

RURAL FRINGE

Journal of the Hall district



VOLUME 23 ISSUE 1

February 2016

A long time ago in a small village...

It was a magical evening on Wednesday 9 December 2015 that saw the Christmas Nativity story come alive through the kids' acting and singing in the outside grounds of Wattle Park Uniting Church. A perfect sunset, and real cows grazing in the nearby paddock, provided the backdrop for this wonderful nativity play so delightfully presented by the church communities.

The authentic set was set provided by Les Beresford (who also supplied the two little live lambs), incorporating Wattle Park's animal silhouettes.

All the kids from St Michael's had parts in the play, including the cutest angels with sparkling halos, a few shepherds with their crooks, the 3 wise men, Mary, Joseph and of course, baby Jesus. Gorgeous costumes were lovingly made by Hayley Primrose from St Michael's, who also very generously let her 6 month old son, Tom, play the part of the baby Jesus. Tom took his role very seriously, and was the perfect baby Jesus, laying happily in his mother Mary's arms, until he wanted his real mummy back!

Sincere thanks to our wonderful hosts at Wattle Park, Pastor Bernie Rogers, and also the lovely Kay for providing a cuppa afterwards.

Look out for more combined church events in the coming year...it's wonderful to walk our faith journey together in this fabulous Hall community.

by **Angie Hazlehurst**



Christmas photo shoot at Hall Vet Surgery

Photos: Mam Wasana



Easter is coming!

While Easter is a little while off, the season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday 10 February. Lent is a season of reflection and preparation for the solemnity of Good Friday and the celebration of Easter Day. At St Michael's we will have a short service at **7 pm on Wednesday 10 February**

Many people know that Ash Wednesday is preceded by Pancake Tuesday – traditionally a time to use up those ingredients which won't be needed during Lent. We will have an informal Pancake supper at St Michael's at **6 pm on Tuesday 9 February.**

Easter services will include walking the Stations of the Cross with other church communities of Hall, on **Good Friday 25 March** (beginning at 11 am at the carpark at the Barton Highway/Victoria Street intersection north of Hall village), and **Easter Day 27 March at 11 am at St Michael's.**

Stations of the Cross, Hall, 2015



+++++

National Sheep Dog Trial Championships



Free entry during the week.
\$5 entry for adults on weekend.
Refreshments available on weekend.

Monday 14 March – Sunday 20 March
at the Hall Showground,
Gladstone Street, Hall



YASS JUNIOR RUGBY CLUB

IS INVITING PLAYERS FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON

With rugby debuting at the Olympics in 2016 and the Wallabies in great form at last year's World Cup, why not make this the year your family gives rugby a go!

Registration Day will be held on **13 February 2016 at Victoria Park in Yass, 9.00am to 12.00pm**



Registration includes the player's jersey to keep!

For more information about the Rams or playing rugby call: Greg Weller – YJRUC President, on 0438 846 752



Broadband for seniors
Free computer training for seniors



Training can include how to use a personal computer (PC), laptop, Android tablet (Samsung), iPad or smartphone. Learn how to send an email, attach photos and how to surf the internet. All training is on a 1:1 basis.

The Hall Kiosk is situated at the Hall School site, for further information and how to book a tutor contact Rod Roberts on 62302436.

Broadband for seniors is a Government funded initiative.

DARRALEE QUARRY



Darralee Quarry has recently been re-opened. It was one of the RTA's main sources of road base for many years.

Supply and/or delivery of Road Base to suit gravel roads

Contact Paul on (02) 4845 8288 or paulwyer@fertspread.com



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CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY
SUNDAY 6 MARCH 2016
 (It's that time of year again)

Site organised by Wallaroo Residents and the Wallaroo Rural Fire Brigade.

Meeting Point: Wallaroo Fire Shed
8.00 am - 12.00 pm Sunday 6 March 2016

Please register ahead of time at www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au (Join a Clean up site) or at the

Fire Shed on the day before you start collecting

Volunteers will be issued with rubbish & recycling bags, gloves and some sharps containers.

Further information: Judy Roberts at allwood3@hotmail.com
 Phone 6230 2436 or www.hall.act.au



The CBR 100 Challenge is back for it's second year on **5-6 March 2016**.

Teams of 3 and soloists will run or walk the 25km, 50km or 100km of Canberra's beautiful Centenary Trail - a chance to view Canberra from a completely different perspective.

Whether you exercise regularly, rarely, or not at all, the CBR 100 Challenge is your chance to get a team together and tackle a challenge that will help you get fitter, healthier, happier as well as fall further in love with our underrated city.

Registrations open 9 am Friday 2nd October 2015.

The checkpoint for the 100km event, and start for the 50 km event is in Hall.

Enquiries and registrations: call **6126 5900** or visit www.cbr100challenge.com.au



8th Annual Twilight Concert

Friends of the Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre will stage the

Annual Twilight Brass Band Concert

featuring All the Canberra Brass Band Ensembles including the newly formed 'Canberra Youth Brass'

On **Sunday 20 March 2016** from **5.00pm - 7.00 pm**

Hall Primary School Grounds
 Victoria Street, Hall

This event is generously sponsored by Barnett Lilley & Associates

Tell all your friends and neighbours Bring a rug or chair and a picnic and relax and listen to the music

There will also be refreshments available for purchase

(The School Museum and associated Exhibitions will be open prior to the concert)

.....
 A group of local artists featuring Helen White, Lyne Dingwall, Julie Hawkins and Meg Dingwall will be exhibiting their work at Shaw Vineyard during the Harvest Festival on 9 and 10 April 10am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday. Just pop out and say hello!



Saturday 12 March 9-11 am
Friends of Grasslands workparty
 at Hall Cemetery. www.fog.org.au



Grandfather's Holiday Fun

Grandfather's farm nestled on the banks of Cow Hollow Creek at a double bend, with two deep springs. Over his lifetime the springs never went dry.

He was a gentle, friendly and kindly man who loved life, children, horses and farming the land. To grandfather, school holidays were as special as they were to his grandchildren.

Up to eight grandchildren would spend the school holidays staying on the farm assisting with chores like milking, separating cream, gathering eggs, eating fabulous morning and afternoon teas and other fun things. We helped harness the great big draught horses for plowing or harvesting and wagon rides, or the trotter for sulky jaunts.

Two fruit orchards and an acre of prolific garden were some of grandfather's pride and joys.

His garden, watered by bucket from the spring, kept the farm and his grandchildren's families supplied with fresh seasonal vegetables and fruit. A treat I will never forget is his first fresh rock melon of the season nurtured for a hot summer day in January each year.

After assembling all we kids under a huge, shady elm tree at the back of the farmhouse grandfather would sit us all down on the exposed tree roots surrounding



a large granite flagstone on which he would place his prize rock melon. After counting the number of children he ceremoniously opened his pocketknife and sliced and handed each of us a piece of melon, which he had cooled, in the spring water beforehand. It was always so cool and tasty.

Grandfather's 1927 Dodge Brothers Six car also provided treats as we all stacked in for a business trip, saved for the holidays, to Queanbeyan or Yass. Queanbeyan was my special as we would lunch at Greenleights Café on a pie and peas, one of grandfather's favourite meals.

Sometimes we called in to Kingston on our way so all we kids could spend our pocket money at the old style Woolworths shop, where the counters were covered with bins of knick knacks costing only a few pennies.

Teaching us skills was another treat as we learnt how to plait rawhide, drink from a water bag without a mug while not spilling a drop, knotting and tying ropes, gardening, making, fixing, mending and many other lessons for life.

Like all we children, grandfather looked forward to the next school holidays as eagerly as we kids, as we waved to each other on leaving the farm.

Ernie the Echidna's mate



Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre An Exhibition : Rediscovering Ginninderra

This exhibition will draw on the Centre's extensive collection of material relating to Ginninderra's first century. The life and times of the pioneer farming community will be portrayed through stories and images relating to a limited number of carefully selected topics.

The Exhibition will be part of the annual Canberra & Region Heritage Festival, 2-18 April 2016. The support of the ACT Environment & Planning Directorate Heritage Grants Programme 2015-16 is gratefully acknowledged.

Entry is FREE. However, the Centre is run entirely by dedicated volunteers and donations are greatly encouraged and appreciated!.

Opening times

2-3 April ; 9-10 April ; 16-17 April: 10 am - 4.00 pm.
 Every Thursday morning 9.30am - 12.30pm. Hall Market Sundays, 10 am-3.00 pm.
 Group visits - by appointment email: museum@hall.act.au

General Information will be posted on the Museum's website: museum.hall.act.au and on Facebook : www.facebook.com by typing in Hall School Museum

Exhibition Coordinators:
 Alastair Crombie Ph. 6230 2977 or a.crombie@effect.net.au
 Tony Morris Ph: 6230 2317 or tonymargmorris@bigpond.com

CSIRO Ginninderra Field Station proposed development

The Ginninderra Field Station is 701 hectares of land in northern Canberra framed by the Barton Highway to the north, William Slim Drive to the east, Owen Dixon and Kuringa Drives to the south and the ACT/ NSW border to the west. CSIRO intends to vacate the land, which would then be available for potential urban development. As part of its focus on exploring the future possibilities for this site, CSIRO has requested the National Capital Authority to include the site as 'Urban Area' on the General Policy Plan for Metropolitan Canberra in the National Capital Plan draft Amendment. See ginninderraproject.com.au. For those interested in this discussion, we have reproduced here the Conservation Council's submission on the proposed changes to land use.



collective expertise and experience of our member groups and networks. We work collaboratively with Government, business and the community to achieve the highest quality environment for Canberra and its region.

The Conservation Council is active in a number of campaign areas. Our current focus includes:

- Biodiversity Conservation – protecting our unique ecological communities and the Bush Capital
- Climate Change – a regional, national and global challenge
- Planning – the right things in the right places
- Transport – connecting people and places
- Waste – being efficient through closed-loop systems
- Water – smart use of a scarce resource
- Governance – for a Smarter, Sustainable Canberra



The Conservation Council ACT Region welcomes the opportunity to comment on the National Capital Plan Proposed Changes as promulgated on the NCA website. We have already commented on the National Capital Plan Exposure Draft 2 and ask that these comments be taken into account.

With regard to the proposed changes we have particular concern with part 12 *Land use policy for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation*.

This is a proposal that the land use policy – 'General Policy Plan – Metropolitan Canberra' – for the CSIRO Ginninderra site (Blocks 1426, 1427, 1545, 1609 and 1603 Belconnen) be changed from 'Hills, Ridges and Buffer Spaces' to 'Urban Areas'.

It is not in the national interest, it is not in Canberra's interest, it is not in the environment's interest that this land use policy be changed as proposed.

The NCA's role includes: "Conservation and enhancement of the landscape features which give the National Capital its character and setting, and which contribute to the integration of natural and urban environments."

The transfer of the entirety of this area to 'future urban area' would be in breach of this conservation role of the NCA.

Comment on National Capital Plan Proposed Changes 2015

13 November 2015

If you have any queries regarding this submission please contact: Clare Henderson Executive Director on 62293202 or director@conservationcouncil.org.au.

The Conservation Council ACT region is the peak non-government environment organisation for the Canberra Region. We have been the community's voice for the environment in the Canberra region since 1979.

Our mission is to achieve an ecologically sustainable and zero net carbon society through advocacy, education, research and engagement with community, the private sector and with government.

We represent more than 40 member groups who in turn represent over 15,000 supporters. We harness the

Recommendation 1.

Land use policy for the CSIRO Ginninderra site (Blocks 1426, 1427, 1545, 1609 and 1603 Belconnen) **SHOULD NOT** be changed from 'Hills, Ridges and Buffer Spaces' to 'Urban Areas'.

The CSIRO has itself stated that "approximately 150 hectares of the land is unlikely to be developable due to its topography, heritage and ecological values, and will likely remain open space".

However, the CSIRO has not identified this area through its website, consultations or in response to questions from the Conservation Council and others. It is not appropriate to change this area to 'future urban area' and then to later go back to identify environmental values.

The CSIRO proposal should also take account of broader environmental factors including nearby areas especially with regard to ecological connectivity



including wildlife corridors and riparian areas along Ginninderra Creek.

As a general position planning in Canberra, including for the CSIRO, should start with working out what areas might be suitable for urban development, before we start planning the urban development, and then undertake investigations to establish what environmental values are to be protected.

Recommendation 2.

Before we start planning urban development, investigations should take place to establish what environmental values are to be protected.



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We are now into 2016 and as usual the team at the Museum are back at work and preparing for another busy and exciting year. Some of the activities to be undertaken this year are:

- planning for this years blockbuster exhibition *Rediscovering Ginninderra* which is well under way (see below for information and a short history of Ginninderra);
- 'annual Twilight Concert';
- tenure on the school site will be finalised and renovations to other buildings is being negotiated;
- Work on the unique Lyall Gillespie Collection by the Collections Management Team will continue throughout 2016;
- the planned 'Peace Garden' will be completed and
- a number of group visits will continue and a number are already booked and more enquiries are received each week.

Communications

The Museum is now connected to the internet and telephone. This will enable a computer hub to be set up for training and research purposes. We will also be able to send out information by email and respond to telephone bookings and enquiries. However, as we are mostly only there on Thursday mornings, an answering service will be available to record messages. The telephone number is 62302738.

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Twilight Concert

It will be March before we know it and that means the Hall School Museum's Annual Twilight Concert. The date will be 20 March on the grassed area at the school and the times will be from 4pm till 7pm. So please come along and enjoy the great band music and a wonderful vocalist and don't forget to tell all your friends. Further details will be posted on the website and Facebook and fliers will be distributed in the near future.

The Museum's Annual Exhibition - Rediscovering Ginninderra

This exhibition is opening on 2 April at the Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre and will be part of the 2016 annual Canberra & Region Heritage Festival which will run from 2-18 April. It will tell the story of a number of the early Ginninderra families, properties and businesses.

The importance of *Rediscovering Ginninderra* is heightened by impending demolition of the 'Deasland' heritage homestead (due to asbestos contamination), and proposed sale of the 700 hectare CSIRO Ginninderra field station. 'Deasland' - which will be featured in the exhibition - was built by George Harcourt in 1890, and was later home to the Curran family. The CSIRO field station includes parts of the 'Palmerville' and 'Charnwood' estates, the old Weetangera road, and the Ginninderra showground and cricket pitch. Hopefully there will be an opportunity to enhance the heritage values of these places.

Honorary Curator Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre: Phil Robson email: museum.hall.act.au or hallmuseum@bigpond.com

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History of Ginninderra

What, and where, is Ginninderra?! A Parish, a Creek, a Drive, a Lake, an electorate - a village? 'Ginin-gininderry' was an aboriginal locality that Europeans first traversed in the early 1820s and began settling around 1826. That was when George T. Palmer (commemorated in Palmer Street, Hall) established his 'Palmerville' estate beside the creek, a mile south of the road that was to run between Queanbeyan and Yass. Ginninderra village grew up along this road, while the Ginninderra district was roughly defined by the Ginninderra Creek catchment, which stretches nearly twenty kilometres from the ACT's northern borders to Ginninderra Falls on the Murrumbidgee.

From 1860 or so for half a century the little settlement flourished, and during its prime could boast a church, school, store, police station, post and telegraph office, School of Arts, boot maker, Farmers Union hall, annual show, sports teams and a hotel. Before the turn of the century however there were early signs of decline. Hall had been proclaimed as an official village in 1882, and the Ginninderra store was forced into closure by the drought and recession of the nineties. By 1915, when land resumption by the Federal Government was well under way, Ginninderra was 'history' - and Hall took over.

The whole Ginninderra district was then in the hands of 'rural lessees' until the 1960's, since when the leases have been progressively withdrawn. Beconnen development began with Aranda in 1966 and Gungahlin was officially established in 1991. Since the 1970's urban development has spread relentlessly across this landscape. Today, Belconnen and Gungahlin have a combined, and growing population of over 150,000, and the basic geography is that of suburbs, roads, schools and shops. For around 150 years between European discovery and urbanization, this was rolling plains turned to productive grazing country by pioneer settlers such as the Rolfses, Gillespies and Gribbles, where creeks and slopes, horsepower and the weather determined what was possible. That Ginninderra



hard work, skill and stoicism of their forbears - families such as the Gribbles, Gillespies, Rolfses, Currans, Shumacks, Boltons, Hollingsworths, Morrises, Southwells, Browns and Kilbys. Many of them have already made generous contributions to our knowledge and

is now remote in time, and still being progressively 'suburbanised'.

Who were the pioneers and how did they keep body and soul together, and find entertainment? How did they get schooling for their children? How did commerce get going, and who were the entrepreneurs? These are some of the questions the exhibition will address.

Despite an exodus of settlers when the Federal government began resuming the land, the pioneer families bequeathed large numbers of descendants, still amongst us, who remember with great pride the

understanding. We hope that they, and others, will find the exhibition interesting and rewarding.

One special feature of the exhibition will be the stories of the 'class of 1905' - the thirty six pupils in a Ginninderra Public School photograph of that year, all clearly identified. Museum volunteers have been busy unearthing the family backgrounds of the Bolton, Gribble, Shumack, Blewitt, Curran, Kilby and other children in the photo.

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In 2016 the Hall Rugby Club will celebrate being part of the Hall Community for 25 years after being established in 1992 by a group of disgruntled Uni-North players aiming to compete in the fledgling Monaro Rugby competition. Since that time, both the Club and the competition have grown and today the Club stands shoulder to shoulder with the bigger clubs of Canberra. The club has 2 Grades in the ACT 1st Division competition and a Golden Oldies side (The Hall Bushrangers), along with two cricket sides (The King Brown Bushrangers) in the ACT Sunday Social Cricket competition.

Whilst other Clubs have risen and fallen, the Hall Bushrangers have stood the test of time. In the last two decades the Club has won the Premiership three times, been minor Premiers three times and contested nine Grand Finals. Since 2003 the Club has participated in every finals series.

The club motto, "Capimus Sed Tradimus" ("What we take we pass on") - is a reflection of our ethos both on and off the field. A valuable community member today, Hall is also a strong force within the Monaro competition.

As the premier sporting club of the Hall District, we are proud of our contribution to the life of Hall Village. The club remains a member of the Hall Progress Association the Hall Collectors Club the Hall and District Axemen's Club and we've built up a great relationship with the Rotary Club of Hall. We are very appreciative of the support of Hall businesses that show their support such as the




Daughters of Hall, Northside Commercial, Territory Energy and the Wood Duck Inn and in our 25th year we'd like to extend an open invitation to the Hall Community to come and watch our games at the Hideout (Hall Oval) in our anniversary year.

The 2016 competition structure for the Monaro 1st Division will combine with the Canberra Premier Division 3rd and 4th grades and we'll play a 17 round competition starting on 2 April and concluding on 23 July before a 3 week final series starting on

30 July and finish with the Grand Final on 13 August. This competition structure will tie in with the Premier Division 1st, 2nd and Colts Competition.





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To find us, take the Wallaroo Road, turn left at Southwell Road, then right at Brooklands Road then left into Woodgrove Close. We are at the end of Woodgrove Close.



Four Tonnes of Support

Four Winds Vineyard, Collector Wines and Eden Road Wines have taken four tonnes of surplus Shiraz grapes and turned them into wine raising over \$46,000 for Canberra's Companion House. Companion House provides support to asylum seekers and refugees living in Canberra.

Four Winds Vineyard's business manager Sarah Collingwood said that they were pleased that the grapes would go to such a good cause.

"We had a great season in 2015 and were left with some great looking grapes in the vineyard," she said.

Four Winds Vineyard was not able to fit another berry into their winery, but discussions with neighbours Alex McKay from Collector Wines and Nick Spencer and Hamish Young from Eden Road saw the wineries collaborate to produce a finished product.

The four tonnes of grapes made over 260 cases of wine that was available to purchase for \$200 a case, with \$174 from each case going to



Companion house. The wineries donated the grapes, winemaking and bottling machinery needed for the project while \$26 went to cover costs such as bottles, capsules, cartons and postage. The grapes were picked on 26 March, the wine was bottled on 12 November and sold out by 21 December 2015.

Companion House director, Kathy Ragless, said that this initiative was like being given a gift.

"We have recently lost some of our government funding and to hear about this was really heartening," she said. "The funds will go toward activities such as helping the children of asylum seekers become involved in some extra curricular activities and emergency funding for those in financial distress."

(It was heard on the grapevine that some Hall residents were very keen supporters of this venture, and have enjoyed the product very much!)





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Local Fire Narrowly Averted

A CFU (Community Fire Unit) member has reported a "a near hit incident" in Hall Village.

A resident had accidentally backed over a gas meter on their property and fractured the gas pipe. The resident then reversed back over the fractured gas pipe. Fortunately there was no ignition. Gas vented with force, a neighbour heard the gas venting and attended, quickly turning the meter off and averting a possible ignition and explosion. This meter had been positioned years ago. The possibility of occurrence was foreseeable and therefore avoidable. Zone leaders should check or encourage residents of properties in their zone to check the position of gas meters on their property.

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Apple Growing in Spring Range

Apple growing in Australia dates back to the First Fleet, in 1788. The first recorded planting of apples crop was with a tree which had been brought across from the Cape of Good Hope. Captain Bligh had secured this tree on the journey to Australia and when he anchored his boat, the Bounty, off Bruny Island in 1792, the ship's botanist planted three apple seedlings and several apple and pear pips on the island. So began plantings on the 'apple isle'. By the 1880s, sailing ships were transporting supplies of Tasmanian apples to England.

The Hall district has an apple growing heritage going back to its early days too. By the early 1930s a well known local orchardist, Charlie Butt, set about establishing an apple orchard on the eastern side of Spring Range. By the end of his plantings he had an orchard spanning several hectares and 4,000 trees. It was during the early days of the orchard that he engaged a young Macks Southwell to collect up bags of potash from the remnants of trees that had been felled and then burnt to make way for the expansion of the local pastoral industry. Charlie would pay Macks 2/6- a bag and scatter the ash around his apple trees to sweeten up the apples.

Charlie Butt continued to grow and supply Canberra with apples until the mid 1950s until he passed away. Thirty years later, I went to purchase supplies from the old Maryborough Street Garden Centre in Fyshwick. The proprietor of the Centre recalled how Charlie

would drive an old truck and deliver apples across Canberra. He specifically remembered how wonderful and sweet those apples were.

That orchard was demolished in the late 1950s by new owners, following on two years of late frost and drought. Bankruptcy due to loss of income and then no knowledge for horticulture.

Fast forward another thirty years and planting of apples was begun at Loriendale Orchard, just 5 kms along Spring Range Road, east of the Barton Highway. With an ambition to plant varieties with superior flavour and a keenness to discover the best apples from across Australia and from the major apple growing countries around the world, Owen and Noreen Pidgeon are now growing over 125 varieties. These have come from 20 overseas countries, some dating back centuries. There are also famous ones from every state of Australia, including Bonza and Granny Smith from NSW, Murray Gem from South Australia and Pink Lady and Lady William from Western Australia.



So it has been a pleasure for Owen and Noreen Pidgeon to welcome Alexia, the daughter of Dale and Jessica Stevens to help in the orchard over the summer holidays. Dale is a grandson of Macks and the second son of Sandra Stevens (nee Southwell). A fine tradition and link to apple growing has been maintained.

Loriendale sells each Saturday its produce at the Capital Region Farmers Market, at EPIC along with other Hall District growers including Homeleigh Olives, Glean Na Meala vegetables and Minto Galloway beef.

Last June, Loriendale's organic heritage apples were served at the mid winter dinner hosted by the Governor General. The Ida Red apple was selected to accompany a pork dish. Several senior agribusiness leaders and the ambassadors from our major trading partners attended the dinner that featured an excellent selection of local produce.

For the Diary: Loriendale Apple Day 1:30 – 5.00 pm, 2 April 2016. A Hall District charity event.

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Poisonous Plants

I am often asked for my list of favourite plants, and I definitely have favourites although I have been admonished by world renowned garden experts for doing so. One such lady even suggested that having favourite plants is akin to having favourite children, what a load of compost, I say.

Plants can be favourites for many reasons, they can be easy to grow and generally maintenance free, very beautiful from their foliage to their flowers and sentimental because someone special gave it to you. There can be no rhyme or reason behind a favourite plant and many of our favourites are poisonous, however this does not prevent us from planting them in our gardens.

I have had folk suggest to me that they cannot have this plant or that plant because little Freddie &/or Rufus, have a penchant for putting leaves and flowers in their mouth. Well, yes I would strongly discourage random plant eating expeditions in the garden, but a good rule of thumb is that if its poisonous it will taste disgusting and the offending nibbler will spit it out. None the less, proceed with caution.

If we were to stop planting poisonous plants in our gardens our plant palette would be so hugely reduced that we could effectively alter the ecosystem not to mention missing out on some of our most beautiful plants.

I have listed a few of the offending beasts that have crept into our gardens in disguise of beauty so you too can see the injustice of their criminality, but also proceed with caution.

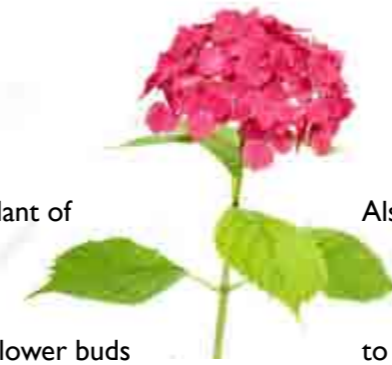


Rhododendron: this plant is not always easy to grow, but give it some shade, protection from the wind and lots of moisture and it will offer a mass of white, red, pink or purple flowers in spring with lovely dark green leaves the rest of the year. This plant is reported to be a 'killer'. It is said that if you swallow any part of this plant, you will drool, then become violently ill followed by your pulse slowing and blood pressure dropping - it does suggest death can occur.

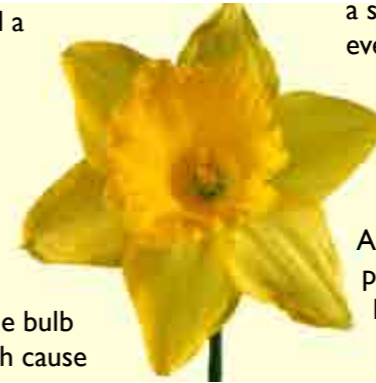
Lily-of-the-Valley: one of my favourites with tiny white or pink flowers, this plant packs a potent, sweet smelling scent despite its tiny size. This entire plant is reported to be poisonous and contains traces of convallatoxin which intensifies the heart's contractions. A small bite can cause headaches, hot flashes, hallucinations, irritability and red blotches and clammy skin.



Hydrangea: another favourite plant of mine, with stunning large pink, blue or white flowers for a shady spot in your garden. The entire plant, but especially the flower buds are poisonous and ingestion in like swallowing a cyanide pill, causing shortness of breath, dizziness, fainting, rapid pulse and a drop in blood pressure.



Narcissus - Daffodil (family): Nearly everyone I know has one variety or more of these little treasures in their garden. I am told that the entire



plant but especially the bulb when consumed with cause vomiting, along with many other conditions that are simply nasty including headaches, convulsions, fainting and perhaps paralysis.

Foxgloves: very pretty with bell shaped flowers in many colours and adds a little drama and height to any garden. While this plant is used medicinally, it is deadly in high doses and children have died from sucking on part of the plant.



Also to add to the list is Delphinium (Larkspur), Oleander, Poinsettia, Azalea, Daphne and Mistletoe. Although this does not cover all the plants, you can see that many of our plants have the potential to cause harm.

So armed with a little knowledge, and if you have a small child or a pooch that is prone to putting everything in their mouth, perhaps it would be wise to avoid all or some of these plants. But for the rest of us, no doubt we will continue to have many of these potentially deadly delights that create so much joy in our gardens.

A comprehensive list of garden plants poisonous to people can be found on NSW department of Primary Industries website, www.dpi.nsw.gov.au



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Recognition for John Starr

Winner of the 2015 ACT Landcare Award for *Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices*

Community members who know John and Bev, and know something about the enduring commitment of the Starr family to taking care of and improving their land will have been delighted at the news that John has been named winner of the 2015 ACT Landcare Award for Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices Award. Such an Award is not won overnight but reflects a long term commitment to leaving the land in better shape. It is a great pleasure to add our congratulations, and to spell out here why he is a winner.



John and his family have farmed Gold Creek Station/ Kinlyside on the ACT's northern border, just outside Hall since 1970, first as managers for the Bruce family, and then as owners, running Hereford cattle and Merino sheep. The farm has gone from 2500 acres to around 1000 acres over the last 45 years, due to resumption of parts of the farm for suburban development. John has always managed his land to capability, to protect and enhance the property's native and introduced pastures and maintain groundcover.

Recognising early on the different land classes across the property from steeper country with shallow soils to fertile flats, he runs much less stock on the 'lighter country', and destocks these areas during drought or

over winter when pasture feed is low. After drought he allows native grasses on these areas to fully recover before reintroducing stock. His approach to farming has seen a 201-hectare section of his property gazetted as Kinlyside Nature Reserve and biodiversity offset area (which he can still graze).

Surveys by ecologists and the Canberra Ornithologist Group have found that Kinlyside supports key habitat for threatened birds and a diversity of plant species that occur only in sites in good condition, which the ACT Conservation Council credits to John's conservation farm management practices. John and his family have also undertaken extensive planting of local native tree and understory species to protect groundcover and improve biodiversity areas on and adjacent to the fertile flats. This has included fencing out and planting around a farm dam to create habitat; fencing out and planting trees in an eroded drainage line to stabilise the area; and participating in the 1999 Olympic Landcare initiative with three other landholders and the Hall community planting 6000 native trees on his property.

John's conservative management of his native pastures on the steep or less fertile areas of his property, has created very healthy and biodiverse areas of native grassland and woodland, as noted above. His management of the fertile flats has been focussed on maintaining a sustainable commercial operation. During drought and over winter stock were hand fed on small improved pasture paddocks, close to haysheds, silos and bore water. The hay was grown on the property in good seasons and the grain grown or purchased opportunistically and stored. This has maintained stock in good condition during drought and winter feed gaps and maintained ground cover and reduced pressure on the fragile, steeper country. After drought feeding he sod-seeded fodder crops into the damaged pasture for regeneration and to provide feed into the future.

In addition John has participated in CSIRO Ginninderra Experiment Station trials of various Lucerne and fodder species and experimental sowing machines. He also applied early stock management innovation in 1971 (ahead of his time) by converting a set of Avery quarry scales to weigh cattle which enabled him to accurately identify the most productive cows leading to the most efficient use of pasture. Since the 1980s, the Starrs have run a very successful farm tourism business which has provided an alternative farm-based source of income as parts of the property have been

resumed for urban development. By diversifying farm income, it means John has not had to put increasing pressure on the natural resource base of the farm, to produce more income from his stock as he lost land to urban development.

John is very active in the ACT community and has been involved and contributed to many organisations associated with Landcare including the Rural Landholders Association, Ginninderra Catchment Group (the peak body for northern ACT Landcare), the Bush on the Boundary reference group (which provides a forum for Landcare, farmers, land managers, government and community on management of the urban-nature reserve and urban-rural interfaces) and the ACT Regional Landcare Facilitator Steering Committee. He was one of the key drivers behind community Landcare activities including the Olympic tree planting which brought together landholders and the local community to plant over 10,000 trees along Hall's Creek.

John has been vigilant about weed control, in particular, control of serrated tussock which is widespread across parts of Northern ACT. His son Craig is currently working with one of his neighbours in controlling serrated tussock infestations on the farm's western boundary. The neighbour had virtually lost the battle against this weed, but Craig, taking a Landcare-approach and working with Ginninderra Catchment Group has managed to bring him back on board and together they are cooperating to address weed infestations on the neighbours property, and control other weeds coming from the neighbouring areas, including the suburban areas onto the property - drawing on advice from natural resource management expert Alison Elvin, from Natural Capital.

The farm tourism side of the operation hosts international groups from Inbound Tour Operators and Travel Wholesalers as well as visits from Embassies and Visiting Dignitary Programs and Educational Groups

from Universities and Schools. The focus of the tours are ecological and the wool industry.

John has experienced many climatic challenges in his 45 years on Gold Creek Station and Kinlyside, including the devastating fires of 1979, which saw more than two thirds of the property burnt out, regular droughts (1982, early 1990s and Millennium drought stand out). Because of his approach to farming, based around managing land to capability, he has built a highly resilient farming system which has ensured the diverse pasture/grassland base of the property is protected and managed according to land class, season and climate, thus improving the property over the last 45 years. The biggest challenges he has had to contend with are security of tenure, and the loss of large sections of his property to urban development.



John accepting his award in November 2015

All ACT rural landholders are leaseholders and up until 1999, all rural leaseholders were on short term leases, ranging from a few months to a few years, to enable the ACT Government to resume this land for urban development. As has been noted by many people, this lack of tenure has many consequences for land management - landholders are reluctant to invest in landcare

activities or innovative farm practices if they have uncertain tenure. Despite insecurity of tenure, the Starrs have improved the natural resource base and sustainability of the property - by managing their land to capability and to season and climate.

They have also diversified their farm income, through the farm tourism business, as the ACT Government resumed some of their lease for urban development. By introducing an alternative stream of farm income, this has further protected the natural resources of the farm, as the Starrs have not tried to earn more income from less land. They still have short term leases on much of their property due to their proximity to North Canberra and the potential for future urban development - which continues to be a challenge.

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Periodontal Disease in Horses

by **Tamara Riley** (Vet Student – USyd)

Periodontal disease is a common problem seen in equine practices. It is mainly seen in geriatric horses over 15 years, but has the potential to affect younger horses as well. Horse teeth continuously grow throughout their lifetime, where the top flat surface of the tooth is worn down via grinding of the teeth whilst chewing. Problems arise when the wear of the teeth becomes uneven and such things as hooks begin to form and cause ulcers on the cheeks and adjacent gingiva, leading to gingivitis (inflammation of the gums). Gingivitis is the precursor to the formation of periodontal pockets which form in-between teeth, loosening the gingiva away from the tooth. This allows feed impaction to occur leading to infection and periodontitis. Infection can eat away at the support system of the tooth, including the periodontal ligament, the alveolar bone and the tooth root, causing loose and painful teeth. In severe cases, this infection can travel into the facial sinuses and cause a tooth root abscess.



progression of the disease. If a tooth root abscess is present or a tooth is loose, it may have to be extracted which can be a very lengthy process, with possible need for surgical intervention, so is always a last resort!

Periodontal disease can be easily prevented with regular dental check-ups, the time between dentals depending on the individual horse although recommended to be between 6-12 months. This check-up will involve a short sedation, cleaning of the teeth to get rid of plaque and tartar, as well as grinding down the rough edges of the teeth to avoid; formation of hooks, mucosal ulcers and periodontal pockets forming. When it comes to periodontal disease, prevention is ALWAYS better than cure!!

With regular dentals, you will be one step closer to a more healthy and happy horse!

Signs of periodontal disease to look out for in your horse include quidding (dropping of food when eating), resisting being touched around the mouth, halitosis (an odour coming from the mouth) and throwing the head around abnormally. They may also resent a bit in their mouth when riding, if chronic, you may begin to see weight loss and deterioration of their physical form. If a tooth root abscess has formed, unilateral nasal discharge will be seen on the side of the affected tooth. If you are concerned that your horse is exhibiting any of these signs, please contact us here at the Canberra Equine Hospital.

Treatment of periodontal disease is most successful when started as early as possible when first signs are noticed, always remembering severe disease may not be reversible. Depending on the severity of the disease, a veterinarian may have to perform diagnostics including dental radiographs to visualise the alveolar bone and tooth roots within the mouth and the facial sinuses. A dental exam can be performed under sedation where teeth can be cleaned and grinded down to form an even occlusal surface and periodontal pockets can be cleaned out with chlorhexidine rinse to avoid further

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President's page

David Hazlehurst
President, VHDPA

In December's issue of the *Rural Fringe* I was thrilled to advise we'd come to an agreement with the ACT Government on the future of Hall Primary School site (see that issue at hall.act.au for the details).

In the first instance the Village of Hall and District Progress Association will be granted a two license to occupy the whole site (apart from the pre-school) on a cost neutral basis, balancing a contribution to costs with explicit recognition of the value to the community of the activities currently occurring on the site (in particular, the preservation and further development of the School Museum collection and ongoing activities of the Men's Shed).



In December we received draft documentation from ACT Property Group and have gone back to the Government with a few questions. We will meet to discuss in early February.

All going well, in the next *Rural Fringe* I'll advise on the signing of a license securing community control of the School site.

David Hazlehurst







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Future Canberra: Don't forget the adventure sports

by **David Ellery**

Reprinted from The Canberra Times Jan 4, 2016

While Canberra is unlikely to bungee jump its way to boundless prosperity any time soon, local adventure tourism operators have urged the ACT government to think outside the oval when it comes to sports tourism. Sports technology and major events such as the recent AFC Asian Cup and ICC Cricket World Cup were identified as potential economic drivers for the ACT in the government's 2015 "Confident and Business Ready Strategy".

The strategy document said visitors supported 14,700 jobs and contributed \$1.6 billion a year to the local economy.

"Major [sporting] international events have raised Canberra's profile as a vibrant, attractive, city across Australia and in a range of major growth markets abroad."

Phil Robinson, a former president of the ACT Hang Gliding and Paragliding

Association and the owner of a launch site at Spring Hill near Hall, said major sports events were not the be all and all.

He likened the adventure and activity sports enthusiasts to ants who travel to Canberra for whitewater rafting, bushwalking, mountain bike riding, hang gliding and paragliding, orienteering and other activities.

"When they are all out in the landscape doing their own thing it doesn't like there is very many," he said.

"When you bring them all together you suddenly see there are a lot."

Peter Dowse, of Canberra's Capital Bike Hire, agreed.

He said that while people who came to the ACT to participate in niche sports were high value visitors they were easy to overlook.

He hires out bikes at Stromlo Forest Park and has been campaigning to get a permanent site on the mountain for a "pop-up" style business for years.

"Every door has been shut in my face."

Mr Dowse would love to emulate the success of New Zealand's Mountain Bike Rotorua, a business which operates out of converted shipping containers and has a popular on-site cafe.

"Canberra is the perfect city to promote adventure sports tourism," he said. "Everything is on our doorstep."

"You are 30 minutes from the middle of the bush but, at night, have access to a cosmopolitan cafe, restaurant and entertainment culture."

"Cross-over between the various sports could offer a Queenstown-like experience with a range of recreational options."

Mr Robinson said one advantage of adventure sports was that they required very little in the way of infrastructure.

"All you need to get started [in paragliding] is a wing and a place to launch from," he said. "The Canberra region is a great place to fly. There are launch sites at Spring Hill, Lake George and Pig Hill near Fairlight Stadium."

Mr Robinson, who bought the Spring Hill property which is the closest launch site to Canberra when it last came up for sale, said he regularly had people calling by from all over the world.

"It [paragliding] is very exhilarating. We get a regular flow of international visitors and the Internet has taken the

sport to a whole new level.

"We are looking at a Go-Pro driven explosion of interest because people can now film their flights and then upload the videos to the web."

Many of these, which include footage from exotic locations such as Africa's Mount Kilimanjaro, make for compelling viewing.

"You see shots of people flying with eagles, sunsets, spectacular cloud formations, sunsets and the like."

Mr Robinson said paragliding and the other adventure sports were 21st century activities that appealed to people who didn't fit into the cricket and football mould.

"A lot of paragliders are well educated, affluent and athletic but not necessarily built like a brick dunny," he said.

"They cover a wide range of ages and appreciate the intellectual challenge of learning navigation and developing other skills you are not going to pick up on the footy field."

"This is a head sport."

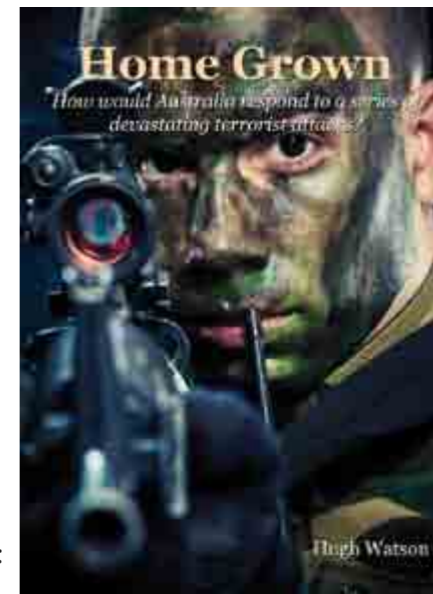
Other pluses were that sports such as paragliding and mountain bike riding were environmentally friendly, socially responsible and much safer than people might think.

"You've got to stay healthy and alert to do these things," Mr Robinson said.

"What we really need is more formal recognition [from government] and guaranteed access to launch sites."



Phil hanging out



A novel which features Hall and many other places of interest in Canberra and on the south coast has been written by Hall local Hugh Watson.

Home Grown is a political thriller with much of the action in Canberra but also in Sydney and Melbourne and on the NSW south coast.

The main character was born in Tathra but works in Canberra and the novel is based on one chilling question: how would Australia respond to a series of devastating terrorist attacks? In following Will Andrews in his mission to uncover the true mastermind behind the attacks, **Home Grown** delves into the dark shadows at the periphery of Australian society and the political machinations that erupt after the attacks.

Hugh has lived in Hall for over 26 years and is best known as a founding member of local band West

books

Texas Crude. He is a Visiting Fellow at ANU and has his own consulting company. He has previously been Private Secretary to a Cabinet Minister and Partner-in-Charge of international company Coopers & Lybrand (now PWC). This is his first novel.

Home Grown is available at the Hall Post Office and Gift Store, the National Library, Booktique in Merimbula, Candelo Books in Bega and at the Bega and Tathra newsagencies. It is also available online through Amazon/Kindle.



Hugh with Trudy Mansfield at Hall PO.

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From the editor

Juggling the balance of time between family, work and leisure must be the more difficult of life's challenges to master and I have huge admiration for those who seem to have got it more or less right, especially when you add volunteering to the list. I am delighted that we are able to report on the recognition of our John Starr's contributions to land care over very many years. Many is the time that our lovely John has engaged me in fascinating conversations about tussock grass and other weeds and conservation and his deep knowledge and actions are an ongoing contribution to Hall and our District – Kinlyside for example - for which we are truly grateful.

I would like to thank another John – John Carson – who has been contributing articles to the *Rural Fringe* for over two years as our special feature writer. John introduced the 'Village People' series to our pages, interviewing local individuals and families and sharing their beautifully written stories with us. You can hear John's delightful Irish accent through his carefully crafted words. However our master story-teller is in the process of moving out of the area from his property on Rochford Road in Wallaroo and his future contributions are unlikely to be as frequent. Thank you John for bringing a special flavour to the *Rural Fringe* and we look forward to more.

Another volunteer with the *Rural Fringe* is the gracious Kevin Stone our proofreader, also a member of the Hall Men's Shed. Always positive and helpful, Kevin patiently corrects our spelling, grammar and split infinitives in amazing detail and record turnaround time. It is with great sadness that we learnt that Kevin's adored wife Susan passed away last week and we offer our deepest condolences to Kevin and his family.

As I look through these pages I see more glimpses of the juggle that so many are making to fit in their volunteer community work amidst their busy lives. To pull off exhibition after exhibition at the Museum, to finally get tenure of the school site, the community fire unit, the amazing wine fundraiser for refugees, the list goes on. It is these selfless activities that make our Hall community the wonderful place it is. It makes me very proud to be a part of it.

Until next time

Jo Hall



Back yard photos

This amazing cactus flower bloomed for just a couple of days in Helen White's garden in Palmer Street. If you have a 'back yard photo' you'd like to share, please send to the *Rural Fringe* at ruralfringe@hotmail.com.



The Rural Fringe – ISSN: 1329-3893

The *Rural Fringe* is a community newspaper published in 600 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 This publication is funded by the advertisements so readers are encouraged to support the businesses advertised.

Contributions

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

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

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

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

Contributions to ruralfringe@hotmail.com or PO Box 43 Hall ACT 2618.

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Other information

Editor: Jo Hall

Sub-editor: Bob Richardson

Enquiries to the Sub-editor on 0407 071 245 or ruralfringe@hotmail.com

The views expressed in this journal do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor, the Sub-editor or the VHDPA.

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T'was the month before Christmas...



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The new menu is up and running, come in for Breakfast or Lunch; there are some really yummy new dishes.

Keep these dates free!

Mexican Night.

Bring your sombrero and spice up your night with Burritos, Nachos and Tacos, Daughters style.

Wine tasting presented by *Kerralee Wines* & live music

Friday 12th February 5.30pm to late

Seafood Night

Delicious seafood supplied by *At Sea Tuna*, fresh off the boat and cooked to perfection by the Daughters.

Wine tasting presented by *Murrora Estate* & live music

Friday 26th February 5.30pm to late

Off the menu BURGERS and Loaded Fries

This burger is built like no other – as for the Fries, they have the most amazing toppings, you'll want more.

Local Wine and Beer tasting & live music

Friday 11th March 5.30pm to late

*Get in early book a table:
6230 2457*

Best in Town All Day breakfast

Two Farmer Brown's free range eggs
Stacked with large rindless Bacon
On a fresh damper roll
\$6.00



Daughters at Hall

1st year anniversary – 31 March

Come in and help celebrate and have some of their beautiful home made cakes.

Remember, we bake fresh Muffins daily, cakes made to order, catering available.

We stock Farmer Browns eggs; Homeleigh Grove Oils & Olives, Local Raw Honey, Mosaic bread, papers and bread

Easter Holiday

Daughters at Hall will be closed:

- Good Friday 25th
- Saturday 26th
- Easter Sunday 27th
- Easter Monday 28th



*Daughters at Hall is pet friendly!
New to our drinks menu,
available on request,
Doggy Chino*

