



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the
General Manager’s Desk”
5 May 2022”

Anzac Day

Thank you to all involved in last week’s Anzac Day activities in Bourke and Louth. Whilst I wasn’t in Bourke for the Dawn Service, a reliable source informed me that the Dawn Service was attended by well in excess of 300 people. I was back in Bourke for the morning service and I always get a chill up my spine as the Parade marches towards the local cenotaph as part of the service. I have attended services at Orange, Sydney, Dubbo and Bourke over the years and I consider that Anzac Day is the Nations most important day. My Grandfather was in the First World War and his Brother was shot and killed next to him in a foreign land. The ultimate sacrifice. Unfortunately, so many families have links to family who have died during theatres of war and more recently through suicide on return from duty. Anzac Day recognises all those who have sacrificed so much. I was honoured to be able to recite the Ode of Remembrance at the Morning Service with the Ode having been recited to commemorate wartime service and sacrifice since 1921. Well done to Bourke RSL Sub-Branch members and particularly its President, Victor Bartley, for their ongoing work in honouring both the fallen and returned soldiers. A thank you also to my staff for presenting and maintaining Central Park and the Cenotaph area year-round and the various other staff involved in ensuring a successful commemoration was held.

Wanaaring to Tibooburra Road

The State Member for the Seat of Barwon, Roy Butler MP recently met with Wanaaring locals at the Soldiers Memorial Hall before travelling onto Tibooburra. In doing so he travelled to Wanaaring on what is known as the Cut Line Road, which, at this point, is mostly unsealed. In his most recent newsletter Roy noted that he was pleased to hear that Transport for NSW has a proposal to seal the Cut Line Road which, when completed, would make it passable in all weather conditions. This would open up the area for tourists, who would normally balk at driving on dirt roads or are reluctant to take expensive caravans across rough terrain. Roy noted that at the moment the sealing is only a proposal, with no allocated funding for the project. At least the project is being talked about, which is a start. Mayor Barry has recently provided a letter of support in respect of the sealing of this road, which as Roy pointed out in his newsletter, would have a multitude of benefits for the region. Roy concludes in his newsletter that the sealing of this road “could be genuinely life changing for many of the isolated properties and communities in that part of the state.” Such conclusion has certainly been the case in respect of the sealing of the Bourke to Wanaaring Road in recent years.

Catch Up with George

On the recent Anzac Day long weekend, I was privileged to be invited to attend drinks in Dubbo in honour of a fantastic lady by the name of Joan Richardson who passed away in 2021 at the age of 90. Due to Covid it hadn’t been possible to hold a wake following her passing. During a large part of her working life, Joan was a solicitor at the the long-established legal firm of Booth Brown Samuels and

Olney in Dubbo. Booth Brown were the Solicitors for Dubbo Council for well over a century. I first met Joan back in the late 1980's when I became responsible for Dubbo Councils land development program. Council was a most active land developer back in those days and Joan had the uncanny ability to advise almost instantaneously the progress of the many land transactions the Council had on the go at the time in terms of exchanges, settlement dates and the like when I would make an enquiry, such was her amazing memory. At the Sunday function I was also able to catch up with former Bourke identity, George Rice, who has successfully undertaken various land development projects in Dubbo, and beyond, since he relocated to Dubbo some years ago now. This includes the very successful rural residential Firgrove Estate at Dubbo. George was telling me of his latest developments in Dubbo and we also touched on the progress of the St George Dragons this season, the day before they upset the widely favoured Roosters at the Anzac Day match at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Benefits of Funding.

I wrote in last week's column as to just how good the Bourke Picnic Race Club Meeting was on Easter Sunday. Apart from the meticulous planning that the Club undertook to present such a successful day, I must say that the new Pavilion constructed at the Renshaw played a significant contributing role in the success of the day. Funding for this shed came via contributions of \$269,170 courtesy of the NSW State Government and its Showgrounds Stimulus Program (Phase 2); \$100,000 through the Federal Governments Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (Phase 2) and a further \$30,000 through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program, Paths and Cycleways component, which funded disability and ambulant access to toilets, shed, bar and food stalls. In addition, council contributed in-kind works to the value \$50,000.

Whilst the Pavilion frame was supplied by a Dubbo firm, essentially all other components, from the concrete floor upwards, were supplied and constructed by local contractors. Some 20 locals worked on the project from tradesman to apprentices and labourers with the materials purchased through local businesses and local machinery hire used. It's always difficult to single out individuals, however many thanks and congratulations to Simon Lawson Constructions for their work and the work of their contractors in successfully delivering a facility that will be of considerable benefit for many years to come.

Over Easter it was great to hear positive comments from returning residents as to how good Bourke was looking after their not having been to town for some time. In this regard it is important to again thank both the State and Federal Governments for the significant funding that Bourke has received over the last five (5) or so years that has enabled so many improvement projects to be undertaken in the Shire.

Aboriginal Communities Funding

Talking of improvements through Government Grant Funding, when the Deputy Premier, the Hon Paul Toole, and Ministers the Hon Dugald Saunders and the Hon Bronnie Taylor, visited both Wilcannia and Bourke recently, some \$5.9m in funding for COVID Impacted Aboriginal Communities was announced. As part of the program, recipients in Bourke Shire are to receive up to \$2,790,000 in funding. The funding recipient for the majority of the projects was Bourke Council for the following projects: Bourke Pool including upgrading of the canteen, provision of a shed for the storage of swim club assets, the acquisition of recreational equipment and for the sealing of the roadway at the western end of the pool; Bourke CBD Upgrades – Aboriginal Employment; Removal and clean-up of old fire damaged dwellings in Bourke; Installation of two pontoons in the Darling River; Improvements at the Bourke Fishing Reserve; Construction of a pathway and the installation of lighting from the Clara Hart Village to the town hall at Enngonia; Upgrades to the Clara Hart Village signage and Meeting place infrastructure at Clara Hart

Park, Enngonia. REDI also received funding to undertake upgrades at the Bourke Youth Hub as did Maranguka for upgrades at the Bourke Men's Hub. These are all great projects for the Bourke Shire.

Council Meeting

Council met for its monthly meeting last Tuesday, 26 April 2022. There were numerous reports adopted that relate to Council's suite of Integrated Planning Documents including its 2022-2026 Delivery Program and its 2022/2023 Operational Plan (i.e. the budget) which also includes Councils Fees and Charges for the financial year period. In adopting these reports, Council did so on the basis of them being drafts which are to be exhibited for a period of 28 days for the purposes of receiving community feedback prior to Council considering such feedback prior to ultimately adopting a Delivery Program and an Operational Plan for implementation. In this regard, exhibition of the Delivery Program and the Operational Plan will commence next Monday, 9 May 2022 with submissions closing at 4.30pm on Monday 6 June 2022. Also at the meeting, Council resolved to accept the tender as submitted by Hydrocare Pools to undertake the construction of a replacement Learn to Swim Pool (and accompanying filtration plant components) at the Bourke Memorial Olympic Swimming Pool facility at a cost of \$1,667,383. Such funding has been made available through Phase 3 of the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program. Construction will commence in coming weeks.

Quote: "I expect that there will be evidence before the public inquiry that iProsperity group paid for some of the entertainment and travel expenses incurred". Claims in the ICAC that another public official, a Sydney Council Mayor, failed to disclose relationships or declare a conflict of interest.