



“From the GM’s Desk” 31st March 2016



Well Done Bourke!!

The Easter weekend was a great success with excellent weather and good number of ex-residents and friends back in town.

The re-opening of the Wonderland Theatre on the Friday night was a great way to open the weekend and Graham and Kelly Randall deserve all the accolades that may come their way for the amazing effort they put in to ensure that the memories of yesteryear were re-kindled with the re-opening of the Wonderland Theatre.

The whip crackers and men on horseback as the guests left Diggers for the theatre certainly gave the evening that “Hollywood Production” feel about the night.

The parade and wool bale rolling were very well supported and proved popular and as President of Rotary I would like to thank all those who assisted by putting in a float and participating. A number of non-Rotarians gave generously of their time. A big thankyou to John Bartley, Charlie Brown, Stephen Coyne, Bill Thompson, Peter Collins, Mathew McCorkle and Sarah Barton for their assistance on the day.

I would also like to thank local school teacher David Pickard, who once again displayed his extraordinary talents in woodwork, his unique trophies will no doubt be treasured by the winners for some time to come.

The crowd at the races was again exceptional and demonstrates the popularity of racing and the associated social activities which always accompany race meetings in the bush, giving the day a real party atmosphere.

While nominations were down a little there was still some good racing.

Like all of the events which were held the race meeting was months on the planning with President, Phil Parnaby having to lobby hard to ensure that the Easter Sunday date was secured.

The Race Club Committee work hard to ensure that the track and facilities were in tip top condition for the day and I think that all those involved should be immensely proud of their achievement in this regard.

The Renshaw Oval Precinct is improving all the time and with the Bourke Show scheduled for the 16th April the complex will again come alive.

With the ongoing improvements to the facilities at Renshaw Oval it lends itself to increased utilization and looking at the arena on Sunday it is very well equipped to have additional sports or activities at the Oval with the flood lighting at the Oval potentially being able to be used to host other night events and make use of the warm summer evenings.

The Bourke Race Club and Bourke Show Committee combined to put up a new fence at Renshaw Oval to assist in improving security at the complex and the materials for this were supplied by Waratah Fencing Supplies through their association with the local Landmark Branch. There are apparently plans to extend the fencing next year it what will again result in a further improvement for the precinct.

The Minister for Local Government, the Hon Paul Toole, MP confirmed in Parliament last week during question time that the elections for those Councils not involved in a merger proposal will be held on 10th September 2016 the normally scheduled date the NSW Local Government quadrennial elections. Those Councils who are involved in merger proposals will hold those elections in March 2017.

The date of the election had been subject to a number of queries from different Councils and Councillors who were keen to ascertain clarification on the issue.

Bourke Shire Council has previously resolved to appoint the NSW Electoral Commission to run the elections on its behalf.

As part of their preparation for the 2016 elections the NSW Electoral Commission has established a website www.votensw.info to provide information to all potential stakeholders and it will become a single source of information. The concept will ensure consistency of information and I think it is a good idea and will eliminate potential conflicts of advice etc.

Bourke Shire Council was pleased to be able to assist in coordination of the Easter Weekend with the Back O' Bourke Centre staff taking bookings for the various events with our works crews assisting with the preparation of the facilities, looking after road closures and undertaking additional cleanups over the weekend.

Phil Johnston the Manager of Tourism and Economic Development deserves special mention as the overall coordinator for much of the weekend from assisting with the projection of the movies, facilitating the program and advertising and marking courses to mention but a few Well Done Phil!

The Draft Operational Plan for 2016/2017 will be put on public exhibition from today, Thursday 31st March following its endorsement by Council at last Monday's Council meeting. The Plan will be on display until 2nd May 2016 and during that time members of the public are invited to make submissions in relation to the plan. Any submissions received will be considered by Council prior to the adoption of the plan which is scheduled for 23rd May 2016.

The Bourke War Memorial Olympic Swimming Pool will close for the season today, Thursday, 31st March 2016, hopefully when it re-opens it will be with the new splash park in operation. Council staff will be trying very hard to see the splash park completed over the winter period whilst the pool is closed.

The flow in the Darling River is diminishing a little slower than initially anticipated it is still likely that it will cease going over the weir in the next few days once again requiring the introduction of water restrictions.

I was amazed at the number of people I meet over the weekend who came out from Mudgee or had a strong connection with Mudgee. I saw people which I hadn't seen for many years and all who I spoke to were glowing in their comments regarding the weekend activities and the town generally.

It is this positive feedback that gets spread around and it will hopefully lead to an ongoing increase in visitation to Bourke. The best advertising is positive word of mouth and to ensure that all our visitors have a good time whilst in Bourke.

Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis and I will be making the long trek to Wentworth next Tuesday, 5th April to attend the next meeting of the Far West Initiative Advisory Committee (FWIAC). At the meeting the discussion will focus on proposed models for the Far West Initiative. As I have said previously, the Department of Premier and Cabinet will be putting out a Discussion Paper in relation to the Far West Initiative and the meeting of the FWIAC will provide the opportunity for the members of the FWIAC to have input into that discussion paper. While the FWIAC will have the opportunity to have input the "Discussion Paper" in fact the Minister's discussion paper and what is included will be determined by him.

Council at the meeting held on Monday, 21st March resolved to proceed with the finalisation of the purchase of lands utilised for both the Bourke Water Supply and Fords Bridge Waste Depot. The purchase of these blocks has been a long outstanding issue and it is good to see the matter being finalised.

The generosity of the Bourke Shire business sector was demonstrated over the weekend with many local business heavily involved in the sponsorship of the activities held.

Quote of the week!

"Silence and smile are two powerful tools. Smile is the way to solve many problems and silence is the way to avoid many problems".

"Whenever you see a successful person you only see the public glories, never the private sacrifices to reach them." --*Vaibhav Shah*

Ross Earl
General Manager