

Issue: Feb 2017

FILL THE GAP

Produced by the Community Association
& Budja Budja Neighbourhood House.

AND WE ARE ALREADY IN FEBRUARY!!!

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FROM THE GARIWERD SIX SEASONS CALENDAR



kooyang

season of eels - late summer
(late January to late March)

A Parched Landscape

Late summer (season of eels
or kooyang) is the hottest and
driest time of the year.
The risk of bushfire (Piikorda) is high
Streams dry up.

Welcome back to Fill the Gap for another year! We've missed catching up on local events and community news over the past few months, but hope everyone had a great summer break.

While we've had more than a few warmer days, luckily we have had very few fires so far (touch wood). The local pool has been getting a work out as have the local lakes. Visitation has been high and there have been plenty of international tourists around.

We are about to head into events season... Check out what's in the pipeline:

Clean Up Australia Day (Officially Sun 5th March) but Parks Victoria and CVA are running an event on Sat 4th March for the whole community. See details in the PV update ;-)

Grampians Music Festival 24—26th March

Let us know about any more! If you run a regular class or are promoting a community event add them to the community website calendar or Visit Halls Gap website.

Don't forget to get your articles and advertisements for Fill the Gap in to Leanne at Budja Budja by the 25th of each month.

Thanks to everyone that contributed to sharing the good news from Halls Gap and surrounds this month :-)

December Rain Fall by Chas;

A recording of 55.5mm for December brings the progressive total for 2016 to 1272mm, the highest rainfall total since 1964 when we received 1326.5mm. (4 years earlier, 1960 we received 1542.0mm) Compared to last year (2015) when we received 26.00mm with a progressive total of 740.5mm.

As of 28th December 2016 Lake Bellfield is holding 70,910ML or 90% full compared to the same period last year of 48,830ML or 62% full. The total system is holding 356,200ML or 63.96% full compared to the same period last year of 152,110ML or 27.315 full.

Fyans is 83% full, Lonsdale 87% full, Moora Moora 88% full, Rocklands 50% full, Stawell 96% full, Taylors 96% full, Toolondo 29% full, Wartook 95% full, and Green Lake 79% full.

Mount William received 63.6mm for December. The highest temperature of 28.9 C was recorded on the 26th of December and the lowest of 1.2 C was recorded on the 9th and 15th of December 2016.

January 2017 Rainfall by Chas;

A good January rainfall compared to last year with a total of 53.5mm. This compares to January 2016 of 21.00mm. As of the 1st of January Lake Bellfield is holding 69,150ML or 88% full compared to the same period last year of 47,120ML or 60% full. The total system is holding 338,920ML or 60.39% full compared to the same period last year of 145,560ML or 25.94% full.

Mount William received 59.2mm for January compared to the same period last year of 105.0mm. The maximum temperature of 30.8 C was recorded on the 17th of January and the lowest of 2.7 C was recorded on the 19th of Jan.

BOTANIC GARDENS

As the working year starts, have you thought whether you would have time to join the team looking after the garden? We could really do with more workers as some of us are aging. You don't really need any expertise. Or if you run a tourist business and your guests appreciate what we do, you might like to help us with a donation, as one kind business already does. Please publicise our Facebook page too: Grampians Flora Botanic Garden. Our regular working bees are the second Wednesday of the month, but there are several of us who come at different times.

Please contact Margo on 0429 201 139 if you are interested in helping.

A PLASTIC BAG FREE HALLS GAP ???!

Boomerang bags is a wonderful initiative bringing communities together to create an alternative choice to single use plastic bags by replacing them with recycled fabric handmade bags.

I am excited to announce that the Grampians has been accepted into the Boomerang bag community and the Halls Gap General store will be one of our major locations where locals and tourists alike will be able to borrow a bag and when finished return the bag.

How you can help right now:

- * Start saving fabric scraps
- * Contact us to make sure you receive all the latest updates
- * Head to FB and join "Boomerang Bags - Grampians"

POMONAL COMMUNITY UNITING CHURCH

Yes the building is in Pomonal, but several of us live in Halls Gap. Apart from our Sunday service at 10 am each week, we have two informal non-churchy activities here each month. One is our social coffee morning at Brambuk on the 1st Tuesday at 11 am (so 7 Feb this month); the other is our singing night (very eclectic) on the second Thursday at Red Rock Olives.

Contact Peter Greenberger for more info. 0400164 962.



We are still in the very early stages of establishing however if you would like to be involved please feel free to contact Cass on 0418 375 199 or casshebbard@hotmail.com - alternatively, stop by the Post.



Source—Boomerang bags website

HALLS GAP CFA

The Halls Gap CFA was very busy over the Christmas and New Year period. Many of the callouts attended were to campfires reported in as being unattended or larger than appropriate.



Other callouts included a car accident, fires in backyards, lightning strikes, grass fires and support to other brigades within our area. Training for fire fighters included 'burn over' and participation in control burns at both Joel and Stawell Airport. We welcomed two new members to the brigade and were supported by volunteers from other brigades while staying in Halls Gap. The brigade would like to thank all the businesses in town that support the brigade through the Fire Extinguisher Maintenance program (FEM).

A number of brigade members are trained in completing extinguisher and fire fighting equipment checks and maintenance. A fee is charged for this service as regulated by the CFA. The Halls Gap brigade uses all money made from this service to fund ongoing maintenance, replacement and new equipment programs. If you are interested in finding out more about how you can support your local brigade by using this service, contact brigade captain Colin Andrews on 5356 4618.

A recent visit to the area by the CFA information van provided opportunity for visitors and locals to learn more about home fire plans, community safety and the dangers associated with excessive grass growth this season.

The following information is taken from the CFA website and answers a much asked question - **Fire Danger Period** (but not a Total Fire Ban)
Can I have a barbecue, light a campfire or light a fire for warmth or comfort?

No unless:

- the wind is not more than 10km/h (this can be observed if leaves and small twigs are in constant motion)

- the fire is lit in a properly-constructed fireplace or in a trench at least 30 centimetres deep
- the area within a distance of 3 metres from the outer perimeters of the fire and the uppermost point of the fire is clear of flammable material
- the fire does not occupy an area in excess of 1 square metre and the size and dimensions of solid fuel used are the minimum necessary for the purpose
- A responsible person is in attendance at all times while the fire is alight and has the capacity and means to extinguish the fire the fire is completely extinguished before the person leaves
- Note that in accordance with the CFA Act, a "properly constructed fireplace" means a fireplace that is constructed of stone, metal, concrete or any other non-flammable material so as to contain the perimeter of the fire. A commercially produced barbecue would be considered a properly constructed fireplace.

Judy Hilbig—Halls Gap Brigade Community Safety Coordinator



Source— Stawell Times news.

PARKS VICTORIA UPDATE

The Grampians has seen another very busy Christmas and New Year period this year. Visitation was steady at all popular visitor sites, and camping was close to capacity throughout the Holiday period. Sadly there were a few rescues to attend, for heat related health issues, twisted ankles, sprains and broken bones.

In partnership with DHHS we recently launched the 'Survive the Heat' campaign aimed at bushwalkers. Signage installed at popular trail heads warns people about the risks of bushwalking in the heat and the dangers of not being prepared for a hike. Leaving your water in the car for your return is not helpful and heat stroke can hit fast. A few tips are to: only undertaking walks suitable for every body's fitness and health levels; choose to walk in the cooler parts of the day; carrying plenty of water, food and snacks for everyone; wear appropriate clothing, seek as much shade as possible along the way.

Walkers at Mackenzie Falls and Wonderland also had the chance to chat to rangers about heat health and general preparedness for a day out in the park at recent 'pop up park information sessions' run by the Visitors and Community team and Summer Rangers. There have also been some very successful Junior ranger bush detective sessions and guided ranger walks this summer.

In other works, the fire and roads team have been busy rolling out the annual mechanical works program. This year we have had the Grader, Slasher and D5 bulldozer running in conjunction to slash and grade firelines and roads to meet fire access standards. So far we have only had to respond to a few small lightning strikes so it's been a great opportunity to monitor fire dam levels, hand clear firelines, undertake tree risk for planned burns and assist with other fire management and park maintenance activities.

We are working towards reopening Kalyrna campground and the loop section of Stapylton walk in late February. Along with the recently reopened but realigned Briggs Bluff and Mt Difficult overnight walk, this will be a great addition to the northern Grampians walking experience again.



Healthy Parks
Healthy People

The Natural Values team has been busy installing remote cameras west of Victoria Point in the search for potoroos and bandicoots. Importantly, we have detected bandicoots with offspring, so we will continue searching in order to inform future planned burning and predator control methods. We've also been installing cameras in Black Range in order to gain a better understanding if the small mammal values in the area. The Grampians Ark fox baiting program will be trialling a new type of pest control (Canid fox bait injectors) in the coming months. The benefit of this system is that the baits can only be deployed by foxes, so it reduces the risk to other animals.

All community members are welcome to join us on Clean up Australia Day! We are targeting over 15 sites this year.... Whoa!!!

Date: Sat March 4th

Meet at: Brambuk @ 9am. goes till 12pm with a BBQ lunch afterwards to say thanks!! Contact Caity or reilly on 9428 553 040 or coreilly@cva.org.au



GRAMPIANS PEAKS TRAIL

Works are underway by one of Horsham's contractors on a sections of existing track near Mt Stapylton that will be upgraded and incorporated into the Grampians Peaks Trail.

The Mitchell Plateau will be closed from March for Grampians Peaks Trail upgrades. Stay tuned for further detail or visit <http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/grampians-national-park>

CERT

2016 was the busiest year for the Community Emergency Response Team since it was formed eleven years ago. We were called upon 133 times, up from our previous high of 120. Only 20 of these calls were from locals with the other 113 being for tourists.

There were 27 calls to people who got into trouble while walking in the National Park. And that's just the small section of park Halls Gap CERT covers. Tragically a 26 year old man drowned in the Lake Bellfield swimming area. There was a Police Rescue training exercise being held in our area that day and as soon as they arrived they found him very quickly but it was too late.

2017 began with seven callouts in eight days. Three of these calls were also from people in trouble while walking in the National Park. There was also a call to a motorist who had run off the road when swerving to avoid a kangaroo. He was transported to hospital for scans on his neck & back.

After this busy start to January our pagers went quiet for a fortnight showing how unpredictable emergencies can be. And it has been a great start to the year for CERT with six newly qualified and enthusiastic members added to the already existing team of five members.

BUDJA BUDJA COMMUNITY HOUSE

The summer school holiday program was a blast, had a great time bead making, fun cooking, paper mache and painting.



Upcoming Events:

- RSA- Responsible Serving of Alcohol
Monday 13th February 2017
10am – 2pm or 6 – 10pm
Cost \$95pp
- Tai Chi every Thursday 10 – 11am
Gold coin donation

Book club is up and running again for 2017 if anyone is interested, just started reading first book for the year, we meet 3rd Thursday of the month at 7.30 at Budja Budja contact Lee-Anne.

Anyone know of a Yoga instructor who would be interested in doing classes at Budja Budja contact Lee-Anne

Phone: 5356 4751 option 2 or

Email: leeannel@budjabudjacoop.org.au



FRIENDS OF GRAMPIANS GARIWERD

We are starting the year with a student presentation. Each year we support students doing research in our Park, both by helping out a bit with travel costs, and by encouraging them to share what they are discovering. And February is the perfect month to have an indoor meeting. Lat Sunday Samantha Barron told us what she has learnt about Sallow Wattle.



This is a coastal wattle which somehow made its way up here quite a few years ago, probably a garden escapee, and is now a really major weed problem, particularly in the areas in the Northern Grampians affected by fires in 1999, 2006 and then again in 2014. It could have devastating effect on the biodiversity of the National Park. Some of our members are helping with photo monitoring of affected areas.

FOGGS Events to come along to:

Saturday March 4 we are going to be part of the Clean Up Australia Day in the National Park. Last year all sorts of community groups had a fun and satisfying day assisting to clean up popular sites such as Mackenzie Falls., venus baths and the pinnacle and we are hoping this year will be bigger and better. Contact Conservation Volunteers Australia /Parks Victoria Volunteer Coordinator Caity O'reilly on 9428 553 040 or coreilly@cva.org.au



SOURCE: [http://vro.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/vroiimages.nsf/Images/weeds_sallow_wattle/\\$File/sallow_wattle.jpg](http://vro.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/vroiimages.nsf/Images/weeds_sallow_wattle/$File/sallow_wattle.jpg)

Hint—You may not even know you have it in your garden!

AREN'T DAD'S JOKES THE BEST....??

Why should you not write with a dull pencil?*Because it's pointless.*

You hear the one about the three holes in the ground filled with water?

No?Well, well, well....



GRAMPIANS FILM SOCIETY

The Grampians Film Society, dedicated to the world of classic cinema, holds its film nights on the fourth Wednesday of the month from January to November. However, in March, please note that due to a prior booking of the venue the movie is scheduled for the last Wednesday.

The venue is the Halls Gap Classic Cinema, Grampians Road, Halls Gap. If there is a change of venue, members will be notified.

The doors open at 7pm and screenings commence at 7.30pm. Drinks and nibbles are served prior to the film and a light supper is served afterwards. New members are most welcome to our relaxed, informal evenings. Members are entitled to bring along a guest twice annually.



A member of the Federation of Victorian



Your Image is Our Focus

Enquiries: PO Box 57, Halls Gap, 3381, phone 0417 883 445 or 5356 4300 or email birdswing@bigpond.com or janet@witham.net.au

Screening Date	Film	Score
25 th January 2017	An enjoyable night was had by all when GFS screened A Beautiful Mind – 2001 USA - Oscar-winning drama based on the true story of prominent mathematician John Forbes Nash Jr. This was reflected in the score of 4.6 out of 5.	4.6
22 nd February 2017	The Dark Horse – 2014 NZ drama - based on the real-life story of Genesis Potini, a brilliant New Zealand chess player who suffered from severe bipolar disorder. Despite the challenges that came his way, Potini pushed forward to find his purpose in life by passing on his knowledge of chess to the community.	
29 th March 2017	Woman in Gold – 2015 UK - Maria Altman sought to regain a world famous painting of her aunt plundered by the Nazis during World War II. She did so not just to regain what was rightfully hers, but also to obtain some measure of justice for the death, destruction, and massive art theft perpetrated by the Nazis	

HALLS GAP PRIMARY SCHOOL

Everyone is back at school! We are so excited about learning and starting a new semester with both old friends and new. This term we get to look forward to swimming, cross country, electing our Junior School Councillors, Maths, English, P.E, Science, MARC van, Art and lots of other subjects. Our teachers are Mrs. Hilbig, Miss Wilkinson, Frau Stoffel, and Mrs. Trimble (who is also our principal.) We're also pretty keen to start learning Chinese this year with Miss He.

Our new preps are Makaylie, Imogen and Jack. We also have a new grade 2 student, Bailey. We always love seeing new faces.

As always, our parents will be working hard at our fundraising events – mostly our markets. The money we raise goes towards our English budget, excursions, camps, cluster days, school equipment and grounds and buildings improvements. It's very important to us. Our first market is on Sunday March 12th. Hopefully we'll see you all there!



FILL THE GAP COMMITTEE

Lee-Anne, Margo, Jenny and
Tammy

Please email your articles and
photos to us by the 25th of each
month to:

leeannel@budjabudjacoop.org.au

Upload your community events
details to the Community
Association webpage:

www.hallsgapcommunity.org.au

Like our Halls Gap Community
Association Facebook Page

Like our Halls Gap Community
Watch and Events Facebook Page



24-26 FEBRUARY 2017
HALLS GAP

Grampians Music Festival

2017 LINEUP

Saskwatch • Tigertown • Felix Riebl
Alex Lahey • Hey Geronimo • CC:DISCO! • Clairry Browne
Bearded Gypsy Band • The Jensens • Cheap Fakes • 19-Twenty
Candice McLeod • Carus Thompson • Grim Fawcner • Garrett Kato
The Settlement • Shag Rock • Orange Whip • Jack The Fox

TICKETS ON SALE NOW grampiansmusicfestival.com

@grampiansmusicfestival

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IN BRIEF

Chas Mangle Justice of the Peace is available for witnessing documents in the History Room at the Centennial Hall most days except Tuesdays from 1pm - 5 pm. Ph. 0439 837 052

Social Coffee catchups at Brambuk cafe 11am Tuesdays.

Ultimate Frisbee Monday evenings

The Halls Gap History Room in the Centennial Hall is open most days except Tuesday from 1PM - 5PM. Locals and visitors are most welcome and there is no entry fee.

