

Preserving the fruit of friendship

BY MATTHEW CHOWN

THE new Ambassador of Japan to Australia has recognised the significance of Cowra to the relationship of the two nations, visiting before he was officially appointed to the role.

His excellency Shingo Yamagami and his wife Kaoru Yamagami joined Cowra Mayor, Councillor Bill West, Cr Judi Smith and other dignitaries in visiting the Japanese War Cemetery, POW Camp and Japanese Garden.

Mr Yamagami said the visit was an opportunity to reinforce the great relationship between the two nations.

"I'm deeply touched by the sacrifices made by all those who lost their precious lives at the time of the Breakout," he said.

"But I'm also touched by the efforts of Mayor West and the Cowra people who did their best to preserve this cemetery in such a good condition."



Ambassador Yamagami, Mrs Yamagami and Cowra Mayor Bill West lay a wreath at the Japanese War Cemetery.

"I think the dedication, commitment and sacrifices have grown to bear this great fruit of friendship and mutual understanding between Australians and Japanese.

"One previous Ambassador called Cowra the spiritual home of Australian and Japanese relations, I do

fully agree with that statement, we started from here."

Cr Bill West said it was always fantastic to have an Ambassador of Japan visiting.

"We've always had a very close relationship with the Ambassadors, council and the community, we're very keen and supportive of the

Cowra-Japan relationship," he said.

"I see very positive signs with that relationship continuing to grow and that's evidenced by the fact Mr Yamagami and his wife have chosen to visit Cowra even before he has officially become the Ambassador."

Memorial service to be held in Cowra

A STATE memorial service for the Hon. Ian Armstrong AM OBE will take place on at 11am on Monday, February 22 in Cowra.

Mr Armstrong, who lived in Cowra, is the former leader of the NSW Nationals and Deputy Premier of NSW.

He was an advocate for rural communities and responsible for relocating the Department of Agriculture to Orange in 1992 - the single largest decentralisation process undertaken by a government department.

In addition to his contributions as a Minister and as Deputy Premier, his commitment to his electorate of Lachlan never wavered and the area still benefits from his legacy as local member.

He held a number of volunteer positions during his lifetime, and also served as Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

Mr Armstrong was a husband, father, farmer and active participant in civic life, serving with many organisations over the years including Cowra Lions Club, the Cattle Council of Australia, the Australian Stock Horse

Society, the Working Kelpie Council of Australia, Cowra Gun Club, Rural Youth Organisation of NSW, and various show and several service, citizen and sporting clubs.

He remained passionate about his local Cowra community up until his passing on December 15, 2020.

He is survived by his wife Jenny, children Angus and Angela and grandchildren Oliver, Louisa, Bronte and Jock.

Further details about the service are yet to be confirmed, however members of the public wishing to attend must register their interest.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, limited seating is available. Any available seating will be allocated in order of registered interest.

To register interest, email: rsvp2-protocol@dpc.nsw.gov.au

A follow-up email will be sent to advise whether there is capacity to attend. The memorial will also be live-streamed.

In lieu of flowers, Mr Armstrong's family has requested donations be made to Dementia Australia.

Disqualified driver took the risk, got caught

A 46-YEAR-OLD Cowra man has been fined \$1980, disqualified from driving for 12 months and given 12-month community corrections orders at Cowra Local Court.

Timothy John Newham, of William Street, was before the court, charged with two counts of driving a motor vehicle during a disqualification period in two separate incidents.

According to police facts, around 5pm on September 18, 2020, police were travelling along the Grenfell Road when they observed a green Mazda 121.

Police recognised the driver, Newham, and performed a U-turn to pull the vehicle over.

The vehicle stopped on Bramall Street just off the Grenfell Road.

Police spoke to Newham and asked him to produce his licence.

Police checks confirmed he had been disqualified from September 9, 2020.

When questioned about the disqualification he told police he had not been to court in a long time since being served a court attendance notice.

Police informed Newham that it appeared he had been sentenced in his absence and it had been his responsibility to appear at court.

In the second offence, around 5.10pm October 15, 2020, police sighted a green Mazda 121 travelling on the Grenfell Road.

The observed it turn onto William Street and caught up to the vehicle for a random breath test.

Police activated their lights and the vehicle turned into the driveway of a residence.

Police stopped and observed Newham exit the ve-

hicle and approach them.

Police professional knowledge caused them to know of Newham's disqualification but checks confirmed the disqualification.

In relation to his driving, Newham told police "I just had to go and pick my car up from behind the show-ground, because someone left it there, I know I shouldn't be driving".

Newham's solicitor, Clive Hill, told the court a mailing error caused his client to miss the disqualification notice.

"A letter was sent out, the letter went to an old address

and eventually was forwarded to his new address and arrived the day after the first offence," he said.

"The first trip was a short one from his home to the service station, about one kilometre, the second offence he makes no excuses for that.

"His girlfriend had a flat tire on the Grenfell Road and he went back and moved it around the corner.

"He realises that if he continues to offend the period of disqualification will only get longer and longer and ultimately jail awaits him at the

end of the road."

In sentencing, Magistrate J. Kiely, said the police eye would be on Newham, given his record.

"He had a court date and he should have made it or taken proactive steps to find out the result of that court date," she said.

"With respect to the fact the first in time trip was only a short one, it makes the court wonder why he didn't just walk.


"Knowing full well he was disqualified on the second occasion, he went and drove regardless, taking the risk."

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