



**BOURKE  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL**

“From the  
General Manager’s Desk”  
22 April 2021”

### **ANZAC Day**

ANZAC Day commemoration services will be held this Sunday, 25 April 2021 at both Bourke and Louth. After the cancellation of public participation in ceremonies last year, due to the COVID Pandemic, it is anticipated that there will be strong involvement this year.

The Dawn Service at Bourke commences at 6.00am on Sunday with attendees asked to be at the Cenotaph by 5.50am. The main ANZAC Day Service in Bourke will start at 11.00am on Sunday. For those intending to participate in the ANZAC Day March, it is requested that you assemble Darling Park across the road from Diggers on the Darling, no later than 10.30am on the day.

The Louth Community have for many years conducted a dusk commemoration Service. This Service will again be held this year starting at 5.00pm Sunday. For details in relation to this service you can contact Jane Murray on 68747401.

COVID safe practices will be in place at all ceremonies, including social distancing and contact tracing.

The Bourke RSL has joined with local radio station 2WEB to broadcast both the Bourke 6.00am dawn service and 11.00am morning service over its airwaves. Residents who are unable to attend either of the Bourke ceremonies are invited to follow proceedings on 585 on your AM dial – Outback Radio 2WEB.

### **River Flows**

The SES is releasing daily official river height projections which, as of 18 April 2021, identify that the Darling River at Bourke may reach a peak height of 11.20 metres on ANZAC Day. This is classified as Minor Level Flooding. At Louth the projection is for a peak of 10.60m in early May 2021, with this being a Moderate Flood Level (10.0m). The Bourke Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) which comprise the SES, Council, NSW Police and other Government agencies met last week in preparation for the higher flows.

As mentioned last week, parents and carers please be aware as to where your children are such that they are not jumping off the Wharf in Bourke, or for that matter, entering flood waters at all.

### **Carp Muster Postponed**

With the increased heights and flows in the Darling River, and coupled with the resulting safety concerns, the Bourke “Aint Caught Nuffin” Fishing Club has determined to postpone the Carp Muster that was set down for Saturday, 24 April 2021 until further notice. Safety is paramount for any event, especially those involving the river, with the

Club recognising the higher danger levels associated with the current state of the river. The Committee will readvertise the event in the future when the river is more accessible for fishers.

### **ACCC Murray-Darling Basin Water Markets Inquiry**

I have received advice that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has released the final report of its Murray-Darling Basin Water Markets Inquiry. This is available by accessing the ACCC's website and then searching, Murray Darling.

The report makes a number of recommendations to enhance markets for tradeable water rights, including their operation, transparency, regulation, competitiveness and efficiency.

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment will hold a webinar tomorrow, Friday, 23 April 2021 from 2.00pm-3.00pm where the department will provide an update on the final report. Officer's from the ACCC will be in attendance and will present a summary of the report's findings/recommendations and answer any questions.

To register for the webinar, go to: <https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/licensing-trade/trade/accc-murraydarling-basin-water-markets-inquiry>

The department will outline its approach for preparing a response to the report, including upcoming community consultation to help inform the NSW Government's response. This includes an online survey that will allow interested persons to have their say on the report's recommendations.

### **Riverview Golf Club**

As advised in a previous Column, former Bourke Council Engineer, Bruce Gray, is preparing a history of the former Riverview Golf Club at Bourke. Bruce sent me an email during the week to give me an update on the book. He has received some information regarding the old days of the Club but is hopeful of receiving more. If you have photos or information that could assist Bruce with his research, please drop them into Leonie Brown at the Council or email her at [lbrown@bourke.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lbrown@bourke.nsw.gov.au) and she will ensure Bruce receives the information.

Bruce advised that the book is generally progressing well, but it is undoubtedly some months away yet. He did send me a copy of the preface which I thought made interesting reading in terms of some of the characters who played at the course!

A player who received an OBE Medal, another who received a Military Medal for Bravery, the "Ruff-Nut" underdog who trounced the champion, the beloved priest, the "rock" solicitor, passionate doctors, romance and a who's who of player history are just some of the stories contained in the book, to date.

### **Rebates for Small Business.**

If you are the owner of a small business, a sole trader, or a not-for-profit organisation, you may be eligible for a rebate of \$1500 from the NSW Government.

Aimed at assisting small business recover from the impacts of COVID-19 by reducing the costs of government fees and charges, the NSW Government has introduced its Small Business Fees and Charges Rebate.

Eligible businesses can use the scheme to claim back the cost of NSW and Council fees and charges up to an amount of \$1500 with applications open until 30 June 2021.

To be an eligible business you simply have to be a small business (including non-employing sole traders) or a not-for-profit organisation that:

- had total Australian wages below the NSW Government 2020-2021 payroll tax threshold of \$1.2 million;
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) registered in NSW and/or have business premises physically located and operating in NSW;
- be registered for goods and services tax (GST);
- Provide a declaration that the business has a turnover of at least \$75,000 per year.

### **Essential Energy**

I was happy to receive advice this week from Luke Jenner who is the General Manager, Customer & Network Services, with Essential Energy, providing advice of the improvements that Essential Energy have been able to achieve during the March cycle of meter readings in Bourke.

Luke advised that Essential Energy had achieved a significant reduction of estimated accounts, with approximately 11 per cent of the accounts for March 2021 being estimated reads. This compared with a 28 per cent figure in December 2020.

In addition, Luke advised that their meter reading contractor had ensured that any new staff in this area receive the appropriate training, and that all employees understand the requirements for gaining actual meter readings where safe to do so.

In respect of the 11 per cent of reads that were estimated reads, actual electricity consumption was not obtained due to locked property gates or unrestrained dogs. Accounts for customers at these premises will be estimated in line with current Electricity Market rules.

Essential Energy is identifying these properties, along with any premises that have not had an actual read in the past 12 months, through enhanced monitoring and reporting and discussing safe access and meter reading options with owners to avoid future estimated reads.

Council is also working with Essential Energy in respect of access to Councils numerous electricity sites.

I consider it important that Luke and his team be thanked for their actions, that they continue to pursue, to address Council's concerns regarding meter reading processes, as previously raised with them.

### **Election: Non-residential rolls**

The Ordinary Election of Councillors for Bourke Shire is scheduled to be held on 4 September 2021.

Whilst people over the age of 18 who live in the Bourke Shire area are eligible to vote in the elections, assuming they are on the electoral role, people who are non-resident owners, occupiers and rate-paying lessees of rateable land within the Bourke Council area also have an opportunity to have a say in who is elected to Council. To this end, it is my responsibility as General Manager to maintain a roll of non-resident owners of

rateable land and the roll of occupiers and rate-paying lessees, these being the non-residential roll.

It is not compulsory to be on a non-residential roll if you are eligible nor is it compulsory to vote if you are on a non-residential roll.

You can check your residential enrolment at <https://check.aec.gov.au> or by calling the AEC on 132326. Contact Council to check whether you are enrolled on a non-residential roll.

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK!**

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
We will remember them."*

Laurence Binyon's poem, For the Fallen, first published in The Times of London in September 1914.

Mark Riley  
General Manager