



ANZAC COMMEMORATION

The dedication by Kevin Anderson of the new memorial at the Cenotaph ranks as one of the most important and poignant functions I have been involved in since becoming Mayor. This was the culmination of around seven years work by the Walcha RSL Sub Branch and the finished product is a credit to all involved, most notably local sculptures Steve King and James Rogers. Anyone who has not seen this, it is well worth viewing by day, but with it lit of a night it is also spectacular. The securing of the funds by General Manager Jack O'Hara and Local Member Kevin Anderson MP to top up the local fundraising efforts by the Sub Branch made this possible.

The brass plaques that were unveiled pay credit to all involved in this process, and while their contribution is crucial, it is the names that are yet to be placed on the columns that are at the real heart of this monument. The women and men whose names will grace these columns have offered so much, and sometimes all, to Australia, and behind everyone of these names is a family that lived or still lives a battle back home and their story is also a vital part of this memorial.

What appears to be an ever increasing number of people at Walcha's ANZAC ceremonies must be rewarding to those who wear their medals on their left side. Though most of us don't understand this honour, to stand as one with them on this day is a fitting tribute to their commitment and sacrifice. Lest We Forget.

DOG CONTROL POLICY

At our last meeting Council revised the Dog Control Policy. This was reviewed due to public concerns with off leash dogs intimidating walkers, especially along the levee banks. It was felt that these walkers etc should have the right to be able to feel safe when walking or riding around town. Even though owners say and feel their dogs are friendly they do frighten many people and therefore restrict this activity for these people. John Oxley Sports ground will still offer an off leash area and there are exemptions to the policy. The revamped policy will soon be available on Walcha Council's website and signage will be erected in appropriate areas to inform dog owners. When this policy is fully implemented it will be advertised and Walcha Council's Ranger will enforce the policy.

WALCHA SHOW

I know this was a few weeks ago but the Show Committee deserves recognition for a fantastic accomplishment in a dry time. A few things came together to make this work and a large crowd had every opportunity to enjoy themselves. The return of the wood chop cannot be sold short in this success. The skill and talent of these women and men enthralled a large crowd and Allan and Megan Scrivener who largely organised this event deserve much of the credit. From conversations I had apparently Allan knew Megan was the girl for him when she could carry his axe box containing three axes at the Brisbane Exhibition. May be something in that for those looking for a spouse. While on the subject of the Showground the new Function Centre is taking shape and will offer a great venue for social events. A project derived from the drought it will be a lasting memorial to a trying time.

WALCHA OVAL REVAMP

Now that the state of the art lighting system at Walcha Oval has been switched on, Council and the community would like to thank Ian and Trudy Notley and family for the donation that made this possible. The donation of new lights and poles which were removed from the Sydney Swans



training ground a couple of years ago; will make night time use of the ground a greater experience. Upgrades like this are expensive and generally out of reach financially for Council's such as Walcha so this makes this generous donation all the more valuable. This, plus the irrigation upgrade, revamping of the change rooms and kitchen along with the inclusion of a new public address (PA) system has made this facility much more user friendly. The Rugby League and Rugby Union Clubs both contributed financially to the PA system.

WATER

As we currently stand on Level 4 water restrictions, and intermittent flows in the Macdonald River continue to thwart any attempt to lower this, the feasibility study to find a long term solution to this issue is gaining momentum. It must be remembered that it is well under 12 months since the Apsley River Feasibility Study was completed with no great outcome and we went back to the original option. This study, being driven hard by our Engineering Department, has identified several sites that offer options to locate a large storage and are awaiting geological test results to narrow this down to the most suitable site. Hopefully from this, a concept design for a storage can be drafted and we then must chase funding to continue. With water being so topical, and Walcha Council having constantly highlighted this issue at State Government level we will hopefully be successful in our funding endeavours. This is the furthest that Council have ever been along this path and while Council understands the frustration of town residents we are making headway.

DEBBY MADDOX

For those primary producers and business owners who need to access Government assistance through the drought, Debby Maddox has become synonymous as the go to person. Debby is with the Rural Financial Counselling Service and can assist with advice on what is available, and completing the associated paperwork. Currently the transport subsidy will end on 30 June and if you are unaware of what is available Debby is across all of this and is both discrete and amiable. Debby will be at the Walcha Council Community Care on Friday 10 May from 2pm til 4pm. Even if you don't need the paperwork drop in for a cuppa, scone and chat. There is an ad in the Advocate this week and it will be repeated next week. For a quick look try <https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/grants/choose-the-right-grant> Debby's most important point is to not self assess and use the help available. <https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/grants/choose-the-right-grant>

ROAD MAINTENANCE

Another victim of the dry is the Council's ability to maintain gravel roads. Like everything else at this time water is the issue. Anyone who has worked gravel understands that without water it is basically dust, and with all the regular water points unavailable due to being dry or needed for stock the grading of roads is futile. If landholders who have water that Council can access to maintain these roads could contact the Engineering Department it may lead to these roads being able to be graded.

Clr Eric Noakes
Mayor of Walcha