

Balonne Bulletin

THE NEWSLETTER OF BALONNE SHIRE COUNCIL

ISSUE 13 | 10 DECEMBER 2021

After years of hard work, Native Title is a cause for celebration on...

YUWAALARAAY EUAHLAYI COUNTRY



HISTORIC DAY: The Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi people received the Native Title Consent Determination at a Federal Court sitting and ceremony in Dirranbandi

Balonne Shire Council enthusiastically welcomes the Native Title Consent Determination for the local Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi people, handed down by the Federal Court at a special sitting in Dirranbandi.

The Native Title Consent Determination covers a large area from the Queensland border, around the Hebel and Dirranbandi districts, extending north almost to St George.

Traditional lands of the Yuwaalaraay and Euahlayi people stretch from the Balonne Shire through to North West New South Wales - around Goodooga, Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri, Walgett and the Narran Lakes.

Balonne Shire Deputy Mayor Richard Lomman attended the hearing on 22 November at Dirranbandi as a representative for Council.

“I was so pleased to see the Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi people’s euphoria as the decision was handed down on this historic day. We know having Native Title over Country is incredibly meaningful,” he said.

“This outcome has been many years in the making, with all the individuals involved putting in an enormous amount of work to get here.

“Thank you to everyone for including Council in this process. I look forward to fostering a positive relationship

between Council and the Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi people.”

Balonne Shire Council CEO Matthew Magin said Council will actively collaborate with the Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi people on local projects.

“We are very much looking forward to working with the Yuwaalaraay Euahlayi Aboriginal Corporation to put an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) in place,” he said.

“Having the formal Native Title Determination is an excellent first step. From here, our two groups will be able to collaborate on the ILUA and many more Council projects in the future.”

What's On

First 5 Forever

A weekly session for children aged 0-5 and their parents/guardians, aimed at building strong literacy foundations.

WHERE: St George Library

WHEN: each Friday, 9.30am

Christmas Carnival and Markets

Back for another bumper year, the Christmas Carnival is a chance to celebrate the festive season with the St George Business Community. Shop local, enjoy free entertainment, and be sure to enter the Mega Draw for your chance to win an amazing prize - you must be there on the day to claim!

See P5 for more details.

WHERE: St George Showgrounds

WHEN: 11 December

SIGNAL OUTAGE

17 December 2021

11am - 3pm

Telecommunications upgrades are happening in St George.

To complete this, transmitters on the St George water tower will be turned off for a short time.

The outage will affect **mobile phone**, **television** and **radio** service.



We apologise for any inconvenience

Got a story, event or notice?

Tell us! We can include your information in the newsletter.

Phone: 07 4620 8888

Email: media@balonne.qld.gov.au

A message from the Mayor

We have all been reminded recently that disruption from flooding out here in the south-western river country can happen overnight.

For example, the Moonie Highway was cut by floodwaters in a number of places, the Goondiwindi route east from St George was also flooded and then the bridge at Surat went under water as well. That left the only practical way to St George a circuitous route up through Roma and Mitchell. Then the Mitchell road was cut as well - but the Moonie Highway reopened.

At the same time, water was rising in the Barwon River around Mungindi, threatening to cut the town off from the north as well as the south, with a peak of up to 7.8 metres and flooding likely to last a week or more.

At the time of writing this column, we know the Balonne River will rise into foreshore parks in St George but it is too soon to know whether the water will get high enough to go over the Andrew Nixon Bridge on Jack Taylor Weir. That depends in part on whether there is further rain in the catchment.

We have been putting up news about all our Balonne communities and the latest predictions for flooding.

The Local Disaster Management Group - comprising the Balonne Shire Council, police, fire and rescue, State Emergency Service, Bureau of Meteorology and other key services - is meeting regularly, monitoring the flood situation throughout the Shire, and will be ready to take whatever action is needed.

What I want to emphasise is the fact that conditions can change so quickly out here. This is one reason you should always check the Emergency Dashboard on the Balonne Shire Council website.

The Emergency Dashboard is the place where you will find all the latest information, emergency news, road conditions, weather warnings and power outages. It can be accessed



via the Balonne Shire Council website or use your search engine to search for "Balonne Emergency Dashboard". There is an "Opt - In" section to subscribe to SMS or Email alerts. Of course, if you need any help with storm or flood damage, call the SES on 13 25 00. In an emergency situation, dial 000.

In the current conditions, please check road conditions before travelling. Everyone knows the message "If it's flooded, forget it", but that really is so important at times like these.

A quick message about COVID-19 vaccinations: please, get vaccinated now if you haven't done it already. With the Premier announcing borders will re-open this Monday, December 13, being double-vaccinated really is the very best present you can give your family for Christmas

The Balonne Shire Council offices will be closing from December 24 till January 3 inclusive - though emergency staff will be on hand if needed. The Balonne Bulletin will be taking a break as well but back again next year, along with our BSC TV videos.

On behalf of everyone here at the Balonne Shire Council, may I wish you and your family a joyous Christmas and a bountiful New Year. Have fun, stay safe.

Mayor Samantha O'Toole

Get your Bulletin online!

Can't wait for the post? Be the first to read the Balonne Bulletin each fortnight.

Our editions are available online - simply scan the QR code



CUC Balonne ends Semester with incredible successes

As this year draws to a close, CUC Balonne and its cohort of avid students have much to celebrate. Centre Manager Alix Greenhil shares her highlights from Semester Two, 2021:

Josie wins scholarship to study Masters

Congratulations to Josie Cargnoni for being a recipient of the Rural Regional Enterprise Scholarship (RRES).

Josie is a Master of Education Student through Griffith University registered at the CUC Balonne's Dirranbandi Centre.

Receiving this scholarship will alleviate a lot of the pressure and uncertainty involved with the commitment to study remotely.

We are so proud to be able to support Josie and celebrate her success with her.

The RRES program helps Australians in regional and remote areas to access higher education, from Certificate IV through to PhD level.

Local Students in their first year of study may be eligible for this scholarship, and Round 6 is open for students commencing in 2022: www.qtac.edu.au/rres-program.

Year 12 students visit CUC

The St George State High School year 12 cohort visited CUC Balonne on 18 November for a full day of learning.

All students completed Basic Barista training, and participated in the Making Career Choices Program, discussing the transition to life after high school. Thank you to Karen Browning from University of Southern Queensland for joining us.

Hebel Hotel supports higher learning

CUC Balonne has a community sponsor!

Hebel Hotel has come on board, and is the first local business to sponsor CUC Balonne.

We are so grateful for this incredible support, and thank Hebel Hotel for their commitment to educational opportunities for Balonne residents.

Our first graduates: Sam and Rebecca

Congratulations are also in order for Rebecca Lindert and Samantha Speedy, the first students to graduate while studying at CUC Balonne!

Both have completed a Bachelor of Agribusiness through the University of New England.

Completing a university degree is an enormous achievement worth celebrating, and CUC Balonne is excited to be a part of this milestone.

It has been a pleasure supporting Sam and Rebecca in their studies, and we can't wait to see their careers blossom.



Centre Manager Alix Greenhill (left) presents a bouquet to inaugural CUC Balonne graduate Samantha Speedy.



Inaugural graduate Rebecca Lindert congratulated by CUC Balonne board member Alex Benn.



The Balonne Business Improvement Scheme applications are now open!

With the support of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Council has opened the application process for the *Balonne Business Improvement Scheme*, which will enable up to \$20,000 + GST per business to be spent on either visual improvements or improvements to energy efficiency to business premises in Balonne Shire.

Applications Open - 24 November 2021
Applications Close - 22 December 2021 at 5pm

To apply for this program, please contact Council for application form and guidelines to support your application. Eligibility is outline in the scheme guidelines and should be reviewed as a first step before applying. Council is available to support applicants with their applications and answer questions.

For further information or clarification please contact:

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Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment

This project was funded by the Australian Government under the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program.

Predator-proof fencing rollout

Increased investment and extra employment are expected to flow from the rapid construction of predator-proof fencing throughout the Balonne Shire.



Exclusion Fencing is protecting properties from many different pests

As of early December, more than 1,000 kilometres of exclusion has been built with funding assistance from a number of Federal and State Government schemes, and there is at least another 700 kilometres still to come.

Several property-owners are also erecting more fencing without government assistance.

Protection of a growing number of properties from entry of predators like dingoes and feral pigs is expected to see wider stocking of sheep and goats, with resulting growth in employment in handling, shearing, transport and related work.

Exclusion fencing is higher and stronger than standard fencing – and built with stiff netting-like wire mesh – so that dingoes and pigs cannot push through, jump over or dig under it.

Property owners are already reporting the fencing is making a big difference to survival of smaller livestock like sheep and goats (especially lambs and kids) and also protecting crops from damage.

A study by accountants Hall Chadwick has confirmed initial economic benefits from the exclusion fencing and these benefits are expected to grow as more fencing is erected and more sheep and goats are stocked.

Balonne Shire Council sees these exclusion fencing programs as important to further grow the local economy and Mayor Samantha O'Toole said recently she is pleased with progress to date.

Note: To see more about the exclusion-fencing program across the Balonne Shire, visit Balonne Shire Council's YouTube channel:

youtube.com/user/BalonneShireCouncil

Mentoring program is open now

If you are a Balonne Shire based farmer, agri-tourism operator or a business directly involved in the agriculture and horticulture supply chains, expressions of interest are now open for interested parties with

up to 30 hours of advisory services. This program builds on the success on the previous rounds where 23 participants from the agriculture and horticulture sectors have participated and realised benefits from the

program.

The closing date for the EOI is Monday 20 December 2021. Please contact Connect Ag (details below) or scan the QR code for further information.

Expressions of Interest - Round 2 - Balonne Shire Council 's Business Advice and Mentoring Program

What opportunities could free, tailored advice unlock for your agricultural business?



OPEN until December 20, 2021

30 hours of FREE dedicated one-on-one advisory services / mentoring per participant

Review business operations

Tailored workshops/webinars facilitated by industry leaders

Up to \$2,000 incentive per participant to purchase equipment or materials

Strategy and development of action and business plans and other mentoring benefits

Topics covered

Diversifying your farming operations

Succession planning

On the property - value-add or vertically integrate

Commercialise a product or service you have developed

New marketing/business development ideas/opportunities

Increase margin in the supply chain

Invest in agri-technology to improve efficiencies

Contact: - Rhonda Toms-Morgan 0407678574 rhonda@connectag.com.au OR Gina Mace 0400879777 gmace@malanga.com.au

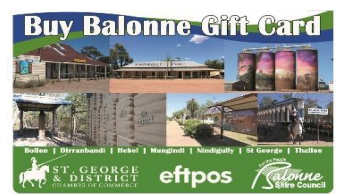
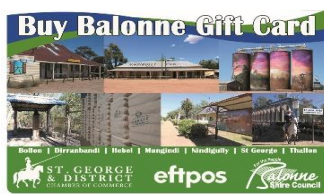
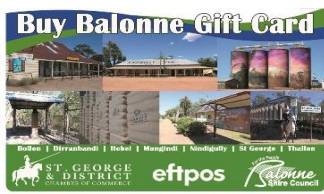


Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment

*This project was funded
by the Australian Government
under the Murray-Darling Basin
Economic Development Program.*

Register your interest via
www.bit.ly/BalonneMentoring
or Scan QR Code





Buy Balonne Gift Card Program – Participating Businesses

BUSINESS	TOWN	BUSINESS	TOWN
Purchase AND Redeem Gift Cards			
Bollon Post Office	Bollon	Nindigully Pub	Nindigully
Bollon Hotel	Bollon	Balonne Betta	St George
Deb's Café	Bollon	Bargains 4 U	St George
Dirranbandi Pub	Dirranbandi	Foodworks St George	St George
Foodworks Dirranbandi	Dirranbandi	St George News	St George
Tucka Shack	Dirranbandi	St George Golf Club	St George
Hebel Hotel	Hebel	Jacaranda Motor Inn	St George
Hebel Store	Hebel	Vanderfield	St George
Two Mile Pub	Mungindi	Thallon Pub	Thallon
Redeem Gift Cards only			
Bollon Fuel	Bollon	Hands to Heal	St George
Bollon Hardware	Bollon	Handy Store	St George
Bollon Hotel	Bollon	Ironbark Steel & Fabrication	St George
Nullawokka Art Gallery	Bollon	Jacaranda Motel	St George
Dirranbandi Ag Spares	Dirranbandi	Lifeline St George	St George
Dirranbandi Bakery	Dirranbandi	Lowe's Petroleum	St George
Dirranbandi Chemist	Dirranbandi	Magic Mirror	St George
Dirranbandi Hair and Beauty	Dirranbandi	Maranoa Meats	St George
Dirranbandi Hotel & Motel	Dirranbandi	Maranoa Mechanical	St George
Dirranbandi Motor Inn	Dirranbandi	Maranoa Tyres	St George
Dirranbandi Outback	Dirranbandi	Merino Motor Inn	St George
Dirranbandi P-10 State School	Dirranbandi	Myla Motors	St George
Dirranbandi RTC	Dirranbandi	NCC - St George	St George
Dirranbandi Retreat and Caravan Park	Dirranbandi	Nick's Fix It	St George
Dirranbandi Service Station	Dirranbandi	Nik's Nursery	St George
Elders Dirranbandi	Dirranbandi	Nutrien Ag Solutions	St George
Stephens Butchery	Dirranbandi	O'Brien Toyota	St George
The Linen Cupboard	Dirranbandi	Pelican Rest Tourist Park	St George
Total Ag Dirranbandi	Dirranbandi	PitStop	St George
AHANO Broadsafe Care Services	St George	Riverland Motor Inn	St George
Amber Hair and Beauty	St George	Riversands Wines	St George
Australian Hotel Motel	St George	Shea Beauty	St George
Balonne Shire Council	St George	St George Ag & Engineering	St George
CC's Trendz	St George	St George Bakery	St George
Cobb and Co Hotel	St George	St George Chemist	St George
Cornetts IGA St George	St George	St George Florist	St George
Cross Engineering	St George	St George Hotel	St George
CRT St George	St George	St George Mitre 10	St George
Delicate	St George	St George State High School	St George
Elders St George	St George	St Vincent de Paul	St George
Farmhouse	St George	The Hair & Beauty Hutt	St George
Golders St George	St George	Tina-Maree Jewellery	St George
Halls Furniture Court	St George	Moonie Merchandise	Thallon
Halpin Motors	St George		

Buy Balonne Gift Card: it's the gift that keeps on giving

Having trouble finding a gift for that hard-to-buy-for person?

Wanting to support our local Balonne Shire business community?

Well, the Buy Balonne Gift card is the answer!

Available for purchase in all towns and accepted at more than 85 businesses across the Balonne Shire, a Buy Balonne Gift Card is the ideal Christmas gift... and it just keeps on giving.

When you spend at small businesses, that support makes a world of difference to not only the local business owners, but the wider community.

These are the businesses which support our community fundraisers, sponsor our sports clubs, and donate to our service organisations; who are the fabric of our towns.

Over nearly two years, more than \$116,000 has been spent at Balonne

Shire businesses through Buy Balonne Gift Cards.

The St George and District chamber of Commerce is encouraging all residents to consider gifting a Buy Balonne Gift Card to their loved ones this Christmas.

"A Buy Balonne Gift Card is as good as cash - but with the guarantee that money will be spent at a local business in the Balonne Shire," St George and District Chamber of Commerce Vice President Garnet Radford said.

"There are so many flow-on benefits from shopping locally, but the biggest one is ensuring our friends' and neighbours' businesses continue to thrive.

"A Buy Balonne Gift Card is a fantastic and thoughtful gift for those hard-to-buy-for relatives; it truly is the gift that keeps on giving."

See the full list of participating businesses on P6 (left).

Buy Balonne Gift Card

A handy how-to guide

1. Purchase the card at a participating business, and load it with your chosen amount (minimum \$20).
2. Gift to your loved ones.
3. Take your loved ones shopping at participating businesses. Make sure they bring their new Buy Balonne Gift Card!
4. Enjoy your amazing locally-purchased goods/services, and the great feeling of supporting a Balonne Shire business.

Vax check requirements for Balonne businesses

Under State Government requirements, customer vaccination checks will come into effect for businesses across Balonne Shire from Friday 17 December.

Businesses are urged to prepare now for these new Queensland COVID-19 vaccination checks.

Also, customers are asked to update the Queensland Check-in app, if fully vaccinated, have their vaccination certificate linked to the app and hence showing the tick on their phones.

Businesses are also urged to assess if their business is restricted to fully vaccinated customers and visitors.

For more, visit:

www.covid-19.qld.gov.au

As a business, you need to be aware of the difference between the "dark orange tick and maroon backgrounds" when customers and guests check in.

Let your customers know about the changes. Suggested steps are:

- display the vaccination rules at your business premises;
- ask for proof of vaccination from your customers at the time

of check-in;

- promote the requirement on your website and social media channels; and
- remind customers when they make a booking.

Council understands there will be challenges with these new requirements over coming weeks and encourages all residents to work with our business community in making the process as seamless as possible.

This is a Queensland Government requirement but the Council will help businesses understand these rules if anyone is finding it confusing.

Please contact Di Francisco, Environmental Health Coordinator, on 4620 8888.



Unite & Recover 

From 17 December proof of COVID-19 vaccination will be REQUIRED for entry to this business

Penalties for people refusing to comply are \$1,378.50

Please be kind to our staff – help keep everyone safe.

For a full list of proof of vaccination options, visit www.covid19.qld.gov.au

 Visit www.covid19.qld.gov.au/check-in-qlld/translated for information in your language.

 Queensland Government

UPDATES

BALONNE SHIRE COUNCIL | LONERGAN PROJECT SERVICES



Local Roads

Bollon Crew

- Runnymede Rd - 28 days
- Fernlee Rd - 28 days

St George Crew 1

- Balonne Hwy truck pad upgrade - 30 days
- Noondoo-Thallon Rd intersection upgrade - 30 days

St George Crew 2

- Carnarvon Hwy RMPC shoulder re-sheeting - 15 days

Dirranbandi Crew

- Jakelwar-Goodooga Rd - 20 days

Local roads crews will break for Christmas on Friday 17 December, and return to site on Tuesday 4 January.

Disaster Recovery

Teelba Rd

- Expected completion: early January

Mitchell-Bollon Rd

- Expected completion: late December

Woolerina Rd

- Expected completion: early December

Hoolavale Rd

- Expected completion: early January



Disaster Recovery works in action on Hoolavale Rd.

Completed Roads

- Cashelvale Rd
- Whyenbah Rd
- Munro Rd
- McDonald Rd
- Ian Paul Rd
- Nulky Rd
- Tambingey Rd
- Koomalah Rd
- Thompsons Rd
- Ula Ula Rd
- Castlereagh Hwy
- Runnymede Rd
- Dalkeith Rd
- Woolerbilla Rd
- Mulga Downs Rd
- Dingadee Rd
- Habnary Rd
- Kilcummin Rd
- Ramalis Rd
- Eumerella South Rd
- Davirton Rd
- Jakelwar-Goodooga Rd (north)

When will Council reach my road?

Crews' progress is governed by weather conditions, water availability, emergency repairs, and other factors outside of Council's control. Works can get delayed by rain or machinery breakdowns, or can be pushed to a later date if a site has no available water source. This update is an approximate guide to Balonne Shire roadworks.

What is Disaster Recovery

Disaster recovery roadworks include: surface correction, gravel re-sheeting, formation grading, concreting and more, to repair damage from the February 2020 severe weather event. These are proudly funded by the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

What is RMPC?

RMPC (Roads Maintenance Performance Contract) works are routine maintenance on state-owned roads. They are managed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, and the work in Balonne Shire is carried out by Council's Road Crews.

What is TIDS?

The Transport Industry Development Scheme is a state government funding program, which provides money to local governments for transport-related initiatives that support state government objectives. Those objectives include: increasing works on the local government transport network, promoting regional development and building a safe and sustainable transport system.