



THE COURIER

THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2021 - VOL CVIII NO. 47

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WOOLWORTHS WEEKLY SPECIALS
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Win

70TH AND 80TH BIRTHDAYS
SOCIAL P8, 10



TWO WEDDINGS CELEBRATED
SOCIAL P12



Shire's visitor economy continues to grow

Narrabri Shire tourism is on a roll. The dramatic uptick in the district's agricultural prospects, record commercial and building development, worth almost \$30 million, endorsed by the council in the year to March, is joined by the strongly expanding third leg of the economy trifecta, district tourism.

Tourism is another of the shire's exciting growth industries.

The new blue print for the future of the visitor economy, the shire

council's draft Narrabri Region Tourism Destination Management Plan 2021/2025 sets out the strategy for the local tourism sector.

More tourists are on the road nowadays.

The plan identified that there is significant growth across all age groups in the caravan and camping sector.

"Visitor markets are changing" the report says.

"There is strong and growing interest in, and visitation to, regional

areas."

Narrabri Shire is well placed to continue to service this burgeoning market, which has the huge added impetus of domestic travel as overseas holiday flights are grounded.

Rick and Sharmaine Cunningham, operators of the long established Narrabri Fish Farm, share the confidence in the growing local tourism economy and are investing in its future.

They are planning to expand the

Jock's Creek Road Fish Farm complex to attract and cater for more visitors.

Locals, and shoals of tourists, are already making the Fish Farm their destination.

Expansion of the hospitality venue and hatchery will cater to the growing number of visitors keen on the Australian bush experience.

Rick and Sharmaine have lodged a Development Application which outlines a staged plan for two, two-bedroom farm stay cabins, a new

amenities block associated with the camping ground, eight powered van sites, six unpowered van sites, functions area upgrade, additions and alterations to the kiosk/cafe building, picnic shelter and hatchery building and a kids' playground.

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BELOW: Sydney visitor to Narrabri Fish Farm, Allart, tries his skill on the didgeridoo on Saturday, pictured with Fish Farm owner Rick Cunningham.

Major shire projects confirmed

Funding for development of major projects in Narrabri Shire has been confirmed in the NSW budget this week.

Recent funding has been allocated to support the recovery and future prosperity of regional communities following drought, bushfires, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Duty MLC for Barwon Electorate Sam Faraway said \$16.81 million would be invested into the Narrabri Industrial and Logistics Hub.

Funding the proposed Narrabri Special Activation Precinct has been reaffirmed in the NSW budget.

The earlier announcement by NSW Deputy Premier John Barilaro of the designation of Narrabri as a future SAP is a huge endorsement of the future for the district.

The budget allocated \$25.4 million for the development of the Narrabri SAP, the funding to include planning for Moree and Snowy Mountains SAPs.

"This year's budget sees \$37.83 million invested into building the new Wee Waa High School, ensuring quality education options for our kids, so they don't have to leave home or travel to a metropolitan area to get the education they deserve," Mr Faraway said.

And \$51.8 million has been allocated for significant upgrades to the Newell Highway between Narrabri and Moree.

Member for Barwon Roy Butler welcomed the NSW Budget.

"Overall I think it's another good budget for the Barwon electorate," he said.

↑↑ This year's budget sees **\$37.83 million** invested in a new Wee Waa High School.

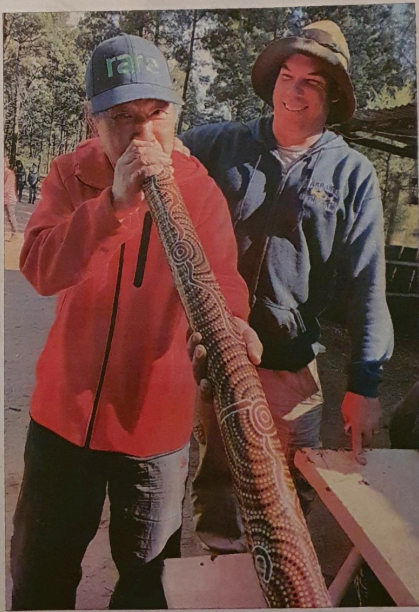
"This year there is \$740 million in electorate specific funding, many of the projects funded including road upgrades, domestic water supply projects, and local park upgrades come from councils and community groups from the electorate talking to me and my team. I've taken up getting funding with government ministers and this positive budget for us is the result.

"There is always more to do, and we are playing catch up after years of under investment, but overall I'm happy with how we've fared" (See page 6).

Deputy Premier and Leader of the NSW Nationals John Barilaro said more jobs and infrastructure builds will be delivered through the 2021-22 NSW budget, to help NSW regions move through recovery and build on the benefits of regional living.

"Of the back of devastating drought, bushfires and floods, there has never been a more crucial time to support regional NSW by providing job opportunities, new and improved infrastructure and community-backed projects," Mr Barilaro said.

"This budget has a strong focus on job creating infrastructure builds to ensure local economies remain strong and regional NSW continues to be a fantastic place to live and work."



WEATHER Fri. Min 11° Max 18°

Partly cloudy. Very high (95%) chance of rain on the northern slopes, medium (60%) chance elsewhere.

Sat 17° Sun 16° Mon 16° Tue 20° Wed 19°

Boggy Ninja swings into next round



The audience gathers at Boggybri's Commercial Hotel for Sunday night's Australian Ninja Warrior episode. Front, Jeremiah Talbot, seated, Danny Low, Jeannine Morley, Cruze, Chris and Max Low and Finlay Morley. Standing, back, Robb Horns, Katrina Low, Connor Miller, Matt Horns, Morgan Hill and Rebecca Talbot. RIGHT: Cruze on screen, FAR RIGHT: Cruze's proud Mum, Karen Morley.

Most of Boggybri will be glad to their television screens on Sunday night when Cruze Morley, the 'Boggy Ninja' contests the semi-finals of the national Australian Ninja Warrior titles on Channel 9.

And viewers around Australia are sharing the excitement - including the Prime Minister (see page 6).

Last Sunday Boggybri's Commercial Hotel was packed with excited supporters cheering their champion on. And Cruze came through.

Sunday's challenge will ratchet the competition up another notch.

"I don't know what the decibel score was but the cheer that went up as Cruze appeared on the big screen on Sunday would have been heard all over Boggybri and possibly beyond" reported *The Courier's* Boggybri correspondent Noreen Boehm.

Friends, family and supporters came from Dubbo, Newcastle, Gunnedah, Narrabri, Boggybri and all places in between to cheer Cruze on.

On Sunday Cruze was placed eighth overall with a time of 3.38.07.

To his Boggybri fans, Cruze is already a winner.



Passing of industry pioneer Lex Gordon

One of Australia's transport industry pioneers, Lex Gordon, has passed away.

Mr Gordon, 93, died on June 21.

Lex Gordon is a figure of legendary status in the trucking industry, a status which has extended over many decades. He developed his business, originally Lex Gordon Transport, from a Narrabri hub in the 1950s to expand across a wide swathe of Australia.

The late Mr Gordon's leading role in the industry was well recognised.

In addition to growing the business, Gordon Roadways, he was a valued mentor, advisor and friend to generations of colleagues and young drivers coming into the industry.

Mr Gordon's recollections of his involvement in the earlier days of the trucking industry, working from the Top End of Australia down south, and across all states, when many outdoor roads were more like creek beds, reflect the true Australian pioneering spirit.

His 70 years in the transport industry were honoured with his induction into the National Road Transport Hall of Fame.

Please see funeral service details this issue.

Tourism an exciting shire growth industry

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Coachloads of visitors are arriving at the Narrabri Fish Farm each week.

On the weekend a busload of tourists pulled in to the Fish Farm to be greeted by their hosts Rick, Sharmaine and Ayla Cunningham.

The visitors were Chinese community members of a Hills District church seniors' group on a tour of the shire and then on to other North Western destinations.

In addition to visiting the hatchery,

having lunch at the Fish Farm and taking part in yabby races, the group was taken out to Sewn Rocks, and inspected a cotton farm and the Pilliga sandstone caves.

The visitor offer to tourists is the 'true Australia' of bush hospitality and interesting local attractions.

The volume of groups coming to the Narrabri Fish Farm continues to grow. The Fish Farm is being developed to cater for more tourists, but the influx brings out of town dollars to many shire businesses.

Tourists stay at local motels and buy locally on their visit.

The numbers keep growing. "We have had six coachloads in the past two weeks and 11 more coaches booked in the coming two weeks," said Rick Cunningham.

Some are day and night visitors and coachloads range around the 50 to 60 passengers.

The visitors enjoy the country experience, food and fun - and tell their friends 'go to Narrabri Shire'.



Rick, Ayla and Sharmaine Cunningham introduce a Sydney coachload of Fish Farm visitors to yabby racing on the weekend.

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