

Mayor backs push to mark historic flight

Anthony Bunn

A PUSH by adventurer Dick Smith to have an aviation milestone recognised at a Culcairn paddock has been embraced by Greater Hume Shire's mayor.

Tony Quinn was commenting after Mr Smith sent a letter to the mayor on September 19 seeking support from the council for a monument.

It would honour World War I soldiers Ray Parer and John McIntosh who in 1920 became the first pilots to complete a single-engine plane journey from England to Australia.

Their odyssey ended dramatically when engine problems prompted a forced landing in a paddock south of Culcairn near the Olympic Highway and Lowes Road.

Mr Smith visited the site on September 1 and told *The Border Mail* he would like a monument there to mark the milestone and to allow passersby to stop and learn of the extraordinary story.

Subsequently in his letter, the former computer and food salesman told Cr Quinn

he would "be happy to donate up to \$10,000 towards the display".

"It could be anything from a simple stone monument at the corner of Lowes Rd

and The Olympic Highway, to a drive through rest stop allowing people to park - which would be a better option," Mr Smith wrote.

"I believe this location is of

historical significance for the people in the Culcairn area, and it should be recognised."

Cr Quinn said he was keen for the idea to become reality.

"There's no need for a



Entrepreneur Dick Smith in the paddock where pioneer aviators made a dramatic landing that saw their plane flip after touching down. Picture by Tara Trehwella



Tony Quinn is happy to support a monument for Greater Hume's link to international aviation history, saying he is keen to make it a reality. Picture by Mark Jesser

We'll respond to him very positively and basically get on with it.

Greater Hume mayor Tony Quinn

council debate or a resolution, it's history that needs to be observed," Cr Quinn said.

"We'll respond to him very positively and basically get on with it."

Asked about the need to lobby Transport for NSW to carve access from the Olympic Highway, Cr Quinn

said "we'll work through the cobwebs to get the right answers".

Meanwhile, Cr Quinn on September 20 was re-elected to another term as mayor, winning a vote 5-4 from councillor Lea Parker who was nominated by former mayor Heather Wilton.

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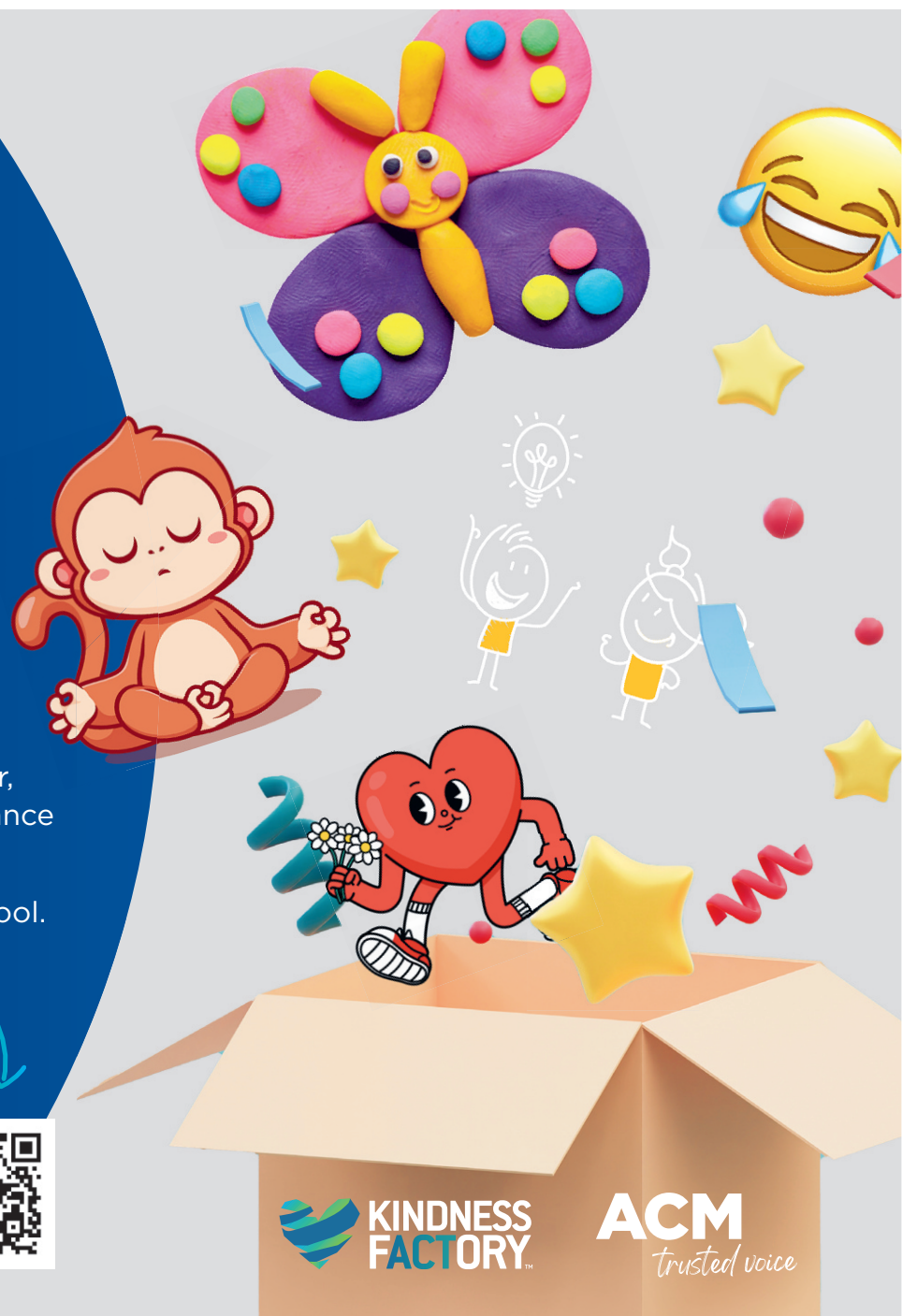
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