

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>  
February 2024



2024 Theme:  
*Happiness Is...*

## **Mardi Gras Family Festival Parade**

### **Invitation, Entry and Safety – Saturday February 24, 2024**

The Loxton Mardi Gras Committee would like you to be part of our 67<sup>th</sup> Mardi Gras Parade.

Loxton's Mardi Gras is one of Australia's longest-running community parades and each year provides a rare opportunity for local residents, businesses, tourists and the community as a whole, to come together and celebrate our town and greater district.

The year 1895 marked the commencement of Agricultural production in the Loxton District, making this year the 129<sup>th</sup> anniversary of farming in the area! We have much to celebrate and be proud of.

This year the Parade will be held around Loxton oval N<sup>o</sup> 2. All floats please report to the registration desk accessed from A W Traeger Dr - East of the swimming pool. Check our website for details.

You or your organisation may already be preparing your float, if so, well done! But if you haven't yet, it's not too late to show your interpretation of our theme of 'Happiness Is...' to present who you are and what you do.

All floats entered are automatically eligible to win 1 of 6 cash prizes: from \$250 to \$500! Please have a look at the float categories prize list on the Entry Form attached. There is no entry fee.

So, please take a moment and think about what you and/or your organisation can do for this year's event.

To enter the Parade, please:

1. **Fill in the Parade Entry Form**, see attached or go on-line at [loxtonmardigras.org.au](http://loxtonmardigras.org.au).
2. **Return your form** via email to [events@loxtonmardigras.org.au](mailto:events@loxtonmardigras.org.au) **as soon as possible – definitely by Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February – call Chris if you are later than this.**
3. **Read the Parade Safety Guidelines** to ensure a successful Parade; **AND**
4. **Take care to fulfil your responsibility to be adequately protected against public liability.**

We look forward to hearing from you soon. Let's make Loxton Mardi Gras 2024 a success for all. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have a query.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Sheahan".

Chris Sheahan

**Event Coordinator**

[events@loxtonmardigras.org.au](mailto:events@loxtonmardigras.org.au)  
0435 623 045

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Magarey".

Peter Magarey

**Parade Convenor**

[loxtonmardigras@gmail.com](mailto:loxtonmardigras@gmail.com)  
0418 808 296

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## Some Background to Loxton's Mardi Gras

Our Mardi Gras began in 1958. It was a way for the community to raise funds for community-based projects. The community was 'all in it together' - a great way to be.

The community's first project goal was an Olympic sized swimming pool. They achieved this, and today the pool is still well-used by many members of the community and visitors.

Of the very first parade, Loxton's Lady Mayor Leatrice Pfitzner wrote; *"There were three floats and they left the primary school at 7pm. They travelled down Drabsch Street, left into East Terrace, and circled around the Rotunda's lawn square to the entrance of the Rotunda"*.

The early Mardi Gras events recognised various clubs and local agricultural industries. In the early 60's there were 'Queens' representing the Swimming Club, Rural Youth, Fruit, and the RSL. From these Queens, they crowned a Mardi Gras Queen.

Over the years the number of floats gradually increased, with awards for the 'best-decorated' and the 'most humorous'.

The 1966 Mardi Gras, it was said, '...took most of the day and half the night'. People from all the surrounding towns and the Mallee area flocked to join in the fun of watermelon eating contests, greasy pig chases, the sideshows, and to see the impressive floats. Some 5,000 people attended.

In the 1970s the Loxton Community Centre hosted the Mardi Gras. The morning Parade travelled from East Terrace to the Showgrounds at the Oval. In the evening, a second Parade circled the oval twice. Many of the horses and riders and other Parade entrants remained at the oval for competitions during the day before participating again in the evening.

Other events have come and gone. For instance, the Soapbox Derby created a lot of fun and interest in the 1980s. Entrants raced each other down the slope from East Terrace toward the Village.

Today, the Mardi Gras is still hosted by a Committee of volunteers. Each has the interests of the Community at heart. The entrants for the Ambassador (previously known as the Queen) programmes remain a focus. There are two main aims of the Ambassador programmes. Firstly, to foster the social skills and personal development of all the Ambassador entrants, building a stronger sense of self-worth and community poise. The second is to provide a public platform for organisations to raise funds for the community **and** for themselves.

Loxton's Mardi Gras culminates a year-long program, with a final series of events held over the week leading up to our parade. With strong support from the community, the Parade continues to give us all opportunity to stop for a moment and share in a community activity. It is still a case of we are 'all in it together' and it remains a great way to be.

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**Mardi Gras Family Festival – Saturday February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**Parade Entry Form**

Please return this form by 5pm Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 – earlier preferred

To email: [events@loxtonmardigras.org.au](mailto:events@loxtonmardigras.org.au)

- I/We would love to take part in the 67<sup>th</sup> Loxton Mardi Gras Parade
- I/We cannot be part of the Parade but would like to volunteer/contribute

Your Name:.....

Organisation (if relevant): .....

Phone/Mobile:.....

Email:.....

Address (if relevant): .....

Title of your entry and description of your float (in **30-words or more**), for our Parade  
Commentary.

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Vehicle  Vehicle with Trailer  Small (MR) Truck  Large (HR) Truck  Semi Trailer (CMC)

Other Float Details.....

Approx. Length of Entry:.....metres; **NB this is important as we need to plan parade space**

Will you have music amplified from your float? **YES or NO**

**FLOAT PRIZES FOR THE CATORGORIES:**

❖ <b>Most Outstanding</b>	<b>\$500</b>	❖ Best Ambassador Float	<b>\$250</b>
❖ Most Humorous	<b>\$250</b>	❖ Best Rural Community Float	<b>\$250</b>
❖ Best Themed 'Harvest'	<b>\$250</b>	❖ Best School Float	<b>\$250</b>

- I have read and understood the attached safety guidelines for a successful Loxton Mardi Gras Parade.
- I note that you have advised me to ensure that I am appropriately covered for public liability insurance. Please provide a copy of the certificate of currency for public liability insurance (from your sponsoring organisation)**
- I understand anyone entering or sitting on a float may be photographed for promotional purposes.

**Note:** There is no entry fee for the Parade.

Your Signature:.....

Thank you for helping us celebrate Loxton's 67<sup>th</sup> Mardi Gras.

Chris Sheahan - Event Coordinator

Peter Magarey – Parade Convenor

# **Mardi Gras Family Festival – Saturday February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

## **Parade Safety Guidelines**

Thank you for being a part of Loxton's Mardi Gras Parade 2024. As always, we want this year's event to be happy and fun for all who attend. A helpful way to achieve this is to be safe in what we prepare and in what we do.

### **Safety Guidelines**

On the day, you the entrant and us as organisers, will share responsibility for the safety of the Parade participants and the spectators. We both have a 'duty of care' - that is, we both need to be sure we are 'taking care in our duty', looking out for potential troubles and where needed, take effective action to prevent that trouble.

Please review the safety points listed below and consider these and other ways that you can help us make the event safe and secure.

Much of this is simply common sense.

Parade Marshalls will be there to assist you (as the 'entrant') at the start of and during the Parade. Your 'entry' (float) may include a moving vehicle, a towed-vehicle or any kind of trailer with or without passengers, a marching band, a group of pedestrians or individual participants walking.

The table below provides you some guidelines to assist in the safe conduct of the Parade. While we do not consider this list either comprehensive or complete the Loxton Mardi Gras Inc takes no responsibility for damages if you do not follow these guidelines.

### **Parade Route**

Depending on the number and size of entries, the Parade route will be modified for safe and where possible, uninterrupted flow of all entrants. Here's what we require of you:

1. Collect your Parade Number at the registration desk near A W Traeger Dr (from 9:00am)
2. Assemble your float in your numbered position as directed
3. Be ready and loaded for departure by 10:30am (unless otherwise advised) - the Parade begins with a few short speeches from 10:45am
4. Follow the Parade Marshall's instructions at all times
5. When directed proceed to the entry gate as shown by the Marshals. The parade enters the oval area via the East gate and then winds around the East side of oval #2. You will then be parking in a static display for the public to examine your float closer. Please exit the oval area via an available exit when directed

We will provide you with more details when they become available. In the meantime, **please read and attend to the following safety guidelines and contact us if you have any query.**

Thank you for your interest in the 2024 Mardi Gras Parade. We look forward to making your time enjoyable and rewarding in being part of our long-standing community event.

Chris Sheahan - Event Coordinator

Peter Magarey – Parade Convenor

**Table 1a: Safety Guidelines for Entrants in Mardi Gras Parade 2024**

Keep the Parade Safe	
Parade Safety	Comments
<p><b>The Parade Marshalls</b> are given authority to manage the Parade – under the guidance of <b>Tom Fielke</b>. <b>If you consider a safety incident is likely or is happening during the Parade, advise a Parade Marshall or immediately ring:</b></p> <p><b>Tom Fielke</b>      <b>0429 825 853</b>, or  <b>Chris Sheahan</b>   <b>0435 623 045</b></p>	<p><b>Look out</b> for and <b>listen to</b> instructions from the Parade Marshalls along the route. They will be walking or riding quad bikes. During the Parade and in case of emergency, they will give directions to you and other Parade entrants. Immediately <b>contact</b> a Marshall if you observe any potential threat or danger.</p> <p>If a safety incident escalates, the Police and/or CFS/MFS will take command. Obey instructions from these sources.</p>
Vehicles pulling floats, or self-propelled floats	
Vehicle Safety	Comments
<p><b>Keep it safe:</b> Vehicles are to be in good roadworthy condition (i.e. brakes, wheels and tyres etc in good condition).</p>	<p>It is <b>not</b> necessary that your vehicle be registered for travel along the Parade route. If it is unregistered, it may be necessary to transport the vehicle to the Parade Route. Either way, <b>ensure</b> that your vehicle is roadworthy. <b>Check</b> the vehicle's brakes and, where necessary, its steering, hubs and axles. <b>Be sure</b> they are in good working condition.</p>
<p><b>Make it clean and quiet:</b> Vehicle exhaust fumes and noise.</p>	<p><b>Ensure</b> that exhaust pipes don't discharge directly into or onto any people or decorations on a float in the Parade or onto spectators on the roadside. For those nearby, <b>avoid</b> making them uncomfortable or unhealthy. <b>Keep</b> exhaust noise to a minimum.</p>
<p><b>Trailer and float connections</b></p>	<p><b>Check</b> that tow-connections of floats and trailers are appropriate to meet SA Road Safety laws for the safety of float participants and observers. <b>Ensure</b> that trailers are coupled correctly, that appropriate safety chains are attached and where relevant, that brakes are released.</p>
Driver of vehicle pulling a float, or self-propelled float	
Driver Safety	Comments
<p><b>Drivers</b> need an appropriate, current driver's licence for the vehicle they are using.</p>	<p>It is necessary that all drivers <b>meet</b> State Road Law requirements and <b>drive</b> safely with due care.</p>
<p><b>Drive to the conditions</b> – be sensible, be careful.</p>	<p>There will be many young children present, so <b>watch</b> for the unusual and <b>be ready</b> to brake suddenly but safely. <b>Watch</b> for someone who might fall from a float or for a child to run onto the roadway, or for a vehicle that might stop abruptly.</p>
See, Walk and Work Safely	
Passenger and Walker Safety	Comments
<p>Maintain <b>clear vision</b> for the driver Assist the driver to <b>maintain safety</b> for parade participants <b>walking or riding on floats</b>.</p>	<p><b>Avoid</b> float decorations that obstruct the driver's view forward and back along the sides of your float. <b>Look out</b> for the safety of any participants walking alongside or behind your float. Walkers, <b>inform the driver</b> of any impending incidents.</p>
<p><b>Secure float decorations</b></p>	<p><b>Ensure</b> that decorations are affixed to the float and will not fall or fly off during the Parade to <b>avoid</b> these items posing a risk to float participants and observers.</p>
<p><b>Safe-working</b> machinery <b>Secure</b> machinery and display items</p>	<p>If your float decorations involve working machinery, <b>ensure</b> that it is safely separated (distanced) from any float riders or spectators. <b>Avoid</b> harming participants or spectators from the operation of machinery. <b>Keep</b> all working machinery, or display items from falling from your vehicle or float.</p>

**Table 1b: Safety Guidelines for Entrants in Mardi Gras Parade 2024(cont.)**

Person Safety and Welfare on Floats	
Keep passengers cool and safe	Comments
Protect from <b>hot weather</b>	Since the weather may be hot, <b>ensure</b> that participants, especially young children, have access to shade, hats, cool water and sunscreen. <b>Prepare</b> for some time in the sun, since only in some locations is shade available for participants to stand under while the Parade is preparing or when it may be forced to pause for a time. We will do our best to provide shade for floats with young children while waiting for the parade to start. Please advise us if any children will be on your float.
Secure people safely	Comments
<b>Sit or stand safely</b> on floats and vehicles	Vehicle and floats may be forced to stop suddenly or start abruptly. <b>Ensure</b> that seats on floats are secured and, for those standing, that suitable handrails or other solidly fixed item can be held to avoid passengers over-balancing. <b>Consider</b> installing fixed rails around the side of the float to provide passengers with something to lean against or hold onto. <b>Ensure</b> that small children are safely seated or securely positioned <u>before</u> moving the float or vehicle and when the float is travelling. <b>Avoid</b> injury to passengers of floats - <b>do not allow</b> float passengers to sit on the edge of the float with their legs dangling over. <b>Provide</b> direct adult supervision sufficient for the number of children on your float. <b>Listen</b> to and <b>heed</b> any advice given by the Parade Marshalls – their instructions will be for your safety.
<b>Riding high</b> ride on floats and vehicles	If appropriate, <b>consider</b> passengers use a suitable safety harness to prevent them falling in the event of the float encountering a spoon drain, making an abrupt start, or a sudden stop.
Spectator Safety	Comments
<b>Provide no incentives for accidents</b>	<b>Do not throw ANY items into the crowd or to individual spectators.</b> Publicity materials, advertising paperwork, gifts and lollies etc may be <b>handed out</b> by those walking beside the float. <b>Avoid</b> tempting children with tunnel vision to run into passing Parade vehicles when chasing an elusive lolly! Also handing the lollies and other material directly to a child is less of a health risk than when the items are picked from the road (if thrown).
Basic Safety	
Fire Safety	Comments
Maintain appropriate <b>fire safety standards.</b>	As appropriate, <b>locate</b> a fire extinguisher in an easily accessible, designated location on the float or vehicle you are driving. <b>Check</b> that it is suitably charged and that you <b>know how</b> and <b>when</b> to use it in an emergency.
Keep the <b>risk of fire</b> to a minimum.	It is a requirement that <b>no open- flame</b> displays, candles or fireworks are operated during the Parade. <b>Reduce</b> fire hazards and <b>adhere</b> to local and seasonal fire bans.
<b>Electrical</b> safety – vehicle and trailer lights; amplifiers, noise boxes etc (both 12 Volt and 240 Volt)	As needed, <b>test</b> all electrical wiring (vehicle and amplifiers etc). <b>Ensure</b> that it is appropriately secured and covered for safe operation of lights and turning indicators, or speakers, microphones, etc. <b>Test</b> and <b>ensure</b> all 240 V electrical cords and appliances have current safety compliance tags.
<b>Portable generators</b>	As above, <b>ensure</b> this machinery is securely mounted and separated from decorative materials and float occupants. Check and correct exhaust noise for quietness and direct fumes away from people.