

HOME HILL NEWS

Greetings from the Home Hill Business Community - No. 56, May 2020

Home Hill's unique Anzac Day



Honouring a scaled back Anzac Day at the Home Hill Cenotaph were (from left) Ron Clive, Richard Kelly, Allan Petersen and Uli Liessmann

THE Coronavirus did not stop the Home Hill community from recognising Anzac Day 2020, with a scaled back service held at the town's Cenotaph with lim-



Burdekin Brass Band member, Raymond Petersen played The Last Post at the Home Hill service

ited numbers present, while large numbers of individuals, couples and families took their places at the entrance to their local driveways to remember those who had participated in conflicts at Gallipoli and throughout the world since that time.

The Home Hill Sub-Branch of the RSL was keen to ensure some form of service took place in the town, despite COVID-19 forcing the cancellation of normal Anzac Day commemorations.

President Richard Kelly said he had contacted the Home Hill Police with regard to the RSL's desire to hold a service with up to four of their members present and the Police were happy with the



Vietnam ex-servicemen, Robert (Red) Marriott (left) assisted by RSL Sub-Branch President, Richard Kelly placed wreaths at the Home Hill Cenotaph

service proceeding with only the four attending.

A representative of the Health Department also gave approval as long as wreaths were placed two at a time. The plans came to fruition with the four local ex-servicemen taking part in the short service, which included the playing of *The Last Post* and *Reveille* and the *National Anthem* by Bur-

dekin Brass Band member, Raymond Petersen and the laying of wreaths by most of those present.

The service, however, drew further support as other

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(Turn to Page 5 for "Jetty Jottings" with Jeanette Garvey's report on activities at Groper Creek including their Anzac Day celebrations.)

OUR congratulations to the Home Hill community for their support for the innovative Light Up The Dawn Service, which honoured Anzac Day this year. In fact, the show of support by residents standing at the entrance to their residential driveways could easily catch on in future years, with or without a pandemic, especially if people are unable to make it to planned town commemorations. The sounds of *The Last Post* echoed around the town, Poppies of all shapes and sizes were prominent, candles were lit and students dressed proudly in their school uniforms as they joined their families in honouring those who had participated in conflicts around the world—with many paying the supreme sacrifice. Even though numbers have been high in recent years, it could be suggested that the numbers out in driveways this year could be more than in normal services in those recent years.

WE hope the council is not encouraging people to go to Ayr to shop, with their latest plans for a Click, Call and Collect initiative, which apparently allows “Burdekin residents” to either reserve library items over the phone or by using the Burdekin Library online catalogue and then pick the items up as part of a trip to collect “essential items such as groceries”. With national authorities encouraging residents to avoid “non-essential travel”, why is it that the initiative is not available to Home Hill residents through the Home Hill Library? A phone call to the council offers advice that it is only available at the Ayr Library. The council says they “offer this service while adhering to National Cabinet directions”, but how can that be if they want Home Hill residents to go to Ayr in what would be non-essential travel to pick up a book and “not make a special trip to collect items, but to incorporate book collection into planned trips for necessities such as groceries or medication”. With those products available in Home Hill, it obviously would be a

The finer points of Home Hill . .



THE Burdekin Shire Council has not won many friends for its decision to close off the Home Hill Comfort Stop (pictured) completely to all users, as part of the overall shutdown associated with the Coronavirus Pandemic. Barriers were put in place to prevent anyone—local residents or visitors alike—from using the facilities as part of ongoing efforts to control the spread of the worldwide disease in this area. There would be no argument with the shutdown preventing the use of the barbecues and showers, with the parking along Railway Avenue at the back of the Comfort Stop also having access prevented through barriers at all entrances. However, why would all the toilet facilities be closed down when other such facilities, both locally and around the country, are still in use—with precautions to allow cleaning by visitors before and after use? Couldn't the Comfort Stop toilets be left open and the others at each end of town closed, especially with travellers using the CBD also shopping in the town. Toilet facilities at each end of town (E.W. Ford Park and the Lions Park) both remained open to the public, but the toilets at the Comfort Stop offer benefits for both the users and the economically-hit local businesses when travellers stop over. And with the Comfort Stop being well known throughout the nation by grey nomads, they have shown their desire to continue using the facilities with phone calls to the Chamber of Commerce asking if the parking area and the Comfort Stop were still open. We had to advise that they were not!

“special” trip.

We don't believe the new council could have been involved in the decision because they had only just started taking their positions at the council table—but hopefully one of their early debates will be to look at this imbalance in decision making and ensure such decisions are of benefit to all shire residents and local businesses on both sides of the river.

The council's position should not be to encourage people to shop in one particular area.

AT LEAST the town's only traffic lights were playing a part in getting travellers to stop in the town recently, as a technical fault resulted in the red lights stopping motorists at least once every minute for some time, without anyone having to push the button to allow pedestrians to cross the highway.

And it was the pedestrians who made sure the fault was recorded as the problem was reported to nearby shops, who in turn passed the problem on to the Main Roads Department.

A case of motorists and pedestrians working together to ensure a free flow of traffic through

the town.

THE Home Hill Harvest Festival committee could do itself a marketing favour by placing prominent signs in Lloyd Mann Park explaining the reason for the prominent signs that are now permanent placements in the park.

During the Festival's popular Canefields Ephemera in recent years, additions to the park include a question mark, a half-opened can of sardines and a white arrow pointing into the ground—with former Festival President John Woods pointing out that they were to “lift Home Hill and promote the positive side of the town”. However, it seems that the message should be placed on signage in the Park, as apparently visitors passing through town are querying why the Ephemera signs are actually in place.

A call into “Google” can easily bring up questions from varying travellers seeking the reasons behind the unique signage, The Festival could do itself a huge favour and enhance its marketing by including a sign in Lloyd Mann Park explaining why the signs exist and help pass on the message to our visitors.

- DAVID JACKSON

Inkerman leads the way into crushing season

DESPITE some “extra challenges” created for Wilmar Sugar by the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, Inkerman Mill at Home Hill will lead the way in commencing the crushing season for the four Wilmar Sugar Mills in the Burdekin District, with the start date set for Tuesday, June 2, 2020.

Wilmar Sugar’s Burdekin Regional Operations Manager, Paul Turnbull said they were planning to start the crushing season at Home Hill, with the other three mills at Invicta, Pioneer and Kalamia expected to start a week later on Tuesday, June 9.

“We expect to process about 1.76 million tonnes of cane at Inkerman Mill this season – slightly up on last year’s total throughput of 1.74 million tonnes,” Mr Turnbull said.

“This year’s total Burdekin crop is also up on last year’s at 8.04 million tonnes of cane.”

One of the major maintenance season projects for Inkerman Mill this year is a new \$2.6 million secondary air system which, the Operations Manager said, supplies air for combustion into the mill’s main boiler.

“The steam is used as heat for factory processes and to drive the turbines that generate the electrical power on site.

“We’ve also refurbished number one cooling tower and upgraded the switch room powering the number two cooling tower,” he said.

“The B shredder will have a new

rotor installed and we are carrying out general maintenance to improve the reliability of the mill.”

Referring to the COVID-19 outbreak, Mr Turnbull said they had implemented strict guidelines to protect the health and well-being of their people.

“We’ve also re-prioritised projects to make sure mill critical jobs are completed early,” he commented.

“The business has boosted labour force hours allocated to maintenance and capital works now, instead of at the end of the maintenance season, to get ahead of our works program.

“Because of our in-house manufacturing capacity and capabilities, we are able to make a number of the parts and components that we otherwise may have had trouble sourcing from overseas.”

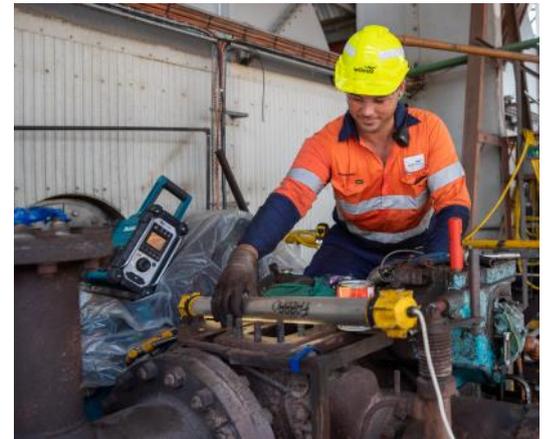
Mr Turnbull said they were in the final stages of hiring more than 270 seasonal workers for the Burdekin and they were confident they would be ready to



Wilmar’s Peter Daley and Tom Johnson working on the replacement secondary air system for Inkerman Mill.

start the season in June.

“Commissioning in the lead up to steam trials commences on May 5 and steam trials are planned to fall in the week of May 18,” he said.



Fitter and turner Jason Fabbro carrying out some maintenance work at Inkerman Mill.

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New President and Life Membership recognition

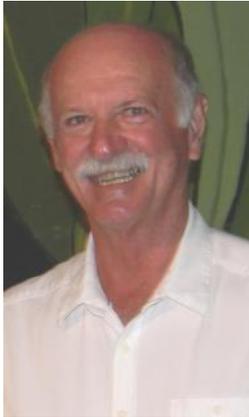
THE Home Hill Choral Society is moving forward positively despite the current COVID-19 lockouts, with a new president elected and two long-serving couples recognised with Life Membership of the organisation.

The recent annual meeting of the Society resulted in Robert Antoniazzi being elected to lead the organisation into the next year, while the former President, Erin Brennan is now Vice President.

Erin Alloway is the Secretary and Christine Grimbaldston is the Society's Treasurer.

The most recent meeting was held via Zoom, bringing members together, despite the need to keep groups segregated.

Life Membership was bestowed on two couples who have had a long association with the Home Hill Choral Society, Ross and Jenny Clive and Bill and Betty Lucas. Jenny Clive joined the Society when she was 16 and apart from



New Choral Society President, Robert Antoniazzi.

12 years in Townsville after they were married, she has always been active in the choir.

Jenny has always been active in the music side of the shows and has performed in all presentations, as well as holding the position of Treasurer for 12 years.

Ross was always active in the Society with the provision of electrical work through his role as a registered electrician, while also being involved in making the many props for productions over the years.

Ross joined the choir in the mid 2000s and was noted for his tenor voice.

Bill and Betty Lucas joined the choir in 1966, only because their children were in Nancy Martin's choir at the time, so they believed they might as well join the adult choir.

Bill held the position of President for 15 years and became well known for his recitations of Australian Bush Poetry, for which he has won countless awards at Eisteddfods over many years.

He would often perform his



Ross and Jenny Clive



Betty and Bill Lucas

poetry as part of Society productions and was always well received. Up until recently, they were always in every production the Choral Society has presented and they were very involved with all aspects of the Society's shows.

Elected councillors move into new roles

THE new Burdekin Shire Councillors for the next four-year term of office were sworn in on Tuesday morning, April 14, in an event with a closed public gallery, but livestreamed to the community online. The move came as the council endeavoured to reduce the risks associated with COVID-19 while allowing families and friends to watch the new councillors take their oath of office.

The public will now be able to view meeting proceedings as they occur over coming months from any desktop or mobile device. Burdekin Shire Council CEO Terry Brennan said the change would allow the community to still stay connected to Council meeting procedures while ensuring social distancing was followed.

"Holding Council meetings is fundamental to the running of the Shire, so being innovative and finding a way to hold them that still gives the public access to view the proceedings live was a really

important step in transparency while doing our part to slow the spread of COVID-19," Mr Brennan said.

"Council's Chambers have been carefully measured to ensure our Mayor, Councillors, Directors and Records Clerk all adhere to social distancing measures during meetings.

"We will continue to monitor National Cabinet directions and recommendations from the Queensland Chief Health Officer to determine if any further changes to procedures need to occur in the future."

The newly elected Burdekin Shire Council consists of (in alphabetical order) Mayor Lyn McLaughlin, and Councillors Kaylee Bocalatte, John Bonanno, Michael Detenon, John Furnell, Max Musumeci and Sue Perry.

The Home Hill Chamber of Commerce has been advised that Cr John Bonanno will represent the Council at chamber meetings.

Greater appreciation of our natural attractions

(With Jeannette Garvey)

LOCALS are gaining a greater appreciation for the Burdekin's natural attractions, thanks to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Groper Creek Caravan Park is always solidly booked from April through to September and the normally festive Easter long weekend at the creek was sadly a non-event in 2020.

Ayr ANZAC Fishing Club members had to call off their planned April fishing weekend, which meant cancellation of the Home Hill Boat Club's two units and 12 caravan sites.

We look forward to welcoming them back "reel" soon.

We are confident that once travel bans are lifted, there will be convoys of happy post-corona caravanners heading our way.

The majority have got the message that holidays are off, but despite all the coverage on COVID-19, there are a minority who don't seem to understand that Groper Creek Caravan Park is not open to holidaymakers.

We have been working closely with Burdekin Shire Council and Home Hill Police with regards to essential travel rulings and social distancing. Our occupancy rate is down by 90

per cent - we have permanent residents in the park who have been here for months. Some are unable to return to their homes or live in their caravans; and some are essentially travelling for work. We'd love nothing better than to have a full house – but unfortunately for now, holidays are deemed non-essential travel.

The Groper Creek Reserve has never looked better – the grass hasn't stopped growing and Manager Dan has been flat out on the mower and working on community improvements. Groper Creek's playground and barbecue areas are also closed for now, but the two boat ramps are open for those essentially heading out to feed their families with some good catches being reported. Bicycle riders regularly trek out from Home Hill and other exercisers call in for a warm-down after climbing Mt Inker-

man.

Groper Creek's playground and barbecue areas are also closed for now, but the two boat ramps are open for those essentially heading out to feed their families with some good catches being reported.

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The birdlife is abundant and there is plenty of open space for people to walk and take in the tranquillity during these troubling times.

Relaxation of restrictions has also now allowed family and friends to drive down and picnic, while still adhering to the social distancing rules.

ANZAC Day was commemorated at Groper Creek for the first time, with locals and visitors Lighting Up the Dawn.

Private driveway vigils took place and a wreath was laid at the community flagpole in front of the jetty as a mark of respect to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Lest We Forget.

A wreath was laid at the community flagpole in front of the jetty at Groper Creek.



RIGHT— Siblings, Eli and Isla Wilkie with their home-made ANZAC decorations in their driveway. Caretakers Jeanette and Dan Garvey believe they could have started a tradition there "as I'm sure there will be a regular service from now on when we can all come together - it's actually a fabulous spot at the front as the sun comes up over the jetty".



Community backing for The First Day

unique Anzac services

Continued from Page 1
residents and family members stopped to watch, resulting in over 20 being present and they ensured social distancing was strictly observed. Mr Kelly said he was very happy with the end result, as they were able to hold the service while also ensuring they obeyed the requirements which included how the wreath laying was carried out. As well, throughout

the community, large numbers of people rose early to participate by standing at the front of their driveways for the North Queensland led recognition of Anzac Day. And most highlighted their presence with flags and candles, home-made poppies and Anzac memorabilia and had a specially-produced app or local radio stations playing *The Last Post*.



THIS contributed drawing, entitled "First Day" is certainly relevant to recent daily activities, with the first day of the new term of office for the recently-elected Burdekin Shire Council and some of our school students returning to their new first day of a new school term.

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Containing the Coronavirus

RESIDENTS of the Home Hill region have been urged to continue obeying all regulations associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic as governments of all levels work towards getting lives back to some form of normality. With those regulations continually changing, the Burdekin Shire Council, State Member for Burdekin Dale Last and Federal Member for Dawson, George Christensen have all encouraged the community to continue to follow all basic rules to help contain the pandemic. The Burdekin Race Club has been severely affected by the changes forced on them by the Coronavirus with their April Race Meeting abandoned under a directive of Racing Queensland and the decision having been made previously for the cancellation of the Burdekin Growers Race Day in May.

The Home Hill Chamber of Commerce acknowledges and appreciates the support of Wilmar Sugar's Inkerman Mill with the printing of the *Home Hill News*.

Uli Liessmann comments . .



Uli Liessmann reports on local issues

Dear reader—

Here is a view point with a difference.

Well, it was not to be - but I did enjoy my years in council, so now I will be looking for a new career, namely pushing the wheelbarrow for Home Hill.

As an observer and looking in, I will keep asking questions in regard to what will Home Hill get?

Because of the structure of council, I now will not hear a lot and will have to wait and listen and try to read between the lines.

The newspaper prints as good as nothing in regard to council business and we must remember, council business is ratepayer business. Council minutes report the bare minimal.

Yes, saying this, I will be labelled as negative, nothing new, but how about an alternative view point and not following blindly without any opposing opinion

The biggest challenge for council will be to be open and transparent and present the facts and figures so as no-one can read anything into the rose-coloured facts as presented at present. This would save council from constantly trying to justify itself—not an easy task.

Top marks to the general public that has supported our business and has kept everyone in a job.

Also, everyone has been following the simple rules that we have in place to help protect the public against COVID-19, so be safe and be aware of your

surroundings.

The Comfort Stop toilets, I believe they should be open. I ask where and what can the public use? Close down the hot plates the showers etc. and fence off the seating, but surely the toilets need to remain open.



Uli Liessmann after laying a wreath during the curtailed service at the Home Hill Cenotaph

Story of the week—

A local having to use the convenience at the Comfort Stop before it was closed—upon entering, our local noticed both doors were locked. The local was about to leave when one of the doors opened and out walks a not-so-nice occupant with an arm full of toilet paper. Our local asked nicely 'how about leaving some paper'. Where upon, the occupant smartly gave our local a mouthful. A small altercation followed and this not-so-pleasant person was sat on his end while clutching an arm full of ill begotten gains. With this, our hero drove off into the sunset. True story, no bull!

These are my views only. To contact me, please phone (mobile) 0439 822 064 www.uliliessmann.com.au .

ULI LIESSMANN

Councils combine eLibrary resources

THE Burdekin Library has joined forces with its Library consortium partners in North Queensland to provide much-needed eLibrary resources to its communities in COVID-19 isolation.

To meet the rising demand of online resources following recent closures of Library buildings to the public, the Burdekin, Tablelands, Mareeba and Cassowary Coast Libraries have contributed funds toward additional e-resource capacity.

Burdekin Library Services Manager, Alexis Adams said the contribution would mean locals would be able to access more titles and wait times of titles on loan would be reduced.

"This partnership with our North Queensland consortium means an additional 15 titles would be available on BorrowBox for simultaneous download by up to 500 users for three months with no waiting time for adult, teen and children's titles," Mrs Adams said. "Existing titles which have multiple reservations have also been increased to reduce the wait time.

The Burdekin Library's eLibrary is also home to magazine and film platforms including National Geographic, Beamafilm and Kanopy with versions tailored for both kids and adults.

"Burdekin Library receives financial assistance from the

Queensland Government through State Library of Queensland to provide these services free to the community.

Burdekin Shire Council Manager Community Services, David Cornwell said the amount of e-resources accessible on the Burdekin Library website could keep residents entertained forever.

"Burdekin residents are incredibly lucky to have access to not only the existing Library e-resources at this time, but further information thanks to collaboration with our North Queensland consortium," Mr Cornwell said.

"On top of this, the State Library of Queensland has now also granted external access to the

library edition of Ancestry.com, which was previously only available on library computers.

Access to this feature is granted directly through the State Library's site, with sign up required in advance.

Uiverscroft, a library supplier, has also made 500 of its e-audiobooks available for free through its U-Library platform. Information on this is available on Council's website."

Physical borrowing is currently suspended following the closure of library buildings due to COVID-19 related restrictions. The due date for items presently on loan from Burdekin Library have been extended to 30 June 2020.

Where to get your coffee fix in Home Hill . .

COFFEE lovers in Home Hill have many options to gain a coffee fix in the town whenever they need it.

Burdekin Motor Inn's Coffee Lounge and Café is open from 9am to 2pm or order by phone on 4782 1511 from 7.30am, with home-made cheese cakes, burgers, wraps, meals and lamingtons. They also offer Iced Coffee "made the old-fashioned way".

Crown Hotel has coffee available from 10am on a daily basis, with the added incentive of a variety of cheese cakes and Gluten Free cakes to choose from.

Dee & Vee's Takeaway complements their menu with tasty coffee seven days a week. Meals and coffee are available Monday and Tuesday from 10am till 2pm; Wednesday and Thursday from 10am to 7.30pm; Friday from 10am till 8pm; Saturday from 11am till 7.30pm

and Sunday from 4pm till 7.30pm.

Home Hill Laundromat (Comfort Stop) Self Serve "Esspresso Essentials" facility at \$3 a Cup—Open from 6.15am to 9pm, seven days per week.

Home Hill Newsagency has a self-service "I Love Coffee" facility, at \$3 per cup. They are open 5.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday, from 5.30am to 1pm on Saturday and from 5.30am to 11am on Sunday, Rise and Grind with coffee at the **Commercial Hotel, Home Hill**—from 7.30am Monday to Saturday and 8.30am Sunday.

Home Hill Olympic Swimming Pool is open in pool hours for local residents and visitors alike to meet their coffee desires from the pool entry area from 5.30am to 7am, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday; 5.30am to 6pm Wednesday; 10am to 6pm Sunday.

BECAUSE OF THE CORONAVIRUS, THERE MAY HAVE BEEN CHANGES MADE TO DAYS AND/OR TIMES ON THIS PAGE

Places to see, things to do in the Home Hill district

170 Arts on the Avenue—The Burdekin Artisans Community invite you to inspect their display of various arts and craft forms at the Ashworths Rock Shop complex from 10am to 5pm each day from Tuesday to Friday and 9.30am to 2pm Saturday.

Beachmount/Wunjunga—Visitors can move off the Bruce Highway south of Home Hill to spend time at the community's beaches—Beachmount and the community of Wunjunga. Travel east off the highway south of Inkerman across gravel roads until meeting the sea in the vicinity of Funny Dunny Park where tourists can enjoy a stay in pleasant surroundings.

Burdekin River and the Burdekin bridge - part of the Bruce Highway plus Home Hill Lions Club Diorama at southern end of bridge, which features five new panels detailing the pioneering sugar industry work of John Drysdale and the town's early history;

Burdekin National Servicemen's Association meets at the Home Hill Community Sports Club on the first Sunday of each month from February to December, starting at 9.30 am. Contact Secretary (4782 2368) or President (4783 5529).

Burdekin Toastmasters hold their dinner meetings at The Crown Hotel on the first and third Thursday of each month.

Card making, scrapbooking, album making and assorted jewellery classes at Lynn and Mike's Craft Studio, Home Hill. Phone 0418 783 799 for details of how to participate.

Charlie's Hill World War II site, about seven kilometres south of Home Hill – former radar station during the second world war—Old igloos and gun emplacement still in place;

For the sports man and woman - Join in the friendly atmosphere at the **Home Hill Golf Course** (4782 1632—amongst the cane fields on Iona Road), at the excellent **Home Hill Tennis complex** in the centre of the Home Hill Race Track; or the **Home Hill Community Sports Club Inc.** (4782 1185) which offers multi sports including Bowls, Soccer, Pin Ball Gaming and Pool.

Groper Creek - worth a look as it is a unique small village —one of the many creeks in the Burdekin Delta allowing access to the numerous fishing areas throughout the district—very popular with visitors who return each year to enjoy our climate over several months;

Home Hill Swimming Pool (Eleventh Avenue) is open throughout the summer months—5.30am to 7pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday; 5.30am to 6pm Wednesday; 10am to 6pm Sunday.

Home Hill Service Clubs—The **Home Hill Lions Club** meets at the Crown Hotel on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. The **Home Hill Rotary Club** meets at their Club House (58 Thirteenth Avenue, Home Hill) on the first Tuesday of each month and at the Malpass Hotel, Home Hill at 6.30pm on each other Tuesday night of the month. Visitors are welcome at both clubs.

Mount Inkerman—approximately 12km south of Home Hill, near the township of Inkerman. Access to the top is via a narrow road, which is not suitable for caravans and a "Nature Trail" for walkers. The narrow road has been widened in sections and a number of new safety barriers installed. Recommend visiting as there are outstanding views of the surroundings such as cane and other farms.

Old Time Dancing at the St Helen's Anglican Church Hall, Tenth Avenue, Home Hill every Saturday evening;

Pioneer Avenue Plaques – learn about the history of many of the pioneers of Home Hill and the Burdekin District by reading the plaques situated along the western side of the ti-trees in Home Hill's main street

Sing Along with the Home Hill Choral Society — every Wednesday evening at the "The Vault" - the Choral Society Hall in Eighth Avenue—from 7pm to 8.30pm. Everyone is welcome to join in.

The Big Canecutters—Visit the former Home Hill Showgrounds (southern end of town across the railway line) to see the representation of the former canecutters that cut the Burdekin district's sugar cane crop before the advent of mechanical cane harvesting.

Comments on our town or services would be appreciated, Email ddjacko@bigpond.com or secretary@homehillchamber.com