

RURAL FRINGE

Journal of the Hall district



VOLUME 29 ISSUE 1

February 2022

Kingsley and Cynthia Southwell

After 145 years and three generations of sheep and cattle farming at Brooklands – a Wallaroo property just 10 minutes drive from Hall Village – Kingsley and Cynthia Southwell are preparing to downsize and leave the hard work that the property entails.

In 1877 Kingsley's grandfather, Richard, began clearing a block of land and established Brooklands. As Kingsley recounted in an oral history with Phil Robson some years ago:

'He had 220 acres ... and he would've built some sort of a house here I guess. But then he married in 1882. He married Amelia Smith, who was a local girl. And they set up house here. And he built, you know, a substantial house then. And they had nine children and lost three of them as infants.'



Kingsley and Cynthia at their pond.

Cedric was in turn succeeded by his son Kingsley who inherited Brooklands after his mother died in 1988 and has lived there his whole life. Kingsley's second wife Cynthia is from South Australia, where she had represented the state in cricket. A silversmith and a renowned porcelain doll maker, Cynthia has exhibited all over the world.

Between Kingsley's amazing collections of railway memorabilia, veteran and vintage cars, farming machinery and the artefacts of a life on the land and Cynthia's extensive doll

collection. Brooklands is a fascinating treasure trove. A monster clearing sale set for Saturday 26 March (see page 2) promises to be a big day when much of Kingsley's collection will be under the hammer.



Cynthia with one of her porcelain dolls.

Richard was a stalwart of the Wattle Park church (he and his brothers helped their father establish the church which opened in 1882) and was prominent in local affairs. Management and eventually ownership of Brooklands passed to his son Cedric, who married Beryl, from the Kilby family.



Kingsley and Cynthia in their kitchen at Brooklands.

... continues on page 7

UNRESERVED MONSTER CLEARING SALE



“145 Years of Collecting” Saturday 26th March 2022

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St Michael & All Angels Anglican Church

Corner of Loftus and Victoria St, Hall

St Michael's belongs to the parish of St Barnabas in Charnwood, and late last year our parish welcomed Rev Peter Malone as our new Priest-in-charge. Residents of Hall and surrounds might have already met Rev Peter, as he has quickly moved to make links in the community and was part of the support team for the Hall Village Christmas Fair on 11 December. Our stall at the fair raised over \$600 and together with half of the gold coin donations made by the public entering the fair, we were able to give \$1,000 to support the local Hall Pre-School.

Our Christmas services were joyous, though contained, as we, like every other organisation, deal with the shifting sands of COVID-19. We are required to maintain distancing at church services, which occasionally means numbers are limited, but we have embraced Zoom, sharing our weekly service online. All are welcome to join us at St Michael's each Sunday at 11am, or via Zoom using Meeting ID and password **9551044551**.

We now look forward to Easter. On **Good Friday 15 April**, parishioners from St Michael's will join members of the other churches of Hall and community members to walk the length of Victoria Street, marking the Stations of the Cross. This Good Friday walk has been held for many years and is organised jointly by the clergy of the Catholic, Uniting and Anglican

churches in Hall. Members of all churches as well as community members not necessarily connected with any church are welcome to attend, and numbers have been increasing each year. The walk will start at 11am at the northern end of Victoria Street – at the Barton Highway intersection – and finishes at the Remembrance Grove on the corner of Victoria and Gladstone Streets, although walkers may join at any point. The combined church choir of Hall will provide musical accompaniment at each Station along the walk.

We will hold our usual 11am service on **Easter Day 17 April**. Residents and visitors are invited to come along for Easter or our weekly service any **Sunday** at 11am.

For more information about our services please call Beryl on **0408 488 526**, or to contact Rev Peter Malone please call **0429 350 207**.



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Hall and District Axemen's Club

FEBRUARY 2022

The Hall Axemen were back in action at the Hall Village Christmas Fair in December and gave new and old members a chance to clean out the cobwebs! The day was a great success and we loved being back in front of a local crowd.

Upcoming events and shows

We're excited to see local shows back up and running despite the continual daily challenges we're all facing, and pleased to see many of these shows running woodchopping competitions once again. You can catch woodchopping in action at these shows and by doing so, support our surrounding communities:

- Crookwell Show: 13 February
- Royal Canberra Show: 26-27 February
- Goulburn Show: 6 March
- Cooma Show: 12 March
- Yass Show: 19 March
- Canberra Beer and Cider Festival: 19 March
- Moss Vale Show: 20 March

Women of Woodchopping and Axe Kids

The WOW program will make a return towards the end of our season (April), and will also be introducing an Axe Kids program targeted at bringing new junior competitors into the sport. All sessions are run by experienced axewomen and axemen. Keep an eye on our socials for more details!

Want to try woodchopping?

In addition to the two targeted programs above, we're always accepting new members and happy to give a helping hand and guidance to those who want to learn. Get in touch via our social media pages or email us

hallaxemen@gmail.com

to find out more information.

STOP PRESS:

Austin O'Connor has been selected as a member of the NSW Under 21 State Team to compete at the Sydney Royal Show in 2022.



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With the easing of health restrictions last November as our national COVID-19 vaccination rate passed 90%, most of us could be forgiven for sharing some optimism for the Christmas season and 2022. In November the Progress Association was able to hold our delayed Annual General Meeting and, in December, had our first face-to-face committee meeting since June. Sadly, many of our individual hopes and plans have been dashed on the shoals of the Omicron COVID-19 variant, and now, as we move towards two million cases in Australia, most of us have family and friends who have had COVID-19, or we have had it ourselves.

In a moment of COVID-19 relief in December, the Hall School Museum and Cottage site was host to an extraordinarily successful Christmas Fair that brought thousands of visitors to the village for a wide array of craft and food stalls, classic car display, wood chopping by the Hall Axemen's Club and the tasty offerings from the new community pizza oven. I am looking forward to a similar event in future years. With such enormous popularity, traffic management, parking and crowd organisation will, of course, need further assistance.



Hall Reserve

The somewhat neglected state of the Hall Reserve has been a concern for some time, exacerbated by infrequent mowing, dead foliage and recent vehicle ruts from parking and driving on the reserve. The Progress Association Committee is developing a plan for some community workdays to remove the dead foliage, clear up and replant around the reserve. We hope that as a community together we can create a space that we will all enjoy.

The issues of storm water drainage and erosion of the Hall Village laneways is a perennial problem that has been neglected by the ACT Government for 20 years. The much wetter than normal 2020 and 2021 La Nina seasons have greatly exacerbated the issues of storm water drainage and again highlighted the need for urgent attention. Towards the end of 2021, the Progress Association arranged for clearing

of some storm water drains and pipes but an overall plan to address storm water drainage is needed. A request for urgent attention has been made to the Minister and all Yerrabi MLAs have been asked for their support to address storm water drainage.

In the coming months, the Progress Association Committee will be seeking more ideas and suggestions from people throughout Hall District and Village on possible activities and what you would like to see improved in our wonderful and unique community. In the meantime, please talk to any member of the Progress Association Committee, give me a call on **0407 012 160**, send me an email, or send a message to **info@hall.act.au**. Very best wishes for 2022.

The Southwell history in the area begins of course prior to Richard Southwell and Brooklands. Thomas Southwell – a keen Welseyean Methodist – arrived in Sydney from England in 1838 and some years later he and his wife Eliza started life at Gininderra Creek, where Thomas later built Parkwood. Eliza died in 1852 giving birth to their ninth child. Thomas later married Mary Coxton, a widow with two children of her own, and they went on to have nine more children, including Richard.

Richard grew wheat and oats and grazed sheep and cattle, expanding his property over time. He supplemented their unreliable farm income with rabbits:

... one of his things in the winter time was driving with his rabbit cart from this Wallaroo area into Queanbeyan railway station. He'd pick up rabbits along the way that the young teenage boys had set traps for. And they'd have them hanging on a fence all the way along to Hall and he'd pick them up and keep a score and all that. Take them into the train, put them onto the train, they'd go to some freezing works in Bungendore or somewhere, and he'd come home again. That's a fair sort of day's work I'd reckon.

The lives of the early settlers is fascinating to read, but equally interesting is Kingsley's time at Brooklands. He recounts, for example, the wool-shed dances at shearing time that he and Cynthia put on. The shearers came from Condoblin and as they had never seen the lights of a big city, Cynthia and Kingsley decided to keep them at home by organising a Saturday night wool-shed dance, which also included anyone who had worked on the property during the year.

And then on the Sunday we'd run a foot race. These things took a lot of preparation. A lot of cheating, a lot of fun. It was all just simple fun. That's all it was.

Kingsley also recounts their firefighting team, forerunner of the Wallaroo fire brigade:

Eventually, you know, it became more structured and we got proper trucks allocated and all this sort of thing. We had one here for – 20 years, was it? I don't know. I used to drive that. Cynthia was my crew . . . I'd got to a fire soon after we were married and she'd asked me when I got home 'where are your crew?' I'd say, 'Oh, I'll pick up somebody along the way' and you'd work it out as you went along, and she decided she better learn to do it, so we – I trained her up a bit. We made the best crew in the district, I don't care what anyone says. We used to get there – if the fire was anywhere in this area we were there first. We had a smallish truck that'd go, and I'd flog it along pretty well. We'd put it anywhere – four-wheel-drive thing, it'd go anywhere. We put out a lot of fires before the other people even got there.



Richard and Amelia Southwell.

Because Kingsley's great grandfather Thomas had so many children, Cedric (Kingsley's father) had 137 brothers, sisters or first cousins. The 150th anniversary of Thomas' arrival in Australia, held in 1988 at the ANU in Canberra was attended by 3000 people. So extensive is the Southwell family that they set up their own society – see **southwellfamilysociety.org.au** for more information and photographs as well as

the Hall Museum website (**museum.hall.act.au**) for more on Brooklands.

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Hall Christmas Fair

A number of items were considered during the Progress Association Committee meeting in December. A request was received from Hall and Wallaroo residents to petition the ACT Government to extend the 80kp/h speed limit on the Barton Highway from the Clarrie Hermes Drive intersection to the NSW border. The Minister and all Yerrabi MLAs were contacted shortly before Christmas, and we are waiting an outcome. Contact has also been made with the QCity bus manager who has indicated their support to improve safety for buses turning into and out of Hall and Wallaroo.

Hall residents, are we okay with this?

by **Olga Minion**

My husband and I have lived in Hall for over 30 years and during this time we have seen it change from a sleepy village a long way out of town, with its dirt roads and thriving little shopping area containing a local doctor, chemist, school and gift shops. Now, it has transformed into a place that caters to visitors looking for food and drink and the pleasure of riding our trails.



But beyond the pretty facade of Hall's heritage buildings, laneways and countryside are some enduring local issues that urgently need the ACT Government to attend to – rather than leaving the responsibility to residents.

During the last 30 years, one constant issue that has come up over and over and over again is the appalling standard of our unsealed, dirt lanes. We have lived in Hall Street, Palmer Street and now Gladstone Street and have backed onto Cricketers Lane, Bootmakers Lane and Saddlers Lane. All lanes need attention, to varying degrees and for differing reasons. Cricketers Lane and Chaffcutters Lane have long needed serious rehabilitation but Saddlers Lane is an utter disgrace.

In every heavy rain, a substantial load of dirt and gravel is washed out onto Gladstone Street, one of the three intake roads from the Barton Highway. For years, my husband and I have diligently shoveled it all back into the lane. But I'm afraid the state of the lane has now overwhelmed us – it is heavily rutted and almost unpassable – and I live in fear of having to pick up a badly hurt bike rider from the outside of my house one day.

This problem isn't unknown to the ACT Government, which simply leaves the maintenance and safety of the lanes to residents. To provide an abridged history of a lengthy saga: On the ACT Government's website can be located The Hall Master Plan, dated May 2002 (yes **20 years ago**). Among the issues to be addressed: Some back lanes being washed away in heavy rain! Eroded and washed out lanes are difficult to use. **RESPONSE:** Review state of repair and establish an improvement program.

In 2008 (**14 years ago**), the Progress Association and a number of Hall residents attempted to help fix or at least improve the problem and pushed to have the lanes named. The Hall community at the time was advised that when named, the lanes officially became streets, which would then require them to be treated and maintained in the same way as any other street in the ACT. This means that motorists should be able to drive safely from one end of each lane to the other and not have to contend with ruts, holes, shrubs and other impediments.

In 2011 (**11 years ago**), the Progress Association Committee carried out a survey of residents regarding the 10 most important issues that required attention in Hall. No prizes for guessing what the number one issue was.



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So what has happened in the last 10 years? Certainly there has been no action from the ACT Government. What HAS happened is that the residents of Hall, those who have the wherewithal and the ability to do so, have repaired their own part of their lane. A quick stroll through all of the lanes in the village will show where a significant number have been improved by residents themselves to various degrees, from bringing in a little bit of road base to a full bitumen restoration.

I am sure all will agree that over the last three years the problem with the lanes has escalated. Given the large amount of rain this year the problem has become extreme. The attached photos show how bad the condition of Saddlers Lane is at the moment. The gravel that covers almost the two lanes of road is a significant safety issue for bike riders, motorbike riders and cars.

What have you done about this issue yourself, you might ask? I have:

- been in contact with the ACT Government on numerous occasions
- lost count of the number of times I have put this issue on the ACT Government's "Fix My Street" platform
- agitated in my position as Secretary and now Vice President of the Village of Hall & District Progress Association
- spoken to anyone who will care to listen.


Yet still the problem persists.

As they say, you get what you walk past. Are we happy to keep walking past this total lack of maintenance by the municipal services our rates, vehicle registration, GST, etc, fund?



As it is, if someone is hurt or worse as a result of the condition of Hall's lanes and the impact on surrounding roads, the ACT Government cannot say it wasn't aware of the problem.

What can we do about this, residents of Hall? How can we push to have an 'improvement program' established as was promised to the good residents some 20 years ago.



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Robert Klaver

23 June 1929 – 13 December 2021

Robert Klaver's Dutch great great grandparents, Willem Klaver and Hendrika Both, were born at Harderwijk around the time Captain Cook was fitting out the Endeavour. They'd have been astonished to think of anyone emigrating to New Holland. Robert was born in 1929 to Jan Klaver, a surveyor, and Jansje Maria van Bueren (Jo). Robert's father was incapacitated after suffering encephalitis when working in California in the 1930s. It was the resourceful and organised Jo who held together the family fort on Amsterdam's Marnixstraat during the Nazi occupation (1940-45). Members of Jo's family who had once disowned her, for marrying across the Protestant-Catholic divide, suddenly descended upon her well-run household.



Margaret and Robert in 1956.

An acquaintance, Fi, spent the occupation hiding in their attic. Robert's Aunt Willy (Wilhelmina, his dad's sister) was gifted at cycling into the countryside to find food, despite at least one search and a heart-breaking confiscation of potatoes. Robert's 15-year old brother Jan, escaped suspicion by working through the war on a farm in Friesland. Robert was younger, but was made to witness violence on the street and was once ordered by the occupiers to wheelbarrow their provisions across the city, only getting home at a worryingly late hour. At home everyone had a part to play, and he recalled his mother's request to innocently throw a parcel, containing an Allied serviceman's uniform, into a canal.

After the enforced famine of winter 1944, liberation food drops on the city by the Canadian Airforce were most welcome, although the butter was so rich that some people were a bit unwell.

Robert loved the sea from childhood, and was a proficient swimmer and sailor. He honed his skills on a long sailing trip with a man who needed to keep out the occupier's radar. After WWII Robert did National Service with the Dutch Army, being particularly noted for his skills in the Army water polo team. He later obtained a well-supported role in amateur water polo. At one point, he and a fellow Dutch swimmer entered a race across Lake Lausanne in Switzerland, and annoyed local swimmers by taking out first and second place.

Many of his family thought Robert was planning a short holiday in Australia but he had been saving to emigrate. He and a friend arrived in Sydney

on 26 May 1954 and, within two years, Robert married the love of his life, Margaret Kimber, at St Mary's Cathedral. Robert had a good knowledge of English from school, and proved a much superior Scrabble partner than Margaret's friends were prepared for. Both Robert and Margaret worked as travel agents, for Australian National Airlines and Air India respectively. Air India gave them world flights as a wedding present, so they were able to catch up with Robert's family in the Netherlands.

Margaret's parents sold their Roseville property in Sydney around 1960 and bought a sheep property



Robert sailing in the 1940s.

near Inverell which they called *Jomarin*. In 1962 Margaret and Robert left their city jobs and commenced a new farming career there. While completing a geography degree by correspondence at the University of New England, Robert heard about a ballot for irrigated rice farms. He won the right to a property at the new Coleambally irrigation area in the Riverina. The township wasn't laid out for another 10 years so they had to start from scratch in the middle of nowhere in 1964, the same year that saw the birth of their only daughter, Jan. All three started off living there in a corrugated iron shed without power. Robert's first rice crop was share farmed with an experienced farmer from the earlier MIA, and thus he learnt the skills. Margaret's parents first moved to Darlington Point then joined the Klavers in the shed. A house was finished in 1968. Completion was rushed as Robert's mother and Aunt Willy were coming from Holland to visit for six months, after which they returned to civilisation, with memories of dust storms and strange insects, and pronouncing it madness to stay. Robert travelled back to Amsterdam with Jan in 1979 and also went to help his Aunt Margaret in the Hague to settle into a retirement home in 1998. The family settled into Coleambally's community life with a wide circle of close farming friends. Robert taught Jan and many of her friends how to swim in the irrigation channels.

By 1984 it was clear that Jan was keen to go to university, so the household made the big decision to sell up and move their Murray Grey stud to the third *Jomarin*, at Kaveney's Road, Jeir. Hall Village and district became their community for the next 36 years. In addition to the cattle stud, Robert took up work as a security guard at the Australian



Robert at Inverell.

National Gallery in Canberra, and was a volunteer guide for many years. A family friend of Robert from Amsterdam, Jan Peeters, was a good painter and Robert had always enjoyed art. Work at the gallery with friendly colleagues was thus a joy. Robert and Margaret became grandparents with the birth of Kate Margaret in 1995. In retirement Robert continued to thrive in the water, and he caught up regularly with his AIS Aqua friends. Robert subdivided the farm in the late 1990s and began to wind down the cattle stud. Kate moved in with Robert and Margaret in 2016, and stayed there



until the farm was prepared for sale in 2018-19. Family and good neighbours enabled Margaret and Robert to stay on their farm before moving into their purpose-built extension in Hall Village. After Margaret passed away in 2020, Robert appreciated the care of dedicated staff at Goodwin House in Ainslie.

conservation

Barton Highway upgrade

A group of local community organisations is continuing negotiations with the Barton Highway Upgrade Alliance. In particular Wally Bell (Ngunnawal Elder) in concert with Kate Waters (Archaeological Consultant) and Jasper Brown (Environmental Defenders Office, EDO) have been able to negotiate to have Stage 1 of the upgrade finish 1km south of the Kaveney's Road intersection. This should allow time for the re-design of the intersection at Kaveney's Road so as to avoid impact on the Aboriginal Heritage Ring Tree and associated spirit circle of trees.

In the Kaveney's Road location it seems likely that the extra carriageway needed for the upgrade will be located to the east of the existing carriageway. The existing design already has the new carriageway to the east of the existing highway north of Kaveney's Road to Capricorn Stud so the change to east some 1km south near Briarwood Lane does not involve major design changes.

In relation to the alignment of the upgraded road through the Hall Travelling Stock Reserve (TSR) Wally, Kate Waters and the EDO are continuing to work with the Barton Highway Upgrade Alliance team to make changes to avoid impact on heritage trees and avoid any clearing of the Hall TSR.

This area is very significant both from an Aboriginal Heritage point of view and from an environmental point of view. There are ring trees close to the existing highway on both sides so that only a slight expansion of the existing highway footprint is possible with doing damage to the trees. Wally's group has asked the BHUA to consider only very minimal expansion of the highway footprint in this location.

The BHUA is seriously considering this option and we hope that a satisfactory solution can be arrived at sometime in the first half of 2022.

A minimalist highway footprint through the Hall TSR could represent a golden opportunity for a

very tangible expression of respect for Aboriginal heritage. The bush capital could boast an entrance which is bordered on each side not by large billboard like structures but by Aboriginal Heritage trees. A very real and visible indication of respect for Aboriginal Heritage. The adjacent Hall TSR grassy box gum woodland enshrining the trees in something like their original context.



The whole would provide an outstanding innovative entrance to the Bush Capital. In spring time the understory flora in the Hall TSR on both sides of the highway is a carpet of bulbine lilies together with a scattering of milkmaids and other native wildflowers.

conservation

by **John Connelly**

A design competition for the national precinct on the lake foreshore will be undertaken over the course of 2022.

I will be attempting over the next couple of months to lobby both ACT and NSW Government bodies to give serious consideration to creating an imposing natural entrance to the ACT as outlined above. I would be interested to hear if the local Hall/Wallaroo/Springrange/Nanima community thinks this is an idea worth supporting. Given the Barton Highway Upgrade Alliance has been very supportive of our aims at the Kaveney's Road intersection, I think we may have a chance of achieving a good outcome at the Hall TSR.



An information panel could be erected at the parking area at the end of Victoria Street to explain the significance of the area with possible walking trails constructed through the TSR.

Such an entrance precinct would be an ideal accompaniment to the Ngurra, The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Precinct which is currently being proposed for location along the primary axis of the Parliamentary Triangle right on Lake Burley Griffin foreshore.



Small dam in the TSR: a good place to watch birds and at night it comes alive with sugar gliders, bats, tortoises and frogs.



Hall TSR and horse paddocks and Barton Highway, spring 2021.

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 'Clare View', Yass \$950,000	 29 West St, Murrumbateman \$1,001,500	 30 West St, Murrumbateman \$1,295,000
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 3/43-45 Dutton St, Yass \$560,000	 23 Marquess Pl, Murrumbateman \$1,530,000	 'Brumby Block', Murrumbateman \$1,920,000

Thinking about selling now or in the future? While this decision is yours, let's start the conversation early!

George Southwell and the entire Team Southwell are property professionals whose marketing and selling tactics create the best result for their clients. Give George a call to discuss how they can help to ensure that when the decision is made, you do not just sell, but you sell for more.

RayWhite



George Southwell
0429 838 345



raywhiteruralyasscanberra.com.au

Do you have COVID grief?

by **Robyn Monteleone** hypnotherapist



Will COVID 'ruin' this year too? We've already changed so much about, cancelled so much, missed out on so much. If you or someone you know is finding COVID difficult to navigate emotionally, perhaps this information on COVID grief will be helpful.

- The first stage is denial. In this stage of thinking, COVID isn't real or that this virus won't affect us.
- The second stage is anger. Some people are angry. Angry their lives and livelihoods have been taken away. That they can't see their loved ones. That the medical system strained.
- The third stage is sadness. I don't know if this will end. There's nothing good happening in the world.
- The fourth stage is bargaining. If we're vaccinated is it over? If we wear masks? If we stay outside? If we get our boosters? What do we need to do for this to be over?
- And the fifth and final stage is acceptance. COVID is here to stay. We are going to need to make some adjustments in our lives, however, we can adapt. In adapting we can survive and then learn to thrive.

This is not a linear process, you could go back and forth a little bit.

What stage of grief are you at? And perhaps, it's not the first time you've been through this cycle with COVID. Omicron is now our fourth COVID wave and the future is uncertain. At the time of writing, we are yet to hit the peak, although this wave is expected to be short and sharp.

Whatever you're feeling regarding COVID, that's okay. What's important, is to gauge what you're feeling and the level of emotion attached to it. Take a moment to stop and ask yourself how you are feeling about COVID and simply acknowledge it. Labelling the emotion can be helpful to start with. If you're feeling sad, acknowledge that you are feeling sad. Or frustrated, or angry or helpless or whatever the emotion is, simply acknowledge it. Emotions are energy in motion, acknowledging our emotions helps them to pass through more quickly.

Then think about the depth of the emotion you're having. Are you able to carry on with your life or has this emotion become overwhelming? Can you interrupt the loop with simple principles?

- Get some fresh air.
- Catch-up with friends or family in person or online.
- Get some exercise.
- Eat well and sleep well.
- Write your frustrations in a journal.

If you are finding you are simply not coping, it's okay to ask for help. If you feel you need more, counselling, psychology and hypnotherapy provide different approaches and work for different people. Hypnotherapy works less on talking about what is happening and more on interrupting the loop and creating new neural pathways to provide you with more options. If that sounds interesting, you can learn more here: www.robym.com.au

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Springfield Rural Fire Service

Rebecca Morrison
President

While it definitely hasn't been a run of the mill summer, Springfield RFS has been busy with weather related activity. The severe storm that came through our region on 3 January wreaked havoc in our region and decimated many of the local vineyards we are so lucky to have in our neighbourhood.

Our crews struggled to make their way to the Patemans Lane fire shed as there were trees across the roads from all approaches. Thank you to those members involved in the clean up that day.

We encourage all of you to support these businesses who always support us – Poachers Pantry, Four Winds and Dionysus Winery; all of whom have had their vintage decimated by the hail.



Grass fire risks increase

The rains have brought more grass in our paddocks than we have seen for some time. This growth will dry out and need to be mown.

Grass fires are unpredictable. They can start easily and spread quickly. The taller and drier the grass, the quicker the fire will move and more intensely it will burn. In fact, grass fires can move three times faster than a bush fire, leaving you little time to get ready.

There is an increased risk of grass fires this summer. It is important that you understand grass fires and how to protect yourself, your family and your property from the threat of fire.

Mowers, tractors and slashers should not be used unless conditions are mild and you have access to an independent means of extinguishing a fire, such as:

- working 9L water fire extinguisher
- or 0.9kg dry powder fire extinguisher, or
- 16L knapsack spray pump filled with water.

Grinders, welders and chainsaws shouldn't be used unless conditions are mild, the immediate area is dampened down and clear of any materials that may cause an ignition.

More than 20 trees were felled by the storm in the entrances to the Poachers Pantry.



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fire safety

FACT
THERE'S AN INCREASED RISK OF GRASS FIRES IN THE SOUTHERN TABLELANDS AREA



You can find more information about the risk of grass fires and preparation here:

wrfns.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/-fire-safety

and click on farm fire safety.

Don't forget you still need a fire permit.

During the fire season you need a permit to light a fire. Not getting one is an offence.

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In order to get your permit, one of our Permit Officers must visit your location to make an assessment. This means we need at least ten days' notice so we can schedule in a property assessment.

Permits are easy to obtain, so there is no excuse not to apply for one. You must contact our Fire Permit Officers:

- Rod Tarlinton **0418 444 325**
- Mark Thornthwaite **0428 487 179**
- or contact Yass Fire Control during business hours on **02 6226 3100**

Don't be a fire risk to your community. Know the rules on safe burning and check: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/BFDP

Next training

Wednesday 9 February from **6:30pm** at Patemans Lane Shed. All welcome, especially new and potential members.



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Countering COVID anxiety

Anita Kilby naturopath

We've all now been through two years of COVID! The effects of the constant vigilance and media saturation has induced fear, anxiety and/or depression in many of us and on a population scale unlike anything most have experienced before. Unfortunately, there is presently no end in sight. To counteract the negativity that surrounds us, now might be a good time to take some positive action to cope better with stress and anxiety – if you haven't already.

We can't avoid the daily reminders of the lurking danger – having to 'check-in', wear masks and be constantly aware of any changing restrictions. Our nervous system responds to these more subtle danger signs in the same way it responds to stress and obvious threats, just at a lower intensity. But ongoing low-grade danger/stress signals have a cumulative effect on the nervous system and can eventually cause it to become hypervigilant – and you suddenly find yourself getting upset over small things or overreacting.

Symptoms of stress and anxiety include irritability, restlessness, anger, worry, depression, feelings of dread, panic attacks, insomnia, headaches, neck/back pain, muscle cramps, mouth dryness, indigestion, butterflies in the stomach, diarrhoea, increased urination, rapid breathing and light-headedness. Chronic stress also reduces immune function, so reducing stress/anxiety

is an extremely important strategy to reduce COVID symptom severity and enhance immunity.

A few strategies to counteract negativity might include:

Tune out – limit exposure to the news, social media etc, connect briefly once a day to catch up on the essentials – we know what precautions we need to take regardless if case numbers are 100 or 10,000 so knowing the exact figures isn't actually relevant!

Positivity – do two positive things for each negative you encounter, if you've watched 10 minutes of the news follow it with 20 minutes of something fun and light-hearted. Do a 20 minute guided meditation, watch a funny video, play with the kids/pets, make sure you laugh every day

Refocusing – have an awareness of your negative thoughts, actively refocus your thoughts onto something positive (daydream about your next holiday, remember happy occasions, visualise positive outcomes, think of five things you are grateful for, etc).

Social support – talk to family/friends, maintain existing social contacts, join a new social/interest group or class.



health

Relaxation – take care of yourself, enjoy some relaxing activities (reading, painting, craft, massage, watching the sunset etc), take a few minutes to do some slow deep breathing to calm the nervous system, take a relaxing bath, take a break, have a holiday, get out in nature.

Sleep – develop a sleep routine, get some early morning sunlight (helps to reset circadian rhythms), turn down the lights in the evening (helps trigger melatonin release), keep mobiles/iPads/TV etc out of the bedroom to reduce brain stimulation.

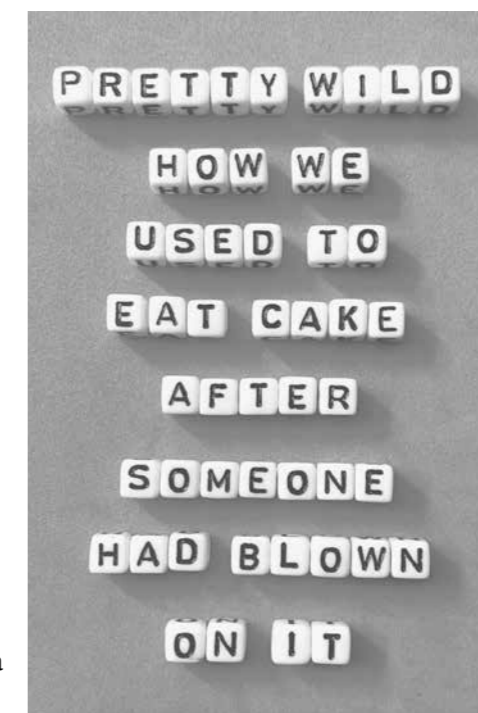
Physical exercise – use up the stress hormones by doing something physical. It doesn't have to be strenuous or for long, just enough to get your heart rate and breathing rate up briefly. Develop a regular exercise routine, start easy and increase intensity/duration as you progress. Rhythmic activities like walking, jogging, skipping, dancing are particularly good for the nervous system, and focused activities like yoga and tai chi help calm the mind.

Diet – eat well and stay hydrated, reduce nervous system stimulants like caffeine and sugar.

Magnesium – the body needs more magnesium when it's under stress. Good food sources include dark green leafy vegetables, nuts and seeds, whole grains, beans and legumes, dark chocolate, avocado, potato, rice, and yogurt. During chronic stress most people would benefit from a magnesium supplement.

Low magnesium makes you more susceptible to the effects of stress whereas adequate magnesium is protective, helping to inhibit the stress response. Look for supplements with amino acid chelate forms of magnesium rather than magnesium oxide which is poorly absorbed.

Those at highest risk of anxiety, such as front-line workers, at risk individuals (older adults, those with pre-existing chronic health or mental health concerns), and stigmatized groups, are at increased risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Implementing these types of strategies will help reduce that risk.



If these simple measures don't bring you relief, there are numerous health treatments which can help calm your nervous system and reduce anxiety and depression. Medications like antidepressants may be necessary for some, but most will respond very well to other therapies. Counselling, massage therapy, hypnotherapy, acupuncture, naturopathy and other modalities all use different approaches so there is bound to be something that appeals to and suits everyone.

Being more kind, tolerant and forgiving of others, and of yourself, will help us all get through this more emotionally and mentally intact – ready to face subsequent challenges with positivity.

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Heritage Festival on the horizon

The 2022 Heritage Festival theme is 'Curiosity'. According to Heritage ACT the theme offers event organisers opportunities to create events to:

- learn from Ngannawal and other Aboriginal people of their deep knowledge of and continuing connection to the land
- learn about the industries of the early colonists and the innovations of Canberra's 20th Century planning, engineering and architecture
- explore the heritage of science and innovation in our region, the diverse collections of our museums, galleries and science centres, and our natural and geological heritage hidden in plain sight.

The 2022 festival will introduce a Kids Week starting on World Heritage Day, **18 April** through until **22 April 2022**.

The centre will contribute to Kids Week by staging a cryptic clue Treasure Hunt – geared to discovering and understanding curious artifacts from the museum's collection.



Volunteer Peter Browning, with Aaron de Smet and Sheridan Burnett from our benefactors the National Portrait Gallery.

The Treasure Hunt will be on **Wednesday 20 April** and will be advertised in the Festival Program.

Our main contribution will be a display recording and celebrating almost 150 years of farming by the Southwell family at the 'Brooklands' property selected by Richard Southwell in 1877, and currently owned by Kingsley and Cynthia Southwell (see page 1). The display will be launched on **Sunday 10 April at 2.00pm**.

Manna from heaven

We recently gained eight splendid new display cases, surplus to requirements, thanks to the National Portrait Gallery. We are extremely grateful to the gallery for the gift, and their advice on using and taking care of them. They seem built to last for ever!

Brass on the Grass

The date has been set for the 2022 annual fundraising concert with Canberra Brass. It will be on **Sunday 27 March at 4.00pm**. Thanks to COVID we will be a bit more reliant than usual on the concert as a fund raiser for us.

Since last year's concert our ongoing sponsors, BL&A, have been purchased by the Parker Financial Group. The upcoming concert will be the first under the BLA Parker branding, and we hope that they will continue the tradition in future years. The 2022 concert will be an opportunity for us to show our appreciation to Stephen Barnett and Scott Lilley for a decade of solid support, and welcome the Parker Financial Group.

Slugs and snails

With record rainfalls continuing throughout this summer, those pesky snails and slugs are still with us. Usually beaten back by the hot summer sun, we are still finding our lettuce infested with slugs, or our strawberries disappearing just as they get ripe. Worse perhaps, following that ruinous hailstorm, we have replanted our pumpkin, basil or broccoli and return to examine our pride and joy the next day, only to find the little seedlings all devoured by snails, slugs and slater beetles or anything that feels hungry as they stroll past the new yummy plants.

It's devastating when all that work and anticipation wipes out your vegetable seedlings in one munch. Slugs and snails are insidious. Sometimes hard to find, they remain one of gardener's worst enemies and are able to consume several times their own body weight of your favourite plants in one sitting.

Salt was used many years ago and was a wonderful deterrent around your treasured plants but it dissolves quickly and can cause potential harm to your soil and other wildlife. If you live near the coast you can use seaweed which will provide an effective barrier around the garden.

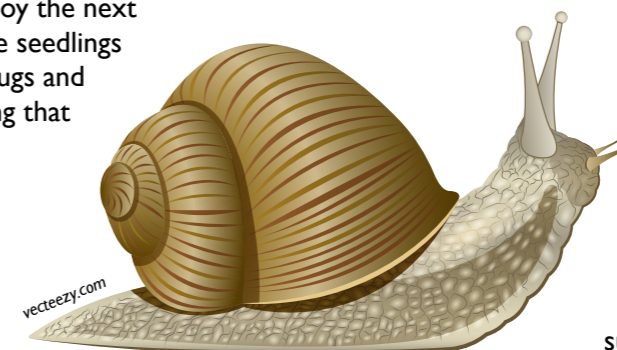
Wood ash works for a while but like many natural treatments it works in some gardens and not others. Other folk swear by grit or egg shells and some slugs and snails hate it while others slide intrepidly across without a glance back.

Traditional slug pellets, while they work really well and, depending on your infestation or your determination to go natural, can contain metaldehyde which can be harmful to wildlife. Birds, frogs and other animals are unlikely to eat the pellets but may eat the slug or snail corpse.

In the perfect garden the ideal method of natural control of slugs and snails is to encourage natural predators into your garden, frogs and birds. And this method really only works as long as the control you use doesn't cause harm to them.

A few methods that have a high rate of success:

- **Coffee grounds** – spread around plants to deter slugs and snails and good for the soil as well.
- **Beer trap** – slugs and snails love beer and small tub in your garden attracts them, they get drunk, fall in and drown. (My problem is that my dogs



love beer as well, so this solution does not work in my garden.)

- **Egg shells and sea shells** – these can work for a while and create a barrier around your plants, temporarily at least.
- **Diatomaceous earth** – finely ground fossil remains of freshwater prehistoric diatoms - is an abrasive powder - slugs can't cross it - may be worth a go.
 - **Copper tape** – is a great barrier as slugs and snails cannot cross it. Using a ring around individual plants will prevent them from getting to plants.
 - **Slug and snail repellent plants** such as garlic, chamomile and chives can work to some degree, but I have leek (a relative of garlic) infested with snails.
- **Wool waste products** – 'shoddy' is a by-product of the wool manufacturing process, turned into pellets that you can spread around plants as a barrier. When the pellets swell, they release little wool fibres that are an irritant to slugs and snails. The pellets degrade over time and become an organic matter in the soil and become plant food.
- **Nematodes** – are a biological control and effective in small gardens, best used early in the season and simple to apply. Simply add to a watering can and water the solution around the soil. Nematodes penetrate the slug and snails, infect and kill them.
- **Wheat bran or corn bran** – small poles or rings of bran are eaten by the slugs and snails and it kills them. This method is used a lot with success but you need to replenish often. It is easy to buy from your local store.
- **Organic slug pellets** – iron phosphate rather than metaldehyde - these are approved for organic gardening - you don't need much so use sparingly. There is some evidence to them killing earth worms and reports of dogs becoming unwell after ingestion - so keep the dogs away like you would with all other treatments.

If you are really keen to work without chemicals I recommend giving everything a go (one at a time) and hopefully you will find one that works. Otherwise use the tried and true pellets, eliminate as many of the pests as possible so that the numbers are more manageable and then you can at least squash them when they are out and about.



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It is interesting how our brains work. I had never noticed the typo in the signpost on Gladstone Street, had you? Thanks to Paul Porteous for the photo and his daughter Alex for spotting the mistake in the first place.



There is much in this issue about our brains and mental states and I was pleased to read Robyn and Anita's advice to help us deal with over two years of this pandemic, which I think all of us are finding wearing to some degree. Lisa too, as a bit of gardening therapy is always helpful for me. The extraordinary January hailstorm we had shredded my vegetable garden, but the rhubarb and pumpkins are making an equally remarkable recovery. It is also pleasing to see events like Brass on the Grass and the National Sheep Dog Trials scheduled. And congratulations to Axeman Austin O'Connor on his selection for the NSW under 21 State Team to compete at the Sydney Royal Show this year!

It was a rare treat to be shown around Brooklands by Kingsley and Cynthia Southwell, I commend the

sale to you on 26 March. We wish them both well as they move to a new home (they promise they are not going far!) and leave behind such a family history associated with Brooklands and the Southwells.

We have been struggling with roadside deliveries of the *Rural Fringe* to our 2618 addresses as Australia Post gradually de-prioritises 'unaddressed mail' and will no longer deliver our December issues at all. Our deep thanks to Marg and Allan, Phil and Yvonne and Ken and Jan for delivering the December issue. We are trialing an arrangement with the Men's Shed who are kindly providing volunteer deliverers for this February edition – our thanks to them and we hope this will become a long term solution.



'Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds'.
... from the Greek historian Herodotus

Until next time,
Jo Hall

The *Rural Fringe* acknowledges the Ngunnawal people who are the traditional custodians of the land of Hall Village and District and acknowledges their continuing relation to their ancestral lands. We pay our respect to the Elders of the Ngunnawal Nation past, present and future.

The Rural Fringe – ISSN: 1329-3893

The *Rural Fringe* is a community newspaper published in 660 copies every second month by the Village of Hall and District Progress Association Inc (VHDP) and distributed free to mailboxes of the 2618 postcode. It is also available online at www.hall.act.au This publication is funded by the advertisements so readers are encouraged to support the businesses advertised.

Contributions

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

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

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

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

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

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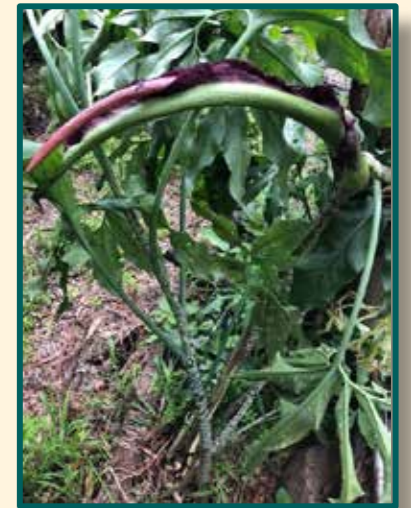
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Other information

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Vulgar(is) Ode

Dracunculus vulgaris has zebra-striped stems, and its meat-perfumed flowers are like huge purple gems.

When the pungent florescence reaches maximum size, Hall's folk are appalled but not so its flies.

That's my second Fringe ode about blowies and blooms, so I'll next write of birds and their sweet songs and plumes.

Alexandra Street Bard

Out and about ... about



photos: Paul Porteous



Hall Polocrosse Oval waterhole