

Rural Fringe 2019-20

Report to the Annual General Meeting of the Village of Hall and District Progress Association

21 October 2020

The small group of volunteers that run the *Rural Fringe* comprise Jo Hall (editor and accounts), Gail Condy and Andrew Purdam (lay out artists) and Kevin Stone (proofreader). Thank you Gail, Andrew and Kevin for your professional and dedicated work.

This busy team has produced six excellent copies of the bi-monthly community newsletter over the last year. When COVID hit in March and community events were cancelled, it became more a bit more difficult to find content, but I think the *Fringe* has played an important role during the pandemic in helping to keep our community connected and informed.

We were concerned, as we went into lockdown, of the effect on our local businesses and advertisers. In order to show our support and give something back to our advertisers, the Progress Association kindly agreed that the *Rural Fringe* could operate at a loss this year and subsidise the advertising costs by drawing on the small emergency reserve of funds that has been built up over the last ten years. We offered a discount to all of our advertisers.

We lost two advertisers because of the pandemic – one small business had to close. I am very happy to report that the other one is doing well now and is returning as an advertiser in December. Our thanks also go to all our advertisers for their continued support.

Income for the last year totaled \$5,748 (all in advertising revenue). Expenditure totaled \$12,069.66 (\$10,059.48 in printing costs, \$1,042 in delivery costs and \$967.97 in software subscriptions). The opening balance on 1 July 2019 was \$13,597.30 and the closing balance at 30 June 2020 was \$7,275.64. This is a loss for the first time in ten years and is because of the subsidy to advertisers. We still have a small reserve to take us through this year. We plan over the next few years to rebuild a healthy financial position for the *Rural Fringe* which aims to break even on its costs through advertising revenue. The accounts have been reconciled and reviewed through the Progress Association's audit process. We print 700 copies each edition and the *Fringe* is also available on the Progress Association website.

The arrangement with Australia Post that started last year requires us to book delivery over two weeks in advance and we specify a Monday to Friday window in which to deliver. There have been a number of occasions when the roadside delivery part of this arrangement has not worked out perfectly and we apologise to residents who have occasionally missed out in receiving their copy of the *Rural Fringe*. We continue to work with Australia Post to try and improve the reliability of roadside delivery. Please let us know if there is an issue with delivery to help us make this smoother.

Contributions, articles and photographs for the *Fringe* are always welcome as are suggestions for how we might make it even better. Anyone who would like to join the volunteer group that puts the *Fringe* together please talk to me, you will be welcomed with open arms (at a COVID-safe distance!).

Jo Hall
Editor