

# RURAL FRINGE

*Journal of the Hall district*



VOLUME 29 ISSUE 2

April 2022

## National Sheep Dog Trials

by **Kevin Stone**

This year marks the 150th year of sheepdog trialling in Australia, and we celebrate 79 years of trials in Canberra. We truly are the 'bush capital', with our link to rural Australia and there's no better place to hold the trials than in beautiful Hall Village, which still maintains a country 'feel'.

It's easy to forget you are minutes away from the built up suburbs when you turn off the highway and drive into Hall, and it must be such a pleasant surprise to the handlers, or triallers, families and friends, to find out where it's all happening.

This could definitely be the case for interstate and even Canberra-based 'first timers', because the public holiday Monday and weekend crowds must have set new records, with estimates of between 1200-1400 on each of those days. Many commented they'd seen *Muster Dogs* on ABC-TV and not only enjoyed the show, but realised how important these special dogs and their handlers are for the country and our economy.

*... continues on page 7*



photos: Andrew and Glen Purdam



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*I'm pretty sure these are death cap mushrooms which are appearing around the oval (there have been signs put up).*

*Paul Porteous*

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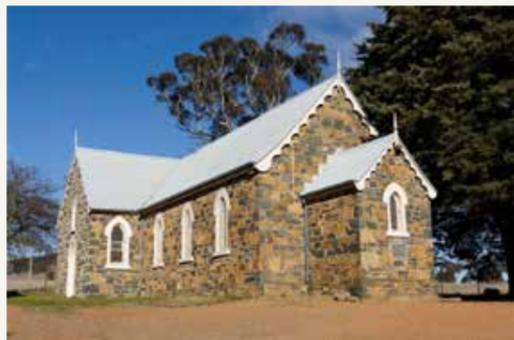
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### Wattle Park Uniting Church – Easter Services



Holy Thursday : 14 April 2022 NO Service

Good Friday: 15 April 2022  
10.00am @ Wattle Park Uniting Church

11.00am Stations of the Cross  
Combined with the Churches of Hall, Victoria Street, Hall.  
Meet at carpark, corner of Victoria Street and Barton Highway.

Easter Sunday : 17 April 2022  
10.30am @ Wattle Park Uniting Church, Barton Hwy, via Hall.

## NSW students at the sheep dog trials

by **Kevin Stone**

This year the Sheep Dog Committee came up with the idea of bringing students with an interest in agricultural science to the trials so they could see the dogs and triallers in action and also learn more about dog handling, training and handling of sheep.

It proved quite successful, with over 50 students and their teachers from Yass, Goulburn, Crookwell and Mulwaree high schools coming along.



Peter Howard was the initiator, greatly assisted by Marion Wahlan, Margaret and Tony Morris and many other volunteers.

The students were welcomed by Marion, who talked about the program and asked each one about their background, where they lived and type of dog they had.

They were kept busy during their time at the showground, visiting the let out area and timing box; having a brief wool classing lesson; and getting a history of the trials and prizes in the pavilion.

After enjoying morning tea, the students were introduced to a dog and handler who showed them

the basic principles of trialling. Sitting in the stands, they had a judging lesson and how the sheep trial works. Each student had a chance to judge and score a round, with one student coming up with the same score as one of the judges!

After all that, who wouldn't be hungry? And they were teenagers after all, so everyone tucked into a sausage sizzle cooked on the Hall Rotary Club barbecue.

And finally, the students were given a demonstration on how to work sheep into a pen with a dog. Some of the students even had a go, which proved to be not so easy, but a lot of fun.

So yes, there was a lot to see and take in with a broad variety of things to do, and who knows, there may be some future dog handlers competing in Canberra! At the very least, hopefully they'll go back home and spread the word about how good the trials are and bring their friends and families next year.

Best of all, things the students learnt and information they took away from the day can only help if they work in the agriculture sector.

And to show how successful this first time event was, within a couple of days two schools had asked to be booked in to participate next year.

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## St Michael & All Angels Anglican Church

### *The Hope of Easter*

As we look around the world today there's not a lot of hope. The devastating impacts of climate change are being experienced dramatically across our nation and the threat of global warfare looms large. And yet for over 2,000 years countless millions of followers of Jesus have proclaimed the hope of eternal life given to us all through the life, death and resurrection of Christ. No matter what calamity has befallen the world throughout that time, the same message of hope has been celebrated. Perhaps you wonder what that message really means or why on earth so many people believe it? Or maybe, for all sorts of reasons, you've lost the connection you once had with the Christian faith? Whatever your circumstances, you are warmly invited to explore afresh our Easter Services.

On **Good Friday 15 April**, parishioners from St Michael's will join members of the other churches of Hall and community members to walk the length of Victoria Street, marking the **Stations of the Cross**. This Good Friday walk has been held for many years



and is organised jointly by the clergy of the Catholic, Uniting and Anglican churches in Hall. Members of all churches as well as community members not necessarily connected with any church are welcome to attend, and numbers have been increasing each year. The walk will start at 11 am at the corner of Victoria

Street and the Barton Highway and finishes at the Remembrance Grove on the corner of Victoria and Gladstone Streets, although walkers may join at any point. The Churches of Hall choir will provide musical accompaniment at each Station along the walk.

We will hold our usual **11 am service** at St Michael's on **Easter Day 17 April**. Residents and visitors are invited to come along for Easter or our weekly service any Sunday at 11 am and stay for a cuppa afterwards.

For more information about our services please call Beryl on **0408 488 526**, or Rev. Peter Malone on **0429 350 207**.

## Saving St Francis Xavier, Hall

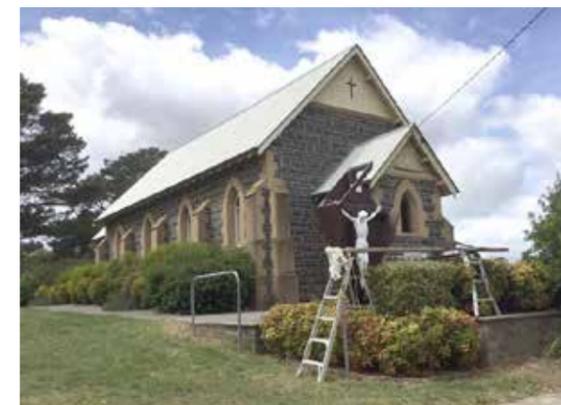
by **Judy Smith**

The Catholic church of St Francis Xavier, Hall, is the oldest continuously used Catholic church in the ACT. The foundation stone was laid in 1907 and the beautiful old bluestone building was consecrated in 1910. In the early days, until 1928, visiting priests from St Augustine's Yass would stay overnight in the vestry where there was an open fireplace. This doubtless was a small comfort on chilly Canberra winter nights.

This old building has seen generations of baptisms, first Communion, Confirmations, morning teas, weddings and funerals to accompany the celebration of countless Masses. The Catholic community from rural surrounds and more recently from the expanding suburbs of Canberra would come together to observe the traditions of their faith.

Unfortunately the pandemic restrictions and pressure on the clergy in the ever-expanding Parish of Holy Spirit at Amaroo (the umbrella under which SFX currently sits) have created some problems for this church. Prior to the restrictions, Mass was celebrated on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 8.30 am. With restrictions, there were no Masses or weddings at Hall. Now with restrictions being raised, it has been advertised that twice monthly services will resume. We hope this will mean regular parishioners and others new to the area will come to join us.

We hope the charm and appeal of SFX Hall will make this a desirable venue for weddings and the tranquility of the location a reflective venue for funerals.



This church has a noble and long-standing history but it needs community support for it to thrive.

I write this in the hope that those parishioners unable to attend SFX due to COVID would return to swell our numbers at the twice monthly services. In addition, if you are able, you might like to volunteer for some of the many tasks required to keep SFX operating. If this is a possibility, could you please email

Anne O'Connor **abb71712@gmail.com** as she has kindly offered to make up a roster. I also hope that members of the community would spread the word that this historic church is an ideal location for weddings and funerals (with a special SFX choir prepared to sing for events).

If you wish to join us on **Good Friday, 15 April**, the three churches of Hall: Wattle Park Uniting Church, St Michael and All Angels Anglican Church and St Francis Xavier Catholic Church and the combined choirs will be conducting their annual inter-faith Stations of the Cross walk along Victoria Street. This commences from the carpark at the corner of Victoria Street and the Barton Highway at 11 am. I hope you will be able to attend.

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# Hall and District Axemen's Club

APRIL 2022

The Hall Axemen have been busy scooting around the country side with local shows now back up and running! Our members have been travelling around the NSW and Victorian countrysides, and also as far as Adelaide!

## What's been happening?

Hall Axemen competitors have been competing strongly around the countryside with placings at every show we've been to!

We're pleased to say that many of our new competitors have finally had a chance to debut! We can't wait to see how these axewomen and axemen improve in future events.

Special shout-out to **Austin O'Connor** for breaking into the Open categories for both Underhand and Standing Block at the age of 16! Many competitors remain in novice for years and well into adulthood, so well done Austin!

## Women of Woodchopping and Axe Kids

The WOW program will make a return towards the end of our season (April), and will also be introducing an Axe Kids program targeted at bringing new junior competitors into the sport. All sessions are run by experienced axewomen and axemen. Keep an eye on our socials for more details!

## Want to try woodchopping?

In addition to the two targeted programs above, we're always accepting new members and happy to give a helping hand and guidance to those who want to learn. Get in touch via our social media pages or email us [hallaxemen@gmail.com](mailto:hallaxemen@gmail.com) to find out more information.



  @hallaxemen

## National Sheep Dog Trials . . . continued from front page

by **Kevin Stone** photos by **Andrew Purdam**

And special the dogs are, because when their event takes place, at the beginning the dog is statue-like before a signal from the handler. Then the dog shoots off incredibly fast and does what it does best, working three sheep with the minimum of instructions. It must be hard to control the sheep because all they want to do is get back to the rest of the mob, rather than outside on an oval surrounded by a crowd of people. But there's no doubt about it, the dogs seem to take great delight in the sport and certainly needs a rest after their turn.



National Open Winner was John Perry with Bredbo Ash, preventing Mick Hudson's clean sweep, scoring 273 to 271. Committee President Sarah Sydrych and National Farmers Federation President Fiona Simson are holding the replica of the Duke of Gloucester Sash.

The trials seem to be getting bigger each year, with triallers and their dogs coming from all over Australia competing for the ultimate prize, which is the prestigious Duke of Gloucester Sash. The age range has been widespread, from people in their 20's coming from Queensland and New South Wales to a few in their 80's, and there's been an increase in the number of women competing. While the sport is growing in popularity, it has to compete with many others and it's encouraging to see the younger generation getting involved.

Next year will sure to be even more successful, hopefully with the pandemic restrictions a distant memory, so put it in your social calendar and come along for some great family entertainment.



National Improver winner Mick Hudson with father Pip and son Harry, a real family affair with three generations of Hudsons competing.



Charlie Cover has been involved with the National Sheep Dog Trials for decades and has been a great mentor to many triallers and a great communicator with the public. He still trials his dogs but handed over the reins to Sarah Sydrych (President), Eileen Moriarty (Vice-President) and the committee. Committee member Linda Dening at the left.



Mick also won in the Maiden. His son Harry was second, Les Everleigh 3rd & 4th and Tony Elliott (pictured with last year's open winner Gundagai Frosty) 5th & 6th.



Last year's Open winner was Tony Elliott. The Queen's Trophy is a painting of the winning dog, and is presented the following year.

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## Storm water drainage in Hall Village: a brief history

by **Robert Yallop**

The wetter than usual conditions over the last 18 months, including severe and torrential rain, have seriously exacerbated the chronic issue of storm water drainage and the erosion of the laneways in Hall Village.

Since early January, the Progress Association Committee has been urging the Minister for Transport Canberra and City Services to arrange for the assessment, design, and completion of appropriate works on storm water infrastructure in the village.

### Background

Almost every other community in the ACT has been planned in their development over the last 111 years. Hall Village, established in 1882, 29 years prior to the creation of the Federal Capital Territory, has evolved organically over the last 140 years with basic infrastructure lagging significantly behind development of the community.

For example, the electricity supply was connected to Hall Village in 1948, 33 years after the establishment of Kingston Power Station supplying electricity to Canberra. The Canberra -Yass Road through Hall Village, now Victoria Street, was proclaimed a state highway in 1935 and was officially named as the Barton Highway in August 1954 but was not fully sealed until 1960.

### Establishment of reticulated water supply, sewerage and storm water drainage in Hall Village

In 1967, a reticulated water supply was established in Hall Village with all existing houses connected to the ACT water supply. Prior to 1967, houses in Hall Village relied on rainwater tank collection and three wells located near Halls Creek.

The introduction of the reticulated water supply to Hall Village created a new challenge. Hall Village had no sewerage system with every individual house relying on their own septic tank. The increased availability of water soon resulted in overflowing septic tanks and, 11 years after the establishment of the reticulated water supply, a sewerage system linked to the Canberra network was brought into service in 1978.

Although a reticulated water supply and a sewerage system had been installed in Hall Village between 1967 and 1978, nothing was done to establish a storm water system within the community.

Following the issuing of the *Village of Hall Policy Plan* by the NCDC in 1981, 12 new housing blocks were sold

and houses built on Alexandra, Victoria and Palmer Streets north of Hoskins Street, as well as 13 blocks elsewhere in Hall Village. None of these 25 new houses, nor any of the existing houses in Hall Village, were connected to any form of storm water drainage system with storm water from the houses directed to the rear laneways or the streets.

### Sealing of streets and establishment of street drainage in Hall Village

During the sealing of all streets in Hall Village completed in the early 1990s and curbing and guttering, a street drainage system was established servicing some 55 per cent of the street surface (map on following page). However, no residential storm water drainage system was established and houses continued to be required to direct storm water to the rear laneways and streets.

Even today, those building in Hall Village are told to direct storm water drainage to the rear laneways and streets as there is no system for the collection and drainage of residential storm water.

Some residents have arranged with the relevant ACT authorities to tie their storm water drainage into the street drainage system. However, the street drainage system still only services some 55 per cent of the street surface and it is unknown if the existing street drainage system would have the capacity to meet the storm water drainage requirements of all residences in addition to street drainage if all houses were to tie into it.

### ACT Government and storm water drainage in Hall Village

The *Village of Hall Master Plan* of the ACT Government dated May 2002 gave relatively limited attention to drainage and storm water with the focus on street drainage and the rural character of Hall Village. The Master Plan noted that rear laneways should be designed so that overland flow is discouraged and scouring avoided while not deflecting additional overland flow on to private blocks.

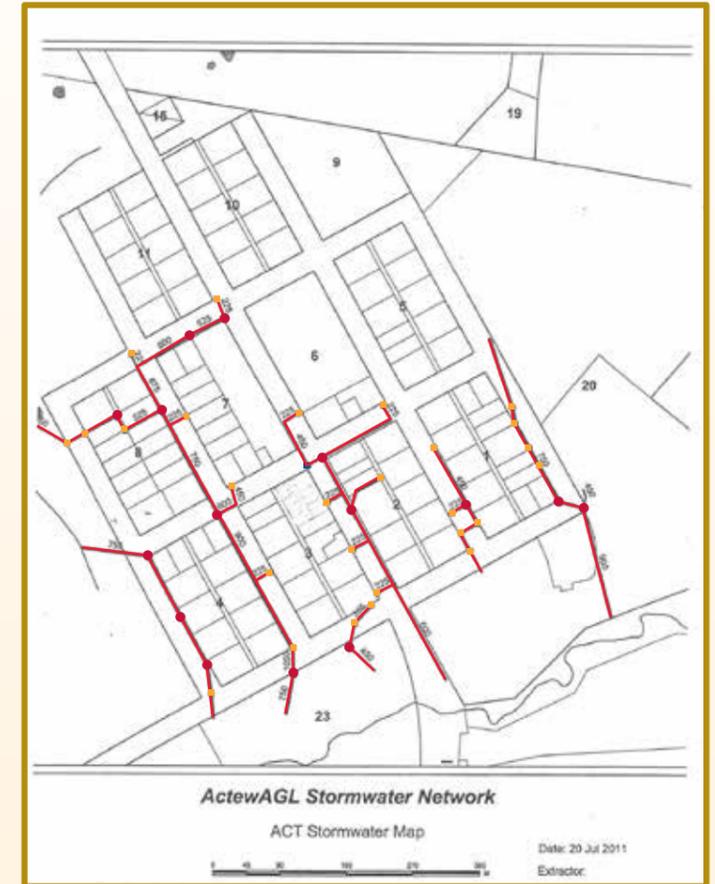
In 2017, following further community consultation the Village of Hall and District Progress Association further raised the concern of stormwater drainage and laneway destruction with the ACT Government in a submission to the ACT Government *Better Suburbs* process.

Numerous requests have been made by Hall residents for action on storm water drainage and the parlous condition of the laneways over many years, including through the *Fix-My-Street* platform. Sadly, other than

some sporadic storm water drain clearance, there has been no action by the responsible area in the ACT Government to address the fundamental issue of storm water drainage in Hall Village.

Most recently, on 14 January 2022, as President of the Village of Hall and District Progress Association, I wrote to the Minister for Transport Canberra and City Services requesting urgent attention to arrange for the relevant ACT Government authority to undertake the assessment, design and completion of appropriate works on storm water infrastructure. This request was copied to all Yerrabi MLAs. Although a response is yet to be received from the Minister, the Progress Association Committee has continued to follow-up with the MLAs, some of whom are working with the Progress Association Committee to urge action by the ACT Government.

Across every community Canberra has basic infra-structure such as reticulated water



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supply, sewerage systems, electricity supply and storm water drainage. In recent years, the ACT Government has undertaken very significant works to improve storm water drainage in established areas throughout the Territory, including the development of wetlands at considerable expense. In new developments, extensive planning and approval processes ensure optimal systems of storm water drainage.

The ACT Government has the same responsibility to ensure that the basic infrastructure of residential storm water drainage and street drainage is established and maintained in Hall Village and I, with the Progress Association Committee, am working to secure this commitment from the ACT Government.

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Robert Yallop President

As reported in the last *Rural Fringe* and with updates over recent weeks on the website [hall.act.au](http://hall.act.au), the Progress Association Committee has continued to focus as our major priority on storm water drainage and its effects on laneway erosion in Hall Village.



Robert Yallop with Yerrabi MLA Leanne Castley looking at drainage issues in Hall.

Committee members have met with two Yerrabi MLAs who have committed their support to having storm water drainage addressed through:

- conducting a thorough and comprehensive assessment by technically qualified and experienced personnel;
- the design of a storm water drainage and street drainage system to address the current and future needs of Hall village; and
- the allocation of adequate funding in the ACT Government budget for the full completion of all required works for a storm water drainage and street drainage system including associated works on the laneways.

photos: Paul Porteous

We have also been following up with Minister Steel and the other Yerrabi MLAs.

Meanwhile, work was organised to fill and grade some of the Hall Village lanes. Cord Civil began work with Bootmakers Lane then continued in Cricketers Lane, One Tree Lane and finally Saddlers Lane. The crew chief driving the grader said that the work 'has been commissioned at the top level to get this done'. Not surprisingly, he also said that no matter what they do, the basic issue that must be dealt with is the storm water drainage otherwise the storm water flooding will continue, with subsequent damage to the laneways.



Fixing the erosion in the laneways is only immediate first aid. The Progress Association will keep the focus on the storm water drainage and continue to urge the ACT Government to get the action that we need.

Meanwhile, the Progress Association Committee is also continuing to work on other areas.

Committee members are developing a plan for a significant refurbishment of the Hall Reserve to restore it as a place of beauty and pride in the village. We anticipate that work will include removing the dead foliage, clearing up and replanting around the reserve. Members have had conversations with representatives of ACT Parks and other possible sources of support. It is hoped that towards late autumn or early winter we may be able to organise some community workdays so that we can create a space that we will all enjoy.

Like the rest of Canberra over summer, the grass in Hall grew faster than it could be mown, with rain further disrupting mowing cycles. Any mowing that was done towards the end of last year and earlier this year was done by contractors who were limited by the specifications and designated areas of their contract. As a result, several members of the Hall community stepped in to try and keep the grass mown in a number of places – thank you for your efforts.

At the end of February, the ACT Government mowing team from Nicholls returned to Hall and it was very encouraging to see them cover a much wider area on both the north and south entrances to Hall Village. They were much more thorough and responsive to requests to mow areas that had been consistently neglected by the contractors as 'not on the plan'. We hope the ACT Government mowing team from Nicholls continue to come and do a thorough job in Hall Village.



One might imagine as we enter the third decade of the 21st Century, and after the global devastation of the pandemic, that our human race could evolve beyond the brutality of war. Yet, here again, we are watching the gross inhumanity of bombing, shelling and rocket attacks on the cities and villages of Ukraine. Once more, we see women, children, the elderly and others fleeing for their lives to refuge and safety across the border. Millions of new refugees are being added to the 84 million already forced from their homes around the world by conflict.

Having spent over 40 years in international aid and development, I have seen how such crises show both the best and worst of human behaviour. I am reminded of a song by James Blunt, himself ex-British Army Captain and with NATO in Kosovo, where he wrote this song *No Bravery*:

There are children standing here Arms outstretched into the sky Tears drying on their face He has been here Brothers lie in shallow graves Fathers lost without a trace A nation blind to their disgrace Since he's been here	Houses burnt beyond repair The smell of death is in the air A woman weeping in despair says 'He has been here' Tracer lighting up the sky It's another families' turn to die A child afraid to even cry out says 'He has been here'
And I see no bravery No bravery in your eyes anymore Only sadness	And I see no bravery No bravery in your eyes anymore Only sadness

What a contrast to the peace of Hall Village and District. Let's do what we can to protect and progress the welfare and amenity of our very special community.

If you have any ideas or concerns for our community, please talk to me or any member of the Progress Association Committee, send me an email at [robert.yallop.care@gmail.com](mailto:robert.yallop.care@gmail.com), or send a message to [info@hall.act.au](mailto:info@hall.act.au).

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## New priest appointed at St Michael and All Angels

On 19 February the Rev. Peter Malone was appointed as the new Priest in Charge for St Barnabas, Charnwood and St Michael and All Angels, Hall.

Peter and his wife Kerry grew up in Perth, Western Australia. They have been married for 31 years and are blessed with two wonderful children and their partners.

From 2012 Peter felt called to be ordained a Deacon and, after finishing a 30 year career within the trade union movement, this came to fruition in February 2014. His ordination as a Priest occurred in February 2018 at St Paul's, Manuka, after which his ministry was as Anglicare Chaplain for its two retirement villages in Canberra and as Assistant Priest at St David's in Red Hill. In late 2020 Peter felt the call to parish ministry and in April 2021 joined Charnwood Parish as Assistant Priest. To his great surprise and joy this led to his recent appointment as Priest in Charge for St Barnabas, Charnwood and St Michael and All Angels, Hall.

Peter is very excited to have joined the team at 'Mike and Barney's' and looks forward to building strong connections within the Hall and Charnwood communities. He also loves a good coffee so if you're up for a coffee catch-up give him a call on **0429 350 207**.



Rev. Peter Malone with a few of the congregation.

## A preschool highlight



For around 13 years, the Ladies Group has been presenting the Hall Preschool children with medallions for their artwork which is displayed at the Hall Showground Pavilion during the sheep dog trials week.

It's also been a highlight for them to watch the dogs in action, plus enjoy a morning tea.

But due to Canberra's pandemic restrictions, this year the children were unable to visit the trials, so a couple of triallers took two young dogs to the preschool.

Not quite the same, but it worked out well and judging by the smiles on the children's faces, they were thrilled to have the opportunity to cuddle the beautiful puppies.

The trial President, Sarah Sydrych, made each child feel very special as she took time asking about their drawings while presenting them with their 79th National Sheepdog Trials 2022 medallion and a copy of their artwork. Two children even spontaneously ran up and hugged Sarah.

A special moment indeed!



Trial President, Sarah Sydrych, chatting to one of the preschoolers.



Two triallers and their pups.

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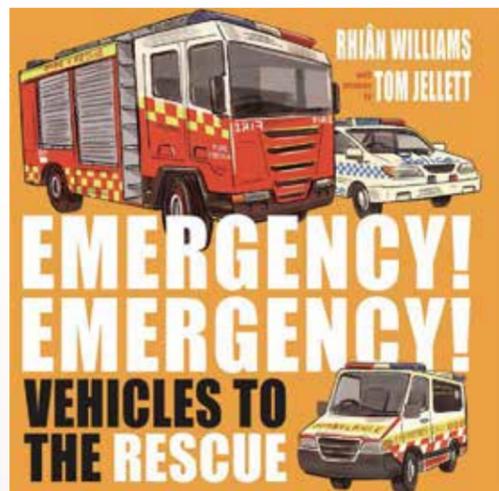
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## Emergency! Emergency! Vehicles to the Rescue A new book for Hall author

*Emergency! Emergency! Vehicles to the Rescue*, is the second children's picture book by local Hall author Rhiân Williams. It is very much inspired by her appreciation of the dedicated work of our emergency service personnel and from her time volunteering with her local Springfield RFS Brigade.



*Emergency! Emergency!* features information about 11 different emergency vehicles including ambulances, police cars, water bombers, helicopters and, of course, fire trucks along with the safety message of calling Triple Zero in an emergency. From chatting to emergency service personnel Rhiân has learnt that many of them say when they go to schools that children will know the American emergency number but not the Australian Triple Zero.

Pat Pledger from Read Plus in her review of the book said it is 'impressive' and 'outstanding' and that it is 'a stunning picture book that is sure to delight all the children who read or listen to the story'. Pat also notes that Tom Jellett, illustrator of *My dad thinks he's funny*, has 'drawn pictures that are a joy to examine as always.'

Local Hall author  
Rhiân Williams.



Rhiân's first picture book *Ten Little Figs* was a Notable Book in the Children's Book Council of Australia Awards in 2021 and shortlisted for 2021 Speech Pathology Book of the Year and is now featured on Premier's Reading Challenges around Australia.

Congratulations Rhiân from all at the Rural Fringe!

Get your copy of *Emergency! Emergency! Vehicles to the Rescue!* from good bookshops everywhere including the Book Cow – Hall's Own Bookshop in Kingston!



Sutton Brigade SES members at Rhiân's house after it was struck by a hailstorm earlier this year. Gidi is gazing adoringly at her new heroes!

## Celebrations and congratulations to the Capital Region Farmers Market

Yvonne Robson CRFM director



Happy 18th birthday to the Capital Region Farmers Market (CRFM). On Saturday 12 March CRFM celebrated the 18th birthday after a rather tough few years for our stallholders. Drought, hail, smoke, fires, pandemic and then the large numbers of protestors camped at EPIC have failed to deter support to our market.

The Rotary Club of Hall (RCH) employs a market manager and an assistant manager. The RCH volunteers together with volunteers from the Rotary Club of Jerrabomberra run the market for 48 Saturdays each year from 7.30-11.30am regardless of weather. As the market is not-for-profit the revenue is allocated to local, state, national and international causes. There are approximately 100 stallholders at the market, however this number varies according to seasonal crops, weather, holidays, etc. It remains a true farmers market that only sells fruit, vegetables, seafood, meat, flowers and food to eat. The market community is like a family as we support each other in the tough times and celebrate the good times.

Recently the CRFM was awarded Favourite Market in the People's Choice Award category of *OutInCanberra 2021*.



The extraordinary closure of the CRFM on one Saturday in February resulted in the following statement from the RCH:

'The Canberra icon of the Capital Region Farmers Market (CRFM) run by the Rotary Club of Hall (RCH) was forced to be cancelled on Saturday 12 February. This after only one other recent occasion in its proud 18 year history. The other recent occasion was in 2020 when COVID-19 cases hit the ACT and the health of the CRFM community was the top priority.

The CRFM Committee's decision to cancel was a result of several factors such as the huge number of anti-vaccine mandate protestors camping at EPIC surrounding our market, the subsequent



traffic logistics and for the safety of our market community. The COVID-19 cancellation occurred on the Tuesday prior to the market. However the 12 February decision was made at 11.15am on Friday 11 February following a briefing by EPIC staff and AFP. Bump in for our stallholders usually commences from midday each Friday so this sudden cancellation had a huge effect as our much valued stallholders had to urgently find alternative outlets for their produce or simply dispose it.

The RCH and CRFM Committee thank the stallholders and shoppers for their support as the market has returned to normal. RCH volunteers appreciate seeing the familiar Hall faces who patronise our market.

Yvonne Robson,  
Rotary Club of Hall, Director CRFM'

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## The Great Unlevelling

gardening by Lisa Walmsley

As I wander around gardens in the district, it has become alarmingly apparent that garden folk are scared of working with levels and don't know how to deal with the varying levels in their gardens.

I personally love levels in gardens, probably because many of my own gardens have been flat, but mainly because they broaden your gardening horizons and provide a wider scope of opportunity to create different spaces. Gardens without levels require extra effort to create a feel of level change to provide a vertical element.

Yes, levels can be expensive to rectify and if too steep can become problems of their own accord.

Levels can cause problems with movement and rest; steep slopes are difficult to manoeuvre around and can be treacherous when wet. Levels can also create big problems with drainage, and if handled badly can make it worse. (I have a client who put in a wonderful pool, in a cut below the house, but after the first massive downpour, the pool filled with mud, which naturally snow-balled into more issues.)

Lawn on slopes can also be difficult with both mowing and irrigation.

Many levels can be dealt with by terracing the slope which creates level 'steps' across the slope. This is a way of moving minimal soil and therefore less expense.

When creating multiple levels across a slope, you can create a series of unique micro-climates, each with its own character and usage. This can create a rich experience with each level providing a stage setting.

Paths can weave their way through the series of terraces, water looks wonderful cascading down in a series of waterfalls. Walls and terraces tend to capture warmth, pergolas provide shade and different plant material adds a stunning dimension to your slope.

Walls add a sense of space that flat land cannot, with an immersion in the three dimensional space created from many layers.

When it comes to practicality and expense, level gardens are preferred. Soil and mulch can wash away in heavy rain and the runoff doesn't soak in to the soil as it should, leaving plants thirsty.

When it comes to the look you want to achieve with your terracing it may be worth thinking outside the square, the traditional sleeper or brick retaining walls

may prove to be a little dated when you could have a more contemporary look with corten steel or gabion baskets or large stones; all look amazing and are sustainable. Another wonderful effect is using soil in 'mounds' in interesting shapes such as those created in The Garden of Cosmic Speculation, created by Charles Jencks.



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## Hall Men's Shed

by Kevin Stone

The shed did something different for the monthly barbeque recently and replaced it with a 'pizza day'. And what a success it was, with about 40 men eating their way through 20 pizzas expertly cooked by Bill Pearson in the community oven, which is near the old Headmaster's Cottage. Bill couldn't have done all the work without help from a number of willing volunteers, including Aaron Whittaker, who negotiated a good deal on the purchase of the pizzas and lit the fire very early, allowing the oven to heat up. There were even homemade biscuits and slice for 'afters', which went down a treat with a cuppa. Thank you to everyone who helped make the day such a great success and one sure to be repeated.

Bill and Dennis Greenwood did a fantastic job in building the oven (see the December 2021 *Rural Fringe*). It's certainly solid and well built. So thank you once again Bill and Dennis for what you've done for the Hall and district community. If you do use the oven, please don't burn plastics or treated timbers.

Some of the men have been busy working with the Yass Valley Men's Shed and now completed a number of Greater Glider nesting boxes, which the ANU has deployed in the Tallaganda Forest in southern New South Wales. This was not only a great project to be involved in, but a good way to bring the two sheds closer together.

Although some of the shed activities have been restricted over a few months, many little projects have also been completed, including tidying up around the cottage to make it more useful and easier to maintain, restoring the Hall Reserve bench and the Hall entry sign, plus refurbishing a picnic table for the Hall Preschool. The mainly woodworking equipment available is therefore put to good use, with safety being the number one priority.

There are now over 70 members, and although the shed isn't actively looking for new members, the numbers seem to be increasing, with some men welcomed in the last few weeks. The membership has probably doubled over the years, which shows how successful and important the Hall Men's Shed is for men's health, both physical and mental. Not everyone wants to work on projects, but happy to come along for a cuppa and chat. And chat they do, with often at least two or three conversations happening at the same time.

But that's not always the case for Brian Charge, one of our hard working toy makers who's been busy making Easter bunnies for this year's intake of pre-schoolers to put their individual colours on his handiwork. Brian had a very broad smile when he presented the bunnies and said he's absolutely delighted to see what pleasure the children get when they paint the toys with some 'imaginative' colours.



Brian clearly enjoys seeing the children with their Easter bunnies. See page 23 for the results!

It's fantastic to have the interaction between the men's shed and preschool. Both Jane and Karen from the preschool are so grateful for what the shed members have done, and continue to do, and the guys readily volunteer to help whenever they're able.

If nothing else, doing a bit of physical work helps keep the kilos off after eating pizzas!



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## ANU students, museum professionals visit

People undertaking professional education for, or working in the field of museum and gallery management, are particularly interesting to have as visitors. They are likely to be more interested in structures, goals and plans, and the way in which the museum is run, than in the content of displays. It has been a pleasure to host two such groups recently.

On 23 February we hosted a visit of museum and gallery practitioners from a range of Canberra's major cultural institution – members of the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA), the national association and peak advocacy body representing museums and galleries. It is also a service and professional development organisation, seeking to enhance the value of Australia's collections, public programs and stories by sharing knowledge, developing skills, inspiring innovation and providing leadership and the authoritative voice in protecting and promoting the arts and cultural heritage.

We took the opportunity to showcase our various displays, including one or two 'under construction', and share the centre's history. After a broad overview from Honorary Curator Alastair Crombie, Mardie Troth presented the recently restored 'Shumack sampler' and explained its importance to us. Ken Heffernan outlined our efforts to explore and tell the story of the district's Indigenous people, and gave an overview of the Gillespie Collection. Allen Mawer explained the foundations of the centre in the original Hall School, and our 'flagship' display 'From Ginin-ginin-dery to Hall'. Phil Robson summarised the on-going development of our Collection Management System, and the display which he is curating for the 2022 Heritage Festival, 'The Brooklands story'. Finally, Peter Browning talked about our Family and Local History Program, and our 'Ginninderra blacksmith'

display as an example of the stories we can tell about Ginninderra's early settlers.

Visitors then had the opportunity for guided visits to the various parts of the centre – but as usual, time was too short! Before departures, the President of AMaGA ACT, Rowan Henderson, gave a vote of thanks to the centre – and presented Alastair Crombie with a box of chocolates (which were generously shared with other volunteers the next day!).

On 8 March we were visited by a group of postgraduate students from the ANU's Museum and Heritage Studies program. Course leader Dr Anna Edmundson had chosen the centre for the first of a series of visits, which will cover small, medium and large institutions and explore their various strengths and weaknesses.

We again offered a series of short presentations, which included this time more attention to the history and development of the centre, the challenges and opportunities that we face. The visitors then had a one hour guided tour, before gathering to share some reflections – and suggestions.

Such visits are warmly welcomed – in part for the challenge that they present to us of finding better ways to describe and explain our work.

## 2022 Canberra and Region Heritage Festival

The theme for this year's Heritage Festival, which will run from 9 April to 1 May, is 'Curiosity'. The centre will be opening on Saturday and Sunday during the Heritage Festival, 12noon-4.00pm.

We will be contributing to the Festival in a number of ways, starting with a display stand at the National Trust's Festival Open Day at Duntroon Dairy on Saturday 9 April.

Our new exhibition 'The Brooklands Story' will be launched on Sunday 10 April at 2pm by Tim the Yowie Man. 'Brooklands' has been a Southwell family property at Wallaroo since 1877. On Wednesday 20 April we will be staging a Kids Treasure Hunt (10-12 noon; 2-4 pm). In addition we will have on display our newly restored Margaret Shumack sampler, and the 'Dellwood' tanning pit.

We will also be displaying on behalf of the National Sheepdog Trials Association the George Westcott Collection, which is normally available to view by special appointment at the National Library. It is a historical collection of press cuttings and other items concerning the early history of the Sheepdog Trials. Using an ACT Heritage Grant, the collection has now been copied, allowing it to be viewed by the general public and by the many triallers who compete. George Westcott was the founder of the National Sheep Dog Trial association in 1943. The collection consists of six A3 books.

Finally, we are giving a helping hand to the Tidbinbilla Pioneers Association, who will be presenting a display during the Festival at the Tidbinbilla Visitors Centre. We will again be helping out with the loan of display cases.

## Grant applications

It is the grant application season! We have had plenty of success with winning grants – 25 grants worth \$160,000 over the past ten years. Despite this success, our experience is that these grants are always hard won. We will be applying to the National Library for funds to undertake conservation work on the Gillespie Collection, and have already applied to the Australia Museums and Galleries Association for a small grant to enable refurbishment of our entrance foyer – mainly for new carpet tiles. ACT Heritage Grants have just been advertised and we are just beginning to identify possible projects.

## Annual Brass Band Concert

This year's 'Brass on the Grass' will be a special occasion for at least two reasons. Famed local bloke David Kilby will NOT be hosting the event after many years as our very capable and much appreciated MC. He is of course a 'pro' and we were so lucky that he is one of us and willing to help. The ABC tells us that:

*David bought his first record when he was 12 in spite of the fact that his family had nothing on which to play it. Such was his fascination for shellac and vinyl. Needless to say, the eventual purchase of a turntable only served to fuel the onset of an addiction. Decades later, much to his wife's chagrin there appears to be no methadone equivalent for a hopeless record collector. Not surprisingly, his condition has had an effect on his children ... two*

*sons are similarly afflicted and his daughter married another sad case. On the positive side, it led to a career change from teaching to radio.*

Despite hanging up his microphone, David and wife Jenny are again generously donating a stay for two at 'Ambledown Brook' to the raffle, and hope to be at the concert.

Also, 2022 will be the last time round for our wonderful sponsors Stephen Barnet and Scott Lilley, of Barnett Lilley and Associates. As many will be aware Stephen and Scott have sold their business (to Parker Financial Services) and will be leaving in August, having opened their office in Victoria Street in 2008. To our shame we have not been able to establish exactly when their sponsorship of the annual concert began, but we can say with confidence it has continued for at least 10 years. Their sponsorship has underwritten the cost of bringing the band and accompanying performers to Hall, and has supported the raffle and promotion and attracted a significant number of their clients to the event. They have been model sponsors and we are extremely grateful to them.

## Defibrillator on the way!

Thanks to a decision of the Progress Association, a defibrillator is to be purchased (at a cost of around \$2000) and located in a publicly accessible place at the centre.

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## Nature's pantry

You may have noticed that some recent world and local events have impacted what's available on the shop shelves. One day the shelves are full then the next time you go to the shop there are swathes of empty shelves. First it was toilet paper (who can forget that) and all the staples, then more recently it's been chicken and vegetables. Now petrol prices have gone ballistic. It all seems so random, very unpredictable. The times certainly are uncertain. Now seems to be a great time to get more self-sufficient!

When you cut back to the pure essentials of what we need for good health, being fairly self-sufficient for food isn't as difficult as you might imagine, at least for part of the year. A regular sized back yard can yield a significant proportion of your vegetable and fruit requirements, with a bit of careful management and planning. Community gardens offer an alternative for those in more compact living situations.

The wonderful thing about growing your own vegetables and fruit is that you know exactly what has been applied to your food. You have control over any insecticides and herbicides that are used, or the choice to use non-chemical options. There has been concern for some time over the amount of chemicals we end up consuming in our food. Some plants are more heavily treated than others, so it pays to at least grow some of those foods organically to reduce your chemical exposure, or to buy organic. In Australia, the most highly sprayed fruit and veg are apples,

**Anita Kilby** naturopath



strawberries, lettuce, pears, grapes, spinach, nectarines and peaches. These can all be grown in our region with minimal need for pesticides.

Interestingly, a 2014 RMIT study found that the consumption of an organic diet for one week significantly reduced organophosphate (OP) pesticide exposure by 89% in adults. Children have a relatively higher pesticide exposure than adults due to their size and less efficient metabolism, so the reduction in OP exposure is potentially of greater significance for our kids. OPs are implicated in causing ADHD/ADD and other developmental neurological disorders as well as having adverse reproductive and endocrine effects and increasing cancer risks.

The 25th Australian Total Diet Study released in June 2019, obtainable from the Food Standards website, highlights a few foods of concern. You'd expect that our food is required to contain minimal levels of chemicals, certainly to contain levels below 'maximum residual levels', ie below the legally allowable level. Concerningly, grapes contained 200% the acceptable level of OPs for 2 to 5 year olds, and 130% of the acceptable level for 6 to 12 year olds. Cadmium dietary intake for 9 month olds was above guidance levels, the main sources being from starchy root vegetables (eg potatoes, carrots), multigrain, wholemeal, rye and spelt breads, chips, savoury snacks, cakes, muffins, and

doughnuts. Mercury dietary intake for 9 month olds and 2 to 5 year olds (and no doubt the ages between) was above guidance levels, the main sources being from fish and sushi.

Surprisingly, the key findings of the study were that there were no health and safety concerns from consumption of cadmium and mercury above guidance levels – so what are the guidance levels for? Both cadmium and mercury are known toxins with known adverse health effects. Surely advising consumers about excess dietary intakes by our infants and young children of these toxins warrants a mention? The authorities did however work with industry to reduce use of the identified OP in grapes, so there is some hope that the next study will show reduced exposure to OP in children's diets.

Meanwhile, parents can reduce intake of fish to reduce mercury exposure, but cadmium avoidance from root vegetables is more difficult as the cadmium is in the soil mainly due to industrial pollution. Root vegetables absorb it during growth so organic options may make little difference. Reducing the amount of cadmium containing foods consumed by children under 2 years old is the best strategy. To be sure of reducing OP from grapes, buy organic or grow your own organically.

Whilst we can't avoid exposures to toxins from our food, we can focus on the most concerning toxin sources and work to minimise their effects on our health and particularly on the health of our most vulnerable, our children. Growing your own food is not only satisfying and can produce safer and tastier food, it also gives you some autonomy, a bit of a buffer against economic/political instabilities, and a nice bit of exercise in the fresh air. A great way to bring you back in touch with the cycles of nature as well.



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For me, the Sheepdog Trials marked the beginning of our COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. At the last minute we postponed a trip to Ireland and the Isle of Man in March of that year, just as the trials finished. And, like everyone else, we spent the next two years making and changing plans and adjusting to the restrictions we have all had to live by. I am now lucky enough to be writing this from the Isle of Man where I am visiting my Mum and siblings after too long apart. I hope everyone separated from family is able to reunite one way or another in the coming months.

This meant that I missed the trials this year, but I am delighted we have reported on them so extensively in this edition. I am always struck by the honour of hosting this national competition in our village. Stormwater drainage is another theme of this edition,

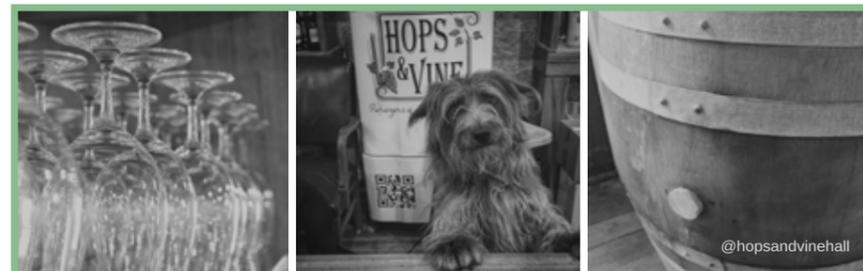
an issue exacerbated by so much rain this past year. It is heartening to see the Progress Association taking action on this long-standing problem. It is good to see some kind of normality returning to Hall and District, notwithstanding the war in Ukraine and the pandemic not quite over yet.

The *Rural Fringe* is put together by a small team of volunteers – myself as editor and accounts manager, Gail as layout artist, Andrew Purdam, occasional layout artist and photographer and Kevin Stone as proofreader. We receive many comments about how professional our little publication is, and when we look at similar publications and even the *Canberra Times*, we feel very proud of the look and feel of our largely error-free Fringe. More than that though, we are proud of the sense of community promoted through the Fringe,

for which we are truly grateful to our many regular contributors – Lisa Walmsley, Anita Kilby, Robyn Monteleone, Kevin Stone, Rhian Williams, Paul Porteous, Alastair Crombie, Yvonne and Phil Robson and more – as well as all our advertisers. For this edition Gail, Kevin and Andrew put in a lot of extra time, thank you!!

We love receiving your articles, photos, letters, ads, poems and pieces of news; please keep them coming.

Until next time,  
Jo Hall



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### The Rural Fringe – ISSN: 1329-3893

The *Rural Fringe* is a community newspaper published in 660 copies every second month by the Village of Hall and District Progress Association Inc (VHDPA) and distributed free to mailboxes of the 2618 postcode. It is also available online at [www.hall.act.au](http://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 VHDPA 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](mailto:ruralfringe@hotmail.com)  
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#### Advertising rates (per issue)

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#### Other information

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Repairing the lane



Lane repaired

## Letter to the editor



Dear Editor,

The previous issue of the **Rural Fringe** included a letter from me which showed my frustration over the lack of maintenance in Hall, particularly the terrible state of the village lanes.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the very, very many residents who contacted me by email, phone and visits to support my position.

I would particularly like to thank the Hall residents who signed a petition organised by a concerned resident showing their concern at the critical lack of maintenance in our village.

However, as you would all be aware by now, the ACT Government has completed a quick fix of the lanes. While it is welcome, this basic fix ignores the fact that the problem with the damage to the lanes is caused because the village has a very limited storm water system.

The Village of Hall and District Progress Association (VHDPA) has taken up this issue and been in touch with all MLAs, as reported by Robert Yallop on the President's Page of this issue, and in the February issue. The VHDPA is keeping up pressure on this matter. Updates in each issue of the **Rural Fringe** and on the website ([hall.act.au](http://hall.act.au)) will keep you informed on what is happening in this and other areas of concern.

If anyone would like to contact me on this or other issues so I can raise them with the Association, my email is: [olga.minion3@gmail.com](mailto:olga.minion3@gmail.com).

**Olga Minion**  
Vice President, VHDPA

## Easter bunnies on parade

Here are some of the colourful little bunnies that were painted by the Hall Preschool children and will be hopping around at Easter.

Brian Charge from the men's shed hoped that some of the children may even keep one as a souvenir and reminder of their time at the preschool.



Letters to the editor . . .  
. . . always welcome

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# Out and about ... about



The Peace Tree at the school – with an insert of its berries which are very healthy this year.



photos: Paul Porteous



Hall walk.

Hall horse paddock.

