

RURAL FRINGE

Journal of the Hall district

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December 2024



Remembrance Day 2024



Thanks to the Rotary Club of hall, especially Dennis Greenwood and Bill Pearson, for once again putting on an excellent Remembrance Day Service at the Hall Memorial Grove. Crowd numbers continue to grow, and this year we were treated to a wonderful and moving musical tribute written by Hugh Watson. With music and vocals by Matthew Herbert and lovely French accordion sounds by Andrew Purdam, the song is called *Sons of the Somme*.

Catafalque party.



John Wombey, piper.

Hugh says that his wife Ros Brydie's grandfather, Lieutenant William Brydie, fought on the Somme and kept a photo diary. A copy of his diary was accepted into the Australian War Memorial national collection in 2010.

Hugh and Ros travelled to the Somme in 2010 and visited the battlegrounds where Lt Brydie fought. Hugh says 'with tears in our eyes we read the gravestones at Villers Bretonneux. I started the song there and finished it when we returned home.'

The song was accepted into the Australian War Memorial national collection in 2012. It is available through Spotify on Willy and the Correspondents' second album *Take Your Chances*.



Graves at Villers Bretonneux.

Ros and Hugh at Villers Bretonneux.





Congratulations Edward!

Edward Jenkins, born and raised in Hall, has been voted as a School Captain for 2025 at Mt Rogers Primary School in Melba.



Remember your local retailers when shopping this Christmas.

Hall Village Christmas Fair

Friday 29 November

Jodi with all the lovely things.



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Farmer Brown's honey.

Beryl Pedvin at the St Michael and All Angels' stand.

Kingsley, Brian and Sonny.



St Michael & All Angels Anglican Church



Christmas Street Fair

Congratulations to Zina Richardson and all involved in the stalls, staging and entertainment of the Christmas Street Fair on 29 November. What a highlight of village life the annual fair has become!

Christmas services in our parish

Christmas is a wondrous season across our parish. The season begins at the start of December with Advent, which is a time of preparation for celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ with reflections on hope, peace, love and joy over the four Sundays of December. At St Michael's we will start Advent with our Service of Lessons and Carols on 8 December, when the story of Christmas is told through six short Bible readings and favourite carols.

Our service on Christmas Eve starts at 10.30pm – a time of anticipation of Christmas Day in the cool quiet night. On Christmas Day, our service time is earlier than usual, at 10am.

Here are the services which will be held at St Michael's. Everyone is welcome to any or all of these celebrations.

Service of Lessons and Carols
Sunday 8 December 7.00pm

This is a simple candlelit service of readings and carols in our lovely little church.

We will also share a cuppa in the cool of the evening afterwards – weather permitting.

Christmas Eve
Tuesday 24 December 10.30pm

A traditional service late on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Day
Wednesday 25 December 10am

Residents, visitors, friends, family and travellers are welcome to join us at St Michael's.

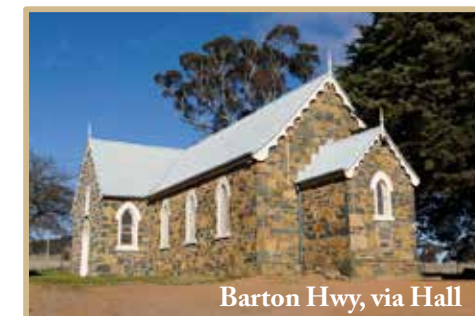
Regular services each Sunday
Visitors welcome at any service.

8am service conducted by parish of St Pauls, Ginninderra.

11am service conducted by parish of St Barnabas & St Michael & All Angels, followed by morning tea.

For more details on any of these activities please phone Beryl on **0408 488 526**.

Wattle Park Uniting Church



Barton Hwy, via Hall

Wattle Park Uniting Church welcomes all friends and visitors to a

Christmas Carol Service on
Wednesday 18 December at 7.30pm.

This will be a simple and heartfelt celebration of Christmas and we will sing our favourite carols by candle (and fairy!) light.

Come along and enjoy the atmosphere, the history and the warm welcome.



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Bernard (Bernie) Alan Rodgers

A life dedicated to service and community by Chris Edwards

15 October 1944 - 8 November 2024

Bernard 'Bernie' Alan Rodgers, a beloved community leader, former Royal Navy pilot and passionate youth advocate passed away at Canberra Hospital on 8 November, 2024, aged 80. His remarkable journey from a sickly child in wartime Wales to a distinguished community servant in Australia embodied resilience, faith, and unwavering dedication to others.

Born in Penarth, Wales, during the tumultuous final months of World War II, Bernie's early life was marked by significant health challenges. Despite recurring hospitalisations and a childhood battle with polio, his indomitable spirit prevailed. Amongst numerous transformative events including struggling with fitness and weight issues, he joined the Scout movement. This experience, coupled with his introduction to the Methodist Church, would shape his lifelong commitment to youth development and spiritual service. His natural leadership abilities emerged early as he became president of the church youth club and joined the drama group, foreshadowing a lifetime of community engagement.

Bernie's distinguished career began in the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm, where he was one of just six successful candidates from over 4,000 applicants. His aviation journey started with the Tiger Moth, memorably including a solo flight under the Tamar Bridge, and progressed to piloting Jet Provost and Hawker Hunter aircraft. During this time, he also qualified as a lay preacher, maintaining his connection to spiritual service even while serving in the military.

After migrating to Australia with his wife Liz, Bernie established himself as an exceptional Air Traffic Controller in Sydney. His team's achievement of 72 flight movements in one hour at Sydney Flow Control in 1988 – a feat considered impossible – exemplified his professional excellence.

Bernie's commitment to community service was expressed through the Rotary Club of Hall, where he rose from member to Club President and ultimately District Governor in 2007-08. His dedication to Rotary's global polio eradication campaign was deeply

personal, inspired by his own childhood experience with the disease. This commitment took him to India, where he participated in childhood vaccination programs and also earned him an International Service Award for raising the profile of polio immunisation.

As captain of the Jeir Bush Fire Brigade and later as Chaplain to the NSW Rural Fire Service, Bernie demonstrated his dedication to public safety and spiritual support. His faith journey led him to become a lay preacher in both the Methodist then the Uniting churches, culminating in earning a Master of Theology at age 69 and appointment as pastor at the Wattle Park Uniting Church in 2013.

Current Rotary Club of Hall President John Kenworthy remembered Bernie as a man of 'honesty and integrity,' noting, 'He was a deeply religious man who actually practiced his religion in his daily life. He had a willingness to get involved in community service and never said no to anything!'

Throughout his life, Bernie maintained diverse interests, from his childhood love of train spotting and the Great Western Railway to becoming a two-time Napoleonic Wargames Champion at the Canberra Convention. His passion for youth development first kindled in his Scout days and church youth club leadership remained constant, implementing many youth projects through the Rotary Club of Hall.

Despite facing multiple health challenges throughout his life, including polio, smallpox and various forms of cancer, Bernie's commitment to community service never wavered. His resilience in the face of adversity inspired all who knew him.

Bernie is survived by his wife of 56 years, Liz, daughter Nerys, son-in-law Tristan, and grandchildren Cian and Myka. His legacy lives on through the countless lives he touched and the community he helped build.

The world has lost a remarkable individual whose life exemplified the values of service above self, unwavering faith, and dedication to building a better future for younger generations. Bernie Rodgers' impact on his community will be remembered for generations to come.



Hall and District Axemen's Club

by Steph Radovanovic



Exciting times ahead indeed for our club! Whilst our committee has been very busy behind the scenes, we have also been very busy with providing Demonstration Chopping at the Cootamundra Show, the Running of the Sheep Festival in Boorowa and at the Bungendore Show. Eight of our axemen also recently travelled to Tasmania to compete at the Royal Hobart Show, where they took out multiple podiums, including Megan P and Steph tying for the 'Most Successful Jill Competitor of the Show' Award.

More locally, our competing axemen have also had great success at Woodstock, Berowra, Eugowra, Dapto, Majors Creek, Bribaree, Lithgow and Queanbeyan. It's fantastic to see all our cutters doing so well, including our newer members who have been performing in their first public and competition chops.

As mentioned in previous articles, we are always looking for wood to chop. Our group can fell trees, pile up head branches, and split leftover wood for firewood in return for taking the main trunk for training, if you have any menace or dangerous trees that need removing on your property. Our preferred wood is straight grain wood such as Peppermint, Stringy Bark, Manar Gum, Blue Gum and Mannifera, ideally with limited knots and branches. Box gum is not suitable. Minimum diameter is 275mm, maximum 500mm, lengths of 600mm minimum.

With the festive season nearly here, all our members are looking forward to our Annual Club Christmas Party and End of Year Awards, as well as a small rest from show demonstrations and competitions, before we launch into a huge and very exciting start to 2025 under a new name and new association, ready to roll into the summer agricultural shows and woodchopping and sawing competitions.

As always, we are looking for sponsors. We have recently purchased a larger, purpose-built trailer to get our equipment to events, and there is currently plenty of space on the large side walls for us to advertise your business should you be interested in being a sponsor.

email: hallaxemen@gmail.com

Fb: @The Hall and District Axemen's Club

Insta: @hallaxemen

An opening message from our new President:

Dear readers,

It is with great pride that I write to you as the newly appointed president of the Hall Axemen. Shaun O'Connor, who has been our president since our inception in 2016 has stepped aside (and into our VP role) and we're preparing for a massive 2025. We thank Shaun for his continued and ongoing devotion to the club and the sport.

We have a very strong history within the Hall community, and it's this history, heritage and success that has presented an opportunity for us to move from club structure to association within the woodchopping world. We have recently been accepted into the New South Wales Axemen's Association. With this move, we are rebranding to 'Capital Country Woodchopping' to encompass a larger geographical region beyond Hall and Canberra, whilst maintaining what we value as Hall Axemen. From 1 January 2025, our members will be able to compete under the Capital Country name which is quite special.

We will be the newest association in Australia and perhaps the first association within NSW/ACT to have a female president. We also have an executive committee which is 75 per cent women – no small feat in a male dominated sport. We have a current membership base of 43 which is not far off being an equal split between men and women – up from just myself being one of four competitors when I moved to Canberra in 2011 and the only woman. This is incredible growth and only possible because of the work Hall Axemen has done since 2016.

Change can be intimidating, but as we step into this new era, we look forward to welcoming new members, reaching more people, and continuing to host demonstrations and competitions that continue to inspire.

If you're interested in working with or partnering with us, please reach out – we'd love to have a conversation.

As a reminder, we train every Tuesday from 4-6pm at the Hall Showgrounds. If you're interested in having a go, please come along and speak to one of our committee members for information.

Wishing you all a safe and happy holiday period.

Cheyenne Girvan

president@capitalchopping.com.au

President's page



Already we find that Christmas is almost upon us and the new year is a few weeks away.

It was a delight to see the brass bands marching together up Victoria Street to the Hall community precinct at the beginning of *Brass on the Grass*. I was fascinated by the story told by Brent Newbery of the beginnings of the Hall Village Brass Band that eventually became Canberra Brass and quite appropriate that the development band has been renamed in Brent's honour.

Our thanks again go to Dennis Greenwood, Bill Pearson and the Hall Rotary Club for arranging our Remembrance Day commemoration. It's been 106 years since the guns fell silent ending the 'Great War', and tragic to see the industrial-scale slaughter of civilians that continues in Gaza, Lebanon, Myanmar, South Sudan, Ukraine and elsewhere.

Annual General Meeting

More than 30 members attended the Village of Hall and District Progress Association Annual General Meeting. The members received reports from the President, Facilities (Cottage and Pavilion), Heritage Centre, Hall Men's Shed, and *Rural Fringe*, the Annual Financial Statements and Report of the Independent Reviewer, and elected the committee



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Robert Yallop President



Brass bands marching along Victoria Street.

and office bearers for the coming year. The AGM was followed by a light lunch of sandwiches and slices from *Daughters in Hall*, providing an opportunity for those attending to chat and catch up with friends and neighbours.

The 2024-2025 elected office bearers and committee are:

President:	Robert Yallop
Vice President:	Lee-Ann Brodrick
Secretary:	Margaret Monahan
Treasurer:	Philip Robson
Committee:	
	Jan Klaver Jack McGrath
	Toni Makkai Tony Morris
	Ralph Southwell Peter Toet
	Aaron Whittaker

The committee will meet every month except January and always welcomes suggestions, comments and proposals from all residents, ratepayers, businesses, organisations and other stakeholders in Wallaroo, Spring Range, Nanima and Hall Village. Speak to any of the above committee members, email info@hall.act.au or call me on 0407 012 160.



Stormwater infrastructure.



2024 Committee

Tony Morris, Toni Makkai, Jan Klaver, Robert Yallop, Aaron Whittaker, Jack McGrath
Lee-Ann Brodrick, Philip Robson, Margaret Monahan.
absent: Peter Toet and Ralph Southwell.

Stormwater infrastructure

As I write this *President's Page* I have been watching surveyors working around Hall Village toward the detailed design of storm water infrastructure. The Progress Association has been assured that the ACT Government staff and consultants will meet with the wider Hall community in the coming months prior to the finalisation of the detailed design for the storm water infrastructure.

Working bee on Hall Reserve

On Sunday 27 October, we held a really enjoyable working-bee on Hall Reserve. Around 14 of us gathered to prepare the Hall Reserve plantings for this summer. We spent a relaxing couple of hours spreading mulch on the existing beds and doing some



Working bee on Hall Reserve

replanting of a few shrubs and trees provided by the Ginninderra Catchment Group. Ginninderra Catchment Group also provided a picnic lunch that we enjoyed together in the shade of the trees near Hoskins Street.

Outcome of the ACT election

The ACT election saw a change of the roles of some of our local Yerrabi MLAs. Andrew Braddock has been elected by the Assembly to the position of Deputy Speaker. Leanne Castley was elected by the Canberra Liberals as the party leader. James Milligan was re-elected to the Assembly. Suzanne Orr and Michael Pettersson have both been appointed to Ministerial responsibilities in the ACT Government. The Progress Association will continue to seek the support and assistance of our local Yerrabi MLAs in addressing the needs and challenges of the Hall community, especially with the major works of

storm water infrastructure and safe cycle and pedestrian access from Hall Village to Clarrie Hermes Drive.

Similarly, the Progress Association will continue to seek the assistance of Yass Valley Council and Member for Goulburn Wendy Tuckerman to respond to the concerns of Hall District residents in NSW.

Once again, 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, send me an email at: robert.yallop.care@gmail.com or send a message to: info@hall.act.au.

Hall Pavilion turns 90 years *a community treasure*

Many Hall residents and visitors will have seen Hall's pavilion, whether taking a dog for a walk around Halls Creek, visiting the Hall Recreation Ground, old sheep pavilion or tennis courts, or when attending the National Sheep Dog Trials. Other people, from all over Canberra, know it as the beautiful rustic venue they hired from the Village of Hall and District Progress Association for a wedding, party, religious festival or other event.

But who knows that, as the *Rural Fringe* celebrates its 30th year, the characterful Hall Pavilion with its fine tallow-wood floor, now celebrates its 90th birthday?

The Village of Hall and District Progress Association (VHDPA) was inaugurated in 1906 and clearing of trees for a Hall Recreation Ground was begun by local volunteers before 1910. The Ginninderra Farmers Union organised sports carnivals from 1907 but the Ginninderra shows up to 1915 were one-day events held beside the Barton Highway opposite Henry Curran's Blacksmiths Workshop. The heritage-listed blacksmith's building can still be seen beside the highway today. During the First World War, sport events raised funds for bodies like the Red Cross. At the war's end, in 1918, the row of pines along the Victoria Street frontage of the Hall Recreation Ground was planted to remember the enlisted men of Hall and District. The same year saw the establishment of a new Hall tennis club, as well as a tennis court that remains, as enlarged around 1929, between the Hall Pavilion and the Hall Recreation Ground.

The *Advance Hall and District Association* was formed in 1922 and held district shows until 1925. It was renamed the *Advance Hall Pastoral and Agricultural Association* in 1926, with the aim of providing a regional show from 1927. In 1930 it was again renamed the Federal Capital Territory Pastoral and Agricultural Association (FCTPAA).



Hall Pavilion, built in Hall in 1934 by the show association using materials donated by the Federal Government (Ken Heffernan, 2024).

Its patron, Dr J.F. Watson, wrote in the *Canberra Times* about progress made up to 1932:

In the early years, the show was held on the Hall Recreation Reserve, a small square area on the Yass Road-side, with one skillion-roofed shed and an unfenced ring or sports ground . . . the frontage of this area is planted with trees, each one with a name plate, commemorating a volunteer for active service in the Great War from the district. These first shows

were really shows and sports meetings combined. In the year 1929, big changes began. The area of the Showground, through the generosity of the Federal Government, was practically doubled; and, during the past twelve months, a further extension has been granted. In 1929, a second ring, which was fenced



Towing half of the Ginninderra Farmers' Union across Hall's Creek to Hall in 1930, for use as a general show pavilion, (Gillespie 1992, p.165).



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this year, was cut virtually out of the virgin bush. It was heavily timbered; but voluntary labour rapidly finished the work in workmanlike style. In 1930, the old Ginninderra Hall was removed two miles to the Showground to form a general pavilion; a sheep pavilion, a poultry pavilion and a luncheon room were erected. Since that date, the poultry pavilion has been enlarged, rodeo yards and the nucleus of a future pig pavilion have been erected.

Improvements to the value of many hundreds of pounds have been effected by an association, principally of primary producers, in the height of the greatest depression which Australia has experienced. How has this been achieved?

The Showground lies in the centre of a district, held principally by descendants of early pioneers to the third, fourth and fifth generations, residing in one and the same district. The early pioneers had one mission only, developed to its full extent. That maxim was self-reliance and self-help, and it has been inherited by their descendants.

The members of the association demonstrated that they were willing to help themselves; the Government recognised and encouraged this spirit.

The old Ginninderra Farmers' Union Hall, brought to Hall in 1930, was used as a show pavilion for a time, pending construction of a more modern exhibition building. The trustees of the Hall Recreation Reserve met with government in August 1930 to see if they

by **Ken Heffernan** and **Jan Klaver**

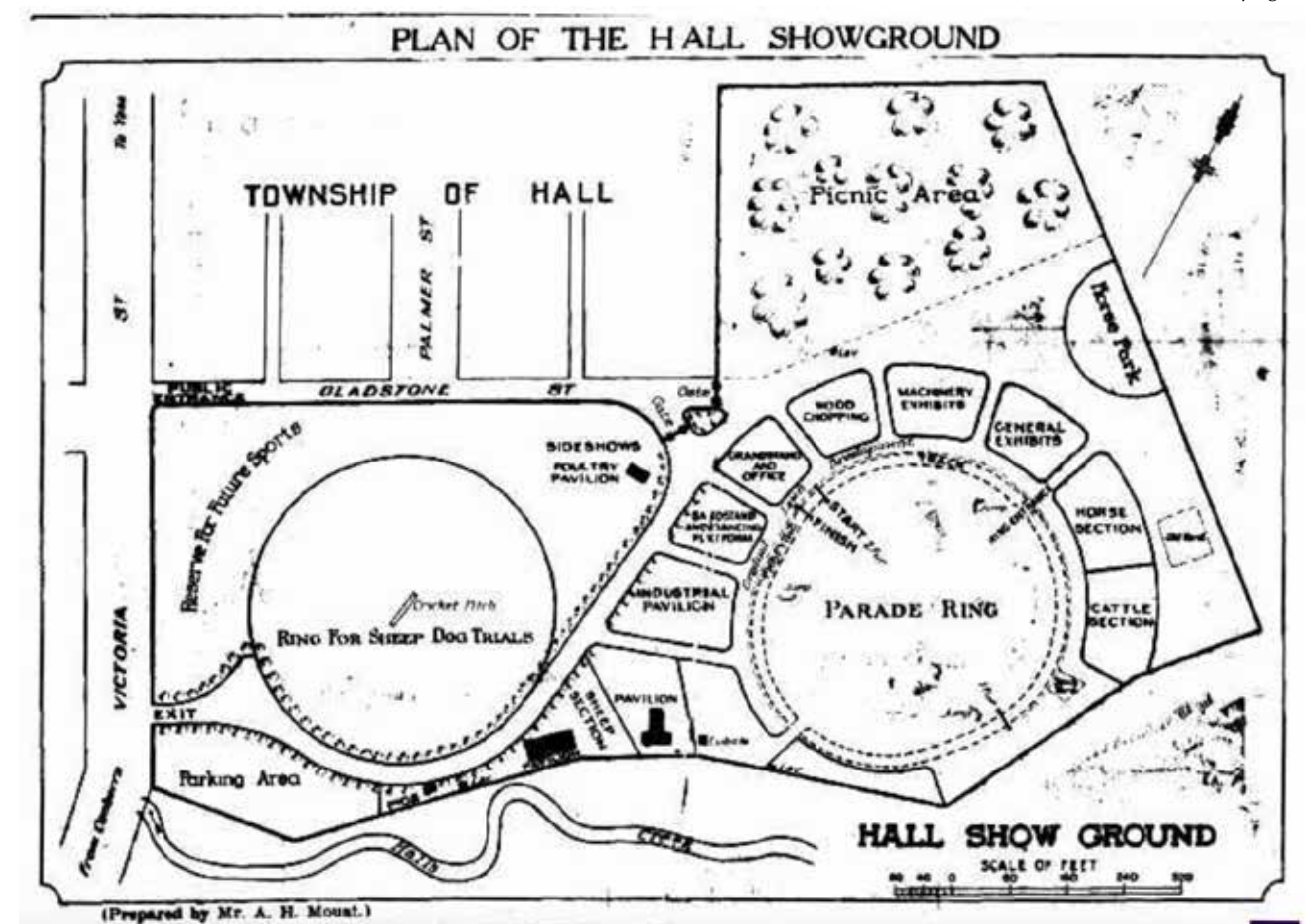
could get community donations for showground improvements matched up to £50, or have some building materials supplied. Meanwhile the show at Hall was growing in importance. Entries over the period 1930-1932 rose from 600 to 1400, and that the shows of 1931 and 1932 were opened by Australian Prime Ministers James Scullin and Joseph Lyons respectively.



Old Hall Show General Pavilion (relocated Ginninderra Farmers Union Hall) at left, and Sheep Pavilion behind at right, on 27 August 1963. (National Archives of Australia Image No. A7973:INT698/6)

A government plan for a model showground at Hall, to be achieved over five years, was published in 1933. Notably, provision was made for parking. Some 400

... continues on page 10



Plan for a Model Showground at Hall (Canberra Times, 28 September 1933).

heritage happenings

Hall Pavilion turns 90 years *a community treasure*

... continued from page 9

cars parked around the showground at the 1933 show. When they left for home with lights on, an observer noted that they looked 'like a streaking meteor'. The plan showed the former Ginninderra Farmers' Union Hall located to the east of the Sheep Pavilion.

Much work was done on the showground by volunteers and residents of Hall in 1933 and the FCTPAA Committee approved the building of a new pavilion.



1950s Aerial photograph showing the old Hall Pavilion, the Sheep Pavilion, the 1934 Hall Pavilion and the adjacent tennis court.

In July 1934 they decided to erect some of the facilities, including a new exhibition building, before the show on 21-22 September. Some 25 tons of timber was provided to the community by the Commonwealth Department of the Interior for the purpose of building a new pavilion and other facilities, like horse stalls. The association awarded the tender for the Hall Pavilion to Messrs Wormald and Thompson of Queanbeyan, and sought a lease of 10 years at nominal rent for the improvements they made. Thus, Hall was to be graced with 'the finest accommodation in the district for its pavilion exhibits'. A grand ball, with wonderful donated lighting and music by Pogson's Orchestra, was held there in 1935.

The retiring President of the FCTPAA, Mr J.C. Tickner, proudly reported to the Annual Meeting of 1940 that 'following representations to the Department of the Interior, the association has been vested with tenant rights in respect of buildings erected by the association on the Hall Recreation Reserve'. However, the show was not held for the next three years (1941, 1942 and 1943), and its scale was limited in 1944 and 1945, due to the Second World War.

Things got back to normal by the 1950s, and the Canberra Sporting Car Club held its very first meeting at the Hall Showground in 1954. By the early 1960s, however, the old Ginninderra Farmers' Union Hall, which served as a show 'luncheon room' after the new pavilion was built in 1934, was slowly being eaten away by white ants. Moreover, having been the venue of regional shows since 1927, the last show held at Hall Village was in 1963, as part of Canberra's Jubilee Year celebration. Thereafter the annual show moved to Canberra. The Hall community, that had made such significant input of labour and direction to the success of the show for 37 years, had mixed feelings about the move.

The community nevertheless saw change coming. The *Canberra Times* reported that Hall community initiated a committee in 1961 to seek the renovation of 'the old tin pavilion at the showground . . . which was very hot in summer and cold in winter' so that it could serve as a 'modern, comfortable and reasonably equipped community centre'.

Dances, like that organised by St Michael's Anglican Church in 1965,

would have been much less salubrious than those in the post-renovation pavilion. The Hall Community Centre Committee submitted a plan for improvements in 1964 to the Department of the Interior and NCDC but it was only in 1972 that the Department investigated whether the pavilion could be used by residents as a community centre. Nevertheless, major improvements were completed in 1974. At last, wire-meshed vents were replaced with glass windows.

After the show moved to Canberra, Hall Pavilion came under extraordinarily stable management under stewardship by the VHDPA. From 1966 until 2021, volunteers Tony and Margaret Morris of Hall maintained, cleaned, provisioned and managed the hiring of the pavilion for the community. They also ran a Rural Youth Group there themselves for many years, helping young people from Hall and Yass. Even after handing the baton to other VHDPA volunteers, they continue to assist in many ways.

Pavilion refurbishments had an immediate impact. The new Community Centre hosted folk music in late 1974 and in January 1975 it was the venue of a community meeting, called by Mr Morris, Vice-President of the VHDPA, to discuss local leasing changes. Music by Bill Gibb in May 1975 raised funds for children at Koomarri School. In the later 1970s and 1980's local club, dance and musical events were regularly advertised at the 'Hall Community Centre'. Indeed, that is the function that the former show pavilion now played.



An exciting development, connection of the Hall Showground toilet to a sewerage system, was presaged in 1978 by the Minister for the Capital Territory. However, Hall residents were by this time already seeking indoor toilets as an extension to the Community Centre.

After Hall School closed in 2006, the Government offered support for other facilities. The VHDPA advised that Hall already had a community hall, its pavilion, although it needed improvements. A major upgrade of the pavilion's interior was put to tender in late 2008 and plans were prepared the following year. They included a gas line for new heaters, removal of asbestos linings, provision of new toilets and bathroom fixtures, as well as décor board ceilings and painting throughout. The kitchen area got a new vinyl flooring, new joinery and Laminex benches. This gave the building a cleaner and modern interior for use by the community, hirers and visitors.

The pavilion has continued one of its show-era activities by hosting the annual National Sheep Dog Trials. It is popular for community meetings, birthdays, indoor health activities, multicultural and religious events, indoor market stalls and weddings. Further painting, fitting a new oven and plumbing improvements were done in 2021 using proceeds of a Commonwealth Stronger Communities Grant awarded to the VHDPA by Fenner MP Dr Andrew Leigh.

Most importantly, the proceeds from hiring out the pavilion (held under a VHDPA licence from the ACT Government) allow the VHDPA to fund insurance, water, electricity, heating and minor maintenance of the pavilion. The proceeds contribute to funding expenses at the Hall Community Precinct, including the Hall Heritage Centre and the Hall Men's Shed. The volunteer work of the Hall Heritage Centre includes conservation of historical objects from the local region, annual heritage exhibitions and a history teaching program for local schools. Proceeds also cover power and water supply to users of the showground and football field, including the Hall Axemen's Club, Pony Club, Bushrangers Rugby Club and Collectors' Club, and provide support to events like street parties and voluntary environmental care. Hartley Hall Markets also benefit from the pavilion's upkeep by volunteers.

A Hall Pavilion Centenary is due in 2034 so, in the meantime, if you have any good stories of your own about the pavilion, we would love to see them in letters to the *Rural Fringe* or by email to: hallpavilion@gmail.com.



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'Is this on again next month?'

All is quiet on the Hall Heritage Centre grounds. The band has gone. The crowd has gone. The pergolas are down, the BBQ is gone, and the seats are packed away. There is a huge collective sigh of relief from all of the centre's volunteers. Another successful brass band concert! Hopefully some well-deserved funding will find its way into the centre's coffers.

Much to date has been written about the great 40 year history of the band, but this year also marks the 15th anniversary of the alliance between the Heritage Centre and the band. In 2009 the then Hall School Museum began an association with what was the Hall Village Brass Band and one that has provided 15 years of mutual benefit to both parties. A march up Victoria Street was held to celebrate the band's 25th birthday. 'Bring your chicken sandwich, a drink, a chair and your neighbours' the advertisement said.



Brass Band marching in 2010.

A Taste of Brass was advertised as a picnic concert in 2019. Just a song at Twilight was held in 2010 and 2011 and It takes two to Tango was the 12th annual free concert. In 2020 along came big, bad COVID and our first Brass on the Grass event. This had to be ticketed and set at a maximum of 200 attendees. COVID ensured a 10 month closure of the now Hall Heritage Centre. The Brass on the Grass event of March 2021 (another ticketed event) was very important to get the centre back up and running and to help provide some much needed funding.

The years 2022, 2023 and 2024 saw the concert settle into the pattern of October shows at lunchtime and continuing with the Brass on the Grass theme.

The 2024 event was different in two major aspects. It was the 40th anniversary of the band and the King of Bhutan was in town.

As they had done in celebration of their 25th anniversary, the band kindly agreed to again march up Victoria Street in celebration of their roots. What a wonderful spectacle that turned out to be again.

The King with 5,000 people attending caused some initial anxiety, however a couple of conversations with organisers and all went well. The King probably thought that the march up Victoria Street was for him. Boy, he does not know what he missed out on, by foregoing our afternoon of brass music.



What does it take to get the show on the road?

To ensure the smooth running of the event means months and months of planning. It begins about six months prior, with a meeting of a group of volunteers who were tapped on the shoulder (sorry, volunteered) to be part of an organising group. A meeting with a rep

by Olga Minion

brass band

from the band provides a date for the concert. Once a date is agreed, work then begins.

A flyer is developed, an ad in the Rural Fringe advises people to save the date (yes, I'm sure they all do), and advertising and marketing is begun. Will our wonderful sponsors support us again this year? What about our local business providing items for our raffles? Facebook gets a workout, as well as Instagram and a myriad of web sites and as many magazines, radios as we can get.



Closer to the date corflutes are made and distributed throughout the region. Much chagrin this year when we had to compete with hundreds of politicians faces. How dare the ACT Government hold an election at the same time as our concert!

Three weeks or so before the event, activities really start to ramp up. The grounds are mowed every week (can't have them looking like someone's back paddock we have been told). Weeds are pulled, hedges are cut, and everything is cleaned. Jobs are allocated, and members are asked to put their hands up for baking. (Ok, ok I only bake once a year but I will do it). Everything needs to have ingredients shown.

We are all like swans that look smooth on the top but under the water we are all paddling like mad.

The day of the event starts early – 7am and the site is a hive of activity. Pergolas are going up, tables are being set up, the band members are getting their gear out, and seats are being carried out.



Brass Band marching in 2024.

The volunteers in the kitchen are making hundreds of sandwiches and putting out the aforementioned cakes and slices. How much should we charge for these delicacies? Is \$5.00 too much? Yes/No? However, as ever, all is done and everything is ready on time.

In reflection, is all the hard work worth it? You only have to look out at the hundreds of people sitting in the spring sunshine and singing along and clapping to the band to give a loud and resounding YES. A big thank you to everyone who makes this event so great – band members, sponsors, Hall business people, attendees and of course the volunteers.

A shout out to the gentleman who told me how much he had enjoyed the event, and was it on again next month. Thank you very much for your compliments kind sir, but the volunteers legs are still tired from all of the paddling under water that they have done this year.

However, come back again next year.

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Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade

Volunteering for the Community by Shona Boyle

The fire season in the Southern Tablelands started on 1 October. We have been off to a busy start, with two grass fires and one motor vehicle accident in recent weeks. We have also completed one hazard reduction burn in our area and supported others in Yass and Jugiong.



The brigade continues to train regularly to ensure we are prepared to respond quickly and professionally when called upon. We are currently focussed on integrating our new Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus (CABA) capability. Wallaroo is one of two brigades in the Southern Tablelands Zone to be issued with CABA in recent months. We now have 11 members trained in the use of breathing apparatus and qualified to conduct interior structural firefighting. This is an important capability which will provide the brigade with more options – and greater respiratory protection – across a number of emergency scenarios.

Now the fire season has commenced, we recommend checking the fire danger ratings and considering local conditions before using any machinery or power tools, including to prepare your property for fire. Use of mowers and chainsaws can create sparks. Grass fires start quickly, can spread



rapidly, and have the same potential as bushfires to threaten homes, crops, livestock, and lives.

It has been our pleasure to engage with our Wallaroo and broader communities in a number of settings in 2024.

We hosted the 2024 Wallaroo Community Dinner, and worked closely with other local brigades to support the Murrumbateman Field Days. We have also spent some time fundraising at Bunnings Belconnen, as well as drilling some core skills with budding firefighters at the Father's Day and Get Ready Weekend events.

We are currently raising funds to upgrade the Wallaroo shed

to implement 'clean' and 'dirty' areas. As evidence grows regarding the negative health impacts of bushfire



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fire safety

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	tyndarah@bigpond.net.au
Yass Fire Control Centre:	02 6266 3100	southerntablelandzone@rfs.nsw.gov.au

smoke, we are planning to reduce contamination and exposure for brigade members, families and members of the community who visit our facilities. Our plans include showers and a laundry so our volunteers can de-contaminate at the station and don't take potential toxins back to their homes, and their families. Our proposed upgrades also include private changing spaces, designed to support the growth in the brigade's female membership. We consider these shed upgrades to be a critical part of our duty of care to our members, whose health and safety is our number one priority. The upgrades will continue to be the focus of our fundraising over the coming year.

Santa has asked to use our truck to visit local children from **3pm on Saturday 21 December**. Santa is determined to let you know he's coming so please don't be alarmed if you hear our sirens. Keep track of Santa on our Facebook page: **NSW RFS – Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade**.



It was our pleasure to brief the Hon. Bob Nanva MLC on our planned shed upgrades and new CABA capability recently.

We wish you all a safe and happy festive season.

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Wild about Hall: A selection of migrating birds

I started writing this article in the week the koels arrived back in Hall and started to call. Love them or hate them, they are a sign of warmer weather and will stay here throughout summer to breed (often laying their eggs in red wattlebird nests) and leave again in early autumn to move further north. They are not the first birds nor the only type of cuckoo to arrive in Hall in spring. Pallid, Fan-tailed, Brush and Shining Bronze Cuckoos have all arrived.



A Shining Bronze Cuckoo with iridescent green feathers on its back.

Like the cuckoos, several other birds migrate from the north during their breeding season. Some breed in Hall reserves and others may just be passing through to other areas.

Sacred Kingfishers can be seen in the wooded areas during spring and summer. They often nest in hollow branches in surprisingly small holes for a sizeable bird. Fortunately, we have many established old-growth trees around Hall that provide suitable nesting sites for kingfishers, parrots and other birds that use hollow branches to raise their offspring.



A sacred kingfisher that nests in our woodland areas.

There is also at least one pair of Gang-gangs nesting in Hall this year. These birds are now listed as endangered so it is good to see that the Hall reserves are providing appropriate habitat for nesting. Notably they require established trees (>200 years old) to nest.



A male Gang-gang Cockatoo emerging from a tree hollow.

Olive-backed Orioles have also returned and will stay around to breed. They make a 'traditional' nest in trees of bark strips, grass and twigs.



One of the more furtive birds in Hall woodland areas – the Olive-backed Oriole.

Rainbow Bee-eaters, also migrate from the north, from as far as Indonesia and New Guinea. However, they may just be passing through as they nest in sandy river banks and may not find suitable habitat here.

A Rainbow Bee-eater making a brief visit to Hall in spring.



Various types of honey eaters have different migration patterns. Yellow-faced, Brown-headed and White-eared Honeyeaters as well as Noisy Miners appear to be around Hall all year and are breeding residents, whereas other honeyeaters have stronger migration patterns. White-naped, White-plumed and Fuscous honeyeaters are more likely to be seen around Hall during autumn and winter.



One of the many White-naped Honeyeaters that could be seen last winter.



Fuscous Honeyeater.

Robins also have different migratory patterns. The Scarlet Robin (declared vulnerable in the ACT and NSW) is a common sight around Hall during winter and less so during the warmer months, often breeding at higher altitudes.



Scarlet Robins are a common sight in the cooler months.

Images and text by Anna Cowan



An uncommon visitor, a Rose Robin.

On the other hand, the Rose Robin is an uncommon summer migrant and could potentially breed in our woodlands.

The final birds that I want to mention are two of my favorites. The Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoo and the Dollarbird are both around Hall at the moment.

I think I like these particular birds because of their unusual and distinctive calls. This morning, just before finishing this article I saw a Dollarbird at a nesting hole, so I expect we will have a new generation in the coming weeks.

The iconic Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo.



Of course there are many more birds around Hall, too many to mention in a single article. If you would like a check-list or photo guide to some of the birds to be seen around Hall you can contact me at a.i.cowan@icloud.com



Dollarbird at a nesting hollow.



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12 ways to counteract stress

leading up to Christmas and beyond

The countdown to Christmas is on and stress levels are rising for many people. Completing work, shopping, planning and logistics for the Christmas deadline all adds to the 'to do' list and it feels like time moves faster. Or perhaps for others, there is a lot less hustle and bustle and a sense of loneliness creeps in.

Stress is a heightened state where the body prepares for potential danger. When we feel good about a situation or life, stress helps us to hone focus and prepare for opportunities. When we feel overwhelmed, angry, sad or fearful our distress shows up as irritability, poor sleep, worry, over reliance on alcohol, social media scrolling, social withdrawal, over-eating, under-eating, headaches, exhaustion and so on.

When stress is short lived, the adrenaline and cortisol in our bodies dissipates. When stressors continue and our body is in a prolonged heightened state it can lead to heart attacks, gut issues such as irritable bowel syndrome, high blood pressure, a lowered immune system, skin issues and more.

Below are 12 ways to reduce stress leading up to Christmas and beyond – in no particular order:

- 1 Be aware of what you take on. Some things are given a magical Christmas deadline simply because Christmas is a goal everyone understands. Sometimes people forget that the world will keep spinning after Christmas. If the task is non-Christmas related, can you extend the deadline to after Christmas?
- 2 You won't please everyone. In the pursuit of trying to please everyone, we may end up pleasing no one, not even ourselves. Your own needs are important and overriding them to please everyone else adds a burden to your stress levels. If there are competing social expectations, prioritise who and what are important for you and go from there.
- 3 No is a complete sentence, although 'No thank you.' is more polite. And pause before responding to anything that may prompt an outburst of too much honesty. A pause may be a second or two before responding immediately, or a day or more before responding to an email, invitation etc. A valid RSVP is 'Thank you for your invitation. I'm not available to attend. Have a lovely time.'
- 4 Limit spending time with 'friends' and relatives who are stressful to be around. If people suck your energy, it's time to limit being in their presence.
- 5 Laugh – put on a comedy movie or meet up with people who make you laugh. Streaming services have a plethora of comedy shows in their programs.
- 6 Exercise creates a release of endorphins. Walk, stretch, swim, do something to get your body moving.

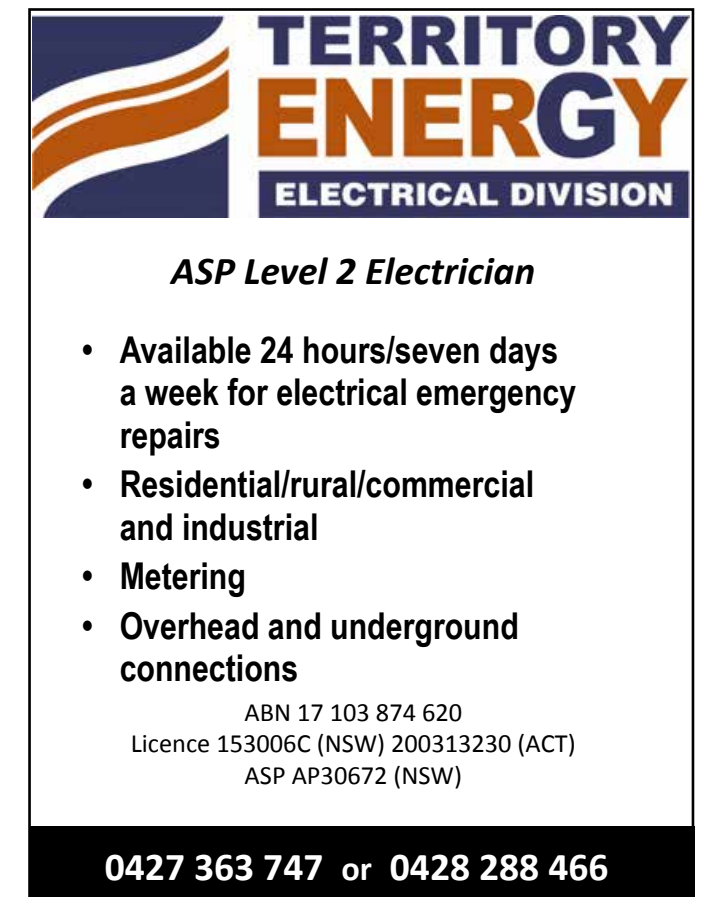
by **Robyn Monteleone**



- 7 Dance on your own or with someone else, put on some music and move your body.
- 8 Sing. Sing along to the radio, sing in the shower, join a choir, or just sing.
- 9 Reconnect with hobbies. What hobbies have you put aside because life got in the way?
- 10 Do some deep, slow belly breathing. Three to 10 deep, slow breaths will have you feeling more centred. Make a habit of incorporating deep breaths in your day and notice how good you feel.
- 11 Download – chat to a friend or write in a journal or talk to your animals. Get the thoughts out of your head one way or another.
- 12 Meditate or listen to a relaxation audio and allow yourself to have some stillness and reconnect with yourself.

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Happy, Happy Birthday Rural Fringe!

Thirty years – what an amazing achievement!

The *Rural Fringe* was carefully stewarded through its first 11 years by dedicated editors, beginning with founding editor Shaun Robson (who also designed the front page logo that is still used today), followed by a stint by Lee Corrigan and then Andrew Purdam, who, notably, held the post for 10 years. In 2005, Andrew put out the call for someone to take over the editing role and I was one of two people who put their hand up for the job. The other was Gail Condy who has continued to this very day doing an outstanding job of laying out the Fringe.

In October 2005 Gail and I edited our first edition together. I cut up and made a little paper copy for layout purposes. Gail was very kindly indulgent of my playing newspaper editor as we spent several (very enjoyable) hours moving ads and articles around by hand to get the 'balance' and look right. That first edition came in at 32 pages but they would get longer and at one point we had a bumper 48 pages.

It was so much fun editing the Fringe. I had lived in the village for about eight years when I became editor and it proved a wonderful way to meet my fellow community members. As editor, I wrote lots of new columns such as Hall's Hidden Treasures, where we featured local businesses like the newly started Robyn Rowe Chocolates – so new in fact Robyn was making her chocolates in her kitchen. She would later build her fabulous chocolaterie which is now operating as *Murrumbateman Chocolates*, but us locals still refer to it as *Robyn's*.

We also had columns like *Just Desserts* with the tagline help your neighbours enjoy their just desserts, *The Echidna* – a pointed, political punditry column written by someone who has gone on to have a stellar career advising various Prime Ministers and a food and cookbook review column where classics such as *Margarine Modelling* by Jean and George Hill were featured and, yes, that rooster on the cover is all made of margarine! I even got my brother who was living

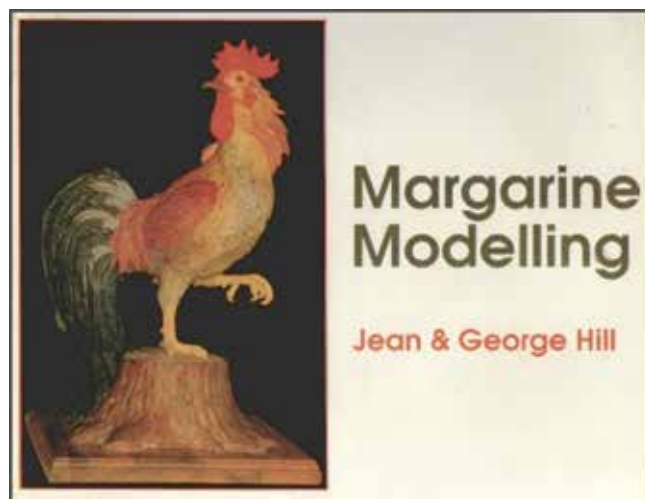
in Braunschweig, Germany to write a column; he had one about a local funeral parlour having a window display of funerary urns in the shape of the World Cup after Germany's big win in 2006!

But my all time favourite column was *Enough Lead*. The name was inspired by an interview show at the time called *Enough Rope* hosted by Andrew Denton. In *Enough Lead* we interviewed different animals of Hall and district, via their human companion. We sought their opinions of the big issues of the day; like what they thought of the scientific research that dogs had domesticated humans (and yes it is real research, check out this article in the *Conversation* theconversation.com/canine-and-able-how-dogs-made-us-human-7394), their advice on being a good neighbour, and suggestions for who else we should interview. We had some very opinionated, and decidedly, funny cats and dogs and even one cow and a kangaroo!

We also featured a Vox Pop on the cover of that first Fringe. Putting people's pictures and opinions on the front cover is a great way to get people involved, plus they share it with all their friends. It was the first of many times we asked Hall locals their opinions on hot topics. In 2007, we

asked people at the *Wood Duck* who would win the election, and I am pleased to say we were the first Australian publication to predict Kevin Rudd would win – although I should also add that, whilst this was the prediction, it was not one that many of the Wood Duckers were very happy about.

The most bittersweet Vox Pop was with the kids at Hall Primary talking about their heroes. One little boy said his hero was Sasha because she had long legs, could run very fast and was really good at rounding up sheep. On the day we distributed that edition of the Fringe, then Education Minister, now Chief Minister, Andrew Barr announced the closure of Hall Primary School – the second longest running school



in the ACT – and, as someone who had gone to a tiny three teacher school myself, I wondered how a little boy whose hero was his sheep dog would fare at K to Year 12 school with well over 1000 students.

A friend of mine once spotted someone reading the Fringe at the Canberra Hospital. She asked if the person lived in the village and they said: 'No, but my friend does and he always gives it to me. It's great, better than the *Canberra Times*!'

I also made some glorious mistakes. One of my favourites was when a photo was accidentally left out.



It was the *after* photo in the *Great Shave* fundraiser, and the space was left completely blank – making it look like Craig had had a very close shave indeed!



30 years

by **Rhiân Williams** *Rural Fringe* Editor 2005 – 2008

I loved my time as editor of the Fringe. It gave me the confidence that I could write to a deadline and be funny and tell stories that matter – things that were really important when I decided to try and write picture books. And thank you to the Fringe for always sharing my latest picture book news!

I also want to say thank you to all the editors who kept the Fringe, our treasured local publication, alive after I stepped down in 2008 and who kept, and keep on, telling the stories that matter to us as locals – Allyson Wedrat, Lee Corrigan again, Jo Hall (for 11 years) and now Jenny Whittaker (still with the amazing Gail as layout artist). Kevin Stone has provided excellent services in proofreading over many years and Andrew Purdam and Jo Hall remain on the sidelines as part of the Fringe support team.

Thank you, one and all, you have each done an amazing job and here's to you and to the next 30 years!

PS And something I hope my fellow editors will appreciate – my apologies for missing the deadline!



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50 years of Hall Polocrosse

It is with great sadness that I start this article on the 50 years of the Hall Polocrosse Club with the news of Norma Coulton's passing in September 2024. For those who have been following my articles, you may remember that Norma was the first Secretary of the Hall Polocrosse Club. The Coulton family were some of the original players/members and part of the formation of the Hall Polocrosse Club, as it is now. The Coulton family resided in Hall for many years, then moved to Murrumbateman prior to retiring to the South Coast. Our sincere condolences to all the Coulton families.

This will be my last article on the background of the 50 years of the Hall Polocrosse Club for the year. 'The Celebration' will be what the new articles will be based on in the *Rural Fringe* next year. In doing these articles I have had a fantastic opportunity to catch-up with a few of the 'originals' who instigated the forming of the Hall Polocrosse Club and it has been wonderful for them to share their knowledge, stories and memories; not just with me, but in turn, with you all.

It is fitting that I was able to catch up with was one of the members of the original players, Chris (and Lorraine) Coulton recently. Chris was one of the original members of the first team when Hall started to compete in polocrosse carnivals around the district in 1975. He remembered playing with Mick DeBritt, Colin and Dickie Reid, Allan Golding and Bob Boatwright, to name a few. His best memories of being part of the Hall Club back then were the club's atmosphere and the family unity, which made it a great club. Everyone enjoyed each other's company and just interacted and helped each other and did it well.



The original members for the first game ever played by Hall Polocrosse (not in any particular order) were Colin Reid, Bruce Reid, Dickie Reid, Mick DeBritt, Chris Coulton, Allan Golding and Tony Coulton.

The most memorable game for Chris was against Burradoo at Burradoo, playing against the likes of Graham Spackman (Spacky), Neville Gilpin, Peter Choice, Ken Gothan, Graham Bennett and one other. Chris said that Hall had never beaten them. Chris thinks the Hall Team consisted of himself, Gary Reid, Warren DeBritt, Lee Martel, Laurie DeBritt and one other. Chris thinks that Hall won and it was the best feeling because 'Spacky' congratulated them at the bar.

In another game they were playing against many of the same players (above) and these guys (the opponents), were actually coaching the Hall players as they were playing against them on the field. Chris said that they learnt so much just in

that one chukka. Keep in mind that the opposition was beating Hall by around 20 goals. This is a true example of the type of sportsmanship which is constantly displayed during the game of polocrosse!

Having met up with a few of the original founders of the club, there has been a funny story or two. The one that I'm going to share with you appears to have 'etched' itself in the memory of many of those who I have spoken with. This story even appears to have been a favourite for the person to whom it happened, and yes, I am retelling this with their permission. The story goes that Chris Coulton had a grey mare, 'Curlew', who wasn't performing as well as she could have. Colin Reid (Reidy) and Ray Hawke (Hawkey) were goal wavers during this particular game when

by **Vanessa Jones**

Colin suggested to Chris that he needed to use a set of 'hooks' (spurs). Chris replied with 'I don't have any'. Reidy said 'use mine' and threw his set at him. Chris strapped on the spurs, got back on the horse and proceeded to head up to the line out. Reidy said 'let the mare know that you have them on'. With that, Chris kicked up the mare to let her know that he had them on and without hesitation the grey mare took exception to that and proceeded to buck! Well . . . Chris ended up in the dirt and as he was getting up, he turned to both of them and just 'glared' at them. I'm not sure if he ever used spurs again on 'Curlew'.

In November, I also had the pleasure of spending a lovely couple of hours with Ray and Cathy Hawke. Ray commenced playing with the Hall Club in 1977 after calling in to watch a game at Hall. Reidy was chatting with him and asked him if he had a horse? Ray answered 'yes' (of course Ray had a horse!). Reidy said 'bring it down next weekend', which he did. That horse was 'Music'.

Cathy, like so many of the wives and mothers including Marie Reid, were actively involved with the canteen. Cathy and Marie used to have a bet between themselves to see if they could beat their previous year's profits from the canteen.

There have been many trips away, such as to Darwin and South Australia. There was so much travelling not just for games, every weekend, but also the Club Championships and the Nationals, all fantastic trips and great experiences for everyone. The trip to Darwin in 1985 was fantastic. The drive to Darwin took about

a week with the convoy of players and horses. Ray recalled that Julie Hawke was a baby, it was so hot, so into the esky she went to cool off.

I asked Ray what the funniest moment that he recalled and his answer was 'every weekend'!! He also said 'Chris Coulton's grey mare'. Ray retired from playing at the age of 62, when Sam Darmody brought his best horse 'Eddie' to represent NSW. It was like a 'State of Origin' – NSW v's QLD. Sam got the best #2 horse at this carnival.

In the later years, Ray played polocrosse with both his sons, Ben and Michael, a number of times. He said that his proudest moment was watching his boys play. Ray and Cathy's daughter, Julie also played. Again, you can see that this game is truly a family sport!

I hope that you have enjoyed reading these articles of some of the background of our own local Hall Polocrosse Club, as much as I have enjoyed writing them. It has been my absolute pleasure to listen to their stories, recollections and antics of the 50 years of their involvement with this wonderful club. Whilst doing these articles, we were fortunate enough to be 'gifted' from Kate King (thank you Kate) some very interesting articles and photos about the inception of polocrosse in Australia. These and other things will be on display at the celebration carnival next year.

I was also entrusted with two Hall trophies, which had been found through the reminiscing by some of these people. The Bruce Reid Cup – B Grade, Mixed Teams, Championship and a long lost (replaced) trophy for Hall Mobil Cup – Men's B Grade, Championship. Unfortunately, it is damaged, however, we are in the process of trying to repair it. There are many trophies and plates, along with many other interesting items all on display in the shed at the grounds, so come and have a look.

Now, everyone needs to get ready for the 50-year Celebrations which will be happening on your doorstep early next year, 2025. Come and support a local club!

In closing, hope that you and your families enjoy a Happy and safe Christmas and wish you all the very best for 2025.

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Free delivery for Hall residents

by Kevin Stone

I must admit I haven't been to the Hall Men's Shed for a number of weeks, but taking the opportunity of using a lot of information from regular emails to members by our very popular and highly efficient Foreman Doug Anstess, I somehow managed to piece together the October Fringe update. So thank you Doug. (I kept my by-line on the article just in case there were mistakes. Hopefully there were none, or at least none found!)

But now I'm back 'on deck', and the first place I went into was the main area where all the work gets done. And there was a lot happening with a number of machines buzzing away and some of the fellas doing the same. Heads down and concentrating and making sure that safety was a priority, so no time to chat. My only concern was I might be given a job, but I think they all know my capabilities, so I was left alone! Phew!

And it couldn't come at a better time to be back, because I joined almost 40 members and very welcome women from the Heritage Centre for our monthly barbeque. Now I'm not particularly fond of meat, in fact I remember years ago driving my younger grandson home, seeing some cows in a paddock and saying, 'none of those animals will be killed for me' or something similar. He replied, quick as a flash, 'Yeah, but a lot of chickens will be'.

But not eating what clearly looked like well-cooked snags and rissoles wasn't a problem, because there was a wide selection of salads, all delicious and once again courtesy of Garth Chamberlain and his willing helpers. There's no doubt about it, everyone certainly gets their money's worth and there were plenty of smiles and chatter to be seen and heard.

As always, many thanks go to everyone involved in getting the goodies, including resident chef Eric Detheridge and Sonny Pirotta, because our other normal chef Rob Durie was away, plus others involved in clearing away and cleaning up who all ensured the barby was another great success. Rob is the silent strength in our shed and was very disappointed he couldn't attend on the day but I'm

sure he would have been happy that Sonny was there to lend his support and add his Maltese influence.

We're getting quite good at putting on barbies. In fact, very good, along with the shed's reputation of a positive and friendly place to gather, so much so that our membership continues to steadily increase, with another new one recently signing on the dotted line.

Not only that, but some members of the Weston Creek Men's Shed made the trek and came for morning tea and also took the opportunity to call into the Heritage Centre. They were really impressed with our shed and all the wonderful items and information on display at the centre. Thanks go to the centre's volunteers who showed their enthusiasm and willingness to help make the overall visit so successful. We're looking forward to going to the Weston Creek shed next year to continue our relationship.

Is it just about Christmas already?

It must be soon, because the very successful men's shed Christmas Party was held on 5 December, with around 80 people attending. That's a lot of pudding! We all had a great time, with everyone being well fed and plenty of chatting. There were a few short speeches, which were well received, so overall, a great way to ease into the festive spirit.

Whatever you're doing during the festive season, best wishes for a very safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year.

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Rebecca Morrison President

Celebrating 85 years



On 7 December 1939, Thomas McAuliffe posted in the Yass *Tribune-Courier* calling for a meeting of all landholders in the vicinity of Nanima, Tallagandra and Wattle Park to form a bushfire brigade.

From those humble beginnings, Springfield has continued to grow and serve its community. On 1 December, the brigade came together to celebrate its achievements, recognise the long service of its members and share the stories of those both here and passed.

Our celebration also saw the launch of *Through the Flames* – a publication documenting a brief history of Springfield; capturing many accounts of those who have served as firefighters since those early days.

Over 85 years, our Brigade has evolved from a small group of local landholders, willing to fight fire with little more than buckets of water, wet jute bags and fire beaters into a modern well-equipped modern rural fire brigade.

We are honoured to share these stories and so very thankful for all those who contributed. A special thank you to Anne Ehsman and Marion Robinson who worked tirelessly to produce this special publication. It is a wonderful legacy that we are pleased to be able to share with the community.

Long Service Recognition

Another special part of our 85th celebration was the awarding of Long-Service Awards on behalf of the NSW RFS Commissioner. Congratulations to the following members for their dedication and commitment:

50 years service	
Geoffrey Larkham	Douglas Southwell
40 years service	
Terry Birtles	Greg Martin
30 years service	
David Lomas	Jeffrey Tarlinton
James Lomas	Rodney Tarlinton
Linda Lomas	Ted Tarlinton
Marty Lomas	Mark Thornthwaite
Thomas Morrison	John Whitmore
Donald Tarlinton	

The Rex Connor Fire Shed

Our Patemans Lane Fire Shed is housed on land provided to us by the Connor Family. To honour his role as a long serving Captain of the brigade, together with his families ongoing support and involvement, we were pleased to officially name our base as the Rex Connor Fire Shed at our celebration. Rex's children, Simon and Meagan were present for the unveiling of a plaque and new signage.

Thank you and back to business

I just want to take this time to give a special thanks to the committee who organised our celebration. They took a spark of an idea and grew it into an extraordinary collection of stories and opportunities to pay tribute to the hard work and dedication of the volunteers who have been, and continue to be, Springfield Brigade.

A reminder, that we are in the Fire Danger Season so we all have responsibilities to prepare our families and our properties for the possibility of fires.


The grasses are long and the winds hot and strong. If you are yet to plan what you will do in the event of a fire, now is the time to visit the NSW RFS website rfs.nsw.gov.au/prepare

springfieldrfb@hotmail.com



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Hi folks,
I am sure by now Hall residents would be aware that we are a bee friendly village, except if you're a bee it seems. A large number of the Hall Honeys (bee keepers) unfortunately have lost their hives over this last year.

If folks are not aware, a mature hive will contain up to 60,000 bees, when you think about it, that's a lot of bees to lose. From our expert advice, it is indicated that they are being killed by toxic chemical spraying. Unfortunately, all herbicides and pesticides are fatal to bees, no matter what the product you are buying states.

We all know that our bees worldwide are in jeopardy. Our pollinators are vital for our flora, and we need to provide a safe planet on which they can survive, by protecting and maintaining our eco systems, which we and our future generations are dependent on.

In response to our collected data all residents must exercise extreme caution, whenever we have to resort to spraying anything. We all should be aware that spraying poison in our gardens will kill a lot of other insects as well, which are beneficial to our environment.

By the way when we talk about pollinators, we are not just talking about honey bees that are affected. All native bees, wasps and lots of flies, which are all great pollinators, are meeting the same fate caused by chemical toxic spraying.

Please heed our request and take extra care when using any chemicals in your garden.

Bob Richardson.
Anne O'Connor.



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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

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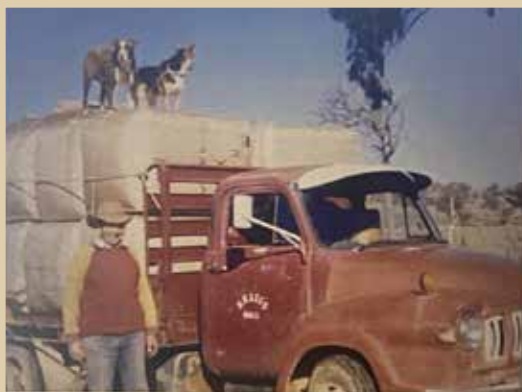
by Jack McGrath



Joan Elizabeth Lees
15 August 1937 – 22 March 2024



Ronnie Keith Lees
5 June 1933 – 19 August 2024



In 1991 we moved into Springrange and made contact soon after with Ron and Betty. I had a special connection with Ronnie and held him in high regard as a neighbour, friend and father figure. We were neighbours for 31 years. Both Ron and Betty came to my 40th and 70th birthday parties and I had the pleasure of attending his 80th and 90th birthdays

Ronnie was a true gentleman and never had a bad word for anyone. He was devoted to the love of his life, Betty and she was a wonderful person who loved her life with Ronnie, and her garden. They would take rural drives together, often visiting Gundaroo and Yass. Although Ron was 20 years older than me, I always hoped that I would be as good in the future.

Once I retired, I managed to see more of Ronnie and Betty and had many afternoon cuppa and catch ups and the odd game of cards which Ronnie really enjoyed. When I was working late at night, on my way home I would look at Ronnie's house and would see Terry, his brother, and Terry's wife on a Friday night playing cards after midnight. Every time I drove past, I would check on them. Even now I still do and although they aren't there, I do look and reflect.

When Betty's health start to fail Ron cared for her day and night, providing company and the support that she deserved up until the day she departed. I believe that Ronnie and Betty had lived through the best times and I hope that the future for their families is as good as their life.