



“From the General Manager’s Desk” 15 July 2021”

Bourke’s Main Street

Following concerns being raised regarding inappropriate behaviour in Oxley St, Bourke, a meeting with traders was convened by Council last week. The meeting was fortunate to have in attendance Detective Inspector Jeff Little, Officer-In-Charge Bourke Police and Ms Kate Sheehan from NSW Health, Mental Health Unit.

Both Detective Inspector Little and Ms Sheehan spoke articulately in regards to their respective fields and their advice was very much appreciated by all in attendance. The bottom line in respect of incidences of inappropriate behaviour, whether that be from persons yelling and screaming, which causes affront, through to shoplifting and beyond, is for shop owners to ring the Bourke Police on 6870 0899 and report the matter. There are rigid processes to be followed in respect of matters involving mental health, however the Police are very much the first port of call.

All such calls are logged and form part of a brief where matters move forward in a legal perspective. The receptiveness of Inspector Little and Ms Sheehan in attending the meeting was acknowledged by Mayor Barry on the evening and I certainly add my thanks and look forward to shopkeepers taking the suggested action .

Variety Bash

Advice was received this week that the Variety Clubs Big Bash has been moved from August till November 2021 due to the current COVID restrictions. The advice was that the Variety Club Bash “will now be in town on Wednesday night the 24th November 2021” with dinner planned at the Bourke Bowling Club and breakfast at the Bourke Public School.

The Variety Bash is not a race or a rally. It’s an adventure with friends driving 30 year old plus cars through regional parts of Australia that might not be otherwise seen, all in support of Variety, which is a Children’s Charity. Throughout the Bash, participants visit local towns, stopping into schools and organisations to visit kids. Bashers get to see the direct impact of their fundraising efforts along the way, with a range of educational, health and mobility equipment provided to local schools and organisations en-route. Festivities along the way include theme nights to entertainment and other activities and games on the road. This year’s bash will travel from Sydney Zoo at Bungaribee through to Bakers Creek, Rockhampton, Queensland, via Bourke, a nice little journey of some 4,400kms over 10 days. Good on them.

Mundi Mundi Bash

Located on the western side of Silverton, outside of Broken Hill, are the Mundi Mundi Plains, a flat expanse of land that seem to go forever. The Mundi-Mundi Bash will be held on these Plains from 19-21 August 2021, with all 10,000 tickets sold out. Yes, 10,000 tickets. Ticketholders will get to experience a

unique three(3) day festival with headline entertainment including Paul Kelly, Shannon Noll, Glenn Shorrock, Wendy Matthews, Dragon and The Radiators, to name but some of the acts. The important thing for Bourke is that participants who are attending the Bash, whose normally reside in the northern part of NSW or in Queensland, will undoubtedly travel through Bourke both before and after the event. This is great news for Bourke businesses and for our local tourism opportunities. All going COVID well, I would expect that Bourke will experience an influx of travellers in the week before and after the event.

COVID Requirements

Whilst not wanting to sound like a broken record, a reminder that face masks must still be worn in indoor areas, excluding residential premises, and the mandatory use of Service NSW QR codes at all workplaces and all retail businesses is now in place. If you are in any doubt as to your obligations, the various requirements are spelt out on the NSW Government website, www.nsw.gov.au

If you operate a businesses and you still need to register for a NSW Government QR code, you can source an application form and more information at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/register-your-business-as-covid-safe> For visitors without a digital device, other check-in forms must be available.

I noticed from last weeks "Police News" in The Western Herald that, "Anyone with information regarding individuals or businesses in contravention of COVID-19 related ministerial directions is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000." It was a call to Police that resulted in various players from the St George Dragons coming under significant public and media scrutiny last week as a result of their non-compliance with COVID requirements at a party in Shellharbour. Whilst a very serious matter the speculation amongst long time Dragons supporters that they may get a "call up" to back fill for the suspended positions, was quite amusing. I happened to have rung a fellow Dragons fan last week, who is in his late 60's, who answered the phone with a "Is that You Hook?" with Hook being the nickname of Dragons Coach Anthony Griffin! With Sydney still under stay at home restrictions, keep an eye on the nsw.gov.au website for the latest updates.

COVID Funding

The NSW Government has announced a new grants package and changes to the Dine & Discover NSW program to help businesses and people across NSW impacted by the current COVID-19 restrictions. This includes regional businesses impacted by a loss of trade during the school holiday period. For full details, please go to: www.nsw.gov.au

A good news story in regards to Dine and Discover NSW vouchers. You can now use your vouchers at the Back O Bourke Exhibition Centre either in the Café, to journey through the Centre or take a cruise on the PV Jandra. If you intend to use your voucher to cruise on the Jandra, you will need to purchase your ticket at the Exhibition Centre.

Pilgrimage

I had an opportunity to have dinner last week with Fr Carl McKander, Parish Priest of St Patrick's Parish in Wellington and Fr Ravi Muvvala, Parish Priest here in Bourke. Fr Ravi was telling us of a project that he is working on which is a Pilgrimage to Bourke to honour Saint Teresa of Calcutta. Known as Mother Teresa of Calcutta, before being canonised as a Saint in 2016, first arrived in Australia in 1969 to open a Missionaries of Charity Convent in Bourke. A Nobel peace prize laureate, I was unaware of her visits and involvement in Bourke, all those years ago.

Fr Ravi said the Pilgrimage would be held from Sunday 19 September 2021 through till Wednesday 22 September 2021. To that end, Fr Ravi has advised of a Planning Committee Meeting to be held on Saturday 17 July 2021 at 10am at the Mercy Convent, Parish Meeting Room and I am happy to bring such meeting to the attention of interested people in the Bourke Community. From a tourism perspective the Pilgrimage is a concept that could bring numerous people to Bourke for a period of time, with the idea being to utilise and showcase various attractions in the community such as Mt Oxley, Mt Gundabooka and the PV Jandra.

Local Government Elections

Within today's Western Herald is an extensive Public Notice setting out information for candidates in respect of the Local Government Elections to be held on 4 September 2021. If you're considering nominating as a candidate for these elections, I would encourage you read the notice. It provides general guidance about the process of nominating, and importantly, provides information in respect of obligations and responsibilities for candidates. Candidate nominations open on Monday 26 July 2021 and close at 12 noon, Wednesday 4 August, 2021.

If you are in the "will I, or wont I" phase of potentially being a candidate, there is a significant amount of resources that are available on Council's website for review to assist in your decision making process. These can be accessed at the following link:

<https://bourke.nsw.gov.au/council/2021-local-council-elections/>

Quote of the week: "We have to quash the community transmission because if we don't, we will see thousands and thousands of people in hospital and lots of people, thousands of people, potentially, dying." - NSW Premier, the Hon Gladys Berajiklian on announcing extended stay at home requirements for Sydney.