



**BOURKE  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL**

“From the  
General Manager’s Desk”

20 July 2023

### **Gook-int-ji-Nhunngku Aboriginal Women’s Gathering**

Enrolments close today for those Aboriginal women wishing to attend the Gook-int-ji-Nhunngku Aboriginal Women’s Gathering to be held at the Bourke Christian Church, Cnr Tarcoon and Anson Streets on Tuesday 8 August and Wednesday 9 August 2023, commencing at 8.30am each day.

The gathering will provide an opportunity for Aboriginal women to come together and talk about issues affecting women in a culturally supportive environment and to listen to women that have paved the way forward for self-determination and showcase their achievements and life stories. All in society have their own narrative and this gathering will allow women to continue to shape and determine their own future. By the end of the gathering the objectives are that women in attendance will understand the importance of having women in leadership roles; recognise the valuable contribution women have in our communities; empower each other and strengthen and enhance individual leadership skills; promote and showcase women to continue to positively influence our younger women; and continue to build governance knowledge.

Keynote Speakers include: Robyn Martin, Director Aboriginal Health & Primary Partnerships, Mid North Coast Local Health District; Lynette Lackay, Manager Aboriginal Health Tablelands and Peel East Sector, Hunter New England Local Health District; Christine Corby OAM, CEO Walgett Aboriginal Health Service; Susan Pearce AM, Secretary NSW Health and Dixie Crawford who is the Founder/Owner of Nganya.

All Aboriginal women are invited to attend this free event where catering will be provided. Numbers are limited to 100. Further details can be obtained from Patricia Canty at email [Patricia.Canty@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Patricia.Canty@health.nsw.gov.au) or by phone on 0409 246 712.

### **Gary Lavelle**

Back on 8 April 2021, the GM’s Column in the Western Herald that day included a piece on the 2021 Easter Festival and the various ex-residents who had returned to Bourke for the weekend to visit friends and relatives. One of these returning ex-residents was Gary Lavelle who was in town that weekend to visit his Mother. At the time, Gary was the General Manager at Temora Shire Council. I recently received an email from a Local Government colleague providing a link to an article in “Region Riverina” in respect of the recent retirement of Gary from Temora Council “after nearly three decades with the Shire as General Manager.”

The article written by a Shri Gayathirie Rajen, noted that Gary was born and raised in Bourke, before leaving home to undertake his tertiary education at the University of New England. He returned to Bourke to start his career in local government and subsequently worked for various Councils before

finally moving to Temora in 1989. He took up the position of General Manager for Temora Council in 1995. Reflecting on his time in local government, the article quotes Gary saying, “When I went back to Bourke, I had no intention of joining the Council, but I was offered a job and fell in love with local government and that I could make a difference and that was something that attracted me to the job.”

Gary has been one of the “good guys” in local government who, apart from achieving nearly 30 years as a General Manager, has worked tirelessly for his community and achieved much in his humble manner. I extend to Gary and his family, all the very best for a long and happy retirement.

### **Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)**

The AEC has developed a range of referendum education resources on the process for the upcoming national referendum on “THE VOICE” for sharing with the wider community. These resources include factsheets regarding referendums in general, including processes such as enrolment and voting, information which explains how to cast a formal vote and advice which encourages people to check the source of their information, before casting their vote. These resources are available for download from the AEC website at: <https://www.aec.gov.au/referendums>

In readiness for the Referendum, the Electoral Commission is encouraging people to enrol or check their details online at [www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au) If you're 18 or approaching the voting age, take the necessary action to have your say.

The AEC is also recruiting up to 100,000 temporary staff to deliver the referendum in metropolitan, regional and remote parts of Australia. The AEC's role is to successfully deliver an impartial referendum with the highest levels of integrity. To work at the referendum people must be, and be seen to be, both politically neutral and issue neutral. This short-term work is a great way for people to earn extra money while contributing to our local community. For more information and to register to work at the referendum visit [www.aec.gov.au/electionjobs](http://www.aec.gov.au/electionjobs).

The Commission maintains strict political and issue neutrality. The information provided above is for the purpose of public awareness of electoral processes. With this in mind, the AEC recommends that if you intend to communicate 'referendum matter' for the purpose of influencing the way people will vote, you should also review the AEC information on referendum disclosure and authorising referendum communications.

### **Water Engagement**

I mentioned in last week's GM's Column that the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)-Water Group, undertakes monthly webinars with a view to updating interested people about current consultations and engagements on important water policy and programs for NSW. The July 2023 webinar was held yesterday, Wednesday 19 July 2023 with DPE providing a seasonal outlook for upcoming months along with confirming water allocations for 2023/2024.

In regard to the seasonal outlook, DPE advised that the Bureau of Meteorology had released its long-range forecast overview for July – September 2023 which provides that below median rainfall is likely to very likely; above median maximum temperatures likely to very likely, above median minimum temperatures likely to very likely and that “we are at El Niño Alert.” Hot and dry comes to mind.

In terms of total rural storage levels, DPE advised that such levels are at 93% of the total accessible storage capacity, compared to 97% this time last year. With this in mind, statements have been released for opening 2023/24 water allocations across the State. These statements include that all groundwater

license categories across all groundwater sources received their maximum allocations on 1 July 2023 for the water year 2023/24, in accordance with their respective water sharing plans, except those that are linked to regulated river available water determinations. All unregulated river license categories received their full allocation for the 2023/24 water year. Whilst the Darling River at Bourke isn't a regulated river, for information, all town supplies and domestic and stock water users on regulated rivers have received their maximum (100%) allocation; all regulated river high security license holders have received their usual full opening allocation, including 97% in the NSW Murray, 95% in the Murrumbidgee and 100% elsewhere; general security water users on all regulated coastal rivers, except the Bega-Brogo River, are receiving their maximum 100% allocation. Inland, the users on Upper Namoi, Peel and Lower Darling water sources are also receiving their maximum 100% allocation; other general security license holders have full access to allowable carryover water in accordance with respective water sharing plan rules; and, supplementary license holders received a full allocation, except for those in the Lower Namoi water source which received 0.36 ML/unit share due to exceedance of long-term extraction limits.

### **July Council Meeting**

The next Ordinary Meeting of Council is to be held on Monday, 24 July 2023, commencing at 9.15am in the Council Chamber. All Ordinary meetings of Council are open to the Public, the exception being certain matters which comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act that are deemed to be considered in Closed Council, confidentially. Where this is the case, following the Council having determined a matter in closed Council, and before the closure of the Council Meeting, the Mayor will request that the General Manager reads to the meeting, in open Council, the outcome or resolutions as a result of Councils deliberations.

A Public Forum is scheduled at each Council Meeting at 9.00 am. It would be appreciated if you wish to address the Public Forum, that you please contact Councils Executive Assistant, Margo Anderson on 68308000 or by email at [ea@bourke.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ea@bourke.nsw.gov.au), by 4.00pm on the Friday before the meeting so that your item can be placed on the agenda and if necessary, any background information can be obtained.

**Quote: "We'll keep all our options open. We've got nine or ten days now, so we'll take a deep breath."** Captain of the Australian Cricket team, Pat Cummins reflecting on potential team selections for the 4<sup>th</sup> Test against England.