

# RURAL FRINGE

*Journal of the Hall district*



VOLUME 32 ISSUE 4

August 2025

## Hall Village stormwater infrastructure

by Robert Yallop

In late June, every household in Hall Village received a flyer from Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) announcing a community 'pop-up' at the Hall Pavilion on Wednesday 13 August from 4:00- 6:30pm to meet with and ask any questions of the project team working on the preliminary design of stormwater infrastructure for Hall Village.

People have asked a number of questions about what will be done on the stormwater infrastructure and what we can expect in the 'pop-up'. First, some background.

In January 2022, a particularly heavy deluge resulted in water flowing into a number of properties, especially around Cricketers' Lane, Saddler's Lane and elsewhere in Hall. The Progress Association Committee contacted the then Minister for City Services, Chris Steel, to request urgent attention to arrange for the relevant ACT Government authority to work with the Progress Association on the assessment, design and completion of appropriate works on stormwater infrastructure in Hall Village.

### History of infrastructure in Hall Village

Hall Village was established in 1882, 29 years prior to the creation of the Federal Capital Territory, and has evolved organically over the last 140 years with basic infrastructure lagging significantly behind development of the rest of the ACT.

The electricity supply was connected to Hall Village in 1948, 33 years after the establishment of Kingston Power Station supplying electricity to Canberra.

Only in 1967, a reticulated water supply was established in Hall Village with all existing houses connected to the ACT water supply. Prior to 1967, houses in Hall Village relied on rainwater tank collection and three wells located near Halls Creek. Nevertheless, Hall Village still had no sewerage system with every individual house relying on their own

septic tank. Eleven years after the establishment of the reticulated water supply, a sewerage system linked to the Canberra network was brought into service in Hall in 1978.

Even with a reticulated water supply and a sewerage system installed in Hall Village, nothing was done to establish a stormwater drainage system within the community.

During the sealing of all streets in Hall Village, and some curbing and guttering, completed in the early 1990s, a predominantly underground, piped drainage system was established servicing some 55% of the village (as per the map). There are also a number of grass verges, swales and open drainage

ditches that form part of the stormwater drainage system, although many have become blocked and fallen into disrepair. This limited infrastructure is not adequate for the needs of Hall Village.

In 2017, the Village of Hall and District Progress Association raised the concern of stormwater drainage and laneway destruction with the ACT Government in a submission to *Better Suburbs*. Numerous requests have been made by Hall residents for action on stormwater drainage over many years, including through the *Fix-My-Street* platform.



... continues on page 5

Come and join your Hall Village neighbours at a Spring working bee on the Hall Reserve, Victoria St opposite old Hall School.

**Sunday 21 September**  
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## St Michael & All Angels Anglican Church

Corner Victoria and Loftus Streets, Hall

by **Beryl Pedvin**



We are very excited to announce that the Hall Village Christmas Fair and Street Party has partnered with Hope-Ginninderra Anglican Parish, to deliver the annual village Christmas Fair for 2025. Most of the organisation and planning will be in the capable hands of Zina Richardson, who will again direct and coordinate the event, but parish members are very happy to be part of the organisation and funding of the fair, and to lend a hand on the day.

Part of the set up for the fair each year has been the placement of a star which glows each evening in the trees in front of St Michael's – a beacon to signal not only the approach of the fair, but the start of Advent and the journey to Christmas. We think this beautiful symbol of the hope which Christmas brings to us all is a fitting icon for the fair, for this community and for St Michael & All Angels' role at the hub of activities on 21 November.

The date of this year's event is:

**Friday 21 November 4:30-8:30pm**

In the meantime, all are welcome to join us at our regular services St Michael's each Sunday at 8am or 11am, or to join the 11am service via Zoom using Meeting ID and password **9551044551**.

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## Stormwater community 'pop-up'

**Wednesday 13 August**

**4.00 - 6.30 pm,**

pop in when you can.

### Hall Pavilion

TCCS will share information on the proposed design of stormwater infrastructure to address the requirements of Hall Village.



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# Consultation on the future of Hall Cemetery

by Anna Cowan and Jo Hall

Hall Cemetery on Wallaroo Road is valued by many residents of Hall and District as a special and meditative place to remember loved friends and family members. With all currently available plots already utilised or reserved, the cemetery is at capacity for burials and two options are being considered by the ACT Government: to either close the bush cemetery to future interments or to expand it into adjacent land. The relevant ACT Government Minister (Tara Cheyne, MLA) is supportive of expansion but requires community consultation before a decision is made.

On 25 June, a meeting was held in Hall Pavillion with Kerry McMurray CEO and Neil Guthrie, Chair of the Board of Canberra Memorial Parks (the public facing name of the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority) and several local residents to discuss the future of the Hall Cemetery. It was explained that the authority



had undertaken preliminary environmental impact assessments and that it was believed the only feasible option for expansion would be into the area currently under private lease (and where *Farmer Brown's Free Range Eggs* is located) to the east of the current cemetery boundary. This is because there is an Environmental Management Plan that regulates the cemetery and surrounds to manage the survival of the endangered Tarengo Leek Orchid (this is the only place in the ACT that you can find the endangered Leek Orchid), and of remnant Yellow Box Red Gum woodland and Natural Temperate Grassland. It was also noted that the area currently under private lease was designated for the Hall Cemetery expansion in the 2002 Village of Hall Master Plan.

The expansion would be approximately one hectare (of the 17) under private lease, but *Farmer Brown's Free Range Eggs* owner Greg Palethorpe explained at the meeting how it would significantly impact his business.

Meeting attendees were informed that, as with all ACT cemeteries, an expanded Hall Cemetery would be available for anyone to reserve one of the potential 300 new plots (this number was only an estimate until more detailed planning), not just Hall and District residents.

Various views were expressed by attendees at the meeting, both for and against the expansion. It was pointed out that it would be appropriate to seek broader consultation as only a small proportion of Hall and District residents were in attendance and the authority intends to take advantage of a future edition of the *Rural Fringe* to conduct a brief survey.

Meeting attendees were informed that, as with all ACT cemeteries, an expanded Hall Cemetery would be available for anyone to reserve one of the potential 300 new plots (this number was only an estimate until more detailed planning), not just Hall and District residents.





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# Hall Village stormwater infrastructure

... continued from page 1

by Robert Yallop

## What has happened since 2022

After contacting Minister Steel in January 2022, in April, the Minister replied that it was decided that the best way to resolve the drainage issues was to regrade the unsealed lanes. The Progress Association made it clear that the proposed response by the Minister was inadequate and would not address the fundamental problems and, together with Yerrabi MLAs Leanne Castley and James Milligan, the Progress Association intensified its advocacy with the ACT Government, including by engaging print, radio and television media. In response to this advocacy, in July 2022, the Progress Association was advised by Minister Steel that TCCS was engaging a consultant to undertake detailed analysis and provide mitigation options to improve stormwater drainage in Hall, including the total topography, water movement and existing infrastructure as well as the lane ways. This initial analysis was completed in early 2024, almost two years after being committed.

Following a Budget submission by the Progress Association, the ACT Government Budget for FY 2023-2024 included funding for detailed design for stormwater improvements in Hall Village on the basis of a matching contribution from the Commonwealth Government through its Disaster Ready Fund. In a meeting with newly appointed Minister for City Services, Tara Cheyne, in July 2024, the Progress Association was informed that the contract would soon be signed for the detailed design work for stormwater infrastructure in Hall Village. If you were anywhere in Hall in November 2024, you would have seen surveyors and other technical staff working towards the detailed design for stormwater infrastructure as they looked at existing drainage, where drains have become clogged and filled in over time, where pipes and other infrastructure may no longer be adequate for the demand and also surveying the swales and other diversions from One Tree Hill trailhead and the Horse Paddocks that significantly contribute to the stormwater issues within the village.

In the 'pop-up' on Wednesday 13 August, TCCS will share information on the proposed design of stormwater infrastructure to address the requirements of Hall Village. The 'pop-up' is not a single community meeting but will be an ongoing drop-in opportunity between 4.00-6.30pm to view the proposed design, ask questions of TCCS and provide comment and suggestions.



## Frequently asked questions

*Will the work on stormwater infrastructure include dealing with water coming from One Tree Hill trailhead and the Horse Paddocks that runs through the village?*

The consultants have studied the water flows from One Tree Hill trailhead and the Horse Paddocks and how that affects the village and are potentially including measures to divert water from flowing into the village.

*Will the work on stormwater infrastructure include clearing, unclogging and reinstating existing drainage infrastructure such as along parts of Victoria St, Loftus St and Palmer St?*

The consultants have surveyed the existing stormwater infrastructure and have identified where it has become clogged and will seek to reinstate existing drainage infrastructure where required.

*Will the proposed stormwater infrastructure take into account the increased volumes of stormwater as a result of more intense storm events as well as the increase of roof areas and non-porous surfaces of extended and new residences in Hall?*

The consultants have looked at the changing nature of rainfall as well as the development of residential properties in Hall and are considering what will be required for future demand.

*Will the proposed stormwater infrastructure address the unchecked flow of water that has resulted in inundation of some houses, particularly around Cricketers' Lane, Saddler's Lane and elsewhere in Hall?*

As one of the critical issues highlighted by the Progress Association to the Minister in January 2022, the association has continued to emphasise to the project team the importance of preventing inundation of properties.

*Will the proposed stormwater infrastructure establish stormwater 'tie-ins' for houses in Hall Village?*

It is not anticipated that residential 'tie-ins' will form part of the stormwater infrastructure.

The Progress Association has continually emphasised to the ACT Government that it is essential there is full information and consultation with Hall residents, businesses and stakeholders in the development of the required stormwater infrastructure. The 'pop-up' on Wednesday 13 August is the time when you can raise all the questions and concerns that you have directly with the ACT Government project team. I hope to see you there.



In a recent *Canberra Times* article, I read about the increased number of kangaroos in the ACT and their greater presence in the suburbs of Canberra seeking food and water following the last few dry months. While we are very familiar with kangaroos around Hall Village and the District, on my early morning walk around Hall Village I have come across increasing numbers of kangaroos of all ages and sizes visiting deep into the village, presumably in search of food and water. Like the farmers, orchardists, viticulturists and gardeners of our village and district, I imagine that the kangaroos welcome the recent rain.



Dennis Greenwood, Emma Bell, Melissa Reynolds, Garth Chamberlain, Rod Roberts.

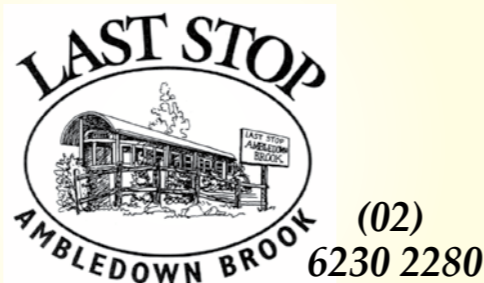
In late June, I attended the Rotary Club of Hall Change-Over dinner as the baton is passed from the outgoing to the incoming President and Board. It was very pleasing to see the Rotary Community Service Awards recognising the contributions of Garth Chamberlain, Dennis

Greenwood, Melissa Reynolds, Rod Roberts and Emma Bell. Congratulations to Dennis, Garth, Melissa, Rod and Emma for very deserving recognition.

**Hall Cemetery**

As mentioned in the last edition of the *Rural Fringe*, the Chief Executive of Canberra Memorial Parks Authority (Kerry McMurray) and the Chair of the Board (Neil Guthrie) presented options for the future of Hall Cemetery to a community meeting of around 30 people at the Hall Pavilion on 25 June. Kerry and Neil advised those present at the meeting that there are no more burial plots available in Hall Cemetery and only 32 ash interment plots available. Therefore, the authority is considering two options for Hall Cemetery: closure of Hall Cemetery for any further purchase of burial plots or expand Hall Cemetery onto adjoining land. Kerry McMurray committed to including further information on the Hall Cemetery

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options in a future edition of the *Rural Fringe* as well as access to a survey where residents can provide their views to the authority on the future of Hall Cemetery.

**Paved path between Hall Village and Clarrie Hermes Drive**

After some two years of work by the Progress Association, in March the ACT Government announced joint funding with the Commonwealth of what the ACT Government has named the 'Hall Village Main Route' and again a pre-budget announcement by ACT Treasurer Chris Steel in early June of 'a new walking and cycling path along Victoria Street in Hall'. The Progress Association is eagerly awaiting further news of the proposed route and nature of the path.



We have previously agreed that the ACT Government will present the proposed route and nature of the path to a meeting of Hall residents, businesses and other stakeholders.

**Walleroo Solar Installation**

Interested residents will recall that the Land and Environment Court has listed the appeal against the approval of the Wallaroo Solar Installation for hearing from 1-4 September 2025. The appeal hearing will commence at Wallaroo at 10:30am on 1 September with the precise location to be advised by the court at a later date. All information is available at the NSW Independent Planning Commission's website [www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/cases/2024/06/walleroo-solar-farm](http://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/cases/2024/06/walleroo-solar-farm).

**Stormwater infrastructure**

Following more than three years of advocacy by the Progress Association, assisted by Yerrabi MLAs Leanne Castley and James Milligan, to establish stormwater drainage infrastructure, in late June, every household in Hall Village received a flyer from Transport Canberra and City Services announcing a community 'pop-up' at the Hall Pavilion on Wednesday 13 August from 4:00-6:30pm to meet with and ask any questions of the project team working on the preliminary design of stormwater

infrastructure for Hall Village. All residents, businesses and other stakeholders are encouraged to drop by the 'pop-up'. This edition of the *Rural Fringe* has a separate item about the stormwater infrastructure in Hall Village.

**Hall Reserve**

Since 2022 the Progress Association has organised a number of community working bees towards improving the amenity of the Hall Reserve. To date, four beds of shrubs have been developed under established clumps of trees to suppress grass and weeds where mowers cannot reach and provide understory and habitat for small creatures.

On **Sunday 21 September** from **10am-1pm**, the Progress Association will arrange another community working bee. We hope to plant a fifth bed of shrubs nearer to Loftus St as well as weed the existing beds as needed and mulch plantings before the summer.

While contributing to the enhancement of our village environment, these community working bees are a great opportunity to work beside our neighbours and meet others in our community.

The Progress Association Committee generally meets each month. If you have any ideas or concerns for our Hall Village and District community, please talk to me or any member of your Progress Association Committee or email [info@hall.act.au](mailto:info@hall.act.au).



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## A rammed earth house in Hall Village

Interview with **Greg Palethorpe**, by **Jo Hall**

Many of you will have seen the structure emerging at 7 Gladstone Street or noticed owner-builder Greg Palethorpe at work on the site in all weather conditions. My curiosity overcame me and Greg kindly agreed to be interviewed exclusively for the *Rural Fringe*.

### What made you want to build a rammed earth house?

Primarily I was after a solar passive house. I was looking at several building materials and I thought rammed earth would be out of my budget, but my brother constructs these walls in the USA and offered to teach me. As an owner-builder it has made it more affordable.

It is north facing and the walls are 45cm thick. We cut back from 60cm so the house fits within the footprint and boundary distances that are allowed in Hall village, but 45 cm is still very thick – it has 10cm of insulation in the middle and is reinforced with fibreglass.



↑ Greg with fibre glass reinforcing bar.

### What are the advantages over other materials?

Rammed earth walls add a lot of thermal mass to the house, stabilising its temperature and reducing outside noise. Our particular rammed earth (known as SIRE Wall) has insulation embedded throughout, so it is also a very good insulator. It will last for generations.

It also has a large capacity for absorbing and releasing moisture, meaning that it regulates humidity in the house and control any mould growth well. Our walls are high strength at 27 mega Pascals (a Besser block is typically 15 mega Pascals) and we selected a combination of material (road base, sand, cement and additive) that has a high amount of compaction. And overall I think they look really nice.

### I can confirm that – I love the colour and subtle layered sandstone look. How does it work – how do you put it together?

The combination of materials is mixed and poured into the wall's formwork (along with rigid foam insulation and reinforcing bars placed in the formwork). Then someone (me!) has to fit inside the formwork (not pleasant) and use a pneumatic rammer, powered by compressed air, to go over the wall and thoroughly ram.

We lay down a 20cm layer of uncompacted mix each time and ram it down to about 15cm in height. This ensures appropriate strength of the wall and gives it the sedimentary rock/sandstone type look.



↑ Inside the formwork: not for the faint hearted or claustrophobic.

All the plans must be thought through very well as all services must be placed in the wall at the time of ramming, and it is very difficult to make changes after the wall is constructed. There will be two gabled roofs and a small courtyard between the two wings of the house.



Work proceeding come hail or shine.

### It is an absolutely monumental effort of a project and I think it will be a fantastic addition to Hall. You should be extremely proud Greg. What has been the most difficult part of construction so far?

Building the walls has been a very large learning curve for me, having no prior construction experience, in fact doing the whole owner-builder thing has been a big learning curve. Luckily I have had good advice and support from family, neighbours and other Hall villagers who have construction experience.



← Greg in front of the peak wall of the master bedroom-to-be.

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## Narooma and beyond

A few weeks ago I 'escaped' the cold-ish Canberra weather and headed to the coast to soak up some sunshine. And yes, there was a noticeable difference in the temperatures, because sometimes I didn't need a jumper, or anything like that to keep me warm during the day.

I hadn't been to Narooma for quite a few years, so that seemed a good place to visit. Having decided to travel there the long way, I went down Brown Mountain and worked my way up the coast. And I'm glad I did, because the surrounding countryside was so green and lush.

Sciatica has somewhat held me back from driving far for the past couple of years, but I find doing a trip in stages is far better and gives a change to look around more while having a break. So that's what I did, first stop downtown Cooma. I found even though it was Thursday, there were plenty of locals and tourists in the main street, which is a reasonably good sign that people are out and, hopefully, spending money to boost the town's economy. I did my bit, having a very good coffee and cake. Ah, the things one does to help out!



From Cooma, I headed to Bega for another break from driving. And once again, it's a lovely place to enjoy stretching the bones and taking a walk around this picturesque town where there are a number of heritage buildings to see. So yes, once again, well worth the stopover even if it did take me longer to get to my final destination. But it's not always about the destination, because in my case the journey was well worthwhile.

by Kevin Stone

me the opportunity to see some brilliant sunsets, once again, highlighting the beauty of this part of our country. The club is also a great place to enjoy a drink of whatever you fancy and very tasty and well presented food.

Oh, the oysters! So fresh! So good! I definitely had my share, because the taste difference when they're fresh from the sea is wonderful. That's if you like oysters. Which I do!

... continues on page 22



Three-week old Holstein cows being bottle fed.

I wasn't completely sure what I going to do once I got to Narooma (typically of me not to have a great plan) but there's so much to do and see. The town is quite hilly, so that meant driving to the quite stunning beaches and I couldn't help but notice how blue the seawater is. My accommodation was very near the golf course at the top of the hill, which gave



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When I wrote an article on native bees in Hall one year ago, I was looking forward to finding more bee species. In discovering more bees, I extended my interest to other invertebrates that act as pollinators for both native and exotic plants.

The Hall list of native bee species has grown to over 30, some of these can be seen early in spring, others through summer, autumn and early winter. Each of them has flower types or colours that they prefer to pollinate. One of the first to appear in August/September are the Spring Bees (*Trichocolletes* species).



*Trichocolletes orientalis* can be found on flowering Happy Wanderer (*Hardenbergia violacea*).

In September the resin and leafcutter bees (*Megachile* species) start appearing on open daisy-like flowers including brachyscome, crowea, tea-trees as well as herbs (oregano, mint, basil) and exotic daisy species. They are more common on pink or white flowers but not exclusive to those.



*Megachile erythropyga* (the gang-gang of the bee world) on *Myoporum montanum*.

Leafcutter bees cut soft leaves to form their nests. I haven't seen any nests near where I have seen the bees themselves, but you can see that leafcutter bees have occupied some of the Bee Hotels located in the Hall Reserve.



*Megachile serricauda* cutting a piece of leaf from Vietnamese mint.

Bees can be seen throughout spring and summer. I saw many other species of bee visiting flowers in and around Hall. It made me think more about planting to have a continual source of flowers available throughout the year.



Not all bees are colourful. *Leioproctus tuberculatus* on a tea-tree in March.

Hairy flower wasps are also pollinators, some for example are important pollinators for native orchids. These wasps spend time on flowers, are hairy (rather than smooth like most wasps) and it is sometimes not clear to me what the difference is between a bee and a wasp. The distinction is often blurred but partially depends on the structure of the hairs and the shape of the body.



The Yellow Hairy Flower Wasp (*Radumeris tasmaniensis*).

Flies are also important pollinators both for native flowers and for some crops. Flies pollinate flowers as their hairy bodies can get covered in pollen as they move from flower to flower. Hoverflies, bee flies and some blow flies can be categorised as 'flower flies' that have a role in pollination.



A wasp mimic hoverfly (*Ceriana breviscapa*) visiting a tea-tree.

Butterflies and moths also pollinate many different types of flower. It is thought that moths and flies may be the pollinators for some wattle species where the exact pollinators are not known.



A butterfly, the Green Grass Dart (*Ocybadistes walkeri*) on a native geranium.



A Mistletoe Day Moth (*Comocrus behri*), one of many moth species that are active during the day.

Flower spiders are inadvertent pollinators. These live and hunt around flowers and transfer pollen as they are moving. In particular, jumping spiders and crab spiders are known to act as inadvertent pollinators.



The Spectacular Crab Spider (*Thomisus spectabilis*) on a daisy (*Golden Everlasting, Xerochrysum bracteatum*).

You might ask whether native pollinators only pollinate native plants, but they are not that discriminating. In spring and summer our herb garden was covered in native bees, flower wasps, moths and butterflies, and native bees could often be observed in the vegetable patch. Whether you have a native garden or not you can plant to attract pollinators.

A variety of flower shapes, pea-like as well as open daisy-like flowers, are important as well as planting in a range of colours as different pollinators have different preferences. I have seen native bees on flowers throughout the colour spectrum, and almost throughout the year (from August through to June), as long as something is flowering. The Aussie Bee website [www.aussiebee.com.au](http://www.aussiebee.com.au) as well as other websites have some information on making gardens native pollinator friendly.

There are also plants you should avoid because they become weedy, both in your garden and by invading the local bushland (ivy and Japanese honeysuckle are two of many examples). Some plants spread through seed dispersal via birds and other animals, others only become a problem if you physically move them to a natural area: grass clippings or other garden rubbish should not end up in one of the reserves. A good site to investigate as spring approaches is: [www.growmeinstead.com.au](http://www.growmeinstead.com.au), which lists the common invasive weed species and some appropriate alternatives.

# Who actually settled the limestone plains?

*Do you have an early local convict in your family?*

Many histories record that the Limestone Plains were settled in the 1820s by large landowners, including Joshua Moore at *Canberry*, Robert Campbell at *Pialligo*, John Palmer at *Jerrabomberra* and George Palmer at *Palmerville*.

However, it seems that most of these influential gentlemen rarely, if ever, visited these stations in the early years of development. In reality, this district was initially settled by teams of assigned convicts under the control of free overseers.

At the Hall Heritage Centre we are researching these early convicts. There are some records, but we would love to hear from anyone who has the story of a convict assigned to this district. We know of documented convicts like Mayo, Crinigan, Butler, Cavanagh and others, but any help to fill the gaps would be appreciated.

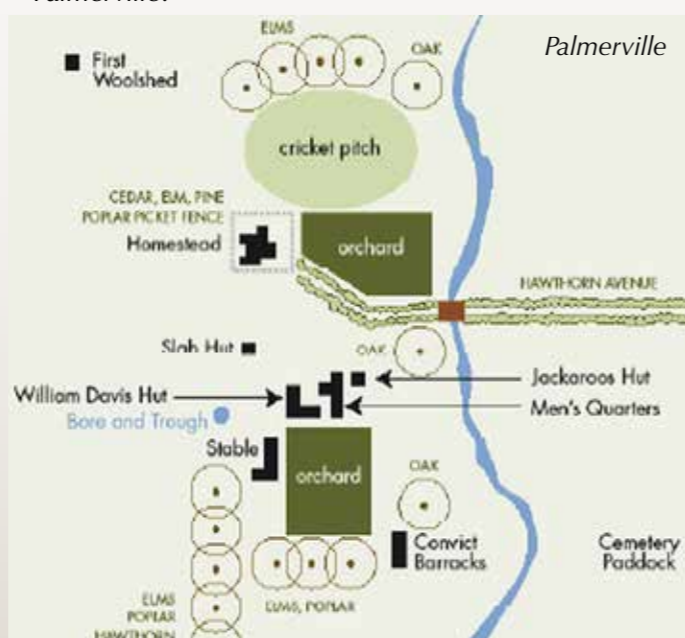
People of standing were granted land at the pleasure of the Governor, in recognition of service to the colony, as compensation for losses incurred, for military service or simply for their status, but the average person could not legally acquire land until the 1850s, by which time all the prime land on the waterways had been taken. Land owners could apply for convicts to be assigned to them as 'free' labour, which was of great financial benefit to them.

Around 1826, Overseer John McLaughlin and assigned convicts, James Clarke and John Tennant, were sent by Joshua Moore to drive a mob of cattle from Goulburn to claim *Canberry*, where they built basic huts, cleared land and established a Station.

James Ainslie and his assigned convicts drove a flock of 700 sheep from Bathurst and settled at *Pialligo* for Robert Campbell. Ainslie oversaw the building of Limestone Cottage, where he lived until he returned to Scotland around 1835.

Duncan McFarlane and a team of convicts were sent by George Palmer to claim land on Ginninderra Creek, which became *Palmerville* (now off Owen Dixon Drive, near Evatt). The 1828 census lists Overseer Duncan McFarlane and 14 convicts at *Palmerville* and John Palmer had seven convicts assigned to *Jerrabomberra*.

By 1829, G. T. Palmer claimed to be employing 43 convicts and 18 free men, who had erected four cottages, four barns, two granaries, stables, sheds, and convict barracks. He was soon formally granted 2,640 acres along Ginninderra Creek and the Queanbeyan to Yass Road. In 1841 there were still 21 convicts at *Palmerville*.



Convicts' sentences stipulated that they would work from sunrise to sunset, Monday to Saturday. They lived under strict rules, and punishment could include whipping, the wearing of leg-irons, solitary confinement or sentences to prisons such as Port Arthur or Norfolk Island.

They could earn a ticket of leave, conditional pardon or an absolute pardon, but were required to carry it at all times. Persons neglecting to produce their papers at time of muster would be returned to Government Service.

by Peter Browning

Rev John Dunmore Lang noted in 1837 that when a ship arrived, the government reserved as many convicts as required for public service and the rest were assigned.

One pound sterling was paid to the Government for each convict, for bedding and slop-clothing, which they carried with them. They were usually housed in barracks or huts formed of a split-timber and thatch.



Convict barracks Palmerville

They received no payment, but were given rations of ten and a half pounds of flour, seven pounds of beef or four and a half pounds of pork, with a certain proportion of tea, sugar, and tobacco, were distributed to each of them weekly; and they received shoes and slop-clothing either twice a year, or whenever they require them. They were allowed to cultivate pumpkins, potatoes, and other vegetables for themselves and a large fireplace was constructed at one end of the hut on which to cook their provisions.

The overseer rang a bell at day-break as a signal for the men to proceed to their labour. This may be a seasonal agricultural operation, or work such as ploughing, gardening, dairy or conducting cattle to pasture. The bell was rung at 8 o'clock for the men to assemble for breakfast, for which they are allowed one hour; they then laboured till 1 o'clock, when they had an hour for dinner, and then laboured from two till sunset.

Punishment was severe for apparently minor infractions:

- Henry Green failed to tie up a dog as instructed – disobedience – 25 lashes.
- William Dawkins lost a number of sheep – neglect – 50 lashes.
- William Sangster absconded for five months, then again in 1840. In 1838 he was sentenced to work in irons for 12 months, then in 1840 to 50 lashes for absconding.

However, things did not always go smoothly as convict Tennant absconded from *Canberry* in 1826 and became one of the first bushrangers in the district. Captured in 1828, Tennant, Ricks, Murphy and Cain were convicted to hang, but their sentences were commuted to seven years on Norfolk Island.

Bushrangers did not only come from the convict population, as the grandson of George Palmer also went rogue and was hung in Queensland for robbery and murder.

If you can help our research with stories of a local convict, please message [heritage@hall.act.au](mailto:heritage@hall.act.au)



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# Springfield Rural Fire Brigade

## Celebrating the Birtles family

In June, our brigade had the privilege of hosting a special afternoon tea to recognise the Birtles family as they prepare to move back into Canberra from Spring Range. This gathering was not only a chance to catch up over a cuppa but a meaningful moment to celebrate a family whose connection to the brigade spans three generations and nearly every form of contribution.

The Birtles family has been a cornerstone of our brigade's history. From serving as active firefighters to holding long-standing positions on the Executive

Committee, their involvement has been deep, generous and sustained. Perhaps most notably, it was their donation of land that gave us our home – the fire shed on Spring Range Road. At the June afternoon tea, that land was officially dedicated by Yass Valley Council Mayor Jasmin Jones, cementing the family's legacy in the most fitting of ways.

The RFS and the council formally acknowledged the family's contributions with the presentation of two framed awards. It was a proud and moving moment, shared with community members who know firsthand the importance of service, generosity and neighbourly spirit.

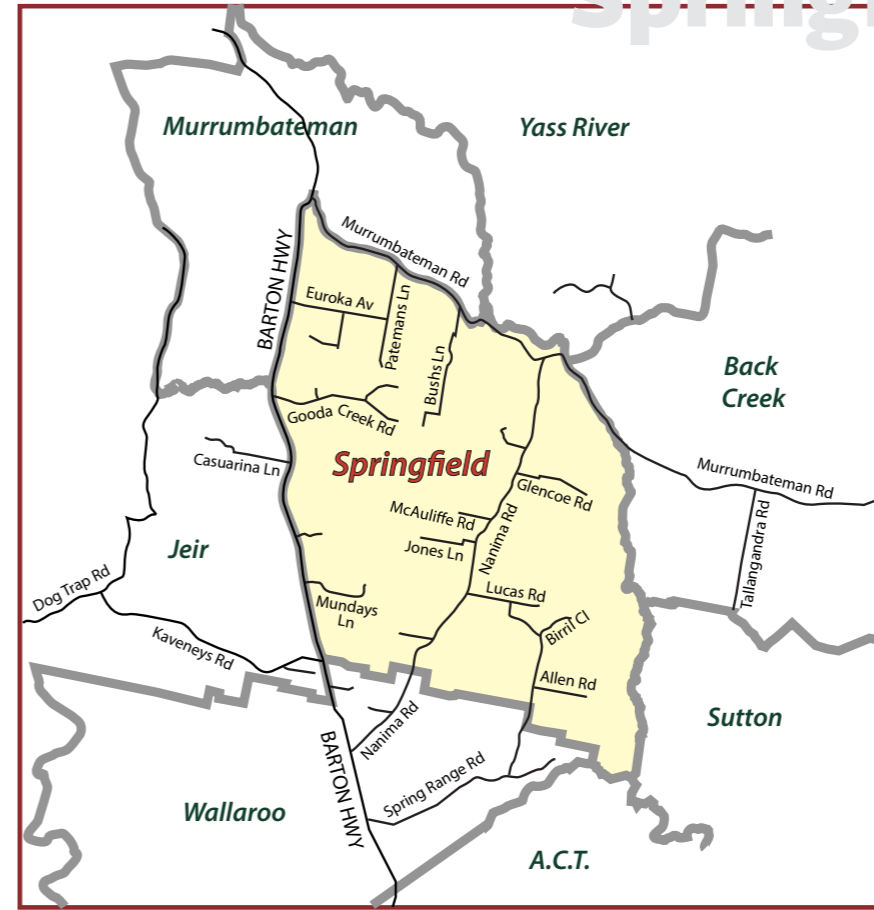


Rebecca Morrison President



## A place for everyone

Terry and Grace's family is a wonderful example of the intergenerational spirit that thrives in the RFS. Being part of your local brigade isn't just about fire response. It's about contributing to something meaningful alongside others – sometimes even across generations of the same family.



## Where is Springfield?

Springfield was named after one of the original land holdings in the district, from where Thomas McAuliffe held the first brigade meeting in 1939. Our brigade covers a unique stretch of the region. It runs from Spring Range Road, along the Barton Highway to Murrumbateman Road, and loops around through Nanima. It's not always easy to describe, so we've included a map to help show the area we serve – from Bluebell Lane to Allen Road, and everywhere in between.

Whether you've lived here for decades or just moved in, if you're within our boundary, this is your local brigade. And for many people, joining the RFS has been a way to connect with neighbours, learn new skills and feel more at home in the community.

We welcome new members of all ages and backgrounds. Whether you're looking to give back, make new connections or simply find your place in the community, there's a role for you here.

## Come and Try at Training

Training is held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm at the Patemans Lane Shed (155 Patemans Lane). It's a great chance to learn more, connect with the team and see what being part of the brigade involves.

If you'd like to get involved or have any questions, just get in touch. We'd love to hear from you.



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# Hall Men's Shed

by Doug Anstess

Greater gliders are three species of large gliding marsupials found in eastern Australia. Their population is decreasing and more of their habitat was destroyed during Australia's 2019-2020 bushfires. Hall Men's Shed and Yass Valley Men's Shed have been helping an ANU project with constructing insulated nesting boxes over the past few years.



The Hall Men's Shed now has another batch of 30 Greater Glider nesting boxes to construct for the ANU in tandem with Yass Valley Men's Shed.

The ANU delivered marine ply and insulation for us to cut so that we had all we needed to assemble them.

Yass took away enough cut-up material to make 15 boxes and we at Hall started to construct our 15. We had to re-learn how to put them together but after the first couple we got back into the groove.

Originally, we constructed 35 Greater Glider nesting boxes and then two years later, we made another 50. This lot of 15 makes a total of 100 nesting boxes for the ANU. Yass has made the same amount. Not only has the project been good for the shed members as many of them have contributed to the work, but it has also contributed to the shed coffers as the ANU has generously donated to the shed.



Ian McLaurie sanding the edges.

We have been very happy to have been able to contribute our talents to helping the ANU and the World Wildlife Fund provide much needed habitat for the endangered Greater Glider possums after their home forests were destroyed by the fires in early 2020 and more recently by logging.

Alan Boyd attaching the roof with Don Jackson assisting.



Alan Boyd attaching the roof with Don Jackson assisting.

Greater glider (*Petauroides volans*) in the Australian Capital Territory.  
by Third Silence Nature Photography  
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Graham Smith and Doug Anstess assembling a box.



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# Gardening in the winter

by Lisa Walmsley

Winter is my favourite time of the year to garden. I get it; most folk hate gardening in the cold and, funnily, I am often asked if it is a slow time.

It is not a down time, there is so much to do and so much that can be done when the garden is dormant.

A garden expresses itself fully when it has shut down for the season. You can see all its faults and its glory, what's working and what's not.

Finally with some much needed rain there are things you can do to help the rain soak in. When we have extended dry periods the soil can become water repellent (hydrophobic – when you water a plant and it all runs away without soaking in). You can rectify this quickly with a good wetting agent such as Seasol soil wetter, but in the long term add organic matter such as manure which conditions the soil, attracts worms and improves the water holding capacity of the soil. If you have heavy mulch or leaf matter, breaking that up to allow water penetration is beneficial.

With our winter rains, even with these huge frosts, we tend to get weeds. Stay in control of the weeds. Pulling them or chipping them when they are young is much easier and removing them before they set seed can reduce your weed population enormously.

Don't keep expecting that a struggling plant is going to rally – move it or remove it. There is not enough time in life to wait for an unhappy plant.

Your orchard and vegetable garden love winter attention. Fruit trees need pruning when dormant. If you haven't done it for a few years – go nuts – they love a brutal prune, and tend to fruit better.



Your vegetable garden should have all your brassicas growing well (cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, etc) but you can do a tidy up around them, enrich the soil with compost and well rotted manure, and start thinking about what you will plant next season. If you have any bare spots, then lettuce, spinach and Chinese vegetables grow well in the winter. It's always great to see what your nursery has available and to try something new.

Look at the shape of your trees and shrubs; take time to prune for structure, especially on young trees. Crossing branches, double leaders, dead/diseased wood are easy to see in deciduous trees and great to deal with when the tree is young.

Hydrangeas are pruned now. Cut out the old wood and prune back to the healthy fat leaf buds to guarantee a great display next summer.

Roses must be pruned in winter, usually July onwards, but any time you have time is better than not at all. Pick up any leaf and wood trimmings around the plants to protect

against fungal problems and apply a good seaweed product or manure to help the plant with drought tolerance, resistance to frost and attack from pests and diseases.

Planning something new is great at this time of the year. Are there any 'blank spaces'? A new design or a new theme? Do you need more shade, less shade, do you want more wild life and birds – which plants will do that?

Fix up paths or broken irrigation; get stuff done. Get enthusiastic with your ideas, then figure out how you are going to make it happen.



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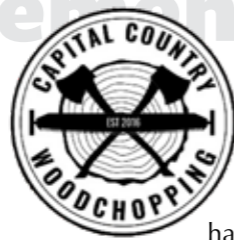
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# Capital Country Woodchopping



by **Steph Radovanovic**

Things have been quiet for the last two months with CCW. Our weekly training sessions for our members are continuing every Tuesday night from 4-6pm at our club grounds, and many of our crew are braving the cold each week to get a few practice cuts and saw's in. Our ability to source suitably sized training logs to cut still remains difficult, so please let us know if you have a tree being felled or if you are aware of any fallen trees in the district that fit the 275mm to 300mm (or larger) diameter that could be sized into 61mm length/s.

We now have available bags of dry kindling wood for sale through our friends at Canberra Stockfeeds at 1 Victoria St Hall. They are priced at \$15 a bag and are another great way for us to recycle and re-purpose our chopped wood, and support our local community.

We also still have our usual wood pile at our club grounds where the general public can, for a monetary donation, help themselves. Simply scan the QR code that is on the large sign beside the wood pile to access bank details to make a transfer. We are a non-for-profit organisation and any money we make goes directly back to the maintenance and upkeep of our equipment and grounds, so is greatly appreciated.



This is also a great time of the season to approach us for sponsorship packages. We have many options available and given that we are preparing for the largest and most widespread circuit of Woodchopping Competitions and Woodchopping Demonstrations that we have ever done, there has never been a more lucrative time to get on board! This coming season will provide excellent exposure and extensive geographical output to any potential sponsors that may be tempted to get on board for the 2025/2026 spring/summer CCW Competition and Demonstrations Woodchopping Calendar. Please contact Shaun O'Connor for further details.



Our club is continuing to grow in membership numbers, events we are attending, events we are placing at, and events that we are running, and we are extremely excited to be holding our first Championship event at one of our Woodchopping Competitions later in the year at Gerogery. We will be running the NSW Jill & Jill Underhand/Underhand Combination Championship, and the 300mm Underhand Championship. Very exciting times for CCW!

Our confirmed competitions that we will run are:

Hay Show	13 September (demonstration only)
Bungendore Show	26 October (demonstration only)
Queanbeyan Show	9 November (Full Competition)
Harden Show	15 November (Full Competition)
Gerogery Hotel	22 November (Full Competition and Championships)

Our CCW Supporters Packs are still available for purchase, as well as single, family and junior memberships within our club. Please feel free to reach out for more details if you're interested. The Supporter's Pack is proving popular for those who wish to support the club but do not wish to chop/train/compete, especially the partners and parents (and grandparents!) of our existing members.

Club contacts:

General enquiries/ Treasurer: Kylie Gillam  
**info@capitalchopping.com.au**  
 President: Chey Girvan  
**president@capitalchopping.com.au**  
 Vice President: Shaun O'Connor  
**info@capitalchopping.com.au 0427 363 747**  
 Secretary: Megan Keogh  
**secretary@capitalchopping.com.au**



Capital Country Woodchopping

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Our line of CCW merchandise is now available permanently for purchase, for our members, supporters and the public. There is a huge selection of singlets, long sleeve and short sleeve training shirts, polo's, hoodies, jackets, beanies and more. Check out the O'Neills Club Hub:

**www.oneills.com.au/en/shop-by-team/other/capital-country-woodchopping.html**

If you would like to know more about our membership options, supporter packs, sponsorship packs, or think you might like to come along and have a try, please reach out to the contacts provided.

We are still a very small club with some very big plans and appreciate all the support that the local Hall community gives us. We would love to hear from you if you, or your business may like to jump on board with us for the 2025/2026 season.

Email: **info@capitalchopping.com.au**

Facebook: **@Capital Country Woodchopping**

Instagram: **@capitalcountrywoodchopping**



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The beaches are also quite stunning, gentle waves and lovely soft, white sand, perfect for strolling along while taking in the beauty, sound of the waves and appreciating life in general.

Seal Rocks (appropriately named) is where seals can be seen lazily sunning themselves, close enough that you could almost touch them, which of course I didn't. What a life they have!

From Narooma it's a short drive to Bodalla, where I saw two three-week old Holstein cows being bottle fed. And who wouldn't take the opportunities to taste test the cheeses, ice cream (I had Hokey Pokey) and yoghurt from the dairy?! Yum!

Another short drive is to the National Trust-classified villages of Tilba Tilba and Central Tilba, where, once again, there's plenty to see, including some very good traditional and contemporary artwork and jewellery by resident artists. It's great to walk around the village, and naturally I felt obliged to try some of the fresh and tasty local produce!



Seal rocks

Next stop for a two-day stop was beautiful Bateman's Bay, somewhere many people from Canberra have visited over the years. But somehow I saw the bay through different eyes this time, again taking the time to appreciate the scenery and fresh seafood. Why is it that food tastes so much better when you're down the coast?! Maybe it's the 'holiday feel', but whatever it is, I made sure I ate some of the seafood. Well, maybe a bit more than 'some'.

But it wasn't only the food that attracted me, because there are two lookouts well worth visiting and I found walking along the marina while admiring the many boats both peaceful and relaxing.

So yes, my little sojourn down the coast was fantastic and I thoroughly enjoyed myself. Maybe put on a teeny bit of extra weight, but really, does that matter?! I think all the walking made up for it. That's my excuse for indulging in many of the delicious things during a week of pure pleasure.

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 (VHDPA) and distributed free to mailboxes of the 2618 postcode. It is also available online at [www.hall.act.au](http://www.hall.act.au) This publication is funded by the advertisements so readers are encouraged to support the businesses advertised.

**Contributions**

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to contribute to this publication, particularly local community groups, however it is at the discretion of the Editor as to whether submitted articles are published or not.

These deadlines ensure publication by the 10th of every second month.

- February issue deadline is 10 January
- April issue deadline is 10 March
- June issue deadline is 10 May
- August issue deadline is 10 July
- October issue deadline is 10 September
- December issue deadline is 10 November

It is the policy of the VHDPA that articles which are dominantly about the profit making activity of any group or individual can only be accepted for publication if the same issue carrying the article has a paying advertisement of similar size.

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