

Community News

FROM THE MAYOR

As we move into winter we also move into the final quarter of this current term of Council. Local Government elections will be held on Saturday, September 14, 2024. I urge anyone who is enthusiastic about what is happening in their community and representing the interests of residents to consider nominating for Council. There is a wide range of information about the election on the NSW Electoral Commission and Office of Local Government websites.

One of the most satisfying tasks as a Councillor is to see projects that positively impact the community go from inception to completion. Among projects currently underway or in the final stages of planning are:

- Pump Track at Wollombi Park
- Muswellbrook Youth Centre
- Road and drainage upgrade in Merton St, Denman
- Works Depot at the Waste Facility
- Netball courts and road upgrade at Denman Recreation Centre
- Upgrade to the Muswellbrook Town Centre
- Hunter Innovation Precinct Activation Project.

We know events are important for the community and Council is pleased to be joining forces with the Denman Chamber of Commerce in November for the *Denman Wine, Food & Film Affair*, which will bring the wine and food festival and the 2024 *Blue Heeler Film Festival* together over one extravagant weekend.

But it is not all fun! Among the many topics discussed at Council - alongside the daily business of roads, rubbish and rates - transition, diversification, provision of economic incentives to attract new industries to counter the impact of mine closures all feature large.

The mining industry continues to inject billions into the state's coffers, but historic funding pools, such as Resources for Regions, have been scrapped. These programs successfully delivered a fair return to our community to compensate for the daily impacts of mining and helped to improve local infrastructure and services.

Council has called on the NSW Government to provide certainty and guidelines around the \$350 million Regional Development Trust Fund, announced in September last year and has lobbied for the establishment of a statutory body, the Hunter Transition Authority, to support the region during unprecedented social and economic change. We will continue to call for a whole-of-region approach to ensure the ongoing prosperity of the Hunter.

A recent announcement from the government on how it is changing the way it will serve regional communities is welcome. However, we will have to wait to see how this translates for our community and how it will address the longer-term complex issues facing all regional communities.

Cr Steve Reynolds
Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire



Film added to food and wine mix for grand affair

After a six-year hiatus Denman's popular food and wine festival is back – with a twist! The multi-faceted street celebration featuring local wine, produce and providores and – here's the twist – featuring Council's world renowned Blue Heeler Film Festival, awards night and street theatre, will debut as, the Denman Wine Food & Film Affair on November 1 and 2, 2024.

Grant funding of \$150,000 from the Open Streets Program, led by Transport for NSW, has enabled a collaboration between Muswellbrook Shire Council and the Denman Chamber of Commerce to reactivate the beloved street festival, showcase cinema at the Denman Memorial Hall and promote the region's unique offerings.

More information on the Open Streets Program is available at: www.transport.nsw.gov.au/openstreets

Proudly funded by



From left: Cr De Anne Douglas OAM, Uncle Gary Wright, Cr Steve Reynolds, Uncle Richie Lawton, joined community members and invited guests for the Tarinpa Renaming Ceremony.

POPULAR RECREATION AREA RENAMED IN MOVING CEREMONY



Community members and invited guests joined together for the Tarinpa Renaming Ceremony at the former Hunter Beach, Aberdeen St, Muswellbrook. Following the Welcome to Country and didgeridoo performance, De Anne Douglas OAM – Councillor and CEO of the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council addressed guests:

Today marks a special day that recognises and honours the Wonnarua people, the people of the hills and plains, and we recognise their ancestral connections, culture, and heritage. We gather to honour a new

name for what was Hunter Beach. The site will now be called Tarinpa, which translates to "Red River Gum Tree Place" or the place of the Red River Gum Tree. This initiative recognises the importance of preserving and reviving Indigenous languages, as many are in danger of disappearing forever.

Indigenous communities are striving to re-voice their languages and are actively participating in strategies to improve the language revitalisation process and reawaken their traditional languages. Language gives people a strong sense of belonging, identity, empowerment, pride, fulfilment, and ownership, and it connects people to their culture, land, and ancestors. Using local Indigenous language in everyday community life will keep the language and culture alive.

In 2022, the Muswellbrook Shire Council, in collaboration with the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council, Wonnarua linguistics expert Aunty Sharon Edgar-

Jones, students of the Wonnarua Language program and Indigenous community members embarked on a journey to translate and rename the Hunter Beach site. This inclusive process saw many suggestions, with Tarin (Red River Gum Tree) being just one of the words beautifully translated.

The renaming of the site in Wonnarua language is not just a symbolic act, but a crucial step in preserving our local Indigenous communities' connection to their language and culture and serves as a platform for educating and raising awareness in the wider community.

It is important that we come together, respect each other, and listen to each other to continue healing our people and our nation. With initiatives such as renaming this site, we are just one step closer to reconciliation and strengthening relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, which benefits all Australians.

Condensed

Get "pumped" at Wollombi Park

A pump track is a circuit of rollers, banked turns (berms) and features designed to be ridden completely by riders "pumping" — generating momentum by up and down body movements, instead of pedalling or pushing. They provide new challenges as riders increase their skills and speed, are relatively simple to use, cater to a wide variety of rider skill levels and can be used by bike riders, skateboarders, scooters and roller bladers.

This new pump track, designed and constructed by Common Ground Trails, is the first stage of the upgrade to Wollombi Park. Common Ground Trails specialise in mountain bike trails and pump tracks, boasting a team of experienced, skilled and

talented landscape artists, urban designers and trail builders who collaborate to deliver outstanding results.

The work crews are also passionate mountain bikers and track users who aim to infuse each project with their enthusiasm. The work is exciting, fast paced, challenging and fun, enhances community well-being and helps to create outdoor enthusiasts and environmental stewards.

This project was proudly funded by the NSW Government's Places to Play Program in association with Muswellbrook Shire Council and Common Ground Trails.

The Places to Play Program helps to increase equitable access to public open space



through an investment in projects that provide for adventure, nature and water-based play activities such as mountain biking, scooter and skate places and pump tracks and supports investment in nature and water play spaces to promote recreation and connection with nature for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

COUNTRY TO THE FORE AT FILM FESTIVAL

Launched by Muswellbrook Shire Council in 2013, the Blue Heeler Film Festival has annually offered cultural opportunities to the Upper Hunter and beyond – and it's back for 2024 with the theme "Country".

Submissions are open now for the 11th annual festival, which will, this year, be combined with a rejuvenated Denman wine and food festival in a weekend-long extravaganza.

"Country" aims to inspire films that celebrate the beauty of landscapes, encompassing historical, environmental or personal dimensions and those that examine the deep cultural and spiritual connection

Indigenous people have with the land or their country.

Artwork by local artist Mat Stair, a proud Wanaruah man will take centre stage in shaping the festival and celebrating the 2024 theme. Mat's mission is to pass on expressions of Indigenous art wherever he can, and he has included elements of country and creativity in his work for the festival.

The Blue Heeler Film Festival is proudly sponsored by Bengalla Mining Company.

The 2023 award for Best Local Film went to the Warrior Disability Group while Scarlett Danswan won the Best Actor Award.



GET READY TO FOGO

Muswellbrook Shire Council is introducing a new residential Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) bin service.

What is FOGO?

FOGO stands for Food Organics and Garden Organics. It is the term used for a kerbside collection service that collects all types of organic materials, from food scraps to lawn clippings, so they can be processed into valuable, nutrient-rich compost. FOGO includes all your kitchen scraps and garden vegetation waste.

Why is Council introducing a FOGO Service?

- Muswellbrook Shire Council is introducing FOGO as part of the commitment to sustainability and reducing waste. This initiative aligns with the NSW Government's 20-year 'NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041'. Under this Strategy, all NSW councils must provide a FOGO kerbside collection service by 2030.
- Food scraps account for 37.5 percent of what goes into the average Muswellbrook Shire household's general waste bin. This food waste takes up space in your red lidded bin, and when it is disposed it takes up scarce landfill space. Additionally, food waste in landfill releases harmful greenhouse gases as it breaks down.
- Once the FOGO service commences, the green lidded bin can be used for both food and garden waste. This waste will be turned into compost, which is a valuable resource. Using the FOGO service reduces the release of greenhouse gas emissions to benefit the environment, and it also helps extend the life of landfill.

What does this mean for you?

For properties who already have a green lidded bin, leading up to the commencement of FOGO services in July 2024, you will be provided with a benchtop kitchen caddy (bin), compostable liners, and an information pack on how to use FOGO.

When FOGO commences in July 2024, all food scraps can be put into the kitchen caddy and then easily transferred into the green lidded FOGO bin.

After the commencement of FOGO, the green lidded bin will be collected every week. The

red lidded general waste bin will be collected once per fortnight. By placing all food waste into the green lidded bin from July 2024, the amount of waste in the red lidded bin will be significantly reduced. The yellow lidded recycle bin will still be collected fortnightly.

For those properties with kerbside services without a green lidded bin, from July 2024 your red lidded bin will be collected fortnightly on the opposite week to your yellow lidded recycle bin. You can request a weekly FOGO bin be added to your service (annual fees apply) if you choose. For those properties that do not receive kerbside waste collection services, nothing will change.

Need support with the FOGO service? We are here to help.

Council is currently investigating options for residents who may have concerns about navigating the new waste service.

During the transition to the new service, households with small children in nappies, residents with medical conditions and disability and large households may have some concerns around managing the service.

Council's website has lots of tips including how to reduce the amount of waste going into the red lidded bin, best use of the green lidded bin, dealing with "bin smells" and improving your recycling by learning what goes where.

If you believe you need more room, property owners may request an additional red lidded general waste bin from Council (annual fees apply). Please note, if you are a tenant of a property you will need to discuss this with your landlord.

The Frequently Asked Questions sheet provides the answers to most questions raised about the FOGO service.

What happens to the materials once they are collected?

Waste materials from the green lidded FOGO bin will initially be processed into compost by a waste contractor, until a processing facility is built in Muswellbrook. Compost is an essential part of improving soils in mining regeneration, agriculture, domestic gardens and public spaces.

Further Questions?

If you would like to know more, visit Council's website www.muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au/FOGO or scan the QR code below



Waste Hotline 800 312 933
council@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au

The NSW Government 'NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041' has more information on the state-wide transition to FOGO collections by 2030 and details the strategic actions toward reducing waste generation and environmental impact across New South Wales.

Organic matter in your FOGO bin contributes to:

- Compost that enhances soil structure and quality
- Better soil structure that prevents runoff to waterways
- Better products for local farmers to grow healthy food
- Better sporting fields, parks and gardens
- Better land rehabilitation



What is the Welcome Experience?

Muswellbrook Shire Council was one of eight pilot areas selected for the State Government-funded Welcome Experience program. Over the past 12 months the program has helped much-needed essential workers and their families move to the Shire. So far, nurses, teachers, police and ambos have been

welcomed – all important workers who support the community on a daily basis.

Council engaged Ms Katrina Kiely as its Community Connector, and she done an outstanding job in welcoming new workers to Shire and providing practical support.

While the current program expires in June, Council has submitted a tender to extend it for a further two years and expand the program

to include the Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook and Singleton shires.

To find out more about eligibility and to encourage family members who are essential workers to move to the region, visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw/makethemove/welcome-experience>



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre Winter Season (to September)

INDOOR POOL Monday-Friday 6am-7pm | Saturday 9am-4pm | Sunday 10am-4pm

FITNESS CENTRE Monday-Friday 5.30am-9pm | Saturday 8.30am-6pm | Sunday 9.30am-6pm

Denman Memorial Pool Closed for Winter Season

For information on Learn to Swim and Aqua Aerobic classes call 6549 3786

Muswellbrook Library June and re-occurring events

- JUNE 3** **Rhyme Time** for 0-3 years (and each Monday at 10am)
- JUNE 3** **Lego Club** for 6-12 years (and first & third Monday each month 3.45-4.45pm)
- JUNE 4** **Craft Group** (fortnightly at 10am)
- JUNE 4** **Circle Time** 0-6 years for music and more (fortnightly at 10am)
- JUNE 5** **Casual Crochet Crew** (fortnightly at 10am)
- JUNE 6** **Storytime and Craft** for 3-5 years (and each Thursday at 10am)
- JUNE 11** **Book Club** (and second Tuesday of each month)
- JUNE 14** **Brain Training** (and 2nd Friday of the month at 10am)
- JUNE 18** **Upper Hunter Writers Collective**

Denman Library Re-occurring events

Rhyme Time 0-3 years (every Monday at 10am)

Book Club (first Tuesday of each month)

Lego Club 6-12 years (second Wednesday of each month, 3.30-4.30pm)

Other Events

- 8 JUNE** **Household Chemical Clean out Day**
(Indoor Sports Centre, Rutherford Rd 9am-3.30pm)
- 8 JUNE** **Liddell WORKS** Artist in Residence Launch (MRAC 4pm-6pm)
- 28 JULY** **National Tree Day**
- 17 AUGUST** **Mullins Conceptual Photography Prize** (MRAC 6pm)
- 7 SEPTEMBER** **TV and Movie Nostalgia Festival** (Muswellbrook Showground 10am-4pm)
- 26 OCTOBER** **Bengalla Community Open Day** (Muswellbrook Showground 10am-2pm)
- 26 OCTOBER** **Viola Bromley Art Prize** (MRAC 6pm)
- 2 NOVEMBER** **Denman Wine Food and Film Affair** (Oglivie St, Denman)
- YEAR-ROUND** **Penguin Community Garden at the Sustainability Hub**
127/129 Sydney St, Muswellbrook
Learn and share your knowledge about how to grow healthy food using sustainable methods every first and third Sunday of the month and every second and fourth Saturday (9-11am).
Denman Community Garden
Every Monday from 9.00am-11am
Contact sustainability@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au for more information.



Contact Council

(02) 6549 3700

Council staff are available during opening hours, and a 24 hour answering service is available for urgent Council matters such as water main breaks and sewer blockages.

Muswellbrook Shire Council
Administration Centre
Campbell's Corner, 60-82 Bridge St,
Muswellbrook NSW 2333

PO Box 122, Muswellbrook NSW 2333

council@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au

www.muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au

Opening Hours

Administration Centre:

Monday to Friday 8.30am-4:00pm

Muswellbrook Waste and Recycling Facility:

Monday to Sunday 8:00am-4:00pm
(except public holidays)

Denman Waste Transfer Station:

Friday and Saturday 9:00am – 4:00pm
(except public holidays)

Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre:

Monday to Saturday 10am-4:00pm

Muswellbrook Animal Care Facility:

Open to the public by arrangement.

Contact (02) 6549 3777 for more information.