

# HOME HILL NEWS

Greetings from the Home Hill Business Community



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## Race Club honours dedicated volunteers

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**Full Story on Page 8**

Burdekin Race Club Vice President, Ron Scott (left) and President Ricky Gudge (right) with the club's new Life Members, Robyn Hewson, Doug Chappell, Jan Davies and Torrie Davies.



The former Home Hill Co-Operative Traders building in Eighth Avenue, which played an important part in business operations in Home Hill over many years

## Former Home Hill Co-Op complex makes way for proposed new project

THE last remaining link with one of Home Hill most significant businesses from the town's earliest years has disappeared with the demolition of the former Home Hill Co-Operative Traders building at the southern end of the Home Hill Central Business District.

The Home Hill Co-Op provided access for customers to a wide range of requirements for customers, from their Drapery Department through to Giftware and Hardware sections as well as a large nursery, while other businesses

occupied shops in the complex including Turnbull's Food Store (with their home behind it) and an Accountants premises.

The Home Hill Co-Op offered residents the chance to own shares in the business, which subsequently allowed them to benefit from a discount from their purchases. In its later years, the businesses associated with the Home Hill Co-Op were sold off to individual buyers.

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Half of the former Co-Op building has disappeared as demolition continued on the complex including the removal of the large trees at the rear of the property

WE mentioned the forthcoming Local Government elections in the December issue of *The Home Hill News* and the need for prospective candidates to start putting their names forward to become known throughout the Shire—not just for the fact that they are standing but also to let voters know just what they are standing for. A couple of names have already started appearing on the Electoral Commission Queensland website (ECQ) including former councillor, Pierina Dalle Cort, who has put her name forward for mayor and Delfine (Fina) Vasta, who has nominated as a councillor. Current Mayor, Lyn McLaughlin has made it known publicly that she will be putting her name forward for a final time (although *The Home Hill News* has not been advised officially) and at least one sitting councillor has indicated that he will not be standing again. Nominations opened on Monday, January 29 and will close at 12 noon on Tuesday, February 14—which leaves little time for new candidates to make themselves known before the voting takes place on Saturday, March 16. It is also to be hoped that there will be candidates who will think of the shire as a whole in their deliberations, instead of the policy of current councillors to spend huge amounts annually on projects in Ayr while other parts of the Shire are forgotten, even though those ratepayers are still paying a high level of rates to the Shire. The Home Hill CBD badly needs upgrading, as can be seen by the forgotten tree in our median, while efforts to install new drainage, which will benefit many of our more mature residents, seems to have been forgotten completely. Then there are the overgrown blocks of land (especially at this time of the year) and the many dilapidated

## The finer points of Home Hill . .

IT IS to be hoped that our new Burdekin Shire Council will find the time and funds amongst its initial projects to remove this tree (pictured) that has been slowly losing any signs of life amongst Home Hill's avenue of T-Trees in the Central Business District over the past 12 months or more. Our current council was quick to trim back several of the featured trees along Ayr's main street, so that they can develop new life—but unfortunately, this poor tree has been unseen by the powers-that-be, although we would think the council's gardeners would have seen it as they swing around it every week when mowing the rest of the median. We have been constantly stressing the need for something to be done to improve Home Hill's Central Business District (including removal of those dilapidated old buildings in the background of the photo), but for some reason, no notice has been taken of our requests. However, the council has always been able to find the funds to keep Ayr's Queen Street at a high standard—along with multi-million dollar projects in successive years—and another one coming if existing councillors are re-elected.



buildings that are a disaster waiting to happen. By the March issue of *The Home Hill News*, at least we will know who the candidates are and what they could be offering the ratepayers of the Shire in turn for their vote. At least Home Hill cannot go backwards any further, based on what the town has received over the past four years.

WORD seems to be spreading quickly around Home Hill after the recent cyclone that the Council would be undertaking a free collection service around the streets of the Shire to remove green waste left on footpaths. However, the Council has made it clear in a press release issued after the cyclone that there would be no free pick-up of green waste. Mayor Lyn McLaughlin said residents had to be responsible for their own debris and dispose it at Council's landfill and transfer stations—"Council will not be providing kerbside collection for debris so please do not leave waste on the kerbs", she said. That was the case

on the weekend after the cyclone as vehicles of many shapes, sizes and colours—some with trailers in tow—lined up to dispose of their own waste. Unfortunately, while many of those people had newly cleared residential properties, some did not properly tie down their loads, resulting in the streets being littered with green waste that fell from their transport to the tip. Those residents could show a bit of pride in our town by properly tying down their loads in future.

CRIME is well and truly in the news around the nation in recent times and the Burdekin District is not missing out. Our community was rife with reports of up to eight offences in Ayr and Home Hill over the past week and we were told of a meeting between local "frustrated" residents, Police and Member for Burdekin, Dale Last in an effort to get something done about it (Story page 7). The Burdekin Shire Council also lost three vehicles recently after they were stolen following a break-in at council offices and all came back burnt out. When will it stop?

- DAVID JACKSON



# Residences lit up for Chamber's festive awards

THE Home Hill Chamber of Commerce has once again honoured the best of the residents of the Home Hill community who added the Christmas spirit to the streets of the town in December in the lead-up to the Christmas and New Year celebrations. Judges from the Chamber drove around the streets in the lead-up to the festive period to inspect the wide range of decorations that were illuminating many of the homes in the town.

Those decorations extended from small strands of lights and tinsel through to homes that were covered in lights from front to back. Good support was received from many of the town's residents for the annual Chamber Residential Christmas Lights Competition, with two trophies to be won for the eventual winners. There were a number of homes that excelled with their lights and decorations, but the eventual winner of the individual competition were Jim and Meg Johnson for their

display at their home in Tenth Avenue, Home Hill.

In the end, the judges' decision came down to a choice between the eventual winners and the winners from the previous two years, Noel and Michelle Bathis of Second Avenue.

The Neighbourhood Award was won by those homes on both sides of the street in the section between Sixth Street and Eighth Street in Fourteenth Avenue.

There were a number of decorated homes in various streets of the town but in most cases, they were not eligible for the prize because they did not have the required number of homes in their area, which was six homes on one or both sides of the street. The Home Hill Chamber extended their thanks to all residents of the town who took the time to decorate and illuminate their homes over the festive period. Unfortunately, some lights were not turned on because of the weather conditions.



Chamber President, David Jackson (left) presents the Residential Christmas Decoration Award to Jim Johnson, who was adjudged the winner with his wife, Meg for their Tenth Avenue home.

THE December meeting of the Home Hill Chamber of Commerce found out a lot about the Surf Lifesaving Movement in the Burdekin as long-time Member of the Ayr Club, Lisa Furnell addressed the members on their efforts at Alva Beach—with the club attracting members from the Home Hill side of the river. The meeting was also attended by new manager of the Burdekin Motor Inn, Kris, who, with his wife, Sarah, have begun duties at the motel.



Guest speaker at the December meeting of the Home Hill Chamber of Commerce, Lisa Furnell (centre) with the Chamber Secretary, Robert Antoniazzi (right) and new manager of the Burdekin Motor Inn, Kris.

## More big race days ahead in Home Hill

Enjoy a day out under the big trees at the Home Hill Race Track as the Burdekin Race Club features their forthcoming events—

**Next meeting: February 17**

**April 6, 2024**

**May 18, 2024**

**(Growers Race Day)**



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



The vacant site where the former Home Hill Co-Operative Traders complex once stood.

## Vacant site ready for new development in Home Hill CBD

**Continued from Page 1—**

Over time, those businesses either moved or closed down until the complex was completely empty.

In the December, 2022 issue of *The Home Hill News*, we announced that “a new service station could be built in the Home Hill Central Business District” on the site of the Co-Op buildings.

The project has since received the approval of the Burdekin Shire Council and the town has been waiting for future progress to take place on the project, which will further change Home Hill’s CBD status from no service sta-

tions at all, to the former BP Service Station being purchased and upgraded into a United Service Station.

The new project on the HH Co-Op site will further enhance the aesthetic value of the southern end of the town’s entrance.

The former buildings were quickly demolished in the middle of January, removing all buildings on the site, as well as several large trees that were prominent at the rear of the Co-Op complex at that end of the main street.

The Home Hill Prawn Stop building remains in the former bakery at the corner of Eighth Avenue and Fifth Street.

## Weather forces Church Nativity into new venue

THE first attempt by the Burdekin Uniting Church to host a Carols in the Park Program in the Home Hill Memorial Park in the lead-up to Christmas, 2023, found organisers having to fight against the weather conditions, which forced the event indoors at the Home Hill Uniting Church.

The church had planned community carols singing and a Nativity Play telling the story of the first Christmas – with those events going ahead as planned, although heavy rain prior to the event resulted in the activities being held in a crowded Home Hill Uniting Church building to the accompaniment of the members of the Burdekin Brass Band and the Home Hill Choral Society.



Members of the Uniting Church congregation participate in the Nativity Play at the Carols program which had to be transferred to the Home Hill Church building

However, the change of venue did not take away from the success of the Carols program, with the audience still able to follow the story of the first Christmas as planned.

The Nativity Play involved several members of the church congregation, ranging from the very young through to the more mature members taking the parts of the three wise men.

## Enter NOW in the Burdekin Artisan unique Rags to Runway event

The Burdekin Artisan Community Association Inc. is once again giving anyone with the ability to sew the opportunity to enter in their annual Rags to Runway competition.

The event has been held annually for several years and is a popular and unique part of the Burdekin entertainment calendar.

The competition this year will be held in the Greek Hall, Home Hill on Saturday evening, April 27 and entries will close on Friday, March 15.

Entrants will be able to choose between five categories, the same as

the last two years—Junior (Up to 13 years and 14 to 18 years), Budget, Trendsetter, Racewear Budget, Open and Accessories.

The event aims to encourage people not to just throw away clothing but to remake it into a garment worthy of being worn on a catwalk or buy used clothing from a second hand shop and remodel it.

Entry Forms are available by email to [artipeople99@yahoo.com](mailto:artipeople99@yahoo.com); by message on Facebook or at the Artisans premises at 170 Eighth Avenue, Home Hill.



# Wild card into Aussie Open for former H.H. tennis player

THE excellent facilities provided in Home Hill by the town's Tennis Association is proving its worth, as a former member and ex-Home Hill High School student, Adam Walton, put the community on the map in the last three weeks as he gained a wildcard entry into the Australian Open Tennis Tournament in Melbourne, allowing him to compete against the best players in the world.

Adam Walton also proved his worth in competing in the earlier Adelaide International Tournament, where he was highlighted on prime-time television as he performed creditably against much higher ranked players.

Ranked at 158 in the world, the 24-year-old University of Tennessee graduate was beaten by Czech seventh seed, Jiri Lehecka 6-1 6-3 at Memorial Drive in Adelaide and faced the daunting task of taking on Italian, Matteo Arnaldi (ranked 41) over five sets at the Australian Open.

Nine Network Tennis commentators were very complimentary of Walton's developing game during the Adelaide International, with Lleyton Hewitt's former coach, Roger Rasheed believing the Burdekin-ite can make a big impact on the tour, if he can attack more and move forward in the court.

The world's media also paid tribute to Walton's determination, describing how he was willing to fund his own way around the world by purchasing soft drinks, chilling them and selling them to juniors.

Among the crowd at the Australian Open was Ayr Tennis Club coach, Patrea Bojack who

said her squad of local juniors have been inspired by Walton's performances.

"They are so proud that a local tennis player has made it to a major and it can only help teach them that if you are willing to put in the hard work – you can make it," Bojack said.

"He deserves every bit of success because he has done it the hard way by building his game in the professional ranks through the American college system.

I was so pleased when Tennis Australia granted him a Wildcard into the Australian Open, as it can help him access tournaments in other places in the world, plus at the very least, walk away with \$120,000 for being a first round competitor at Melbourne Park."

Patrea Bojack recently returned from a coaching summit at the Brisbane International, where she learnt from the likes of Judy Murray (Andy Murray's mum and coach) on how to develop players from regional backgrounds.

Three-time singles major winner, Andy and his brother, seven-time doubles major champion, Jamie, were born in Glasgow, Scotland and moved to London at an early age to further their talents.

If not for Judy's persistence, Andy could have ended up working alongside Rafael Nadal at his Spanish academy - something that resonates with most Burdekin tennis stars like Walton, who had to move away to improve his game.

A former player on the ITF



Adam Walton in action in an earlier tournament and (inset) serving in a recent event

satellite circuit, Bojack was thrilled to catch up with her former training mate, JP Smith from Townsville, who was playing in the men's doubles at a show court next to Pat Rafter Arena.

Smith made the quarter-finals of both the Brisbane event and Adelaide with his German partner, Andreas Mies and will feature at Melbourne Park in both men's and mixed doubles.

Bojack, who was recently featured on a national coaching handbook for Tennis Australia, says the groundwork for future success on the international stage begins at home with coaching sessions for 2024 beginning on January 30 at the Ayr Tennis Association.

Anyone interested in beginning their tennis journey or continuing their development can contact Patrea Bojack at (0438 821514) or at her Facebook page, Delta Tennis and Gear.



Local tennis coach, Patrea Bojack amongst the crowd at the recent Australian Open



Patrea Bojack with the coaching handbook in which she features.



Judy Murray, mother of International tennis player, Andy Murray, being interviewed at the Australian Open in Melbourne

# New apprentices for Wilmar Sugar Mills

WILMAR Sugar and Renewables has started the new year with the signing on of 34 new apprentices for 2024 across the company's eight Queensland sugar mills, 16 of whom will be based in the Burdekin Region.

The new apprentices completed their two-week Safe Start program in December, 2023 before beginning work at their respective sites in the Burdekin, with seven based in the Herbert region, six at Proserpine Mill and three in the Plane Creek region.

The newest intake of apprentices into the Company's operations cover the key trades of electrical, fitting and turning, boilermaking and diesel fitting.

Training Superintendent, Daniel

Shipard said the two-week Safe Start program prepared the new apprentices for what life would be like in Wilmar's mills.

"It's about getting them to understand Wilmar's safety requirements and procedures, as well as giving them the basic skillset they require to enter their relevant workshops," Mr Shipard said. New Burdekin employee, Hugh Barnicoat, who is starting at Pioneer Mill as a second-year electrical apprentice, said he had transferred to Wilmar from his previous job for greater skill exposure and to be mentored by Wilmar's experienced tradespeople.

"I'm excited to be working with the mill's state of the art equipment, particularly the big switch rooms in the factory," he said.

Plane Creek Mill fitting and turning ap-



New apprentices ready to start work at Wilmar's northern mills are (from left) Lane Corlis, Sabine Turner, Hugh Barnicoat, Dekota Cutuli, Bailey Marini, Cadey McMurray and Hendrikus Voigt

prentice, Hendrikus Voigt said he chose to do an apprenticeship with Wilmar because he believed it would set him up for a strong future.

"I'm looking forward to learning more skills in the workshop and getting my hands on the big lathes. It just blows my mind how big they are and I can't wait to get to work on them," he said.

Proserpine Mill electrical apprentice Jayme Farr said she was thrilled to be doing her trade training in her home town.

"My family has been living in Proserpine since my father was 16 years old and, for over three generations now, we've been breeding horses on our

family farm," she said.

"Being able to do my apprenticeship at Proserpine Mill means that I can be home every afternoon to spend time working on the farm with my family and compete in campdrafts with my friends on the weekends."

Mr Shipard said he was excited to bring the newest intake of apprentices into Wilmar's operations.

"They're going to be a huge asset to our organisation and we can't wait to see them grow over the next four years of their apprenticeship."

Wilmar is one of North Queensland's largest apprenticeship providers employing about 140 apprentices at any one time.



Electrical apprentices, Hugh Barnicoat, who will be based at Pioneer Mill and Cadey McMurray, who will be at Victoria Mill in the Herbert, are looking forward to working with Wilmar's state-of-the-art equipment.



## Monthly Bible Message

(Contributed)

They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cost lots.

- Psalm 22, Verse 18

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# Frustration over local crime

DRASTIC action has been called for from the Queensland State Government by residents and business owners of the Burdekin who are “frustrated” with the spiralling crime rate, according to Member for Burdekin, Dale Last.

Mr Last heard firsthand from locals earlier this week as they shared their experiences with him as victims of crime.

“People are frustrated and angry due to the actions of a small group of offenders, who are running riot in the Burdekin,” he said.

“Queenslanders have the right to feel safe no matter where they live and that is a right that this state government has ignored for years now.

“Burdekin residents are demanding an immediate increase in Police numbers at both Ayr and Home Hill stations, as well as additional plain clothes officers.”

Mr Last said the group had also called for government-funded secu-

rity patrols, because they no longer feel safe. “Between July, 2022 and December last year, we saw Police Officer numbers in Queensland fall by 322,” he said.

“Requests for additional Police in the Burdekin have fallen on deaf ears and it is the community that is left to pay the price.

‘It shouldn’t be the responsibility of community members to conduct patrols after hours to determine young thugs.

“Community safety is a state government responsibility and, just like people throughout the Burdekin, I am sick and tired of this state government’s empty words and broken promises.”

Attendees at this weeks meeting were also scathing of the judicial process and believe juvenile offenders are not being held to account. “We have the situation where a local tradesman no longer takes appointments on a Monday morning because he knows he will spend every Monday morning repairing damage to schools caused by a small group of thugs,” he said. “That is completely unacceptable anywhere in Queensland, let alone in a community like the Burdekin.”



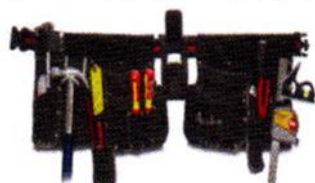
A burnt-out utility near the Home Hill cemetery

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A tree in Seventh Street brought down a power line servicing the area

## Cyclone brings mixed fortunes

THE Home Hill community faced mixed fortunes as Cyclone Kirrily forced a path through the North Queensland area before Australia Day, with some residents feeling it was a “fizzer” with little damage apart from a few broken branches on residential trees, while others found themselves without power for a period of time.

The cyclone was hard to prepare for as its actual course towards the coast seemed to vary over a considerable amount of time leading into its final crossing of the coast just north of Townsville.

Prior to that, it was predicted to be heading for south of the city and then directly for Townsville itself.

However, the Home Hill region “missed a bullet” as a lack of rain with the strong winds resulted in very little

damage, apart from cane blown over, a number of trees down, which also brought power lines down and debris from trees and bushes spread around the area. That tree rubbish was evident by the large number of motor vehicles of all shapes, sizes and colours – many with trailers attached – making a trip to the Home Hill dump in the days after to leave their rubbish behind. Home Hill residents seemed to be well prepared for “Kirrily” with many going to the SES headquarters to fill sand bags, resulting in the SES Group having to arrange for extra loads of sand to be dumped at the site to accommodate all comers.

The Local SES Group was also backed up by more emergency personnel from the south, with some personnel from the Sunshine Coast area enjoying the benefits of the coffee at Home Hill News & Coffee as they waited for the cyclone to cross the coast.



A tree that came down on a motor vehicle in Home Hill

# Race Club honours dedicated volunteers

THE Burdekin Race Club has recognised the services given to the club mostly on a voluntary basis with the presentation of Life Memberships to four long-time members and volunteer service presentations to another two couples, who have devoted a lifetime of assistance to the sport they love.

During a race meeting held at the club prior to Christmas, Club President Ricky Gudge recognised the contribution of Jim and Fay Olsen and Mitchell and Margaret Gudge in a large range of roles at the club over many years, while Life Memberships were presented to long-time Club Steward, Doug Chappell, former Burdekin Delta Turf Club member, Robyn Hewson, former President and Vice President, Torrie Davies and marketing and sponsorship organiser from the earliest days of the Burdekin Grower Race Days, Jan Davies.

During a break in the afternoon of racing, Mr Gudge used the occasion before a good crowd to honour the ten long-term club members who had devoted many years to the continuing success of the Burdekin Race Club.

A presentation was initially made to Home Hill couple, Jim and Faye Olsen in appreciation of the work they undertook throughout the year at the club, with a gift voucher presented to Faye and a watch to Jim.

Mr Gudge said Mr Olsen was particularly involved in maintaining the club's machinery including their tractors.

Similar presentations were made to Mitchell and Margaret Gudge, who were unable to be present at the Race Meeting, for their dedicated volunteering over many years at the club.

The first of four Life Memberships was presented by Mr Gudge to Doug "Chippo" Chappell, who is

widely known around race tracks throughout the north, where he has worked in numerous stewarding roles since he first touched the code as a teenager.

Racing stalwart Doug Chappell, who was born-and-bred in Home Hill and still resides there as a 78-year-old, was awarded Life Membership of the Burdekin Race Club after around 60 years of involvement.

He was employed as an advisory steward for the best part of 40 years and ran the majority of race meetings at tracks such as Home Hill, Bowen and Collinsville during that time.

In more recent years, as he has got on in age, he has stepped back from that role but has continued to be hands-on with racing as the club steward for the Burdekin Club.

"I was real thrilled," Chappell told a Queensland Racing scribe. "I got the shock of my life when I was told. I was thrilled over it. It has been a big journey."

North Queensland senior steward, Darryl Griffith has worked shoulder-to-shoulder with his mate, "Chippo" for decades and applauded the Home Hill-based club for handing him the honour. "Doug has worked in many positions on the club and has been a club steward for over 30 years assisting the QRIC stewards on race day," Griffith said.

"He also does untold voluntary work for the Burdekin Council and helps organise and work at many local functions. He has lived a very interesting life."

Growing up as a carpenter, Chappell completed a job at the race track as an 18-year-old and stayed on to give them a hand before eventually joining the club as a member.

Not long after, he was drafted to



Race Club President, Ricky Gudge (right) and Secretary/Treasurer, Leanne Gudge (second from left) with recognised volunteers, Jim and Faye Olsen.

the Vietnam War and when he eventually returned to Australia, his connection to the industry accelerated as an advisory steward. "It was always a challenge, when you are doing it alone as a steward in those days, it is a lot," he reflected.

Chappell also spent some time in more recent years working at tracks such as Hughenden and Corfield in North-West Queensland.

"I love that you meet so many people," Chappell said. "I really enjoyed it."

"And, then in my later years, I did the western meetings and I met a lot of people out there and everywhere you go, you always see them again. I really liked that."

President Ricky Gudge said "Chippo" helped out the stewards on race day from a club perspective.

"He will go and get the odds from the bookmakers, get the horses in line for a pre-parade to go out in order – similar things like that." Chappell has long been instrumental in local community events such as the Home Hill Harvest Festival, the Local Ambulance service as well as the Home Hill Rodeo and he was also a top rugby league player in his younger days.

"He loves being a part of it all," Gudge, who is also a local trainer,

said. "He is involved in everything and tries to help

"His experience is something that has always been helpful in different areas.

"His knowledge out in the saddling enclosure of what needs to be done, it takes the weight off some of us who would normally be helping.

"He is always available when we have working bees at the club and helps out the bookmakers for the draws where they stand. He helps out wherever he can."

With around 60 years of experience and knowledge of racing in the area, Chappell thinks the sport in North Queensland – and specifically at Home Hill – is in as positive a place as it has ever been.

"Ricky and his family, with his wife, Leanne, who is secretary/treasurer of the club, have done a wonderful job with our club," Chappell said.

"They have brought this club up to being one of the best clubs in the area."

As well as Chappell, fellow stalwart, Robyn Hewson was also given Life Membership for services to the club over many years.

After being a member of the former Burdekin Delta Turf Club in Ayr for many years, Ms Hewson moved to the new Burdekin Race



# Busy two months for Burdekin Race Club

THE Burdekin Race Club has successfully completed two successful months of racing to finish the 2023 year and to start the 2024 year – with two TAB meetings shown around the nation and featuring eight-race programs adding to the final December Club meeting, that drew families out to help celebrate the festivities.

The December meeting allowed the Burdekin Club to recognise the contribution made to the club by their late Patron, Trevor Davies, who passed away recently, with four of the races named after Mr Davies' horses – Molongle Chief, Molongle Magic, Molongle Dream and Molongle Surprise – while the fifth of the races was named the Patron Trevor Davies Memorial.

That race, over 1180 metres, was won by top weight, Mr Tangles (Scott Sheargold), trained in Rockhampton by Darryl Johnston and owned by Mrs M.A. Togne and Mr John Togne, who accepted the trophy.

At the presentation after the race by Mr Davies' son-in-law and daughter, Phil and Kim Cole, Charters Towers trainer, Brian Williams, who trained all of Trevor Davies horses, described Trevor Davies as "a very good bloke to train for". He told the crowd that one of the better wins he had, was by Molongle Dream, which won a \$50,000 QTIS race.

The meeting also featured the presentation of Life Memberships to

four long-serving volunteer members of the Burdekin Race Club, while four other members received presentations to recognise the contribution they had made to the club over many years. The Club also celebrated Christmas with presents and other gifts for all children on course, with Santa Claus making an appearance to help with the festivities.

THE Burdekin Club was also well supported by owners and trainers at a TAB meeting held on the Home Hill track on Thursday, December 28, with eight races providing plenty of entertainment for the large crowd at the mid-week meeting.

Horses travelled from all over the state from north to Cairns, west to Mount Isa and south-east Queensland, with some of the nominations having raced before that meeting at Doomben in Brisbane.

Success came to Home Hill trainer, Darcy Moss in the third race, the Happy Holidays Benchmark 70 Handicap over 1460 metres with Private Cheetah (Raul Silvera Olivera) winning from Lady Rain (Lacey Morrison) with Vienna Rain (Morgan Butler) in third place.

THE Burdekin Club was due to host another TAB meeting on Friday, January 12, but wet weather in the week prior resulted in the meeting being transferred to Wednesday, January 17 with another eight-event program again drawing strong fields



Santa Claus was busy at the Home Hill Race Track prior to Christmas as children lined up to receive their gifts during the afternoon

of horses from all over the state.

The racing proved eventful for track officials with the first race featuring a false start after the last horse to be loaded into the barriers lunged at the stall, opening all the gates and setting the entire field off down the track. However, the horses did not go far before they were pulled up and after a vet check, all except the bottom weight, Mishani Style were passed to run and the field was set on their way successfully the second time around.

In the last race, one horse, Lucia Maria (Dale Evans) was declared a late scratching after being vet checked

while Miss Helmut lost its rider at the start and after following the field for the entire race, did another circuit of the track before entering into the public area in front of the grandstand at speed, where it was pulled up and taken back into the saddling enclosure.

A report after the meeting indicated that the favourite, Ruby Sparkles "took a right hand turn when gates opened at Home Hill" with "Lilliana McCormack, who came off following the interference".

The Ambulance was still on the track treating the jockey, Lilliana McCormack, well after the completion of the race.

THE next meeting at the Burdekin Club will be on Saturday, February 17.



Home Hill trainer, Darcy Amos welcomes (8) Private Cheetah (Raul Silvera Olivera) back to the saddling enclosure after winning the third race on Thursday, December 28



Miss Helmut is led from the public area in front of the grandstand into the saddling enclosure after its rider, Lilliana McCormack was dislodged in a tangle at the start of the last race in Home Hill on Wednesday, January 17



*Direct from Dale*

**Dale LAST MP** Member for **Burdekin**

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**Welcome to 2024**

HAPPY New Year to you and yours! I hope that everyone had the opportunity to enjoy the festive season. We are only a few weeks into the new year and it is already looking to be another jam-packed 12 months ahead. This year will see both local and state government elections being held in Queensland, so please take the time to ensure that your electoral enrolment details are up to date.

**Parliament Update**

PARLIAMENT does not resume for 2024 until early February and as a consequence, I have taken the opportunity to travel around the electorate and catch up with constituents, business owners, farmers and community groups. Of course, we have seen some major changes within the Labor government over the course of the Christmas break and with that, changes have also been made within the Shadow Ministry. While I remain, first and foremost, the Member for Burdekin, I have now taken on the additional role of Shadow Minister for Natural Resources and Mines whilst retaining Fire and Emergency Services, Corrective Services and Rural and Regional Affairs.

**Christmas Appeal Success**

I WOULD like to take the time to offer my thanks to everyone who donated to my Christmas appeal. Once again, the generosity of the Burdekin community shone through at a time when members of our community are doing it tough. (TOP PHOTO—Dale Last MP with School Chaplain, Gwen Marshall; and BOTTOM—Dale Last MP (centre) with Ayr Men’s Shed representatives, President Rob Ritchie (left) and member, Steve Bridges)



**Congratulations to all Australia Day Award recipients**

ONCE again this year, I have had the privilege of joining celebrations to recognise some of our community’s most valued members. I would like to personally congratulate each and every award recipient from this year’s Australia Day ceremonies. You are all an invaluable credit to the communities you contribute to.

**Here to help**

IF YOU, or someone you know, has an issue that you/they 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](mailto:burdekin@parliament.qld.gov.au) .

*Until next time, stay safe and well—Dale*

**Burdekin Region Mills Weekly Production Figures**

**Weeks 26 —ending December 2, 2023**

Cane crushed—	This Week	Season to Date
Invicta	70,267	3,147,030
Pioneer	74,089	1,666,567
Kalamia		1,509,152
Inkerman	31,370	1,711,082
Burdekin	175,685	8,033,831

**CCS**

Invicta	14.34	14.94
Pioneer	14.28	14.87
Kalamia		14.32
Inkerman	14.40	14.55
Burdekin	14.37	14.72



**Comments —**

**Week 24—**The Burdekin mills processed just over 175,000 tonnes of cane for the week. This was the last cane processed for the 2023 season. Inkerman Mill finished on 29 November, followed by Invicta on the 30 November then Pioneer on 3 December. Kalamia Mill had crushed out on 17 November. The season-to-date total for the Burdekin mills is 8.03M tonnes and all available cane was harvested. The average weekly CCS dropped due to cane quality and some isolated showers. The provisional season average CCS is 14.72 which is higher than originally forecast. The highest CCS sample of 17.7 was from a rake of Q208-4R harvested in the Selkirk Productivity Area. Although the production season is now over in the Burdekin, our track maintenance vehicles will continue to move across the network. The 2023 season was largely incident free, which is evidence that both locals and visitors were using their train brains. Well done to all.



John Tait,  
Cane Supply Manager,  
Burdekin Region



## Uli Liessmann comments . .

With a bit of common sense and deliberation, thanks to the tree loppers for being reasonable and willing to listen. This old paperbark tree and many nesting sites were saved from the chainsaw here in Home Hill.



It got a trim up and it remains a wildlife sanctuary.

We need to keep as many trees as possible for the environment that is if the tree is safe and in no way a threat to a dwelling or traffic. I think this was a win for all involved.

Well, here in pictures is the end of an era and the good old days (well I don't know about that) Here are some pictures of work in



progress of knocking down the old Home Hill Cop-Op building which was a farmers-owned enterprise selling hardware, all sort of haberdashery, dresses, and nurse plants among

other things at a discount to members who had shares in it. The business was viable it went well for years until the community got more mobile and then it was here I come Townsville. Over the years the Co-Op employed many good local people and not enough customers and slowly it was demise and was no longer financially viable. Along came Liessmann and Sons who ran the hardware side of the business before moving down to



Fourth St. with their good customers following for whom we are grateful.

A changing of the times. At one time we all knew who the residents were in other words everyone knew everyone. Now here we are in a New Year, and you look around and think where have the years and where have the people we all knew gone? Now 80 percent of the people you see you have no idea who they are. So, the question is had we got to know everyone in town? I do not know about that.

Yes, we know all the older residents and they are getting fewer every year, and some of the younger people too. At one time you and I would just about know everyone is this a good or sad thing? In my job we get to meet new people all the time both young and not so young who have moved to Home Hill. I engage them with a few jokes and inquire why they chose our town of Home Hill; most answers are the housing prices are realistic and moved here because of the unaffordable house prices elsewhere. Or they have driven through and liked the look of the place and then brought property



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

here to either live in or as a rental. We make them feel welcome and help them with the many questions they have. They come from interstate as well as throughout Queensland and yes, we need all the newcomers that we can get, thanks for choosing Home Hill to settle down in, and in the future, we will again know each other better and you will become a Homehillian which is not so bad.

ANZAC Day is not so far away and there are some changes in the procedure of the day, all will be held in Memorial Park at the War Memorial Cenotaph. The timetable will remain the same throughout. Please note the main change is that the Dawn service at 5.25am will no longer be held in front of the Memorial Hall, it will now be held at the War Memorial Cenotaph in the park. The cemetery service at 6am remains the same and the Gunfire Breakfast is at the hall at 7am. There are no other changes to the itinerary, and this includes the main street march Parade at 10.45am. The Cenotaph Service after the street march at 11.20am. For any other information regarding the ANZAC Day parade please contact any RSL member.

The next big event in the Burdekin Shire will be the local Council election. So, what does this mean to you? Well besides the cost of living and this means the rates will surely go up. The figures on the bottom of your rate notice is what counts but do not be fooled by the term general rates, ask what are all the other increases which are not advertised, increases on everything. Ask the questions and get answers before committing yourself on who you will vote for. find out what the old or new candidates stand for or better still what do they believe in. Council is far from not having money and helping the rate payer will help the Shire in general and ease some of the daily cost of living. Council must get its priorities right, just a small suggestion how about white lines throughout the shire this is a safety issue and will benefit everyone. The other one is a foot-path sweeper again a benefit for the shire, both the two items are not million dollar projects, but the benefits are for everyone, not like some other mulita million dollars projects which are aimed for a select few.

On a personal note, thanks to the Council gardeners and the library also the great IT department at the library. The ladies at the front Council counter need a price rise as they are always helpful and get back to you if they cannot answer right away. Now if the rest of Council worked as well as the above mentioned, they would almost be perfect.

These are my opinions and views only. To contact me, please phone (mobile) 0439 822 064 [www.uliliessmann.com.au](http://www.uliliessmann.com.au)

Uli Liessmann

# Flying Fox Dispersal activities in Home Hill

FLYING fox dispersal activities have taken place in Kidbys Gully, Arch Dunn Park and other known roost sites in Home Hill over the past month prior to the arrival of Cyclone Kirrily as part of the Burdekin Shire Council's approved permit from the Department of Environment, aiming to reduce the impact of flying foxes on the nearby residents and businesses.

Mayor Lyn McLaughlin said the dispersal activities used non-lethal methods, such as light and sound devices, gas guns and ammunition shots. She reassured residents that Council had to adhere to the per-

mit conditions, which saw no flying fox harmed in the dispersal activities.

"The methods used by Council officers are humane and effective, and comply with the permit conditions and animal welfare standards," she said. Dispersals were undertaken every Tuesday and Friday from approximately 4.30am to 7am until February 2, 2024.

Cr McLaughlin said intense dispersal would commence in the first week of February, every day for one week. "Following on, subsequent dispersals will be as necessary, depending on the flying fox population," she said.

## 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; or

**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](http://play.tennis.com.au/homehilltennis)).

**Home Hill Community Sports Club Inc.** (0468 313 115) offers roll-up bowls Thursdays and Sundays at 12.30pm with an open bar. Things to do at the Club—**MONDAY:** Low Impact Classes at 9am; **TUESDAY:** Trimmers at 9am; **WEDNESDAY:** Arts and Crafts at 9am. The Club is also available for hire.

**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.