

Warren Goad

Grand knowledge

In the long series of consultations to negotiate the many ideas and concerns with the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline Project, Chris Hewitt once asked Warren Goad where he got so much information.

Mr Goad simply told him: "You've got to go to bowls."

Mr Hewitt said the anecdote reflected what a great communicator Warren Goad was at all levels and how instrumental he was in the long process of community involvement in the project.

Mr Goad was serving on the Community Steering Committee of the pipeline when he died last year.

For the past 15 years he has played an active part in speaking with a diverse range of Wimmera farmers and residents on water issues.

"At the same time he could talk happily with Minister Thwaites and politicians could talk with him and know what he told them was genuine and honest," Mr Hewitt said.

He said Mr Goad was a great listener, finding time to hear everyone's views and spent hours on his computer dispatching emails to keep them informed.

Further information is available by contacting the Horsham Piping It Office on 1300 659 961 or dropping into the office at 42-44 Kalkee Road.

Mr Goad's diplomacy concealed a passion for the water saving project and a particular concern to revive the recreational waterways of the Wimmera.

"He could recall the time when 20 families would be enjoying the swimming and boating at Brim Weir pool on a Sunday afternoon," Mr Hewitt said.

This led to his famous remark on Ian McNamara's ABC program, Australia All Over, where Mr Goad said all he wanted for Christmas was to see the water in Brim Weir Pool.

But Mr Goad was also highly practical and believed in the advantages of the pipeline from first-hand experience.

Mr Hewitt said Mr Goad constructed a water feature at the Brim Golf Club where he was a longtime member and kept meticulous records of the daily evaporation rates.

He showed how a plastic-lined pond could save large amounts of money by halting seepage.

Mr Hewitt also laid an internal piping water system on his own Brim farm and specially adapted his tractor to plough ditches and lay the pipe. This knowledge was invaluable in communicating the benefits of the much larger pipeline project.

"When farmers said piping would be too expensive he would simply say that's rubbish and know to the very dollar how much it had cost him," Mr Hewitt said.

GWMWater chairman Barry Clugston said Mr Goad had a great understanding of water issues in the Wimmera and ability to communicate them directly.

"He once referred to our channels as the Ganges of the Wimmera due to the number of dead sheep and foxes that got caught in them," Mr Clugston said.

He said by highlighting problems with open channels, Mr Goad showed the advantage of an enclosed piping system and the real possibility of improved water quality.

"He had a great ability to explain and articulate complex processes and speak the language of whoever he was talking to," Mr Clugston said.

Mr Hewitt was also able to objectify the many water issues in the Wimmera and convince a wide range of people of a greater good beyond their own issues.

"There was a lot of heat and light around many of the issues but he was able to see through this and help people understand the processes and the long term objectives of the project."

"He would have made a great board member and will be a serious loss to the whole Wimmera community.

"The tragedy is he will not see the project to completion."

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