

# RURAL FRINGE

*Journal of the Hall district*

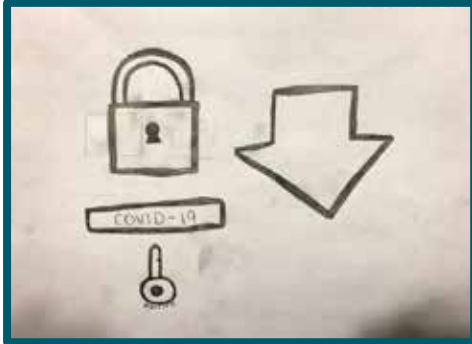


VOLUME 28 ISSUE 5

October 2021

## children's perspectives

### Hall during lockdown

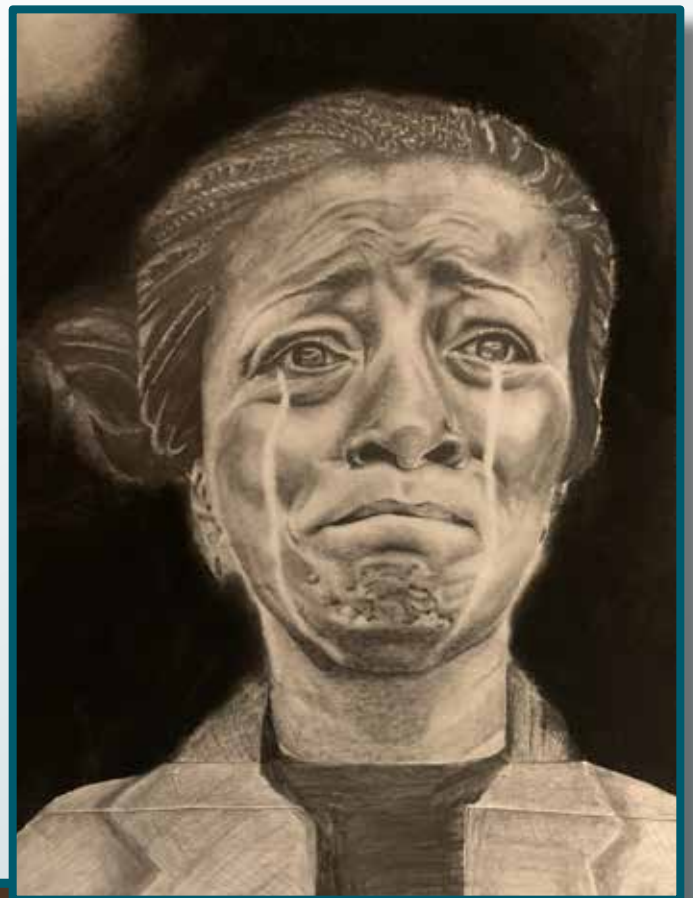


Thanks to Ben, Maddy, Finn and Lilly for their contributions about life in lockdown. These were entries to our competition sponsored by *The Book Cow*, see page 5 for the announcement of the winners. It is great to be able to reflect the art and thoughts of our younger readers and their contributions are always welcome to the *Rural Fringe*.

From Madelaine (Maddy) Macfarlane, aged 14.  
An artwork and picture puzzle: Covid-19 blocking the vaccine key from unlocking lockdown.



From Finn Macfarlane, age 11.  
Reflecting lockdown with a jail being built by the Coronavirus monster, and the deaths of George Floyd and Kobe Bryant.



From Lilly Macfarlane, age 17.  
Artwork in graphite pencil and charcoal, titled 'Pain'.



Boots and Paddy feature in the entry from Ben Tompson, age 9.  
See Ben's full story about life in lockdown in Wallaroo on page 5.

# Out and about ... about



## Hall Lockdown Must-Have Accessory

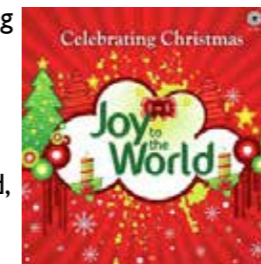
The 'Hall'-model standard backyard wash basin with optional possum-proof raised garden bed, features recycled wire mesh, 44-gallon drum, old fence railings and gate, reused coach screws, garden tap and wash basin, with paint-leftovers and classic mosaic-art touches. Available whenever it is not possible to justify a hardware-store visit.

Ken and Jan  
Alexandra Street

## Christmas carols at the Hall Museum

Combined church choir and museum tours:  
**3-5pm Sunday 12 December.**

The Roman Catholic, Uniting and Anglican churches are joining together with the volunteers of Hall Museum to offer the Hall community an inspiring and fun couple of hours. Enjoy singing your favourite Christmas carols and listening to the wonderful Canberra Brass, as well as taking the opportunity to reconnect with the history of your village and district.



Gold coin donation appreciated, with sausage sizzle on site and all proceeds going to the Hall Pre-School. For further details contact Greg Farrugia ([gjvita@gmail.com](mailto:gjvita@gmail.com)) or Revd. Peter Malone ([peter@mikeandbarneys.org.au](mailto:peter@mikeandbarneys.org.au))

NB: This event will be subject to ACT Government COVID Public Health Orders and as such could be cancelled at short notice. For updates follow the St Michael and All Angels at Hall Facebook page or visit the website [www.mikeandbarneys.org.au](http://www.mikeandbarneys.org.au)

## St Michael & All Angels Anglican Church

Subject to ACT Government Public Health Orders, the Anglican Church Christmas services this year are:

### Christmas Eve

**10.30pm** at St Michael & All Angels, Hall

### Christmas Day

**9am** at St Barnabas, Charnwood

**10am** at St Michael & All Angels, Hall

You are also welcome to our weekly services:

**9am** at St Barnabas, Charnwood

**11am** at St Michael & All Angels, Hall

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# Hall Cemetery woodlands - Friends of Grasslands

by **John Fitz Gerald** and **Margaret Ning**

We'd like to share with readers some information about Friends of Grasslands (FOG) work in the woodlands at Hall Cemetery during 2020.

A small group of volunteers put in 410 hours of weeding work in addition to the four scheduled Saturday FOG work mornings. Volunteers worked in ones and twos and turned out on many days; on average over the year the woodland was visited twice each week for additional weeding.

Given an important grant from the ACT Chief Minister, FOG was able to engage the contract group EnviroAg to spot spray for about 27 hours. Their principal, Richard Bland, did a great job treating Sow Thistle with the organic herbicide *Slasher* – it has worked a treat. FOG has continued to use *Slasher* on rosettes of Spear Thistles (estimated over 550 plants, prior to flowering) where again it is most effective. We also cut unopened seed heads from, then pulled up roots of, hundreds of Prickly Lettuce plants.

The Kangaroo Grass grassland in the cemetery core grew lush and tall in the cool moist summer. This vegetation was not mown till autumn 2021, as the ground remained wet. The Tarengo Leek Orchid population in the grassland bounced back into active flowering after a very meagre year in 2019.

The frequent volunteer visits, with repeated sweeps through the woodland in weed searches, resulted in some nature sightings that could interest readers.



Juvenile pied butcher bird. Photo John Fitz Gerald

The juvenile pied butcher bird was seen on the cemetery gate in early January 2021. According to information from Canberra Ornithologists Group, this species is near its south-east limit in the ACT, so it's nice to have this event recorded by photo at Hall, and posted on Canberra Nature Map, and Key's Matchstick Grasshopper (in September) – an uncommon native.



Sow thistle area before (26 May 2020 - Jenny Clarke) and after (12 Feb 2021 - JFG). The area was weeded manually by Jenny and Graeme and flowers were initially bagged by them before they could throw seed. Later plants were either removed entirely, or cut and daubed.

## Competition for children's contributions

... continued from front page

Locally owned bookshop *The Book Cow* kindly offered two prizes for children's entries to the competition about life in lockdown in Hall. We think all four entries are fabulous and the *The Book Cow* has generously doubled their sponsorship and is giving all four children a prize of a \$20 gift card. Congratulations, everyone's a winner! And special thanks to *The Book Cow* which is doing it tough during lockdown, but offering online 'click and collect', 'click and deliver' and free delivery to Hall. See their website at [bookcow.com.au](http://bookcow.com.au)



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### Lockdown

At home in Wallaroo  
by Ben Tompson  
Age 9



Ben Tompson, full entry.

### Thursday

12th August 2021

It was on Thursday, the twelfth of August, at 5:00pm, when the whole of ACT went into lockdown. A person in ACT tested positive for Covid-19. Earlier in the afternoon, teachers told us that we would be doing home schooling for a couple of weeks, and to get prepared. Later that day I went home on the bus and have not returned to school since.

### At home in wallaroo during lockdown

I have been learning from home and it is very different to working in class. Half of my brain thinks I can relax and it is the weekend, but the other half reminds me that I need to work hard to get good grades.

I like being at home because when I'm finished my school work I can play with my dogs and our new lambs. The other thing I like about it is that I can easily ask my parents for help and don't feel shy to ask.



Boots & Paddy

### Boots and paddy in lockdown

Boots and Paddy are lambs, but they act like dogs! Boots and Paddy walk to the Murrumbidgee River in the mornings with me, my sister, my mum and dad and our dogs.

Boots and Paddy are keeping us busy in lockdown. We give them lots of love and milk to drink from a baby bottle. Taking care of a lamb is different to what most people think. They wear nappies when they're in the house, it's common for them to get pneumonia (where they can get milk in their lungs if they drink too fast), they can get cold easily and baa when they're looking for their owner/mummy.

**The end**

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The past year has been extremely busy for the Progress Association. The Association has continued to support the 'Special Interest Groups': The Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre, The Hall Men's Shed and the Hall and District Collectors' Club in their endeavours wherever possible. Ten years since its establishment by the Progress Association, in June the Hall and District Collectors' Club (HDCC) took the opportunity to incorporate and is now no longer a Special Interest Group of the Association. We hope that they continue to prosper.

The Association continues to pay for services provided on the School site, the Pavilion and the Showground area. The Association has also coordinated the welcome restorative works on the Hall School Precinct Buildings by ACT Property Group and repainting and sewer repairs to the Hall Pavilion. There are still a few maintenance issues with the School Precinct buildings including leaking roofs.

Due to the ACT Government COVID-19 lockdown six days before it was scheduled on 18 August, the Annual General Meeting of the VHDP had to be postponed. The timing of the VHDP AGM is not yet finalised with the current extension of the COVID-19 lockdown until mid-October. In the meantime, I encourage everyone to renew their membership, or to join the Association if you are not already a member and live or have involvement in Hall Village and District. I would also urge anyone with an interest in Hall Village and District, and some time to invest, to consider nominating for the committee. You can nominate now by following instructions on the [Hall.act.au](http://Hall.act.au) website or nominate as soon as the date for the AGM is announced.

**Representation**

The Committee of the Progress Association has continued to meet and work on a number of priorities over the past 12 months. In the 2020 election year, the Progress Association contacted all of the MLA's in our electorate of Yerrabi, as well as the leader of the ACT Greens, to share our priority concerns for Hall Village. We sought from each MLA confirmation of their commitment to protect the buffer zone and ensure that the district rural and Indigenous heritage of Hall is taken into consideration when the ACT Government

authorities are planning developments affecting Hall Village. We also asked each MLA to confirm their commitment to consulting with the Hall community on any plans or proposals for activities in Hall Village by the ACT Government and its agencies.

Andrew Leigh, the Federal Member for Fenner, has always been keen to support Hall and is a familiar sight, with his family at Hall 'Brass in the Grass' events. We are most grateful for this support. Another example of this support has been the Stronger Communities Grant through his Office which has enabled the Hall Pavilion to get much needed repairs. His visit to open the restored Victoria Street Gardens on 20 May 2021 (World Bee Day) was another example of his support.



On 17 June 2021, members of the Association escorted MLA Leanne Castley (shadow Minister for Heritage and Environment, Small Business and other portfolios) to the museum, men's shed and to meet with Shaun O'Connor of the Hall Traders. Leanne was very interested in pushing forward

with support, in particular with the traders seeking rates reductions that they consider to be disproportionate to the unique rural location of Hall Village in comparison with elsewhere in the ACT suburbs.

**Community facilities**

The association manages the Cottage tennis court, the Headmaster's Cottage, the men's shed, the Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre, the Hall Pavilion and 1919 tennis court, near the showgrounds.

During 2020-21 the Hall School Precinct buildings received considerable attention with new roofing, painting, air conditioning and most lighting. Much effort went into containment of hazardous materials in these buildings. The security system has also been overhauled and upgraded: important considering that Hall has not been immune to burglaries earlier this year. It is positive that one culprit was convicted and is now sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.

The citizens of Hall and District have continued to 'carry on' with as many activities as possible during these very trying times, some highlights include:

**Hall participation in the Floriade Re Imagined event**

This event in September/October 2020 dovetailed nicely with the Hall Men's Shed, Hall Honey's and Hall Rotary's efforts in dressing up Victoria Street with timber planter boxes. Floriade Events sent along a nicely worded Certificate of Appreciation.

Following the recent COVID-19 prompted cancellation of the central Floriade event, the Progress Association has agreed to host some portable plantings in Victoria Street. Not only will this be a cheerful sight, we hope it will encourage visitors curious to experience the dispersed Canberra Floriade, and give a boost to our wonderful Hall businesses.

**Brass in the Grass**

Hall was most fortunate to have two Brass in the Grass events during the 2020-2021 financial year and both were resounding successes. 29 November 2020 was most notable for Mother Nature providing more grass than the mowers could cope with. The Brass in the Grass of 28 March 2021 made up for this with about 400 attendees and a full and lively Program. Many thanks to Alastair, the museum volunteers, Canberra Brass (formerly Hall Village Brass Band) and to the local businesses which support this event so generously.

**78th National Sheep Dog Trials**

A colourful plume in Hall's cap has to be the annual National Sheep Dog Trials. By dint of hard work and more hard work, Sarah Sydrych and her hard-working committee have succeeded in producing a very relaxed but well run event. The attendance to this event for the second year running of the Governor General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley was very memorable. Their Excellencies visited the Hall Museum and Heritage Centre enroute to the trials (with a beaut singalong from Her Excellency) and were suitably impressed with the Viking table (Tharwa suspension bridge timbers) behind the Headmaster's Cottage. The Dogs' Dinner was not just dry food but succulent cuts courtesy of the efforts of Graeme, Bill, Dennis and others. Many thanks to Dogpro Plus for sponsoring this event.

**Allwood National Trust listing**

A significant event in the Hall region is the listing by the National Trust (NSW) of the restored slab cottage at 'Allwood'. The cottage was built in the mid to late 1880's by district pioneers Agnes and David Rule. Rod and Judy Roberts have completed a very sympathetic restoration, including highlighting some elements of the original interior. Many thanks to Judy and Rod.



**Victoria Street Gardens**

In April 2021, work began on the revitalisation of the entry and exit of the Hall CBD (can a village have a CBD?). Prime movers of this were Leigh Crocker and Jonathan Palmer and they have done a marvelous job. Lots of volunteers, locals with machinery donating 'pro bono'. The ACT Government also came to the party and sorted out the Victoria/Loftus street intersection very well.

**Barton Highway Upgrade**

This is a very current issue and concerns the Barton Highway Upgrade Authority (BHUA) removing quite a number of old growth trees in the Hall Travelling Stock Route and further along the easement within the Hall district. This was covered extensively in the last issue of the Rural Fringe. If you are concerned you can contact John Connelly at [percycconnelly@yahoo.com](mailto:percycconnelly@yahoo.com).

**Hall Honours**

Yes ... I know that it appears to be a bit of a skite ... but when three people in our Hall Village and district population of a couple of thousand receive Order of Australia Honours, then not only they but we are special, because they are directly in our sphere of influence. Very well done to all concerned and I am confident that the awardees shall use their honours to good effect.

**Hall the way ahead**

Late 2021 is just such a big challenge for Hall. Weekends are seeing hundreds of Canberrans on the Centenary Trail with very little or nil masking or social distancing. Surely this is going to become a pandemic for the unvaccinated. I remember the Polio problem in the 1950's and my brother was a victim. Vaccination was the only respite and it is not a cure, you can still get the disease but an infection will not devastate you.

The VHDP has recently been in touch with the ACT Government about the state of the rear laneways in the village. 2021 has been a pretty wet year and many have deteriorated. The rear laneways are a unique feature of the village, and while their condition can be frustrating, they are required to remain unsealed. We will be continuing our conversations over the next month to encourage more regular maintenance by ACT Roads.

Stay safe, vaccinated and connected.

Peter Toet 0408 697 105

**STOP PRESS:**  
AGM date is set for  
17 November,  
see page 9.

# Museum Musings

museum

**Alastair Crombie** honorary curator



## Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting on 12 August beat the lockdown by a few hours! This was a relief, our guest speaker Dr Roslyn Russell having been waiting for two years! Her fine address – ‘Historian, Collector, Museum: Lyall Gillespie and Hall School Museum’, proved well worth the wait. Ros worked with Lyall in the eighties and nineties, and was commissioned by us in 2019 to carry out a formal ‘Significance Assessment’ of the Gillespie Collection, which we are custodians of. Lyall Gillespie was honoured earlier this year as one of the ACT Honour Walk recipients for 2020, as ‘One of Canberra’s most prolific historians and archival researchers’ with a ‘passion for bringing the city’s early history to life’.

She concluded her address with some weighty acknowledgement of the centre’s work: ‘I congratulate all those concerned with bringing Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre to a level of excellence that is not always demonstrated in local history museums. The next challenge is to make the Canberra community more aware of the deep memory of their region that is captured here in Hall.’

The existing managing group members – Alastair Crombie, Paul Howarth, Mardie Troth and Margaret Foley (Treasurer) – were endorsed for a further year.



Ken Heffernan (curator, Gillespie Collection) thanks Dr Roslyn Russell (speaker).

## 10th anniversary

As this is the 10th year since the community took over the school museum left orphaned by closure of the school, honorary curator Alastair Crombie highlighted some achievements of the decade past.

We have mounted 17 exhibitions, won 25 competitive grants from four funding bodies (worth over \$160,000), established a computer network with our own server and created a searchable photo archive of around 18,000 images.

We have sustained an active volunteer force of 25-30, augmented by 10 tertiary student internships. A Schools Program (for Year 2 students) and a Family and Local History Program have been established, and we have created the popular online databases ‘Rediscovering Ginninderra’ and ‘Early schools of the Capital region’. We are on the threshold of building a full digital catalogue of our collection, when not just photos but all elements of the collection will have a searchable digital record.

Perhaps the most challenging and rewarding project of the decade has been accessioning Lyall Gillespie’s lifetime collection – books, maps, stone artefacts, research notes, diaries, photographs, and much more – of which we became enthusiastic custodians in January 2015.

The annual meeting was followed by a celebratory lunch.



Who’s who in Hall cemetery?

## Two new project grants

We were successful with both grant applications made to ACT Heritage this year. The first (\$4,500) is to fund an interpretive sign incorporating augmented reality for the Morris tanning pit that was rescued from Dellwood on the Barton Highway just outside the village. The pit sits on the Palmer Street verge just below the centre. The second grant (\$10,000) will enable us to complete the design and construction of our digital collection management system.


## COVID – looking on the bright side

At a time when we were hoping to be getting more visitors to the centre our long lockdown is not very helpful. However, life and the work of the centre, goes on. The two new grant funded projects are under way, the Hall Cemetery commemorative journal keeps growing, our security system is now fully functional, and the good women of Gungahlin CWA have very generously decided to support our work with a donation of \$200!

We are also hoping of course that we get the COVID ‘all clear’ to allow the planned community carols event to proceed. We are partnering with the churches to organise and promote the event which is timed so that folk can visit the centre from 3.00pm, before the carol singing and Canberra Brass begin at 4.00pm.

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Please save the date

Wednesday 17 November

for the Annual General Meeting of the Village of Hall and District Progress Association  
subject to ACT Health directives.

Additional information on the location and arrangements for the AGM will be available when the ACT Government announces further stages of ACT Health arrangements in relation to COVID-19.

See [hall.act.au](http://hall.act.au)



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# hypnotherapy

## What is holding your attention?

by **Robyn Monteleone** hypnotherapist



Distractions are all around us; our phones, social media, emails, texts, the media. What is it you're paying attention to? And is it serving you?

Whilst our whole brain processes 11 million bits of information per second, our conscious brain is only able to pay attention to 40-50 bits of information per second. Or if we chunk that up, seven plus or minus, two chunks of information. Sometimes we can only pay attention to five chunks of information, at other times we can pay attention to nine chunks. Which is why phone numbers are structured the way they are, for easy memory recall.

If we can only process a small amount of information in our conscious awareness at any one time, are you paying attention to the information that is serving you best? It's easy to get lost in scrolling the phone, checking on emails and looking at the news. I find, if I'm scrolling my phone, I am often unsure of what to do next or perhaps I don't want to do what's coming up, so the phone is a distraction. And with COVID, many of us have felt the need to keep up-to-date with the news and have found it hard to focus on anything else.

Below are some tips we can use to focus on what we want to focus on:

- Turn off the news and only look for updates once or twice a day.
- Put your phone down, with notifications turned off.
- Remember your why. Whether it's doing the dishes because you value good hygiene or a professional project, think about why the task is important. It can help to keep you on track when you remember why you're doing a task.

- Give yourself five minutes. Tell yourself, you'll do the task for five minutes and can stop after that. The likelihood is, in five minutes, you'll have started and will be more likely to keep going with the task.
- Look after yourself; eat nutritious foods and stay hydrated with water. Be conscious of whether your caffeine or alcohol intake has increased over the last 18 months or so and consider the possibility that reducing your consumption may help you focus more and be healthier.
- If you've got something on your mind, write it down. Doing a mind dump and writing down anything that comes to mind, is a great way to clear your head so you can process things and move forward.

And if you find you're still having trouble focussing, hypnotherapy may help you break through the layers of what's limiting you. You can find more information here: [robynm.com.au](http://robynm.com.au).

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# rugby

## Hall Bushrangers Women's Team

by **Jaimee Thompson**

A historic season for the Hall Bushrangers!

The Hall Bushrangers women's 10s team has competed in a thrilling first season of rugby.

Like many of the girls on this team, this was my first season of playing rugby union. I have learnt so much about the game thanks to the amazing coaches at Hall (special shout out to Shaun!) and made some amazing friends.

Our team has grown into a truly competitive side. We had our first win in a blockbuster hit out against the Yass Ewes on 31 July – a gold star achievement for a new team in an established competition!

To anyone who is curious about playing rugby, come have a run with us! Our team is super friendly and welcoming, and I promise you will love the game and the team.

Ra-Ra-Ooh-La-La Bushrangers!



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# history

## An eclectic collection – unfolding stories from the past

This year the Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre (HSMHC) is celebrating its 10th anniversary. Over the past 10 years we have been the recipients of many fascinating artefacts, donated by local families keen to see their treasures valued and cared for.

Here are the stories that emerge from a few of those treasures in our collection.

### Bessie and Ruma Kilby's dolls

Beatrice (Bessie) and Ruma Kilby were born at the height of the Great Depression. Life for many in Australia at that time was tough, with unemployment rampant. The Depression of the 1930s hurt most rural lessees around the Federal Capital Territory but Athol Kilby, the girls' father, was a successful soldier settler and so life wasn't all hardship for the family. In fact Athol and his wife Eunice (Smith) must have had enough savings to buy their girls a special doll each: Bessie in 1934 when she was four years of age and Ruma in 1936. Children at this time had few toys and so the dolls must have been a very welcome gift. One can but imagine the wonderful times the girls had dressing them up and playing with them on their property, *Homeleigh*.



Bessie Kilby with her doll c.1934

Last year Bessie's daughter, Jane Bardwell, donated the dolls to the centre. Cynthia Southwell, a long-time resident in the Hall district, has a keen interest in and collection of dolls of all shapes, sizes and ages. When she was first introduced to the Kilby dolls she very generously offered to undertake their restoration.

Both dolls are classified as composite dolls – a technique where papier maché is placed as an outer covering over a composite material of sawdust, glue, corn starch, resin and wood flour. Composite dolls were marketed as unbreakable, compared to earlier more fragile dolls. The larger doll belonged to Bessie and is the older of the two and was probably made in Europe between the 1860s and the early 1900s. Ruma's smaller doll was made in Australia in the 1930s by a well-known doll maker Laurie Cohen, and is now considered to be a collector's item.



The two dolls following restoration.

### A pram used at Palmerville and Deasland

Henry Everard (Babe) Curran married Amy Reid from Tallagandra in 1921, the couple having met at a tennis party. Together, they reared four children and all four children were wheeled, sunned and entertained in this sturdy cane pram.

Early prams were more like carriages and were made of sheet metal and wicker which includes materials such as cane, rattan, willow, reed, rush and grasses. They were often seen as a status symbol amongst privileged families with small ponies hitched up to convey young children around large estate gardens. By the 1920s they had taken on a more utilitarian role, with more safety and comfort features and were more readily available for purchase.



By 1949 Nell, Babe and Amy's eldest daughter, had custody of the pram – her daughter Janet is sunning herself just like her mother before her.

The young Currans had no capital or land behind them and rented one of the two cottages at Palmerville next to the convict barracks, where Babe worked as a roustabout for the Crace family and Amy bore her first two children: Nell and Heather. By 1927 they had saved enough cash to buy the neglected homestead and property of *Deasland* where Babe built up a world-class merino clip. Here, Amy had two more children: Richard and Isobel. In married life, she worked hard, cooking for the growing numbers of shearers to support her husband in his efforts to become one of Australia's premier woolgrowers. By the time Babe was 30 he had 10,000 acres and Australia's finest merino flock. From the 1930s through to the end of the 1960s, *Deasland* was the heart and soul of Curran family life.



Amy Curran (Reid) the first mother to utilise the pram.

When James McDonald (Babe and Amy's grandson) donated the pram to the centre he noted: 'It has been very lucky to have survived. I remember as kids, we used to use it as a billy-cart in which to hurtle down the driveway'.

### A biscuit and cake tin from Brooklands

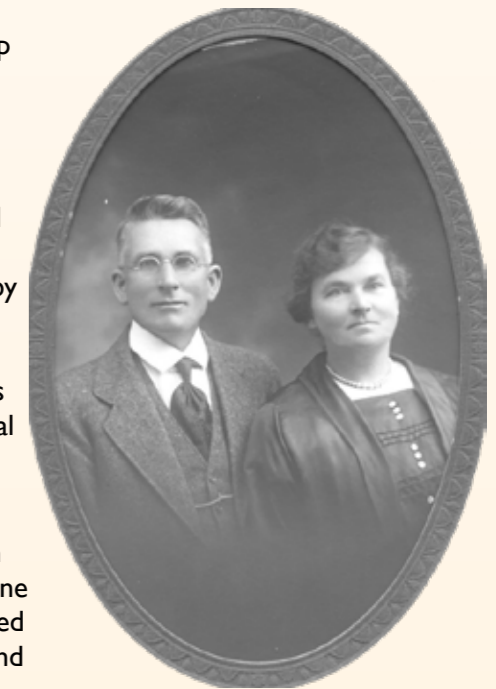
Cedric and Beryl Southwell (Kilby) lived all their married lives at *Brooklands* – the property originally farmed by Cedric's parents Richard and Amelia Southwell (Smith). Cedric and Beryl had a keen interest in the history of the local area and were great collectors, a trait they passed on to their son Kingsley. Over their and Kingsley's lifetimes a sizeable collection of photographs and personal ephemera has been amassed and is now recognised as the *Brooklands Collection*, part of the Southwell Family Archive.

It is a source of wonderful details about life in the Ginninderra District over the past 150 years.

When we were setting up the centre's Memory Lane classroom for visiting students, we were looking for unusual items from the past that children could relate to. Kingsley has several pieces on loan in the classroom, but this tin always catches the students' interest. At first they have no answers for the question 'What do you think it is?', but when we add the faux food they can guess its use. It takes a little longer to identify exactly how it works!



The structure was made by Kingsley's maternal grandfather, James Kilby who was a great handyman. He probably made it for his wife Beatrice (Southwell) who passed it on to their daughter Beryl. It has a kerosene-tin base and the top is a man-made hoop iron and timber lid. A great solution to the perennial mouse-plague problem faced by farmers' wives of the day and which continues unabated in rural communities.



James and Beatrice Kilby.

In the early part of the 20th Century kerosene was a widely used fuel for lamps and fridges in rural communities and for stoves and heaters in urban areas where firewood was not as plentiful. It was purchased by households in four gallon tins. Its use diminished with the advent of electricity, but the accumulation of tins over time, especially on farms, saw the tins converted into all manner of thing – a prized recyclable commodity.

... continues on page 14

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**Kathleen Morris' handmade petticoat**

In 1912, as part of her formal education program, Kathleen Morris stitched this petticoat. She was 11 years old and one of the first pupils enrolled at Hall Public School, the school having been opened on 1 January 1911. She was the seventh of eight children born to William (Billy) and Louisa Morris (Gozzard) who lived at Dellwood just north of the village.



Kathleen Morris is in the front row of the Class of 1915.

All the Morris women were outstanding handcraft people. They made patchwork floor and bed rugs from tanned possum and rabbit skins, were dressmakers and milliners, so Kathleen would have learned sewing and embroidery from her elder sisters, mother and grandmother who all lived at Dellwood. Her home-grown skills would have also been nurtured by Matilda Thompson, Charles Thompson's wife who took weekly classes in needlework and sewing at the school. The 1880 NSW Government Gazette stipulated that in schools where there was no female teacher the 'teacher's wife' was to take the girls for at least four hours of needlework. It was an accepted practice that she would train the girls for their domestic duties later in life; a practice which continued in public schools into the 1960s. Kathleen's excellent work was recognised when her petticoat won a first prize at the Ginninderra Farmers' Union Show, a precursor to the Canberra Show. The hand-stitched, fitted petticoat is made from lawn cloth, a plain weave fabric which is lightweight. Lace is attached at the hem, shoulders and neckline, with pin-tuck stitching featured.

After Kathleen recovered from polio as a child, Billy taught her piano as a therapy to strengthen her affected hands and following in his footsteps

Kathleen also proved to be a very capable musician, conducting a violin ensemble at the Hall School. Kathleen studied music by correspondence through the London College of Music and conducted music lessons at Dellwood and her brother Harry's family home in the Canberra suburb of Braddon, until shortly before her death in 1981 aged 80 years.



**The Curran family's sugar scoop**

Harry Curran was a well-known blacksmith who plied his trade at the Ginninderra Smithy for more than 50 years. He was an expert farrier and made and repaired the local farmer's machinery, drays, fences and household items. But he was also a husband, having married a local girl, Agnes Gribble in 1891. And by 1896 Harry and Agnes had a family of three children: Chappie, Vera and Babe.

By the late 1890s, George and Agnes had built a weatherboard home, situated about 100m east of the workshop where they lived for most of their married life, surviving a massive bushfire in 1905. Harry and Agnes were highly respected members of the Ginninderra community, with



Agnes Curran – an accomplished cook, with one of her many grandchildren.

**The Weeds List**

Many of our favourite plants over the years have joined the noxious weeds list.

**Cotoneaster** – a wonderful, bird attracting, frost hard, drought tolerant shrub. With beautiful red berries and white flowers and soft green leaves. This plant also hedges very well. Its only negative is due to its lovely red berries, birds are attracted, eat the berries then spread the seed all over the country.

**Cootamundra wattle** – this lovely Australian native shrub or small tree, with grey bipinnate foliage and masses of golden ball flowers in late winter or early spring is a noxious weed because of its prolific seeding.

**Privet** – this evergreen shrubs which has been used extensively as hedges all over the country has now literally spread everywhere. I find this plant randomly in gardens everywhere, carried in by birds. A very well known landscape designer, that charges extraordinary prices for their work is still using this plant, very scary!

These three are only a few of our old favourites and people with these in their gardens have great difficulty removing them as they can form crucial design elements. Prominent streets in Canberra have hedges of them, lets hope the local weed inspectors don't insist on removal!

**The Curran family's sugar scoop**

... continued



Agnes an accomplished cook, dress maker and sportswoman. One can imagine the use this sugar scoop was put to by Agnes, feeding her children, grandchildren and

great grandchildren, not to mention the constant stream of visitors she reportedly 'fed and watered'.

The sugar scoop was donated to the centre via Beulah McAppion, Harry's granddaughter. It was fashioned by Harry using sheet metal and a recycled tin lid. The patina suggests it was used by the family for years, passing from one generation to the next. Beulah was a frequent visitor to her grandfather's blacksmithing business as a child during school holidays and developed a close bond with Harry and Agnes.

*This article has reflected on the provenance of the items featured. The centre welcomes items of interest which have links with the Ginninderra district, with a preference for those in circulation prior to 1945.*

In my travels around gardens, I am rather alarmed to notice many more of our tried, true and faithful plants self seeding prolifically and therefore are destined in due course for the weeds list.

Some of you may already know that agapanthus in Victoria has joined the list already and may not be far away for this area. This is a loved plant by many, very easy to grow, drought tolerant and has pretty flowers at Christmas time.

I have also seen seedlings in gardens of lavender (which, may I say, when I was a child used to die every winter from frosts; either climate change or adaptation is evolving this plant). Also seeding is pittosporum, rosemary, and polygala all potentially woody weeds.

Then we have the regular weeds we all deal with such as privet, sticky weed, serrated tussock, St Johns Wort and all the variations of thistles that pop up in our gardens annually.

Plants like people and animals are very adaptable and even though our weather is becoming increasingly moody some plants are rising to the challenge. Survival of the fittest and strongest in its finest example.

Don't be fooled in your garden by the 'cute' little seedlings some of your plants are producing. Pot up the ones you want to keep and remove/poison the rest.

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# Springfield Rural Fire Service

It's time to get ready!

**Rebecca Morrison**  
President



We're over the wet winter and heading into the growing season, and the fire risk is as present as ever. The annual *Get Ready Weekend* looked a little bit different this year, but it still acts as a reminder for you and your family to start talking with your family, prepare your home and stay informed to be ready for a bush fire.

Recent rains mean more grass growth. As it dries out, the risk of dangerous grass fires increases. Grass fires are unpredictable – they can easily start and spread quickly. In fact, grass fires can move three times faster than a bushfire, leaving you little time to get ready.

Grass fires on farms can also destroy homes, crops and livelihoods. There is an increased risk of grass fires this coming summer. It is important that you understand grass fires and how to protect yourself, your family and your property from the threat of fire.

What can you do to be prepared?

Everyone needs a bush fire plan, and everybody needs to have taken some time BEFORE the fire season begins to work out what YOU will do.

There are four simple steps:

## GETTING READY FOR BUSH FIRE IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

THE 4 SIMPLE STEPS ARE:



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE [www.MyFirePlan.com.au](http://www.MyFirePlan.com.au)

The NSW RFS website has specific information to help you assess your risk of grass fire, whether you live on land, in town or passing through grassland.

You can download all the material you need to help you prepare your home from the NSW RFS website: [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/bush-fire-survival-plan](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/bush-fire-survival-plan)

If you have any questions about your fire plan, get in touch with us and our members will happily advise you.

### Who to contact at Springfield RFS?

Earlier this year our elected officials were appointed following our AGM. The key contacts for the 2021 Fire Season are:

<b>Captain</b>	Rod Tarlinton	0418 444 325
<b>Senior Deputy Captain</b>	Tom Morrison	0417 276 391
<b>Deputy Captains</b>	Mark Thornwaite	0428 487 179
	Simon Connor	0429 782 083
	Jason Burgess	0438 855 040
<b>President</b>	Rebecca Morrison	0407 943 813
<b>Permit Officers</b>	Rod Tarlinton	0418 444 325
	Mark Thornwaite	0428 487 179
	Simon Connor	0429 782 083

Congratulations and thanks to our other office bearers:

- George Southwell – Vice-President
- Karen Shaw – Secretary
- Wendy Craik – Treasurer
- Ian Davies - Training Officer
- Jason Burgess – Junior Training and Equipment Officer
- Jane Morrison – WH&S Officer
- Ted and Kaye Tarlinton – Catering Officers
- Marion Robinson – Fundraising Officer
- Louise Burgess – Communications

### Recent improvements to our Sheds

We are thankful for the support from our community, particularly through voluntary donations to the brigade. In recent months, we have been able to make some important improvements to our fire sheds, including the installation of automatic doors, flood lights and other safety measures. These improvements mean it is much easier for our crews to get to an emergency safely and have important protective equipment and tools to use on site.

If you would like to contribute, you can donate to us via bank transfer or even a cheque! Account details are **Springfield Bush Fire Brigade BSB – 062919 Account – 10000512**. Please use your surname as a reference.

### COVID safe

Please know that the RFS will continue to respond to emergency call outs. We have strict COVID safe operating requirements and continue to respond to 000 calls. We look forward to being able to train and meet together in the near future and wish you all good health in the meantime.



NSW RFS – Springfield Brigade

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### 'The Silo'



A novel by Hall local Hugh Watson has been published by Halstead Press.

A horrific death in a grain silo, rural properties mysteriously acquired and a corrupt politician on the move ... Detective Susan Swift is blocked at every turn. Can anyone stop Barry Kingscliff? Novelist Hugh Watson draws on his country roots and political background to take readers on a compelling story of political corruption and dogged pursuit.

*'Has the reader hooked from the very first page.'*  
(Adrian d'Hagé, author of *The Omega Scroll*).

*'All the elements are there: politics, greed, power and deception.'*  
(Michael Brissenden, author and double Walkley Award winner)

*'This second novel by Hugh Watson captures his country roots and political experience in a compelling story of political corruption and dogged pursuit'*  
(Philip Williams, Former Chief Foreign Correspondent, ABC)

This is Hugh's second novel. The first, *Home Grown*, is a political-action thriller 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.

*The Silo* is available for sale at the Hall Post Office, *The Book Cow* and through [hughwatson.com.au](http://hughwatson.com.au).

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## Too much of a good thing

Anita Kilby naturopath

Once you've found some healthy food options that work for you, it is very easy to become over reliant on a limited selection of foods thinking you're doing the right thing for your health. Moderation of the quantity of each food and diversity of food choices is healthy and highly beneficial for the diversity of a healthy gut bacteria population, aka your microbiome.

There is an emerging renewed awareness of the oxalate content of food and the possible adverse health effects of a high oxalate diet. Oxalates have long been of concern for those susceptible to kidney stones as oxalate crystals form the most common type. It has also long been known that oxalate crystals can accumulate in the thyroid gland. What's less well known is that oxalate crystals can accumulate in other organs and tissues causing damage and a wide range of common and non-specific symptoms.

So what are oxalates? Oxalic acid is present in many plant foods in variable amounts. It is a small organic molecule (C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>) that readily forms oxalate ions and oxalate salts which are soluble and easily absorbed into the body. These can combine with minerals like magnesium, iron, and sodium, making the minerals unavailable for bodily functions. It particularly likes to combine with calcium, forming insoluble crystals of many shapes and sizes. One form called raphides are like a bundle of double pointed needles.

If you've ever experienced mouth irritation after eating kiwi fruit, that'll be from oxalate raphides (they're the white area around the seeds).



Aside from kidney stones, high oxalates can deplete minerals, cause inflammation, connective tissue, neurological, and digestive problems. Symptoms may include: cloudy urine, digestive symptoms, food sensitivities, pain (joint, muscle, facial, eye, sinus, pelvic, genital, gout), rashes, muscle weakness, poor exercise endurance, poor sleep, mental fatigue, brain fog, memory problems, mood disorders, poor injury/surgery recovery, gum, tooth or connective tissue problems, low bone density, respiratory problems, autoimmune conditions. Men are more prone to kidney stones and women to pain syndromes. If you have several of these symptoms and consume a lot of oxalates, there might be a connection.

Some foods that are particularly high in oxalates are: spinach, silverbeet, sorrel, rhubarb, almonds, peanuts, sesame seeds, kiwi fruit, star fruit, blackberries, Indian gooseberry, buckwheat, amaranth, chocolate/cacao/cocoa, or a high intake of beans, grains and other nuts and seeds. By all means, enjoy foods with high oxalates, but consider limiting the frequency and

amount consumed if you are experiencing any of the associated symptoms. The accuracy of many online high oxalate food lists is questionable so please contact me if you'd like access to a reliable list.

A 'normal' daily dietary intake of oxalates is considered to be 100 to 200mg. It doesn't take much to get into high levels: a cup of raw baby spinach contains over 200mg, 1/2 a cup of star fruit = 230mg, 1/2 a cup of peanuts = 100mg, 10 almonds = 55mg, a tablespoon of cocoa powder = 46mg. A diet full of 'superfoods' can easily get you closer to 1000mg daily. If oxalates are identified as a problem, a low oxalate diet containing less than 60mg may be required to resolve symptoms.

If you think oxalates might be contributing to your symptoms you could experiment by removing one high oxalate food for a week or two to see if symptoms improve. But don't go cold turkey on high oxalates foods – a dramatic drop in dietary oxalate levels could cause a release of accumulated oxalates from tissues (oxalate dumping) and a nasty increase in symptoms. There are things you can do to reduce dumping symptoms like particular supplements, but the slow reduction of high oxalate foods is key. There is a urine test for oxalates but it's not always a reliable indicator of levels.

Oxalates are cleared by the kidneys into the urine, but a high intake can cause accumulation of oxalates

in tissues even when the kidneys are functioning normally. The body also makes some oxalates during its metabolic processes, which the kidneys should excrete easily, but higher amounts are made if there is a deficiency of vitamin B6 or if high doses of vitamin C supplements are taken.

Some people can happily consume high oxalate foods without any apparent symptoms, or the symptoms are attributed to other conditions, but such a diet is likely to eventually cause symptoms. There are many factors that influence how much oxalate is absorbed from foods, how toxic absorbed oxalates can become and who is more vulnerable to their effects, for example the elderly. It has even been suggested that oxalates might adversely affect babies during pregnancy, increasing the risk of autism. There is a lot more to be learned about the effects of high oxalate diets.

Plant foods which contain oxalates are still generally good for you, just be careful not to base your diet on these foods. There are plenty of lower oxalate foods to alternate with so you can still get your greens every day. Variety is the spice of life after all, promoting a healthy gut microbiome which helps reduce oxalate absorption.

For more information about oxalates see: [sallyknorton.com/oxalate-science/oxalate-basics/](http://sallyknorton.com/oxalate-science/oxalate-basics/)



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# What's new, Pussycat?

by **Hall Veterinary Surgery**

## Future cat containment in the ACT.

In the new ACT Cat Plan 2021-31, the bold ambition is that 'all cats will be owned, wanted and cared for by responsible owners' <sup>1</sup>. It is a strong recognition of both the love, companionship and wellbeing benefits that cats provide to their owners and also of the risk of harm to both the cat and to wildlife when they are not responsibly owned.

One strategy is to expand cat containment through:

- encouraging voluntary cat containment
- declaring all new suburbs as cat containment areas
- introducing city-wide cat containment requirements for new cats
- introducing legislation to allow cats to be walked on a lead and harness.

Legislative changes are being developed with a view to introducing this on 1 July 2022, most likely with a grandfathering for existing cats in suburbs which are not currently under cat containment. New cats will be required to be contained. The emphasis for the grandfathered cats will be on voluntary containment.

Cat containment has many benefits for both cat and wildlife.

Roaming cats are at a much higher risk of death or injury through misadventure. Cars, dogs and cat fights can lead to serious and fatal injury. Cat fights also become a way of transmitting potentially fatal diseases like Feline Immunodeficiency Virus and Feline leukemia. Poisonous plants, insecticides and rodenticides are some of the more common sources of poisoning of cats. A 2019 study of more than 5,000 Australian cat owners showed that two thirds had lost a cat to a roaming incident such as a car accident or dog attack, or the cat had simply never come home <sup>2</sup>. Concern for their cat's safety is in fact the primary reason given by owners who keep their cats contained.

On average, each roaming pet cat kills 186 reptiles, birds and mammals per year, most of them native species <sup>3</sup>. Neither attaching a bell nor feeding your cat several meals a day has much effect on the amount of prey a house cat will catch.

A study using cat-cameras showed that on average cats bring home less than a fifth of what they catch. So owners are often completely unaware of how much their cat is killing.



In the UniSA Cat Tracker Project <sup>4</sup>, urban owners identified rodents as the main prey of their cats, followed by birds, insects and spiders, rabbits and lizards. It is suggested in other studies that domestic cats in fact have a bigger impact on wildlife numbers around city margins than feral cats simply because there are more domestic cats <sup>5</sup>. The conclusion is that containing domestic cats would have a huge positive effect on wildlife numbers around city/bush margins.

Cat Tracker also showed that cats tend to range further at night than during the day and often go out at night without their owners knowledge. Half of the 428 cats in the study would range about one hectare or less (a hectare is about the size of the Hall Village Reserve opposite the school). Three per cent of the cats ranged over 10 hectares (that's about half the village).

Also, contained cats don't poop in neighbours' sandpits!

Cat containment can be as simple as keeping your cat indoors <sup>6</sup>, or as luxurious as an outdoor enclosed cat run with a tunnel to a cat flap to get back inside. Many cats adapt to simply staying indoors, often just needing two or maybe three litter trays in quiet places about the house to allow them to toilet discreetly. Some might benefit from extra toys and environmental enrichment <sup>7</sup>. Some dedicated/handy owners have crafted ramps, platforms and feline playgrounds indoors that are works of art <sup>8</sup>!

There are many outdoor cat enclosure companies around the ACT, providing a variety of netting and mesh structures. They are also available for self-installation in pet stores and even hardware chains now. It is better for the cat if they can get up to a high space, as they

prefer to look down on others and will feel safer if an unknown dog intrudes into the yard. Cat containment is becoming more the norm now. In the ACT as of July next year, if you are going to get another cat after your existing one, it will have to be contained, so why not get started now?

- <sup>1</sup> <https://yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/cats-and-dogs/ACT-Cat-Plan>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/9/9/703>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://theconversation.com/one-cat-one-year-110-native-animals-lock-up-your-pet-its-a-killing-machine-138412>
- <sup>4</sup> [https://ap01-a.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/view/delivery/61USOUTHAUS\\_INST/12143271650001831](https://ap01-a.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/view/delivery/61USOUTHAUS_INST/12143271650001831)
- <sup>5</sup> <https://www.publish.csiro.au/wr/WR19174>
- <sup>6</sup> <https://indoorpet.osu.edu/cats>
- <sup>7</sup> <https://iaabc.org/cat/cats-indoors-or-outdoors>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okOVxfuSYPk>

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**Cats and Australian wildlife by the numbers**

**Pet cats**

There are 3.8 million pet cats in Australia, of which:

<b>1.1 million (29%)</b> ...are kept inside 24 hours a day.	<b>2.7 million (71%)</b> ...are allowed outside to roam and hunt.
--	--

- Roaming pet cats **kill 390 million animals** collectively per year in Australia
- An individual roaming pet cat **kills 186 reptiles, birds and mammals per year**, most of them (59%) native species
- A study found **39% of cats** brought in at night **snuck out** for nocturnal roaming and hunting
- Pet cats bring home only 15% of what they hunt.

**Feral cats**

- The average feral cat **kills 748 reptiles, birds and mammals** a year
- In the bush there is **one feral cat per 3 to 4km<sup>2</sup>**, versus **40 to 70 pet cats per km<sup>2</sup>** around towns
- **Pet cats kill 30-50 times more animals per km<sup>2</sup>** around towns than feral cats do in the bush.

Wes Mountain/The Conversation, CC BY-ND

Letters to the editor . . .  
 . . . always welcome

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## From the Editor

It was finally our turn in Hall to join the global pandemic proper when positive coronavirus cases were detected in the ACT in August. Our lockdown since then has successfully kept the numbers of cases reasonably steady, but as in New South Wales and Victoria we are finding the Delta strain just too difficult to eliminate. And so, as Maddy has beautifully illustrated on page 1, the race is on to get as many people vaccinated as possible so when the restrictions ease we will have at least some protection and minimise the numbers of serious cases.

Thank you Ben, Maddy, Finn and Lilly for your brilliant contributions to this edition. Lockdown is pretty wearing and it's good to be able to give space for children's perspectives and to showcase their artwork. Thanks so much to Peter and *The Book Cow* for sponsoring the competition by providing prizes. All our local businesses are doing it tough, please support them any way possible. Hopefully by the time of the next edition of the *Rural Fringe*, there will be fewer constraints for them.

At least it is spring. And in Hall that has meant the magical tunnel of wattle on the Hall walk (see picture opposite →), the wild orchids flowering and the Floriade and Hall-planted bulbs blooming in our CBD. The photo to the left reminds us that there is no better place than Hall to be in lockdown. Also courtesy of the Porteous family, I love the photograph of the rainbow from Gladstone Street on the back page. The season of hope.

Until next time,  
 Jo Hall



Lockdown Hall style – Alex and Daniel Porteous at the Polo Crosse Oval.

### The Rural Fringe – ISSN: 1329-3893

The *Rural Fringe* is a community newspaper published in 660 copies every second month by the Village of Hall and District Progress Association Inc (VHDP) and distributed free to mailboxes of the 2618 postcode. It is also available online at [www.hall.act.au](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 VHDP that articles which are dominantly about the profit making activity of any group or individual can only be accepted for publication if the same issue carrying the article has a paying advertisement of similar size.

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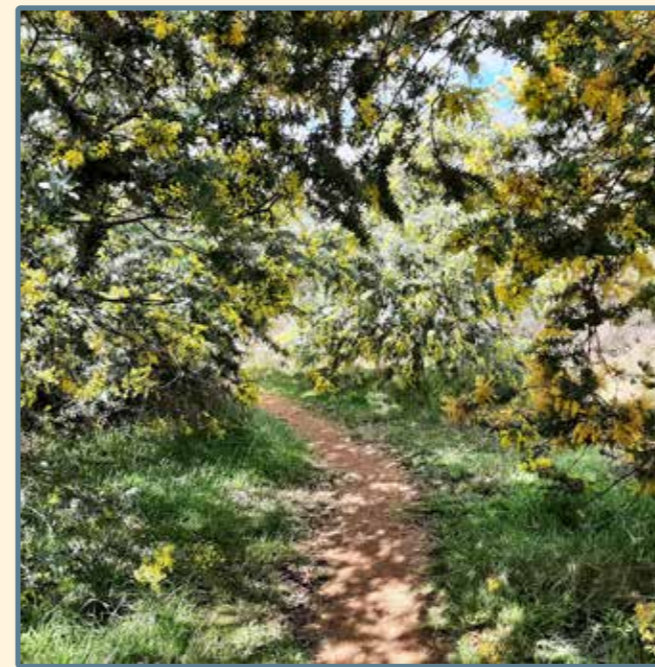
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Proudly printed by Instant Colour Press

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Wattle tunnel on the Hall walk.

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# Out and about ... about

A large falling tree blocked Gladstone Street for several hours very narrowly missing a car and walkers in the late afternoon. A shocked baby possum ran up the leg of a passer-by before being coaxed into a nearby tree.



*Blocked Gladstone Street.*

This very near miss is a reminder of being careful around dead branches and trees, especially as the rain and high winds have brought down many trees along the Hall Heritage trail.



*Rainbow photo from earlier in the year showing the tree before it fell.*

*Clean up that night (and into the next day).*



*photos: Paul Porteous*



*Trees down along the Hall Heritage Trail.*