



“From the GM’s Desk”

20th September 2018



A meeting of the Barwon Darling Bushfire Management Committee was held at Bourke Fire Control Centre at North Bourke on Monday and together with representatives of Bourke and Brewarrina Shires, Local Land Services, National Parks and Wildlife, Police, Crown Lands Rural Fire Service.

The meeting focussed on the preparedness for the 2018/2019 Fire Fighting season and also sought to approve a number of plans that had been developed.

The current drought conditions mean there is limited fuel but none the less the level of preparedness should always be to a high standard to ensure the risk of fire is minimised and any outbreak that may occur is quickly contained.

The Council and the community generally should be very appreciative of the efforts of the various members of the Rural Fire Service who volunteer their time to help the community. This level of dedication is replicated in other emergency service organisations where members risk their lives on many occasions to assist others.

Manager of Corporate Services, Leonie Brown and I had the opportunity last week to meet with Sam Bush who is the advisor on water matters to the Minister for Regional Water, the Hon. Niall Blair MLC. We had the opportunity to pass on an invitation from Mayor Barry Hollman for Minister Blair to officially open the Walkden’s Bore Project which was funded by his Department as part of a strategy to assist in drought proofing the town water supply.

Minister Blair has also been invited to attend the Annual Conference of the Western Division Shires Association which will be in Bourke on 24th, 25th and 26th February next year.

Despite the extremely dry conditions across much of the Shire the water storage at Byrock continues to be maintained at a reasonable level with estimates indicating that it may be sufficient to last until at least January. This of course will depend on weather conditions over the next few months. The Byrock supply is the only village supply in the Shire totally dependent on runoff and fortunately there has been some good falls in the catchment.

The New South Wales Office of Industry has provided funding to Councils to assist in the promotion of Small Business Week in October 2018. Bourke Shire has embraced the opportunity to assist small business within the Bourke Shire Community and will be hold an evening on the 25th October 2018 to allow the small businesses within the community to have an evening with Certified Action Coach and Business Coach for Small Business Beau Robinson.

The evening will be held at the Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre Cafe starting at 6.00pm and will finish around 8.00pm depending on questions.

There is no cost to small business and during the course of the evening there will be the opportunity for business to enter a draw to win one (1) of five (5) one (1) hour sessions with Beau at their individual businesses the following day. Registrations can be made with Mick McDowell on 6830800 or email at aes@bourke.nsw.gov.au and will greatly assist in the provision of any material and catering.

Bourke Shire Council is pleased to be able to partner with the Department of Industry in providing the opportunity to assist local business owners grow and develop their businesses.

Council is conscious of the need to attract new businesses to Bourke but is equally aware of the need to ensure that those existing business are able to maintain their service to the community.

An environmental water flow that is currently going through the Macquarie Marshes will hopefully result in a small part of that flow reaching the Barwon then onto the Darling. The flow even if it does reach the Barwon will not significantly impact on the flow although it is hoped that it will provide some increase in the Bourke Weir Pool. This is very much a wait and see situation with the increasing temperature expected over the next month influencing the level of evaporation etc.

Lillian Brady has just been re-elected Mayor of Cobar Shire with Peter Abbott again to serve as her Deputy. Councillor Brady is now the longest serving female Mayor in New South Wales which is a great achievement. Mayor, Councillor Barry Hollman has expressed his congratulations on behalf of Bourke Shire Council and the broader Bourke Shire Community.

IPART have announced that the rate increase for 2019/2020 for the General Purpose rates for Councils in New South Wales will be set at 2.7 %. This increase does not impact on the fees and charges in respect of Water, Sewerage and Garbage.

The Far West Algae Coordinating Committee has reported that there are currently no red, amber or green algae alerts in the Far-West area.

The Far West Blue-Green Algal Reports are based on samples collected by various councils; Moree Plains, Walgett, Brewarrina, Bourke, Central Darling Shire Councils and Water NSW.

River flows are virtually non-existent; this is concerning coming into the warmer months. Standing water holes and weir pools may become an ideal environment for algae production. Stock owners and managers should be vigilant and be on the lookout for signs of algae scums.

A guide to help with identification of algae can be found on the Water NSW website.

The Enngonia Races were held last Saturday and the crowd enjoyed a good days racing with good fields in most races and a couple of very tight finishes.

Unfortunately the weather was a little unkind with blustery windy conditions blowing up a huge amount of dust for much of the day and into the evening. The conditions didn't spoil the atmosphere with most people taking it in their stride and accepting the fact that the drought conditions are impacting on everything.

It is a credit to the small community and the volunteer committee who come together to stage the race meeting each year and they are to be congratulated on their efforts. In a time when population base of most rural areas is diminishing their efforts are even more commendable in bringing together all those in the small community and the surrounding district.

It is only a little over a week before the Bourke War Memorial Swimming Pool will be open for the 2018/2019 season with the opening scheduled for 10.00 am on Saturday 29th September 2018.

If our grant applications are successful, this may be the last season that the existing pool operates, with plans in place to replace the existing pool if the grants are successful.

The cost of utilising the pool is one of the lowest in the state and those who elect to purchase a season ticket are getting excellent value for money.

Level 1 Water restrictions are still in place for Bourke and North Bourke.

The use of fixed sprinklers is limited to two (2) hours per day either between the hours of 6.00am to 8.00am or 6.00pm to 8.00pm daily.

- Hand held sprinklers can still be used at other times.
- The washing of paved areas and filling of new swimming pools is prohibited in accordance with Councils adopted policy.

Water restrictions also apply to watering of public parks, recreational areas and sporting ovals. Where it is able to coordinated the hours will be varied from residential allocated periods to ensure, as far as possible, water pressure is maintained for all residents during the times allowed for watering under the restrictions.

Bourke Shire Council has applied under to the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program for funding to purchase defibrillators that will be located throughout the Shire and able to be used by sporting and community organisations in the Bourke Shire. It is intended that these be located as follows:-

- Bourke PCYC
- Bourke War Memorial Swimming Pool

- Wanaaring
 - Louth
 - Fords Bridge
 - Enngonia
 - Byrock
 - Bourke Community and Sporting Organisations- Unit to made available for function and large events
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Construction in the Central Business District (CBD) continues to take shape and the work undertaken at the Corner of Oxley and Sturt Streets adjacent to the newsagency provides a sample of what the appearance of the street will look like going forward.

Bookings for the use of the Bourke Community Centre (previously known as the Bourke Senior Citizens Centre) will be handled by Council Staff at the Main Office, 29 Mitchell Street. ALL organisations utilising the facility are asked to book their proposed usage so that Council can ensure there is no double bookings and the facility is able to be prepared for requirements of each organisation.

At the Ordinary meeting of Council to be held 24th September 2018 the election of Mayor for the next two (2) years will be conducted. At the same time Council will conduct an election for the position of Deputy Mayor and make appointments to the various Committees of Council and also appoint delegates to the numerous organisations of which Council is a member.

Mayoral Elections by Councillors are conducted in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005.

Bourke Shire Council wishes to remind Bourke residents and business owners of the collection times for Domestic and Trade Waste Collection.

Domestic garbage collection times are Monday – Friday between the hours of **3:00am – 11:00am ONLY**

Trade Waste garbage collections times are - Tuesdays and Fridays between the hours of **3am - 11:00am ONLY**

Bins are to be put out for collection the **NIGHT BEFORE** your scheduled bin collection day, to avoid your bin being missed.

Additionally both residents and businesses are reminded that they should only be putting out the number of bins which have been paid for.

Hills Rogers, Councils Auditors have completed their onsite component of the audit of Council's 2017/2018 Financial Reports.

As I have previously mentioned, during the course of 2017/2018 Council migrated its accounting functions to a new computer system meaning that the Financial Reports were a little more complicated to prepare and had the potential to also create additional work in the audit process given two (2) distinct systems were involved.

In a huge compliment to both our staff and the consulting team who assisted in the implementation process of the new system and the transfer of all information, the Partner of Hills Rogers responsible for the oversight of the audit, Gary Mottau, said the implementation of the new system and the transfer of information was relatively seamless and the accounting records were presented to the satisfaction of the auditors.

Well done to all involved.

This year marks the 100 anniversary of the end of hostilities of World War I with the Armistice being on the 11th November 2018.

To assist in recognising the significance of this very important date it is proposed that knitted or crocheted poppies be made and displayed at the remembrance date service in Bourke. It is hoped that at least 267 poppies are able to be made and displayed with 267 being the number of persons from the Bourke area who enlisted to serve their Country in the quest for peace.

Anyone has the skill and time to produce poppies is encouraged to participate.

Bourke Rotary Club has offered to donate the wool for the project and the wool and patterns can be collected from Carole's of Bourke.

It would be ideal if the poppies could be made and delivered to Carole's before the end of October so that they can be mounted for display on Remembrance Day. Poppies can still be delivered up until Friday 9th November 2018.

Remembrance Day has been previously known as "Poppy Day" or Armistice Day.

The concept has been discussed over the past few weeks and there have been some poppies which have already been made.

Bourke Shire Council has been very conscious of the need to preserve the memory of those who have served in the various conflicts in which Australia have been involved and worked with the Local RSL members to ensure that the cenotaph area is maintained and improved.

Bourke Shire Council will be hosting a Grant Writing Workshop during October and is likely to be held on Saturday 6th October at the Back O Bourke Exhibition Centre Café. There will be no charge for the

workshop and it is being run to assist members of the various sporting and social groups in town improve their grant writing skills which could in turn translate into additional funds being available via the success of grant applications that are lodged

The Facilitator will be Belinda Colless who has a great deal of experience in the area of grant writing will also provide participants with some reference material.

Anyone who would like to participate is invited to leave their name and contact details at Council Offices.

Quote of the Week!

"The difference between genius and stupidity is; genius has its limits."

– Albert Einstein

Ross Earl
General Manager