

RURAL FRINGE

Journal of the Hall district

VOLUME 26 ISSUE 5

October 2019

How Fireproof is your Plan?

by **Chris Ellison**

Deputy Captain, Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade

The fires of August and September to our far north have provided an early indication of just how challenging this fire season is likely to be. In our own patch, the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre has identified that there is above normal fire potential, with weather forecasts for conditions that will be drier and warmer than average over spring and summer.



You can also access similar information from the NSW Rural Fire Service website (rfs.nsw.gov.au) or the ACT Emergency Services Agency website (esa.act.gov.au), which show the approximate location of incidents on a map and provide additional information.

Just remember, ABC Radio Canberra (AM 666 kHz) continues to be your local emergency broadcaster. Make sure you have batteries for your radio!

Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade provides the following to get you thinking about the impending fire season.

Sources of information

All fire agencies encourage you to **prepare, act and survive** in the face of a bushfire threat. Your ability to act in response to an emergency is often dictated by how much information you have available. There are a number of key resources you should consider which will help you in an emergency.

We think one of the most important is a smartphone application: **Fires Near Me NSW**. This application is the official application of the NSW Rural Fire Service, providing information about bush and grass fires across NSW and the ACT. The app provides warnings and incident information to help you act wisely. The app includes the ability to add one or more Watch Zones, so you can select locations to keep watch on, and be notified about incidents or other important information affecting your selected zones.



Fire season is here!

The Bush Fire Danger Period commenced on **1 October 2019** across the ACT and across NSW's Southern Tablelands.

A Fire Permit is required for burning activities during the Bush Fire Danger Period. For information regarding the issue of a fire permit, please contact:

- NSW Rural Fire Service: **02 6226 3100**
- ACT Rural Fire Service: **02 6207 8609**



... continue to page 4

STOP PRESS... HOTELS COMING TO HALL VILLAGE see page 2 for more information



In celebration of its 30th Birthday, the Rotary Club of Hall will host a "Bee Friendly Garden Sizzle" in the Hall Park on Sunday 17 November from 12:30pm.

GET YOUR FREE BEE PACK

See you at the sizzle... **Hall Honeys** will be on hand to discuss *Bee Friendly Gardening* and all residents are invited to register their gardens as "Bee Friendly" and receive a **free Bee Pack**.

Your pack will consist of:

- a beautiful "Hall Bee Block" Native Bee Hotel (locally designed and hand made by the Hall Mens Shed)
- a "Bee friendly garden" sign
- a guide to *Bee Friendly Gardening*
- a selection of *native plants*



St Michael's and All Angels Anglican Church

Corner of Loftus and Victoria St, Hall

Dads' Playgroup

Saturday's 10am - 12noon
at **St Barnabas, Charnwood**

We have recently started a Saturday morning playgroup at our church at Charnwood. It's a space for kids (0-5 years) to play, and for dads, grandads and male carers to connect socially.

Email playgroup@mikeandbarneys.org.au or phone **6153 0030** to register or for more information.

Garden Fete

Saturday 26 October
10am - 2pm
at **St Michael's**

Make a note in your diary for our annual parish fete on Saturday 26 October. In addition to the usual games, yummy food, pre-loved books, terrific plants and great entertainment, this year we are planning a display of wedding dresses in our little village church. We hope to have some old and some new dresses, photos and news clippings on display, as well as dressing the church for a wedding with flowers, candles and ribbons. Come along and bring some friends.

Blessing of The Animals

Sunday 27 October at 11am

Following the Fete, our regular Sunday service will be an outdoor service and will include Blessing of the Animals. This is an annual service to give thanks for the role of animals in our lives – pets, livestock and native fauna.

Please join us for this lovely occasion. Pets of all types (suitably restrained) are welcome, or perhaps bring a photo if your furry friend isn't comfortable in a social setting.

Our new priest Rev Emma Street has settled into the parish, and has also been accepted as a RAAF chaplain. We are all very proud of Emma's achievement following a rigorous and lengthy recruitment process, and know she will be a caring and supportive chaplain to RAAF staff.

For more details on any of these activities please phone **Beryl** on **0408 488526**



Hills of Hall Spring Festival

Saturday 2 – Sunday 3 November
11am – 5pm

WINE – FOOD – LIVE MUSIC

Visit the wineries and sample their produce

Brindabella Hills, Capital Wines,
Pankhurst Wines, Surveyors Hill and Wallaroo Wines.

A Palette of Pioneer Places

An exhibition of Isla Patterson's watercolours

Date: 6th October – 15th December

at the Hall School Museum

The exhibition features eight early district properties, supplemented by accounts of the heritage of each building

Thursdays from 9 – 12 Sundays from 12 – 4
Hall Market Sundays 10 – 4

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What time
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Where
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For more information contact:
Judy: 0431 676 959
Email: rgcm@gmail.com

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at the Old Hall School site,
Victoria Street, Hall, ACT

Try 1 thing new online
'Online recreation – try it at your leisure'

A free half day workshop for older computer users and those wishing to start

Venue: **Headmasters Cottage**
Date: **Tuesday 15 October 9:00am – 1:00pm**

Tech Q & A

A free half day workshop for older computer users who are wanting to learn about computers and tablets and how to solve basic problems with their devices.

Venue: **Hall Kiosk, Old School site**
Date: **Wednesday 16 October 9:30am – 12:30pm**

Contact: **Rod** on **0407 008 104** or
hallkiosk@hotmail.com
Limited places, booking essential, morning tea provided

How fireproof is your plan? ... continued from page 1

Get ready – plan to survive!

The size, speed and ferocity of recent fire conditions experienced in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales can mean that responding resources can be stretched very thinly. Wherever possible, Rural Fire Service resources will be deployed to help you – but you should not necessarily expect a fire truck in every driveway.

You need to prepare your family and property for when bush and grass fires strike. This includes making a plan on whether you intend to stay and defend your property, or leave early. Please take five minutes to improve or make a plan that will give your property, your family and yourself the best chance of survival should you be threatened by a bushfire.

Ask yourself – would your plan stand up to the test of a fire? How 'fireproof' is your plan? Find out in five minutes at myfireplan.com.au or download their app.

Reporting an emergency – 000 and 'Emergency+'

Enabling a swift response by your local rural fire brigade is heavily reliant on you as a resident, landowner, homeowner or passerby on reporting a fire.

The tried and tested method of calling 000 (triple zero) from your landline or mobile phone will put you in contact with dispatchers who can direct resources to respond.



One of the first queries by an emergency dispatcher will be 'Where is the incident?', and with the wide use of mobile phones by community members, sometimes working out your location can be difficult.



We recommend you download 'Emergency+'. This free app, developed by the Australian Government in concert with emergency services, allows you to dial 000 with one button, while simultaneously showing you your location to pass onto dispatchers.

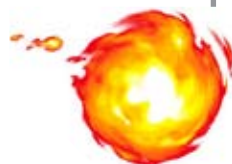
Watch out for the Fireball!

As both a fundraising and community activity, the brigade will host the 'Fireball' at **Brindabella Hills Winery**, 156 Woodgrove Close, Wallaroo **Friday 1 November 2019**, commencing at 7pm.

Tickets are \$85 each for a three-course meal and a glass of bubbly on arrival.

The night will feature a charity auction, great food, fine wine and good company.

All are welcome – book at humanitix.com/au and search for **Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade**.



by **Chris Ellison**
Deputy Captain, Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade

President's page

The Annual General Meeting of the Village of Hall and District Progress Association was held at the Pavilion on 21 August. 35 members of the VHDPA attended the AGM with 21 apologies received from members.

Reports at the AGM recognised the great work being done by many groups in Hall village and district including the collectors club, the honeys, the men's shed, the museum, the *Rural Fringe* newsletter and others. The efforts of those who voluntarily manage the Pavilion and other facilities, and provide the income that underpins the VHDPA, was recognised.

I was encouraged to see that, for the first time in many years, there were nine nominations for the VHDPA Committee. A secret ballot, run by John Burns (former VHDPA committee member) and Olga Minion (VHDPA Secretary), elected seven ordinary members of the VHDPA Committee for 2019-2020. Office bearers were returned unopposed.

The VHDPA Committee for 2019-2020 comprises Peter Toet (President), Tony Morris (Vice President),



From left to right: John Starr (Treasurer), Olga Minion (Secretary), Peter Toet (President), Tony Morris (Vice-President)

Peter Toet President

Olga Minion (Secretary), John Starr (Treasurer), re-elected members Peter Howard, Margaret Monihan and Phil Robson and newly elected members

Yvonne Robson, Ralph Southwell, Heather Wilford and Robert Yallop. All members have a track record of service to the community and I am confident they will contribute much to furthering the interests of Hall and the district.

The VHDPA Committee will be working over the coming months on supporting the work of the sub groups and various activities including the Hall Street Party, improving parking and footpath arrangements in the 'central business

district', supporting the development of Hall as a 'bee-friendly village' and continuing to respond to ideas and challenges raised by Hall residents. We are also looking forward to the completion of the Hall Park upgrade and the 'missing link' of the Bicentennial Trail along the Eastern side of Victoria Street to the Barton Highway.

We hope to organise a couple of General Meetings of the VHDPA during the year to consider ideas around some specific activities to improve the amenity of Hall and protect our unique and precious heritage.

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Museum Musings

The postal wars: Ginninderra vs Hall

William Davis Junior's request in 1859 for a Ginninderra post office ('owing to the large population around here') was readily acceded to – the first post office in what is now the Australian Capital Territory. It was to endure for 103 years. The brand new (and uninhabited) village of Hall was granted a post office for a six month trial in 1888, and has been operating ever since. For a generation around the turn of the century it seemed only one could survive – and the contest for survival got quite willing.



Ginninderra Post Office and Schoolhouse

Contestants warmed up with an amusing barney over the name of the new Government village on Halls Creek, thoughtlessly proclaimed 'Ginninderra' on 20 March 1882. With Edward Crace leading the charge, the Ginninderrans repudiated this identity theft, which would have created two 'Ginninderras', two miles apart. This educed a back-flip – an edict advising that henceforth 'Ginninderra' was to be known as 'Hall' (29 August 1882). Sadly, the Lands Department did not consult with the PMG, who renamed their established Ginninderra office 'Hall', meaning there was then two 'Halls' and no Ginninderra. Crace declaimed '[we] will never submit to have the old name of 'Ginninderra' taken from us and the meaningless and ugly "Hall" substituted'. (Fortunately, Henry Hall of 'Charnwood', whose name was being commemorated, had departed to Yass by this time).

Alastair Crombie
Honorary Curator



Order was restored by year's end.

The main battle was fought through petitions and the press. An opening salvo from Hall followed a public meeting at 'One Tree Hill' on 19 March 1888, which called for a proposed new Post and Telegraph Office to be built at Hall instead of Ginninderra. James McCarthy JP of 'Glenwood' topped the list of 59 names. Nothing determined, Hall fired again in April 1892, when lease of the Ginninderra post office premises was soon to expire, pointing out that in Hall 'Government land has been set apart for public buildings'. This time McCarthy headed a list of ninety-one petitioners.

Ginninderra postmistress Louisa Tobin was stirred by this to advise her superiors in Sydney via telegram, 'am informed Southwell family & connections are principal agitators for transfer to Hall' and 'it is asserted that bogus names have been attached to Hall petition' (!) [Telegram 27 April 1892]

This covert action was swiftly followed by a horde of Ginninderra petitioners, who pointed out that 'there are located within a radius of one mile of the Ginninderra Office, 10 families, also Public School, Police Station, Church, General Store and Blacksmiths Shop, whereas at Hall within the same radius, there are no Public Buildings and only four families residing, one of whom signs this petition'. Edward Crace's and George Harcourt's were followed by 101 more names. A serious salvo.



Hall Post Office

Goulburn Penny Post correspondent The Wizard weighed in, bravely accusing the Hall petitioners of a 'selfish and unjust proceeding'. (GEPP, 23.4.92). This drew a sharp riposte in a letter to the editor from 'Hall-marked': 'It is not to the public interest that a post and telegraph office, which would undoubtedly enhance the value of private property at Ginninderra, should be erected simply to benefit two squatters, a storekeeper, and their understrappers'. (GEPP 2.5.92). The Wizard observes in the same edition that the matter has 'assumed a rather lively aspect' – 'it is war to the knife between the residents of Ginninderra and Hall ...'. To prove the point, 'Hall-marked' is assailed by 'Pro bono publico', another anonymous letter-writer, for his charge that Ginninderrans are boycotting some of the Hall petitioners: '...this must be either a myth in the imagination of a diminutive brain or the idle tattle of some skulking tale-bearer intent on making mischief'. More to the point perhaps he claims that just four residents of Ginninderra 'send and receive more telegrams twice over in the year' than all the Hall petitioners together. A cricket match could have been interesting at this point, but the season had ended.

Ten years later the battle of petitions was joined once more, again triggered by expiry of the lease of premises from the Gungahleen estate. Reprising Ginninderra's earlier claims, the Hall petition observed that:

'Hall now supports two general stores, one hotel, one coach-building establishment, one butcher, one blacksmith, one shoemaker, one saddler and harness-maker, one registered dairy and several private residences. This is within the village of Hall. The outlying neighbourhood to the north, east and west consists chiefly of small holdings such as farmers, graziers, dairymen etc who have been put to great inconvenience by being compelled to go to Ginninderra to transact any official postal, telegraphic or money order business' [Petition from Hall residents to Postmaster General requesting removal of Ginninderra PO to Hall. 1901(?)]



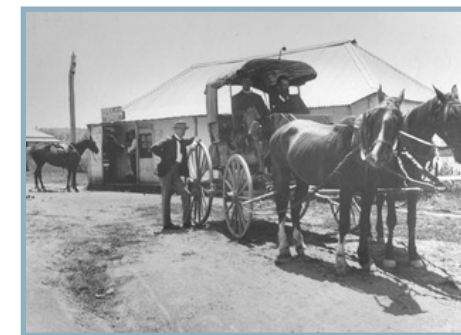
Ginninderra Post Office and store

George Harcourt organised the reply and 130 signed up for the status quo. The PO should stay in Ginninderra for various reasons, including that: '... its present position is more central to the people of Canberra, Weetangera, Mulligans Flat, Tallaganderra, etc' [Petition from Ginninderra residents requesting that the PO not be removed to Hall. 24.2.02]. At that time post offices east of Ginninderra could be found only at Ainslie, Lanyon, and Majura. Weetangera opened in 1896.

By 1905 the balance of power was shifting decisively towards Hall. The year began with more petitions, for (33) and against (61) removal of the PO to Hall. A 'stocktake' of those 'householders' getting mail at Hall (52) and at Ginninderra (34) followed. John Southwell was emboldened to advise the Post Master General of certain facts: '... that all commercial business is done at Hall, that at Ginninderra the old established store has had to close some few years ago for want of patronage, that Ginninderra now is obsolete, and that under present conditions can never be a centre'. At Hall, in contrast, '... there is one hotel, two general stores, one wheelwright and blacksmiths establishment, (which employs from five to seven hands constantly), also one saddle and harness maker, etc' [J Southwell letter to PMG, 26 Feb 1905].

The breach came in May 1905 when the Department decided to convert Ginninderra from an official post office to a 'contract office', with tenders for the conduct of postal business being invited in the Government Gazette. Rosanna Blewitt was eventually successful. When the contract expired in 1910 it was decided to further reduce the status of the service to an 'Allowance Office',

with salary reduced from £110 to £43. Mrs Blewitt was asked if she had any other income? 'No, other than a couple of cows, a horse, poultry, etc'. She was reappointed at £51 p.a. and added a news agency and stationery business to the livestock. When an opening came up at Bulyeroi (Moree) in 1912 however, she was quick to take the opportunity to move.



Ginninderra Store

Charles W Thompson, the Hall teacher, had written to MHR Andrew Chapman in October 1912, promoting his 18 year old daughter, Bertha, for the position of post mistress at Ginninderra 'in the event of that office becoming vacant in the near future'. His prescience was rewarded just two months later. For the modest rate of £51 p.a. and subject to the approval of the Department of Public Instruction, Thompson proposed 'conducting the post office at the school residence' – thereby solving the problem of suitable accommodation for the Ginninderra post and telegraph which had dragged on for a quarter of a century.

First Thompson (for 20 years) and then his teacher successors at Hall ran the Ginninderra post office for half a century until it closed in 1962.



Hall Premier Store

Sources:

National Archives of Australia. Series SP32/I. Ginninderra Post Office and Hall Post Office

Dale, R C M (1958), *Postal history of the Australian Capital Territory*. A paper delivered to the Canberra District Historical Society.

Curtis, T. *Australian Capital Territory (ACT) – the post offices and postmarks*. <http://actpostmarks.blogspot.com.au/search/label/1909>

Gillespie, L. L. 1992. *Ginninderra: Forerunner to Canberra*. The Wizard (Canberra local history series): Campbell



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Kerryn Ernst, Churchill Fellow

Some of you may know Kerryn. If you do, it's probably because you're aware that for the past 10 years Kerryn has been the McGrath Foundation Breast Care Nurse/Metastatic Breast Cancer Specialist Nurse within the Canberra Region Cancer Centre. But you may not know that on Australia Day in 2017, Kerryn was awarded a Public Service Medal for her work in providing excellent nursing care to the ACT community and in 2018 was awarded a Churchill Fellowship.



by **Kevin Stone**

Kerryn would have learnt and gained a lot from her very worthwhile overseas trip and we, as a community, and more generally the rest of Australia, are the real beneficiaries.

It's not only the patient who needs support during and after treatment, because it can have a huge impact on families and loved ones. That's where psychosocial/ supportive and survivorship care has played a greater role in Kerryn's job description, with an emphasis on planning care well after the intensive treatment period. This

includes helping patients and their families through the sometimes confusing and complex healthcare system, especially when that assistance is needed the most. And this helps to ensure patients will feel supported and can return to their pre-cancer lives with the least amount of impact.

While breast cancer is obviously not the only cancer that invades our body, or indeed is confined to women only, unfortunately the rates within Australia are growing, with over 18,000 cases each year being recorded. And there can be associated offshoots to cancer, such as depression, feelings of survivor's guilt, loneliness, ongoing pain ... the list goes on.

The good news is that survival rates are improving, with 89 per cent of women diagnosed with breast cancer surviving five or more years beyond diagnosis.

But don't be complacent when it comes to being aware of early signs of changes to your body. If you're unsure, speak to your doctor and don't, I repeat don't use excuses like 'I'm too busy', 'no time', 'I'm going on holidays' or others to put off what might just save your life.

Kerryn gave me her kind permission to use any part of her *Models of Care in Breast Care Nursing in Canada and the US* report to write this article.

So why am I writing about this wonderful person and how fortunate we are to have her, along with all her relevant knowledge and experience, in our region?

Well, there are a couple of main reasons.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and even though this may be a bit different to the usual *Rural Fringe* articles, we all know and have women in our lives, and I feel that it's important to get messages out to make people aware of how things can change so suddenly if any type of cancer is detected. And according to the Australian Government Cancer Australia website, breast cancer remains the most common among Australian women (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer).

The second reason is to tell you a bit about our local Churchill Fellow.

Kerryn's list of qualifications and achievements is long, and the Canberra region has been so fortunate having her and the McGrath Foundation Project Team provide such quality, coordinated, empathetic and excellent care to patients with breast cancer. Kerryn has looked after hundreds of patients with metastatic breast cancer over the years and it's fair to say that she has a passion for cancer nursing.

The Churchill Fellowship recently provided Kerryn with an excellent opportunity to study models of care in breast care nursing in Canada and the United States of America. Attending various breast cancer clinics allowed her to observe key points of discussions such as advanced care planning, diagnosis and prognosis, emerging treatments, wellness and survivorship.

This information exchange between Australia and other countries is invaluable when considering new ways of organising and delivering care and setting visions for services in the future.

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Landscapes of the local area

The latest exhibition at the Kyeema Galley, Hall, Canberra to the Coast, features Canberra artist, Sandra House, who has been painting in oils for over 40 years. She is widely collected and well-loved in Canberra and best known for her delicate landscapes and forest scenes.



Exhibition runs: **27 September – 22 October.**

Official opening: **2pm Sunday 29 September**

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This exhibition includes charming locally painted scenes of the Wallaroo, Hills of Hall, Murrumbidgee and South Coast areas. The paintings are snatches of rural landscape, farmhouses, forest scenes and seascape – sometimes populated by cows, sheep and cattle dogs. They have a subtle impressionistic feel, while skilful and energetic brushstrokes impart a freshness and vitality to the scenes. This is an example of Australian landscape painting at its best and most honest.

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Kyeema Gallery
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13 GLADSTONE ST HALL
OPEN 10:30am – 5pm THURSDAY – SUNDAY

Congratulations Nancy!

Local artist and former resident of Hall, Nancy Tingey set up the 'Painting with Parkinsons' group which still continues after 25 years, at the Botanic Gardens. Drawing on thorough documentation over a much longer period, Nancy compiled a beautiful book to record this journey: *Magic Happens* (see report in *Rural Fringe* February 2019). Earlier this year Nancy's tireless work was recognised with an Order of Australia medal for service to community health. Congratulations Nancy!



In about 1981, Nancy Tingey, then President of the Hall Preschool Association, and Polly Plowman, the Hall Preschool teacher, co-designed the Hall Tree Logo (see *Rural Fringe*, August 2018).

Nancy Tingey receives OAM award.
Photo by Irene Dowdy idphoto.com.au



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Yass Landcare Group is offering up to 24 paddock trees and guards per property in the Yass Valley Local Government Area. Yass Landcare is administering this grant on behalf of YAN for members within any of the Yass Area Network of Landcare Groups.

Participants are required to:

1. Be a current financial member of one of the YAN Landcare Groups (Binalong, Bowning/Bookham, Murrumbateman, Sutton or Yass);
2. Co-invest \$15 per tree and guard;
3. Supply their own steel posts (3 per guard). Plants and guards will be supplied in autumn 2020.

We invite interested landholders to submit an *Expression of Interest* by 30 November 2019. For more information and to receive an EOI form, contact Sonya at coordinator@yan.org.au, or phone **0488 027 653**.

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Homeleigh Grove

We thought when we started planting our olive grove in the late 1990s that we were the first to plant a few olive trees in the immediate sheep-country surrounding Hall. For us it was a risk, nobody yet had established a successful grove near us, although legend suggested that where you could grow grapes you could grow olives.

How delighted we were when Jim Rochford told us that we were by no means the first and that properties around Hall had grown olives since the area was first settled by Europeans. Jim took us to see a few early olive trees which are still standing in the district today and were planted by the Hall family after whom the village is named.

These early trees were a little sad and untended, but like the olive trees in Europe, they are hardy souls and will probably be still there in many hundred years' time.

The early trees however were not for olive fruit or olive oil as we know it. They were there for the same reason most of the major groves in Puglia were originally planted – to provide lamp oil in the days before kerosene, gas or electricity. Those who went to the Rome exhibition at the National Museum of Australia, may recall seeing olive oil lamps in the display.



Our aim when planting our grove, however, was directed more towards the olives in the hills of Tuscany – high quality oil and table olives for human enjoyment rather than lighting.

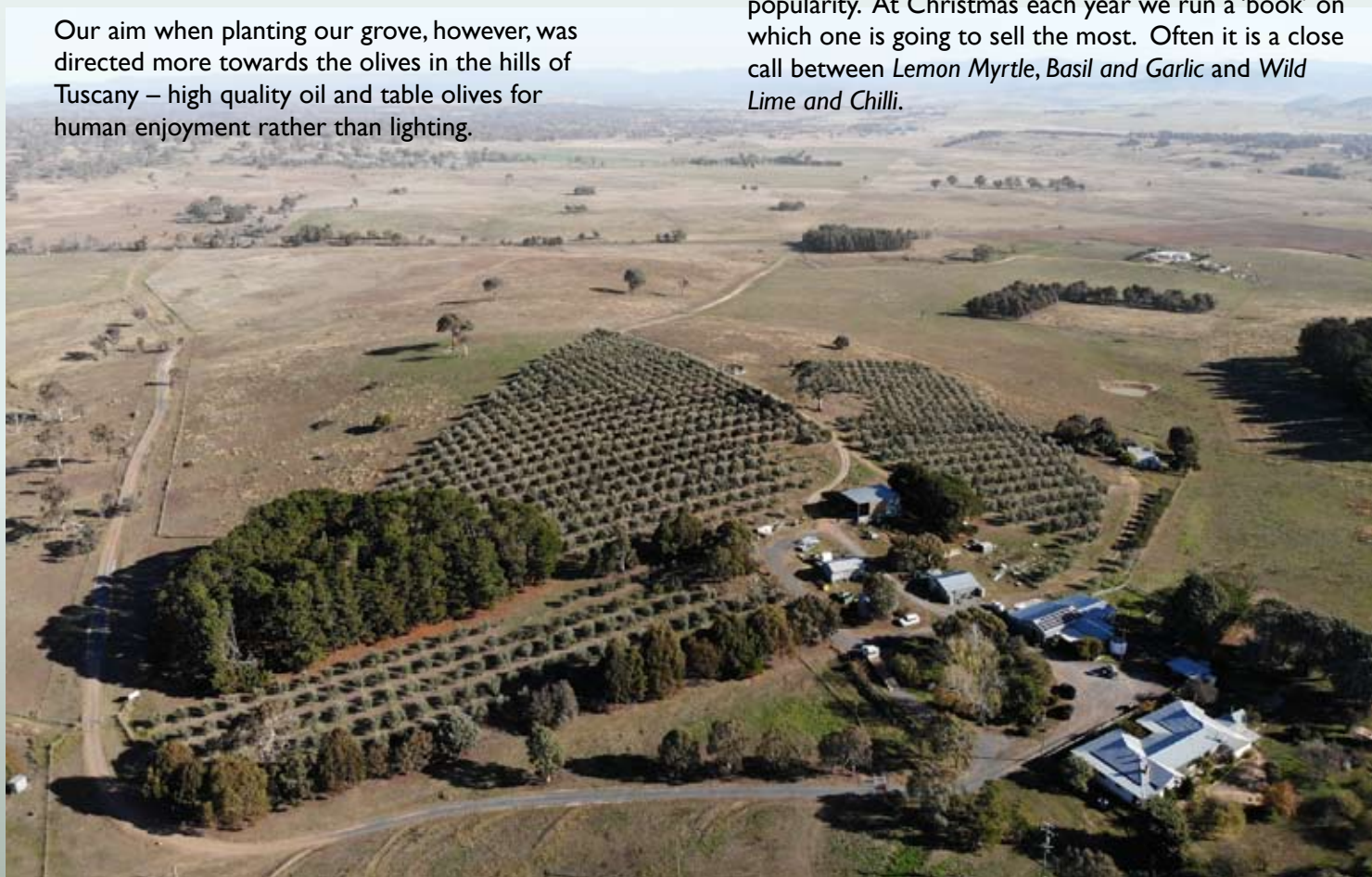
We chose mainly Tuscan cultivars, largely because analysis showed remarkable climatic similarities between the two regions, although we have a very much more unreliable rainfall pattern. To some extent we have overcome the losses suffered by others who attempted dryland olive groves, though irrigation from a licenced bore.

Today we have about 2,000 trees just inside the NSW border opposite Hall, which is quite enough for us to look after. Over the 20 years the grove has been growing, we have gone from a few crates in the back of the car to about 50 half-ton bins for oil and 1.5 tonnes of table olives.

Like the wine grape growers in the district, we have had extraordinary success with our olive oils in competitions in Australia, Italy, France and London.

Our two labels are **Homeleigh Grove** (generally a mild to medium each year) named after the property and **Lowanna's Paddock** named after a 'spicy' pony who late in her very active 35 year life on the property retired to the paddock in which we first planted olives and 'looked after' the young trees. Lowanna's Paddock is more robust, reflecting her peppery character.

We also have developed a wide range of flavoured oils which have increasingly grown in popularity. At Christmas each year we run a 'book' on which one is going to sell the most. Often it is a close call between *Lemon Myrtle*, *Basil and Garlic* and *Wild Lime and Chili*.



by **Peter O'Clery**

Ground covers to replace lawn

by **Lisa Walmsley**

Our lawns are not looking their best at this time of year, ongoing low temperatures, frosts and low rainfall all contribute to our lawns looking sad and grey.

Regular lawn is often disappointing. It requires a lot of irrigation, fertiliser and maintenance to perform at its best. While many of us are considering reducing our lawn area its worth considering all your options.

Many folk ask me what else they can use instead of lawn as a walkable surface. In regard to this, lawn is the most robust. Plants don't like to be walked on. Having said that, ground covers can be used very effectively around steppers, along paths and in garden beds to create a lovely affect and enhance other plantings and hardscaping.

Another point worth considering is how you plan to control weeds in your ground covers. Hand weeding is always an option; most herbicides will kill your ground covers, making them difficult to maintain.

Ground covers worthy of mention:

Dichondra repens: (**kidney weed**) this is a lovely ground hugging evergreen plant. This plant forms a dense sod in full sun and partial shade, that responds well to watering, fertilising and mowing. In our cold climate it does shrink in size during winter but it recovers quickly in warmer weather.

Myoporum parvifolium: (**creeping boobialla**) this is a native, low growing ground cover and will spread as far as three metres. It has a few varieties, from broadleaf to fine leaf and dark green to purple, all have a lovely flower in the summer.

Trachelospermum 'Flat Mat': (**star jasmine**) this is a relatively new hybrid of the climbing star jasmine. Forming a ground cover, flatter and faster than the original form, it will spread as far as four metres and has the typical highly fragrant flowers in the summer.

Phlox subulata: (**creeping phlox**) this is an incredible plant when its in flower, everyone wants one. Extremely cold tolerant evergreen plant with needle shaped leaves that form a dense mat and bees love it.

Ajuga reptans: (**bugleweed**) there are dozens of varieties of this plant on the market, some are green other purple and variegated. *Ajuga* has big leaves and stands to about 20cm tall, producing a spire of blue-purple flower in spring. Hardy in cold and hot climates and spreads to form a thick mat.

Thyme sp.: (**thyme**) this wonderful herb has dozens of species and cultivars and makes a tough ground cover for winter and summer gardens. Everyone should have at least one of these in their garden, disease and bug resistant and it is a fail safe plant.

Juniper horizontalis: (**creeping juniper**) there are many varieties of ground cover juniper, with needle like evergreen foliage. This plant is incredibly tough, and not really useful to walk on, but fantastic on banks where its too steep to mow or for soil stabilisation. Likes all climates and soils and responds well to pruning.

Cotoneaster horizontalis: (**rock cotoneaster**) this is one of my favourite ground covers (not to be confused with the regular cotoneaster – which is on the noxious weed list). Soft sprays of green leaves with a spring display of white to pink flowers followed by red berries in autumn.

These are just a few ground covers, with many more to chose from. Remember that none is really capable of replacing regular lawn, but give you the opportunity to reduce your lawn space and use some of these brilliant plants to frame and enhance your lawn.



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Springfield Rural Fire Brigade

The most important message of the year – **BE PREPARED**

The official Fire Season has commenced and already there have been significant fires across NSW and Queensland. The drought has contributed to extremely dry conditions and the risk for fire events in our areas is high.

You and your family need to have a plan for when those fire events occur, and it's not as complicated as you think. By taking 20 minutes with your family to discuss what you'll do during a fire, you could save their lives, as well as your home.

GETTING READY FOR A BUSH FIRE IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

THE 4 SIMPLE STEPS ARE:



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE www.MyFirePlan.com.au

Step 1 – **Discuss** what to do if a bush fire threatens your home.

Step 2 – **Prepare** your home and get it ready for bush fire season.

Step 3 – **Know** the bush fire alert levels.

Step 4 – **Keep** all the bushfire information numbers, websites and the Smartphone App.

The NSW Rural Fire Service has developed a **Bush Fire Survival Plan** guide to assist you and your family. You can get a hard Kit from your local Brigade, download the plan from rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare, or even download the **My Fireplan App**.

It's a fact. If you and your home are well prepared, you stand a better chance of surviving a bush fire.

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Rebecca Morrison
President



Know Your Risk

You don't need to live near the bush to be at risk of fire. You can check to see if you live on Bush Fire Prone Land by using the new online tool on the RFS website. On a side note, for those submitting Development Applications with Yass Valley Council, this tool will assist you complete the application.

The RFS website also explains what to expect from a fire if you live in an area surrounded by bush, grasslands or paddocks, or where bush or grasslands meets built up areas. This knowledge helps you make better decisions.



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Make Preparations to Your Home

Here are some things to do around your house and garden:

- Keep lawns short and gardens well maintained.
- Cut back trees and shrubs overhanging buildings.
- Clean up fallen leaves, twigs and debris around the property.
- Have hoses long enough to reach around your house.
- If you have a pool, tank or dam, put a Static Water Supply (SWS) sign on your property entrance.
- Check that your insurance is adequate and up to date.
- Complete your Bush Fire Survival Plan.

We are always happy to talk to our community about how to be best prepared in a fire. Get in touch with me or come along to a training session with the Brigade. Our Facebook page is full of information and event details to help you out.

Juniors in Action

We are still looking for local young people aged 12 and over to become parts of our crew. At our most recent session, the Juniors went on a familiarisation drive in our trucks and participated in a mock fire, accessing the pumps and hoses. It's a



One of our Junior members at a recent training session manning the pumps on the truck. The crew was simulating a pile burn and the remainder of the group was working on getting water onto the hypothetical burning heap.

great way to learn some valuable skills, whilst getting to know people within the community. Our Juniors will be participating in the Zone Fire Game later this year, which is an incredible experience for all involved.

If you or your child would like to find out more, come along to the Patemans Lane Shed on the last Sunday of the month from 3pm.

As always, you can stay up to date with what's happening in Springfield by visiting our Facebook Page – search for Springfield RFS.

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Menopause and beyond

We've all heard stories of crazy hormonal symptoms in menopause. The reality is that about 20% of women have no symptoms and 60% experience only mild symptoms – not so crazy for the vast majority of women. However, every woman will experience changes in their physiology regardless of the severity of their symptoms.

The menopause process actually starts in a woman's late 30s to early 40s when the production of hormones by the ovaries starts to decline. Menopause (the final menstrual period) usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, the average age being 51 years, and is diagnosed when periods have been absent for one year. This whole transition is called perimenopause (meaning 'around the menopause'), and commonly lasts 4-5 years.

The most common symptoms during menopause are hot flushes, vaginal dryness and changes to the menstrual cycle. Other symptoms might include sleep disturbances, night sweats, urinary complaints, sexual dysfunction and mood changes. In the longer term, there is an increased risk of osteoporosis and heart disease post menopause, partly associated with the decline in hormone levels.

Menopausal symptoms are rarely due to just one cause. Hormonal fluctuations are obviously a major contributor but improving other areas of your health

can help to lower hormonal symptoms. Getting a general health check can help identify any other issues which may be contributing to symptoms, such as blood glucose regulation or thyroid issues.

Stress management can be a critical factor in managing symptoms. Chronic stress reduces hormonal, digestive and immune functions, all of which become challenged with age as well. If you don't already have some stress management strategies in place now is the time to find some that work for you. Slow, deep breathing is an easy place to start and can be done anywhere. Research shows that regular exercise and meditation can effectively lower stress levels.

Exercise has many other benefits during and after menopause. It improves heart and brain health, reduces weight gain, strengthens bones, lifts mood, and reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes and several cancers. A combination of aerobic and weight bearing exercise is best, for example, alternating short duration, high intensity exercise with yoga and walking.

A good magnesium supplement can be very helpful to improve sleep, energy levels and stress response, and to help regulate hormones. Combining that with the amino acid taurine and B vitamins can provide further benefits for the stress response and boosting levels of the calming neurotransmitter GABA.

Histamine intolerance can occur for the first time in perimenopause, causing hives, headaches, anxiety,

insomnia, brain fog and nasal congestion. This is because high estrogen compared to progesterone levels increases histamine, and high estrogen also reduces DAO enzyme which breaks down histamine. Progesterone is produced after ovulation in a normal cycle but levels drop during perimenopause as ovulation becomes irregular. Reducing foods that are high in histamine or stimulate histamine release can help reduce symptoms, but other conditions like poor gut health may need addressing too.

Recent concerns regarding the safety of hormone replacement therapy leaves us looking for other treatments. There are many herbs that can safely provide symptom relief, improve hormone balance, reduce heavy periods, help you cope better with stress, and help you sleep better.

Key strategies for continued good health after menopause include:

- Prioritise getting adequate sleep – tissue repair, memory consolidation and brain detoxification occur during sleep.
- Consume lots of vegetables and fruit to provide fibre to keep the bowels functioning well, feed the beneficial bacteria in the gut which help regulate mood and brain function, and provide a host of nutrients and phyto-chemicals for good health.
- Find out how acidic you are – acidity increases the risk of osteoporosis. Blood and urine tests

Anita Kilby
naturopath



can indicate acidity levels. Increasing vegetables and fruits and decreasing animal proteins/foods, soft drinks and grains helps lower acidity.

- Maintain a healthy weight to lower the risk of developing diabetes and other chronic health issues.
- Manage stress and keep physically and mentally active to keep your body and brain healthy, reduce the need for medications, and improve recovery from illness or accident.

Supporting and improving your health during this transitional time will provide a strong foundation to begin the next chapter of your life. Post menopause can be a very rewarding time in a woman's life with more freedom to follow their own interests and passions as the responsibilities of child-rearing, career building, and paying off the home ease off.

Even if your health hasn't been great leading up to menopause, taking steps to improve your health during and after menopause can make a huge difference to your quality of life now and in 20 or 30 years. It's well worth the effort.



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From the Editor

In the largest ever global climate demonstration, millions of people across the world joined the climate change rally on 20 September. A record 300,000 people joined climate change events in 100 cities and towns across Australia, with some 15,000 in Canberra assembling at Glebe Park and walking through the city. The event was of course organised and run by children as part of the *school strike for climate*, and children were the centre of all the action and speeches in Canberra.

But there were a few adults too. National President of the United Firefighters Union Greg McConville said global warming was also being felt by Australians suffering longer bushfire seasons and extreme weather events. He said 'It's time to take climate change seriously.'

Here in Hall, Chris Ellison, Deputy Captain of the Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade, alerts us to the above normal fire potential this season. We have made this front page for this edition of the *Rural Fringe* to reflect its importance to our community. Chris's article includes helpful advice about how we can supplement the stretched resources of the rural fire brigades with our own planning and preparation. Thanks also to Rebecca Morrison for her article from the Springfield Rural Fire Brigade. I hope we can all undertake the necessary preparations to protect our community and stay safe this spring and summer.

And please also note the upcoming Fireball at Brindabella Hills Winery to help support our fires.

Until next time,
Jo Hall

Dear Editor.

I'd like to make some comments about the *Rural Fringe* and why I enjoy reading it so much.

Although we've never lived in Hall, I've always felt part of the community because of the people I've met through my involvement with the *Fringe* and the many interesting stories I've proofread over the years.

Oh, I admit I may not get overly captivated with all of the articles, but that's the beauty of this type of publication, where it has something interesting for a wide audience. I know this because feedback to me from interstate friends who read the various stories is always positive. For example, a NSW friend likes reading about horses, where I enjoy gardening articles, so you must be doing something right!

And now that my favourite season is here, it's a great time to take in the beauty of spring, and I would encourage someone to write about their walks around the lovely village of Hall. I don't know who wrote a story some time ago about just that, but I remember reading it and could almost see the blossoms flowering and hear the birds.

So thank you for all the work that goes into making 'our' newspaper so worthwhile. I hope it continues to be a valued and uniting part of Hall for many years to come.

Kevin Stone.

Dear Editor.

It appears that the spirit of Aboriginal reconciliation has bypassed the people of Hall, who do not seem to appreciate the relevance and symbolism of the Governor General's speech to parliament, spoken in the Ngunnawal language. Seems they've also missed the subsequent political reality shifts.

At the recent Hall Progress Association AGM (21st August) there were 11 vacant positions. Surely there was room for an educated, articulate Ngunnawal woman - Josie Reardon. But no, by a substantial majority, the voters elected the same tired old bunch of whitefellas, including three women. They just couldn't bring themselves to elect one Ngunnawal woman. In her speech, Josie explained in a dignified way her family's connection to this land, extending back thousands of years. She also expanded on her knowledge of Aboriginal culture and how she could help Hall residents. Given that Hall proudly promotes its status as a Heritage Village, and also the extensive collection of Aboriginal artefacts in the museum, this election result raises the question of deeply entrenched attitudes and relevance.

This will not improve Hall's standing in the wider community, and for that, I am very sad. People on the committee have often said to me that "they don't want Hall to change". Wake up guys, it's happening all around you, from increased cultural awareness to planned legislative changes. The words "Pandora's box" come to mind.

John Burns

The *Rural Fringe* and the VHDP are not responsible for the factual accuracy or other content of any letter to the editor.

The Rural Fringe – ISSN: 1329-3893

The Rural Fringe is a community newspaper published in 700 copies every second month by the Village of Hall and District Progress Association Inc (VHDP) and distributed free to mailboxes of the 2618 postcode. It is also available online at www.hall.act.au. This publication is funded by the advertisements so readers are encouraged to support the businesses advertised.

Contributions

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to contribute to this publication, particularly local community groups, however it is at the discretion of the Editor as to whether submitted articles are published or not.

These deadlines ensure publication by the 10th of every second month.

February issue deadline is 10 January

April issue deadline is 10 March

June issue deadline is 10 May

August issue deadline is 10 July

October issue deadline is 10 September

December issue deadline is 10 November

It is the policy of the VHDP that articles which are dominantly about the profit making activity of any group or individual can only be accepted for publication if the same issue carrying the article has a paying advertisement of similar size.

Contributions to ruralfringe@hotmail.com or PO Box 43 Hall ACT 2618.

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small (three sixteenth page) \$30	colour \$45

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Out and about



Sunset over the horse paddocks in September

photo: Paul Porteus



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photo: Robert Yallop

A fire broke out in a garage in Alexandria Street, Hall, around 3:00am on Monday 16 September. The home owners and neighbours fought to douse the fire with garden hoses until ACT Fire and Rescue arrived. Shortly after the arrival of Fire and Rescue, blasts echoed around the village as some gas bottles stored in the garage exploded.

Three Fire and Rescue tenders, Breathing Apparatus truck, Command vehicle and Ambulance were at the scene.

Fortunately, no one was injured.

Ray White

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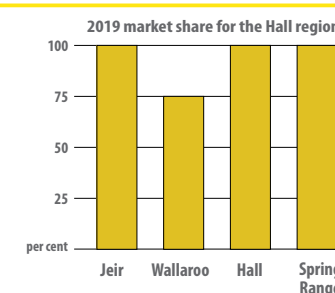
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