



**Village of Hall and District Progress Association Inc.**

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## **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT TO MEMBERS**

The Progress Association has continued to further the interests of the Hall Village and District community members over this past period, it being thirteen months since the previous Annual General Meeting when the current committee was elected, on 21 September 2022.

The Association is the overall responsible body for the Hall Heritage Centre and the Hall Men's Shed. There are separate reports provided by these groups. The Association manages the former school site of the Hall Community Precinct, the Cottage and the Hall Pavilion. The Association also informs the community about local issues, events, and personalities – through the bi-monthly *Rural Fringe* newsletter, and the [www.hall.act.au](http://www.hall.act.au) website.

Another important function of the Progress Association is to advocate for and represent the Hall Village and District community in relation to significant planning, development, heritage and environmental issues and the provision of government services. It also facilitates minor works and maintenance in and around the village. In the "President's Page" of the *Rural Fringe*, I regularly share the matters that the Progress Association Committee is addressing.

Over the last twelve months, the Progress Association Committee has made submissions to the ACT Government, the NSW Government and Yass Valley Council, sought the commitment of the ACT Government to establish a comprehensive storm water drainage system in Hall Village, requested that the ACT government develop a safe pedestrian and cycle path from the Barton Highway to Hall Village along Victoria Street, requested assistance from the NSW Government in the control of feral animals in Wallaroo, petitioned Yass Valley Council to repair rain damaged roads in Wallaroo, Spring Range and Nanima, supported community activities such as the Hall Christmas Fair, and responded to a variety of requests from residents.

The Progress Association Committee is very pleased that, after 18 months of advocacy with the ACT Government to address chronic issues of storm water drainage in Hall village, the 2023-2024 ACT Government Budget includes an allocation for the "detailed design for storm water improvements at Hall Village on the basis of a matching contribution from the Commonwealth Government through its Disaster Ready Fund". Detailed analysis of flood modelling, investigation and development of design options to the preliminary sketch plan stage has been completed. Although, to date, TCCS have not made the report public, Minister Steel has however said that the Hall community will be further engaged during the detailed design stage to ensure the best outcome for the Hall Village stormwater improvement works. We are very grateful for the support we have received from Yerrabi MLAs James Milligan and Leanne Castley.

Over the last year, the Progress Association Committee has been seeking the establishment of safe pedestrian and cycle access from the Barton Highway to Gladstone Street. It is somewhat disappointing that Transport and City Services Minister Steel, contrary to his advice in December 2022 that the establishment of a safe pedestrian and cycle path to Hall had been placed on the community path priority listing for future works, notified the Progress Association in August that the safe path has been reassessed and is a lower priority

compared to other community requests and is not included on the immediate forward works program. The Progress Association is continuing to seek the advocacy of Yerrabi MLAs and Pedal Power to accelerate this work. I would like to thank Lee-Ann Brodrick for her significant contribution to this effort.

Over the last sixteen months, volunteers have participated in five community workdays that have transformed the Hall Reserve from a somewhat sad and neglected place to an area that reflects the care and attention of our Village community. Dead shrubs have been removed, overgrown grass mown, weeds and undergrowth have been removed. Five beds have been created and mulched with some 250 shrubs planted. On average around twenty people have participated in each workday with one workday involving over thirty volunteers. Thank you to Aaron Whittaker for his organisation of this work over the last twelve months. We would like to also thank Ginninderra Catchment Group for providing shrubs, stakes and plant protectors.

In March 2023, the Progress Association Committee supported the Ginninderra Catchment Group to submit an application for an ACT Environment Grant. Having been successful, the Ginninderra Catchment Group and the Hall Progress Association are developing a management plan in collaboration with the ACT Government for the open space areas surrounding Hall, including Halls Creek. When agreed, the plan will be used to prioritise future works and focus volunteer time on areas of higher conservation value that is within the ability of volunteers and will protect the unique Indigenous and European Heritage values of Hall. To facilitate the immediate implementation of the plan, the grant budget includes some funds for weed control and plantings identified in the plan.

Having received a request from the President of the Southwell Family Society Australia Inc in April 2023, the Committee of the VHDPA provided an undertaking in June to the Southwell Family Society that the Hall Heritage Centre of the VHDPA will continue to manage, maintain and develop the Southwell Family Archive. The VHDPA Committee further undertook that, of the surplus funds received on the wind up of the Southwell Family Society, an amount of \$15,000 will be held by the VHDPA and specifically designated to be applied to the maintenance requirements of the Parkwood Chapel for a period of ten years. This arrangement is built on the relationship developed between the Hall Heritage Centre and the Southwell Family Society over a number of years.

Submissions made by the Progress Association Committee on behalf of residents include:

- 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;
- 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; and,
- Submission to Yass Valley Council regarding the application to amend Yass Valley Council DA200091 for "Gully Rehabilitation including importation of up to 42,000 cubic metres of material (VENM/ENM)". The submission addressed concerns over the adverse impact on biodiversity, road safety and the deterioration of road surface and the need for ongoing monitoring of environmental impacts. These submissions can be accessed on the Hall website [www.hall.act.au/documents.html#vhdpa\\_submissions](http://www.hall.act.au/documents.html#vhdpa_submissions).

Management of the Hall Pavilion, Cottage and Community Precinct on the former school site all take a significant amount of effort that for many years had been done by Margaret and Tony Morris. After they handed over their responsibilities a couple of years ago, Jan Klaver took responsibility for the Pavilion and Bill Pearson for the Cottage. Bill has subsequently handed responsibility for the Cottage to Margaret Monahan. Meanwhile, Peter Toet has carried responsibility for the former school site Community Precinct and ongoing liaison with the ACT Government Property Group. We are very grateful for the enormous contribution of Bill, Jan, Marg and Peter in managing these facilities that are so important to the life of our community.

The Hall Men's Shed, The Hall Heritage Centre, and the *Rural Fringe* are three remarkable activities that reflect the unique nature of our community. Each make an enormous contribution to the quality of our lives in Hall Village and District.

After twelve years as Editor of the *Rural Fringe*, Jo Hall handed over the responsibility to Jenny Whittaker in July. At its July meeting, the Progress Association Committee endorsed Jenny as the new Editor and expressed its deep appreciation to the incredible job that Jo has done in establishing a strong financial position of the *Rural Fringe* and, together with the *Fringe* team, continuing to develop an informative and attractive flagship publication of the Hall community. Thank you to the whole *Rural Fringe* team of Gail Condy, Jo Hall, Andrew Purdam, Kevin Stone and new Editor Jenny Whittaker.

I would like to echo our appreciation for the contribution of Michael Sinclair as Independent Reviewer of the Association.

I would particularly like to thank the Progress Association Committee and Office Bearers for their efforts throughout the year. Whatever has been accomplished by the Association has been achieved by the work of Aaron, Jan, Lee-Ann, Marg, Olga, Peter, Phil, Ralph, Toni and Tony.

The Progress Association has been part of this community for more than a hundred years and is believed to be the oldest community association in the ACT.

The Progress Association Committee will continue to seek ideas and suggestions from people throughout Hall District and Village on possible activities and what you would like to see improved in our wonderful and unique community.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Progress Association for the privilege to represent this wonderful community as Association President.



Robert Yallop  
President  
Village of Hall and District Progress Association