



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the General Manager’s Desk” 15 September 2022”

Passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II

I was saddened last Friday when I woke up to the news of the passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. What a remarkable woman who gave a lifetime to public duty. The outpouring of emotion by so many has been amazing. There were many reflections shared post her passing and I took the opportunity to research her visit to Bourke in 2000.

The day was Wednesday 22 March 2000 when the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh visited the Bourke community. The Official Itinerary for the visit shows that The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh departed RAAF Base, Fairbairn, in Canberra at 10.50am on an RAAF Falcon Aircraft. At 12.05pm they arrived at Bourke Airport and were received by the Premier of the day, the Hon. Bob Carr and then presented to our Mayor at the time, Councillor Wayne O’Mally and Councils then General Manager, Alan Varley. From there it was off to Bourke Primary School for the Queen, arriving at 12.20pm. Again received by the Premier, the Queen was then presented to the Principal of the School, Paul Loxley. In talking with Paul, he said the day defined surreal. The program provided 20 minutes for her visit to the School and during that time she met with students and parents, all in front of the media beaming the interactions to the world. It was reported at the time that student Warren Turnbull asked the Queen, “Did you bring your crown to Australia?” The Queen responded, “No, its in the Palace.” From the Public School the Mayor accompanied The Queen down to Radio Station 2CUZ FM for a visit. She was received by the Mayor and Mrs O’Mally before being presented to Elder Greg McKellar, CEO of the Muda Aboriginal Corporation. She viewed the studio in operation and then walked to a side garden to observe a pre-school Aboriginal language learning class. After that it was off to a meet the people walk and a Welcome in Central Park where some 1,000 people were in attendance. Speeches by the Mayor, the Premier and Her Majesty followed before she unveiled a plaque. Another meet the people walk and then off to the airport with wheels up on the plane at 1.45pm. What a day for Bourke and in the Council Chamber is a beautiful picture of Her Majesty in Bourke that day which hangs proudly.

For me, I personally always enjoyed reports of her sense of humour. I heard a story provided by Her Majesty’s former royal protection officer, a Mr Richard Griffin, known as Dick, which made me smile. The Monarch was out in the hills near her Scottish castle at Balmoral when two U.S. tourists on a walking holiday approached and one of them engaged Her Majesty in conversation. The hiker asked The Queen where she lived, so she said London, adding that she had a holiday home just over the hill and had been visiting the area for more than 80 years since she was little girl. She did not say she was referring to Balmoral Castle. Aware that the Castle was in the vicinity, the hiker then asked the Queen if she had ever met The Queen. Mr Griffin advised that The Queen quickly responded, “I haven’t, but Dick here meets her regularly”. The hiker then asked Griffin what the Monarch was like in person.” Because I was with her a long time and I knew I could pull her leg (tease her), I said ‘oh, she can be very cantankerous at times, but she’s got a lovely sense of humour’. Delighted, the hiker then put his arm around Griffin’s shoulder and asked if he could have a picture of the two of them together.” Before I could see what was happening, he gets his camera and gives it to the Queen and says ‘can you take a picture of us?’ The Queen obliged, and then Griffin took the camera and took a picture of her with the pair of hikers. Later, Griffin said The Queen told him: “I’d love to be a fly on the wall when he shows those photographs to friends in America and hopefully someone tells him who I am.” Lovely.

Back O' Bourke Stampede

It's some 20 years since Bourke hosted its last major Rodeo however, with the assistance of funding from the NSW Government, via its Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program, rodeo will shortly return to Bourke. On Saturday, 15 October 2022, the Back O' Bourke Stampede-Peter Simmonds Memorial Pro-Rodeo will be held at the Bourke Showgrounds (Renshaw Oval).

With nine (9) main events comprising Saddle Bronc, Bareback, Bull Ride, Barrel Race, Steer Wrestling, Rope and Tie, Break Away, Team Roping and a Junior Barrel Race, prize money of \$1,500 (plus add back) is on offer for the Junior Barrel Race with \$3,000 (plus add back) in prize money for each remaining events with an additional \$2,000 for the winner of the Peter Simmonds Memorial Saddle Bronc Shootout.

Some of the best bucking stock in Australia have been arranged with the McPhee Rodeo Company on board. Already, the organising Committee have received nominations for some big names for the October Stampede. One name that readers may know of is Fred Osman from Cameron's Corner. Fred is a two-time Australian Bareback Champion, a five-time Mt Isa Bareback Champion and a nine-time National Finals Rodeo (NFR) qualifier. Excellent credentials.

Having been involved in the last rodeo staged in Bourke all those years ago, I was always of the view that another rodeo would be a hit. The interest that the event has generated, however, is very much beyond my expectations. The recent launch of the event on the Back O' Bourke Stampede Facebook Page, to inform social media users to 'Save the date', has reached over 48,000 people and engagement has included more than 6800 clicks, reactions, likes and comments. These are very impressive numbers, and I am certain we are going to see locals, friends and many others head back to Bourke for this very special event.

Electric Vehicles

Warren Brown, who is an Australian cartoonist and presenter of the motoring show, Top Gear Australia, recently wrote a most interesting article which appeared in the Sunday Telegraph under the banner, "Fury Road: the truth about EVs in the bush." There is certainly significant media surrounding governments vision for the nation's residents to be driving electric vehicles (EVs), however from Brown's article, it is evident that there is still a way to go, both from a vehicle and infrastructure perspective, especially in regional locations, such as Bourke.

Warren Brown lives in Goulburn and was travelling to Griffith, a one-way trip of some 390km. A friend picked him up in his EV and they were off on their journey. What he experienced was that the range of their EV, operating at "continuous high speed" and in cold conditions, lost charge rapidly and when using the cars heater, the power drain became even worse in terms of range. Brown wrote of experiencing "Range Anxiety", where drivers, and passengers, are concerned at their vehicle potentially running out of electricity in between charging stations and requiring a tow. Not good in a remote location.

Having regard to their experiences, and with a level of anxiety, Brown and his partner took a cautious approach to their travels. About halfway along their journey, the travellers stopped at Gundagai for breakfast and to plug the car in to top up the charge. Upon arriving at the charging station, they had to wait about half an hour before a charger became available and they were able to plug their vehicle in for what Brown described as the vehicles, "intravenous dose of 240 volts." Their charging time was half an hour. Brown and his driving partner were wary as to where the other drivers who had used the chargers prior to them were heading, concerned at potentially having to experience another half hour delay before being able to access a charger at the next stop. They travelled another 88km before stopping at Wagga Wagga for a 45-minute charge before heading the 100 km to Narrandera where they plugged in for a further charge before moving onto their final destination.

The question Brown asked after his experience was, "who on earth would be game enough to visit remote Outback towns in far flung NSW?" It's an interesting question and whilst I am not anti EVs and I am aware of some EV vehicles being driven to Bourke on occasion, the experiences of Warren Brown show that as a Nation, we still have a way to go in the EV roll out. It's still a bit like the joke about EVs, "you're going to need a longer extension cord!"

Reduce Mosquito Risks

Now that spring is with us it's a good time to take action with a view to reducing your chance of being bitten. Mosquitoes aren't just a nuisance. they can transmit serious diseases. They can transmit a number of serious human diseases. In NSW, some types of mosquitoes can transmit viruses such as Ross River and Barmah Forest and occasionally, the virus that causes Murray Valley Encephalitis.

To protect yourself: cover-up with a loose-fitting long-sleeved shirt and long pants when outside; apply mosquito repellent to exposed skin and take special care during peak mosquito biting hours, especially around dawn and dusk. Check for damaged flyscreens on windows and doors and repair them. Screen any chimneys, vents and other entrances. Consider also using a surface insecticide spray in areas where mosquitoes like to rest. During the day, mosquitoes rest and hide in cool shady areas such as in and around the home before emerging at dusk to feed. Make sure you if you spray to avoid aquaria and fishponds as fish are acutely sensitive to these insecticides.

Mosquitoes need water to breed and some mosquitoes can breed in very small amounts of water, such as in the water that collects in a discarded soft drink can. Measures to reduce the risk of mosquitoes breeding in around the home include cleaning up your backyard and removing all water-holding rubbish, including tyres and containers; keeping your lawns mowed; flushing and wiping out bird baths and water features once a week; filling pot plant bases with sand to avoid standing water; storing anything that can hold water undercover or in a dry place, and keeping bins covered; flushing out the leaves of water-holding plants such as bromeliads once a week; keeping drains and roof guttering clear to avoid standing water and covering or securely screening the openings of septic tanks and rainwater tanks. Properly cleaned and chlorinated swimming pools are rarely a source of mosquito breeding but neglected pools can be a haven for mosquitoes.

Quote:

"A few moments ago Buckingham Palace announced the death of Queen Elizabeth II," BBC reporter Huw Edwards announcing the Queens passing to the world.