

HOME HILL NEWS

Greetings from the Home Hill Business Community

Issue No 91, July, 2023

(First published April, 2015)

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“Modest” 4% rise in rates

BURDEKIN Shire ratepayers will face a “modest” 4 per cent rise in their annual rates bill, which Mayor Lyn McLaughlin said demonstrates consideration for the cost-of-living pressures faced by residents and local businesses.

In adopting its 2023/24 Budget, the Mayor said it built on strong foundations, “with allocations of \$40.5 million for capital initiatives and \$59.8 million for operational activities”.

Saying she was pleased to present the Budget, Cr McLaughlin said the council was committed to living within its means and had managed to restrict the rate rise to well below inflation and the LGAQ’s Council Cost index of 6.9 per cent.

“In a further sign of Council’s commitment to sound financial management,” she said she was pleased to announce the removal of the

\$30 per property Aquatic Facility Charge for the 2023/24 year.

Cr McLaughlin announced the “highlights” of the budget on the southern side of the Burdekin River as –

- Home Hill Pool Upgrades, \$295,000;
- Home Hill Comfort Stop Refurbishment, \$105,000;

On a shire-wide basis, the “highlights” included –

- Roadworks and Reseals and Drainage, \$12 million;
- Landfill and Transfer Station Upgrades, \$680,000;
- Cultural Venue Upgrades, \$329,500.

In and around the town of Ayr, those



Mayor Lyn McLaughlin

“highlights” included –

- Ayr/Brandon Wastewater Treatment Plant Macro Algal Earthworks, \$6.5 million and Facility Construction;
- Ayr Industrial Estate Development, \$3.2 million;
- Ayr Showgrounds Main Hall Refurbishment \$350,000;
- Burdekin Cascades Caravan Park Upgrades \$150,000.

“Building on a strong foundation, the Budget reflects Council’s commitment to residents and dedication to developing the Burdekin as a place to live, work, play, visit and invest,” Cr McLaughlin said.

Recognising the importance of external funding sources, she said council would continue working with the State and Federal Government to secure grants, which will assist in relieving some financial pressures.

Few major budget projects for Home Hill

WHILE the Burdekin Shire Council is budgeting for a “modest” four per cent rate rise and \$38.3 million “to improve roads and drainage, water and wastewater networks and other infrastructure improvements”, there seems to be little in the way of major projects planned for the south side of the Burdekin River for the rate dollars that will be paid by residents of the area.

However, the council’s media release does not detail any major works at all on the south side of the Burdekin River, apart from projects such as a “fire hydrant replacement and renewal program” and “water supply disinfection dosing equipment upgrades” which could include work in all parts of the shire.



The 2023 council budget has allocated \$60,000 for footpath lighting in the Home Hill Memorial Park

The detailed projects include a considerable amount of work costing millions of dollars on the Ayr Industrial Estate, but no mention of anything on a possible industrial estate in Home Hill? However, included as “budget highlights” were \$295,000 for Home Hill Pool upgrades and \$105,000 for Home Hill Comfort Stop Refurbishment.

Mayor Lyn McLaughlin said the Budget funded a range of projects

aimed to improve liveability and community well-being, including \$70,000 to complete a detailed design for a youth zone in Anzac Park (in Ayr), as foreshadowed in the Anzac Park Masterplan, which aims to strengthen connectivity between the Burdekin Aquatic Centre and other recreational elements in the park.” Parks and recreation facilities throughout the Shire are due to receive an upgrade with the fol-

lowing initiatives funded in Home Hill— \$295,000 to refurbish ablutions, shade sail and fencing replacement at the Home Hill Swimming Pool and \$60,000 for footpath lighting in the Home Hill Memorial Park. There were also projects in Ayr and Giru with shade sail replacements.

The Burdekin Memorial Hall will also receive \$38,500 to replace chairs and tables, improve access and enhance the fire safety. Cr McLaughlin said that in 2023/24, Council would continue to build on the strong foundations to support local business. That includes \$22,500 allocated to continued funding of the partnership with the Smart Precinct NQ.

Infrastructure projects Page 3

WE need to update our story from the June issue of *The Home Hill News* with regard to the Foote Family's association with racing in Home Hill many years ago, mainly through the efforts of patriarch, Jock Foote, a former owner, trainer and jockey. Jock has been recognised through his name being adorned on the stables at the race course. The family displayed a Home Hill Cup trophy won many years ago by Grand Poplar, which was trained by Jock Foote—but we did not mention that Jock was also an owner of the horse. The Foote Family also took the opportunity to recognise *The Home Hill News* and the contribution it is making to the Home Hill community with a combined donation to the Home Hill Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber appreciates the support from the family and their contribution to the publication.

HOWEVER, not everyone is happy with our publication. Mayor Lyn McLaughlin took us to task at a recent Chamber social meeting for failing to mention the efforts of the staff at the Council in organising and running the Sweet Days, Hot Nights celebrations at the former Home Hill Showgrounds. Cr McLaughlin has not hidden the fact that she does not read *The Home Hill News* but she was able to comment and criticise based on what she is told second hand by other people. We are always willing to compliment the efforts of people in our community if we are told about it. The Home Hill Chamber went out of its way to congratulate Doug Chappell and other farmers who used their own volunteer time, money and equipment to run the Hand Cane Cutting Championships for many years including growing the crop ahead of the event each year at the former showgrounds. It is unfortunate that our council does not inform us of its activities and events now, so that we can publicise them—although the council does outlay a large amount of money on advertising in other northern media. Last month, we published a full page on the Sweet Days, Hot Nights

The finer points of Home Hill . .

IT WOULD have been nice to see some of the Burdekin Shire's rates dollars go towards upgrading and improving Home Hill's Central Business District. While the main street of Ayr seems to be well looked after by the council, that cannot be said for our CBD with untidy footpaths including lifting brick pavers, dirty frontages to empty shops that are ignored mainly by absent landlords, pigeon droppings everywhere and grass growing out of control, especially after wet weather. Council workers do a good job regularly cleaning the Comfort Stop, but we have been told by travellers that word is spreading amongst the grey nomads on the road that there are some of those on the road who overstay their limits. We haven't seen it ourselves and we would hate to see such



rumours ruin the benefits the Comfort Stop brings to town. The Chamber of Commerce is doing its bit with a RADF \$3700 grant to improve the "4806" sign (pictured above) with additions to make it more attractive to our community and the many people who stay in Railway Avenue.

events, listing all the prize winners. Due to the amount of news we publish in the newsletter, we cannot name everyone who works at the events, as is the case with other events in this area, although we would if we could. This would be the first year in many decades that we have not received a copy of the Council's annual budget report ahead of the Budget Meeting—says a lot for what our council thinks of Home Hill? We were able to find it on the Council's website, however, which means we are still able to bring the rating news to the community, especially for the many people who do not depend on Facebook and other sites for information. Keep us informed and we will keep our community informed.

IT IS budget time within all levels of government but residents of the Home Hill region should not hold their breaths in their desire for something positive to be done for our own little corner of the world. The Federal budget is mainly focused on the most populated areas of each of the states and the economy of the nation—which is having a serious effect on how families are living and, especially, paying their bills. One thing is certain though, election promises mean nothing when whatever party gets into power. The state government also seems to be lost when it comes to controlling crime throughout Queensland, although there is always more focus on doing something when car thefts and the like rise substantially in their

favoured south-east corner. And their focus on the state of roads seems to also be rising as the population in the south-east goes up and their desire is to make their highways bigger and wider, while the so-called 'highways' in the north are a mess—but also forgotten in the hype put out by government spokespersons". Member for Burdekin, Dale Last has referenced the state budget in a press release, highlighting that "There are a lot of projects in the Burdekin electorate that are only partially funded and then there is a long list of projects completely ignored. There's no new funding for the Bruce Highway or for a CT Scanner at the Ayr Hospital, that would be a huge benefit to patients and staff". On the local scene, it will be interesting to see how the new land valuations affect the bottom line on individual rates notices—taking into account that there were rises in many of the valuations—or if council will put ratepayers in the Home Hill region and other areas of the shire outside Ayr on a "special general rate" to bring in more rates or charge them a "rate in the dollar" based on their new land valuation. However, overall, most of the money will again go to the northern side of the river as the council always seems to find a multi-million dollar project in that part of the shire—this time it is the Ayr Industrial Estate that is a major beneficiary, while some minor projects come our way, such as "pathway lights" in the Home Hill Memorial Park. An industrial estate in Home Hill would be a major benefit and there are people who would use it, while having no desire to set up in Ayr.

- DAVID JACKSON

Budget infrastructure projects

A TOTAL of \$38.3 million has been allocated by the Burdekin Shire Council to improve roads and drainage, water and wastewater networks and other infrastructure improvements as part of its 2023/24 Budget.

Mayor Lyn McLaughlin said council will be largely investing in roads and drainage infrastructure around the shire with the \$38.3 million investment dedicated to a range of projects.

The Budget includes these infrastructure projects:

Water projects:

- \$460,000 for expansion of the Ayr Industrial Estate water supply infrastructure;
- \$350,000 to complete the Mount Kelly water main renewal;
- First year of a \$200,000 per annum fire hydrant replacement and renewal program;
- \$120,000 to complete the water supply disinfection dosing equipment upgrades

Wastewater projects:

- * Close to \$7 million to complete the Macro Algal Sewage Treatment Facility at the Ayr/Brandon Sewage Treatment Plant;
- \$800,000 for expansion of the Ayr Industrial Estate sewerage infrastructure;
- \$250,000 to refurbish Trickle Filter at the Ayr/Brandon Sewage Treatment Plant;
- \$120,000 to replace two Sewage Pump Station switchboards at the Ayr Industrial Estate

Roads/Drainage Construction projects:

- \$950,000 for the Jerona Causeway reconstruction (subject to NDRA funding being approved)
- \$880,000 for the Barratta Road reconstruction
- \$870,000 for roadworks construction at the Ayr Industrial Estate.
- \$630,000 for drainage expansion at the Ayr Industrial Estate.

Road Design projects include:

- \$80,000 towards the Upper Houghton Road design
- \$60,000 for the heavy vehicle bypass reconstruction
- \$45,000 for the reconstruction of Colevale Road
- \$30,000 for the reconstruction of Toll Road.

Design and Construct projects:

- \$550,000 for the new roundabout at Soper and Graham Street intersection
- \$200,000 for the reconstruction of sections of kerb and damaged road at the existing Ayr Industrial Estate.

Wilmar offers trade careers

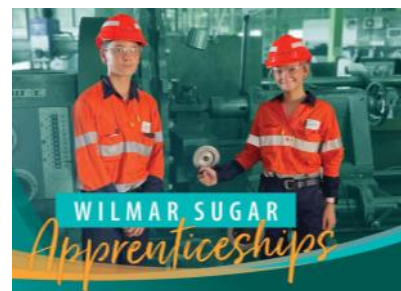
FOR the second consecutive year, Wilmar Sugar has created more than 40 new apprenticeship positions, as the company shores up trade skills to support what they describe as “an extensive local manufacturing program”.

As Australia's leading sugar manufacturer, Wilmar has opened applications for its 2024 apprenticeship intake, with 43 positions available across Wilmar Sugar's Queensland mills and bioethanol distillery.

Of that number, there are 19 new positions in the Burdekin and the company is bringing them on earlier than in the past, with the first-year apprenticeships being in the electrical, boilermaking, fitting and turning and diesel fitting trades. Of the other positions, eight are in the Herbert, nine in Proserpine and seven at Sarina. Training Superintendent, Daniel Shipard said the large intake was driven by the need to build and retain skills across key trades, as Wilmar continued to bring manufacturing back to North Queensland.

“This is the second consecutive year where we've offered more than 40 apprenticeship places, which is well above our traditional intake of around 30,” Mr Shipard said.

Wilmar Sugar's apprenticeship program is one of the most successful in Australia, with Mr Shipard saying that “over the past five years, we've achieved an average apprenticeship completion rate of 98 per cent, which is well above the national



average”.

“Our apprentices are well supported throughout the program, which is a key factor in our high completion rate,” he said.

“They learn from some of the best tradespeople in the industry, work in a safe environment and they get to work on multi-million-dollar manufacturing projects, like new locos, new pan vessels and new motor control centres.”

Wilmar has brought forward its application process this year so successful applicants can start their apprenticeships in early December, rather than January 2024. “This will give them the earliest possible start to their apprenticeships, so they start learning new skills and earning money before Christmas,” Mr Shipard said.

Successful applicants are provided with uniforms, PPE and a fully-kitted trade specific toolkit, while Wilmar Sugar also covers all training expenses. The positions are open to Australian citizens and permanent residents. Applications close on July 23. More information is available by googling 'Wilmar Sugar apprenticeships'.

They are racing again in Home Hill in July

Enjoy a day out under the big trees at the Home Hill Race Track as the Burdekin Race Club features a six-event program on

Saturday, July 8, 2023

If you enjoyed the Burdekin Grower Race Day, come along again to take advantage of the facilities and pleasant surroundings of Home Hill's racing facilities.



Six local races during the afternoon plus southern races, the TAB in operation as well as local bookmakers and a range of food options available

Chamber speakers of interest

THE Home Hill Chamber of Commerce is continuing its monthly social meetings featuring interesting guest speakers, in the hope of encouraging more members and their guests to attend the meetings on the third Wednesday of each month.

A wide range of speakers have been arranged to address the meetings through to the end of the year, with Wilmar Sugar's Raymond De Lai (the G.I.S. Manager at Inkerman Mill) intriguing his audience at the June meeting with not only information on his role at the sugar mill, but also in his work experience travels through countries such as Mexico.

Mr De Lai will be followed in July by the Project Manager for RoadTek, Michael Brennan, who will provide details of the Burdekin River Bridge rehabili-

tation program currently under way.

The situation with the ongoing work on the bridge would be of interest to a lot of chamber members and they are being urged to take this opportunity to hear what is happening on the bridge and have their questions answered.

While final approvals are still coming through for the address, the Chamber has been advised that Mr Brennan's presentation will be 20 minutes in length and he will be happy for questions to be asked throughout.

However, the chamber is unsure if Mr Brennan will be able to speak on other Transport and Main Road Department projects due to a review of Federal Government funded projects.

However, those projects may be able to be raised at future Home Hill Chamber meetings with other project updates.



Guest speaker at the June social meeting of the Home Hill Chamber of Commerce, Wilmar G.I.S. Manager, Raymond De Lai (centre) with Chamber members, Meghan Wilson (*Grower Marketing Consultant at Wilmar's Inkerman Mill*) and Trevor Elton, President of the Home Hill Community Sports Club.

Home Hill Chamber of Commerce members are reminded that the social meetings are held at the Home Hill Community Sports Club premises in Ninth Avenue on the third Wednesday of each month, commencing at 5.30pm and guests are also welcome to attend. The August meeting will be the Annual General Meeting for the

Chamber, with the presentation of the Chairman's annual report and the election of officers.

At this stage, that meeting is being planned for Wednesday, August 31, because of the absence of key Chamber executive members on the third Wednesday of that month, when the meeting would normally have been held.

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Artisan's Art Space improvements

MAJOR improvements are under way at the home of the Burdekin Artisan Community Association Inc. at 170 Arts on the Avenue in Home Hill following the receipt of two grants.

The Association received a grant from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund to construct a room adjoining the kitchen in their art space at 170 Eighth Avenue, Home Hill, which will enable them to conduct workshops in a quiet, dust-free space.

The construction project was undertaken by Branden D'Alessandro of Dalco Pty Ltd on their front display area and the workshop space at the rear of their premises.

Another grant received under Pacific Blue's Sustainable Communities Fund, which shares the benefits of the Haughton Solar Farm.

That grant will allow the Artisan Community Association to install air conditioning in the new room in their art space for the comfort of the workshop attendees.



Art flavour in social morning

LONG term residents of the local community or even those new to the area are being invited by the Burdekin Artisan Community Association Inc. to join them for a weekly Thursday social morning, where they can fulfil their arts and crafts cravings over a "cuppa".

The Association is planning to host the mornings each Thursday, where anyone interested can "come and join a friendly group of arts and crafts people".

The social morning will take place from 10.30am to 12.30pm each week, with tea and coffee available to add to the morning's activities. Those attending have also been invited to take along any unfinished items of arts or crafts that they can work on while talking to other like-minded attendees.

The social mornings will take place at the Burdekin Artisan Community Association's home at 170 Arts on the Avenue (adjacent to Ashworth's Rock Shop).

Planning scheme information

THE Burdekin Shire Council is offering residents of Shire communities a free Community Information Session to introduce the Shire's new Council Planning Scheme December 2022, which commenced on March 1, 2023.

The information sessions will take place on Wednesday, July 12, 2023, at the Burdekin Theatre Foyer in Queen Street, Ayr from 7.15am to 8.30am.

The sessions offer the chance to "Learn about Council's recently developed Planning Scheme, designed to assist in planning for growth and change in the region over the next 20 years".

A complimentary light breakfast will be served from 7.15am, while a coffee van will also be on site to purchase any additional items. Presentations will be provided by council officers and consultant planning firms, Brazier Motti and Milford Planning.

Anyone planning to attend should respond to the Town Planning section of the Burdekin Shire Council at planning@burdekin.qld.gov.au by July 3, 2023.



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or a **LONG-TIME RESIDENT**?

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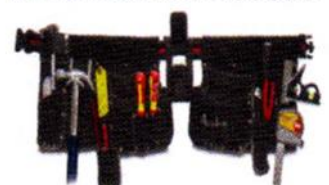


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Molongle supporters do their bit for cancer fundraising



THE Australia's Biggest Morning Tea came in an even bigger way to the Molongle Beach Caravan Park shelter by the seaside near Gumlu on Sunday, June 18, as a crowd of almost 60 people raised a total of \$2667 at the event. In nine years, a milestone has been reached, with a total of \$10,000 raised since 2014, with the only year the event was not held was the covid year of 2020. A "big Thank You" was extended to all those who attended the event, for their generosity towards the worthy cause. Each year, there is a huge spread of sweets and savouries, together with a variety of coffees and teas for the Caravan Park patrons, who travelled from the south, as well as locals and friends from the Burdekin and Bowen districts and their friends from Townsville. Fundraising was carried out through sales of cent sale and raffle tickets, as well as money boards, while the guessing of the number of lollies and teabags was another distraction.

There were almost 100 cent sale prizes and a dozen larger raffle prizes, which were all donated. Raffle donors included Cornetts IGA Home Hill, the Sandbar Café at Molongle Beach, the Gumlu Tavern, Lands Family Farms, Maria Totorica, Sharon Gist, Christine Hinds and the Complete Health Pharmacy in Home Hill. A generous donation was also offered by the Home Hill/Ayr Lions Club. An extra \$1000 was raised in bidding on an auction of a 2022 signed Cowboys' away Jersey, which was donated and framed by the Gumlu State School and the Gumlu Parents and Citizens Association. The highest bid from Colin and Tracy Skinner, of Bowen was a generous \$1000. MC for the morning, Gumlu Principal, Thomas Harrington, ensured all ran smoothly, as he introduced two speakers who reflected upon their own experiences of knowing close ones afflicted by cancer. High school teacher, Nyree Woods, reminded everyone of

The crowd of supporters at the Ninth Molongle Creek Biggest Morning Tea, including speakers, Nyree Woods sitting at the front (pink and grey striped shirt, holding a cup) and Christie Gist (in brown, standing at the centre of the group)



Colin and Tracy Skinner from Bowen, who submitted the largest bid on the Cowboys' away jersey

the fact that they have all either been impacted or know of someone who has fallen victim to this disease and how important it is to be grateful for the many people in healthcare who are doing their utmost to work towards a cancer-free world. Christie Gist, who travelled to Gumlu from Townsville with her mother and grandmother, also delivered a heart-warming speech highlighting the recent loss of a colleague to cancer. Originally from Home Hill, she is a clinical nurse, who has been working at Townsville Palliative Care for four years and knows first-hand of the impact of the suffering of pa-

tients and their loved ones. Christie is a registered nurse, who participates in the Queensland Ambulance Services' "Make a Wish" scheme, which helps patients on a journey to fulfil their last wish. She stressed that every little effort is valuable and contributes to the vitally needed funds to help with research and support, as we move forward to a vision of becoming cancer free. In essence, together we can all help to make a difference. Organisers of the Morning Tea were Regina Lequerica and Nandine and Katrina Land.

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Quarter Page	\$50.00	\$60.00	
Half Page	\$100.00	\$110.00	
Full Page	\$150.00	\$160.00	
Join the Home Hill Chamber of Commerce TODAY to save on advertising costs			



Mila Caspanello and Lola Smith in a craft activity



Charlotte Alexander at the Wilmar display



Freja Caesar, Archie Sgroi and Daley Caspanello with the Bendigo Bank mascot

St Colman's School Open Day focus on agriculture

ST COLMAN'S School hosted an Open Day and celebration of the local community during June, with many local organisations invited to attend and support the school.

The Open Day also educated the school's students about the resources that our community offers. The local ambulance and police officers were described as "a big hit with their hands-on experiences", while Ergon Energy joined in and allowed the students to move a cherry picker up

and down.

Wilmar Sugar took the opportunity to teach the students about how to be safe during harvest time and the protection of our waterways was reinforced within the Burdekin Council stall.

Nutrien taught the students about how to grow healthy crops and kindly donated a greenhouse to the school and the new green house is now full of herbs and vegetables ready to supply the canteen with the produce.

Also on display were tractors, while the Bendigo Bank mascot was a big hit.

The school children also had the opportunity to interact with some farming animals and ponies and craft was conducted by the school's seniors for the younger visitors, as they made farm animals.

The Open Day was described as "a fabulous morning celebrating everything about agriculture".



Harley Vass with a cane knife and the Sweet Days, Hot Nights mascot.



Mia Bojack, Dayne Weston and Evie Totorica at the animal nursery



Ben Bapty tries out the Ambulance stretcher



Harrison Bojack at the Ergon Energy display



Samuel Bakkar tried out the display of tractors

New mill-made loco hits Wilmar's tracks

THE first loco to be built from the ground up by a sugar milling company in well over a century has joined the 2023 crushing season at Wilmar Sugar. Called *Brisbane*, the newest locomotive in the Australian sugar industry – Wilmar's new 26 tonne locomotive - is the first new model introduced to the company's fleet since 1991, at a cost of about \$2 million to design and build.

The new loco's many features include using about 25 per cent less fuel than the model it replaces.

Significantly, it is the first new cane rail loco designed and built from the ground up by a milling company for cane haulage in more than 140 years.

According to Wilmar Sugar Senior Project Engineer, Calvin Smith, *Brisbane* had been designed to meet all of the company's requirements for a mid-sized loco.

"This has been a really important project for the company and for the team," Mr Smith said.

"We started the conceptual development by looking at what we wanted in a mid-sized loco, in terms of operational performance, fatigue life, cabin design and driver comfort.

"Then we engineered it from the ground up to meet all of our business needs across all of our milling regions.

"It boasts several new features, including an improved gearbox design, a soft-mounted engine to reduce chassis vibration, a fit-for-purpose automotive-grade control system and new remote shunting unit for single driver operation." Mr Smith said the new loco also used about 25 per cent less fuel than the model it will replace and is part of a broader Wilmar strategy to reduce carbon emissions across the business.

"Wilmar is also considering a trial of renewable fuel later this year," he said.

Asset Manager for Mobile and Services, Carl Schmidt said the Wilmar 26 tonne loco project had taken almost three years to complete – from concept to delivery – and cost about \$2 million.

"It has involved a lot of very dedicated and skilled people from different parts of the Wilmar business, as well as external contractors and we're extremely proud of the result," Mr Schmidt said.

Brisbane will be based at Wilmar's Victoria Mill in the Herbert region, starting operations this season.

Two more of the new model locos are currently under construction, with two more planned for 2024. Railway historian John



Brisbane was designed and engineered from the ground up for Wilmar's cane haulage operations. It is 25 per cent more fuel efficient than the model it replaces.

Browning said the new Wilmar locomotive was a significant achievement - After more than 140 years, it is the first main line cane haulage locomotive designed and produced by a milling company in Queensland," he said. "Cane locomotives must be robust and purpose-built to operate 24/7 under demanding condition. "Wilmar's understanding of these requirements means that in-house manufacture is preferable to going to a locomotive builder, most likely overseas, with no familiarity with Queensland conditions or experience in producing this type of loco."

FACT FILE

Wilmar Sugar owns and operates 74 locomotives across its milling regions

- * The fleet comprises three different sized locos – large 40-tonne locos, mid-sized 24- to 26-tonne locos and smaller 18-tonne side-rod locos.

- * Wilmar started a major overhaul program in 2016, rebuilding its large, 40-tonne locos from the chassis up.

- * The upgraded 40-tonne locos have a new Mercedes Benz engine, Allison transmission and purpose-built Renk-Maag reversing box – a combination that delivers fuel reductions of around 30 per cent;

- * So far, 20 of the 40-tonne locos and four of the mid-sized Baldwin locos have been rebuilt;

- * The new Wilmar 26 tonne loco will replace the aging Baldwin locomotives.

Monthly Bible Message

(Contributed)



The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.

- Psalm 23



Direct from Dale

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Parliament Update

WHILE the state budget may give the appearance of rivers of gold flowing through Queensland, I have sounded a warning that could see promises undelivered.

The budget documents forecast a 60 per cent reduction in royalties for the 2023-24 financial year, a reduction that could leave projects uncompleted or even abandoned before work begins. Undoubtedly, the extra \$10 Billion in coal royalties are responsible for many of the projects and programs announced in the budget. My concern is that, once that river of gold dries up, projects will either be left half-finished or completely abandoned. There are a lot of projects in the electorate that are only partially funded and then there is a long list of projects completely ignored.

There's no funding for a CT Scanner at the Ayr Hospital for example, no funding to upgrade the TAFE college to train our young people for jobs and no new funding for the Bruce Highway. In the 2022-23 financial year, the Queensland government earned a whopping \$18.288 Billion from royalties and land rent. Of great concern is the fact that the budget documents forecast a reduction of 60 per cent in the 2023-24 financial year and a further 20 per cent the following year. The budget should be about more than glossy brochures. You really have to dig down into the details and also ask whether the government will actually deliver on its promises. While the budget contained measures to address spiralling cost of living,

the devil is in the detail.

Funding in Home Hill

AS you may be aware, the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport's Minor Infrastructure Program was recently announced. The program provided funding to eligible organisations to assist the sport and active recreation industry deliver new, upgraded and end of life replacement projects and works. I was honoured to support local sporting groups in their endeavours to improve and update their facilities for their members. Two organisations in Home Hill have been successful in their effort with funding totalling \$409,850.00 (GST exclusive) distributed amongst the two groups. Another funding opportunity, which I was happy to provide my support to several Burdekin groups was the Active Clubs Round three, which is part of the suite of initiatives under Activate! Queensland 2019 – 2029. According to correspondence received from the Department, \$137,500 has been approved to deliver 55 projects in the Burdekin electorate area.

Here to help

If you or someone you know has an issue that you need help with, please remember, my job is to represent you. I may not always be able to fix the problem, but rest assured, I will always do my best. For help, please call my office on 1800 817 594 or send an email to burdekin@parliament.qld.gov.au.

Until next time, stay safe and well.

Dale Last

Burdekin Region Mills Weekly Production Figures

Weeks 1, 2 and 3 —ending June 25, 2023

Cane crushed—	This Week	Season to Date
Invicta	145,993	360,483
Pioneer	79,038	170,752
Kalamia	76,927	172,037
Inkerman	70,875	171,890
Burdekin	372,834	875,164

CCS

Invicta	13.98	13.80
Pioneer	12.46	11.92
Kalamia	13.03	12.62
Inkerman	13.95	13.30
Burdekin	13.46	13.10

Comments —

Week 1—All four Burdekin mills commenced crushing on the scheduled dates this week, processing just over 164,000 tonnes for week one of the 2023 season. The dry weather has provided favourable harvesting conditions. The average weekly CCS was 12.76 which, while above budget, was suppressed a little due to the proportion of standover cane being delivered. The highest CCS sample of 16.5 was from a rake of Q183-P in the Clare productivity district. The season start has been a good one given the scale of the capital and maintenance program and the compressed timeframe in which it was delivered.

Week 2—Throughput this week was just under 338,000 tonnes, which again exceeded budget, as the dry weather continues and all four mills settle in to some consistent crushing. The average weekly CCS increased to 12.89, which reflects the volume of standover cane being delivered. The highest CCS sample of 17.20 was from a rake of Q183-P in the Clare Productivity district.

Week 3—Weekly throughput was just shy of 373,000 tonnes, which was above budget due to dry conditions and consistent milling operations. This brings the total cane processed to date to just over 875,000 tonnes. The average weekly CCS increased to 13.46, which is a significant increase on the previous week and is reflective of the dry conditions and the reducing proportion of standover in the cane supply. The highest CCS sample of 16.6 was from a rake of Q240 2R in the Clare Productivity district. With school holidays in full swing this week, parents and caregivers are urged to remind children about the dangers of playing on or near the cane railway network. For those travelling on the roads these school holidays, cane rail crossings are active from Bundaberg all the way through to Mossman.



John Tait,
Cane Supply Manager,
Burdekin Region

Uli Liessmann comments . .

ON THE not-so-good news front, the only gold mine in the vicinity of Home Hill has gone into voluntary administration.

That is not good news for the locals that work there and with a bit of luck, they might be able to turn it around and that means they need to find more gold.



HOME HILL—a town without a Service Station, which is just as bad as a pub with no beer. If Slim Dusty was still alive, he could make a song about this. I spoke to someone from the old service station, which is at present on hold and was told it will open “eventually”. On the other service station, Liberty, we have received tender documents for this job. So, this is still on the go, but it will take some time.

HOWEVER, on a positive note, the Home Hill Chamber is attracting some remarkably interesting speakers at its meetings. The last speaker was a Wilmar representative who spoke about the mills and the mapping of farms all through GPS. This was a very interesting talk about technology that is going on around us. Anyone can join us to listen to these talks and the next one is by the Main Roads regarding the Burdekin bridge plus much more, so come and listen and get the information firsthand. We also had a bit of an embarrassing moment at our last meeting—it helps to make the meetings more interesting.

WE ARE in the final stages of printing the pictures on



Businessman and Home Hill Chamber of Commerce Vice President, Uli Liessmann reports on local issues of interest in the Home Hill district

vinyl of local people and pioneers to be installed on the “Gate Way to Home Hill ” in Lloyd Mann Gardens. If you want to be included or your family, you need to get the information/pictures to me ASAP.

We are getting close to rate time again and here it is—4 per cent plus other increases—not a happy time. I just wonder if any belt tightening was employed in the decision-making, if at all. It's all a question of affordability for the working ratepayer. On a good note, I believe Cr Musumeci was the only one with any gumption and voted ‘NO’. He needs to be commended for standing up and voicing his opinion and not being led by the a weak majority of ‘yes’ men.

I AM also led to believe that we will now receive a rate notice twice a year and I do not think it will be more affordable, in fact it would have to cost more. Just council staff labour in postage alone. The other question is, will we be getting two increases in a year? Work with money that is available and not with the money that can be collected by ever increasing the rates and all other utilities and charges, because one day the pot will run out .

NOT that long to the next Council elections in 2024, and who is going to put up their hand? Let the public know who you are and build a profile for yourself—sooner is better and whoever you are, good luck as it is a big job and you never know, you might make a difference.

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

- ULI LIESSMANN

Your Say

JUST wondering if anyone else in this area has not been getting their parcels delivered because - and in this, I'm quoting from delivery driver - "I don't lift heavy parcels because she respects her back!". Then why is she a delivery driver?

I have twice now had to collect from the Post Office because this driver won't deliver heavy parcels to the house.

Anthony - as you would know, is not the youngest man in town - has been having to carry not only my parcels

(six so far) but I have been there as he's carried down for other people as well. If anyone else reading the *Home Hill News* has the same problem, they need to lodge a complaint with Auspost, as it's not Anthony's job to take care of parcels that have been paid for to be delivered to our residences.

This is in no way a complaint against Anthony or Lorraine, they are doing the job of the delivery driver, which, by the way, they are not paid to do.

**Michael and Lynn
Home Hill**

September start on new green

THE Home Hill Community Sports Club is taking a huge step forward in improving conditions for its bowling enthusiasts, with work to commence in September on replacement of the existing bowling green.

The club was successful in obtaining a grant of \$159,850 towards the upgrade of the green.

Sports Club President, Trevor Elton said work would commence on the replacement green on September 20 and would take about three weeks to complete.

The club is also undertaking fundraising activities to assist with the improvement works, as it hosts The Lindsay Butler and Shaza Leigh Country and Western Show on Friday, July 21. A three-course dinner will be served at 7pm, while dinner music will be played by a local group.

New professional coach for Home Hill Tennis Association

THE Home Hill Tennis Association has a new coach, starting in Term three.

Lessons for Hot Shots, including blue, red, orange, green and yellow ball and cardio, will continue to be offered on Wednesday afternoons and evenings, while there will also be an opportunity to arrange private lessons.

Highly qualified club professional coach, Tim Robinson from Tennis Blast at Kalynda Chase in Townsville will be the operator.

Mr Robinson has been running his business in the city for over 10 years, with many of the north's recent successful up-and-coming players being coached at Tennis Blast.

He will plan and oversee all lessons, which will be delivered by Junior

Development Qualified Coach, Kayla Acornero.

Kayla, an Ingham product, has worked under Tim for four years and is keen to begin her journey towards Club Professional training at the end of the year. Smaller class sizes as well as the highly acclaimed Hot Shots program will be fully implemented, meaning that families and players will be getting good value for their dollar spent.

To support coaching and grow numbers at the club, Home Hill Tennis will be using the State Government's Activate Strategy funding that the club was recently successful in gaining.

More information on lessons and times is available by emailing homehilltennis@gmail.com who send out a player pack and pass on Tim Robinson's contact details.

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

170 Arts on the Avenue—The Burdekin Artisan Community Association Inc. invites you to inspect their display of various arts and craft forms at the Ashworths Rock Shop complex each day from 10am to 5pm Tuesday to Friday and 9.30am to 1pm 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 am. Contact Secretary (4782 2368) or President (4783 5529).

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 Club** (phone 0467 566 448) — amongst the cane fields on Iona Road; at the excellent **Home Hill Tennis complex** in the centre of the Home Hill Race Track (**Email:** homehilltennis@gmail.com, Facebook: Home Hill Tennis or to book a court go to play.tennis.com.au/homehilltennis; or at the **Home Hill Community Sports Club Inc.** (4782 1185), which offers roll-up bowls Thursdays and Sundays at 12.30pm with an open bar.

Burdekin Friendship Club—Fortnightly, on Mondays from 9.30am to 11.30am at St Helen's Anglican Church Hall, Cnr Fourteenth Street and Tenth Avenue, Home Hill. \$7 per person. Light entertainment and fellowship. Morning Tea provided. Phone Esme 4782 1766.

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 Friends and Neighbours Craft Group—meets every Wednesday, 9am to 11.30am at Home Hill Community Sports Club, Ninth Avenue, Home Hill for general craft activities and cooking tips. Cost \$3 with morning tea. Phone 0427 804 129 for more information

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 on the first three Saturday nights of each month;

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