

SE News
HD **Use your melon, please**
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WITHOUT being too parochial, we really are an accommodating lot in the north of the state. Up here, being nice to people just comes natural.

Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Karumba, Bowen, Collinsville all seem to get on with bus-in, bus-out and fly-in, fly-out workers remarkably well. Sad to say this isn't the case in the uppity southern towns of **Chinchilla**, on the Darling Downs, and Injune, north of Roma.

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In **Chinchilla** (its main claim to fame is the annual melon festival), workers from the nearby gas and coal fields are told in no uncertain terms where they can **park** in the main street.

For example, they can't **park** in front of the chemist shop.

Yes, for some reason the car parks in front of the **Chinchilla** chemist shop are out of bounds to gas and coal industry vehicles.

We hear there was a ruckus in the town when some of the locals couldn't get a **park** in front of the chemist shop.

Imagine? What a scandal.

Someone should tell the **Chinchilla** Chamber of Commerce how much money these workers put into these towns.

It's no better in Injune. Back in the 1970s, you couldn't walk down the main street without getting cow dung over your boots. On Saturdays it was fight night at the pub when the ringers came into town.

Now it's all hoity-toity.

Nearby mining and gas workers have been told they can't **park** their vehicles anywhere in the main street.

No, the main drag is reserved for locals. They have to **park** in the backstreets. This is despite a nearby gas project camp purposely not having a fully stocked store on **site** so that the workers all **buy** their supplies in Injune.

The project staff fly into Roma and bus it to the work **site**. On the way the buses stop in Injune so they can **buy** what they need for their three-week shift.

It's great business for the town, but obviously not appreciated by the locals. Up here in the north, we know how to roll out the red carpet to anyone who wants to spend a few bob in our bush towns.

If the KAP fits ... IF there is one politician who must be doing a lot of tossing and turning about what the future holds, it is Member for Dalrymple Shane Knuth.

Will he eat humble pie and go back to the LNP, which he left in 2011 to join Bob Katter's Katter's Australian Party?

The Member for Dalrymple is under a little bit of pressure (read, a lot) from some Charters Towers locals to rejoin the LNP. The reason being is that Charters Towers lies within the boundaries of the KAP-held seat of Kennedy and Mr Knuth's Dalrymple.

As a result, the Towers is not exactly being bowled over with attention by visiting state and federal LNP ministers.

But would the LNP forgive and forget, and welcome their errant son back into the fold? Can a black duck fly through a dust storm? You betcha.

Shane's pain IF there is one town screaming for a new hospital, it is Charters Towers. Florence Nightingale wouldn't feel out of place in the current one. Can Mr Knuth deliver these sort of big-ticket items under the KAP banner? It's all hard yards on that score.

Our Mr Knuth must be wondering about the KAP's longevity as a party. Founding father Bob Katter almost lost his federal seat of Kennedy in last year's election. Bob must be thinking it's time to put the canoe in the water and paddle off into the sunset.

In retirement, he could become a serial writer of Letters to the Editor. Now that's a scary thought if ever there was one.

Shane, meanwhile, is sitting on top of a slippery horse and must wake up in a sweat at night wondering how long KAP will stay in the political game. If it does implode when Bob retires, he must be asking himself "where will that leave me?" The answer to that is: In that proverbial canoe, up Crapanzola Creek without a paddle.

Son also rises WE covered some of this ground a few months ago, but will Bob's son Robbie, KAP's able Member for Mount Isa, have a crack at Kennedy if his dad retires?

He might. But if he doesn't and decides instead to stay and fight on in the state seat of Mount Isa, he may have to go up against Cloncurry Mayor Andrew Daniels. Cr Daniels, you never know, might decide to test the political waters on behalf of the LNP.

Meanwhile, Noeline Ikin, who almost toppled Bob in last year's election, is already campaigning for another tilt.

Robbie could have a fight on his hands no matter which way he jumps. Pub's bitter truth TIMES must be getting tough in the pub game.

A **group** of drinkers decided to pull the plug at one inner-city watering hole when the cost of pots went up to \$4.50 and took their patronage to a North Ward pub.

A few days later, the publican turned up at one of the blokes' homes and asked him what it would take to get them back.

Port prospers THERE are eight cruise ship visits listed for Townsville on the Port of Townsville's website for 2014.

This compares with five last year and four already marked down for next year. Our port contacts tell us the \$85 million terminal has really hit its straps as far as cattle boats, scrap iron boats and car boats are concerned. "They just love that big cement apron," one bloke said.

Meanwhile, the good news is that the coffee shop at the terminal is a goer. Acting chief executive officer at the port Ranee Crosby said Quayside Terminal should be open and operating six days a week in the second quarter of this year.

"The cafe is outside the port gates so you'll be able to come and go as you please when the terminal is not in use," she said.

Hungry crocs ANOTHER estuarine crocodile has drowned in a crab pot in Alligator Creek, south of Townsville.

A smaller croc drowned in a pot a few weeks ago.

This latest one, measuring a healthy 2.48m, got its snout caught in the trap when it tried to get in.

While it was struggling, it managed to get the pot wedged in among some timber under the water. Unable to get to the surface, it drowned.

Cleveland Palm old-timers reckon the long drought has had an impact on the food chain in the creek and that the crocs are hungry. That's why they are hitting the pots.

Fishy farewell LAST week Ronald "Manny" Bloss's mates painted his tinnie black, put his coffin with him in inside it and took him on his last ride to the Manchester cemetery in America's Dauphin County.

Seventy-eight-year-old Manny, a keen fisherman, had died of cancer. Being towed to your own funeral in the fishing boat you loved is not such a bad idea.

Here in Townsville, Ray Valdeter, manager at Morley's Funeral Home, says people have taken their last ride on the backs of semi-trailers and on the trays of Land Cruiser utes. So far, no "tinnies".

"We encourage families to consider doing things like that. It personalises the funeral," Ray said. But what about the law that says everything in trailers, boat and in the backs of utes has to be tied down or have a net over it?

Are you going to throw a cargo net over poor old Uncle Adolpho's coffin as he takes his final ride in his "tinnie" from The Lakes chapel along Hughes Street towards the Belgian Gardens cemetery?

Is this the image of Uncle Adolpho you really want in the family album? Mr Valdeter, as tactful as you would expect an undertaker to be, said "an unobtrusive restraining strap" could be provided.

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