



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the General Manager’s Desk”

19 October 2023

Back O Bourke Stampede

Leading into last weekend’s very successful Back O’ Bourke Stampede-Peter Simmonds Memorial Pro-Rodeo, I was buoyed to read that the Nevertire Rodeo, held on 1 October 2023, was attended by many, with the Dubbo Daily Liberal newspaper reporting that “a huge crowd had descended on the small village for the event.” Our Stampede – Memorial Rodeo was also a great success with action aplenty for the large number of attendees.

What I find amazing, and I have seen it on many occasions in Bourke, is the tremendous support that events such as the Stampede receive from members of our community. Whether such support is provision of manpower including volunteering your time to host the event, equipment or machinery or through direct financial support, the hard-working Committee should be very pleased with the outcome of their considerable efforts. I thank them accordingly. To those who assisted with equipment, or direct financial support a big thank you also goes out to you on behalf of the Bourke community. I am not going to name any individual. That is one for the Committee. The people who contributed obviously know who they are and they should be very content in themselves for their contribution in providing Bourke residents and visitors a fantastic event. Importantly, they have also assisted in recognising one of Bourke’s sons and one of Australia’s finest saddle bronc riders, the late Peter Simmonds, in a most fitting manner.

It would be remiss of me not to also thank the NSW Government for their significant financial contribution towards the staging of this event. Funded under the Reconnecting Regional NSW – Community Events Program, funding was provided to Council to promote social and economic recovery following the extended COVID-19 restrictions across regional NSW back in 2021 and 2022. Originally planned for Saturday 15 October 2022 and then on Saturday 3 December 2022, the Pro- Rodeo was postponed on two occasions due to the spate of wet weather and flooding that was occurring across Western NSW at the time. After a 12-month delay, the event was well worth waiting for. What a fantastic event the rodeo was for Bourke.

Community Assets Program

The Community Assets Program (CAP) is a co-funded program between the Australian and NSW Governments that exists to ensure that disaster impacted communities have “what they need to thrive.” Under the nations Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, communities like Bourke receive support to repair essential public assets like roads. However, these funding measures do not necessarily extend to repairing damaged community infrastructure such as parks, playgrounds, walkways, and places of cultural heritage, all of which contribute to our community’s sense of wellbeing.

The \$70 million Community Assets Program, which is administered by the Department of Regional NSW, seeks to support the social recovery of eligible storm and flood affected local government areas (LGAs)

by providing funding for the repair, restoration, and betterment of community infrastructure. In respect of this program, I am delighted to advise that following the submission of a funding application, Council has received funding through the CAP of \$1,615,680 to undertake remediation works to the Bourke Wharf. The wharf sustained damage during the protracted flooding of 2022, including the undermining of the structure.

It is rather easy to forget just how much water was in the river this time last year. Reflecting some 12 months on, from early August 2022, the river rose from approximately 7.2 metres to a high of 13.95 metres in late November 2022 before dropping back to a height of some 4.5 metres in January 2023. In addition to the height of the river, the intense flows of the river over a protracted period have been damaging, especially to the base of structures with timber supports, such as the wharf. At a flow rate of 30,000 megalitres in early August 2022 through to a high mark flow of some 225,000 megalitres in November 2022, such flows have been significant and damaging, having regard to the constant force of the water associated with these flows. A megalitre of water weighs 1,000 metric tonnes.

Whilst the existing Bourke Wharf is a replica of the original three (3) wharves that once stood in Bourke, the wharf both reflects the design of wharves located up and down the Darling River back in the 1850s and provides a link back to a time when Bourke was the largest inland port in the world. It is a most important structure in terms of Bourke's tourism product.

October Council Meeting

The next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on Monday, 23 October 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, by 4.00pm tomorrow, Friday 20 October 2023, so that your item can be placed on the agenda and if necessary any background information can be obtained.

Small Business Month

Small businesses are such an important component of our community and essential to the prosperity of the wider region. With some 275,000 small businesses based in regional NSW, these businesses account for 33% of all NSW small businesses. These small businesses create jobs, drive innovation and provide goods and services to local communities. By supporting small businesses, we can be part of creating a more vibrant and sustainable economy in our town.

October is NSW Small Business Month, an initiative of the NSW Government which aims to increase the profile and recognition of the importance of small business in the community. The theme for October 2023 is "My Small Business." The NSW Government will provide free assistance and tips on how small businesses can strengthen their business in seven key areas – branding and marketing, cyber security, business health, e-commerce, current market conditions, resilience and teams. Small Business Month events are being held across the region and online, featuring business experts from the private and government sectors, industry leaders and successful small business owners. Many events also allow small-business people to come together, connect and collaborate. It's all about providing an opportunity

for small businesses to take the time to work on their business in October. For further information on planned activities during October, access the following link: www.smallbusinessmonth.nsw.gov.au.

Agritourism Business Guide

I have previously advised that the NSW Department of Planning and Environment had introduced clearer planning terms for agritourism with an amending State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) having been made by the NSW Government in August 2023. This resulted in local environmental plans being amended to expand the permissibility of agritourism across NSW and making it easier for farmers to know how they can use their land for new income streams.

I had mentioned that the Department of Planning would shortly be making guides available to assist interested landowners with the setting up of an agritourism business. It is advised that such a guide is now reality. Titled "Setting Up an Agritourism Business - A Guide to Planning Approvals", the 50 plus page document is a comprehensive "how to" to work through the agritourism legislative and planning processes. A copy of the Guide can be accessed from the NSW Planning website at: <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au> and search for agritourism guide.

Portuguese Rugby

I saw the end of the Rugby World Cup game between Portugal and Fiji where Portugal scored basically on the bell and kicked the conversion to beat Fiji by one point. Whilst the win by Portugal wasn't by enough points to see the Wallabies slide into the quarter finals of the Cup, and we didn't really deserve it anyway, but it was the raw emotion of the Portuguese players on the final bell that struck me. 120-kilogram Portuguese players with tears running down their faces, such was their elation and joy.

Quote: "This is an abhorrent attack on Israel. This is indiscriminate. Civilians being targeted, killed and murdered, and as well, many of them being taken as hostages." Prime Minister Albanese on the current hostilities in the Middle East.