



ANZAC DAY

The importance of ANZAC Day to the broader community was highlighted on Saturday when due to the current lockdown services could not be held. Despite this necessary lockdown individuals and families rose early and showed the respect our armed forces have earned. I believe Walcha has one of the elite positions for their memorial and to see the sunrise over the autumn colours on a crisp April morning is a great sight. Just before 6am the sound of the Last Post filled the air from various locations around town was an emotional moment.

I believe the great change to ANZAC Day since I was young is the respect and honour shown by the youth of our country. They are proud to dress in their school uniform even when school is not on, make poppies and put them on other people's mailboxes and be out of bed at 5:30 am to stand with a candle. Our future is in good hands.

THE AFOREMENTIONED LOCKDOWN

As our virus lockdown extends into however many weeks our community is still free of any cases. This is probably down to a bit of luck that no one has brought it to town, but much more also the way in which we have taken it seriously. As is said life goes on and the world keeps turning but the measures put in place by all levels of government, the dissemination of this message and adherence to it will save lives. I find Adrian Allen's and King's Pharmacy's columns of particular interest. These give it a local touch and make us realise this doesn't only happen in the big smoke. All we can do is hang in there, look after those who are more vulnerable and for some hope that toilet paper doesn't have a use by date. Remember that Walcha Council is readily contactable if you are concerned about a neighbour or friend. Under these difficult times it is great to see our local businesses have maintained an important role to help us through. Even though the people who work in these are on the front line of infection risk they still smile, are courteous and have put in place protocols to make it easier on customers. A simple thank you to these people can make their day. Remember some of these people can get more money to stay at home.

\$10,000 BUSHFIRE GRANT

The long overdue announcement last week that Walcha Council LGA was included on this list, along with other New England Councils, is welcome. I won't go back over the last couple of months last year but we should have been in this list from the start. The overriding message which is constantly being pushed with all of this funding is do not self assess. With the help of your accountant (if needed) fill in the forms and lodge them. Both levels of Government have a stake in this funding and if you do get knocked back contact me (0428 774504) and we will push it from our members' level. As business owners you have had trying times over the last couple of years and this may provide a financial boost that you deserve. Visit <http://www.service.nsw.gov.au/>

COUNCIL BUSINESS

Despite the lockdown and associated disruption Council business still goes on. The concrete has been poured for the Community Storage Shed, the push to build another



water storage is still our main priority and is progressing steadily, Thunderbolts Way work has begun and maintenance of all other council infrastructure continues. Some work will be impacted by outside contractors not being able to travel and the use of cyberspace to communicate becomes commonplace.

WALCHA NEWS

It is sad news that the Walcha News has been shutdown in the short term. This newspaper has been an icon of our community for years and the trip to the mailbox on Friday was always with the anticipation of reading it. I can remember when photos first appeared and then later when they went to colour. Changes in advertising methods and online news have impacted newspapers everywhere but there is still something special about being able to read it on paper. Hopefully this will only be temporary and our much revered paper will once again take pride of place in our mailboxes.

Clr Eric Noakes
Mayor of Walcha