



## “From the General Manager’s Desk” 18 March 2021”

### **New video presentation**

Last week saw a preview screening of a new video presentation which will be shown in the theatrette at the Back O’ Bourke Exhibition Centre. 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 Bourke’s history and its ancient identity and was written in collaboration with Aunty Dot Martin and Uncle Phil Sullivan. Over the period of development more than thirty-five artists, technicians, designers, animators, photographers and illustrators 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.

Aunty Dot, Uncle Phil and Linda Edwards were invited to see the film last Thursday prior to its official launch this week and they were extremely pleased with the final product.

### **Back O’ Bourke Exhibition Centre – Open Day**

‘Lifeblood’, as mentioned above, is the final component of a broader project funded between Council, the Far North Western 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.

To showcase these various improvements, the Exhibition Centre will be holding an Open Day this Sunday, 21 March 2021 from 9.00am to 3.00pm for local residents, with a free sausage sizzle also available on the day from 11.00am to 2.00pm.

This is a perfect opportunity for old and new residents to view what the Exhibition Centre has to offer and further view the fantastic Function Centre. The Exhibition Centre is more than just an information centre!

With tourism being such an important component of Bourke’s economy, the vision shown by Council in creating this Centre is to be applauded. Council again thanks both the Federal and NSW Governments for their financial support of various tourism projects in Bourke as we head into what is expected to be a most busy tourism season for Bourke.

## **Story Telling**

In last week's column, I wrote about the North Bourke Bridge and commented about the stories it could tell given its near 138-year-old history. Like the Bridge, we as individuals also have a story. Unfortunately, many of these stories are simply lost and often narrowed down to just 10 – 15 minutes as part of a eulogy at a funeral.

This week I was advised of a special regional project that involves members of the community being invited to get involved to tell their story. Outback Arts, the arts and cultural development organisation working in the seven (7) local government areas of Bourke, Brewarrina, Coonamble, Cobar, Walgett, Bogan and Warren Shires are working with a firm called Signal Creative on a regional audio storytelling project titled Outback Outloud.

The project involves free workshops and a community story booth, designed to collect stories from and about people in the remote NSW, Outback Arts region. Outback Outloud encourages full community participation and through the support of local organisations, people can come to a familiar and comfortable location to take part.

For the workshops, participants are asked to bring their smartphone, or use one of the provided iPads, to learn to interview and record sound. A series of fun activities to build confidence on the mic as well as some tricks and tips to getting the best recording you can, will be held.

In addition, the story booth is available to have your story recorded or you can bring along a family member or friend to tell a story.

Outback Outloud will be happening in Bourke on Saturday 27 March, 11 am - 1 pm at Diggers on the Darling and then on Monday 29 March, 11 am - 1 pm at the Maranguka Community Hub. Further information is available by contacting Outback Arts on 02 6822 2484 or by emailing them at [admin@outbackarts.com.au](mailto:admin@outbackarts.com.au) if you have any questions.

## **Cooee**

I was privileged last week to meet and talk with the Bishop of the Forbes-Wilcannia Catholic Diocese, the Most Reverend Columba Macbeth-Green. I have to admit that my perception of a stereotypical Bishop is very different to what I found with the energetic, engaging and humorous Bishop Columba.

His passion for the far west of the state was very obvious. The Bishop was in Bourke for the opening of the "Cooee for Coffee Café" located next to the Crossley Engine/ Wally Mitchell Wharf Precinct, and for a meeting of the Catholic Care Board of the Diocese. Also at the opening of the Café was the Parish Priest of the Holy Spirit Parish in Bourke, Reverend Ravi Muvvala who has recently been appointed to the Bourke Parish. I previously met Rev Ravi when he attended Councils recent New Residents- Welcome to Bourke Event.

## **Carp Muster**

It's great to hear that the annual Carp Muster is back on again this year with Bourke's A'int Caught Nuffin' Fishing Club and Local Land Services, combining to host this family fun event.

The Muster allows the community to be involved in looking after the Darling River by removing carp, which are classified as pests, from the river. The event is set down for Saturday 24 April 2021 with many prizes on offer for all participants. Registration for the event is free, with details of the event being available on the Facebook site for Bourke's Ain't Caught Nuffin' Fishing Club.

### **River Height.**

As of Monday this week, the height of the Darling River at Bourke had increased to 4.24 meters resulting in approximately 1000 megalitres flowing over the weir in the 24 hours to 9.00 am Monday. Last Thursday, water was essentially trickling over the weir wall, with a river height of 4.01 metres. Under Council's Drought Management Plan, at a river height of 3.9 metres, which is effectively when water ceases to flow over the weir, the township proceeds to level one (1) water restrictions.

With the current and further expected flows, Bourke will avoid water restrictions, for the immediate future at least.

The unfortunate issue for our township is the amount of water that has flowed past Bourke in the last 12 months and how little of this Bourke is able to store. In this regard, Bourke can only store what is held in the weir pool and that is why Council is so keen to see additional water storage for the Bourke Community as part of the Western Weirs Strategy that is currently being developed by the NSW Government. Council anxiously awaits the completion of the development of the Strategy and ultimately, implementation of plans such that the towns' water storage capacity is increased.

### **Census.**

Australia's next national Census will be held on Tuesday, 10 August 2021. The Census is a snapshot of who we are and tells the story of how we are changing. It provides data on important topics such as populations, rents, mortgages, incomes, religion, languages, housing and more and is used to inform many things, from planning schools, healthcare and roads to local services for individuals, families and communities.

Whilst the date for the 2021 Census may appear to be still some time away, planning is obviously well underway. This week, staff from the Australian Bureau of Statistics met with Council officers to discuss how the ABS can best engage members of the Bourke community, such that each and every person in Bourke on that August day, is accounted for and included in the data for our town.

As most people would appreciate, planning for and conducting the Census is a massive undertaking. Held every five (5) years, which is a quinquennial basis, the census is the largest peacetime logistical effort in Australia. It includes surveying around 10 million households and 25 million people.

I will provide further information as Census Day approaches.

### **QUOTE OF THE WEEK!**

*"You don't learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over."*

*Richard Branson*

*Mark Riley  
General Manager*