



**BOURKE  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL**

## “From the General Manager’s Desk” 29 April 2021”

### **ANZAC Day**

The courage and sacrifice shown by all those who have served our Nation, from that fateful day on 25 April 1915 at Gallipoli right through to current day soldiers, should never be forgotten. Thanks must go to the Bourke RSL Sub Branch who undertook the coordination of ANZAC Day activities in Bourke last Sunday such that the spirit and tradition of ANZAC Day remains strong in the broader Bourke community. I also thank the community for their attendance and my various staff involved in preparations for the Day.

### **Percy Hobson Mural**

What a day last Thursday was for Bourke with so many community members taking the opportunity to leave their handprints on a completed Percy Hobson Mural. Mayor Barry and I were travelling on Thursday from the Western Division Conference held in Broken Hill and all the way back in the car we were able to listen to the activities at the mural as broadcast by 2WEB. As an aside, I was not aware till Thursday that the broadcast area of 2WEB extended so far.

By the time we arrived back in Bourke, the mural was an absolute sea of handprints, and whilst all the school students had been and gone, there was still a stream of people taking the opportunity to leave their handprints on the lower section of the mural.

In due course, Council will have an official opening of the mural and at that point, recognise and thank those people who bought the mural to fruition.

### **Wanaaring Levee Bank**

Council this week determined a course of action in respect of the Wanaaring levee. In late February/early March 2020, as a result of substantial rains within the upper catchment of the Paroo River and projected river heights, Council undertook works to a 200 metre section of the levee at the eastern end of the village that had been removed post the 2012 floods due to the levee in that location being in close proximity to overhead power lines.

At the Wanaaring Village Community Meeting held in February 2021, Wanaaring residents in attendance were in favour of the removal of a portion of the levee from Vicary Street, Wanaaring, sooner rather than later. They advised that the current route through the village was difficult for road train traffic, the existing route pushed heavy traffic past the school and further it meant that tourist traffic was not easily able to access the hotel, when and if it reopens.

Council investigated various portable barrier options but in the end, the best option determined was simply to remove the levee where it crosses Vicary St, store the soil and then replace the soil when a flood event is imminent.

Removal of the relevant section of the earthen levee will be undertaken in early June 2021. This date is subject to there being no significant rainfall in the Paroo River catchment during April – May 2021 that results in high river flows and thus above moderate flood levels in the Wanaaring area.

## **Cuttaburra Creek Bridge No1**

In other Wanaaring news, I am happy to advise that repair work has started on Cuttaburra Creek Bridge No 1 following a road accident on the bridge some time ago. With extensive damage caused to the bridge, Council staff have been able to finalise negotiations with the driver's insurance company.

The initial component of the project is the grading of an old side-track located to the north of the damaged bridge which will be used to provide uninterrupted access for vehicles whilst the bridge is closed for repairs. This side-track will receive a formation grade to allow safe access for both light and heavy vehicles.

Damage to the bridge includes some 60 metres of guard rail and 15 bridge decks, all requiring replacement. When Council initially contracted the construction of the bridge in 1991, it required the then contractor to provide additional bridge decks. In this regard, Council has some 18 unused bridge decks in storage at its Bourke depot. Given the damage to Cuttaburra Bridge No 1, 15 of these decks will be transported to the site of the damaged bridge and installed. Once removed the damaged decks will be bought back to Bourke for repair. These damaged and then repaired decks are then to be signed off by an engineer as being "fit for purpose" such that the decks can be used by Council at some point in the future, if required.

## **Display upgrades Back O' Bourke**

Display upgrading works at the Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre are now underway and will continue over coming weeks. Two (2) new major displays are being installed. The first titled 'Reflections of the Darling' is being installed towards the end of building two and has been developed in the style of the entrance to the pavilion.

The second major display installation is labelled 'visionaries' and sits in the third building across from the Hearts of Gold section. This display highlights the important contribution made to Western communities by Jimmie Barker, Pearl Gibbs and Bill Ferguson and highlights their struggles for equality for the Aboriginal community. Direct quotes from these visionaries are used to tell much of this story and while it is confronting it also gives an insight into the founding of reconciliation in this Country.

These display upgrades are the latest additions to recent works at the Exhibition Centre including the development of the visitor's centre, café and garden development. The Centre will continue to evolve and remains a pivotal part of the Outback tourist trail.

## **Mount Oxley**

Along with my wife, we took the opportunity to visit Mount Oxley over the Easter Break. After a lot of people telling me how fantastic it was, we were certainly not disappointed as we arrived at the summit. The view is simply spectacular. We were there mid-morning, and my next visit will be to watch a sunset. The access road to the Mount and the summit is not perfect, however it's all part of the adventure.

I have been to Kakadu in the Northern Territory where there is a well-known rocky outcrop called Ubiir Rock lookout, located some 250 km from Darwin. Call me biased but I felt the outlook and the diverse landscape visible from Mt Oxley was as good as Ubiir Rock, with Mount Oxley being but a 50 km drive from Bourke.

## **Bourke Show**

This Saturday, 1 May 2021, is Show Day in Bourke at the JB Renshaw Sporting Complex. As a Gold Sponsor, Council views the annual show as an integral component of Bourke's culture, allowing the community to come together as one.

In addition to the regular show jumping events, wool and sheep exhibitions, a dog and pet show and a Pavilion displaying the best local flowers, floral arrangements, plants, produce, jams and preserves, cooking, crafts arts, photographs and needle work, the 2021 Show brings with it a full program of entertainment for young and old.

There is a mechanical bull, "Dash for Cash" foot races, a Dog Jumping Team, the comedy act the "Crack Up Sisters", live music and a fireworks display.

Bringing this full day of activity together is no small task. To Show President, Grace Ridge, and her team of volunteers, thank you for what you all do for Bourke and best wishes are extended for a successful and well attended Show.

### **Mosquitoes**

With the recent rains and the impending flooding, undoubtedly there will be an increase in mosquitoes in the area. Whilst being bitten causes annoying skin irritation, mosquitoes can carry some pretty ordinary diseases.

Residents can take action now to avoid being bitten, with such preventative actions including:

- Screen all your windows and doors to prevent mosquitoes from coming inside ;
- If you live in an unscreened house or are camping, sleep under a mosquito net ;
- If going outside at dusk or dawn, take precautions including using repellent and/or wearing a loose-fitting long sleeve shirt and trousers ;
- When mosquitoes are present inside a room, use spray, especially behind furniture and in dark places ;
- Air conditioning, fans and mosquito coils are also effective in protecting yourself from mosquitoes ;
- If you have a septic tank on your place and it has been inundated with water, you will need to have it pumped out ;
- Ensure there are no containers around your place that store water ; and,
- Ensure mesh is in place on septic vents.

### **Quote of the Week!**

*"The noblest art is that of making others happy"*

*P.T. Barnum,*

*Mark Riley  
General Manager*