

# Talking Tablelands

with Adam Marshall MP

your Member for Northern Tablelands

Parliamentary Secretary for Northern NSW and Renewable Energy



## Merry Christmas

WELL, what a year we've had and I hope it's also been a good one for you too.

We started the year with a green light for the Sapphire wind farm project west of Glen Innes and by year's end we've seen the first arrivals of the giant turbines for the neighbouring White Rock wind farm. Renewable energy projects will drive jobs and development and cement our position as the leading regional location for investment and energy infrastructure.

This year saw the full switchover of Armidale to the NBN in February and November brought the icing on that broadband cake with the naming of Armidale as the new TAFE NSW digital hub.

There was a record injection in the NSW budget for this electorate, \$117.8million, with \$65million for roads, and some big ticket items for water, health and hospitals. We've had a start on the \$60million Armidale hospital, a recommitment on the \$30m for Inverell, and money for Glen Innes.

The campaign Judges for the Bush – a push to get a District Court judge appointed for the Moree, Armidale and Tamworth circuits to be located in one of our regional centres – so they reflected and were reflective of our rural standards was a success.

Our Daylight Saving petition – to bring the clocks back by a month – has won incredible support, and educationists are still telling me of the significant wins Gonski and literacy and numeracy strategy funding are having in their schools.

Despite my vocal opposition and protestations, Guyra Shire has been forced into a merger to form the Armidale Regional Council but Uralla remains an entity on its own.

Some other good news was the \$2million invested to restore the rail line at Moree under the Fixing Country Rail program which reinstates a 2.8km section of the Moree/Inverell line. This will take around 6,000 trucks off local roads and save farmers on their freight costs.

We've had another year where our richest resource has been acknowledged although not ever enough in my opinion. People, our residents, make us what we are in this world and their individual and collaborative and cooperative value can never be underestimated.

We paid homage to those who serve above their duty, including police, volunteers and veterans, school kids, teachers, and oldies and business types doing significant but sometimes unheralded deeds that contribute to our sense of community and practically to our communities.

May your Christmas be a merry and safe one and a Happy New Year to you all.

## Armidale the new home to TAFE Digital

THE decision to make Armidale the home of the new headquarters for TAFE NSW Digital from April 2017 will bring more than 40 new local jobs alongside providing state-of-the-art learning experiences for TAFE NSW students across the State.

I joined Deputy Premier and Minister for Skills, John Barilaro for the announcement on November 22 at the TAFE NSW Armidale campus and it's one of the biggest wins for this electorate so far.

The choice of Armidale as the location for this hub proves technology can trump the tyranny of distance when it comes to digital jobs and learning.

TAFE NSW Digital will be responsible for developing digital, world-leading content for use throughout TAFE NSW's footprint.

In his announcement, the Deputy Premier noted that the amount of students taking up online learning with TAFE NSW continues to grow and

our government is focusing our resources on meeting the demands of students.

Students now want convenient and accessible training anywhere, anytime – it could be face-to-face, online, in the workplace, or a blend of all three.

I'm incredibly excited about this and I think it will be just the beginning of more positive initiatives for Armidale and the broader region. The public service can be managed from regional centres, certainly in many cases, much more cheaply too.

Armidale will become a central edu-tech hub with streamlined course content development, innovative and compatible opportunities for local industries, and local partnerships with businesses in the region.

The region already has an impressive reputation for its educational facilities, and the addition of the new TAFE NSW Digital headquarters is great news for the future of Armidale.



The Deputy Premier and Managing Director for TAFE NSW John Black also announced the appointment of Megan Aitken as General Manager for the TAFE NSW Digital headquarters and Lyn Rickard as Head of Education.

## Adam Marshall MP

**Armidale office:** Suite 1, 175 Rusden Street, Armidale NSW 2350 **Phone:** 02 6772 5552 **Fax:** 02 6772 5026

**Moree office:** Suites 2-6, 161 Balo Street, Moree NSW 2400 **Phone:** 02 6752 5002 **Fax:** 02 6752 6102

**Mail:** PO Box 77, Armidale NSW 2350 **Email:** northerntablelands@parliament.nsw.gov.au

**Web:** www.adammarshall.com.au





Deputy Premier John Barilaro visited Inverell Hospital while in the region last month.

## Inverell hospital plans on track

I'm confident - and I think the community can be too - that planning is on track for the \$30million redevelopment of Inverell District Hospital.

During his first visit to Inverell as Deputy Premier on November 22, I had the chance to help brief John Barilaro on the planning progress for the project - and impress on the new Nationals State leader the need to

continue infrastructure works in regional centres like Inverell, that are really kicking goals.

At this stage plans should be finalised by the end of the financial year which means we should be able to access the funding for the infrastructure and I look forward to updating you on this in the New Year.

## Armidale underway

THE \$60 million redevelopment of the Armidale Hospital is finally underway. Local company Richard Crookes Constructions has the main contract but there has been extensive consultation and liaison with Health Infrastructure, the project designers, and senior facility planners within Hunter New England Health and the Armidale hospital.

We should get a purpose-built building for the specific health needs of the thousands of patients and hundreds of staff who are part of the Armidale Rural Referral Hospital.

There will be a new emergency department, new critical care unit, new in-patient ward, new operating theatres and a new sterilising unit - and even more.

This new hospital complex will meet current needs but importantly cater for the next 20 to 30 years of a facility that is so critical to the wider community.



Turning the first sod at the Armidale hospital redevelopment site.

## Power plans boost our renewable future

A \$500 MILLION State Government environmental funding package announced in November offers us real and realistic rural and regional benefits that would boost jobs and investment through renewable energy projects.

The five-year funding plan for a range of innovative environmental programs will be a huge shot in the arm for country economies, not just in jobs and investment growth, but also in lower electricity bills and energy savings.

We are in the perfect place, not just geographically, but also practically, philosophically and logically to reap real benefits from this planning.

We're already committed in this region - at Uralla, with that Net-Zero emissions type of philosophy for the future, and wider afield with other solar projects such as the bulk-buy solar hot water and household and business power programs, and the giant wind and solar farm projects.

## \$4m extra Gonski funding for schools

NORTHERN tablelands public schools will get a 23 per cent increase, an additional \$4 million, in needs-based recurrent funding in 2017.

I'm a passionate advocate of the Gonski education reforms and this year, the third under the allocation model saw our schools' funding increased by \$3.2 million.

With these extra resources for 2017, our local Northern Tablelands schools will benefit from an additional \$11.48 million in recurrent funding under the

NSW Government's Resource Allocation Model (RAM) - and there's more to come.

In total, the 59 Northern Tablelands public schools will receive \$21.25 million in needs based equity funding next year.

It's what NSW public schools have always wanted - a significant increase in funding guaranteed into the future, with the greatest benefits flowing to schools and students with the greatest need.

## ACCC report on Armidale fuel prices a farce

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) released its 72-page 'Report on the Armidale petrol market' in November and quite frankly it says nothing to me other than that we as motorists are being screwed - and nothing is set to be done to stop that.

The report is the result of an investigation into the Armidale retail fuel sector first announced in

August 2015 and was expected to deliver fairer pricing practices to consumers but contains no new information and certainly delivers no outcome or action and I'm disappointed beyond belief.

It states the obvious - that Armidale motorists have been paying on average around 8 cents per litre more than motorists in the five largest cities.

We will fight on for a fairer deal.

## Record \$11.2 million flow for Moree Plains water

MOREE Plains Shire Council has received \$11.21 million under the NSW Government's Regional Water and Waste Water Program to upgrade Moree's water supply system and provide potable reticulated water to the villages of Ashley and Biniguy.

There is \$4.3 million for the project at Ashley which will provide drinking water for the local community as well as adequate flows for fire-fighting.

There is \$3.96 million to construct a 11.5 kilometre water pipeline from Pallamallawa to Biniguy. It

includes an upgrade of the existing water supply treatment facility in Pallamallawa to improve water there and a new transfer pump and bolster chlorination facility.

The Moree water supply project has been allocated \$3.12 million to drill bores at south Moree to address the low water pressure situation in that area. This will also alleviate problems for the local fire brigade with water pressure and availability.



Moree Plains Shire Council will receive \$11.2 million to upgrade work supply systems in the district.

# Working for the Northern Tablelands

## Public Reserve Management Fund

- ✓ **\$11,806** to replace a concrete floor and erect an accessible toilet at the **Gurley Public Reserve**.



- ✓ **\$29,640** for a *Fitness for the Future* assessment of the **Moree Showground**.
- ✓ **\$1,810** to build an access ramp to the activity room at **Moree's Moreena Aged Care facility**.
- ✓ **\$16,219** for an upgrade to the boundary fence and gates at the **Boomi Sportsground**.
- ✓ **\$28,985** to construct a family recreation area at the **Warialda racecourse**.
- ✓ **\$40,000** for a new canteen at the **Dundee sportsgrounds**.



- ✓ **\$25,000** to resurface two netball courts at **Wilson Park, Glen Innes**.
- ✓ **\$25,337** for weed management and boundary fence upgrade at the **Glen Innes racecourse**.
- ✓ **\$29,800** for some maintenance work on the **Glencoe Sportsground building**.
- ✓ **\$15,458** to install a ceiling in the **Tent Hill Public Hall**.



- ✓ **\$87,000** to install new toilet facilities at the **Armidale Playhouse**.
- ✓ **\$57,282** to upgrade the entrance to the **Armidale Showgrounds** and update electrical wiring in the pavilion.
- ✓ **\$25,118** for new rain tanks at the **Hillgrove Public Hall**.
- ✓ **\$29,868** for fencing and yard work at the **Delungra Recreation Reserve**.

- ✓ **\$8,800** for new cut-out yards at **Ashford Showgrounds**.



- ✓ **\$45,786** to repair and upgrade the kitchen and bathroom at the **Guyra War Memorial Hall**.
- ✓ **\$2,277** to repair the leaking roof at the **Tingha Caravan Park**.
- ✓ **\$9,257** to install shade shelters at the **Inverell Motorsports complex**.
- ✓ **\$3,000** to install solar panels at **Myall Creek Community Hall**.



- ✓ **\$1.66 million** to install and upgrade fire systems at **Copeton Dam Water Park**.
- ✓ **\$45,540** to erect a storage shed and accessible toilet at **Nullamanna Public Hall**.
- ✓ **\$21,305** to repair the termite damage of the prison cells at the old **Bundarra Courthouse**.



- ✓ **\$7,818** to install four new water troughs and portable seating at the **Bundarra Showgrounds**.

## Funding windfalls

- ✓ **\$5,000** to help build covered walkways at **Gilgai Public School**.
- ✓ **\$43,800** Social Housing Community Improvement Fund for a recreational upgrade to the **Ross Hill Reserve at Inverell**.
- ✓ **\$50,000** to construct an amenities block in the multipurpose hall at **Minimbah School**.



- ✓ **\$2.2 million** for **Centacare** offices in Armidale, Inverell, Glen Innes, Tamworth and Gunnedah for the Youth on Track program which co-ordinate services for 10-17 year olds at risk of long-term involvement in the criminal justice system.

- ✓ **\$4,000** grant for **Moree NSW RFS** to purchase a new specialist firefighting hose nozzle



- ✓ **\$47,000** for fencing around Homes North properties in **Glen Innes**.
- ✓ **\$3,500** for special needs students at **Duval High School** to create a classroom vegetable garden.
- ✓ **\$3,500** for a food garden and chicken coop at **Yetman Public School**.
- ✓ **\$3,500** for a bush tucker garden at **Bingara Central School**.



- ✓ **\$9,800** for **Northern Tablelands Fishing Clubs** to teach young kids how to catch fish.
- ✓ **\$5,000** for new seating at **Boomi Sportsground**
- ✓ **\$2,000** for **Armidale National Servicemen's Association** to purchase a printer for monthly publication
- ✓ **\$500,000** for capital works project for schools in **Northern Tablelands**
- ✓ **\$4,479** for **Bingara Anglers Club and Hatchery** to purchase new pump and airlines for breeding tanks

## Fixing country roads and rail

- ✓ **\$1.9 million** for essential maintenance work on the **New England Highway north of Uralla**
- ✓ **\$2 million** to restore 2.8-kilometre section of the Moree to Inverell railway line to save on freight costs
- ✓ **\$3.6 million** for overtaking lane on the Newell Highway 28km north of Moree at Wallon Creek.



# Tablelands

- ✔ **\$700,000** to upgrade three local roads in the Moree Plains Shire to improve freight links in the district

## Pet ownership programs

- ✔ **\$13,000** grant for the **Moree Plains Shire Council** to promote responsible pet ownership in the local community.
- ✔ **\$15,000** grant for the **Armidale Regional Council** to hold free microchipping and community education days.
- ✔ **\$6,952** for the **Gwydir Shire Council** to hold free microchipping days at Bingara, Warialda and Gravesend.



## Arts and culture

- ✔ **\$25,000** for **Glen Innes Local Aboriginal Land Council** to record and document the language of the only known Ngorabul speaker in the district.
- ✔ **\$51,000** for the *Stuff of Tales* cultural art projects in Armidale, Glen Innes, Bingara, Uralla, Tamworth and Werris Creek
- ✔ **\$60,000** for the **Armidale Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place** to extend its programs and offer more cultural artworks to the public



- ✔ **\$2,000** grant to the **Deepwater Jockey Club** to help publish an historical record that traces its proud racing heritage
- ✔ **\$15,500** to help **Moree Plains Shire Council** preserve more of the community's local heritage
- ✔ **\$5,000** for 2017 **Moree Reconciliation** awards
- ✔ **\$59,000** to **Moree Plains Gallery** to renovate the bathrooms
- ✔ **\$60,000** to **New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale**, to replace the cladding on the exterior of the building



# Congratulations

## Education

GLEN INNES artist and arts administrator Stephanie Brummell has won a \$10,000 scholarship in the NSW Government Young Regional Artists Scholarship program.

The scholarship will allow her to further develop her skills in contemporary textile arts practice.



CONGRATULATIONS to Inverell High School past captain Ashleigh Campbell who was presented with a NSW Minister's Award for Excellence in Student Achievement. Ashleigh was one of only 13 students from across the state to receive this recognition.



WELL done to preschool teachers Lidia Mathews (Moree) and Naomi Hoffman (Guyra) who have been awarded \$10,000 scholarships to help build on their qualifications in early childhood education.



## Humanity awards

DESTINY Mills (PLC Armidale) and Ethan Bellman (Croppa Creek Public School) have received Fred Hollows Humanity Awards in recognition of their care and compassion.



## Apprentice of the Year

I WAS proud to be at the NSW Training Awards in Darling Harbour when Inverell-based Light Vehicle Technician Courtney Harrison won the NSW Apprentice of the Year. She has also been named runner up in the national title for Apprentice of the Year.

Her achievement reflects the passion and commitment she has invested in her studies with TAFE NSW New England Institute and in her apprenticeship with local employer Dieselquip.



## News in the mail

IF you're interested in getting weekly updates about what's happening in the Northern Tablelands electorate, you can elect to receive electronic copies of Adam's weekly column. Let us know via [northerntablelands@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:northerntablelands@parliament.nsw.gov.au) and we'll make sure you go on our mailing list.

## \$16.3 million Moree East Public School rebuild



*Cutting the cake to celebrate the opening of upgrades to Moree East Public School.*

THE new \$16.3 million school upgrade at Moree East Public was officially opened last month. The rebuild has been going on for 18 months and the official opening brought a long held dream to a wonderful reality for the Moree school community.

The major capital investment is part of the Connected Communities Strategy, and includes 15 new and refurbished classrooms, a new administration and reception block, refurbishment of the Careunga building, which serves as a community hub, the renewal of the covered learning area and carpark and improved energy sustainability with installation of solar panels.

Moree East has already seen huge improvements in student results, placed last year in the top 10 per cent of schools across NSW for student learning improvement and on track to be in the top five per cent this year.

## Boost to keep wayward youth on track

A NEW youth justice program being rolled out across the north from this month could help up to 100 young people avoid the cycle of crime.

The Youth on Track program is designed to co-ordinate services for 10-17 year olds at risk of long-term involvement in the criminal justice system.

Centacare New England North West will deliver the program and a grant of \$2.2 million from the State Government will help them co-ordinate the program from offices in Armidale, Inverell, Glen Innes, Tamworth and Gunnedah.

A successful pilot program showed results of up to 90 per cent of young people who participated in Youth on Track either stabilised or reduced their contact with Police and 53 per cent reduced their offending risk factors after three months.

This is about breaking the cycle of offending by offering intensive, personalised help for young offenders and is about trying to change how they think, not so much what they think, so there's less chance of them getting into more serious crime and time in jail.

## Wind blade arrives in Glen Innes



THE first shipment of the huge wind turbine blades set for the \$400 million White Rock Wind Farm near Glen Innes made a spectacular road convoy up the New England Highway earlier this month.

The turbine blades are the largest to arrive in Australia and measure nearly 60 metres in length and weigh about 10 tonnes each. Three blades will be used on each turbine giving them a span of some

120 metres in diameter.

The convoy presented a pretty impressive and imposing sight – and there's much more to come, with an estimated 700 loads over the next six months.

The 175 megawatt White Rock Wind Farm, under construction about 20km west of Glen Innes will initially have 70, 2.5 megawatt turbines, but planning approval has been granted for 119 turbines.

## \$46m technology boost for students

IN OCTOBER I took Education Minister Adrian Piccoli and NSW Department of Education Secretary Mark Scott on a tour of Moree and Boggabilla schools to share the news of the Connecting Country Schools program.

All 59 schools in the Northern Tablelands will share in this \$46 million program which will upgrade schools' Wi-Fi access and internet capacity.

Digital technology is vital to student learning in a modern education system and this upgrade will allow for wireless speeds four times faster than currently available.

There is a learning gap between rural and metropolitan students which needs to be addressed. Country students deserve educational infrastructure that is as good as their city cousin.

## SES to the rescue

FLOOD response capabilities of the Armidale State Emergency Service (SES) Unit have received a huge boost with the presentation of a brand new flood rescue boat in November.

Namoi SES Region Controller Andrew Galvin joined me for a short ceremony to hand over the \$26,900 4.75-metre Jabiru 385 boat to Armidale SES members.

The boat will give a considerable lift to the emergency capabilities of the members of the Armidale unit, who number 43 active volunteers.



## Clocking on to wind back daylight saving

THERE'S been an overwhelming response from not just northerners to a statewide petition to help wind back Daylight Saving by a month, but right across the State and I will be taking that show of strength to parliament early in 2017.

The Standard Time Amendment (Daylight Saving Period Reduction) Bill seeks to bring the end of daylight saving forward one month, from the first Sunday in April to the first Sunday in March each year.

We need to show city people that we have widespread support for this bill. This is a serious issue for people in the bush and the numbers of people who sign it will show that solidarity.

It's not about ending daylight saving but purely about ending it just one month earlier. Across country NSW many people agree that the last month is just a pain; it drags on too long.

## Four new mobile phone towers

MOBILE phone reception blackspots across the region will soon be further reduced with news that four additional locations have been selected for funding to construct new phone towers.

The improvements in network coverage will be delivered through the State Government's investment

of \$15 million into round 2 of the Federal Mobile Blackspot Program.

The towers will be built at Baldersleigh, west of Guyra, Aberfoyle, east of Guyra, Pinkett, east of Glen Innes which are Telstra towers and at Wongwibinda, near Ebor, a Vodafone structure.

# Out and about in the electorate



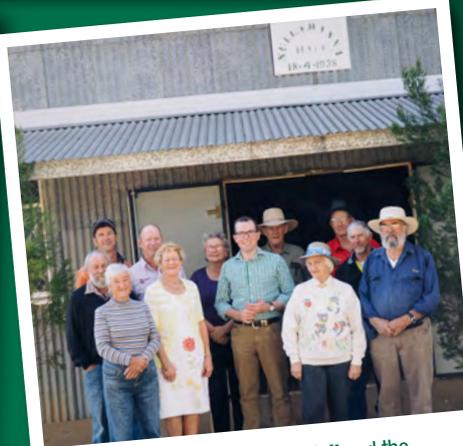
**Special celebrations** are ahead for the Deepwater Jockey Club celebrating their 150th year in January 2017.



**Talking arts** at Mehi Gallery in Moree



**Funds to fix a leaking roof** at the Tingha Caravan Park.



**Nullamanna Memorial Hall** and the hardworking trustees.



**Bingara Anglers Club** – an impressive group of volunteers responsible for keeping the fish biting.



**Meeting paramedics** at the Moree Ambulance Station.



**National Remembrance Day** – a day to honour those police officers who have fallen in the line of duty.



**Lunch time** at Boomi Public School



**Deputy Premier John Barilaro** visits Inverell TAFE