



“From the GM’s Desk”

16th July 2020



Local Heritage Fund

Applications for grant funding under the Local Heritage Fund are closing at 4.00pm on Friday, 17 July 2020. These are small grants that are offered in conjunction with the NSW Government on a \$ for \$ basis to private homeowners for restoration and repair work. Application forms can be downloaded from Council’s website and are also available at Council’s office and the Library. Application forms can be emailed and/or posted, if required.

Council has been offering this funding for a number of years and many projects have been completed during that time. Projects have included the replacement of front fences, painting of buildings, restoration of brickwork and window replacement, to name but a few.

If you think that you have a project that may be eligible for funding, please contact Council’s Environmental Services Department on 6830 8000 for further information.

Library

The library is open from 11:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday and has significant resources on offer. If you’re looking for something to keep children occupied throughout the holidays, come and review the great range of DVDs on hand.

The library has all the popular DVD titles, including Disney, LEGO, Barbie, Pokémon, Yu-Gi-Oh, and Transformers. For the littlies, there is Dora, Thomas & Friends, Octonauts, Postman Pat and much more. If you want to binge and watch for yourself, we have plenty for the adults too. Series include Midsomer Murders, Chicago Fire, Downton Abbey, Poldark, The Vikings, Big Bang Theory, Bones, and many more. The library also has movies in a range of genres, from Westerns to Sci Fi/Fantasy, and all the big franchises such as Marvel, DC Comics, Fast and Furious, Jurassic Park and Mad Max. Call in to the library and check them out today!

You can also go to the library website www.bourkelibrary.com.au to access the fantastic online resources, or download the Bourke Public Library app, available on the App Store and Google Play.

If you would like any more information contact the library on 0268722751 or bpl@bourkelibrary.com.au, and one of the friendly staff will be happy to help you. Don’t forget to like the Facebook and Instagram pages to find out what’s happening at the library.

Visit by the Hon. Adam Marshall, MP, Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Western New South Wales

The Hon. Adam Marshall, MP visited Bourke last Wednesday and announced funding for Bourke under Round 3 of the Stronger Country Communities Program.

Included in the projects announced under the Program are the completion of the fencing around Coolican and Davidson Ovals, the construction of a small bike track within Central Park, which will be complete with a series of traffic signs to enable young children to get an understanding of the road rules before going onto the roads, and the construction of welcome signage to Bourke and all the villages within the shire. The funding will also allow the commencement of a project called “Standing Stories” which will involve the erection of a series of sculptures along the Darling River to celebrate indigenous culture with the area.

The grant funding will also include funding to develop coaching and administrative resources in relation to sport in Bourke. These funds will complement the vastly improved sporting amenities that we enjoy in town, all aimed at significantly improving sporting participation amongst the younger members of our community.

The funding is in response to the areas of priority previously identified during a series of workshops facilitated by Mark Horton of the NSW Office of Sport. These workshops not only shaped the priority list for the improvements of sporting and recreational facilities in Bourke, but also identified the need for the development of coaches and administrators and a greater cooperation amongst the various sporting groups in Bourke.

Fixing Local Roads

The news that Council has received \$4.6m for the reconstruction and sealing of the Coronga Peak Road in the Byrock area from the Fixing Country Roads Program has been extremely well received by road users.

The road services the gravel quarry which is located in the area. The quarry generates comparatively high levels of traffic, most of which are heavy vehicles. The sealing of the road will also, no doubt, be welcomed by the owners of these vehicles.

During his visit to Bourke last week, Minister Marshall advised in relation to the Fixing Country Roads Program that the funding as announced related to Round 1 and that there were a further five (5) rounds proposed by Government.

Bourke Shire Council will be working to determine a priority list for future rounds so that Council is "shovel ready" for projects when future rounds are announced.

The level of funding that Council has received in relation to road projects in recent years is unprecedented. This funding has, and will continue to, allow Council on behalf of the Community to undertake works that would have been well outside its normal financial capacity.

Drought Communities Fund

Council has received notification that its application for funding under the latest round of the Drought Communities Fund has been approved. This funding will see a number of very worthwhile projects undertaken within the shire.

An amount of \$105,000 has been made available to various community groups to assist in undertaking the purchase of some much-needed equipment by some groups, all of which it is hoped will be procured locally.

Larger projects include the repairs and maintenance of some of the historic cemeteries within the Shire; a major refurbishment of Enngonia Hall; repairs to the Grandstand at Enngonia Race track; the replacement of the asbestos roof on the Wanaaring Hall; the construction of a shed and a spectator shade facility at Fords Bridge; the installation of much needed playground equipment also at Fords Bridge; repairs to the tennis courts as well as improvements to the sportsground at Louth; the construction of a storage facility at the Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre and the installation of further structures along the Darling River as part of the "Standing Stories" initiative.

The funding will also allow the painting in Bourke of a mural acknowledging Percy Hobson, a Bourke local who won a Gold Medal at the 1962 Commonwealth Games held in Perth. In winning Gold, Mr Hobson became the first Indigenous Australian athlete to achieve this feat.

The project has been a few years in the planning, however with the funding becoming available the mural will finally be painted on the water tower at the entrance to Bourke on the Nyngan Road.

Percy Hobson now lives in Melbourne. He still has strong family ties in Bourke with his sisters Freda Harvey and Heather Meini, and other members of the extended family, residing in Bourke.

Council Grants Workshop

Councillors and staff attended a Grants Workshop last week to identify projects that can be undertaken through the Commonwealth Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI).

The LRCI Program aims to assist a community-led recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic by supporting local jobs, firms, and procurement. It is expected councils, where possible, will use local businesses and workforces to deliver projects under the Program to ensure stimulus funding flows into local communities.

A number of projects have been suggested and these in the main align with the adopted priorities contained within the Strategic Planning Documents that have been developed by Council.

The projects are currently being costed by staff along with consideration being given as to the ability of Council to undertake the projects within the required time frame. These matters will be considered prior to a final decision being made on the priorities at Council's July meeting to be held on the 27th July 2020.

Following last week's visit by the Hon Adam Marshall MP, as previously noted, it was clear that there will be further rounds of the Stronger Country Communities, the new Fixing Country Roads, Fixing Local Roads and the Fixing Country Bridges funds. Accordingly, Council will be looking at each of these programs with a view to securing additional funding. The scheduling of potential projects will take place along with the obtaining of all necessary approvals and cost estimates.

Council's priority for the Fixing Country Roads Program will be the finalisation of the Bourke to Wanaaring Road and hopefully this will become a reality.

In structuring Council's Application there has been an emphasis of improving existing infrastructure and completing projects and this has been demonstrated by the work in Central Park as well as the major sporting precinct including the Pool and Davidson and Coolican Ovals.

As has been demonstrated throughout earlier items in this column, the funding available has not been Bourke centric with each of the villages also receiving a share of available funding resulting in a significant improvement in the social amenity of all Shire communities.

One of the major projects that Council would like to undertake, and is actively pursuing funding for, is the restoration of the historic North Bourke Bridge. Steeped in history and built during a period when Paddle steamers operated on the Darling River, the Bridge is arguably the most photographed feature in Bourke. The need to protect this historical artefact is paramount. Coupled with this, the ability to be able to use the Bridge for pedestrian and cycle traffic would be a significant boost for the community in dramatically enhancing the tourism experience within Bourke.

Development Consent Process

Council regulates building and development activity (commercial, industrial and residential) on behalf of the community. Each Development Application (DA) is assessed on its merits, using relevant Environmental Planning Instruments, Development Control Plans, and other relevant policies.

Council consent for most types of development is required by law under the *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. There are some minor works that do not require development consent and further information on these can be obtained from Council.

Council encourages all persons proposing to undertake a development, that prior to submitting a DA to meet with Council staff for a confidential pre-lodgement meeting.

A pre-lodgement meeting provides the prospective applicant with the opportunity to discuss and receive feedback from Council on the technical aspects of a development proposal. This occurs following a preliminary assessment by staff of submitted plans and documents detailing the proposal.

Construction Certificates

A Construction Certificate (CC) is required ***before work commences*** and can be issued by Council or obtained from a private registered certifier. A CC cannot be issued for retrospective works.

Please contact Council for further information on any planning or building requirements.

If you are not sure if you require the consent of Council or approval to build something, please contact Council's staff on 6830 8000 for advice.

Bourke Ceramic Centre

The newly developed Bourke Ceramic Centre has already been utilised for the conduct of some classes for those wishing to learn new ceramic skills. Local resident Kayla Amos, who recently graduated with Honours in Fine Arts from the University of New South Wales, is providing the tuition.

This weekend, Annette's sister and Narromine based ceramic artist Nerida Barber, who is also a former TAFE teacher, will visit Bourke and provide some additional instruction to the group.

July Council Meeting

The next Council meeting of Bourke Shire Council will be held on 27th July 2020 and it is again likely that members of the public will be unable to attend but will have the opportunity to submit matters, for the public forum and to follow the meeting via the live streaming, depending on what changes are made to the COVID-19 Public Health Orders.

The meeting will commence at 9.15am and will again be live streamed with the link for the livestream being advised on Councils Website at approximately 9.00am on the meeting day.

Whilst no public forum is planned to be held at this stage, should any resident like to raise an issue in relation to the items on the agenda, they are invited to do so by forwarding representations on the matter they wish to raise to Council via email: bourkeshire@bourke.nsw.gov.au or via telephone 68308000, ensuring that this is undertaken by 8.30am on meeting day.

Airlink Courtesy Vehicle

Airlink Airlines who operate the air services to Bourke from Dubbo and return, each Monday, Wednesday and Friday, have recognised that there is a need to be able to provide their passengers with the opportunity to have access to a vehicle whilst in town, particularly those persons with no real connections in town. In this regard Airlink have decided to provide a courtesy car for that purpose.

Airlink are keen to increase patronage on the service and feel that this additional service would provide a benefit for their passengers and hopefully result in more regular passengers. Details in respect of the flights are available at: www.airlinkairlines.com.au

Minister Marshall Meets Local Farmers Regarding the Wild Dog Issue

Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, the Hon Adam Marshall MP, last week joined with representatives of Local Land Services at the "Lakemere " property of Jim and Annabelle Strachan to discuss the wild dog problem which is plaguing many properties in western New South Wales, impacting the numbers of lambs and goats.

The situation has in some parts of southern Queensland and northern New South Wales, has become such that the financial viability of some grazing enterprises has been put at risk. A number of measures have been put in place by Government to reduce the number of wild dogs and to restrict their movement and these include baiting, trapping and the erection of exclusion fencing.

From my discussions with attendees at the meeting they were extremely pleased that the Minister took the time to travel down to Louth to meet with impacted landowners and hear first-hand from the graziers regarding the problem. The Minister was aware of the issue and supportive of the landowner's attempts to bring the matter under control recognising the financial implications and the impact on agricultural production more generally.

Bourke Shire Council is the lead Council on behalf of a number of Councils in Western New South Wales who have obtained over \$1m in funding through two (2) grants to assist in the implementation of a number of strategies to control wild dogs. The Councils are working closely with Local Land Services in the implementation of those strategies and the coordination of programs funded under the grant.

I thank Minister Marshall and commend him on being prepared to take such an active interest in what is a very important issue to graziers within the shire.

Darling River

The River was at 3.98 metres at Bourke on Monday and a slight trickle coming over the weir wall. There has been a small flow in the Bogan but to date that hasn't translated into a flow into the Darling. The rain over the weekend had little impact on additional flows.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK!

Dreams can come true, but there is a secret. They're realized through the magic of persistence, determination, commitment, passion, practice, focus and hard work. They happen a step at a time, manifested over years, not weeks."

Elbert Hubbard

Ross Earl
General Manager