



Village of Hall and District Progress Association Inc.

Annual Report 2009 – 2010

INTRODUCTION

Committee members are asked from time to time ‘what does the Progress Association do?’ Our Annual Reports seek to answer this question. In short, we have managed the Hall and district website (hall.act.au) and the Rural Fringe, partnered with government in planning and developing around a million dollars worth of community facilities, won and managed two government projects – one ACT and one Commonwealth – each worth around \$10,000, initiated a Men’s Shed, made significant gains in recognition, conservation and interpretation of Hall and district heritage, staged a very popular twilight Concert by the Hall Village Brass Band, supported the National Sheep Dog Trials, and taken on the organization of the Hall School Centenary in 2011.

Endeavours such as these are in addition to the on-going task of maintaining relationships with local MLA’s and representing the interests of the Hall and district community to the ACT government on a whole range of matters.

MEMBERS

As well as maintaining the Rural Fringe and the community website as community services, we circulate periodic email updates to members on forthcoming events, and important issues. We also respond to a steady stream of requests for information.

Lacking a reliable source of surplus income, the Association is not a funding body as such. We nevertheless made contributions to the community dinner during the Sheep Dog Trials (paying for the Band) , and a special grant to the Hall Village Brass Band to enable them to acquire uniforms. The Band is one of our many valued affiliated organizations. We also assisted the Rugby Club with promotion of their very successful Hall Ball, and the Polocrosse Club with promotion of their two major Carnival weekends. President Alastair Crombie attended the Rotary Club of Hall meeting on 23 February to brief members on the Association’s work, and to gratefully receive a cheque from them in support of the Men’s Shed. Affiliated organizations get privileged access to the Fringe and the website, and a discount for hire of the Pavilion.

REPRESENTATION

Representing the interests and concerns of the Village and district community is a core role of the Association. We seek to keep Ginninderra MLA’s well informed about local issues, and in turn have benefited from their interest and support on a number of matters. We have met at various

times with MLA's Mary Porter, Alistair Coe, Meredith Hunter and Vicki Dunne, and are grateful for their continuing attention to Hall and district. Through the Wallaroo and Spring Range Residents Group, we are now also interact regularly with the Yass Valley Council on matters of concern to our NSW members.

HALL SCHOOL

Having prepared a substantial submission, and made a presentation in May to the Legislative Assembly committee inquiry into school closures, we were pleased that the committee's report, tabled in September 2009, recommended that Hall Primary be re-opened. However, the government's response in December rejected this recommendation, although it did extend hours and access for the Hall Preschool, and allow for expressions of interest from non-government school providers.

Government policy: Hall

The Government will:

- *Expand its support for viable early childhood settings in Hall*
- *Work with the local community to develop a master plan for the village which supports enhanced social capital for Hall, and*
- *Permit a registered non-government education provider to use part of the Hall site for educational purposes*

[Extract - Government response to the Inquiry into school closures and reform of the ACT education system 2006. September 2009. Andrew Barr, Minister for Education and Training].

One of the two such schools that expressed early interest is still pursuing the matter, and we have been actively engaged with them.

Hall Primary School P & C, which fought the good fight with us over more than three years, decided as a result to wind up, taking the opportunity to disburse their remaining assets to a range of needy schools, including three affected by the Victorian bushfires – Marysville, Strathewen and Middle Kinglake. The P&C kindly bequeathed their fine notice board to the Progress Association, and we have been making good use of it.

The school was closed four years short of its Centenary. The Association has decided to organise an appropriate **Centenary celebration** in April 2011, including a Saturday night Centenary Dinner at the Pavilion, and is actively seeking to contact former pupils and teachers. New pages were created on the website for the Centenary: <http://www.hall.act.au/centenary.html>

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Following closure of the school the government offered to invest in the upgrading of community facilities, including the Hall Pavilion.

Our refurbished community facilities are to be launched by Ginninderra MLA Mary Porter AM on 22nd August, on behalf of the Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope. This will mark the end of a long

and demanding process. The outcome is that we now have four greatly enhanced community assets:

- A 'new' tennis court with artificial grass surface
- The Cottage – a flexible, modern, multi-use community centre
- The double garage next door to The Cottage adapted to operate as the Men's Shed.
- A comprehensively refurbished Pavilion

The Association has been centrally, and quite intensively involved on behalf of the community as 'client' for these works. Brian Banyard and Tony Morris in particular have devoted an extraordinary amount of time and effort to making sure we were clear about what we wanted - and that this is what was delivered.

There are early signs that hirings of the Pavilion will increase, as it gets around that this is a modernized facility. Recognizing the new status of this asset the Association has now spent money on new tables and chairs, and updated the hire conditions, including hire charges and bond arrangements.

HALL SCHOOL MUSEUM

The Association has continued in the role of 'custodian' of the Hall School Museum – created by former school principal Laurie Copping and officially opened in 1986.

We were advised in July 2009 that our application for a Heritage Grant of \$8,745 to help produce a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) and a Volunteer Guides Handbook for the Museum had been successful. That work is now largely completed, giving us a solid platform for the future. The CMP sets out in great detail the future conservation needs of the Museum and its collection. Following a meeting at the Museum with the head of ACT Heritage we have already initiated the quest for further resources to address the priority conservation tasks.

"It is the comprehensiveness of this school museum, in terms of the large variety of its education artifacts, documents and school records which is its greatest strength, rather than the individual value of its items. It provides viewers and researchers with an insight into typical rural primary schooling in New South Wales during the first half of the twentieth century. As such it is a most valuable community asset, in its original geographical context, in addition to being an important part of the Canberra district's educational history". Dr Geoffrey Burkhardt, Australian National Museum of Education.

The Volunteer Guide Handbook is a rich collection of informative resource material put together to enable community volunteers to get a good working understanding of the origins of Hall and its school, the history of the school, and nature of the collection.

With the unstinting involvement of Elizabeth Burness, the Museum has been open every Hall Markets day, and on many other occasions by special request for groups such as the Australian National Museum of Education, the National Trust of Australia (ACT), and The Pinnacle Southern Cross Cub Pack. This latter group was led by the great grandson of the original teacher in 1911 - Mr Charles Thompson - Tony O'Sullivan.

A special mention is warranted for Mrs Irene Copping, the widow of Laurie, who is in her '90's' now, yet still braved the winter chills to visit with her son-in-law, as part of the Museum of Education group.

HALL HISTORY AND HERITAGE

The forthcoming Centenary of Canberra in 2013, and the Centenary of our own 'bush school' next year, have presented opportunities to promote interest in the history and heritage of Hall and district. The Association is keen to take every advantage of this opportunity, and already has a number of achievements:

Hall Red Cross commemoration

At a ceremony at the Peace Tree at Hall School on Remembrance Day 2009, Ms Kaye Hogan, AM, Deputy Chair, ACT Advisory Board of the Australian Red Cross, unveiled a plaque commemorating the efforts of Hall Red Cross ladies during World War I. Margaret Morris of Hall handed Ms Hogan a compilation of articles published by the *Queanbeyan Age* during 1914 to 1919 which record the history of Hall Red Cross, formed to prepare comfort parcels and raise funds for our local boys serving in the Great War.

The Peace Tree was planted at a ceremony in 1919 to recognise the efforts of the Hall Red Cross. It was planted by Mrs Susan Hollingsworth, whose son Clyde was killed during the war. Thirty pine trees were also planted at the school on the day by Red Cross members.

Naming Hall's Lanes

"I was very pleased to receive such a well thought out and researched submission. The names are delightful and the associated history will enhance that which is already recorded within our nomenclature of the ACT. I am happy to report that the Place Names Committee are also fully supportive of the names and wish to congratulate the VHDPA". Lorraine Bayliss, ACT Place Names Officer, March 1 2010

Our proposal for the naming of Hall Lanes was very well received by the ACT government, and we are delighted that the following names have now been gazetted:

Cricketers Lane
One Tree Lane
Schoolhouse Lane
Chaffcutters Lane
Saddlers Lane
Merchants Lane
Bootmakers Lane
Pony Lane

Congratulations to Shaun O'Connor for the initial suggestion, and to the small group convened by Margaret Morris who chose the names. Each Lane is now imaginatively associated with part of the history of the village, and will help to tell the Hall and district story. (We note that 'One Tree Lane' may yet have to be modified so as to avoid any possible confusion with the 'One Tree Fire Trail')

Heritage interpretive signage

We have also been successful in our request to ACT Heritage for a series of heritage interpretation signs to be located around the village at places of heritage significance. With our close cooperation, seven such signs have are being developed, covering such places and aspects of our history as:

- The One Tree Hill /Cricketers Arms Hotel
- The Showground and the Canberra Show
- Kinlyside Hall
- Winarlia and the Hall Store
- The old Bootmakers Shop
- 'Cooee' and 'Avoca'
- The 1911 Hall School

It is expected that this project will be completed before the end of 2010, and will stimulate interest, and help residents as well as visitors to Hall gain a better understanding of the beginnings and early years of development in this district.

School Centenary

The School Centenary celebration has been set down for the weekend of April 16-17th 2011, with the focus on a Centenary Dinner at the Pavilion on the Saturday night. This project is presently in the hands of an ad hoc working group who would strongly welcome interest and involvement from the community

New web pages have been added to the website, giving details about the Centenary, some history of the school, and an opportunity to register interest in the celebration.

National Trust (ACT) Hall brochures

Early in the year we responded to a request from the National Trust of Australia (ACT) to review and comment on revisions to their two 'heritage tour' brochures – the heritage walk and the heritage drive or bike tour. These brochures are a valuable resource and we were pleased to be able to assist the National Trust in this way. The NTA has since been very helpful to us in relation to development of our Volunteer Guides Handbook.

'New' Heritage Officer

Phil Robson, who served on the Progress Association committee in the nineties, primarily in the role of Heritage Officer, has been re-appointed to the position after an absence of some ten years.

Phil moved from Hall in 2003 but has never lost his passion for the village and its history and was delighted to be asked to take on the role again. Given all the heritage related projects we are involved in, we are delighted to have him back!

'Digital archive' project

Central in our future plans is the development of a 'digital archive' of early images from Hall and district, to be located on the Hall community website. The Association itself has a reasonable collection of Hall and district photos, which are now being scanned. We recognize here the

valuable role played by Peter Corrigan of 'Cooee' as informal curator / custodian of a collection of early Hall and District photographs.

Our hope is that once a secure foundation has been built we will be able to borrow and scan photos from elsewhere and add them to a universally accessible photo archive.

WALLAROO & SPRING RANGE RESIDENTS GROUP (W&SRRG)

NSW residents of the 2618 postcode have had quite a busy year, commencing with the Yass Valley Council Non-Urban Lands Study, with a number of residents attending public meetings and lodging submissions with the Council.

A Wallaroo Community Consultation Meeting with the Yass Shire was held on 8th February to discuss Council's Management Plan for 2010-2011. In March a number of local residents, with the assistance of the Wallaroo Bushfire Brigade and the Yass Shire participated in Clean Up Australia and collected in excess of 3 tonnes of rubbish.

In response to a reported increase in crime in the local NSW area a meeting was held in Queanbeyan with the Crime Prevention Officer for the Monaro. A community meeting is now planned for later in 2010 to discuss policing issues for this area.

In an attempt to improve the information flow to NSW residents of the 2618 postcode area there have been a number of new initiatives including:

- Direct link from the Shire Website to the Hall Website
- Erection of Community Notice Boards as a result of consultation between the Shire and Wallaroo Bush Fire Brigade. These can be seen at the corner of Wallaroo / Gooroomon Ponds Roads and Spring Range Road / Barton Highway.
- Negotiation with Council to ensure:
 - a) Copies of all Development Applications in our area are sent to both the Progress Association and our Resident group. These are being displayed on the Community Notice Boards and forwarded on to all of those on our email list
 - b) Copies of the Valley Views Newspaper are now routinely delivered to all ratepayers in our district and are also available for collection at the Premier Store.

In particular we would like to thank those responsible for the revitalization of the Rural Fringe and on-going maintenance of the Hall website, both of which are very valuable vehicles for the dissemination of information. We look forward to an increasing number of NSW resident becoming members of the Village of Hall & District Progress Association.

HALL 'BROADBAND FOR SENIORS' KIOSK

On 23 November 2009 we signed a contract with NEC Australia to establish and operate a 'Broadband for Seniors kiosk' at The Cottage – almost before the paint had dried after the refurbishment! NEC is the main contractor in a Commonwealth funded program which supplies eligible community organizations with around \$10,000 worth of computers, associated furniture, software and broadband access. We now have eighteen seniors (over fifties) registered, and Bill Pearson who has championed, and now coordinates the project, is recruiting helpers, or 'buddies', who can assist seniors with picking up basic email and internet skills.

Our Broadband for Seniors kiosk (now one of seven in the ACT) was officially launched at a well-attended gathering at The Cottage on March 25th 2010 by Dorothy Braxton, the inspirational founder of 'University of the Third Age On-line'. The Cottage has proved to be an ideal setting for this valuable community project.

HALL AND DISTRICT MENS SHED

As envisaged in last year's report, the Association has fostered the development of a 'Men's Shed' group, based at the double garage next to The Cottage on the school site. The group has recently undertaken to repair and maintain the bicycles used by children at the Cranleigh School in Holt, and members have been involved in a range of 'self-help' activities, such as a 'purge' of the store-rooms at the pavilion and unpacking of the new function furniture.

The Men's Shed group has been beneficiary of a generous grant from the Rotary Club of Hall, and the donation of a set of cordless power tools by Bunnings Warehouse, Belconnen. Blokes of all ages and stages are warmly welcome to join the group, which has a regular meeting at The Cottage on Thursday mornings at 10.30 am.

HALL COMMUNITY WEBSITE / RURAL FRINGE

The Hall community website, managed by the Association on an entirely voluntary basis, continues to provide a valuable service to the local community. Ninety three local businesses are now entered in the local business directory, and nineteen of these currently have an editable business page of their own on the site. Sixty two events were promoted in the on-line 'events calendar during the year, and sixty local news stories were published.

During the year a serious start was made on creating photo galleries of early Hall and district photographs, and new pages were created especially for the Hall School Centenary.

The site regularly gets favourable comments, which is pleasing, but we are very conscious that much more could be done. Content contributors would be very welcome.

RURAL FRINGE

With grateful thanks to outgoing editor Allyson Wedrat and the new Rural Fringe team – Lee Corrigan (welcome back! Lee produced the first Fringes some fifteen or more years ago), Gail Condy, Bob Richardson and Jo Hall - our bimonthly publication is running to schedule with news of our affiliated members, interesting articles and advertising for local business.

Each edition is now available on the website as well as being posted to all 2618 households, with extra copies available in the shop. Articles or advertisers are always welcome!

EVENTS

Hall Village Brass Band Twilight Concert

A large and diverse audience enjoyed the second annual Hall Village Brass Band Twilight Concert on Sunday 21 March 2010. The Band entertained with a real mixture of styles, their offering including the Sullivan Fantasy, McArthur Park, and Rhythm and Blues. Bandmaster

Colin Fischer kept the evening flowing with his relaxed and amusing commentary. We were also treated to some really fine soprano solos from Bronwyn Douglas, with Band accompaniment.

The Concert was generously supported by Hall Financial Consultants Barnett and Lilley, and by Southern Cross Media, who gave free television promotion for the event. Lerida Estate winery donated a case of their 2005 Pino Noir as a raffle prize, while amplification gear was lent by Hall garage band 'West Texas Crude'. Thanks are due to all these supporters of the event.

During the interval funds were raised by gold coin bucket collection, and by the raffle, for the Hall Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade. The Brigade advised that \$1,394.90 was raised - a terrific result! The Hall Preschool also used the occasion as a fund-raiser, by selling refreshments, and raised several hundred dollars.

The Concert was a joint venture between the Progress Association and the Band, and is set to continue as a major event on the Hall and district calendar.

National Sheep Dog Trials,

The National Sheep Dog Trials held at the Showground each year goes from strength to strength. The week-long event (March 8-14) this year attracted the highest number of participants since the Queen visited the Trials in 1970 (when they were being held at the Canberra Showground).

This event is organized by the National Sheep Dog Trials Association officials, all of whom are volunteers, including the President, Peter Welch and Treasurer, Barbara Brown. Some years ago, Hall residents formed an auxiliary group to support the NSDT Committee as they ran the week-long Trials, and get the local community more involved.

The Hall residents group now organises a number of regular 'meet and greet' opportunities to encourage locals and visitors to socialise. This includes a morning tea, a wine and cheese evening, and a feature event, much anticipated by all, The Dog's Dinner. This year the Dogs Dinner, and indeed the Trials, were greatly boosted by the presence of Ian 'Macca' McNamara of ABC Radio's 'Australia All Over', in Canberra to broadcast live from the Canberra Aboretum.

The dinner was a terrific night out shared by around a hundred people. Local MLA's Meredith Hunter and Alistair Coe were amongst them, and enjoyed getting a 'slice of the bush'. Trials Association Chair Peter Welch welcomed the guests, and made a special presentation to Progress Association committee member Brian Banyard, who ensured that the pavilion refurbishment was completed, to our specifications, in time for the Trials.

All of this effort is dependent on the generous support of local businesses, the Rotary Club of Hall and the Progress Association.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

As usual, the Association has responded to a number of planning and development issues affecting the local community.

We availed ourselves of the opportunity of a briefing on the proposed new Clarrie Hermes intersection, and were satisfied that the matters we raised have been addressed in the final design solution – a traffic light controlled cross-roads.

In response to residents' concerns, we asked Roads ACT to have a careful look at the Gladstone Street bus interchange. After commissioning a consultant's report, they advised that no action is to be taken. The Association believes the situation when school buses arrive and depart is quite dangerous, and is persisting with this issue.

We had consultations with Parks, Conservation and Lands about the renewal of street plantings, and new tree plantings in the Hall Village Reserve and at the park along Gladstone Street, and through the 'Bootstrap Brigade' continued to take care of recent plantings throughout the village.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As President, I extend my thanks to all members of the Committee for their community service with the Association. I believe we have worked effectively and productively on behalf of the community – and have a number of achievements on the ground to show for it. Our Treasurer for the past eight years, Elaine Leckey, will not be standing again, and we are particularly grateful for her lengthy contribution to the community in this role.

Val Wiseman (Convenor) and Judy Roberts as committee member have diligently attended to the matters of interest to our NSW members through the Wallaroo and Spring Range Residents Group.

We again express our sincere gratitude to the Hall Rural Centre for managing Pavilion bookings on our behalf. We also thank Hall Premier Store, and other local enterprises that have assisted us with the promotion of various activities and events.

We thank the Rotary Club of Hall and the Bunnings Warehouse Belconnen for their generous donations to the Men's Shed.

Alastair Crombie
President
July 2010

VHDPA Committee Members 2009-2010

Alastair Crombie	President
Bob Richardson	Vice President
Tony Morris	Vice President
Elaine Leckey	Treasurer
Cathy McIlhoney	Assistant Treasurer
Jo Hall	Secretary
Brian Banyard	Public Officer
Helen White	Correspondence Secretary
John Starr	
Judy Roberts	
Greg Palethorpe	
Allyson Wedrat	
Trish McIntyre	(resigned Nov 2009)
Shaun O'Connor	(resigned Sept 2009)

VHDPA Committee meetings 2009 - 2010

12 August 2009	AGM and General Meeting
26 August	
7 October	
18 November	
20 January	
17 March	
14 April	
26 May	
14 July	
11 August 2010	AGM and General Meeting

Affiliated member organizations 2009-2010

ACT Dressage Association
Hall Pony Club
Hall Polocrosse Club
Hall Rugby Club
Hall Primary P&C Association
The Rotary Club of Hall
Hall Village Brass Band
Wattle Park Uniting Church
St Michaels and All Angels Church
St Francis Xavier Church