



“From the GM’s Desk”



15th November 2018

The Remembrance Day Service held on Sunday was very well attended and the service was once again very well coordinated by the local branch of the RSL.

In addition to the strong local representation there was a strong presence of visitors who took the opportunity to join with the residents of Bourke and District to mark the Centenary of Remembrance Day.

It was extremely pleasing to see so many school children take an active role in the commemorative service and the wreath laying ceremony. Their understanding of the significance of the Day will ensure that the sacrifices made by so many will not be forgotten.

Bourke Shire Council has been overwhelmed by the response from local residents to make knitted and crocheted poppies to be displayed on Remembrance Day. The concept was to have one poppy to recognise each of those persons from Bourke and surrounding District who enlisted in World War I with the initial target of 267 being the number of enlistments from the area and that number more than doubled.

267 Poppies were displayed around the Cenotaph to recognise with the balance of the poppies made available to those in attendance and it was great to see everyone wear the poppies a symbol of their respect of those people who served our Country in World War I.

In expressing his appreciation to all those who contributed in the poppy making project Mayor of Bourke Shire Councillor Barry Hollman said that” he was proud to be the Mayor of such a caring and respectful community.

A community that is mindful of the selfless sacrifices that these 267 men and women from the Bourke region were prepared to make in the quest to ensure that the freedom and liberties of others were protected.

A big thankyou to all those who made poppies and to Carole’s of Bourke who undertook the coordination of the project and to Anna McCorkle and Amanda Smith who together with the School Captains of Bourke High School Mathew Bowden and Jilara Weston were responsible for the placement of the handmade poppies around the cenotaph.

As part of the Centenary Celebrations Annette Earl took part in an international event involving bagpipers and bands across the globe who at 6.00am the time at which the Armistice was signed to mark the end of World War 1 all played the tune the Battle is Over. The tune was played in Bourke at 5.00pm which is the same time as 6.00am in Europe. The event in Australia was coordinated by Pipe Bands Australia and saw at least 174 locations across Australia involved.

Residents of Bourke and North Bourke are reminded that level 2 water restrictions have applied from 8.00pm Friday 2nd November 2018.

The height of the Darling River at Bourke has dropped to 3.5 metres which was the catalyst for the introduction of level two (2) restrictions.

The use of fixed sprinklers and hoses is now limited to one (1) hour per day either between the hours of 7.00 am to 8.00 am or 7.00pm to 8.00pm daily.

Hand held sprinklers can still be used at other times.

The cooperation of all residents is sought in complying with these restrictions.

There are a number of residents who are obviously unaware of the water restrictions and continue to water their lawns for periods well in excess of the timeframes allowed and quite often allowing some of that water to be wasted.

Bourke Shire Council has taken a relatively soft approach to the problem of people ignoring, the water restrictions, however, will be starting to take a much stronger line and have sought a legal opinion as to the options available to Council. Action may be taken against those people who continue to have a blatant disregard to the introduction of restrictions and an equally blatant disregard for their fellow residents who are complying with the restrictions.

As the tourist season winds down there will be reduced hours of operation in place for both Tourism Information Office and the Back Of Bourke Office with the facilities closed of a Sunday effective from the 18th November 2018 and having reduced hours of a Saturday from 17th November 2018 with the facilities opening from 10.00am to 3.00pm each Saturday.

Both facilities will be closed of a weekend from 15th December 2018

The Jandra and Crossley Engine have ceased operating for the season with both the declining numbers, availability of staff and the low river levels combining to influence that decision.

Whilst there will be a lull in tourist activities over the next few months the Tourism and Events Manager and her staff are busy looking at a number of other promotions within the Shire . They are also looking to work with the organisers of the some of the existing events within the Shire to improve the marketing of those events for 2019 and ensure that they are included on any promotional material relating to Bourke.

Also high on the priority of the team is to ensure that the tourism product within the Shire continues to be enhanced and in particular building upon our current attractions and assisting in their development and promotion.

Council is keen to further cement Bourke's reputation as a tourist destination.

The next meeting of the Far North West Joint Organisation of Councils (JO) will be held on the 21st November 2018. The Far North West JO will shortly be finalising the tender documents in relation to the provision of air services for Bourke Cobar and Walgett/ Lightning Ridge.

The Far North West JO has engaged Mark Riley the former General Manager of Dubbo to assist with the work involved in the establishment of the Joint Organisation and his experience in the development of similar documentation has proved invaluable.

The JO has a lot of work to do in both the coordination of the air service project and also looking at the most effective way in allocating the funding being made available for tourism promotion in the funding package made available to the Councils in the Far West Joint Organisation of Councils.

The JO is also looking to determine its strategic priorities.

Ratepayers are reminded that the next rates instalment is due on the 30th November 2018 with the water charges also due on that day.

Nominations are now open for the 2019 Australia Day Awards. I would like everyone to consider nominating someone for each of the awards as there a number of people within our community who make a significant contribution and often go relatively unnoticed.

In changes from previous years the Community event of the Year Award and the Community Service through Employment will no longer be awarded whilst the Junior Sportsperson of the Year and the Young Citizen of the year will be restricted to those eighteen (18) years of age and under.

The categories for 2019 are as follows

- Shire Village Community Service
- Emergency Service Volunteer of the Year
- Young Sportsperson (18 and under)
- Sportsperson
- Young Citizen of the Year (18 and Under)
- Citizen of the Year

The Australia Day function will be held at the Bourke War Memorial Swimming Pool in 2019.

Council will be continuing with its round of Community Consultation Meetings with the following schedule of meetings planned

MONDAY 19th November 2018 TIME: 1.30PM-3.30PM VENUE: MULGA CREEK HOTEL

FORDS BRIDGE

WEDNESDAY 28th Nov. 2018 TIME: 10.00am-11.00am VENUE: WARREGO HOTEL

LOUTH

WEDNESDAY 5th December 2018 TIME: 9.00am-11.00am VENUE: LOUTH TENNIS SHED

WANAARING

WEDNESDAY 5th December 2018 TIME: 1.30PM-3.30PM VENUE: WANAARING HALL

The meetings will also present the opportunity for residents to have an input into the development of the 2018/2019 Operational Plan (Budget). Council has received a grant for village improvements and the allocations of these funds will be one of the focus items.

The attendance at Enngonia was excellent as was the contribution from those in attendance and Council looks forward to a similar response as we move across the Shire

Annette and I had our eldest daughter Jaimie staying with us for a few days in Bourke. Jaimie recently underwent ankle surgery and as a result and is on crutches for a few weeks, which really restricted her mobility but none the less she once again enjoyed her visit out west and is always impressed with the friendliness of the town.

Jaimie has been out to Bourke on a number of previous occasions and has had the opportunity to have a good look around. This time she joined us in undertaking a visit to Enngonia to look at the creative steel artwork done by Enngonia local Tony Mallon and made a couple of purchases. Tony is extremely creative and his use of waste materials in such imaginative ways is fantastic. Of course no visit to Enngonia is complete unless you stop a while enjoy the hospitality of Greg and Kim at the Oasis Hotel which we did as well.

I note that Central Darling Shire will receive up to 30 million dollars for the construction of a new Weir at Wilcannia with the funding coming equally from the State and Federal Governments. Amongst the options suggested for the improvement of water security for Bourke has been both the construction of a new dam or regulator upstream of Bourke or the raising of the height of the existing weir.

This funding follows funding being made available to improve the weir and to construct a fish ladder at Walgett to improve the water security to that town.

Water security is critical in this part of the state, as water is effectively the lifeblood of the area and needs to be treated as both a precious and finite resource.

Council was fortunate to receive funding to be able to construct treatment facilities and a pipeline from Walkden's Bore, and this will give Bourke an emergency supply should it be required. Council may also take the opportunity to apply for funding to construct an additional bore to supplement the emergency supply currently available.

Work seems to be progressing well on the construction of a new TAFE building at Bourke and hopefully it should be ready for use in early 2019. I understand that the building will contain some

state of the art technology and facilities which will improve access to learning opportunities for residents in the district.

The town is generally looking quite good despite the fact that water restrictions have been in operation for a few weeks now. I have noted on previous occasions that first impressions count and it is important that our town is well presented if we are going to make that good first impression on visitors and tourists. I would ask that everyone do a little bit to help the appearance of the town including picking up rubbish adjacent to their home, ensuring their nature strip is mowed and edges are tidy.

A reminder that Council has an after-hours number that should be used to contact Council in case of emergency situations such as water main breaks or sewerage blockages which occur outside normal office hours. The emergency contact number is 0419 722 055

Local Government New South Wales have recently released the preliminary results of the latest cost shifting survey.

The latest report, which marks 10-years of monitoring the impact cost shifting has on the local government sector, puts the total cost shifted onto councils at \$820 million per year.

This is an increase of \$150 million per annum on the 2013/14 financial year, and takes the accumulated 10 year cost shifting burden to an estimated \$6.2 billion.

Bourke Shire Council continues to make application for the various grants which are available across a number of areas and Council has had a reasonable amount of success in this regard.

Council has recently lodged its application in respect of the Drought Communities Program which has been made available to Local Government areas significantly impacted by drought. Each of the eligible Councils are able to apply for up to 1 million dollars in funding for projects that meet the program guidelines.

The Program is designed to provide communities with immediate and meaningful support.

Quote of the Week

Great things in business are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people- Steve Jobs

Ross Earl
General Manager