



## PERMISSION

At last the car park attendant at Parliament House has given us the nod and the tender for package one of our Off Creek Storage has been advertised. After an exhaustive EOI process five prospective civil works companies have the opportunity to become the successful tenderer. This will be out for five weeks and then, everything going well will come to the April Ordinary Meeting of Council for acceptance of the successful company. General Manager, Barry Omundson, has put in place a strong governance team at Walcha to oversee the construction and keep a close oversight on this project. Once awarded we hope for a quick start followed by smooth sailing during the construction period. Risks such as fuel prices, inclement weather or unforeseen geology put the project at both timing and therefore financial risk. This tender will be closely followed by other packages around access roads, piping, pumping and electrical infrastructure. The level of governance and legislation around a project like this never ceases to amaze and often frustrate me. Anyway, I'll have to adapt. This is a major step forward in our search for secure water for Walcha.

## LAW AND ORDER

On 16 February Council was addressed by Sergeant Brock Freeman and Senior Constable Sam Churchill in relation to issues around that concern both the Police and Council and therefore the community. Firstly, they informed us that Walcha LGA now has a full roster of police with an appointment at Nowendoc.

The initiation of an *Alcohol Free Zone* in Walcha was raised and Councillors had a resolution to support this. It will basically cover the CBD and gives police power to reduce anti-social behaviour especially in the wee small hours of the morning. Obviously the main area of concern on both sides was the change in anti-social behaviour not necessarily linked to alcohol, but more in relation to what is being termed "wayward youth". Council has also had meetings in regard to this with concerned and invested community members. The first reaction of myself to this is we need more policing, but in reality, this will never happen. Despite contacting Local Members it has been constantly reiterated that we are one of nearly every Local Government Area (LGA) in NSW living with this issue. It's a political issue. You only have to watch local news or read the paper to see Tamworth struggles with the same problem despite having [24/7](#) policing. The cost of providing this level of policing in Walcha, and therefore nearly every other LGA in NSW would be cost prohibitive. It would at least double and maybe triple the current budget. Policy and rules govern police in their duty in order to protect their safety, Dirty Harry was a fantasy movie. We all hate having our rights taken away but the freedoms and way of life we have been used to is changing and being a little more security conscious will have to be the way to go. This doesn't always work as the offenders appear to be very resourceful.

As I have mentioned before Council is in the process of implementing CCTV. The focus of this will only be to protect Councils '(your) assets. Like all things we do we are restricted by legislation and privacy. The best advice we have been given is to install your own CCTV, and while everything comes at a cost there is a variety of options out there.



One important message that came out of the meeting was who to contact and when. Walcha Police Station is not manned all the time, even when they are on duty they can be called away. The number for it is [67383530](tel:67383530). This will be diverted to Tamworth when the station is unattended.

Police Assistance Line Ph: 131 444 for incidents involving: Malicious damage to property, Stealing's, Break and Enters, Stolen Vehicles / vessels, Lost Property, Minor Traffic Collisions, General Information. Police Assistance Line is available 24hrs a day 7 days a week.

Crime Stoppers Ph: [1800 333 000](tel:1800333000) to report criminal information. We are all aware of 000 and when to call. If you take nothing more out of this column is a good time to put these in your phone for quick reference.

## **DERBY STREET**

The pavement issue on Derby Street in front of the Pioneer Cottage is a testing issue. What appears to be a simple fix is turning out to be very complicated. There are other breakouts on this hill and while some have been there for years it has been compounded now. For a long time this has been effecting neighbours with water coming to the surface in many areas. The repair of this section of street, along with the southern approach to town was always part of the Thunderbolts Way Strategy for a complete rehabilitation, but this has been put on hold due to doubling of the budgeted costs. We are applying for extra grant funds and looking at rescoping to complete this. Despite this we need to rectify the current drainage issues and repair the surface in the short term. Attempts have been made, but obviously have not solved the problem and the engineers are working hard to isolate the cause. Underground water is one of the most unpredictable issues any engineer can face. Sometimes solving the first problem just pushes the issue to another place.

## **THE SHOW**

Best wishes to Martin Oppenheimer, his powerhouse secretary Dale Webber and the Show Ccommittee for another successful show. Always a great spectacle it doesn't happen by chance. The thousands of hours that go into organising this event surely deserve a couple of fine days.

## **WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

To be selected as a finalist for Woman of the Year in NSW is a great honour. Congratulations and good luck to Anna Barwick for this achievement. Anna, we wish you all the best in Sydney. People who work behind the scene and don't seek adulation are an inspiration to us all. Whether you win or not you make Walcha proud.

Clr Eric Noakes  
Mayor of Walcha