a station wagon with a lock-diff that was adequate to getting up the track. We got up there in time for lunch. The weather was stormy and we were sitting in the hut eating when lightning hit the tower. There was a tremendous flash inside the hut. It was a rather dramatic introduction to my life as a firewatcher. Brian and I went out a bit later in the dense white mist and found the radio aerial blown to smithereens. There was just a blackened wire across the ground between the tower and the hut and bits of orange plastic insulation from the wire all over the ground.

Brian and Alison went home and I stayed. I guess the aerial must have been fixed within the next couple of days. I lasted the three weeks and got the hang of climbing the tower (so to speak). I followed Barry's practice, which I understood was accepted, of not staying in the tower between the hourly reports. The radio was in the hut on the tower and I climbed it every hour just before the hour, taking a quick look around, and then contacting Harold on the hour, each hour from nine to five. That generally meant nine trips up the ladder a day, so I got used to it, except it was always something to focus the mind when the wind was up. There were no guards around the ladders, which were on the outside of the tower, and you really had to hang on. Mt. Terrible Tower is 60 feet high: 30 feet up to the first landing, 20 up to the second, and 10 up to the final and the climb through the hatch to the hut. I was always glad to get to the 10 foot ladder.

Firewatchers were paid as road construction workers grade one, the lowest on the FC scale. What made the job worthwhile was the overtime on the weekends – time and half on Saturdays and doubletime on Sundays – and also ten-bob (later one dollar) a day allowance for being camped out. On top of this there was no way to spend the money except on basic groceries, so it meant being able to save a tidy sum in a relatively short period.

During these three weeks I got to know Don Fry, who was the Eildon FC foreman. He was a middle-aged rotund man with dark hair, usually covered in a cloth cap. He came up twice a week with groceries, each time taking my order for the next delivery. Don





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

smoked lots of Drum rollies. It was a worry when he climbed the tower as he would be breathing so heavily I thought he might collapse.

There was a kerosene fridge in the hut but it was very difficult to keep steady, tending to either freeze everything or go musty with humidity. My cooking skills were rudimentary at best, so diet tended to fried chops, sausages and eggs for a couple of days then canned stuff; boiled potatoes and other vegies. Bread and toast were ok but keeping butter was difficult (I don't think there was margarine then). I used the Tilley lamp at night.

The hut was never designed to keep flies out. Blowflies were always buzzing and the hut would rapidly fill with them when cooking. I quickly learnt a lot about coping with a bush shack. One time I was eating some pork german sausage, thinking it was close to going off. I looked at the freshly cut surface and a maggot stuck its head out for a look around. Overcome with disgust I chucked it in the fireplace, spat profusely, and poured kero all over the lot and set fire to it.

I survived the three weeks and returned to Melbourne to go back to uni. a week late. It was to be the pattern for the next couple of years. I had left with the understanding I would return at the end of the year to do the next summer season's firewatching.

**1964 – 1965:** Exactly one week before Christmas 1964 I was delivered up to the tower again. I stayed until probably late January when I got three days break. Don took me down on one of his regular runs, then back on the next. I guess someone must have substituted for me. I hitched down to Melbourne to see my family, not returning again until early in March when I went back to uni. one week late again. It meant I spent 12 weeks on the tower. The money gave me enough to cover expenses, which included subject fees, and to live on for the remaining 40 weeks of the year until the next season.

I was able to pass the time on my own all right. I liked listening to the radio a lot, which mainly meant 3AR, later known as ABC Radio National/621. This was pre-FM so it was the station that broadcast the classical music I was interested in and always keen to learn more about. (3LO, later 774, was often taken up for lengthy periods by parliament). I think my father must have driven me up to Taggerty as I had brought a large box of books with me. There were times when I was reading a book a day. I tried a lot of the classics – the Russians etc. – at this time, but I think most of it went over my head.





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

My main memories of that first full season were to do with the weather. In the middle of January there was a cold snap. The clouds would close in fairly often, but on more than one occasion it turned icy. There was only some light snow, but ice formed on the aerial wires between the hut and tower. They looked like half-inch thick white ropes. Sheets of ice formed on the outside of the walls of the tower hut. But the main challenge was the icicles that formed on the rungs of the ladders. They would be up to an inch and a half – 6 or 7 cm – long, and sharp. I still had to climb up and make my hourly reports. I had brought my motorbike gloves and these became essential gear.

There were also lots of nice days. I did start to spend some amount of time staying up the tower, even if it was mainly to sun-bake on the walkway around the hut. I remember one time lying up there listening to the Rodrigo guitar concerto, watching a raven soar down the hill in time with the music. Whenever I hear that work these days that always comes back to me.

Another time I saw a flock of about 200 ravens swarming around the alpine ash just down from the tower. A wedge-tailed eagle came along and started dive-bombing them and making them all rise up squawking. Wedgies were common over the ridges and valleys.

I found that it was quite rare for anyone to ever come through along the track, perhaps only a handful of occasions the whole three summers I was there. The only visitor I can remember was a guy who arrived up the track from Jamieson in a short-based four-wheel drive. He would have been mid-thirties, bearded and in shorts. He talked furiously at me, but without any real conversation. I found him a bit scary. He was walking quickly all over the area around the hut, either talking to himself or occasionally coming back to speak to me again. Eventually to my relief he drove off down the track toward Woods Point. Being young and naive, it was only several years later I realised he must have been out of his brain on speed.

There were two lookouts that reported to Taggerty: Mt. Terrible and Eildon. An elderly couple were on the Eildon lookout, and had been there I think the previous summer. I was also reporting to Mansfield forestry office at five minutes to the hour. I had two different radio transmitter/receivers, one for each of the two frequencies used. There were two others who used to call in on the Mansfield frequency: a Hungarian on Mt. Buller, and a man on The Paps who called from a vehicle that he drove up there each day.





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

**1965 – 1966:** This season was basically a repeat of the prior – up the tower a week before Christmas and down for the second week of term at uni., with a three day break about half way through. And with another big box of books. The setup was the same with the radios, the lookouts and the reporting. David Horne was on Eildon this year.

I'm not sure I've got the right year with this, but I well remember the big fires in Gippsland about this time. 3AR used to broadcast a 15 minute BBC World News bulletin every morning about 7.30 for many years. I listened to it fairly habitually and it was very rare for Australia to ever get a mention. But there was one dramatic bulletin about fires burning on a 150 mile front in Gippsland. The towers in the Mt. Terrible area could all see these fires over a period of quite a few days.

But the most unforgettable thing was one morning after the fires had reached their height. It had been a pretty cool night and the air had compacted down. When I went up the tower in the morning I found it was just sticking out the top of the layer of smoke and I could see one of the most spectacular landscapes I've ever seen (and I've seen a few)!

The whole arc from north around through the east to the south was covered in a dense snowy white blanket. Only a few beautiful blue peaks like Mts. Skene, Sterling, Buller etc. were poking up above it. In the passes between some of the mountains the layer of smoke looked as if it was flowing through like glaciers. But to top this off, in the distance were maybe half a dozen big clouds where the firefronts were burning. These clouds – not “mushroom”, more like big cauliflower heads – rose up thousands of metres into a clear blue sky with the morning sun glinting a bronzed light off them. The western half of the sky was also covered with more of a grey blanket, with a thick dirty brown band around the horizon. The whole landscape was like on another planet.

One of the other spectacular things up there was the view one got of the weather fronts coming through when a change came. Aside from seeing them in panorama, there was the issue of lightning and when to get out of the tower. This was the very time when lightning strikes were liable to start fires and one wanted to get on to them. One time I watched a front come across until it was just about over Mansfield. All the lightning was still well off over the farmland to the north. That is until an amazing small cloud broke free of the front and veered along the Goulburn Valley. It was shooting lightning bolts out like some bizarre spacecraft. I watched it closely until it arrived over Jamieson and was





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

obviously coming my way. I was out of the tower quick smart and into the hut.

Considering the time I put in on Mt. Terrible I can't claim a great contribution to saving the world from fire. I think it was this final season on the tower that I did get one lightning strike fire near the base of Mt. Torbreck. This was the only time I got a smoke plume that only I could see at first, and I was able to give an accurate bearing from the compass and map. I think it eventually got big enough for Mt. Buller to see it and triangulate it; but it was hidden from Eildon.

Another time there was a fire north of Jamieson. This one was more serious. I wasn't the first on to it – I think Mt. Buller saw it first, but I was able to give a triangulation for it. It was fanned up by a northerly and got seriously big and I can remember it coming at night over the ridge up behind Jamieson and heading toward the town. The blazing was quite impressive in the darkness. It was the most serious incident in all the seasons I was there. Fortunately it was contained and didn't get into the town.

On the downside, after another bit of unstable weather I thought I had smoke up on the side of Mt. Skene. The foreman from Jamieson had to drive all the way up there in the late afternoon after knock-off, only to discover it was dust from some of their own roadworks. We were taught about recognising different kinds of smoke and what they meant: grassfires, scrub, bush etc. But sometimes it was difficult to pick that white road dust from say some bracken taking off. You would often wait with baited breath to see if the plume settled, in which case you knew it was dust, or if it kept growing. Usually it would settle in a few minutes, but this time it took a bit too long and I erred on the side of caution and reported it.

I felt pissed off with them because the Mansfield office basically didn't give a stuff about Mt. Terrible and never communicated anything to us. There was a cursory acknowledgement of the hourly reports and that was it. Obviously I had not made myself popular, but I complained to the office in Taggerty about the lack of communication and extracted some sort of commitment from Mansfield that they would let me know in the future about roadworks etc.

One thing that I enjoyed about the final season on Mt. Terrible: I was asked to keep records and report on the movement of swifts. I think they would have been Spine-tailed Swifts. They were reasonably common over the summer as this is the period of their





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

migration to southern Australia. Sometimes I would be sitting in the tower lost in one the books when there would be a sudden whirring sound and I would look up to see the air full of swifts rocketing around the tower. They're not called swifts for nothing and it was quite exciting to watch. They follow the insects as they are pushed along in the humid air at high altitude before the weather fronts. Sometimes scores of them would fly in a tight circular pattern as they fed, forming a kind of high cylinder of birds in the air that would gradually move past the tower, with many other birds rocketing around the general vicinity of the cylinder.

**1966 – 1967:** This season I spent on the Eildon Lookout (there was no tower) in somewhat different and more comfortable circumstances. This was the year that a big drought got underway. (Now known to be an El Nino event). It was very dry and the fire season was extended well into April, but I had finished uni. by then. Mt. Terrible was just a little spike on a distant horizon manned by David Horne. Hopefully David can tell some of his stories about his adventures up there with Gae Johnson.

**1979:** My next trip to Mt. Terrible was not until the summer of 1979. By this stage I was working in Parkville and putting the finishing touches on my book *Buckley's Hope*. I took some holidays and headed bush with another very large box of books and papers for the writing and manuscript revision I had planned. I had a 1971 Corolla station wagon. I was reasonably confident its low gears could handle the track, but not with the weight I was carrying. When I got to the Mt. Terrible track I took the big cardboard box out and hid it under a tree and then drove up.

Kelvin McMurtry was manning the tower. We sat on the verandah of the hut watching the bats flying around in the evening. By that stage it had a substantial alcove added on the tower side where the shower had always been. The hut was in much the same condition as when I had been staying there. However Kelvin was mainly living in a caravan parked next to it. After I left I drove back down, picked up my box and drove via Matlock to Walhalla where I stayed at a friend's place to write.

**1993:** On the weekend of 24-25 April David Horne and I drove in David's Landcruiser up through Woods Point to Kevington and stayed in the pub overnight. The next day we drove up to the tower and had a look around. The hut looked a bit sad and lonely but still ok. It was boarded up and there was a locked shed built on to the tower side of it where the shower recess had been. The fireplace was crumbled from use. An old table was in it,





# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

probably the one that had been there twenty-odd years before.

The tower had been changed: it was somewhat higher, with new caged in ladders on the inside of the tower frame, a big new hut on top with several parabolic dishes and solar panels, and lots of cabling over it. There were new concrete buildings at the base, which was fenced off and locked. We rolled under the gate to climb the tower up to the second landing. The hatch was padlocked. We hung around up there for a while remembering the names of mountains and other firewatchers. After we climbed down we walked over to the helicopter pad. This was put in when David was there one year. From there we drove home the same day.

© Craig Robertson  
May 2008.



# HORSE RIDING ON MT MERRIBLE

BY © KEN DEACON 2008



## MEMORIES OF MT TERRIBLE

### Rubicon Valley Horse Riding

© Ken Deacon 2016

I read your article about the restoring of the Mt Terrible Firetower Hut with great interest, as there is a connection between Rubicon Valley Horse Riding and the former Mt Terrible Firetower Hut.

We frequented this hut over a ten year period with the operation of our five day safaris between Rubicon and Kevington. The ride was always made around the New Year Eve's weekend, so the celebration of the New Year, could be had at the Kevington Hotel.

At times we would have more than 20 horses making the trip across Mt Terrible, which was always an arduous trip, whether you were heading up to the summit from the Big River side or on the return journey home to Rubicon, from Kevington via Pollettis Track. Because of the steepness of both of these tracks, riders would spare the horses and walk both ways.

On our arrival at the summit of Mt Terrible, lunch was always had and the hut was always a welcome site, where we could all rest in the shade of its verandah and admire the magnificent view you get over the Great Divide. In one of your photos, is a view from the Tower, by Mick McEvoy, of our horses, having their rest before descending down into Kevington. Once in Kevington, the horses were rested at Mick and Irene Pooles Farm, which was a short distance south of Kevington, on the road to Gaffeneys Creek.

Back then, the Kevington Hotel had a delightful oval on its north side, where we would set up camp, only a short walk to the Hotel, where a great New Year's atmosphere would evolve, as riders and local revellers, celebrated.

The "Kevington Hilton? as the hotel was called, always had a great party atmosphere, which lasted to the early morning hours of the New Year's Day. Generally there would always be one reveller, who would go beyond the bounds of accepted behaviour, which would come to the attention of the local constabulary, lead by Jamieson's Sergeant Bernie McQuinney, who would transport the culprit to the Mansfield lockup, to quell their festivity.



# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## RUBICON VALLEY HORSE RIDING

One year, due to a lack of available camping space on the oval, we decided to stay at Gaffeneys Creek Hotel. The horses were still kept at the Pooles Farm, but all riders were transported up to Gaffneys Creek, by all available transport.

What a night we had, hosted by the Publican, Bill Pridell, who offered all the Rubicon Valley Horse Riding Customers, drinks at half price on the hour; surprisingly, there were still customers trying to get to the bar to take advantage of this offer, even at five o'clock in the morning.

Unfortunately for Bill and his Gaffney Creek Hotel, that was the last New Year's Eve it was ever to have, because a few months later, escapee Peter Gibb and his prison officer girlfriend Heather Parker, who had escaped from the Melbourne Remand Centre, had stayed there for a night and on leaving, set fire to the Hotel, which was burnt to the ground. A sad day and the loss of iconic historical hotel.

So the memories we have of this wonderful area, will always be with us and it is great you have rekindled them with your story.

Thank you

Ken Deacon

**Rubicon Valley Horse Riding**  
**[www.rubiconhorseriding.com.au](http://www.rubiconhorseriding.com.au)**  
**Phone: (03) 5773 2292**







# HISTORIC FACTSHEET

## DISTANCES TO MOUNT TERRIBLE

### **Newmans Track from: Eildon Jamieson Road**

30 minutes, 10.7 km

AWD in summer, 4WD in wetter months

### **Mt Terrible Track from: Eildon Jamieson Road (Bald Hill Gap)**

40 minutes, 14.5 km

AWD in summer, 4WD in wetter months

### **Polletti Track from: Mansfield Woods Point Road (2.7 km north of Kevington)**

40 minutes, 9.5 km

4WD only



# MEMORIES OF THE HUT BURNING

BY © PETER McGRATH 2017



# MT TERRIBLE HUT

© PETER MCGRATH 2017

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## MY MEMORIES OF THE HUT BURNING

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from 9 December 2012

I was working in the tower, but it burnt down overnight when I was off work.

On 8 December 2012 I was working when a white Nissan Patrol came up the Mt Terrible Track early in the afternoon, there were two occupants in it, (or should I say one inside and the other was riding on the running board). They came past the tower and stayed a while, then left. They came back a second time and left again. When I was leaving for the day it was 1900 hrs they arrived again.

On 9 December when I arrived back for work I found the hut on the ground still smouldering. I had to go up the tower to report that the hut had been burnt. I went back to the hut to see what had happened. There was no one there. I did find a burnt chainsaw, wheel spanner and a number of other things.



**Mount Terrible Hut after it accidentally burnt to the ground on 9 December 2012**

Photograph © Peter McGrath 2016



I was sure that it was the two from the Nissan. In 2011 when I started working in the firetower, I started taking a photo of every vehicle that came past the tower. I had taken a photo of the Nissan, but the number plate was not clear. Not long after going back up the tower the Nissan arrived back. The two occupants were having a look around the burnt hut. I was now able to get their registration number.

After they left, I was able to give the direction they were heading. The Eildon Police was waiting for them to come down the Eildon Jamieson Road. It was their first 4x4 and their first weekend away, which happened to be a Total Fire Ban day. They had decided to sleep in the hut and lit a fire in the fireplace. They got on the *turps* during the night and around 0200 hrs in the morning a log rolled out of the fire. One woke to find the hut on fire. He could not wake his mate so he dragged him out in his sleeping bag. There was no water there for them to fight the fire, so they left. The water tank was removed during the Winter after some idiot shot holes in it.

*Towerman*

© *Peter McGrath*

**The hut was rebuilt in late 2016**





# eSPLASH MEDIA ARTICLES

**eSPLASH148** - *Restoration talk*

**eSPLASH155** - *New hut approved*

**eSPLASH165** - *Opened to Public*

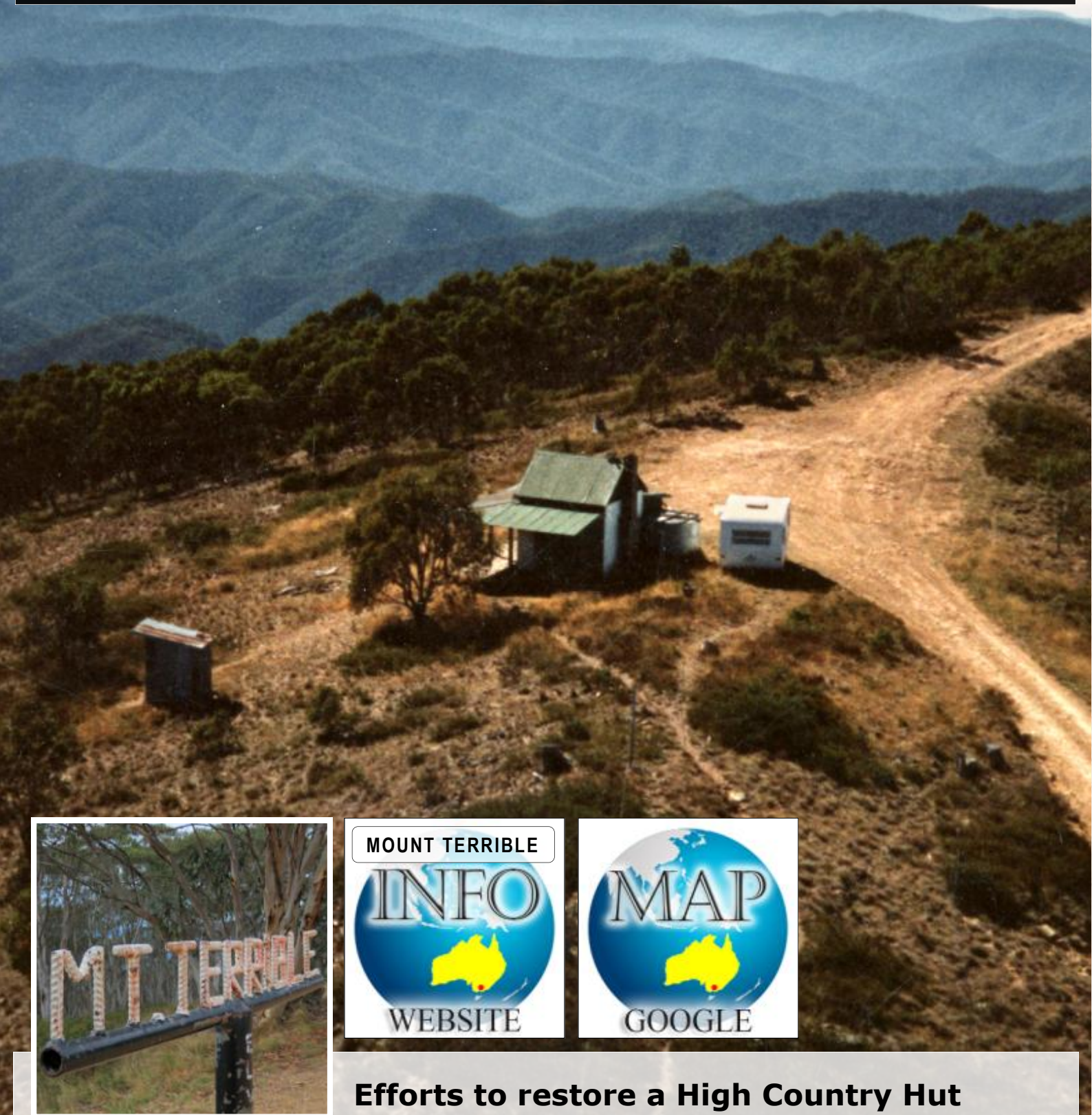
**eSPLASH181** - *Official Opening*



# MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT

- RESTORING OUR HERITAGE -

PUBLISHED ESPLASH148



## Efforts to restore a High Country Hut

A recent trip into the Mt Terrible Firetower to inspect the site of a former Towermen's hut, burnt December 2012, took me on an amazing journey through diverse landscapes. It requires a 4WD to be safe.





*Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016.*

Mick McEvoy was a former Towerman and remembers staying in the hut and leaky caravan (brought to the site by the Forestry Commission to help accommodate employees circa 1989. He supports the rebuild effort and joins a growing list of supporters for the project.





## Restoring a past relic Mount Terrible Hut Rebuild



Also known as the Mount Terrible Firetower Hut, it is located in the Southern Great Dividing Range, south-west of Kevington in Central Victoria. The summit and the Firetower located at the summit are included in the 100 hectare Mount Terrible Natural Features and Scenic Reserve. The 22 metre steel firetower was constructed early 1962 to a quote of 750 pound. A 12 foot by 12 foot accommodation hut was constructed mid 1962 to a quote of 330 pound. The hut offered towermen (also known as fire watchers or fire spotters) accommodation during the fire seasons. It was used for around five decades, however its condition slowly deteriorated due to a lack of ongoing maintenance and vandalism. Eventually the hut became more of a bush shack for bushwalkers, those with off road vehicles and those walking the Bicentennial National Trail (BNT) (a 5330 km trail from Healesville to Cooktown) opened 1988.





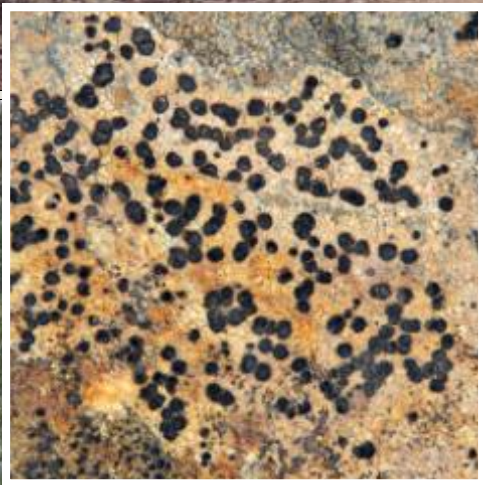
*Photograph © Mick McEvoy 2016.*

The associated firetower is 18.28 metres high (9 m to the first landing, 6 m to the second landing and 3 m to the third). The ladder between landings originally had no hand railings, so care had to be taken, especially at night or during periods of high winds. Fire watchers were paid a low wage, though overtime rates (especially on weekends) made the job attractive. Towermen were expected to be in the tower from 10 am to 6 pm and be available to report to the Eildon Tower, who would check in on the hour during summer. During the winter months the hut's water tank was drained so it wouldn't freeze and rupture the pipes. Valuables such as the fridge were removed and the hut then left open as a emergency shelter.

In May 2008 a report on the condition of the hut by the High Country Huts Association rated the hut as being in poor condition. Photographs included in the report showed how it had become almost unusable. The report was a part of an effort to gain permission from then Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) to rebuild the hut (at no expense to Government). Then on Saturday 9 December 2012, to the dismay of hut lovers and travellers to the high country, the hut burnt to the ground.

On 7 March 2016 efforts by the Avro Anson Track Clearing team, headed by coordinator Anthony Dykes, began with a request for permission to rebuild the hut (at no expense) submitted to the Department of Environment, Lands, Water and Planning (DELWP). We will let you know the outcome, once we know it, and if successful, we will endeavour to keep you up-to-date through the construction phase of the project.







- MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT & TOWER -



Mount Terrible Firetower and sign.



# **MT TORBRECK A4-4 MEMORIAL TEAM**

## **HOPE TO HELP RESTORE**

## **PART OF OUR LOST HERITAGE**



Our team is very passionate about the aussie bush and the history that is associated with it. We have visited many High Country Huts which have always been a high priority on our itinerary when we've travelled together. We have all visited the Mt Terrible Hut at various stages and were all deeply saddened to hear of its demise.

Due to our past relationship with the Department of Environment, Lands, Water and Planning (DELWP), we as the Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team have put forward a request to DELWP to be considered as the team to rebuild the once iconic hut. We have a registered builder and various other tradesmen in our team to ensure it's built to a high and safe standard. To strengthen that standard, we have recently made contact with the Victorian High Country Huts Association's (VHCHA) maintenance coordinator Wayne Peterken who has stated that the VHCHA would like to be involved as they carried out the extensive restoration in 2008.

We are currently in discussions with VicForests for financial assistance and we will once again be seeking the generous logistical support that was available from Anvil Angus on the A4-4 Memorial project to ensure that DELWP does not have to be financially involved in any capacity.

At the time of writing I am looking forward to a meeting with DELWP mid next month.

Anthony Dykes.  
Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team



- MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT & TOWER -



Mount Terrible Firetower and sign. (Inset) Layered rock patterns.



- MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT & TOWER -



The view from Mount Terrible. (Inset) Rock surfaces and lichens.











# - MOUNT TERRIBLE HUT & TOWER -

We would love to know who the person is in this photograph. He was driving a Holden Station Wagon with Government plates and may have been a Ranger. Any help would be greatly appreciated as we want to let him know his left tail light is out (see next page)!











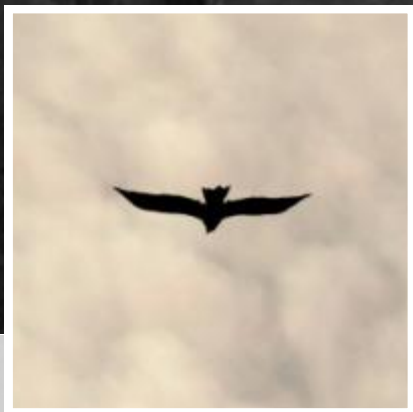






# MT TERRIBLE HUT

JULY 2016 UPDATE - A NEW HUT IS APPROVED -  
PUBLISHED ESPLASH155



## **New Alpine Hut coming to Mt Terrible**

Mt Terrible is isolated, exposed and known for weather extremes. It is for these reasons that an alpine hut at the site is so valuable. The previous hut which was burnt to the ground in 2012 is to be replaced soon!





The new hut will be located at the same site as the former hut and unlike the previous structure (which was more an accommodation unit for firetower employees) the new hut will be built from the ground up as an Alpine Bush Hut. The design is better suited to the location's conditions.



View more photos here, including a beautiful panorama of the former hut by ©Goldnbrownman.



**NEW HUT SITE**



## **Working together builds commitment to have the Mt Terrible Hut rebuilt**

The new hut is being built thanks to Department of Environment, Lands, Water and Planning (DELWP) who are working with the Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team and the Victorian High Country Huts Association (VHCHA). This excellent union of like minded people has resulted in a formal plan and timeline for the construction of the new hut. It has also resulted in funding from VHCHA and VicForests. DELWP is supplying a significant quantity of building materials and has been responsible for much of the design. The Mt Terrible Hut site is located on the Bicentennial Track and constantly attracts visitors. The location is extremely picturesque and the firetower is also highly photographic.





As can be seen in this photograph, the old hut (accommodation unit) was not in great condition and this got worse as time went on. At one point an old caravan was relocated to the site for firetower workers to sleep in, as it offered them more acceptable accommodation. By the time the hut was destroyed by fire in December 2012, it was not that appealing and was constantly being vandalised. It is the group's hope that the new hut will reduce vandalism and engender a greater sense of pride from future visitors, who come to admire the location and hut!

The hut pictured here in 1979  
was in poor condition.





## In some 'not-so terrible' news... Mt Terrible Hut will be rebuilt



An historic hut at Mt Terrible near Mansfield will be re-built by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in partnership with the community. DELWP's Acting District Manager – Murrindindi, Ben Giovanetti, said: "Plans to refurbish the hut were put on hold after it was accidentally destroyed by fire in December 2012. The original hut, believed to be built in the early 1960s, was burnt down by accident while people camped inside" Mr Giovanetti said. "All that remained was the brick chimney among a pile of rubble."

The former fire watcher's hut was used for accommodation for the nearby fire lookout observer until the mid-1990s. After that it became a visitor attraction and emergency shelter for many hikers, horse riders, four-wheel drivers and trail bike riders in the area. The nearby Mt Terrible firetower is still operational at the site and is manned during the highest fire danger days.

The rebuild project is being supported by the Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team, VicForests, the Victorian High Country Huts Association (VHCHA), ARB Thomastown and local community members. It's great to have the Mt Torbreck A4-4 Memorial Team working with us on this project as well as the Victorian High Country Huts Association, who did some work on the hut in 2009 before it was destroyed.

The rebuild will be completed before Christmas and is expected to take three to four weeks. The new hut will have steel walls, a concrete floor and a fully enclosed fireplace to make it as fire-proof as possible. There will also be an outside fire pit, a verandah, water tank and picnic tables.

People are reminded that public huts are for temporary shelter only and not for accommodation. Leave the hut the way you found it and keep fires small, attended at all times and within existing fireplaces.

VHCHA maintain more than 50 huts in the Victorian High Country and are volunteers.

For more information or to become a member visit [hutsvictoria.org.au/membership](http://hutsvictoria.org.au/membership).





# OPENED TO PUBLIC

- 23 DECEMBER 2016 -  
PUBLISHED ESPLASH165



*This is a seven page summary of  
the dedicated 40 page issue.  
Click left to download*



## New hut replaces working quarters

The construction of the new Mt Terrible Hut got underway on Friday 18 November with the laying of the foundation. We attended the site to record this significant historical event for you, our readers.

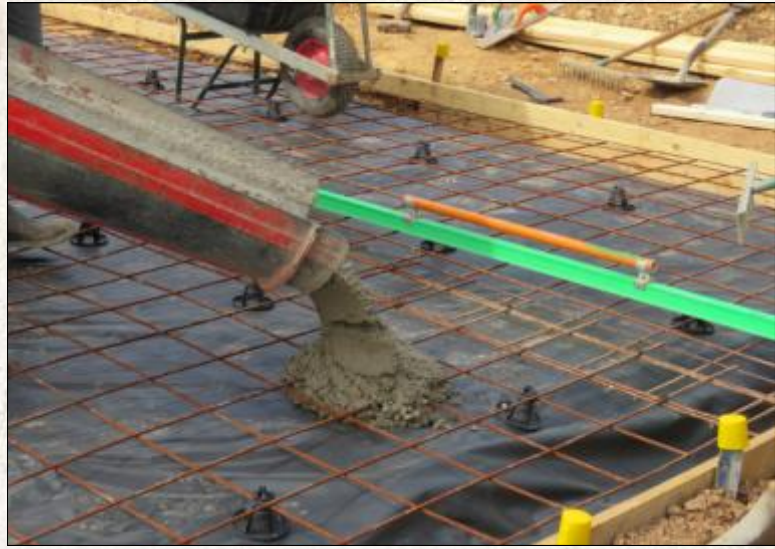




## Mount Terrible Hut Build Nov - Dec 2016

One of the hardships during the build, was getting a concrete truck up to the 1316 metre high Alpine Hut site. Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), undertook significant track works to ensure the truck could safely make the trip. However, it was still a slow and careful drive, for Andy of Alexandra Pre Mix and his DELWP escort. Once the truck was on site, DELWP workers laid the slab in just a few hours. By noon the truck had left with its escort. Andy told us it was the most dangerous location he had ever taken a concrete truck.





## DELWP Laying the Slab

The slab was laid by DELWP workers and co-ordinated by James Cowell and Luke Herd. One of the first visitors to inspect the new slab was a curious Caper White Butterfly. From the moment wet concrete left the chute, the idea of a new hut on Mt Terrible became real.

The DELWP team worked together perfectly and laying the slab was surprisingly quick.



# DELWP

The prefab walls went up quickly once the weather permitted.



A quick trip to photograph the current state of works after DELWP erected the walls.

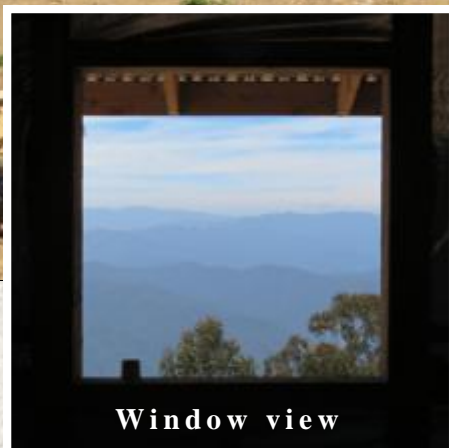
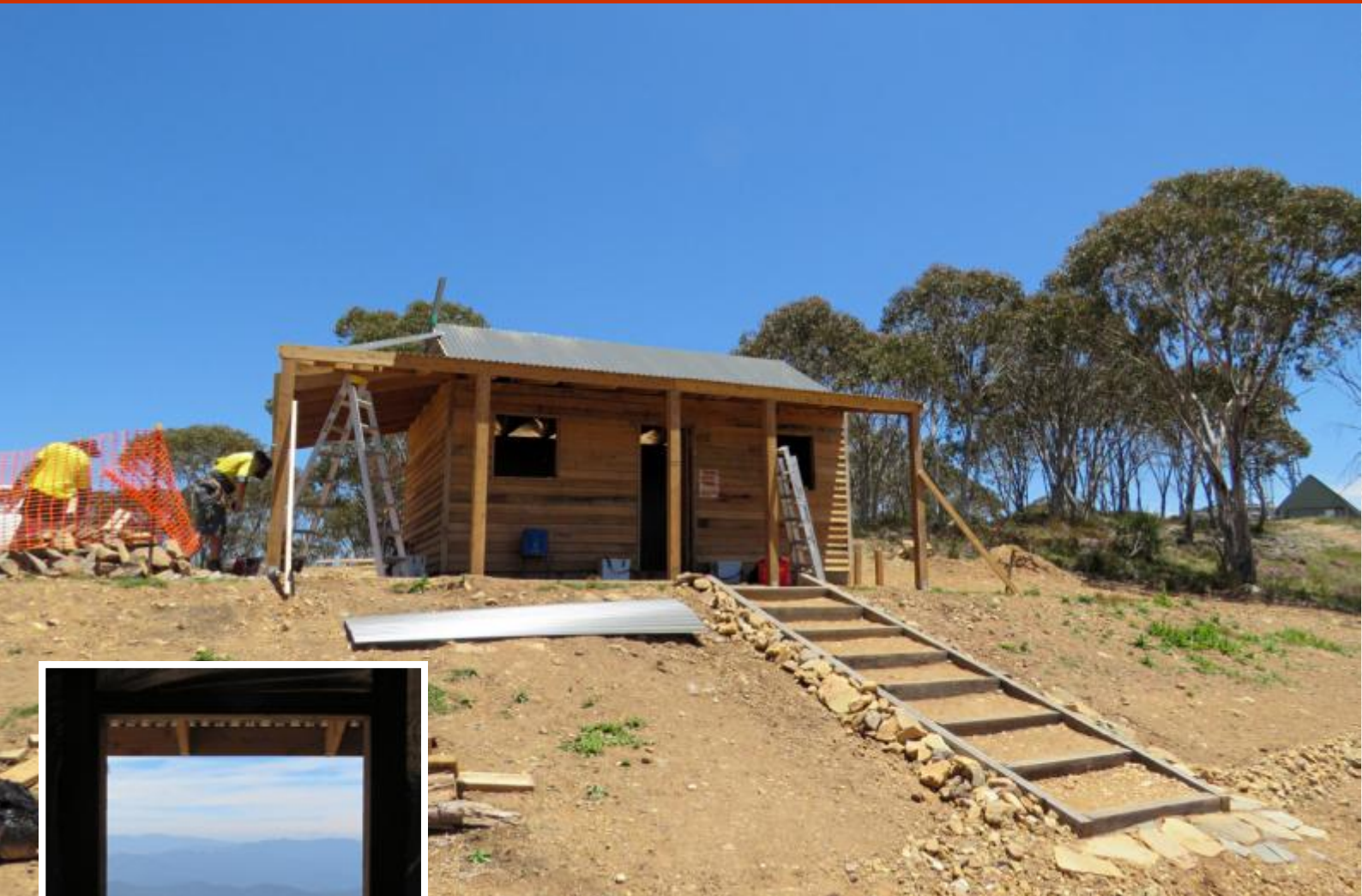




## A4-4 Memorial Team

Due to weather delays, the idea of having the hut ready for Christmas looked daunting at times. However, thanks in part to this large skilled and highly motivated team of volunteers - work was kept on track.





Window view

## DELWP

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), continued working around the weather and other internal work commitments whenever possible. On this day DELWP staff finished the roofing and erected the inside metal lining.

I visited the site on this day to photograph the hut and to catch up with DELWP team members. Whilst chatting, our attention was drawn to a young man walking past the hut. I talked with him and discovered that he was from the Netherlands, had been in Australia for only a few weeks and had spent a few months in New Zealand prior to travelling to Victoria. His current plan was to spend two years in Australia travelling and enjoying our great country. He had walked to the top of the range from Kevington - deep in the valley below. I showed him the hut and he was most impressed with the work achieved to date.

It is exciting that visitors will now be able to enjoy the hut.





## First public access after the hut opened

Yesterday works on the Mt Terrible Hut were completed and it was available for public use. I attended the site just after the DELWP crew had left. I was amazed at just how beautiful the hut and site looked!

Within 15 minutes, four vehicles had driven past the hut. Two vehicles stopped and enjoyed the new attractions. My wife was even asked to take photos of tourists. One group included visitors from England, while the other group included a couple who rode horses to the hut twenty years previous. After I explained to both groups the significance of the day and how they were the first groups of visitors to see the new hut, they felt a stronger connection with the hut. I am sure they will help spread the word that the hut is now available to the public, is stunningly beautiful and has one of the best front views of all of Victoria's alpine huts.



- OPENING 23 DECEMBER -



Interior and exterior





The Mount Terrible Hut rebuild is now complete just in time for Christmas. While there are a few minor things to be attended to in the New Year, the hut is now ready and waiting for you to appreciate it's beauty.

There are numerous 4x4 tracks leading to the hut site, though as I only have an All-Wheel-Drive, I prefer to travel the Mt Terrible Track. Access to this is via Bald Hill Gap, located on the Eildon-Jamieson Road. Mt Terrible Track still gets rough in places and it is longer than some other options such as Newmans Track (at around 13.2 km each way), though I find it easier and more picturesque than the other tracks.

The view from the front of the hut and out of the two windows and the door surpasses all other alpine huts in Victoria, making it a must see and something very special and unique.

If you do get to the site, please add pictures, 360 spheres and reviews to the Mt Terrible Hut site on Google Maps. This will be of great benefit for future visitors to the area who will be able to see it and view comments prior to travelling.



A huge thanks to all those involved in this project (see sponsors page earlier in this publication). Passionate men and women are working together with all relevant groups to add value to the district's tourism attractions.

David Hibbert  
Artworkz



# MT TERRIBLE HUT

OFFICIAL OPENING - 2 SEPTEMBER 2017 - PUBLISHED 8 SEPTEMBER 2017



**Our District's newest and most visited hut is officially open to the public**

- Ceremony held 2 September 2017 -

The official opening Ceremony for the Mt Terrible Hut was conducted by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and marked the end of a rewarding and exciting journey for all those involved in the rebuild. The former structure was first built in 1962 as accommodation for fire towermen, but was accidentally burnt down in 2012. The opening saw many of those involved in the rebuild come together to unveil a commemorative plaque inside the new hut.



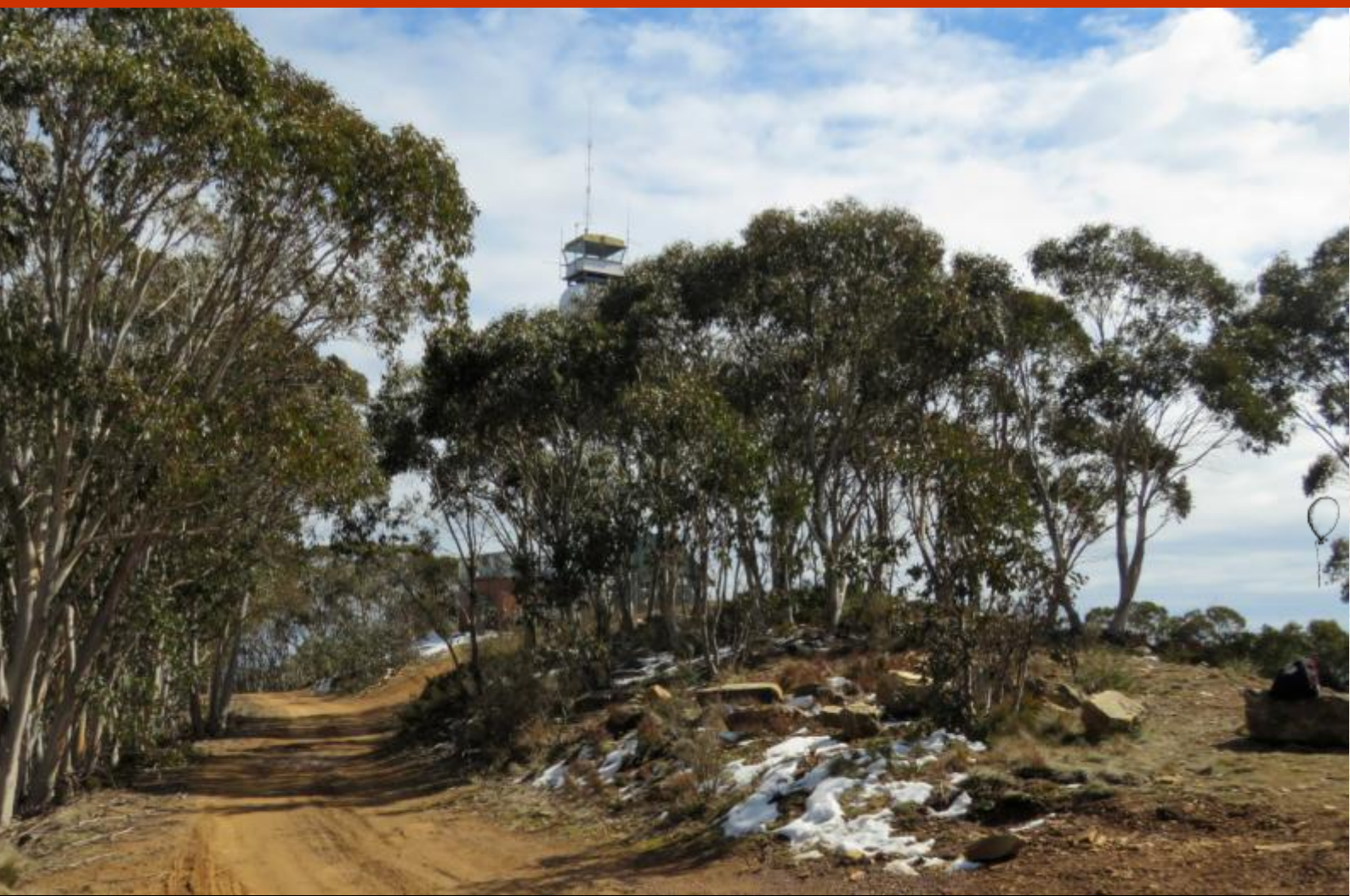
- OPENING OF THE MT TERRIBLE HUT -



(Top) The way in - (Bottom) Mt Terrible Hut carpark



- OPENING OF THE MT TERRIBLE HUT -



Beautiful scenery at the hut site



## - OPENING OF THE MT TERRIBLE HUT -

James Cowell of DELWP officiated with a speech and the unveiling of the plaque. After the opening we all enjoyed a BBQ lunch supplied by DELWP and prepared by department staff. The day was an outstanding success.



(Top) James Cowell unveiling the plaque - (Bottom) Luke Herd, Anthony Dykes and James



## Mt Terrible Hut





- OPENING OF THE MT TERRIBLE HUT -



(Top) Former towerman Colin Myers - (Bottom) visitors attending the popular site





Artworkz was honoured to experience the hut

rebuild from behind the camera and watch groups come together and formulate plans that now add benefit to our community and tourism.

If you have never been to the Mt Terrible Hut, we recommend taking the time to visit. You will need a 4WD, and we suggest driving the Mount Terrible Track for access. This track is in good condition and the drive to the hut is picturesque. Click [HERE](#) to see a map showing the start of the track (at Bald Hill Gap) on Eildon-Jamieson Road.

A special thanks to all involved in the project and for helping make our district more visitor friendly. Central Victoria is one of the more magnificent districts in our State, and this magnificent new hut improves it even further.





- MT TERRIBLE HUT AT NIGHT -



Beautiful night sky the evening before the opening - Photographs © Anthony Dykes 2017







- MT TERRIBLE HUT IN SNOW -



Mt Terrible Hut in snow on 21 August 2017 - Photograph © James Cowell 2017





*Artworkz*

*Serving the Community*