

### President's Message

With the wet weather that has been around this February, people may be forgiven for forgetting that we still face a very real threat of bushfire. As of 22 February the prohibited burning period is downgraded to restricted.

Restricted still means that people with properties of 2000m square or less are still not permitted to burn without a permit. Larger properties may now burn small loads between 6pm and 11pm without a permit. Please continue to take care and respect burning restrictions, if you are unsure, please contact the Shire office.

The Australia Day activities and opening of the new swan breeding enclosure were a great success. I'd like to extend a special congratulations to award winners, the Bakers Hill Volunteer Fire Brigade, Anne Christmass and Elma Rewell plus the winners of the regional centre awards coordinated by the Progress Associations. Our Shire is fortunate indeed to have so many people prepared to volunteer their time to help others.

Council currently has some proposed changes to local laws in regard to Dogs and Cemeteries open for public comment until 20 March. More information can be found by contacting the Shire office or via the website, [www.northam.wa.gov.au](http://www.northam.wa.gov.au)

On February 12 I spent a thoroughly enjoyable Sunday morning at the launch of community consultation for the Bakers Hill Community Plan 2017-2027. The Wishing Well, built by the Wundowie & Districts Men's Shed is absolutely amazing, such skill and creativity this group has. I've no doubt that the Well is destined to be an important piece of public art, celebrating the town's history as a major eastern transport link. I saw some great ideas for the town's future being put forward on the day which augers very well for a quality Plan. I look forward to seeing this project progress over the next few months

Also on the subject of planning, the Council held their first workshop for the Review of our principal planning document, the Strategic Community Plan 2012 -2022, during February. Community consultation is starting in earnest now and Council hopes that you will participate by telling us what the Shire needs over the next five years.

The Aboriginal and Environmental Interpretive Centre has taken a significant step forward with Council agreeing at a special meeting on 2 February to award FIRM Construction the building tender for the facility. Construction is expected to commence in the coming weeks.

### Bakers Hill Community Plan

The official launch of the Bakers Hill Community Plan consultation process was held on 12 February, at the Bakers Hill Rec Centre.

Approximately 75 residents attended enjoying a free BBQ Brunch and plenty of activities to keep the children occupied.

The Baker's Wishing Well sculpture created by the Wundowie & districts Men's Shed was unveiled with residents being invited to complete the words "Bakers will be better if...." on golden coins to place in the well.

The Well is made from a piece of the Golden Pipeline and railway track from the now decommissioned Eastern Rail Link, capturing the town's history as a major transport link.

A time capsule has been created to store the coins for the 10 year life of the Plan, to be opened in 2027.

The Wishing Well is currently moving around key places in the town to provide more opportunity for residents to place their wishes for the town in the Well.

Surveys have also been released with extra copies available at the Service Station and Hardware. They can also be completed online by heading to <https://tinyurl.com/BakersHillSurvey>

You can also have your say on the Shire of Northam Website [www.northam.wa.gov.au/your-say-northam/](http://www.northam.wa.gov.au/your-say-northam/)



### Aboriginal Trainees Finding Their Feet in Engineering Services

The Shire is currently working with trainees David Slater and Jared Wynne to enrol them in traineeships of their choice after both young men successfully completed a three month probation within the Engineering Services team.

During their probation the two 18 year olds have been rotating through different roles to assist them to decide on a preferred course of study. Options include construction, horticulture, reticulation and more.

The young men graduated from Northam Senior high School in December last year and joined the Shire through a collaborative initiative with Clontarf.

While both have potentially promising careers in football before them, they have embraced the opportunity for Shire traineeships with dedication and enthusiasm.

Already they have attained their white cards, completed chainsaw and wood chipper training and will soon undertake training in traffic control and EWP.

In a short time they have proven themselves to be valuable members of the works team. The Shire looks forward to supporting them over the coming years.

### Shire of Northam Community Grants - Open

The Shire's annual Community Grants Round 1 opened 13 February this year, closing 13 April 2017.

Community not-for-profits, sporting groups and schools can apply for funding of up to \$5,000 for events and/or projects.

Community Project Grants can include equipment purchase, facility development and community based projects or programmes. Priority will be placed on projects that promote skill development, enhance safety or increase participation and inclusion.

Community Events Grants can be for festivals, networking functions and activities that demonstrate significant reach and benefit, promote social inclusion, and encourage partnerships and collaboration in the community.

The Shire also offers Club Sponsorship Grants of up to \$500 to assist sport and recreation groups to hosting club events or competitions. These grants are simple to apply for and can be very useful for getting planned activities across the line.

These grants are only offered once per year so it is important for clubs, groups and schools to plan ahead and prioritise.

Throughout the year the Council also offers Quick Response Grants of up to \$500. These grants are to support innovative responses to community needs either as a whole or for specific target groups such as children, youth, seniors. These are suited to capturing opportunities that arise at short notice or for short term projects that require a quick response. Applicants receive a decision within six weeks of receipt of their application.

All Shire grant applications are assessed against the criteria pertaining to the type of grant they apply for. Further information, grant guidelines and application forms are available from Community Development Officer Michelle Blackhurst on 9266 6100 or download at [www.northam.wa.gov.au/funding-opportunities.aspx](http://www.northam.wa.gov.au/funding-opportunities.aspx)

### Drum Muster - 8 March 2017

Round them up, rinse them out and run them in the Drum Muster is on again 8 March 2017.

The drum muster is aimed at recycling clean and dry drums from growers, farmers and chemical users throughout Australia. Eligible containers are those with the Drum Muster logo. They must be clean, that is triple rinsed or cleaned with high pressure and left with lids off to dry.

Once the containers are received, they are crushed or shredded and transformed into practical items such as plastic cable covers, wheelie bins, bollards and irrigation pipes. More information is available from the Drum Muster website [www.drummuster.org.au](http://www.drummuster.org.au).

The drums can be delivered to the Old Quarry Road landfill site in Northam.

To be allocated a time to deliver your drums, please contact Susan Burley on 9622 6113 with your number of drums.

### Bushfire Volunteer of the Month Dec 2016 Gail James

Gail James has been a member of the Inkpen Volunteer Bushfire Brigade since the 1980's during this time she has housed the Inkpen 2.4 and before that the old International 2.4 Alpha in her shed.

Each time the fire truck returned from fire in filthy condition Gail would without fail get down to the task of cleaning it until it was in pristine condition. She would drive her ute down to the service station with a 44 gallon drum on the back to refuel the fire truck with and make sure the truck was always ready to be rolled out of the shed should another call be put out for fire fighters.

Over the years in the Northam and surrounding shires she has willingly made herself available. Gail is dependable, honest, hardworking and a much admired team player, Gail's sense of duty is something we in the Inkpen community will always be extremely grateful for.

Many times brigade members have climbed into a clean, fuelled up truck and murmured "Thank you Gail".

Gail's dedication to the IVBFB has set an ideal example and we hope the newest brigade members will look to her example to steer them into selflessly volunteering their time in fighting bushfires and supporting our community.

The Shire of Northam and the community thanks you for your efforts

### Northam Shire - Where to 2022?

The review of the Shire's principal planning document, the Strategic Community Plan 2012-2022 is underway.

Council had their first workshop on 8 February 2017. In March there will be a series of workshops held with invited stakeholders as well as surveys available online and through postal drops.

This is an important opportunity to have your say and influence Council decision making. It's your chance to let Council know where you believe they should be focussing on, for example, on roads and verges or mainstreet development.

The Review is expected to be completed in June 2017.

### Wundowie Community Plan

The final Plan has now been endorsed by Council and will be launched to the community 1 March 2017.

The Wundowie Wishing Tree, 2m wrought iron sculpture created by the Men's Shed is currently being permanently placed in the central business district as piece of public art.

The leaves that community members used to complete the sentence 'I wish Wundowie...' are sealed in a time capsule intended for opening at the end of the 10 year plan in 2026.

The plan itself is available on the Shire website [www.northam.wa.gov.au](http://www.northam.wa.gov.au)