



“From the GM’s Desk” 2nd April 2015



A very big welcome to all visitors to town, many of whom would have come back to Bourke this Easter to participate in the “Back to Bourke celebrations.” An extensive programme has been put together by the enthusiastic committee for the weekend and the involvement and support of the various organisations and business throughout the community has been fantastic. It has taken a big effort by relatively few to bring it all together.

If you enjoy a relaxing cruise on the Jandra when you have a spare afternoon or when you are entertaining guests why not consider purchasing an Annual Membership of the Back O Bourke Exhibition Centre and Jandra which at only \$57.00 represents excellent value given that you are then entitled to have unlimited access to both facilities.

ANZAC Day is just a month away with this year seeing the Centenary of ANZAC Day. It is anticipated that large crowds will attend the services which will be held in towns and villages right across the state. The Local RSL Sub Branch led by Victor Bartley will again be coordinating the commemorative services in Bourke and details of those services will be available shortly.

The staff at the Bourke Public Library have just about completed the display that they have been putting together to assist in marking the Centenary of ANZAC Day and this will be available for inspection straight after Easter.

If you have any memorabilia or photos I am sure that the staff would still welcome them.

The NSW State Election held last weekend saw the Liberal/National Coalition returned, albeit, with a reduced majority. The Member for Barwon, the Hon. Kevin Humphries, MP was returned and Council looks forward to continuing to work with Kevin over the next four (4) years to achieve some positive outcomes for the residents of Bourke Shire. Kevin has been a member of Cabinet for the past four (4) years but has still always found time to visit Bourke. His electorate now includes Broken Hill and it has become a massive electorate to service.

Daylight saving will finish on the morning of Sunday, 5th April 2015 with all clocks to be moved back one hour at 3.00am.

We have had a number of calls regarding garbage collections over the Easter period and I would like to advise that garbage services will be UNCHANGED, so residents should to put their bins out in accordance with their normal collection day.

Remember the changed traffic conditions in Bourke next Saturday to cater for the conduct of the “Back to Bourke” Celebrations Parade and the Wool Bale Rolling competition.

In particular business owners are asked to keep Oxley Street free of vehicles and ensure all deliveries are made early in the morning if possible.

There will also be closures in place in the Wally Mitchell Wharf Precinct for Easter Markets.

Council staff will be erecting and removing road closure and directional signs in accordance with the Traffic Control Plan.

At the Council meeting held last Monday, Council endorsed a recommendation from the Town and Village Committee that Council fly both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags outside the Council Offices each day and at ceremonial functions conducted by Council.

The flow in the Darling River has reduced significantly and water restrictions will probably need to be introduced shortly. While there have been some good rains in the upper reaches of the catchment it would appear that the resultant flows won't reach Bourke.

Council is calling for expressions of interest for the purchase of a second hand hoist and these will close on the 10th April 2015 for further details and inspection you can contact Council's Workshop Supervisor Neil Driscoll on 0268308000.

Councillors have also elected to call for fresh tenders in respect of the contact for the Management of the Bourke War Memorial Swimming Pool Complex over the next three (3) years. Further details and copies of the tender documents are available by contacting Dwayne Willoughby Council's Manager of Environmental Services. Tenders for the Pool Contract close at 3.00pm on Wednesday, 22nd April 2015.

The Bourke War Memorial Swimming Pool closed for the 2014/2015 season last Tuesday 31st March 2015.

At the Annual General Meeting of Barwon Darling Water last Wednesday, Ian Cole stepped down as Chair of that organisation following a long period of involvement.

Barwon Darling Water is an organisation which provides an advocacy and advisory role on behalf of Irrigators and other water users along this section of the Barwon Darling River system, including Local Government.

The knowledge and experience Ian has gained during his term as chairman will hopefully not be lost with Ian being asked to undertake a consultancy role with the organisation.

Ian's replacement is local Tony Thompson, while Anthony Barlow from Mungindi has been elected one Vice- President with Tony Hall of Tamworth an ex-office of Water employee being the other Vice- President. Matt Gaukroger of Clyde Cotton at Bourke retains the office of Secretary/Treasurer.

The recent embargo on pumping of water in this section of the river system to allow the flow to go through to Menindee to shore up the water supply for Broken Hill is one of the issues that was discussed at the meeting. All members of the committee will be watching with interest the developments in respect of an alternative water supply for Broken Hill.

The meeting was also attended by the Minister for Water, the Hon. Kevin Humphries, MP and his input to the meeting was certainly appreciated.

Congratulations to Stuart Johnson and family who have re-furbished and opened the Oxford Hotel in Anson Street. The hotel opened for business late last week and it is good to see the confidence shown in the town despite the impact of the current drought conditions.

Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis has been busy with the construction of the new sheds on his block on the corner of Anson and Richards Street which now houses numerous vintage pieces of machinery that Andrew has collected over the years. Whilst it is still being developed, it has already provided a much improved entrance to town from the Kidman Way. The display will become a permanent feature.

The Draft Delivery Program 2013/2017 and Operational Plan (Budget) for Bourke Shire Council for 2015/2016 is now on public exhibition with members of the public able to make submissions in respect of the document up until the 4th May 2015. Prior to adopting the Draft Operational Plan Council is required to take into consideration any submissions received.

The gardens in the cenotaph area of Central Park are undergoing a facelift thanks to the work being undertaken by the work groups coordinated by Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporation in conjunction with Council staff.

The work will ensure that the area looks its best the upcoming weekend's Memorial Service and for the ANZAC Day Centenary Service on the 25th April 2015.

Users of Council's Ovals and facilities are reminded of the need to ensure that bookings are made well in advance of the proposed date of usage so that Council staff can ensure that the required facilities, bins, ground markings etc. are able to be provided and that facilities have been properly prepared.

The Bourke Show is only a few weeks away with the show guide being released last week. I am sure that the stewards of the various exhibitions and pavilions would welcome all entries so if you

have been thinking about putting an entry in, - do it. The success of the show depends a great deal on the community involvement.

The Office of Local Government has a new Executive Officer with Marcia Doheny being appointed to that role.

Marcia has a Local Government background having worked with Sydney City Council.

With the State Election now over and the Coalition being returned we will wait and see what that means to the implementation of some of the recommendations of the Independent Local Government Review Panel.

While on the Local Government Reform process at last Mondays Meeting Council re-affirmed its commitment to retain its membership of the Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC) and it also agreed to participate in the transition of that organisation into a Joint Organisation of Councils once the guidelines are properly developed.

I would like to publicly acknowledge the work that all Council staff have done in preparation for the Back to Bourke Weekend. There is a lot of coordination that goes on behind the scenes in preparing grounds, development of Traffic Control Plans, Road Closures (including State highways), additional Waste Services, additional Street Cleaning etc. and all members of the staff have worked as a team to ensure that the preparations have gone very smoothly to date.

I travelled to Brewarrina last week and met up with my counterparts from Walgett and Brewarrina Shires to look at strategies to further enhance the operation of the Outback Shire Alliance which is intended to facilitate both resource sharing amongst the three (3) Councils and also lobby for the improvement of service delivery in each of the shires.

All the eight (8) Councils who are to form the proposed Far Western Initiative took part in a video Conference yesterday to receive an update from the Office of Local Government and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. Given the huge distances involved it is a practical way to conduct these update sessions.

The Councils utilised the facilities of the Department of Education and are grateful for the cooperation by the schools involved.

Ross Earl
General Manager