



Mayor's Ball Exceeds Fundraising Expectations

Balonne ball-goers prove they really know how to party and raise money for a great local cause.

The inaugural Balonne Mayoral Ball, which had a James Bond theme, was held at the Cultural Centre at the Hub in St George last month and exceeded fundraising expectations.

The Ball raised nearly \$45,000 for this year's beneficiary, the student bursary of the Country Universities Centre (CUC) Balonne.

Mayor Samantha O'Toole said it was a wonderful night, with 140 people attending the event.

"I'm absolutely delighted that the Mayoral Ball was such a fantastic event and that is thanks to our organising committee, which includes representatives from the community, council and the Country Universities Centre Balonne," said Mayor O'Toole.

"There was big-hearted bidding throughout the auction, which combined with generous contributions from our corporate sponsors, has given us a substantial sum of money to support local students in achieving their further education goals, without having to leave their hometown."

Including the student bursary, the event generated almost \$100,000 economic benefit to the Shire, including the use of local services and products for the event, visitor expenditure and accommodation.

Country Universities Centre Balonne manager Alix Greenhill said the aim of the organisation was to drive change in rural and remote education and empower the Balonne community to fulfil their potential through higher education, by providing highly connected learning communities in St George and Dirranbandi.

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What's On

BATTLE ON THE BALONNE TRIATHLON SERIES

Held over two days, the Battle on the Balonne Triathlon series offer a range of event categories including Olympic distance events (1.5/40/10) for individuals and teams, sprint distance events (750/20/5) for individuals and teams, the corporate, business and sporting clubs challenge (750/20/5), a junior triathlon and a 5km Fun Run. More information can be found on the Battle on the Balonne website: www.battleonthebalonne.com

WHEN: 15-16 Oct 2022

WHERE: The Terrace, St George

PODCASTING 101 WORKSHOP

Free and fun 1 hour podcasting workshop, presented by Signal Creative, covering basic sound recording techniques using free apps, interview preparation, presenting styles, creative ways to use and share sound. To register, or for more information, email CDO@balonne.qld.gov.au. Funded by the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF), a partnership between the Queensland Government and Balonne Shire Council to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland.

WHEN: 15 Nov 2022 @ 9AM

WHERE: The Hub, St George

NINDIGULLY PIG RACES

Nindigully Pub's world-famous Pig Races are held annually and attract a larger crowd every year. The day consists of live music, raffles, auctions, food, drink, fireworks, camping and, of course, pig races! This year's music line up includes Luke O'Shea, Brian Carlon, Adam Kilpatrick, Jase Lansky, Anderson Lane and Tootie Hiles. Funds raised are donated to the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Adult tickets are \$50 and can be purchased at the gate from 10am. Entry is free for children under 15. More information can be found on the Nindigully Pub website: www.nindigullypub.com

WHEN: 26 Nov 2022

Where: Nindigully Pub, Thallon

A message from the Mayor

In issue 27 of the Balonne Bulletin, Council published an article on the recommendations of the Learning Opportunities Report, commissioned by Council in response to community concerns about educational issues in the region and the impacts on attraction and retention of families in the community. On 1 September, the CEO and I met with four senior representatives of the Department of Education, including Regional Director, Leanne Wright and Assistant Director General, Liam Smith, who travelled to St George for the meeting. We are very encouraged by the response we received from the Department of Education and will continue to push for the best educational outcomes for our shire.

Since that meeting, Council has received confirmation from Education Queensland that they will be supplying additional resources to all year seven students at St George Senior High School, at the start of term four. Council is working with Education Queensland and St George SHS to pursue opportunities to develop St George SHS as an Agriculture, Water and Environment School of Excellence. Council has also offered a restorative practices behavioural management training course to all schools within the Shire, prior to the commencement of the new school year in 2023, with funding provided by Care Balonne.

We will continue to work with key stakeholders within the community, Education Queensland, and other relevant agencies, until every child feels safe and encouraged to learn and grow in our schools, and every teacher feels supported by senior leaders to deliver the best educational outcomes for our children. We will keep pushing until every child has access to learning opportunities that match or exceed the quality of education offered in bigger towns and cities.

Councillor Ian Todd resigned from Balonne Shire Council for personal reasons, at the conclusion of our September meeting. I want to thank Councillor Todd for his time serving the Balonne community and for his contributions during his time as a councillor, he was actively involved in many projects, including the Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Scheme, the St George Pump Station build, the development of the St George Library and establishment of Country Universities Centre Balonne.

A by-election to fill the vacancy in the office of a councillor in the Balonne Shire will be announced by the Electoral Commission Queensland. Voting will most likely be by postal ballot that will be managed by the Electoral Commission Queensland. Council will update the community as soon as this information becomes available.

I am absolutely delighted that we were able to exceed our fundraising expectations at the inaugural Mayoral Ball, held in August this year. There was big-hearted bidding throughout the auction, which combined with generous contributions from our corporate sponsors, has raised nearly \$45,000 for this year's beneficiary, the student bursary of the Country Universities Centre (CUC) Balonne. Including the student bursary, the event generated almost \$100,000 economic benefit to the Shire, including the use of local services and products for the event, visitor expenditure and accommodation. Planning has already begun to make the 2023 ball a huge success and more details will be released in early 2023.

Samantha O'Toole

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

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“We are extremely grateful for the amazing sponsors, organisers, and attendees of the 2022 Balonne Mayoral Ball,” she said.

“Their generosity affords students at CUC Balonne with quality opportunities to pursue their dreams without having to relocate, while creating vibrant and more prosperous futures for themselves and the wider community.”

Gold sponsors for the 2022 Balonne Mayoral Ball included AH & JH Earthmoving, Field Solutions Group, Leading Roles, Lonergan Projects and O’Brien Toyota. Silver sponsors were Safeway Excavations and Tierney Crushing & Transport. The St George Cotton Growers Association were bronze sponsors. Sponsors have been presented with certificates of appreciation for their support.

Planning has already begun to make the 2023 ball a huge success and more details will be released in early 2023.

Below & Below Left: The Australian Army Band Brisbane provided the soundtrack to dance the night away.



Tourism Events Grants Opening 1 November

The next round of the Balonne Shire Council’s popular Tourism Events Grant is opening on 1 November.

Council offers a series of Tourism Events Grants to support event organisers in developing, promoting and executing events which contribute to growing tourism in the

St George Region.

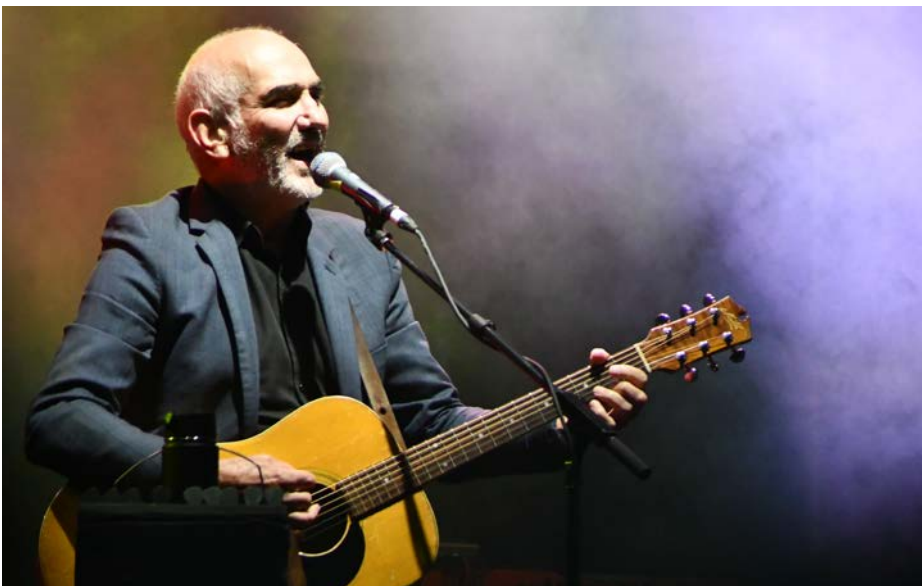
Tourism events are an important and growing part of our local economy and add to the vibrancy of our region. Council’s Tourism Events Grants provide funding for events which have the potential to attract a significant number of visitors to the Balonne Shire.

Priority will be given to events which increase visitation to the Balonne Shire, generate positive media coverage, and stimulate the local economy.

Examples of past funded events include:

- St George 399, St George (Major Event)
- Paul Kelly & Friends Concert, Dirranbandi (Major Event)
- Dragon Country Sandgreen Cup, St George (Destination Event)
- Thallon Truck Pull, Thallon (Regional Event)
- Easter in the Vines, St George (Regional Event)
- Can’t Help Falling in Love, Dirranbandi (Regional Event)

The program provides a tiered range of grants to support event organisers to develop, promote and host events which make a pos-



GRAND OPENING: Paul Kelly performing at the Dirranbandi Paul Kelly & Friends Concert, a previous recipient of the Major Event Grant.

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Looking for information about road closures?

Balonne Shire Council has several ways that residents and visitors can find out the latest information about road closures and river heights during flood events or other emergency situations.

The fastest way to find this information is to go to Council's Emergency Dashboard. This online resource contains the latest road closures and links to other useful sites, like the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), Department of Transport and Queensland Health.

You can also opt-in to the emergency situation alerts here, which will alert all people in the area of a key emergency message.

The News section of Council's website and Facebook page is also updated with the most current situation to help residents and travellers understand which roads have been impacted by flood waters, or other dangers.

For residents who are unable to access the Emergency Dashboard they can access information as follows:

- Visit any Council library
- Visit Council's administration centre
- Look for the notices on the noticeboards in each town
- Phone Council offices 07-4620 8888 (24/7 service)

If there is an emergency, an alert will go to your home phone or mobile phone without needing to subscribe. This is reserved for times when we need to alert all people in the area of a key emergency message. You do not need to do anything to receive these alerts. Emergency Services may also do a doorknock to inform residents in certain areas of any required actions.

Council works with Queensland Health, Queensland Police, Queensland Ambulance Services, Queensland Fire & Emergency



A banner with a dark teal background. At the top center is a red triangular warning sign with a white exclamation mark. Below the sign, the text "ROAD UPDATES" is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Underneath that, "CHECK ROAD CONDITIONS BEFORE TRAVELLING" is written in smaller white capital letters. At the bottom, "IF IT'S FLOODED, FORGET IT." is written in white capital letters. A red horizontal bar at the very bottom contains the text "IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL 000." on the left and the Balonne Shire Council logo on the right.

Services, State Emergency Services and services such as Red Cross and Care Balonne.

If you need assistance in an emergency (like evacuation) then you can talk to your doctor or home and community care provider at your next appointment, so they are aware of your needs. At our Local Disaster Management meetings, we are then able to prioritise those in need in an emergency.

Remember to talk to your neighbours or family members who may be able to access the Emergency Dashboard for you and to also let them know if you need help so they can look out for you.

If you are aware of an elderly person, someone with English as a second language, or special needs in your neighbourhood, consider checking on them when we are issuing flood messages to see if they are okay.



A banner with a teal background. On the left, there is a circular logo for "St George Region" with "Queensland's southern gateway" written below it. The text "Tourism Event Grants" is written in large, white, sans-serif font. Below this, it says "Round 3 opens 1 November and closes on 1 December 2022." and "Applicants will be notified in January 2023." At the bottom, the URL "www.balonne.qld.gov.au/homepage/89/tourism-events-grant-funding-program" is provided. On the right side, there are three small images: a man playing an acoustic guitar, a dune buggy driving on a dirt track, and a group of people standing next to a classic car.

Landowners on High Alert for African Boxthorn

Exceptional seasonal conditions and good growing conditions have led to an increased presence of African Boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*) within the Balonne Shire.

African Boxthorn is a thorny bush which restricts the movement of humans and most animals. As summer approaches the weed is easily recognised by its prolific red berries.

Birds spread the plant's seeds, usually depositing them under trees. As plants grow, they take over the shaded area, denying access to livestock, and creating the perfect harbour for feral animals.

Balonne Shire Council will be undertaking control of African Boxthorn on stock routes.

All landowners and managers are urged to be on the lookout and remain vigilant in the control of this highly restricted Category 3 Woody Weed. Under the Biosecurity Act 2014 all landholders have a "general Biosecurity obligation" to take all reasonable and practicable measures to minimise Biosecurity risks.

Control methods may be manual, mechanical or by herbicide. If you choose herbicide be sure to select the right herbicide and read the label well for application rates and safety.

African Boxthorn has been declared as a Weed of National Significance (WoNS) due to its potential to spread further and its economic, environmental and social impact. The declaration highlights the need for landowners and managers to renew their weed control commitments, particularly for widespread weeds that display these qualities. This will help protect primary production industries in our region and our natural environment.

Further information is available

on the Business Queensland website, or by contacting Kevin Fontaine, Rural Services and Compliance, at Balonne Shire Council on (07) 4620 8888.



Above: As summer approaches, African Boxthorn is easily recognised by its prolific red berries.

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itive and ongoing contribution to the Shire.

Funding is available across four (4) categories for pre-existing Shire events:

- Regional Events (up to \$3,000)
- Destination Events (up to \$4,000)
- Major Events (up to \$7,000)
- Hallmark Events (up to \$10,000)
- New Event Development (one-off, up to \$3,000)

Round 3 opens on 1 November and closes on 1 December with applicants notified in January 2023. The assessment process is competitive; applications will be assessed on merit against the selection criteria outlined in the funding policy. Note that all event applications must be submitted a minimum of six months before the event occurs.

For further information please phone Council on 4620 8888 or check our website at [Tourism Events Grant Funding Program – Balonne Shire Council](#).

For the People
Balonne
Shire Council

It's time for a
**SPRING
CLEAN UP**

**COUNCIL WILL BE CONDUCTING REGULAR COMMUNITY
AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PATROLS**

Compliance notices will be issued to owners of land containing potential community safety hazards, including hazards that:

- have the potential to attract vermin
- could cause personal injury or property damage
- have a negative impact on the amenity of the surrounding area.

Please take some time this month to:

- ensure grass is not excessively long
- remove debris and unused items
- check your home and property for potential mosquito breeding sites (tip out, wipe out, or dry out items that can hold water).

Compliance officers do not enter private properties during patrols.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE AND HEALTHY!

Long-awaited Sculpture Trail opens in Mungindi

Mungindi's long-awaited Sculpture Trail officially opened on Sunday 18 September, the culmination of over two years of work by the community, the family of the artist who created the sculptures and two local government organisations from different sides of the Queensland / New South Wales border.

Featuring ten raw and rustic sculptures by award-winning local artist Tony 'Nicko' McMillan, who tragically died at 54 years of age in 2016, the trail delivers a new perspective on art and nature.

Katherine McMillan said she and her husband Nicko had a beautiful life together in Mungindi.

"Mungindi was in his blood. Nicko loved making sculptures and sharing his love of art. You'll be in awe of what this man could do. He had a sixth sense when it comes to art, he could make something out of virtually nothing."

The 2.5km Mungindi Sculpture Trail is an open-air art gallery that uniquely crosses the Queensland / New South Wales border in two spots.

Nicko's family has generously donated the sculptures to the Mungindi community, while a collaborative approach by the Mungindi Progress Association, the Moree Plains Shire Council and Balonne Shire Council followed through to pay tribute to Nicko and showcase the sculptures for everyone's enjoyment.

The Balonne Shire Council utilised funding from the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program to deliver the project, which saw a number of challenges thrown up over the two years of planning.

Balonne Shire Council Mayor Samantha O'Toole said the community had faced some difficult times since the beginning of the project.

"The community had been dealing with the effects of a long drought which was then followed by a flood in February 2020. While heavy rainfall eased drought conditions, it also created new challenges. Floodwaters cut off important transport routes and isolated some residents for weeks or months at a time," said the mayor.

"COVID-19 also created some serious issues for this border town during the height of border closures, then a fire struck in 2020, destroying buildings in the retail heart of the town on the southern side of the town, leaving the butcher, grocery store and haberdashery shop without a place to operate from. The impacts of continuing floods are still being felt by this community.

This opening event has been a much-needed celebration for Mungindi, and this incredible artwork will brighten both town and spirits."

The opening began at Barwon Park Main Street, Mungindi, on the NSW side of the border, followed by a guided tour of the trail led by Nicko's family. It concluded with a community celebration in the park to acknowledge Nicko's gift to his beloved Mungindi.

The Cross-Border Mungindi Sculpture River Walk project was funded by the Australian Government under the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program.



Above (L - R): Balonne Shire Mayor Samantha O'Toole, Byron, Trinity, Katherine & Tony McMillan, Moree Plains Shire Mayor Mark Johnson.



Rates Reminder

Extended discount period ends
5pm 17 October 2022

Payment options are listed on your rates notice and can be made in person, by mail, BPay or credit card.

Interest free payment plans can be arranged and agreed by contacting Council.

Contact Council on (07) 4620 8888 or email rates@balonne.qld.gov.au for more information.



Balonne won't Back Down on Better Learning Opportunities

In issue 27 of the Balonne Bulletin, Balonne Shire Council published an article on the recommendations of the Learning Opportunities Report, commissioned by Council in response to community concerns about educational issues in the region and the impacts on attraction and retention of families in the community.

Over 140 people participated in the community consultation process, the overwhelming majority of whom recognised the high quality of teachers within all schools across the Shire. However, many respondents felt there were continuing issues with poor school attendance, behavioural issues not being addressed and students, parents and family becoming disengaged.

On 1 September, Balonne Shire Mayor Samantha O'Toole and CEO Matthew Magin met with four senior representatives of the Department of Education, including Regional Director, Leanne Wright and Assistant Director General, Liam Smith, who travelled to St George for the meeting.

Mayor O'Toole said she was pleased that Council and the Department were now working together towards a positive outcome for students, teachers and the wider community.

"We are very encouraged by the response we received from the Department of Education and will continue to push for the best educational outcomes for our shire," she said.

"For me, that means continuing to push until every child feels safe and encouraged to learn and grow in our schools, that every teacher enjoys going to work and feels supported by senior leaders to deliver the best educational outcomes for our children. We will keep pushing until every parent and carer feels their children have access to learning opportunities that match or exceed the quality of education received in bigger towns and cities."

Council has received confirmation from Education Queensland that they will be supplying additional resources to all year seven students at St George Senior High School, at the start of term four. Council is working with Education Queensland and St George SHS to pursue opportunities to develop St George SHS as an Agriculture, Water and Environment School of Excellence. Council has also offered a restorative practices behavioural management training course to all schools within the Shire, prior to the commencement of the new school year in 2023, with funding provided by Care Balonne.

In their September meeting, Council considered all recommendations of the report and resolved to adopt them unanimously. Council also clarified its role to work with key stakeholders within the community, Education Queensland, and other relevant agencies, to support and advocate for the implementation of the recommendations and assist in identifying funding required to implement the report.

*Olympic Individual
Olympic Team
Sprint Individual
Sprint Team
Kids Triathlon
Enticer Tri*

Proudly supported by:

Battle on the Balonne
15th - 16th October 2022
Come and experience The Best of the West!

Awesome Prize money
1st prize
Olympic Individual
\$750

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Register at:
www.battleonthebalonne.com

Balonne Shire Council and Signal Creative present

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9AM AT THE HUB
ST GEORGE

NOVEMBER 15

TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
CDO@balonne.qld.gov.au

The Regional Arts Development Fund RADF is a partnership between the Queensland Government and Balonne Shire Council to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland



Friends of the Hub

Every Monday
9:45am - 12:00pm

Friends of The Hub (incorporating the St George Library, the Cultural Centre and the Country University Centres Balonne) meet socially every Monday at the St George Library.

This is a great opportunity to meet with library staff and fellow Friends of the Hub to socialise and connect, over a cuppa.

Pop in to say hello and find out more about the group's activities.

Contact the library for more information on 07 4625 8879