

RURAL FRINGE

Journal of the Hall district

VOLUME 30 ISSUE 2

April 2023



80th National Sheep Dog Trial Championships

Bringing a taste of the bush into the bush capital

In March the National Sheep Dog Trial Championships returned to Hall showground for their 80th year of trialling in Canberra. Competitors label it 'the Melbourne Cup' of sheepdog trialling, and the event attracts people from across Australia.

The trials run for seven days, and host 300 dogs, 70 triallers (humans), and about 900 sheep. Yes, your math is correct, every dog gets their own three sheep. You may wonder now, does every dog get their day? Sadly not every dog; there are prizes for top performers in three categories – Maiden, Improver, and Open Championships, (as well as prizes specifically awarded for handlers' performance). However, all our canine competitors do get their 15 minutes of fame on the course, where they have three obstacles to navigate with their handlers.

Competition organiser Sarah Sydrych says the key to a good run is finding the perfect unspoken balance between the handler, the dog, and the sheep, so that the sheep don't panic but will follow the dog's direction, and everyone goes where the handler wants them to go.

A lot of publicity goes to the dogs, but for a moment let's go back to the sheep. These are not just any sheep: these are ultra-superfine saxon merino sheep, lent for the week by Neil and Vicky Carey of Kashmir, Wee Jasper. There is a rumour that their wool ships to fashion houses in Milan, Italy (no pressure, pups).

by **Tiffany Winterbottom**

Establishing a good connection between dog and sheep early is important.



Soyli, 4 months, has just begun obedience training, dreaming of future success.

This year, it was hot. The week capped out on Sunday with temperatures that were about as warm as Hall gets, just 0.1°C shy of the Canberra March record of 37.5°C in 2016. Spectators, however, were not shy – turning out in the hundreds armed with golf umbrellas, resolve, and 50+ sunscreen by the pump-pack.

If reading about the trials has whetted your appetite, head over the National Sheep Dog Trials website for a treasury of information on the sport, as well as some great photos of the competitors in action.

nationalsheepdogtrials.org.au

Also, if you missed Georgia Styne's presenting ABC Radio's Friday broadcast live from the Hall Showground, you can hear the full episode on ABC 'listenback'

abc.net.au/canberra/programs/afternoons

Pip Flower from Tasmania closing the pen.



Open Garden

6 - 7 May 10am to 4pm

At 'Yellow Box', 447 Spring Range Road



This garden is almost exclusively planted with Australian natives.

Entry is free to members of the Open Gardens scheme, otherwise \$10, with under 18's free.

Funds raised will be donated to Pegasus (Riding for the disabled).

Refreshments will be provided by volunteers from the Hall School Museum.

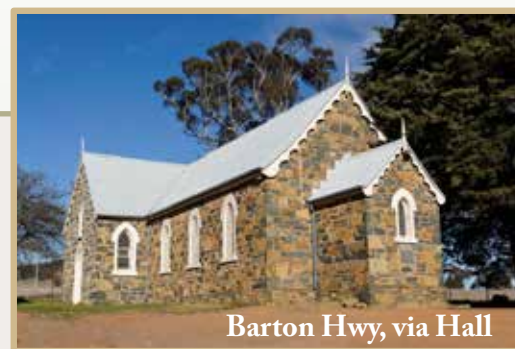
Andrew Brydie-Watson

We would like to thank the whole Hall community for their love and support following the death of our son Andrew on 18 February.

We celebrated his life at Gold Creek Station on 28 February with over 300 friends and a further 400 online. There were tears and laughter for our larger-than-life son and the family was enveloped in love by this wonderful community.

Andrew was born in Hall and attended Hall Primary School. He had an idyllic childhood and even before starting at Hall PS was a constant presence there following his big brother Will and sister Hannah. This was his home.

Thank you, Hall.
Hugh, Ros, Will and Hannah



Barton Hwy, via Hall

Easter Services

Good Friday: 7 April 10.00am,
finishing in time for anyone who wishes to join the Stations of the Cross in Hall commencing at 11am

Easter Sunday: 17 April 2022 10.30am

St Michael & All Angels Anglican Church

by Beryl Pedvin



On **Good Friday 7 April**, all are welcome to join parishioners from St Michael's and the other churches of Hall to walk the length of Victoria Street, marking the Stations of the Cross. The walk will start at 11am at the northern end of Victoria Street (the carpark at the intersection with Barton Highway) and finish in the Remembrance Grove on the corner of Victoria and Gladstone Streets.

On **Easter Day 9 April** we will hold our usual 11am service at St Michael's. Residents and visitors are invited to join us for Easter Day, or at our regular service on any Sunday at 11am, followed by morning tea in the garden at St Michael's.

Hall and district residents have been celebrating Easter in St Michael & All Angels church for 75 years, since it was opened and dedicated on 22 May 1948.



1948

Imagine all the families who would have taken a day of rest from farms and other workplaces or household chores to dress up and make their way to St Michael's for church, at Eastertime and on other Sundays, over the 75 years. Easter celebrations would have been different back in those early years – not so many gigantic foil-wrapped eggs and bunnies! No doubt there was some chocolate involved once the shortages of the war years had eased, but family gatherings for Sunday lunch after church would surely have been welcome after the contemplative weeks of Lent.

We are planning to celebrate our 75th anniversary with a service starting at 10am (earlier than our usual services) on **Sunday 21 May 2023**. The Rt Rev Bishop Mark Short will officiate at the service, and we are inviting former clergy and parishioners as well as families who have had a connection with St Michael's over the years to join us. After the service, the Bishop will dedicate a Lych gate which is to be built at the newly created gateway on our Loftus Street boundary to mark the occasion. We may overflow our little church – how wonderful would that be! After the service we will share a barbecue lunch in the grounds.

In addition, the Hall Heritage Centre in the old Hall Primary School will incorporate a small display of memorabilia from St Michael's during April 2023 as part of ACT Heritage Festival, and the church will be open to visitors 1pm till 4pm each Sunday during the festival.

All are welcome to share the celebrations on **21 May**. For catering purposes please let us know if you are planning to attend by **12 May 2023** via beryl@mikeandbarneys.org.au stating any dietary requirements.

We would love to hear from anyone who has connections with, memories, stories or photos of the early days at St Michael's, or the years in between. Please contact Rev Peter Malone on **0429 350 207** or Beryl Pedvin on **0408 488 526** to share information.

All are welcome to join our regular services at St Michael's each Sunday at 11am, or via Zoom using Meeting ID and password 9551044551. The anniversary service will also be streamed on Zoom using the same ID and password.

Wattle Park Uniting Church

Wattle Park was founded in 1882 and last year reached its 140th anniversary.

We weren't able to celebrate then, due to the pandemic among other things, so we are planning to recognise this milestone with an Anniversary Hymnfest on **21 May** at the usual time of **10.30am** on Sunday morning. We will feature as many favourite hymns as time will allow and welcome old friends and new to come along and sing your hearts out.

140 years

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President's page



What an amazing event the National Sheep Dog Trial Championships were this year. ABC Radio Canberra seemed to spend almost two weeks with regular segments on the Sheep Dog Trials and our wonderful community of Hall, culminating in an outside broadcast from the Hall Showground on the Friday of the Sheep Dog Trials. It was great to hear Tony Morris interviewed about the history of Hall and the interviews with many volunteers. Hosting the National Sheep Dog Trials in Hall contributes to the vibrancy of the community and, as National Sheep Dogs Committee Chair Sarah Sydrych said last November, Hall is the perfect location for the National Sheep Dog Trials, which reflect an important dimension of our national history.

On 19 February and 26 March, the Progress Association organised the third and fourth community work days on the Hall Reserve following those held last June and November. These work days, involving an average of around 20 participants, have truly transformed the Hall Reserve from its rather sad, neglected, overgrown and unkempt state into an area that has been cleared of dead shrubs, weeds and rubbish, mulched and replanted with numerous native shrubs in clusters that will facilitate easy regular mowing and weed control. Particular thank you to Danny Clynk, Olga Minion, Jonathan Palmer and Aaron Whittaker for their work over the last 12 months and to Ginninderra Catchment Group for providing the shrubs for planting.

Presentation of the top 20 dogs (represented by 13 handlers).



I have really appreciated the opportunity to meet, work beside and talk with our neighbours during these community work days.

Although the La Nina climate phenomenon of the last two years has waned and we may now be entering the opposite, drier El Nino conditions, the Progress



Flooding outside 1882 and Kynefin following heavy rain.

Association Committee is continuing efforts to address the need for appropriate storm water drainage infrastructure in Hall. In December, we were advised by the Transport Canberra and City Services Project Manager that the consultant is still in the model building phase of the project and will have the flood study and options study completed by 30 June 2023. Unfortunately, we have received no real update and, as yet, have no idea when TCCS will share outcomes and options with the Hall community. We are continuing to work with our local Yerrabi MLAs to emphasise the priority and urgency and also ensure that it is recognised that the Hall community are key stakeholders and partners in these works. We very much appreciate the support of Yerrabi MLAs Leanne Castley and James Milligan towards having this critical issue addressed.

Many people have raised concerns about the condition of the Centenary Trail link between Gladstone Street and Clarrie Hermes Drive. Even for a rudimentary scraped track, it is severely eroded, rutted and unsuitable for any but the most intrepid of off-road cyclists. Over the last five months, Progress Association Committee member Lee-Ann Brodrick and I have met and toured the track with Yerrabi MLA Andrew Braddock and Pedal Power Executive Officer Simon Copland and discussed how to secure safe cycle and pedestrian access to Hall Village. We have been advised by Yerrabi MLA Michael Pettersson that the connection between Gladstone Street and Clarrie Hermes Drive has been included on the community path priority listing but it has not been identified as an immediate priority. The Progress Association will continue to advocate for safe cycle and pedestrian access to Hall Village.

In February, the Progress Association Committee made three submissions to the ACT and NSW governments:

- Submission to the ACT Planning System Review and Reform Project draft Gungahlin District Strategy. The submission emphasised the importance of maintaining the key protections of the unique character of Hall Village as outlined in the 2002 Hall Village Master Plan;
- Submission to the FY 2024 ACT Budget. The submission requested the allocation in the FY 2024 ACT Budget of sufficient resources to install appropriate storm water drainage infrastructure in Hall Village and to create safe cycle and pedestrian access to Hall; and
- Submission on the NSW Government Draft South-East and Tablelands Regional Transport Plan. The submission addressed the lack of public transport services from the Hall District to Canberra and the development of cycling and walking trails in the Hall District.

These submissions can be accessed on the Hall website hall.act.au/documents.html#vhdpa_submissions.

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Robert Yallop President

It is with much sadness that we learned of the passing of Andrew Brydie-Watson. I love this photo



that featured on the front page of the June 2020 edition of the *Rural Fringe* when Andrew was groomsman at the wedding of his brother Will.

Our sincere condolences go to Hugh, Ros, Hannah, Will, family and friends.
Vale Andrew.

Andrew Brydie-Watson (right), groomsman at his brother Will's (left) wedding in 2020, pictured at Hall Primary School with groomsmen Jack Williams and Glen Purdam.

The Progress Association Committee generally meets every month. If you have any ideas or concerns for our community, please talk to me or any member of the Progress Association Committee, give me a call on **0407 012 160**, or send an email: robert.yallop.care@gmail.com, or a message to info@hall.act.au.

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Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade

Amy Goldstraw President

Welcome to 2023 and Christmas seems a distant memory. To date the fire season within the Southern Tablelands has been busy with multiple fires each week across the zone and given the hot dry conditions generally these have been brought under control quickly. Within the Yass Area the Narran Gullen fire has been the largest and burnt just over 2000 hectares. Wallaroo Brigade has been able to supply trucks/crews to all fires within the Yass area, as well as support other functions as required, which is always a credit to our brigade.

In the space of a few days the brigade was paged to two incidents involving side by side farm vehicles that started fires that spread to the surrounding long grass. What we have found is that when traveling in long grass, it is getting stuck in the undercarriage of the vehicle and the heat from the engine causes the dry grass to catch alight and spread.

It seems the weather patterns have changed and a return to normal conditions is upon us and with high fuel loads and dry conditions still forecast our risk of fires will continue for some time yet. The long-term forecast is that we could return to dry winter conditions and with the high fuel loads present in the grasslands and forests it could prove to be a very challenging fire season in 2023-24.



Callouts – since 1 January 2023:

- 2 x service/good intent call
- 9 x bushfire/grassfire
- 2 x motor vehicle accident

Brigade training has been well attended and apart from washing and cleaning trucks due to call outs we have had some great training sessions with plenty of variety and challenges. Attendance to training has been great and thank you to all that step up to coordinate and run training. As always we encourage the local community to become involved within the brigade. With training being held on the first and third Wednesday of the month at the Wallaroo Fire Station.

In light of the recent fires in Wallaroo and surrounding areas we have had a number of our local residents asking questions about what to do in the event of a fire. We would like to invite all the local residents to a Fire Awareness Information Evening on **Wednesday 3 May** at our station at **468 Wallaroo Road** from **6pm** until around **9pm** with light refreshments available afterwards.

We would also love to see you at Bunnings in Belconnen on **26 March** when we will be hosting the Sunday Sausage Sizzle.

Prepare, Act, Survive

We encourage you to ensure you and your family are prepared.

Know the risk: New fire danger ratings are now in place. Understanding what these mean will allow you to make potentially life-saving decisions.

Prepare: ensure your property and your fire plan are ready for this fire season. This could be key to protecting your life and those of the ones you love.

Visit rfs.nsw.gov.au to learn more.



If you wish to make a donation to the brigade, please contact Treasurer Peter Vincent.

The brigade is also able and willing to support the local community with planned burns on private property, pending RFS headquarters approval. Please contact Captain Neil Shepherd to discuss.



Brigade contacts

If you have any questions about fire safety, preparedness, RFS membership or Wallaroo Brigade activities, please feel free to reach out to our Brigade Executive or the Southern Tablelands Zone.

Captain: **Neil Shepherd** 0418 628 095
nshepherd@shepelectrical.com.au

Senior Deputy Captain: **Geoff Morris** 0407 188 192
geoffmor@hotmail.com

President: **Amy Goldstraw** 0410 763 936
amy.goldstraw@gmail.com

Secretary: **Mike Textor** 0408 825 281
tw43887@bigpond.net.au

Treasurer: **Peter Vincent** 0415 630 560
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An afternoon with kids and dogs

by Jenny Whittaker

At the mention of the words sheepdog trials and sheep my two grandsons were scrambling to be in on the action. So sunscreen and hats on, off we went down the hill to the oval to attend the 80th National Sheepdog Trials.

When we reached the entry gate Peter Toet, one of the volunteer gatekeepers greeted us, and the boys were wide eyed as he showed them his vintage BSA motorbike he had ridden down to the event. Curiosity won over fear even when he kick started the bike and it roared into life. Wow, great start to the afternoon, thanks for showing us Peter.

After heading in we decided to watch the dogs before the boys got tired and the excitement wore off. Climbing as high up the bleachers as possible we eventually got the boys to sit still and actually watch what was happening on the oval. So many questions! I'm sure the other spectators didn't want to hear us talk the whole time so we shushed everyone while the dog was doing it's best to get the recalcitrant sheep moving. As we had attended on the Canberra Day it was 'novice dogs' day. It was entertaining watching the sheep sometimes have the upper hand. One dog looking very out of its depth but was brave enough to give it a go – it's important to expose them to competition so they get used to the noise and distractions outside the ring.

Without meaning to, the dog that was used to round up the sheep when a competitor finished just showed how easily it could be done when you have years of experience under your belt. With an easy lope towards the sheep, it was as if they knew not to argue and they were back in the pen quick smart without any fuss.

In one round the sheep were released from the pen but just kept wandering to the left. As they were so far offline the next dog competing may have been at a disadvantage so those three naughty sheep were sacked from the job and a new trio had to be called on. We also soon found out that a dog nipping the sheep's heels to get it moving is a quick way to an early finish. But if the sheep headbutts the dog, the dog just has to put up with it. Hardly seems fair!

After watching a few rounds we decided to wander around the grounds. We nearly got the boys faces painted but they spotted the ice cream van which trumped all else. While sitting on a low fence, doing a great job of demolishing the ice cream cone they spied the sheep penned at the bottom of the oval ready for their turn to be released and mustered. We must have looked very interested as an offer was made for us to give the sheep a pat. The handler leapt into the pen, grabbed one and held onto it so we could have a really good look (and smell).



Their wool was superfine and when it was parted it looked so white with many crinkles which indicates its quality.

We were off again, this time to check out dogs lining up for their turn at mustering. So many shapes and sizes of dogs – the one thing in common seemed to be energy! They were just itching to get going. The handlers were also an eclectic bunch of young and old, men and women. Last year one of the competitors was in a mobility scooter so nothing holds these handlers back! We peeked into the announcers/scorers hut and explained how a PA worked, showing the boys the amplifiers around the ground. They now understood how we could hear the calls from our house up the street.

Onto the Pony Club rooms and woodchop area where we found a sheep statue that just had to be sat on. Once we'd taken a photo we walked through to the Polocrosse fields to see if we could find the Belted Galloway cows that I'd seen the previous weekend. After a lot of 'my legs are tired' we bushwalked home via the Pony Club paddocks and did see the cows much to the boys delight. The tired legs were soon forgotten and we made it all the way up to the water tower and a hundred metres or so along the Centenary Trail. We waved to some horses and the boys ran down the gravel trail towards home, us with our hearts in our mouths hoping they didn't fall over but not wanting to stop them and be overprotective helicopter grandparents!

What a wonderful place Hall is for the city dwelling grandsons. They love our bush setting and we often trek up to the horse paddocks to treat them to apples and carrots (the horses, not the children!). We love living here and they love visiting, especially when there's something as interesting as the sheepdogs on offer.



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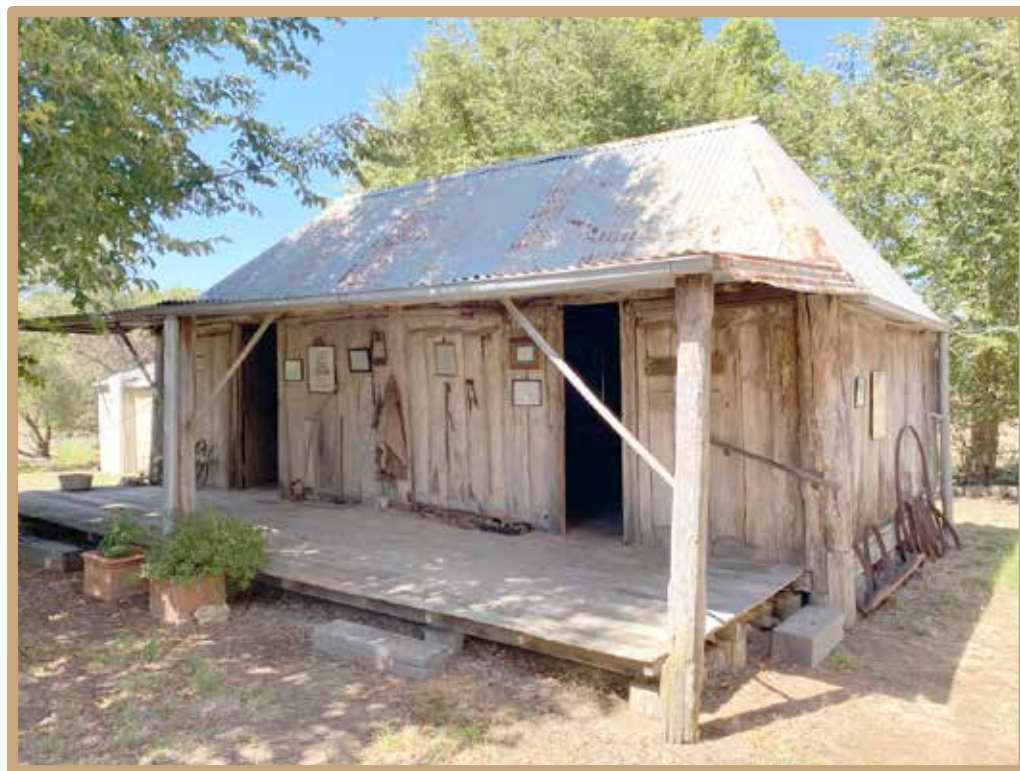
by Jenny Whittaker

On 6 March 2023 some members of the Hall Men's Shed made a visit to this historic property. The visit was generously organised by Judy and Rod Roberts, who have been meticulously restoring the buildings on their property in Wallaroo over several years.

They not only took the time to show everyone around, but presented some very interesting background stories and history. David and Agnes Rule were amongst the original settlers in the Wallaroo area having married at Parkwood Chapel in 1871. David's family immigrated to Australia on the 'Herald' in 1856 and Agnes' (nee Munday) in 1852 on the 'Irene'.

They acquired the land in the County of Murray in 1881, and commenced building the first cottage in 1884. It comprised a living area, bedroom and kitchen. An additional building was constructed to cater for their eight children.

The buildings were constructed of locally sourced red box and stringy bark timber cut with axes and adzes, and split with wedges. The spaces between the slabs were sealed with strips of cloth and hessian on the ceilings provided some insulation, but it would stretch the imagination to think these huts were cosy – life would have been very cold or very hot, and the living very basic.



By 2006 both buildings were in very poor condition and at risk of collapse. The restoration project started with the assistance of friends, family and volunteers.

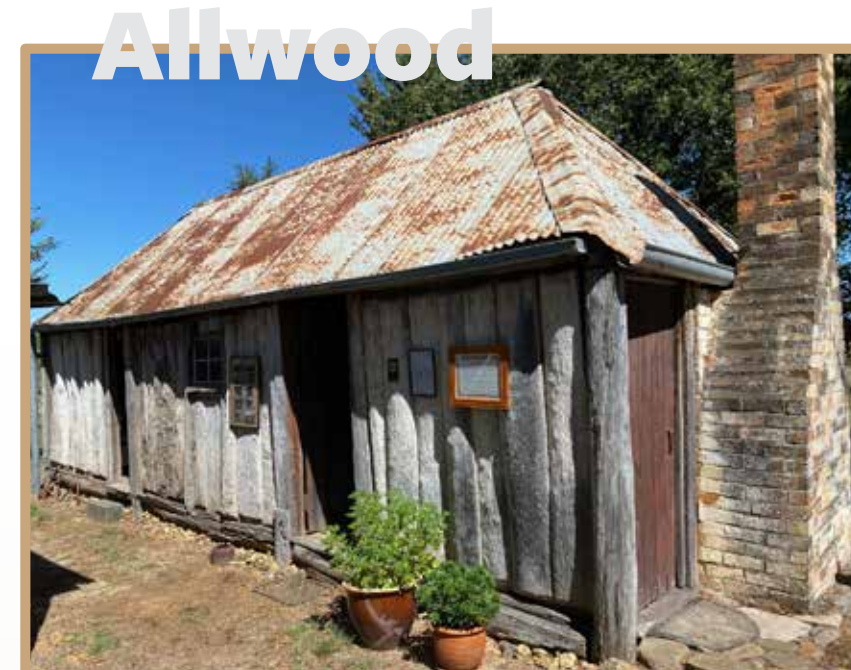
Activities included repair and replacement of corner posts, bearers and floorboards, plus chimney repairs and installation of guttering. Management of elm tree suckers, digging out tree root after tree root which had gotten into the structures and rabbit proofing under the buildings – the list goes on.

There are many documents, photos and information sourced from around the district, including Hall Heritage Centre, local contacts and the National Library. Much of this is displayed inside the buildings and is a very interesting read. Many period artifacts, items of furniture and collectables throughout Allwood gives a sense of living in that era.

The slab cottages have been listed with the NSW National Trust and recognised by the 2013 Yass Valley Local Environment Plan.

A true labour of love, many years have been spent saving Allwood from the ravages of time, weather, neglect, elms and rabbits. The end result is a wonderful achievement for Judy and Rod and a fantastic example of slab hut construction common to the era of the pioneers of early Australia.

There was so much to see and learn about our local history and everyone certainly enjoyed the visit. So thank you Judy and Rod for taking the time to show us around and sharing the wonderful stories of Allwood.



Layers of wallpaper

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men's shed

In and around the shed

by Kevin Stone

Another month, another fantastic barbeque at the Hall Men's Shed with 45 people attending, including our friends from the museum. Once again, Rob Durie and Eric Detheridge cooked the rissoles and snags, and Garth Chamberlain provided the breads and a selection of salads. Our thanks go to these three who always do such a great job, not only with the barby, but each week with the bountiful morning teas. It's also good to see several others help with clearing away the plates and cups etc and washing up afterwards. *Many hands make light work!*

There's a great camaraderie amongst the members, so it's no wonder the shed is quite often getting record attendance numbers each week, because the men not only enjoy the monthly barbeques, but get a chance to have a chin wag over a cuppa and morning tea, with new friendships often made. Whoever thinks that men don't talk a lot should come along on a Thursday morning!

But it's getting a bit 'cosy' around the outdoor table and chairs setting these days because it's such a popular shed. That's largely due to our Foreman Doug Anstess, volunteers Rob, Eric, Garth and several others who put in the time and effort to make it a great place where members can go to relax, whether it's sitting around or getting involved in some of the woodwork activities on offer.

For example, one of our long term wood craftsman Alan Boyd recently completed a lectern, made from recycled Mountain Ash timber and used for the first time during the presentations at the Sheep Dog Trials Dog's Dinner on 18 March. Alan is a very modest man who usually lets his results do the talking and it's a pleasure to see all the fine work he either restores or creates. Thank you Alan for the lectern, which not only looks excellent, but will be put to further good use. And thank you also to the guys who gave up their time to volunteer and help out at the trials. Very much appreciated.

Alan's not alone when it comes to making items of use and interest, because some of the men have several new and ongoing jobs that keep them busy on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. One of the projects that has been a winner is the very well made recycled wood cheeseboards, which are available for a donation at the shed or the *Daughters at Hall*.

It's always pleasing to see the men either working by themselves or with others and once again, safety is their number one priority. Don't want to mop up any blood off the floor! No, seriously, they all look out for each other and make sure all the tools and machinery are used in the correct manner.



Lectern made by Alan Boyd.

And yes, the numbers have been steadily growing, but people are always greeted with a genuine welcome when they visit, whether it's just to see what's happening, or making an enquiry about joining. If nothing else, it can be an excuse to pop in on barbeque days!

Daughters At Hall

SINCE 1882

Opening hours:

Monday	6.30am - 3pm
Tuesday	8am - 3pm
Wednesday – Friday	6.30am - 3pm
Saturday – Sunday	8am - 3pm

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Springfield Rural Fire Service

Rebecca Morrison
President

It's been a busy few months for our brigade attending a number of fires both within and surrounding our local community. You might have thought that it hasn't been dry enough to be a problem, but we can assure you, the amount of growth in paddocks has created a significant fuel source.

Many of these fires have been started by vehicles in long grass, be it tractors, mowers and even side by sides. Do your paddock vehicles have a fire extinguisher on board? Do you regularly stop to check what's underneath your vehicle? If you're driving through paddocks are you checking behind you to see if something is amiss?

All these checks make a difference and can save you and those around you from fire.



Burnt out ride-on lawn mower.



Electric gates & emergencies

There are increasing numbers of properties installing electric gates to their properties. They look great, but have you thought about how others can get access in an emergency? Emergency services vehicles should be able to access your property if you aren't home, or unable to open the gates. They should also be able to be opened in the event of power loss or malfunction. Do you have enough width for a fire truck? The RFS recommends 4m wide and 4m high. If you haven't thought about this or are not sure if your gate can do what we are asking, contact your gate installer to ensure we can get in. If we can't get the truck in, there isn't much we can do to help you when you need it most.

Updated emergency apps

Fires Near Me NSW has undertaken an upgrade. If you've got the app on your phone, you may notice it's now called *Hazards Near Me NSW* and now shows information and warnings about grass and bush fires and floods. Over time, more hazards will be added.

To make sure you're up to date:

- Update your app, or search for *Hazards Near Me NSW* in your App Store.
- Check your Watch Zones to be notified about incidents in your area.
- Set up a user profile to use the same watch zones across all your devices.

Hazards Near Me NSW is now your official and trusted source of emergency information, showing information and warnings directly from emergency services.

Find out more at:
rfs.nsw.gov.au/news-and-media/stay-up-to-date



Get involved!

The Springfield AGM is coming up on **Monday 15 May at 7:30pm** at our Patemans Lane Shed (155 Patemans Lane, Murrumbateman). It's an important event which we encourage all members (and residents) to attend. Not only do we vote for new committee and operational positions at the AGM, but we recognise the efforts of our members and all they have achieved.

We are always looking for new people to get involved – and you don't need to be an active member or qualified firefighter to hold a position. We are looking for people who like to engage with their community and want to help with fundraising or community education. With so many new people moving into our region, this is a great way to meet your neighbours and become part of an important group in your community.

All positions are open so if you would like to find out more, please contact Bec Morrison on **0407 943 813** or Captain Rod Tarlinton on **0418 444 325** for a chat.

Rebecca Morrison
tomandbecmorrison@hotmail.com



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Smith brothers – mixed fortunes

John and Rebecca Smith had at least six children in Huntingdonshire UK, including Matthias and Edward.

The youngest, Edward, was born in 1822, married Mary Kilby in 1840 and they had four children in the UK. Edward emigrated to the US looking for work, leaving the family behind, but on returning after 18 months he discovered that his daughter Maria had drowned.



Edward Smith

The family then emigrated to Australia, arriving on the 'Irene' in October 1852. This was a difficult voyage as 34 people died, mostly from measles, fortunately none of Edward's family. This was followed by a three-week journey by bullock cart from Sydney to Duntroon.

Edward was employed as a shepherd by Campbell at Duntroon and then by Davis at Palmerville, eventually as superintendent. The three surviving children, Shelton, Louise and Ann, journeyed with their parents to Australia and were joined later by three more children – George, Ellis and Amelia.

Three of the children married children of Thomas Southwell – Louise to John and lived in 'Ottocliff', Ellis to Jane and settled at 'Woodgrove' then 'Glenona' and Richard to Amelia and settled at 'Brooklands'.



Mary Kilby Smith

Ann married Ewan Cameron of Weetangera on Christmas Day 1865. The Hall Heritage Centre has an exhibition on 'Brooklands', the home of Richard and Amelia.

Around 1870 Edward acquired his own land at Weetangera, with his farmhouse known as 'Old Weetangera'. Edward and his family were innovative and successful farmers and he is credited with being the first to use Shire draught horses to pull a plough, rather than a bullock team. This proved much more effective as it only required one worker, not two.



Esther Smith sampler from Weetangera School c1892.

He was the first to bring the combined mechanical reaper/binder into the district, and he offered a mechanical threshing service. He imported different varieties of wheat and was an initiator of ploughing matches in the 1870's, with his son George becoming a champion ploughman.

Edward died in 1888 and Mary (Kilby) in 1907 and both are buried in the Old Weetangera cemetery. They had a very successful life in the new colony and left a legacy behind them with their extended families.

However, his brother Matthias had a much more difficult life. He was an agricultural labourer who married in 1838 in Wistow, Huntingdonshire, UK to Eliza Fields and they had 10 children.

Matthias and family had remained in the UK when Edward emigrated, but tragedy soon struck the family and by 1861 his parents, Eliza and five of their children had died, some from a black fever. In November 1861, deposits were paid for the emigration of Matthias and five children, but a plague or flu epidemic took two more of his family before they could depart, leaving only Matthias and three sons – William, Robert and Mathew.

Matthias, now forty-five, Robert and Mathew arrived in Australia in 1862 on the 'Northumberland' after a 96 day voyage. They travelled as Assisted Immigrants, with the government paying the bulk of the fare, but with Matthias having to pay eight, five and three pounds respectively. Edward loaned Matthias the fare, which he later repaid from his salary when he arrived and worked for his brother.

Matthias was only 5 foot 5 inches tall, but was said to be very strong and an excellent mower with a scythe. He worked around the district, but did not acquire his own land. His only attempt to sow his own crop was in 1865 which was a bad drought year and he lost everything, so he worked for wages thereafter, working into his seventies.

He was said to be a good friend of Parson Pierce Galliard Smith (no relative) of St John's and worked with him, including planting many trees around the old rectory – 'Glebe House'. They were an unlikely pair, as Matthias was described as a rough diamond who lived hard, worked hard and talked hard. He is said to have possessed a tuneful light tenor voice and had a facility for reciting verse, although unable to read. He was known and appreciated as an entertainer.

Matthias worked at the Rectory until old and infirm and then retired to his son William's house in Sydney, where he died in 1903 at age 86.

His son Mathew married neighbour Eliza Plummer at the Weetangera Wesleyan Church in 1879. After Levi Plummer's accidental death, Eliza Plummer Smith was listed as the executrix of her father's estate and she and Mathew ran 'Pinchfield farm' (now Hawker) for the family until it was sold to George Shumack in 1893. Mathew and Eliza Smith had six children and after the sale of the farm remained farming around Weetangera.

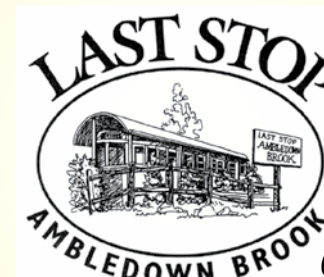
Four children remained in the district, with Esther marrying Clarence Cavanagh, and they lived all their married life at 'Strayleaf', Mulligans Flat. Amy married Alex Shumack and lived on 'Springvale' Weetangera and Mabel married George Kaye of Queanbeyan. Ironically, after the family escaped the diseases of England, William Smith died in the 1919 flu epidemic.



Leon Smith, grandson of Edward Smith, with horses introduced by Edward.

Two very different stories of escape from poverty and disease, with Edward achieving significant things, but Matthias living a comfortable, but unremarkable, life. He did not own property or reach great heights, but was one of the many who worked hard to develop the colony, a far better life than they left behind.

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Dirt is soil that has no life in it and even though you can grow plants in this for a while it is not sustainable and your plants will become very sick and eventually die.

Most of us have work to do on our soils.

I have banged on about mulch in this space a million times and it is definitely a key ingredient to improving our soils but it is not the only thing.

We have all been told for years that mulch helps our soils retain moisture, suppress weeds and add organic matter, and that's true. But what else is happening underground?

Curious that we have not stopped to ask or think, do we actually have life in our soils?

It's not unusual to drive your shovel into the ground, with the assumption that easy digging means good soil. That simply is not true.

Worms are a really good sign that your soil is heading in the right direction. But what else is going on?

Like so many other things in life, diversity in biology is the key to improving your soil.

I have spent the last year, exploring the life living below us through the lenses of a microscope and it is beyond extraordinary.

Our soils (the world over) are bacteria dominant, and what does well in bacterial dominant soils? Weeds!

What I am learning is how to increase the population of biology in our soils via the creation of compost, teas and extracts.



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Biology in soil is in the form of fungi, bacteria, Protozoa, nematodes – who collectively improve our soils by making aggregates, improving nutrient cycling, improving water penetration and therefore allowing deep roots and better soil structure.


This is new for me and it's a steep learning curve and much of it is so foreign it goes against the grain but it's loaded with science and totally works.



Nematode in my compost.

Plants work symbiotically with creatures in the soil, they support each other with their nutrient cycling.

The bottom line is plants just do better with soil that has improved biology and my mission is to prove to myself that that is so.



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A not so new, newcomer to Hall

Late last year 1882 changed hands. David and his wife Tina are now running the restaurant and have started to implement their plans for a la carte and pizza dining using mostly local ingredients and wines.

David spent his apprenticeship at the National Press Club and eventually became 'Chef de Cuisine', a traditional French term which we know as 'head chef'. David starting working for Nicki, the previous owner of 1882, a few years ago, but while he was overseas on holiday the pandemic struck and he wasn't able to get back to Australia. He was replaced but last year Nicki asked him to come back to 1882 and eventually David negotiated to buy the business in November 2022. He and Tina operate it together, David in the kitchen and managing the business side, and Tina serving and behind the bar.

David wants to promote 1882 as a destination featuring local food and wine – he is aiming for 70-80% of seasonal local produce and local winery offerings. Rather than just using well known brands David wants to help smaller producers and has changed the wine list to reflect this. You may recognise some of the names - Pankhurst Wines, Canberra Winery, Nick Spencer Wines, Lark Hill, Collector Wines. Most are from the Murrumbateman, Hall and Barton Highway areas. After struggling with smoke from bushfires affecting grape quality, too much rain causing mould on grapes, not enough heat and sun reducing grape sweetness and flavour, and that pesky pandemic, local wineries have been on an uphill battle in business.



David and Tina plan to hold a dinner once a month, except for April which is grape harvest time, featuring a local winery. Collector Wines is the winery for May's dinner.

And David's pizza's are 'dining' pizzas, made fresh each day to taste the best they can. These can be ordered as takeaway too.

The restaurant is quite large, with an open fireplace for those cold winter evenings, outdoor tables and has a private dining / function room for 30 diners.

While things may change in the future, 1882 is currently open -

Tuesday to Sunday night for dinner
Thursday to Sunday for lunch
Not open for breakfast

Say hello to David and Tina while you enjoy one of their lovely meals and glass of wine.




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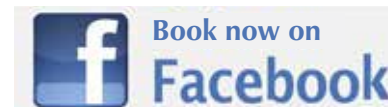


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The Hall Kiosk is part of the **Be Connected** program, an initiative by the Federal Government Department of e-safety to get all older Australians online.

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Research shows that volunteering is good for the soul. It gives you a sense of achievement and purpose, helps you feel part of the community, improves self esteem and confidence, helps you learn new skills and promotes a better work-life balance. It helps combat stress, loneliness, social isolation and depression and helps you meet new people making you feel more connected and valued. With such a great rap it's a wonder that we're not all quitting our jobs and working for nothing for a good cause!

My thoughts turned this month to volunteers because the very successful National Sheepdog Trials were held in Hall in March and I think the volunteer army that helped out all week are on a par with those who make the Olympic Games such a success.

For eight days Hall Village hosted the National Sheepdog Trials and this year was the 80th time the event has been held in or around Hall. Our village not only has a wonderful venue, facilities and ambience, but also a trove of volunteers without whose help the event just couldn't proceed. Finding enough people to sustain an event every day for over a week presents so many challenges. Throw in a heat wave and you have a mammoth task. Hall should be proud of achieving a successful trials and thanks need to go to so many individuals and groups who donate their time and effort. Thankyou, thankyou! I'm sure that the organisers are already looking to next year's trials so we wish them well. We'll be here ready, willing and able to help.

Other volunteers in the village have been busy repairing doors at the Pavilion, spreading mulch at the Hall Reserve ready for the tree planting day, holding a working bee to clean up around the Men's Shed and many other routine, and not so routine, jobs and chores. Rotary holds weekly meetings, our own Progress Association meets monthly and there are many other groups that involve people giving of their time. With all the health benefits I think we'd be mad if we all didn't volunteer for something.

Until next time,
Jenny Whittaker

Repeated graffiti

There has recently been a series of graffiti attacks on buildings on the former school site. Hall has long been remarkably free of such vandalism, and it is sad to see these recent events. Cameras are now installed at various points with the school site, and the site is attended periodically by security officers. The perpetrator(s) have obligingly left a distinctive 'tag', pictured here, which may be a useful clue to identifying those responsible. If you have experienced any similar issues in Hall or have any information that may be helpful, please contact email:

hall.village.2618@gmail.com or
info@hall.act.au.



Letters to the editor . . .

. . . always welcome

email: RuralFringe@hotmail.com

post: P.O. Box 43
Hall ACT 2618



The Rural Fringe acknowledges the Ngunnawal, Ngunawal and Ngambri peoples who are the traditional custodians of the land of Hall Village and District and acknowledges their continuing relation to their ancestral lands. We pay our respect to the Elders of the First Nations past, present and future.

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 (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.

Advertising rates (per issue)

large (quarter page)	\$80	colour \$120
medium (eighth page)	\$40	colour \$60
small (three sixteenth page)	\$30	colour \$45

Other information

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Roving editor: Jo Hall

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FIRE AWARENESS INFORMATION EVENING

FOR RESIDENTS AND FAMILIES IN THE
WALLAROO AND SURROUNDING AREAS.

Wednesday 3rd May

Wallaroo Fire Station

6:00pm – 9:00pm

468 Wallaroo Road, Wallaroo.



This workshop is to assist residents in the preparation of a personal **BUSH FIRE SURVIVAL PLAN**, as well as provide the opportunity to learn practical bush fire preparation and protection skills.

Specifically the program will include:

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- › What to do in the event of fire – **LEAVE EARLY or STAY & DEFEND**
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In addition, the program will provide practical skills regarding:

- › The use of personal firefighting equipment including pumps, fire blankets and home sprays.

If you would like to attend this **FREE** workshop, please email us at wallaroo.nswrfs@gmail.com and provide the following information:

- › Name/s of attendees
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Reserve community planting event

On Sunday, 26 March, the Hall Reserve community working bee planted 240 native pollinator and habitat plants into the newly created mulched garden beds. Volunteers from Hall were joined by others from around the ACT, working for 3-4 hours to finish the planting.

The plants have been carefully selected for their flowers, which will help support the local bees and birds. These native plants are a crucial step in creating a sustainable and healthy environment for the local Hall Village biodiversity to thrive. Local species included beautiful flowering Banksia and Acacia, as well as smaller flowering native daisies.

In February 2022 the Hall Progress Association began to plan the rehabilitation of the long-neglected Hall Reserve. The first working bee in June 2022 involved 35 Hall residents who did a mammoth job of clearing 20 years of weeds and dead shrubs. A second clear up followed in November 2022 and this February five areas were laid out with tons of mulch ready to be planted. We were very grateful for the rain during the previous week that assisted the planting today.

Thanks to the Ginninderra Catchment Group (GCG) who provided the plants funded by ACT Government Nature in the City Grants-Urban Revegetation. The group also provided wonderful catering for lunch from *Daughters at Hall*. Also thanks for visitors to Hall Village Andrea and Leana together with GCG



representatives Suzanne and Kat who boosted morale working beside our Hall residents.

Planting events are not only lots of fun but are also an essential part of environmental conservation efforts. They help to create healthy ecosystems and provide essential habitats for local wildlife. We hope that the newly planted pollinator shrub beds will not only create a beautiful community space but will also help support the local ecosystem for many years to come.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to this effort over the last 12 months.



HALL VILLAGE RESERVE