



“From the GM’s Desk”

4th April 2019



The Premier Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP and The Deputy Premier Hon John Barilaro MP have announced their Cabinet following the State Election held last weekend and there are a number of new portfolios as well as a number of new Ministers and a number of Ministers in the previous Cabinets have changed portfolios.

Some of the recent Ministerial appointments with whom it is anticipated that Council will have immediate interaction with, include

- Hon John Barilaro Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade
- Hon Paul Toole MP Minister for Regional Transport and Trade
- Hon Melinda Pavey MP Minister for Water Property and Housing
- Hon Adam Marshall Minister For Agriculture and Western New South Wales
- Hon Shelley Hancock MP Minister for Local Government
- Hon Don Harwin MLC Special Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs and the Arts
- Hon Sarah Mitchell MP minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning

A full list of the Ministry can be accessed at

<https://static.nsw.gov.au/nsw-gov-au/1554000547/Ministry-List-2-April-2019.pdf>

Anzac Day is only three weeks away and ceremonies are planned to be held across the Shire with the Dawn Service at Bourke to begin at 6.00am on 25th April with attendees asked to be at the Cenotaph at 5.50am.

The main Anzac Day Service will start at 11.00am on the day and those who intend to March are asked to assemble at 10.30 am outside Diggers on the Darling.

Details on the Services at Wanaaring, Louth and Enngonia will be notified as they come to hand.

Bourke Shire Council wishes to advise that the water coming from Walkden’s Bore and the new Stoney Rise Bore is safe to drink and poses no risk to health.

Bourke Shire Council acknowledges that the sodium (salt) level in the water is higher than desired. Recent testing of the bores shows that the sodium concentrations range from 289 mg/L to 353 mg/L. The Australian Drinking Water Guidelines gives a value of 180 mg/L as the concentration at which people are likely to taste sodium in their drinking water.

NSW Health confirms that the water is safe to drink, but Council appreciates that people may be concerned about the taste of the water.

Chilling your drinking water can help reduce the salty taste.

Anyone who may be concerned about sodium in the water and their diet should talk to their doctor for specific advice. NSW Health has given information to doctors about patients who may need special attention because of the extra sodium in the drinking water. These are pregnant women, and people with advanced kidney disease, poorly controlled high blood pressure, diagnosed heart failure and others who are on a low salt diet.

The Rural Financial Counselling Service provides assistance for those on the land who are experiencing difficulties particularly in these times of extreme drought.

There is an Office of the Rural Financial Counselling Service in Bourke at 27 Mitchell Street and you are able to access a wide range of information from the staff

Alternatively the link to the Rural Financial Counselling Service website:-

<https://www.rfcscr.com.au/>

The website will take residents to further links of RAA; Drought Hub; etc. plus links to those organisations that may be able to assist with support such as CWA and Salvation Army etc.

As of Monday 1st April 2019 the Darling River at Bourke will have stopped flowing over the weir at Bourke for 227 days further extending the previous record created in 2006 of 200 days.

The water last stopped flowing over the weir on the 17th August 2018 and unfortunately it would appear that this record looks likely to be extended further with no significant flow anticipated locally and any rain in the catchment or any environmental flow made available likely to take six (6) weeks to traverse the dry river system to Bourke.

Planning for the Easter weekend is in full swing with the programme now close to being finalised and has been widely circulated.

A full programme is available at the Council offices and is also available on the Council website www.bourke.nsw.gov.au or visitbourke.com.au

If there is something that you would like to see included in the program please Contact Jodi Sontag at the Back O Bourke Exhibition Centre 68721321 so that it can be included in any further prints of the program and included on the online versions.

To assist residents become a little more water wise Council has for distribution to residents timers so that they can gauge length of shower times. These "egg timer" like devices are able to be attached via a suction cup to the shower recess and allows for periods of four (4) minutes. While four minutes might not seem long it may surprise people how much time they take in the shower and the water usage as a result.

They are available free of charge to any residents who would like to make an attempt to conserve water.

Water carting to Byrock commenced over a week ago and will continue until there is sufficient water in the ground tank to enable water to be taken from that source.

Council has received a number of enquiries for carting to properties over the past few days as the supplies on many properties runs out.

NSW Public Works Advisory and Bourke Shire Council will combine to host an information night on the 9th April 2019 between 5.30pm and 8.00pm at the Back O' Bourke Conference Centre. Tradespersons, contractors, suppliers and their administration teams can find out more about the opportunities available. The evening will also provide guidance through the first steps of registration and "pre-qualification".

The information night is free of charge and local tradespersons are encouraged to register their intent to attend by contacting Mick McDowell at Bourke Shire Council via email aes@bourke.nsw.gov.au or telephone 68308000

The Bourke War Memorial Swimming Pool has closed for the season.

The Bourke Senior Citizens Week commenced last Sunday 31st March 2019 with a luncheon at Renshaw Oval Pavilion hosted by Bourke Shire Council and Bourke CWA. The final function for 2019 will again be held at Renshaw Oval Pavilion will be held on Sunday 7th April commencing at 12.30pm. This function will be hosted by Bourke Rotary Club in Association with Bourke Shire

Council. If you haven't booked in for the final event it is not too late and you can call the Shire Offices on 68308000

Last Sunday was a great day with around 40 of our Senior Citizens in attendance plus a very good representation of Councillors and Staff from Bourke Shire Council together with the members of the Local CWA who were responsible for a magnificent array of desserts.

Councillors Hollman, Barton, Rice and Dorrington proved be great exponents of barbeque cooking and I am sure will be invited to perform the same function at future events.

Bourke Shire Council will host the 2019 Annual Conference of the Environmental Development and Allied Professionals (EDAP) Conference which will be held from Wednesday 3rd to Friday 5th April 2019

Almost 100 delegates from across the state are expected in Bourke, they will have the opportunity to hear about trends in their industry from a number of speakers who are experts in their fields.

The Conference was held in Young in 2017 and Mudgee in 2018 and it was through the efforts of Bourke Shire's Manager of Environmental Services Dwayne Willoughby that the Conference was held in Bourke.

The bulk of the Conference will be at the Back O Bourke Conference Centre and will inject a considerable amount of money into the local economy as well as enabling Bourke to showcase itself as both a tourist destination and conference venue.

Mayor Councillor Barry Hollman and I were invited to the opening of the Conference where the Mayor provided the welcome address to delegates highlight some of the projects that Council is currently involved with and also detailing the size of the shire and the challenges this presents.

The Annual General Meeting of Outback Arts was held on Monday 1st April and Council was represented by Councillor John Thompson as Councils Delegate whilst Sally Torr represented the Bourke Arts Community Incorporated as a Community Representative.

Outback Arts is based in and also has Members from Walgett, Warren, Bourke and Brewarrina and aims to promote the various types of arts across the area.

The good rainfall across Queensland and some parts of New South Wales over the past ten days will hopefully result in some positive flows within the River systems and result in inflows into the storage dams and the larger river systems.

It is a little early to determine accurately but from all reports that I have received it is anticipated that there will be a flow into the Darling River above Louth from the Warrego.

Annette and I enjoyed "Ladies in Black" which was shown by the Bourke Arts Community as its movie at Flicks in the Sticks last Saturday Night at the Bourke Community Centre.

Whilst a little unseasonal cool weather was with us the evening was enjoyed by around thirty people and the night is always a good way to watch a movie in a very relaxed and informal atmosphere.

The Library at Bourke although relatively small offers a large range of books, audio visual material and magazines to cater for all ages and interests. If you haven't been to the library why not drop in and see what they have to offer. If the Library doesn't have the book you may be looking for they can in most instances arrange for a inter- library loan.

Council would appreciate the notification of any incidence of dangerous situations involving Council owned or controlled facilities being by contacting Council during office hours on 026830800 or if the situation is afterhours and is viewed to require emergency response because it poses a high degree of risk of an accident or injury occurring then the concern should be relayed via Councils Duty Officer on 0419722055.

Bourke Shire Council's Draft Operational Plan (Budget) for 2018/2019 is currently on display with submissions in relation to the Operational Plan able to be lodged any time during the display period which concluded on the 10th May 2019. Council will again consider the Plan at its Ordinary meeting of Council to be held on the 27th May 2019.

It is a small world. I rang Local Government New South Wales last week and ask to speak to Senior Policy Officer Roads and Transport and was advised the previous Project Officer whom I had known had left and Sanjiv Sathiah was the person now in the role. During the course of our discussions Sanjiv indicated that he was familiar with Bourke having spent some time in Bourke in the mid- seventies when his father Doctor Kula Sathiah was in medical practice in Bourke.

The Federal Government indicated last week announced that it would provide an additional \$2.2 Billion towards roads and this would be comprised as follows

- An additional \$1.1 billion in funding for local governments under the Roads to Recovery program, which allows investment in road safety infrastructure in regional Australia.
- An extra \$550 million for the successful Black Spot Program, which targets known high-risk locations and reduces serious crashes by 30 per cent, on average.
- A further \$571.1 million to improve the safety and efficiency of heavy vehicle operations through the Bridges Renewal Program, Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program and heavy Vehicle Safety Initiatives (HVSI).

The increase in Roads to Recovery Funding amounts to an increase of 25% which in the case of Bourke Shire Council will mean an increase of around \$210,000 per year.

Road funding is critical to Bourke Shire Council who have a huge road network and the additional finding will be very welcome

Work is progressing on the work in the main street and it is really starting to take shape and really looking good.

As part of the now Annual Easter Festivities in Bourke the Wool Bale Rolling Competition and the Parade will once again be held.

If you are thinking of entering a float into the parade or the wool bale rolling please contact Jodi Sontag at the Back O Bourke Exhibition Centre who will provide you with all the details and any requirement for registration.

The next meeting of the committee of Regional Development Australia – Orana will be held in Bourke on Monday 15th April 2019.

Bourke Shire Council has indicated that will be hosting a small welcome function for members of the Committee who are drawn from across the Orana Region.

Quote of the week!

When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened for us. - Alexander Graham Bell

Ross Earl
General Manager