

# Monks fled after nitrate on trailer caught fire

SHANNON HAMPTON

The monks of New Norcia were in the middle of a night-time vigil when they heard “alarming thuds” and were then told they had to evacuate after a truck’s trailer containing ammonium nitrate caught fire overnight.

About 100 residents in the only monastic town in the country were told to evacuate in text messages and by door-knocks about 10pm on Saturday night, and warned there was a “direct threat” to the community.

New Norcia abbot John Herbert, pictured, said he was in the middle of a prayer session called the Office of the Vigils in the chapel when they heard a “few rather alarming thuds”.

“We’ve got a huge crane parked in one of our carparks that has broken down or something, so I thought ‘that’s them taking the crane away,’” he said.

“When we finished prayers I got the notification from the shire to say what had happened and that we needed to evacuate.”

Fr Herbert praised the work of the town’s fire chief Gavin Halligan, police and other volunteers and officials who helped everyone get away from the “complex site” in good time.

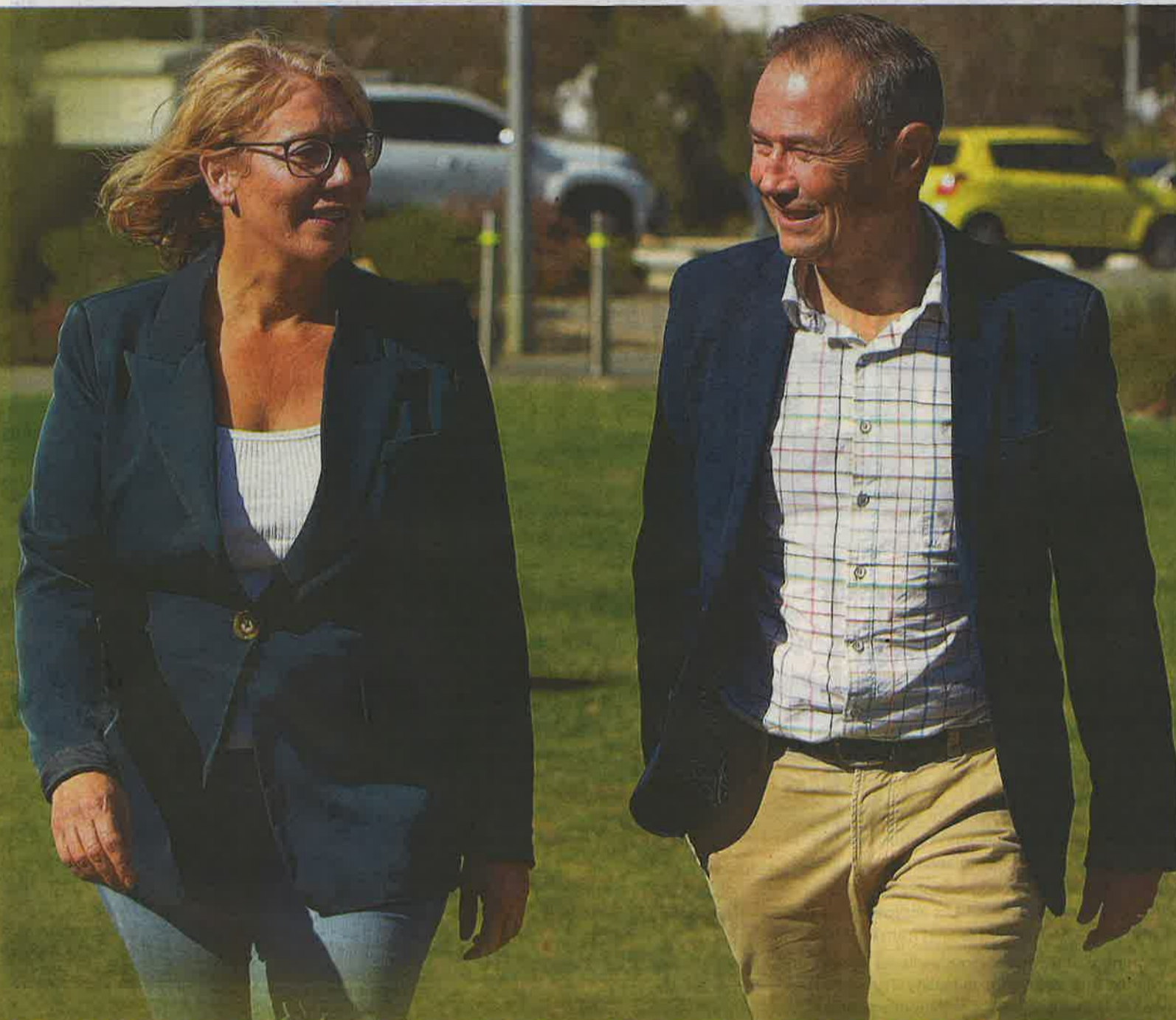
“There’s residential homes, the monastery, the guest home, the heritage buildings. We had to go right across the whole site to get everyone out and we managed to do that,” he said.

“The police were excellent, the evacuation personnel were excellent and so were the other emergency services. We then had to drive 2km north to be safe in case there was a major explosion and they kept us informed.”

Many of those who left waited for about five hours outside the exclusion zone on the side of Great Northern Highway until it was deemed safe to return about 2.45am.

Fr Herbert, who has lived at New Norcia for 28 years, said he has never experienced an incident where the whole site had to be evacuated. The incident happened on the New Norcia bypass — a road the community had asked for for 15 years.

“That truck would have come right through the middle of the village in the past,” he said.



# KIDS' JAIL IN SIGHTS

he prepares to announce his new Cabinet mid-week

**I'm keen to find out how those particular models of care (at Banksia Hill) are being implemented. Roger Cook**

tive the WBH goes at the QEII site,” Ms Mettam said.

Mr Cook confirmed at the Burswood-based event that Labor’s caucus would be held on Tuesday, Mr Cook’s Cabinet will be unveiled on Wednesday, and he will be sworn in on Thursday. Peppered with questions on what the make-up of his Cabinet would be, Mr Cook remained tight-lipped on a re-

shuffle, urging media to wait and see mid-next week.

“I respect the process. I will have more to say following the caucus meeting on Tuesday. We’ll be making further announcements around that in the next few days,” he said.

It comes after The Sunday Times revealed Labor MP Bill Johnston looks set to lose Corrective Services in a Cook Cab-

inet reshuffle, as the new premier seeks to stamp his authority on the Banksia Hill detention centre.

Ms Saffioti is likely to become WA’s new Treasurer and amid speculation on whether she will keep her coveted Transport portfolio she vowed she had the stamina to do both.

“All those discussions are still being had. And of course, as you know, I’ll be keen to do everything, if possible,” she said.

Mr Cook rejected suggestions factions within Labor

would have control of who makes it to the frontbench.

“This is not simply a matter of one group dictating to another group what it’s about. This is about our team coming together to decide which is the best team that we can put forward on behalf

of the people of Western Australia,” he said. Mr Cook and Ms Saffioti declared they would fight “tooth and nail” against east coast leaders on the GST distribution.



## Man accused of knife attack

Detectives have charged a 38-year-old man after he allegedly used a knife to threaten the occupants of a South Perth home and attacked them and their dog.

Police say the man went to the Coode Street home, and armed with a knife confronted the occupants about 4.30pm on Saturday.

It is alleged a man in his 40s was attacked and he suffered

cuts to his hands. He was taken to Royal Perth Hospital for treatment.

Police say a woman at the home was also threatened before a dog was attacked by the man. The pet needed urgent vet care.

The man faced Northbridge Magistrates Court on Sunday charged with offences including armed robbery.

## Same dingo attacks two kids at Karijini

A four-year-old boy has been attacked by a dingo at Karijini National Park — likely the same wild dog that mauled a two-year-old in April — prompting the closure of a campground until rangers can “destroy” the animal.

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions’ Parks and Wildlife Service confirmed the boy was bitten on

the leg at Dales Campground about 6pm on Saturday. He was taken to Tom Price Hospital by his family. Rangers believe the same dingo is responsible for both attacks.

“Dales Campground is a very large campground and this incident occurred in the same section where a two-year-old was attacked in April,” a Parks and

Wildlife Service statement said. “Based on accounts from the boy’s parents and other witnesses, rangers consider that it is likely this is the same dingo.”

Rangers have been searching for the dingo since the first attack to “humanely destroy” it. Dales Campground, Warlu Loop, will be shut until “rangers find the problem dingo”.