



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

**“From the
General Manager’s Desk”
18 February 2021”**

THE LATE FRED HOLLOWES

Last Wednesday, 10 February 2021 was the 28th anniversary of the passing of Fred Hollows back in 1993. An active campaigner for the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Fred Hollows worked incredibly hard in the field to bring sight to so many people suffering from avoidable blindness. Buried at the Bourke Cemetery, and recognised locally by way of the “Vision Way”, the work of Fred goes on through the Fred Hollows Foundation. The Foundation has worked in 25 countries and restored sight to millions of people. In the past six years it has trained a staggering 308,000 eye health workers – 1,145 surgeons, 4,295 clinic support staff, and 302,716 community health workers.

STATE FUNERAL

The NSW Government has announced that former Mayor of Cobar, the late Lilliane Brady, OAM is to be honoured with a State Funeral to be held tomorrow, Friday 19th February 2021, commencing at 11.00am in Drummond Park (Linsley Street), Cobar. It would be understood that the park has been chosen as the funeral site to allow as many people as possible to attend. Council will be represented at the Funeral.

EASTER FESTIVAL

My first meeting that I attended last week as General Manager that involved members of the community was a meeting to discuss plans for this year’s Bourke Easter Festival. Yes, the Festival is going ahead and planning is well underway. Once again there will be a myriad of activities over the weekend ranging from Easter Church Services through to markets, street parade, wool bale rolling, art exhibitions and Picnic Races, to name but some of the activities. Each event will have its own COVID Plan to meet statutory requirements. Councils Manager of Tourism and Events, Fran Carter and Ben Nott will be heading up the planning for the weekend. Don’t hesitate to contact Fran or Ben at the Back O’ Bourke Exhibition Centre on 02 68721321 should you wish to be part of the weekends program.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS:

Following this week’s initial Community Meeting held in Bourke at the Back O’ Bourke centre on Monday, Tuesday saw the Mayor, various Councillors and Council staff “hit the road” and travel to Louth and Wanaaring for meetings in the western sector of the Shire. Next week will see the remaining meetings held, as follows:

Village/Town	Date	Day	Time	Venue
Byrock	23/02/2021	Tuesday	12.30pm - 2.30pm	Mulga Creek Motel
Enngonia	24/02/2021	Wednesday	8.30am - 10.30am	CWA Hall
Fords Bridge	24/02/2021	Wednesday	12.30pm - 2.30pm	Warrego Hotel

Whilst the meetings provide an opportunity for residents to have input into the development of Councils 2021/2022 Operational Plan (budget), an overview and update of Council's current operations and proposed works schedule will be provided

To those residents at Byrock, Enngonia and Fords Bridge and surrounds, I invite you to come along and have your say.

WESTERN WEIRS PROGRAM

Council representatives received a briefing last week as to the status of work by the State Government regarding the Western Weirs Program. Aimed at improving water security for far west region towns serviced by the Barwon Darling and Lower Darling River systems, the Program is a comprehensive and extensive parcel of work by Government for the Western Region. At the meeting information was provided as to the progress in preparing the Strategic Business Case for the river system. The rigour being brought to the project is comprehensive and whilst all in attendance would have liked an outcome by now, all appreciated the need for a robust business case to inform funding decisions. It is anticipated that a further briefing will be held mid-year and it is expected that the Strategic Business Case will be completed in the latter months of 2021.

ROTARY PARK TOILET BLOCK

Construction of new accessible toilet block in Rotary Park Bourke is essentially complete. Funded by the Commonwealth Government through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund at a cost of some \$90,000, the new facility replaces the dark green toilet of old.

COVID INFECTION CONTROL COURSES

It is apparent that COVID-19 is not going away any time soon with associate professor at the Australian National University's medical school and Infectious diseases physician, Sanjaya Senanayake, saying that it could take up to six (6) years for the world to be vaccinated against COVID-19. To assist business, it has recently come to my attention that the Illawarra Business College has received Government funding for Fee Free Online Courses for Infection Control to assist in this current Coronavirus Pandemic. The courses have been identified as being required in a number of industries, such as Retail, Health, Community Services, Cultural and Recreational Services, Food Handling, Transport and Logistics. Taking between 6-18 hours to complete, the courses are open to all NSW residents aged 15 plus. The courses are Certified NSW Government Courses and Expressions of Interest must be received by COB today, 18th February 2021. For further details go to:

www.tibc.nsw.edu.au/covid-19

WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Work on the new Bourke Water Treatment facility continues successfully and is on target for completion in May 2021. This is an exciting and major project for Bourke. Councillors and staff were to undertake an inspection of the facility today in the company of the Construction Contractors, Laurie Curran Water (LCW) and Councils Project Managers, NSW Public Works Advisory. LCW are a Victorian based company and due to this week's five (5) day Victorian lockdown, it has been necessary to reschedule the inspection. Despite the many difficulties that have arisen over the past 12 months due to numerous border restrictions, all parties involved in the project have worked together to successfully progress the project. I look forward to the rescheduled inspection.

UPGRADE OF DISPLAYS AT THE BACK O' BOURKE EXHIBITION CENTRE

Council staff will be overseeing the installation of a new presentation in the theatre at the Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre during the next week. The presentation, titled 'Lifeblood', has been in production for over a year with Nick Tory from Ample Projects undertaking the development.

'Lifeblood' is a film about our history and ancient identity and was written in collaboration with Aunty Dot Martin and Phil Sullivan. Over the period of development more than thirty-five artists, technicians, designers, animators, photographers and illustrators have worked on the project. The crew included a group of 16 animation students from the Design Department of the University of Technology Sydney, who took part in an internship program, created to be a genuine part of the production process.

The installation is the final component of a broader project funded between Bourke Council, the Far North West Joint Organisation and the NSW State Government. Other elements have included the completion of the Yaama Garden, expansion of the Visitors Centre and construction of the new Café. Bourke Shire Council again thanks the NSW State Government for their funding support of various tourism projects over the past several years.

ALGAL ALERTS

On 12 February 2021, Water NSW advised that the Darling River at Bourke was now on an Amber Alert in respect of Blue-Green Algae. Water NSW advises that where an Amber Alert is applicable, "blue-green algae may be multiplying and the water may have a green tinge and musty or organic taste and odour. The water should be considered as unsuitable for potable use and alternative supplies or prior treatment of raw water for domestic purposes should be considered. The water may also be unsuitable for stock watering. The water is generally suitable for water sports, however people are advised to exercise caution in these areas, as blue-green algal concentrations can rise to red alert levels quickly under warm, calm weather conditions".

These alert levels apply to non-human consumptive or recreational contact and stock alert warnings. Drinking water safety thresholds are much more stringent. For further Information go to the Water NSW Algal Website www.watarnsw.com.au/water-quality/algae or call the NSW Algae hotline 1800 999 457.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK!

"If anyone has any superlatives that haven't been used yet, you know how to get in touch with me. My reservoir is bone dry".

American CBS announcer Jim Nantz, commenting on Tom Brady after he led the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to an American Super Bowl title at the Age of 43.

*Mark Riley
General Manager*