

Issue: December 2016

FILL THE GAP

Produced by the Community Association & Budja Budja Neighbourhood House.

SUMMER IS FINALLY HERE!!

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FROM THE GARIWERD SIX SEASONS CALENDAR



The weather begins to stabilise and heat starts to dry the country.

Butterflies chase each other in the warm sun. Beetles and moths collect around lights at night. Echidnas dig for ants.

Cumbungi and water ribbon grow in streams and wetlands. Wildflower displays shift to the higher peaks. Banksias are in full flower. Abundant Honeyeaters. Murnong is flowering in heathlands.

Well, we made it through the wettest winter and spring for many years... and as the landscape starts to dry out, our minds start to shift towards drier conditions, hot sunny days and the annual task of bushfire CFA has included preparedness. some timely messages this month about being prepared for the summer fire danger period, and all local residents, businesses, absentee landholders and travellers should ensure they have plans in place for each of the fire danger rating days; from high to code red.

Christmas is almost here but sadly, rumour has it the Dennis Walter carols won't be on this year and we haven't heard of any other event in Halls Gap, so head out to Pomonal Carols Sun 11th 6pm if you want to enjoy a sing along.

We've decided not to do a January newsletter as we'll all be at the beach, so we'll send out a reminder about articles for February in late January. Thanks for your input this year and we wish you all a safe and merry Christmas and look forward to catching up in the New Year...Eds.



NOVEMBER RAINFALL BY CHAS

Another good recording with 58.5mm and a progressive total of 1216.5mm for the year. This compares to the same period last year of 25mm being recorded for the month with a progressive total of 714.5mm.

As of the 30th of November Lake Bell-field is holding 71,910ML or 92% full compared to the same period last year of 50,840ML or 65% full.

The total system is holding 372,490ML or 66.89% full compared to the same period last year of 164,780ML or 29.59% full.

Mount William received 110.8 mm for the month compared to the same period last year of 37.2 mm.

The maximum temperature of 28 C. was recorded on the 21st November and the minimum of -0.1 C was recorded on the 1st November.

LOOKING BACK...

Its easy to forget how dry this landscape has been in years prior...

This image was taken in January 1983 at Lake Bellfield in the middle of the drought. Bit different at the moment??!!



HALLS GAP AND GRAMPIANS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Our small but enthusiastic group had their quarterly meeting on 1st December and ended the year on a very positive note. The History Room has been rearrangeto make it more welcoming and we plan to change a number of displays when we resume our regular Thursday morning working bees early next year.

We have two outdoor projects in the pipeline for completion in 2017 and are applying for a grant to upgrade our computers. However, the best piece of good news is that shortly we shall have the History Room open daily, from 1 - 5pm, which is something we are all looking forward to.

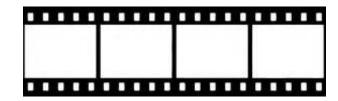
So, if you have never been inside to see the displays and you would like to know how Halls Gap came to be such a popular tourist town, drop in sometime when you are passing.

GRAMPIANS FILM SOCIETY

We have come to the end of our screenings for the year and, once again, the films chosen were given the "thumbs up". Now to choose next year's program and stock the cupboard with goodies for our pre-screening drinks and nibbles and our post-screening supper treats.

We are always looking out for more members and ours must be the best value-for-money film society in Victoria.

Only \$45 annually or \$25 for a half year and that include the drinks, nibbles, supper and the film! Just give Janet a ring on 5356 4300, if you are interested in joining.



FRIENDS OF GARIWERD GRAMPIANS

Friend of Grampians Gariwerd had our AGM on November 19 when we met at Borough Huts.





explore a small section of the Peaks Trail.

We admired the new bridge, then walked up the surprisingly gentle slope towards Mt Rosea, but didn't go all the way... (too much time spent commenting and identifying unusual flowers).

Our next activity should be most interesting and we hope many of you will come along. We have had three students from RMIT filming interviews with members of Stawell Field naturalists club, researching their interesting documentation of plants and animals in the area, reminiscences of the late Ian McCann.

The students will present what they have recorded on December 11 at 3.30pm in the Mural room in the Parks Victoria Office. It is great to be able to capture some of this knowledge while some of these elderly folk are still alive and active. I hope when I'm 90+ my memory is as sharp as some of theirs are.

If you are interested in finding out more about FOGGS, we have a website http://friendsofgrampiansgariwerd.org.au/ and a facebook page Friends of Grampians Gariwerd - FOGGS.

CERT CALLOUTS

Three of the callouts were from school groups while on camping trips and on two of these we went with the Police and the SES.

We are so lucky at present to have such experienced Police and SES looking after our area and their knowledge, along with Parks Victoria input, makes National Park callouts as simple as they can be. For one school group there was a girl with an injured ankle and with the other two groups the problem was dehydration.

A female adult also suffered dehydration on the Pinnacle walk but managed to get to Wonderland Carpark with help from passing tourists. The symptoms of dehydration can be severe and it can take a minute or two to make sure the patient is not having a stroke.

We were called to a lady who fell from a horse and also for a lady who hit a tree while riding a Quad Bike, however both accidents were in Brimpaen and Horsham ambulance was available so we didn't attend. Lastly, three people had breathing difficulties, two people fell at ground level and one person fainted.

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





What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney? Claustrophobia!

Why does Santa go down the chimney on Christmas Eve?

Because it 'soots' him!

What do reindeer hang on their Christmas trees?

Horn-aments!

Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?

A mince spy!

HALLS GAP CFA



Brigade members continue to improve their skills in readiness for the coming fire season.

Five new members completed their minimum skills training (basic skills and safety requirements to be able to commence attending incidents) and twelve members qualified in the use of class A foam (a mixture of water and concentrate (solution) which absorbs heat more efficiently than just water and used in fire fighting),

In addition to training and callouts during the last month, the brigade hosted a bushfire safety session for the community. The program included information about establishing a personal bushfire plan.

ARE YOU FIREREADY?? Information about preparing for the coming fire season can be found at http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare

At an absolute minimum, talk through the ten decisions below with your household (an extract from the Fire Ready Kit, available on the CFA website). Review these points before each fire season.

- Key decisions to make with your family
- Which Fire Danger Rating is your trigger to leave?Will you leave early that morning or the night before?
- Where will you go?
- What route will you take and what is your alternative in the event that a fire is already in the area?
- What will you take with you?
- What do you need to organise for your pets or livestock?
- Who do you need to keep informed of your movements?
- Is there anyone outside your household who you need to help or check up on?
- How will you stay informed about warnings and updates?
- What will you do if there is a fire in the area and you cannot leave?

REMEMBER...to decide who will do what as part of your plan.

HALLS GAP RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

A briefing on the February music festival was given by Carly from the Harvest Café. The festival will start on the 24th Feb. until 26th Feb. There will be an introductory session on the evening of the 23rd Feb. Brochures will be available soon.

Our secretary will be leaving Halls Gap in the next few months and we are looking for someone to step forward to do the job.

Remember, our AGM will be held on March 8th in the Supper room at 7.30 pm. All positions will be declared vacant prior to nominations.

A letter was sent to Vic Roads requesting the installation of a pedestrians crossing in the main shopping complex. This was sent in October with no response, so far.

The primary school will have an increased number of students requiring an extra teacher, which is great news for Halls Gap.

With the influx of younger families, the issue of a Skate Park (for bike and boards) was again raised. This would be an excellent facility for our youth and it would provide excellent after hours entertainment and a greater exposure to the outdoors. However before the Council will support us, we need a show of interest and support for the project. Anyone interested in driving this project (school committees, Reserve Committees included) can contact Paul Turner — Presidents HGRRA on 0418 99 2510

A request was made to Cr. Hosemans to organise mowing of grass adjacent to the bike path. As a result of comments about annual Green Waste disposal, Cr. Hosemans will investigate an annual free disposal of Green Waste during the spring period

Tourists have taken to erecting rock cairns in and around "The Balconies" area. Parks have, yet again removed them as they are hazardous and could result in people following them into the bush, thinking they are trail guides. If you see them, break them down.

Any Resident and/ or Ratepayers are welcome to our meetings, which next year will be

- o 8th March AGM
- o 7th June
- o 6th September
- o 6th December
- o All meetings start at 7.30pm in the Centenary Hall Super Room

Paul Turner – President (hon.) HGRRA

HALLS GAP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Among a long list of community related projects such as meeting dates for next year, Botanic Garden working bees, skate parks, kangaroo feeding signage, rubbish bins, Run the Gap, Landcare starting up, a local food/produce swap program and a successful Wildflower Wander here's a few key points from the recent committee meeting:

Fill the Gap Newsletter is going well. The Committee along with Budja Budja neighbourhood house has applied for a grant to support a community website redevelopment and other committee business needs.

The Film society had a successful year. The group is looking at children's film nights as well for next year.

The walking track support group had a great working bee at Mt Abrupt recently with the Warrnambool club. Assistance to Parks Victoria with a revamp of Golton Gorge Picnic area is next on the cards.

New members and fresh community ideas are always welcome. Contact David Witham or check out our facebook page.

PARKS VICTORIA UPDATE



Healthy Parks Healthy People

Volunteers

The Parks Victoria and Conservation Volunteers Australia Volunteer Coordinator has been extremely busy with Sallow Wattle removal in the Hollow Mountain area of the National Park recently with the assistance of a number of visiting school groups. They have noticed a significant improvement in native vegetation growth where previous sallow wattle removal has opened up space and provided sunlight to important species such as the Threatened Large Leaf Ray Flower.

Come and join CVA/PV, Landcare and Project Platypus for the Halls Gap weed identification BBQ on Wednesday 14th December @ 5:30pm in the park opposite the Hub.

Fire and Flood Recovery

In mid November Parks Victoria commenced its first Pilot 'grazer control program' in the Grampians in collaboration with Sporting Shooters Association of Australia and Australian Deer Association. The program is targeting introduced grazers including red deer and goats in the Grampians NP and Black Range SP. There are a number of target zones throughout both parks that will require temporary closures while the program is in place—Details of this program can be found at Brambuk the National Park and Cultural Centre or by visiting the Grampians National Park 'change of conditions' page at http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/grampians-national-park

In collaboration with Traditional Owners from BGLC, Aboriginal Victoria, an art conservator and PV Indigenous staff a week of graffiti removal undertaken in the Black Range and nearby reserves, to remove paint, charcoal and scratchings from shelters containing Aboriginal rock-art. A further week is programmed in early December.

While the Art Conservator was in the Grampians, Parks staff sought his advice to remove spraypaint graffiti from Hollow mountain. Specialists products have been ordered and we anticipate to undertake this work as soon as they arrive. The site will need to be closed temporarily to facilitate works.

Smoky mouse researchers have recently undertaken monitoring in the Victoria Range and Mt William to determine seasonal fluctuations in mouse populations. Although the survivorship of individuals seems to be high (some individuals have been caught over a 3-year period), to-date there appears to be limited recruitment (reproduction) within colonies.

Car park resurfacing was recently completed at Reeds Lookout, with car park marking installed to reduce overcrowding at the site. The Balconies walking track has also had some maintenance works undertaken including drainage and resur-

facing of some steeper sections.

Walking track crews recently completed track restoration works to Briggs Bluff—a popular but challenging day walk located on the Mt Difficult Range. Further track works are scheduled through-



out the Mt Difficult Range with the hope to reopen the overnight walking track in the near future. Roads and tracks continue to undergo assessment and repair works after recent spring rain and floods. Closure of some roads and tracks will remain in place until April 2017—details can be found on the Grampians National Park 'change of conditions webpage' http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/grampians-national-park

GRAMPIANS PEAKS TRAIL

Planning works continue to finalise trail head locations, trail alignments and undertake environmental and cultural heritage management plans. Lidar imagery has been used to produce 3D modelling of hikers camps. Fabrication of steel mesh panels continues for the Major Mitchell Plateau—works will commence post fire season, along with works on a number of other sections of existing track at Stapylton, Mt Abrupt, Mt Difficult, Chatauqua Peak and Mt Sturgeon.

GREAT VIC BIKE RIDE

It was hard to miss all the Lycra in town last weekend as thousands of bike riders flocked here for the start of the Great Vic Bike Ride.

It was a great spectacle to see the tent city set up in the paddocks behind town, and it was also great to see the riders enjoying some down time prior to setting off.

Halls Gap provided extremely welcoming hospitality and there were some fantastic comments made to the stallholders that set up down at the hub. Red Rock Olives and Grampians Cycling, and the primary school set up a fantastic space for riders to charge their phones, receive a massage, grab a snag in bread or chow down on a gourmet hamburger or delicious smoothie and the kids loved the bike decorating activity.

The space behind the Hub proved to be really suitable to market stalls as the foot traffic certainly wandered right to the area. Something to think about for another big weekend in town...



BENDIGO BANK



Some of you may recall last months newsletter highlighting the fact that Halls Gap was looking into bringing the Bendigo community bank to town??

Well, the bank is now a reality! A committee has been formed and work is underway with initial set up proceedings.

The basic concept with the bank is that the more locals that sign up, switch banking and support the 'local bank' the more money that will be generated for Halls Gap community based projects.

So, its time to get your thinking caps on for ideas for community projects... Here's a few to start.... (skate park, bigger better community garden, art spaces or sculpture trails, redevelopments to the HUB, a playgroup area or sponsorship of important teams or individuals....

Have a think about switching your banking and we'll be in touch soon with further details :-)

HALLS GAP GOLF CLUB



NEWS FROM THE HALLS GAP PRIMARY SCHOOL

FROM THE CLASSROOMS OF HALLS GAP PRIMARY SCHOOL

This term we have some special and loud visitors. They are cicadas and they're getting louder and louder in the heat. They are getting up to 85 decibels. If they get louder, we have to stay inside for the day because the cicadas are getting too loud. Everyone can hear them but it's hard see them. When everyone's playing outside it's very noisy. Some kids find cicadas and take care of them and release them after school.



Late in October we had the annual Maths Olympics at Stawell Secondary. Over the day we had problem solving, maths games and an exciting relay – seriously it was fast and furious, people

running everywhere. From Halls Gap we had the grade five sixes. We worked in teams and mixed with students from the schools in the area. Maths Olympics is a fun way to enjoy maths. Everyone enjoyed the day and made loads of new friends and can't wait until next year.

Early in November the Grades 3-6 students went to Stawell to play T20 cricket, which is a short and easier version of cricket. The first game we played was against St Pats. Halls Gap won by a fair bit in the first game. Then we beat Pomonal it was a close game but Halls Gap got away with the win. The last game we played was against Great Western and Concongella which we also won. It was a great way to finish our day of cricket. Over all we got third place out of all the primary schools. We all had a great day at Stawell and we can't wait for next year to play it again.

The Stawell Bowls Club and Stawell Racing Club hosted us for some sports.

We really enjoyed a huge day, firstly learning how to play bowls and then having a tour of the racing club and running our very own "Halls Gap Cup!" It was so much fun!



THE PREP – 2 "LITTLE BIG DAY OUT" EXCURSION.

On Friday we went on a Little Big Day Out in Geelong. First we went on a carousel. Then we had a look at some bollards. Then we went to Moore Grace Studios. We played games there. We played dead ants and picture frames. Then we acted out a film so we could watch it t school. Then we went home on the bus. On the way we stopped to have a drink and something to eat. I had lots of fun! It was the best! By Arlo (Grade 1)

We went to Geelong on Friday. We went on the bus. I was really excited to go. And off we went! First we went to the carousel. I bet we all had fun. Next we went to



Moore Grace Acting Studio. We played games with Jess. Then we made movies with Sarah Luke and Jayden. First we did a Christmas background then a beach background and at the end we got lollies. Then went home!!!!! By Bonnie (Prep)

On Friday, Frau Stoffel and Miss Wilkinson took us on a Little Big Day Out to Geelong. We saw bollards on the beach and then Frau Stoffel said that we are doing something special. We went on a carousel. We had lunch on the beach, then we went to Moore Grace Acting Studios. We saw Angus teachers. There was Sarah and Jess and Luke and Jayden, but the fun part was making videos and I was Santa and Eden and Tabitha and Fiona was and Elf and Eden was a naughty girl and Tabitha was a good girl. It was the best day I ever had out with Frau Stoffel. By Kelanee (Grade 1)

We went to Geelong on Friday. I had fun. We saw lots of bollards. Then we went to the carousel. Then we ate lunch at Eastern beach. Miss Wilkinson got fish and chips. It was great! We went on a little walk it got very fishy. So we had to go back to the bus. Then we went to the Moore grace acting studios. We had two teams they had names that were Thunderbirds and lightening. My team name was Thunderbirds the teacher's names were Sarah, Jess, Luke and Jayden. Then Frau Stoffel and Miss Wilkinson gave us an apple and a fruit box. It was the best day ever. By Eden (Grade1)



BUDJA BUDJA MEDICAL CLINIC

20-22 Grampians Road, Halls Gap PH: 53 564751

GP DATES

DECEMBER 2016	JANUARY 2017	FEBRUARY 2017
Dr Susan Watson 6,7,8 Dr Susan Watson 13,14,15 Dr Diana Jefferies 20, 21,22	Dr Susan Lewis 3.4.5,6 Dr Diana Jefferies 10,11,12,13 Dr Diana Jefferies 17,18,19,20 Dr Diana Jefferies 24,25, 27	Dr Susan Lewis 31,1,2 Dr Jim Tompson 7 Dr Susan Lewis 8,9 Dr Susan Lewis 14,15,16



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM ALL AT BUDJA BUDJA

We will be closed from <u>Friday 23rd December</u>, and reopen <u>Tuesday 3rd January!</u>

If you are in need of medical attention over the festive season:

000 for ALL emergencies

Stawell Medical Centre 26 Wimmera St, Stawell

PH: 53581410

Patrick Street Family Practice

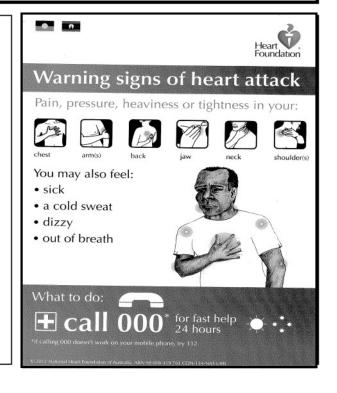
8-22 Patrick St, Stawell

PH: 53587555

Stawell Hospital

27-29 Sloane St, Stawell

PH: 53588500



CICADAS!!!!!!!!!!!!

Cicada facts:

Cicadas are the loudest insects in the world and there are more than 200 species in Australia. Cicadas are considered lucky in China and are common objects in jade carvings. They are also popular in southern France, and cicada frig magnets are popular souvenirs. In the French fable about the hard working ant and the lazy grasshopper, it is not actually a grasshopper but a cicada. Which makes more sense.

Australian Cicadas are so conspicuous that many of their common names were initially given to them by children. As a result cicadas probably have the most colourful common names in the insect world. Some of these include: Black Prince, Double Drummer, Floury Baker, and the Green Grocer or Yellow Monday (our most common one , *Cyclochila australasiae*.)

Cicadas are the only insects to have developed such an effective and specialised means of producing sound. Some large species such as the Greengrocer/Yellow Monday and the Double Drummer produce a noise intensity in excess of 120 dB at close range (this is approaching the pain threshold of the human ear). In contrast, some small species have songs so high in pitch that the noise is beyond the range of our hearing.

Only male cicadas sing.

Different species have different songs to attract only their own kind. Adult cicadas have short lives, usually only a few weeks. Most of their lives are spent as nymphs underground. For some species this can be up to several years. Cicadas feed only on plant sap using their piercing, sucking mouthparts. Cicadas feed on a huge range of plants, including eucalypts and grasses. Cicadas have large compound eyes situated one on each side of the head. They also have three very small glistening simple eyes on the top of the head.

Most Australians are also probably unaware that the cicada can make a very tasty meal. Dr Moulds said many peoples around the world regularly eat cicadas, usually as an addition to their regular diet. "They are quite good eating and taste quite pleasant," said one scientist who sampled his first roasted cicada during a field trip in Papua New Guinea.

"The female cicada is usually best because they are the most meaty. First they pull the wings off and then throw them onto hot coals for about a minute. Turn them over once or twice and they're ready to eat. I thought they would be crunchy but actually they are remarkably soft. Their taste is not very strong and is probably closer to chicken than anything else."

Blake Clark from Brambuk has a great recipe using a wattleseed coating.

The seven year itch

While it is true that most species take around six or seven years to re-emerge, their underground so-journ can take anything from nine months to 17 years or more depending on the species. Nobody really knows exactly what it is that tells cicadas when to emerge from the ground. It's most likely to be a combination of events or signals, one of which would be increased sap flow in the tree indicating that warm weather and rain is around. When you have a year with thousands of cicadas out you are likely to have another year in five to seven years time when there are similarly large numbers. But this is by no means certain.





IS YOUR VEHICLE STUCK IN THE BUSH???

Need Help?

Call Glenn on 0419 802 846
Alternate Ph. 0424 619 355
Leave a clear message with your details.

Our On-Board Recovery Equipment Includes:

Winch Hi-Lift Jack

Snatch Straps Tree Trunk Protectors

Winch Extension Straps D Shackles Snatch Blocks Shovel

Sand Anchor Rated Recovery Points

Air Compressor Chainsaw
UHF Radio Fridge



LANDCARE



Halls Gap Land Care Group is off and running with our first grant awarded to us last week of \$10,000 for weed control within the township of Halls Gap. Our grant is to help us target water ways. Other projects on the agenda are rubbish in Halls Gap and a produce swap.

In celebration of our first grant we are holding a BBQ party in conjunction with Conservation Volunteers Australia/Parks Victoria, and Project Platypus.

Come along and learn about our local weeds and how we can all work together to halt their spread.

Halls Gap Landcare and VicParks invite you to a FREE BBQ in the park

...to talk about weeds and other things



When? Wednesday 14th December 2016 What time? 5.30pm to 7.30pm

Where? Playground on Grampians Road - opposite Visitor Info Centre
Are you going to be fed? Yes, we will have lots of food for free
Can I go? Yes you better, everyone is welcome...it's free!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: COREILLY @CVA.ORG.AU OR 0428 553 040

FILL THE GAP COMMITTEE

Lee-Anne, Margo, Jenny and Tammy

Please email your articles and photos to us by the 20th of each month to:

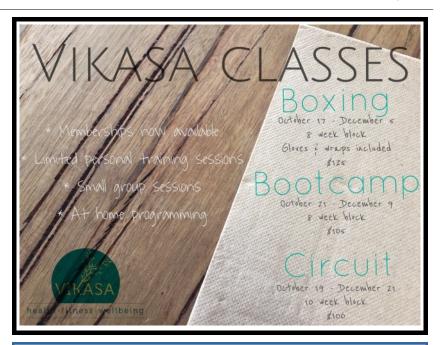
leeannel@budjabudjacoop.org,au

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



Halls Gap Transfer Station

Halls Gap residents make use of the facilities we have close at hand! Use it or lose it...

Halls Gap Transfer Station Open Sunday 12 - 4pm

NEWS IN BRIEF....

Pool opening Hours - 7am-7pm Daily Purchase your family seasons pass to get the best value.

Well done to Halls Gap hotel for a successful Black Sorrows chow, even if there was a little rain, everyone enjoyed the afternoon. All the best for the renovations!

Congratulations to those businesses involved in the Victorian Tourism awards especially Gariwerd motel for such a great effort in your first year and to Grampians Helicopters as well.

Pip and Eve have sold the newsagency and are moving to somewhere a little more coastal. All the best to these long standing residents and thanks for your contribution to the community over the years!

BOTANIC GARDENS....

Why not come along to our working bee on December 14 from 9.30. One of the tasks is to prune back things that have finished flowering, and we will have an expert on hand to give us some tips. Free lessons!

