

Edward River News



Edward River COUNCIL

Issue 3 : March 2017

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Edward River celebrates Australia Day



Citizen of the Year Russell Tait - Deniliquin.



Citizen of the Year Shelley Scoullar - Conargo.

New General Manager

Edward River Council Administrator Ashley Hall has announced the appointment of Adam McSwain as Council's new General Manager, following an extensive national recruitment process.

Mr McSwain will take up the post on April 18, 2017.

Mr Hall said the selection panel was impressed with Mr McSwain's energy and his drive to take on his first General Manager role.

"Adam has a very impressive background in local government, spanning a number of professional disciplines including recreation, community development, economic development and statutory planning," he said.

"I am confident that Adam's leadership experience and qualifications, coupled with his strong knowledge of community and economic development and his commitment to organisational excellence, will see him well positioned to make an outstanding contribution to Edward River Council as our General Manager."

Mr McSwain has most recently been Director of Development and Planning at Swan Hill Rural City Council, and was previously the Manager Economic and Community Development at Hepburn Shire Council in Daylesford.

He holds a Bachelor of Applied Science and Bachelor of Management from the University of Ballarat and a Master of Business Administration and Master of Politics and Policy from Deakin University, and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

In accepting this significant career opportunity, Mr McSwain said he was looking forward to moving to Deniliquin with his wife and getting involved in the Edward River community.

"I'm really excited about the opportunity at Edward River Council. Whilst clearly any merger process provides some challenges, it also presents some terrific opportunities for both Council and the community," he said.

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Message from the Administrator

It has been a very busy time for Edward River Council since our last newsletter was distributed in January.

A major task has been appointment of our first full-time General Manager, and I was delighted to announce the appointment of Adam McSwain to this position, which is covered elsewhere in this newsletter.

One of the most important infrastructure upgrades for Edward River Council is the Deniliquin Airport redevelopment. We have a Memorandum of Understanding with Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport to establish a regional freight hub linking Deniliquin with Asian markets. Council is delighted to be hosting the Chairman of Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport, John Wagner, on April 10. While in the region he will address a business and community forum, talking about his company's commitment to the Deniliquin freight hub. Further details about the forum, which will also feature well-known Sefton & Associates Managing Director Robbie Sefton as facilitator, are on page 7.

Another major development which continues to progress is construction of an ethanol plant. I am anticipating some further news in relation to this project in the near future.

As long-term residents of the region would be aware, a number of Government Departments have downsized or withdrawn their offices and services from the Edward River Council area over a period of more than 20 years. We now have a push from the Federal Government to relocate appropriate services to rural and regional centres. Edward River Council has prepared a submission supporting this decentralisation push and we will work closely with any Government Department that wants to relocate or expand in our region.

Currently our staff are working through the budget process and review, which is quite a large task for the new entity. We will be seeking community feedback on the budget in coming weeks.

Staff have also been relocating to the new administration building adjacent to the Town Hall and Estates Building. This will open on Monday, March 27 with a larger customer service and reception area which will be entered from Cressy St. Council is also extending its office hours for the public's convenience and these will be 8.30am to 5pm from the new building.

Finally, a reminder to keep thinking about whether you are prepared to stand for Council in the September election. It is important that we have a strong and enthusiastic team of Councillors to lead the new Edward River Council into the future.

Until next time.

Ashley Hall
Administrator



New General Manager

From front...

"I look forward to working with the staff, the community, the Advisory Committee, future Councillors and the administrator Ashley Hall to make the most of every opportunity available to us."

Mr Hall said Mr McSwain was selected from an impressive field of candidates from South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.

"This was a very competitive process and it was indeed a difficult recommendation the recruitment panel had to make to Council," Mr Hall said.

"Nonetheless, in the end the recommendation was unanimous and Adam will commence knowing that he has the full support of the panel members," he said.

"I want to place on record my deep appreciation and that of the Council for the outstanding contribution made by the panel members, former mayors Norm Brennan, Pat Fogarty and Lindsay Renwick, and Michael Courtney, Chief Executive Officer of CT Management.

"We were ably assisted in the task by recruitment consultant Stephen Blackadder of Blackadder Associates."

Mr Hall confirmed outgoing Interim General Manager Barry Barlow had agreed to continue at Council to assist during a transition period.

"Barry has done a terrific job leading our organisation through the merger process, and I am very pleased that he will be continuing on to guarantee a seamless transition for Council and to support Adam in his new role," he said.

Mr McSwain will undertake a five year contract with Council and his challenges will be to ensure the continued financial sustainability of the organisation, to help facilitate local economic development and job growth, and lead the organisation with a strong focus on customer service.

Edward River Council prepares disability plan

Edward River Council is developing a plan to ensure people with disability have every opportunity to fully participate in the social, community and business life of the council area.

Its Disability Inclusion Action Plan aims to provide strategies and a planning framework for achieving these goals.

Council's Manager Environmental Services Julie Rogers said Council would be seeking information and feedback from a range of sources during February and March through widely distributed surveys.

It has also appointed consultants, Strategy to Action, who will work with disability groups, individuals and service providers to gain more detailed information about how best to continue to break down barriers for people with disability.

"In the context of the DIAP, we are not just looking at people with a diagnosed or permanent disability, but anyone in the community who has barriers to achieving full participation, whether these are the result of physical, cognitive or sensory disability, mental health, chronic illness or ageing," Ms Rogers said.

The DIAP is being prepared in accordance with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014. The NSW Government is committed to disability inclusion in order to build a strong and equitable community.

The NSW Government supports the fundamental right of all people to make choices about how they live their lives, to access opportunities and enjoy the benefits of living and working in our society.

Sometimes this can be difficult for people with a disability because of the lack of understanding by individuals and organisations, the physical difficulties of getting to and into places, finding employment that takes their special needs into account, and getting information they need.

For further information about the DIAP process contact Julie Rogers at Edward River Council via email julie.rogers@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au or Robyn Condon at Strategy to Action robyn@strategy2action.com.au or phone 0429 848 765.

Information for Council candidates

The first election for Edward River Council will be held in September 2017.

It is important that potential candidates for the election are well informed on the process and what is involved in becoming a councillor.

To assist, the NSW Electoral Commission has a range of information on its website under the heading 'Information for Candidates & Groups'.

It provides an easy to follow six step guide to being a candidate (and forming a group of candidates) at the local council elections.

Edward River Council Administrator Ashley Hall encourages all interested residents to consider standing for Council.

Mr Hall has extensive local government experience. He was Mayor of Deniliquin when the merger between Deniliquin Council and Conargo Shire Council was announced, at which time he was appointed by the NSW Government as the Administrator of Edward River Council.

"Being a councillor is a very rewarding experience and those elected will have a unique opportunity to play a vital role in building a strong, vibrant community," he said.

All the information needed by potential candidates can be found at:

http://www.votensw.info/nsw_local_council_elections_2017/candidates_and_groups



Edward River celebrates Australia Day

Australia Day was celebrated in style by Edward River Council residents, with celebrations in the Waring Gardens and at the Conargo Recreation Reserve.

The weather was ideal for the large crowd that relaxed in Waring Gardens, first enjoying the traditional Rotary breakfast, with music from Edward River Concert Band and Sing Australia Choir.

Official activities started with a moving Welcome to Country presented by Steven Charles and an address by Edward River Council Administrator Ashley Hall.

Australia Day ambassador, author Susanne Gervay, gave an amusing and inspiring address as she spoke about her family's migration to Australia and some of the challenges they faced.

A number of Australia Day Citizenship presentations were made, as follows: Citizen of the Year Russell Tait, Sportsperson of the Year Jim Jennings, Young Sports Person

of the Year Tom Bradley, Community Event of the Year Deniliquin Ute Muster, Community Service Awards to Allan Edwards, Barb Anderson and Janet Mathewson.

Long service certificates were presented to Edward River Concert Band members Ron Richards, Neville McBurnie, Richard Davies, Ken Fisher and Claire Wing.

The Conargo ceremony also featured the Sing Australia Choir and an address by Australia Day Ambassador Susanne Gervay, as well as bush poetry from Alex Allitt.

Australia Day awards were presented to Citizen of the Year Shelley Scoullar and Outstanding Junior Sporting Achiever Award to Hayley Doohan.

The day concluded with a delicious luncheon and refreshments.

Administrator Ashley Hall thanks everyone involved in Australia Day activities across the Edward River Council area, with special mention to all award recipients.



Sportsperson of the Year Jim Jennings.



Young Sportsperson of the Year Tom Bradley.



Outstanding Junior Sporting Achiever Hayley Doohan.



Community Service Award recipients, Janet Mathewson, Allan Edwards and Barb Anderson.



Edward River Concert Band members Ron Richards and Neville McBurnie were two of the Long Service Award recipients.

Ambassador becomes Edward River ambassador

Edward River Council's 2017 Australia Day Ambassador Susanne Gervay enjoyed her trip to our region and recapped on a great time with a blog on her website.

Ms Gervay was the guest speaker at Australia Day ceremonies in the Waring Gardens and the Conargo Hall.

Ms Gervay wrote on her blog: "So what's Edward River? Paradise. The first welcome we received was lazing along the river in a house boat eating great sausage rolls hand-made by their very own Director of the Sun Festival, Geoff Riley OAM in the great company of locals. They all have amazing stories of floods and droughts, farming and water – they need water for their rice and grain crops. Everyone comes together to fight those fires and sand bank the rising river and to celebrate on Australia Day."

Ms Gervay was accompanied on her trip by fellow author Yvette Poshoglian who she said was "totally embraced by the community as they love their schools, books and their libraries".

Ms Gervay said she was also embraced by "the fantastic Rotary cooks", and the "beautiful park in the centre of Deniliquin, to former mayor Pat Fogarty leading the Australian Citizenship affirmation, to wonderful Steven Charles of Yarkuwa, an Aboriginal elder, who gave the Welcome to Country. Steven brought tears to my eyes with his stories."

She said the Sing Australia Choir, Edward River Concert Band and "the people" were all "inspiring".

From the Conargo ceremony she spoke about Alex Allitt "who recited the powerful poem of Australia" and praised Conargo Citizen of the Year Shelley Scoullar who she described as "a farmer with three young children who has become the voice of farmers to access water while protecting the environment".

She recognized Conargo Young Citizen Hayley Doohan "who leads other young people in sports and self worth – what a girl".

Ms Gervay acknowledged "the generous stories the people of the Edward River shared with me – thank you, thank you, thank you".

"Russell Tait (Citizen of the Year) who leads the organization of the Deni Ute Muster gave me a special muster cap – I promised I'd support it and I do.

"I feel honoured to have been an Australia Day Ambassador and honoured to have given addresses in Conargo and Deniliquin," Ms Gervay said.

On the Friday after Australia Day activities Ms Gervay gave a presentation at the Central Murray Regional Library in Deniliquin.

For the full text of Ms Gervay's blog, visit her website www.sgervay.com



DeniFest

It's going to be a huge Easter weekend in the Edward River area as we celebrate the inaugural 'Deni Fest', an arts and cultural festival coordinated by Edward River Council and South West Arts.

Deniliquin will be full of arts and culture for everyone over the Easter break.

The highlight will be a performance by legendary James Morrison at the first Rhythm Blues and Jazz Festival on Easter Sunday at the riverside Edward River Oval.

The annual Rotary Easter Art Show will be held in the Deniliquin Multi-Arts Centre, in Cressy St, from Thursday April 13 to Monday April 17, and the ArtOut artisan market will be another festival feature.

Other Deni Fest activities will include a free South West Music Picnic Concert in Waring Gardens, performances by Deniliquin Bush Poets Society and exhibitions by the Australian Plein-Air Artists Group.



International College at Murray Valley Industry Park

Edward River Council was delighted to sign an agreement with Melbourne's Ausway College to operate a campus for international agricultural students at the Murray Valley Industry Park, on Todd's Lane.

Under the arrangement, Deniliquin will become a centre for international collaborations, educational opportunities and cultural integration.

The aim of Ausway College is to establish Australia's leading agricultural research facility in Deniliquin. Ausway College has an affiliation with Guangzhou University in China, which will feed students to the college.

Murray Valley Industry Park was originally a NSW Government research station before coming under control of the former Deniliquin Council, which fought hard to have the land stay in community hands, rather than being sold by the government.

Edward River Council Administrator Ashley Hall said the college campus was an ideal use for Murray Valley Industry Park, and establishing courses there would provide the region with a significant economic boost.

He said Ausway College originally expects to have up to 30 students studying here, plus support lecturers, with its business plan aiming to increase this to 105 within five years.

Ausway College Director Mr Patrick Lay said its aim was to create Australia's leading agricultural research facility in Deniliquin.

"We will bring researchers from the Asia-Pacific region to work and learn from Australian agricultural experts to create a climate for international collaboration.



"Food insecurity will become a major issue for the region in the future and the more research and investment we can put into more efficient and safer farming practices the better the outcomes for both the farmers and the increasing population of the Asia-Pacific.

"I would like to thank Edward River Council for their drive and vision to help develop this innovative project," he said.

The research that will be carried out at Murray Valley Industry Park will not only provide the Edward River Council area with an economic boost, but will also help position our nation to provide more food for our international neighbours.

New gym equipment on Beach to Beach Walk

New gym equipment has been installed at two locations along the Beach to Beach Walk.

They are at McLean Beach and at the end of Macauley Street, adjacent Deniliquin Hospital.

The equipment will further enhance the walk for locals and visitors.

The installation of water fountains and landscaping will further enhance the exercise stations which have been made possible due to funding from the Federal Government and Edward River Council.



Business forum

Director of the Wagner Group, John Wagner, will present the keynote address at a Business Forum and Dinner at the Deniliquin RSL Club on Monday, April 10.

The evening is being hosted by Edward River Council, in partnership with Deniliquin Business Chamber, and will be facilitated by Robbie Sefton, founder and Managing Director of Sefton & Associates.

The format will include a Q&A panel of business, industry and political leaders.

The Wagner Group owns and operates Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport at Toowoomba, and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Council early last year to develop an international air-freight port at the Deniliquin Airport.

To book, RSVP on (03) 5881 2621 or email admin@deniliquinchamber.com.au



Edward River Council local representation committee member Sally Dye with guest speakers Jenny Old and Hayley Purbrick.

Beautification works at Blighty and Conargo

Work is progressing well on two beautification projects at Blighty and Conargo.

A landscaped rest area is being established alongside the Riverina Highway near the Blighty Hotel which will provide a pleasant stop for motorists.

Earthworks have been completed and additional contract work will take place in coming months.

Tables and chairs, as well as rubbish bins, plus appropriate signage will complete the project.

At Conargo a unique park is being constructed as a tribute to the late Manny Pottinger, who was the district's resident windmill repair man.

To fit the theme the park will include a windmill, and the tower has already been installed. Custom-built seats in the shape of a rainwater tank have been designed and will feature a

mosaic showing how water brings life to the outback.

Landscaping and signage will complete the project and give Conargo a welcoming, shady area for locals and visitors.



International Women's Day

More than 100 women attended International Women's Day celebrations at the Deniliquin RSL Club on Wednesday, March 8.

The event was coordinated by Edward River Council and featured presentations from author Jenny Old and founder of The Riverina Collective Hayley Purbrick.

Mrs Old wrote a memoir of her time in the Gulf Country of Far North Queensland on the property 'McAllister', which is the name of her book. It tells the story of her move to the middle of nowhere and the challenges she faced.

"We started with nothing. We lived in a shed while we built our home brick by brick. We took a lump of virgin land and turned it into a thriving working cattle property," Mrs Old said.

Hayley talked about her life, coming to Deniliquin, starting a family and The Riverina Collective which grew from an event called Women In Water in 2015.

The attendance was overwhelming and highlighted the importance of getting women together to learn, share and connect with other women.

The theme for International Women's Day this year was 'Be bold for change', and Robyn Corboy from Edward River Council said each of the speakers represented the theme well.

A delicious lunch was served between speakers.

Upgrades planned for Waring Gardens

Edward River Council has announced a Waring Gardens Beautification Program, which will start shortly with the removal of a diseased Moreton Bay fig tree.

Council's Acting Director of Infrastructure, Mark Dalzell, said the program would deliver upgrades to the large Rotunda,



Community consultation for major projects

Edward River Council will be undertaking community consultation over the coming weeks to determine the projects to be funded under the Stronger Communities Fund Major Projects Program.

The Major Projects Program will see up to \$8 million invested in large scale priority infrastructure and services projects that deliver long-term economic and social benefits to the Edward River community.

Community consultation meetings will be held this month, commencing on Tuesday, March 28 2017 at Deniliquin, with subsequent meetings at Conargo, Wanganella and Blighty.

Members of the public will be given the opportunity to have their say on which projects should be prioritised under the program.

Meeting venues and times will be advertised in the Deniliquin Pastoral Times and promoted on Council's website.

For more information about the Stronger Communities Fund or the upcoming consultation meetings, contact Council on (03) 5898 3000 or via email at council@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au.

the peacock enclosure, and the wishing well beside the peacock enclosure.

"Waring Gardens is a true asset for Deniliquin, and one that is widely used by members of the Edward River community as well as tourists and visitors to our region," he said.

"Over the coming weeks and months, Council will be undertaking several improvements to the park, including refurbishing the large Rotunda as well as the wishing well, which will be returned to use once again."

Mr Dalzell confirmed that a mature Moreton Bay fig tree would be planted after the sick tree has been removed.

One of the Moreton Bay fig trees in the gardens needs to be removed as soon as possible, and this work has been scheduled to occur in March and be completed before the Cruising Nationals, which starts on March 31.

An arborist's report has revealed that the tree is critically unhealthy and poses a safety risk to users of the park.

For further information about the Waring Gardens Beautification Program, contact Council's Infrastructure Department on (03) 5898 3000 or via email at council@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au.

DrumMuster Service

The Edward River Council drumMuster site has been relocated from Augustus St, Deniliquin to the Deniliquin Waste Disposal Depot. This change will extend the hours that residents can access the service.

DrumMuster provides an easy, environmentally friendly way of disposing of empty farming chemical containers. Farmers are encouraged to use drumMuster for disposal of appropriate containers.

The Deniliquin Waste Disposal Depot is located on Tip Road off the Cobb Highway, 4.9 kilometres from the North Deniliquin roundabout. The depot is open from 8.30am until 3.45pm seven days a week, except for Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Anzac Day and Good Friday.

An alternative drumMuster collection site is at Mayrung. Farmers in the Mayrung region should contact Bergette Schultz at Mayrung School on (03) 5882 4243 during school hours to arrange drop-off. The money from returned drums goes back to the Mayrung School.



Customer Service Centre

180 Cressy Street, Deniliquin
Post: PO Box 270, Deniliquin NSW 2710
Phone: 03 5898 3000
Fax: 03 5898 3029
Email: council@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.edwardriver.nsw.gov.au

Central Murray Regional Library

Gorman Park, 55 Napier Street, Deniliquin
Post: PO Box 206, Deniliquin NSW 2710
Phone: 03 5898 3100
Fax: 03 5881 4833
Email: library@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.cmrl.deniliquin.nsw.gov.au



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Keep in touch - Follow Edward River Council and the Central Murray Regional Library on Facebook.