



## “From the GM’s Desk” 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017



There was a great deal of excitement in town last Friday when the people of Bourke were able to welcome the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove and Lady Cosgrove to our iconic town.

Sir Peter and Lady Cosgrove had the opportunity to visit the Hospital, Public School, TAFE and Maranguka Community Hub and speak with a diverse range of our community members throughout the course of the day.

During the afternoon Sir Peter and Lady Cosgrove also laid a wreath at the cenotaph to acknowledge those like him who served in the Australian Armed Services and in particular those whom paid the ultimate sacrifice.

In the evening, The Mayor, Councillor Barry Hollman hosted a civic reception on board the Jandra Paddle Boat where Sir Peter and Lady Cosgrove were able to enjoy a cruise on the Darling River which is the lifeblood of the western area of the state. The visit was very well received with both Sir Peter and Lady Cosgrove being very approachable and very willing to engage with those present at the various functions.

A considerable amount of coordination goes into hosting such a visit and I am pleased to say everything went extremely well with a number of positive comments received in relation to the overall coordination by Council of the visit. Council of course received considerable support from the Office of the Governor General of which we were very appreciative.

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The Cuttaburra Bridge has been assessed and the work to affect the required repairs determined. Quotations for that work currently are being sourced.

A five (5) tonne load limit has been in place on the bridge and will remain in place pending the construction of a side track which should be completed by the end of this week. Work on the side track required the approval from other government agencies which has already been obtained. The side track will remain in place until all repairs have been completed.

Council understand the difficulties caused by the bridge closure but I would like to assure the users of the road that everything possible is being done to expedite the repair process.

Any enquiries in relation to the load limit should be directed to the Engineering Department of Bourke Shire Council.

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The RUOK convoy were in town on Tuesday to assist in increasing awareness of the prevalence of suicide within the community. There was a particular need to create awareness among the male

members of our community and they encouraged all to keep an eye out for their mates and ask them RUOK. The RUOK team and the speakers highlight the need for people to understand that it is okay to seek help and illness such as depression is not discriminatory and can impact on any member of our community. The awareness campaign highlighted the number of organisations that can provide support and assistance.

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Whilst in town earlier this week to support the RUOK Convoy, Member for Barwon Kevin Humphries MP took time to meet with members of Council regarding the opportunities that exist in the funding being made available from the Regional Growth Fund.

Kevin went through a number of the various funding streams including the Regional Cultural Fund which provide opportunities for both council and individual organisations to potentially secure funding.

Council has for some time considered the construction of an Aboriginal Cultural Centre to complement The Back O Bourke Exhibition Centre and the Regional Cultural Fund is a potential source of funding.

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Whilst in town Kevin announced that Bourke Shire Council was successful in their application for funding under a Community Road Safety Fund which is funded from the revenue of speed cameras.

Council will receive \$145,889.00 which will go towards community roads within Alice Edwards Village, footpaths and a bus shelter.

This funding builds on the other funding received from a variety of funding sources over the past few years all of which is being spent to improve the amenities in and around Bourke. A lot of work goes into preparing the submissions required to obtain the funding and it is good to see this hard work being rewarded with some very positive outcomes.

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Council's Auditors Hills Rogers from Sydney are in town undertaking the Audit of Council's Financial Reports for 2016/2017. The Auditor General is now responsible for Councils audit, however, has contracted a number of the previous auditors to NSW Councils to continue in that role in the interim and Hills Rogers will continue with a long serving relationship with Bourke Shire Council.

Gary Mottau a Partner in Hills Rogers heads the Audit team along Senior Auditor Steve Kim. They are accompanied on this trip by Katie Brock who is on exchange from California and Callum Gritt who is on exchange from London.

Hills Rogers try to give their exchange staff at taste of "Outback Australia" and a visit to Bourke and the other Western Councils audited by the firm provides this opportunity.

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The Men's Health Education Rural Van (Mherv) will be in the area during September with the van being in Cobar on the 8th and 9th September, Bourke on the 12th and 13th and Brewarrina on the

15th and 16th. Mherv provides the opportunity for men to undergo some basic health tests and potentially identify any problems. Mherv is supported by Rotary and is a great initiative and I encourage all the men of Bourke to take advantage of the service it provides.

It's a five minute ... non-invasive group of tests.

- Blood pressure ... just to check the heart isn't too stressed.
- Blood sugar levels ... just a pin-prick in the finger, to make sure there's no type two diabetes- this is manageable even if there is.
- Cholesterol ... just another pin-prick to see if levels are high and need attention.
- There's also a test for bowel cancer ... we'll provide the kit, but that needs to be done later at home.

Bourke Rotary Club is assisting with the hosting of the Mherv whilst it is in Bourke.

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Work has almost been finalised on the playground equipment at Jones Park and it will be a welcome addition to the facilities available at the Park which is a popular stopover point for tourists as well as being utilised by locals. The new equipment looks great and is sure to meet with approval from all children. However, before it is able to be utilised soft fall needs to be installed and that should take place over the next two (2) weeks.

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Manager of Works Peter Brown represented Council at the 2017 Local Government NSW (LGNSW) Water Management Conference held on Tuesday the 5th and Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2017. Dubbo played host to around 200 delegates, who were in town to discuss the NSW Government's key priorities in tackling water and sewerage issues, particularly across regional and rural areas of the state.

LGNSW President Keith Rhoades said NSW's reticulated public water supply and sewage services were vital in protecting public health and contributing to the liveability of communities.

In regional NSW, these services are provided by 89 council local water utilities, which own and operate water supply and sewage assets valued at \$28,100 million.

These assets include 164 water treatment works, 78 chlorinators and aerators, 104 water supply dams, 443 water supply bores, 32,800 kilometres of water mains and 885 pumping stations.

The 2017 Conference focussed on the following issues

- The security and quality of water supplies, including the implications of climate change and environmental water recovery,
- Alternative supply and demand management solutions for regional areas.
- Drinking water quality management; and
- The Productivity Commission's national water reform inquiry; and
- Future policy challenges opportunities such as modernising the regulatory framework and smart data.

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The next meeting of Bourke Shire Council will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017 commencing at 9.00am and will incorporate a Public Forum at 10.00am.

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**Quote of the Week!**

*“No one ever damaged their eyesight by looking on the bright side”*

Ross Earl  
General Manager