

## Local artists brand our new town entrances

New town entrance signs are being placed at Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone, featuring local art and workmanship.

The town entrance columns feature a Wailwan pattern, created by Aboriginal Elder Kevin 'Sooty' Welsh, in consultation with the Gulargambone Local Aboriginal Lands Council. Other artwork is by Wiradjuri woman, Jamie-Lea Trindall (developed from local knowledge shared by 'Sooty' Welsh), Anastasia Robson and Harriet, Jim and Joe O'Brien.

Coonamble Shire Council, Jamie-Lea Trindall and 'Sooty' Welsh were delighted to work together to secure the required special permissions to use the cultural material.

Molly Mackay, Sam and Allan Wykes were involved with the manufacture of the artwork and signage.

Commissioning of the sculptures is funded by a NSW Government Drought Stimulus Program grant, with Council funding the new town entrance signage.



■ Artists and tradesmen gathered in Gulargambone to unveil 'Arboreal Metamorphosis', by Ana Robson.



■ Kevin 'Sooty' Welsh stands by one of the new town entrance signs.



■ Dad Emu grazes his chicks on the lawns of the new Coonamble Information and Exhibition Centre.

### MARK THESE DATES

- 26 February** – Welcome to Coonamble Dinner at the Golf Club.
- 28 February** – Rates instalments due.
- 09 March** – Ordinary Meeting of Council in Gulargambone.
- 31 March** – Seniors Week celebration at Coonamble Bowling Club.
- 13 April** – Ordinary Meeting of Council in Quambone.
- 23 April** – Classic Wallabies Tour in Coonamble.

### Emergency contacts:

**Water & Sewerage** 0428 217 420

**Other Emergencies** 0458 271 881

**Regulatory Officer** 0427 255 881

**Website for all details:**

[www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au)

## New Coonamble residents invited to dinner

Residents who have moved or returned to Coonamble since March 2021 are invited to the Welcome to Coonamble Dinner, organised by local service and sporting clubs and church groups.

The free dinner will be at Coonamble Golf Club on Saturday, 26 February, from 6.30pm for a 7pm start.

Booking is essential through the Coonamble Information and Exhibition Centre on 6827 1923.

The dinner is an opportunity for newcomers to meet locals, to find out a little more about Coonamble, what the area has to offer, and to find out about local sporting and service clubs in town.

## 'Outta this world' theme for Seniors Week fun

Royden Donohue returns to entertain guests at the Seniors Week event on Thursday, 31 March from 11am at Coonamble Bowling Club.

'Outta this world' is the theme of this years event. Fancy dress is optional, but anything with a 'space' theme is welcome.

The event includes a free luncheon

for residents of the Coonamble Local Government area aged 50 years and over.

Bookings are required, and seating is limited to ensure COVID-safe distancing. Phone 6827 1900 by 23 March to book your place.

And as every senior likes to hear: "Live long and prosper!"

## ENGAGE WITH YOUR COUNCIL

- Contact individual Councillors by email or mobile.
- Attend a meeting of Council.
- Speak at a meeting of Council on a particular issue.
- Report an issue in writing through Council's website.

From the Mayor's Desk:

# Council moves to address community concerns



The first Ordinary Meeting of the newly elected Coonamble Shire Council gave me an opportunity to raise some matters that I see of concern to our community.

## SES Shed

Many years ago, the local SES shed was identified as a building unfit for purpose. For several years now a new SES shed has been on the agenda. To date there have been three building plans, with the latest received in December. During discussion with local SES members, I have been advised they do not consider the latest plan to be suitable for their local needs.

The Local SES is currently undergoing accreditation for road rescue to assist and back up the NSW Fire and Rescue. Having experienced first-hand emergency service responses locally, I cannot stress enough the importance of having skilled and available emergency services to respond to community needs, particularly at times when two or more incidents occur at once.

Coonamble Shire has had its fair share of emergencies and disasters over the years, and I believe the new SES building should be commenced as a matter of urgency.

I have had discussions with Roy Butler's office, and they intend to make the building a priority and will be making representations to the Government and Minister for Emergency Services to remedy the building plans issue and have construction start urgently.

While Council has committed funds to the project and will be the owner of the building Council should also be supporting the local volunteer members in achieving a building that will meet their needs.

## Return and Earn

The new Return and Earn program has been operating in Coonamble since its introduction by the State Government. I have met with the current operators and understand the facility has outgrown its capacity. The service employs two casual staff and provides a cash injection for many struggling people and families. It also results in less rubbish on the streets and roads.

This service is not a money-maker by any means, and the one shipping container per week is filled very quickly and limits operating hours. The operators are seeking to expand the service from having one shipping container to several and are seeking Council support to consider relocating some or all the facility. The operators also hope to install a facility at Gulargambone and Quambone.

I understand Vinnies is also keen to look at operating a facility but am advised the current contract will remain with the Bucking Bull Hotel.

There appears to be a high demand for the service and Council should be encouraging the use of the facility and any potential for growth.

## Youth Services

For many years Council has supported both internal and external youth services and programs in Coonamble Shire. Over the past few years there has been a lot of discussion about the lack

of adequate youth services and programs in our communities, particularly Coonamble.

R.E.D.I.E currently operate the Youth Centre in Railway Street, and Council provides a number of programs throughout the year. I consider a meeting with the relevant services should be held as a priority to ascertain exactly what services are available and how often and at what times.

## Master Plan

The Master Plan was developed by the previous Council to provide some direction over the next 20 years. The Plan has created much conjecture within the community. The Plan covers many years, is a lengthy document and its proposed project run at an estimated \$50 million.

While forward planning is very important, we also must understand that we have a number of other integrated planning processes that cover the short and medium term, but most importantly, the term of this Council. Councillors are elected usually every four years and each of us believe we have something more to offer during the term.

As such, I firmly believe it is each Council's individual term and each Councillor's right to be able to put forward projects and initiatives that they feel important at the time they are sitting on Council.

In saying that it, appears the Bore Bath and Main Street are projects generally supported by all Councillors.

Given all of this, this Council should be given the opportunity to fully understand the Master Plan, its impact on forward planning and the budget.

## Bore Baths

The bore baths have been on the agenda for many years and are a project I believe will be of benefit to the region. The current concept plans and possible location are causing some division in the community.

With a new council recently elected an opportunity should be available to bring all Councillors up to date with the planning of the facility, including but not limited to the water allocation, site options and land acquisition, bore operations method (flowing or recycled), excess water use, costings and funding and management.

## Economic Development

While Councils have many views on Economic Development, I consider it to be a significant priority for our area's prosperity. The current Economic Development Officer has recently resigned from the position, and the General Manager and I have had lengthy discussion about the role and its potential. I have asked the General Manager to take some time to consider the role and its future within Council, to which he agrees and will provide a report to Council in due course.

## Coonamble Weir

The Coonamble Weir is a fantastic recreational facility and offers water activities for many locals. For many years the Weir has been managed by a local committee whose members should be very proud of the success of the facility.

Over the years there has been a lot of discussion about access to the weir facilities by locals and tourists and those who are not members of the Aquatic Club. There is a lot of discussion about the weir being a community

facility, yet it is mainly not accessible by the community because of the closed gating.

Council needs to consider all options of the operations and access of the weir and facilities for the benefit of all the community and, particularly with the emphasis on tourism, as the current arrangements do not align at all with tourism. Whether this be separate facilities or one main facility there must be better options for the benefit of all.

An effort should be made to improve the weir facilities with the view of the weir being one of Coonamble Shire's main attractions.

## Quarry Operations

The Coonamble Shire Quarry is an invaluable business for Council. Over the years it has injected millions into the general funds, along with employing several staff and providing a product to the region.

It is noted the quarry has a limited life and provides a valuable resource to Council for its own needs along with retail supply. I am concerned about the future operations of the quarry, including but not limited to its life span, product prices, our own supply and that to the region and the plant itself. I also note the Quarry Committee no longer exists.

## Roads

We are all too aware of the importance of our local and rural roads. At the previous meeting, Councillor Pat Cullen raised the issue of roads, including how we maintain them and the importance of local landholders' knowledge of the roads near them. While Council has a Local Roads Committee, I believe more can be done as far as listening to the rural residents and those who live on and use the roads.

A workshop for Councillors is planned in the near future where there will be discussion about our local roads in particular.

## Animal De-Sexing Program

The pet de-sexing program helps Council in managing cat and dog numbers and in reducing straying animals. This also reduces the workload on the Regulatory Officer and operational costs. Animal welfare is also an important part of the program.

Council should be regularly involved in the program and offer support, including financial contributions to assist the program.

## Cemeteries

Over time our cemeteries have lacked adequate maintenance. It was pleasing to hear from the General Manager that Coonamble cemetery will see a caretaker worker there for up to three days per week.

Gulargambone and Quambone cemeteries still require more attention and should be reviewed and included in future maintenance programs to ensure they are kept tidy.

I raised all these items in a Mayoral Minute at the February meeting of Council.

Please check the Minutes of the meeting on Council's website to see Council's decisions in relation to each matter.

Should anyone wish to contact me to discuss any concerns or issues, please phone 0488 425 312.

**Tim Horan**  
Mayor