

## @THE COAL FACE

Vol 1 No 6: March - April 2017

### DRAYTON DONE & DUSTED

FOR THE 4<sup>TH</sup> TIME, THE PAC HAS REJECTED THE DRAYTON SOUTH EXPANSION, THIS TIME CITING RISKS THE PROJECT WOULD POSE TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND POSSIBLE SOCIAL IMPACTS IN THE REGION.

Despite the project being approved by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment in September last year, the PAC's final determination saw a key concern being the proximity to the Coolmore and Godolphin studs.

Although the PAC recognised the economic and flow on benefits of the mining industry, it did not feel this project was a unique or primary contributor to the wider industry, whereas the studs were believed to be an integral contributor to the Hunter Valley equine industry.

FOR 6 YEARS, THE DRAYTON SOUTH PROJECT HAS BEEN CAUSING CONTENTION IN OUR COMMUNITY BUT WITH THE FINAL DECISION BY THE PAC ANNOUNCED WE CAN START TO MEND THOSE BROKEN TIES.

"Both Coolmore and Godolphin are globally renowned thoroughbred operators and are, most importantly, recognised as central to the development and international success of the Hunter Valley equine critical industry cluster," the PAC outlined.

With Anglo American stating that they would not go ahead with any future planning if the PAC rejected this plan, the decision is a hard blow for many in the community.

## 10 BILLION REASONS WHY MINING MATTERS

THE LATEST EXPENDITURE SURVEY IS OUT FROM THE NSW MINERALS COUNCIL, AND ONCE AGAIN SHOWS THAT MINING IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO NSW'S ECONOMY.

In the last financial year 23 participating mining companies directly injected \$10.8 billion into our state's economy. And for us here in the Hunter, we've proven once more that we are a vital part of the state's mining sector, accounting for a whopping \$4.8 billion of direct expenditure.

Mining also contributed 24 percent of gross regional product (GRP) in the Hunter, which just goes to show that mining in the Hunter has never been more important.

#### WHERE WAS THE MONEY SPENT?

\$2.6 billion was paid out in wages to the almost 30,000

full-time employees in the mining industry. \$6.9 billion was spent on purchases of goods and services from over 8000 local businesses, community contributions and payments to local government. And the NSW Government certainly got their piece of the pie with \$1.3 billion spent in taxes and royalties.

#### THE HUNTER MINING INDUSTRY DESERVES RECOGNITION

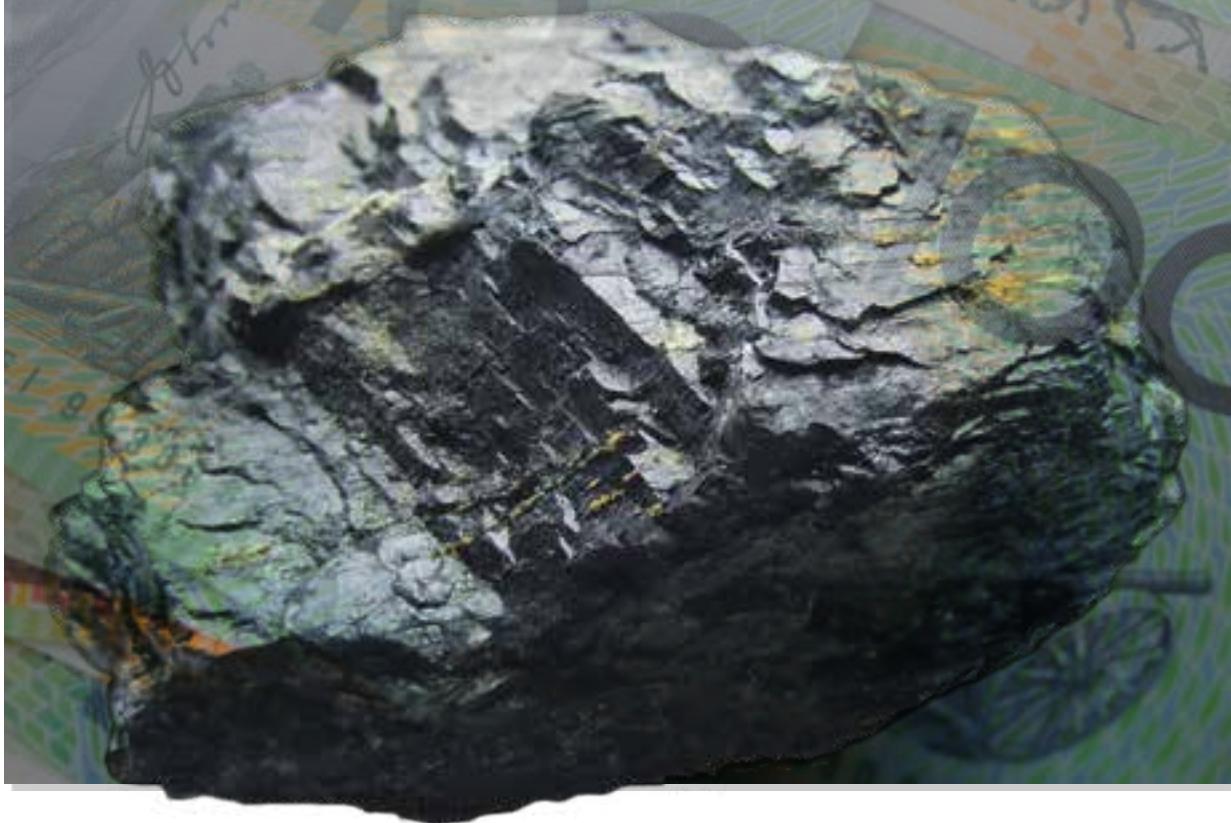
Stephen Galilee, CEO of the NSW Minerals Council said the Hunter deserve to be recognised for the important contribution it makes.

"Our hardworking Hunter miners should be thanked for

the valuable contribution they make to NSW. Not only for the positive economic contribution mining makes to the Hunter and the State through direct spending on wages and business purchases, but also in terms of mining royalties that help pay for schools, hospitals, emergency services and roads."

#### MINING HAS SPENT \$35.7 BILLION IN NSW OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS AND THIS LOOKS SET TO IMPROVE

These figures are for the 2015 - 2016 financial year and as we all know the recovery of commodity prices didn't come into play until late 2016 making next year's figures set to be even higher.



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# COMMUNITY, COMMUNITY, COMMUNITY

THIS MONTH THE MAIN THEME IS THE AMAZING THINGS OUR MINING INDUSTRY IS DOING IN OUR COMMUNITY.



From cycling for days on end, encouraging kids to study and learn (even if it's for something fun like making a billy cart,) the amazing collection of community stories will warm your heart this month.

We also had the opportunity this month to enjoy a great lunch with some of our industry's retired miners at the Albion Hotel. The stories they had to tell took us back to a time in mining when it was about mateship and family. We also look at what kind of gear these guys used to cart around in our new monthly page on the history of coal mining in the Hunter.

We were also impressed with our young un's this month, from the talented Australian champion barefoot skier Elaina McClung to hardworking Bengalla Engineering scholarship recipient Danielle Nicol.

And all the opportunities and support for our kids in stories such as the Coal & Allied Leadership program and the selfless contributions Bloomfield is making to Hunter youth outreach programs.

With great spots to eat and travel this month (the timeless holiday destination of Forster will surely bring back childhood holiday memories) we hope to encourage you to get out and enjoy yourselves with the family.

Make sure you check out our dream car on our driving page and the cool gadgets we feature this month. And don't forget to enter our prize giveaways. Winners will now be posted each month in the back of the mag.

We hope you enjoy and as always, we value your feedback so drop us a line!

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**NSW SHOULD GET ON BOARD WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY COAL-FIRED POWER**

**OUR HUNTER COAL MINERS WORK HARD TO DELIVER THE WORLD'S BEST COAL TO POWER STATIONS AROUND THE WORLD. WHY SHOULDN'T THE HUNTER ALSO GET TO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE COAL TOO?**

Year after year we send our high-quality coal from Hunter coalfields to power stations that supply electricity to the cities of Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China and many other countries globally.

Hunter coal exports are at record levels. High quality Hunter coal is increasingly going to new power stations that use advanced technology to generate electricity with improved efficiency and lower emissions.

Currently there's discussion about whether this technology is suitable for NSW. It might seem like a boring subject but it's an important

one, because it's is not just about climate change and appearing to be 'politically correct'. It's also about jobs, our economy, and keeping the lights on.

There's an argument going around that while it's okay to send our Hunter coal to be used around the world, we shouldn't use it here. It's a strange argument. Why is it okay for others to use our coal to provide reliable energy but not okay for those who actually mine the coal here in the Hunter to do the same?

The Hunter is blessed with high quality coal resources - ideal for these new generation low emission power plants. If it's good enough for some of the world's most advanced countries, and some of those still developing, why should these plants not be good enough here in the Hunter too?

Coal-fired power generation will

Stephen Galilee  
CEO, NSW Minerals Council

continue to be central to delivering a stable and reliable energy system, alongside a balance of other sources including renewables. Instead of shutting down the Hunter's power plants they should be upgraded and expanded so they can continue to deliver the stable energy supply we all rely upon every day.

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THE HON. DON HARWIN,  
MINISTER FOR RESOURCES.

## MEET THE MINISTER

IT TOOK 11 DAYS INTO MY NEW ROLE AS MINISTER FOR RESOURCES TO EXPERIENCE FIRST-HAND THE ONGOING VITAL ROLE OUR COAL MINING INDUSTRY PLAYS IN KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON IN NSW.

The heatwave of February 10 and the ensuing weekend tested the state's energy network but despite near unprecedented demand from consumers we avoided residential blackouts in the state during some of the hottest days on record. The value of our coal industry became even clearer to me

when I saw that coal generators contributed to around 67% of NSW's energy supply during the peak period. Renewables provided 27% of generation and gas provided 6%, and this diversity of supply helped us through this near record peak. For the export industry, our

coal mines continue to compete globally in a rapidly changing market, particularly in Asia. From December 2015 to December 2016, exports from NSW coal mines increased from 168.8 million tonnes to 170.4 million tonnes, according to Coal Services Pty Ltd. Japanese and Chinese demand continues to make up the bulk of coal exports but other Asian markets are also turning to NSW for higher quality.

The Mineral Council's latest Expenditure Survey shows the

Newcastle and Hunter regions are enjoying the economic boost from improved market conditions for export coal. I welcome the economic benefits of this trend to the Hunter Valley communities. This all seems to be lost on the Greens. Their proposed policies would threaten our energy security and our communities. There's a sensible way to address climate change whilst creating new jobs and supporting the economy, and that's this Government's approach. We need to further diversify our energy sources to ensure clean, reliable, and affordable energy into the future.

It's been a busy start to my tenure as a Minister, and the new Government who have hit the ground running since Gladys Berejiklian stepped in for former Premier Mike Baird.

I would like to pay tribute to the work of my predecessor Anthony Roberts in the Resources portfolio. I thank Anthony for his contribution to the portfolio and I look forward to continuing from where he left off.

I look forward to ensuring that we maintain a balanced approach that values our resource sector and appreciates its importance to regional communities, and the state's economy.

### GO KARTS GO!

SEAT BELTS ON, HANDS ON STEERING WHEEL, PEDAL TO THE FLOOR AND DON'T LOOK BACK!

The new Go Karts Go Hunter facility at Kearsley will get your adrenalin racing as you ignite those racing instincts and burn some rubber!

For your chance to win tickets for a family of 4 to hit the track together, simply SMS: GO KARTS GO and your email address to 0438 474 290. Limit of one entry per person. LTPM/16/01100

WIN!

### LETTERS FROM YOU

EACH MONTH @ THE COALFACE FEATURES SOME FEEDBACK FROM OUR READERS. WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR OPINIONS ON EVERYTHING – THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE INTERESTING. DROP US A LINE.

It was distressing hearing about the case of Black Lung disease right here on our doorstep but the way some people are carrying on you would think it was the plague! Yes, it's terrible that some poor bloke has got it but I think it's unlikely that we will see more cases, after all this was the first in decades.

I'm not alone when it comes to occasionally slacking off when wearing the right PPE, and I guess the one good thing that has come out of this is reminding all of us to play it safe all the time.

**Chris, Muswellbrook**

@ The Coalface hopes that all our miners out there always put their safety first and stick to the procedures that have been put in place to help guarantee that. We also send our heartfelt sympathy to the miner affected and his family.

Hey what's the go with your giveaways? Are you keeping them for yourselves? I haven't seen any winners posted!

**Matty**

@ Thanks for pointing that out Matty, rest assured that all prizes were legitimately given out (despite the team here hoping to keep a few). We will now be listing the prize winners each month on the last page of the magazine. Keep entering and good luck!

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## A GLASS OF THEIR OWN

HUNTER VALLEY GLASS HAVE DEVELOPED A NEW HIGH IMPACT RESISTANT MINING GLASS SET TO TAKE ON THE WORLD.

A request from the mines to develop a specialised high impact mining glass saw HVG spending the last five years working with the worlds leading glass suppliers to develop a solution that is not only more versatile and easy to use in a broad range

of applications, but most importantly, dramatically improves the safety profile when in use.

This amazing Hunter Valley innovation performs around 40 times better than the existing Fortress glass that has been the standard for nearly 20 years.

HVG Managing Director, David Flynn said, "This has been designed specifically for mining as the challenges within our industry are unique and require a tailored approach. In the end the solution wasn't thickness matters it was about performance and the best performance comes through the unique structures within the glass we have created. It is thinner, stronger and safer and that goes for our end in maintenance and replacement as well. The weight saving represents a significant reduction in risks for my people by having to not work with the older much heavier product. It's faster to put it in, safer to put it in and improves operator safety considerably."

David talked us through another huge benefit in that it works within all existing OEM designs and avoids retrofitting that has become the norm allowing us to glaze within OEM Guidelines.

David continued, "This approach cures a range of headaches and challenges. The product recently passed Australian Standard AS2080 and has also been tested against EN356 the European standard and has come out on top. Obviously this has been developed for mining, but the innovation could be applied to cranes and a whole lot of other industrial applications as well.

Currently in trial and in use on heavy earthmoving mining machines across a range of the Hunter and Mudgee mining areas with huge success, this new technology looks like being the new standard in these applications. This Hunter innovation is taking on the world and the product and intelligence is being shared and exported as far afield as Chile, American and other Australian states.

DAVID FLYNN, HUNTER VALLEY GLASS





DAVID YOUNG (ENGINEERING MANAGER) AND PETER OSTERMANN (OPERATIONS MANAGER)

## OPEN SESAME!

IT WAS SMILES ALL ROUND AS THE DEVELOPMENT CREW AT INTEGRA UNDERGROUND PRODUCED THE FIRST COAL AT ITS NEWLY OPENED OPERATIONS THIS MONTH.

Integra Operations Manager Peter Ostermann said they were proud to record this significant milestone. "This was the result of a great team effort and a significant amount of work that's gone into returning the site to an operating mine with

upgrades to infrastructure and mining equipment. We are looking forward to first longwall coal in Q2 and building the Integra team further."

With 134 staff and mineworkers now on site and continuing to grow, this successful start is great news.

## CFMEU SUPPORTS CANCER RESEARCH

OVER THE PAST 3 YEARS, CFMEU HAVE DONATED \$300,000 TO A HUNTER MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE PROJECT INTO PROSTATE CANCER THAT COULD CHANGE THE WAY WE DIAGNOSE AND TREAT THE DISEASE.

Grahame Kelly, District Secretary for the CFMEU says that they got behind the project because they wanted to donate to a worthy cause. "We saw this project as having a great potential to make a difference in people's lives and in particular we saw this project as being relevant to our membership."

Prostate cancer is big issue in Australia with over 20,000 diagnosed cases each year, and with the highest number of reported cases in Newcastle it's something that many of our families know about all too well. What is not so well known is that a large number of prostate cancer cases are not life threatening. In many cases the disease is slow to progress so the patient will outlive the disease.

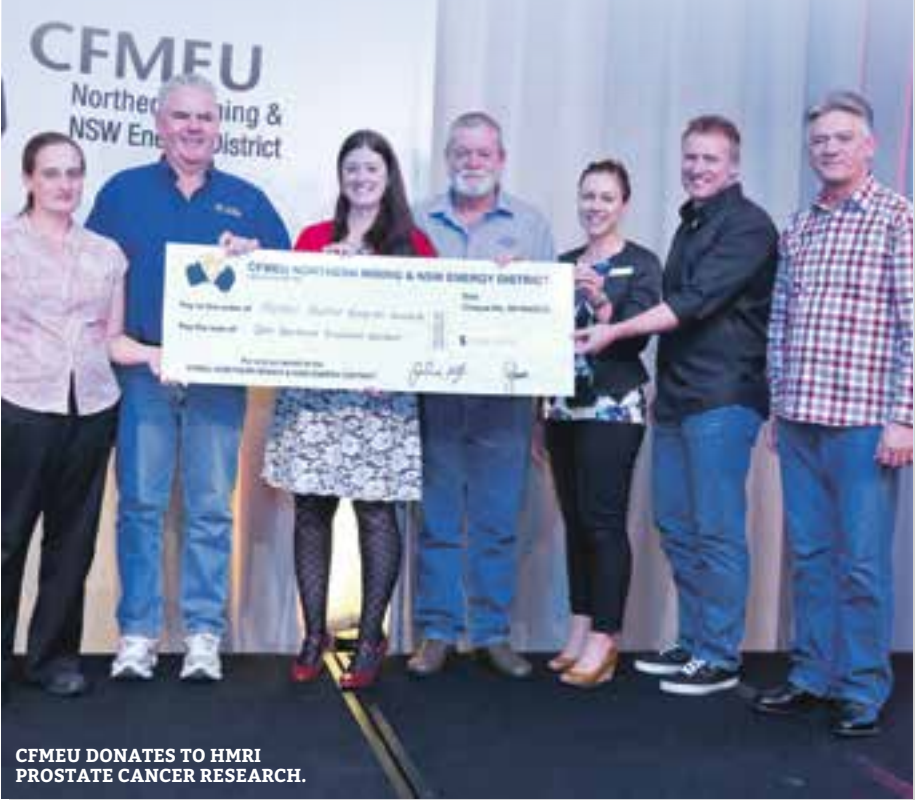
What are we unable to do with current testing is to tell the patient with any certainty if their cancer is of the slow progressing variety, or if it a serious and life threatening case which needs immediate treatment. Treatment such as chemotherapy and surgery that can leave the patient with pain,

impotence, incontinence and other lifelong issues.

So how do you decide? Take the chance and do nothing and possibly live out a long life with no ill effects. Or take treatment and possibly live out the remainder of your life with side effects.

**That's the dilemma that the project hopes to solve.**

Dr. Judith Weidenhofer is a Lecturer with Newcastle University's School of Biomedical Sciences & Pharmacy and says that the project aims to determine by a blood test the type of prostate cancer allowing the patient to make an informed choice of what treatment is best. "Knowing exactly what treatment is required will help alleviate the trauma and remove the heartache around decisions for the patient and their family. Thanks to the support from CFMEU the project is showing promising results that could not only help alleviate the trauma of dealing with prostate cancer but could also have wide ranging implications on other cancers and diseases." Judith said.



CFMEU DONATES TO HMRI PROSTATE CANCER RESEARCH.

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# FROM RUINS TO RICHES

REHABILITATION IS A MAJOR FOCUS OF EVERY SINGLE MINING COMPANY IN AUSTRALIA, SO IT'S TIME WE STOP CONDEMNING THE INDUSTRY AND CONGRATULATE IT INSTEAD.

Mines Program to help address this issue.

**NSW IS A WORLD LEADER IN MINING REHABILITATION**

In the past we have showcased rehabilitation stories that have met all the required conditions and then some. And every month in our Parallel Economics we offer up ideas for other uses for mined land that could have enormous contributions to communities.

Regulators, environmental consultants and industry are all working to find solutions and better practices; the Mine Rehabilitation Conference in March is just one example of that.

**APPRECIATE THE BEAUTY OF OUR MINING LEGACY**

There are so many areas around that were once heavily mined but now have returned to native Australian bush. They contain an abundance of native flora and fauna and you would be hard pressed to see any evidence of mining.

There's also parts of our national parks where you can still see firsthand these remnants of our mining history. From scatterings of old roads where you might be able to pick up a piece of fallen coal, to old mining buildings and unique artifacts from an industry that has made Australia what it is today.

These remnants are an interesting and visually appealing part of our heritage and allow us to reflect on our history. They are something to be proud of.

The NSW Government has strict conditions imposed on mining companies to ensure that mining affected land is left in a stable and safe condition. This final condition should be as good or better than it was before mining took place. All NSW mines are required to lodge substantial rehabilitation security deposits that aren't returned until the regulators are satisfied that those conditions are met.

Yet you often read stories about the destruction caused by mining without any real facts to back it up.

Like the recent report from The Australia Institute examining mine rehabilitation which has been heavily criticised as deeply flawed and poorly researched and with several inaccurate claims levelled against the mining industry. The report, featured on ABC's Lateline, claimed the NSW public stands to incur billions of dollars in rehabilitation costs and that there was a lack of reliable data on rehabilitated sites in NSW.

The NSW government refuted the Australia Institute claims by stating that rehabilitation bonds and strict regulations gave it a high degree of confidence that taxpayers would not be lumped with clean-up costs. Further, government was also investigating ways it can better show the public and industry how rehabilitation of historical derelict mine sites was progressing.

Of course, mining rehabilitation was not always a consideration in the past. Derelict mines exist where no individual or company can be held responsible and in 1974 the government established the Derelict

# YES - IT'S THAT BIG!!



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## DRILLED FOR SUCCESS

DAVID HANNIS IS A MAN WITH AN INVENTION THAT IS SET TO REVOLUTIONISE DRILLING, AND OUR MINING INDUSTRY COULD BE SET TO REAP THE BENEFITS.

Since the late 70's David has been working for some of the biggest mining suppliers in the world, yet it didn't matter where David travelled to, he always found that when it came to drilling, productivity varied very little regardless of which equipment or drill bits were being used. Although the technology of drill rigs had seen big changes over the last few decades, drill bit design remained basically unchanged for the last 60 years.

David couldn't help notice this imbalance when it came to the drill rigs and the outdated drill design they were still using. So, utilising all the knowledge and skills he had accumulated over the years, he decided to go back to the drawing board and come up with an entirely new drill bit design. His re-engineered new drill bit has an amazingly simple design, but uses a high kinetic flow rate to revolutionise what is currently the industry standard.

Initial computer modelling and analysis showed David's drill bit to increase productivity by over 50% and onsite field testing and trials at a number of sites in the Hunter Valley have shown productivity improvements of an astounding 40%. "I didn't want to design a drill bit that could just compete with the current market, I wanted a drill bit that would blow the current standard

out of the water" said David.

The difference this productivity increase could make to drilling performance and drilling costs is enormous but when it comes to taking a new product to the market, industry can be as slow moving and cumbersome to navigate as any big rig. That's why David said it's been great to work with Rio Tinto's Enterprise Facilitator Mat Goddard who has supported him in getting his product into the market and building his business.

"Moving a new product into a market and building a business takes time and requires persistence. You also need collaboration with the industry and I am very grateful to the mines which have allowed us to trial and perfect our drill bits over the last 12 months to the point where we are now in a position where we are discussing supply agreements with some of the local mining companies" said David.

**ENTERPRISE FACILITATION IS ABOUT SUPPORTING LOCAL PEOPLE TO BUILD NEW BUSINESSES.**

Rio Tinto's Enterprise Facilitation program is about helping anyone with a startup business or even an idea or invention, commercialise it into a successful business.

David's family owned company, Newcastle Bit Bros is like many other startup companies trying to build their business and overcome all of the hurdles on the way. Startups often fail not because the service or product they are providing is not good enough, but because of all the hurdles they must overcome in getting that product or service to the market.

Mat Goddard is Rio Tinto's Enterprise Facilitator and understands all too well the difficulties people encounter trying to get businesses off the ground or turn an idea into more than a pipedream.

"Innovation doesn't happen in big corporations or governments, it happens in your garage or the back room of your house and with people just like David who have a passion they want to pursue, and I love working with people like that." Mat said.

David couldn't thank the program and Mat enough for the support they have given him. "I've been overseas for a while and lost touch with the industry and Mat has helped me reconnect with the people I need to know to make my dream into a reality. The support Mat has given me is invaluable and I recommend that anyone who has a new idea, or is even tinkering around in their garage with an invention to call Mat, because every great innovation starts with just an idea."





## BHP PASSION ALIVE & WELL AFTER 100 YEARS

**JAMES PALMER, BHP BILLITON ASSET PRESIDENT NEW SOUTH WALES ENERGY COAL, REAFFIRMS COMPANY'S HUNTER COMMITMENT AT THE BUSINESS CHAMBER MINING LUNCH.**

Speaking to a packed audience in Newcastle, James spoke proudly of the company's past and present Hunter story. "Our proud history here goes right back to the Newcastle Steelworks that opened in 1915. Today we operate Mt Arthur Coal Mine on the outskirts of Muswellbrook and employ more than a thousand local people."

James went on to talk about their commitment to coexistence and the community. "Through initiatives like our Local Buying Program our local supply chain is as diverse as the Double Picc café in Muswellbrook and MRM Solutions exploration drilling in Singleton. We are also an active member of the Upper Hunter Dialogue which brings together miners, community, government, business and environmental groups. Some of our closest and most fruitful relationships are with

the cattle, cropping, viticulture, olive farmers and horse studs who graze, raise and grow crops on Mt Arthur Coal Mine buffer land and surrounding areas. Here in the Hunter there has been almost 200 years of successful coexistence among our industries."

The fact is the mining sector and the Hunter are synonymous for good reason – it is a critical pillar of the local economy. BHP Billiton has a long association with the Hunter and is proud to be a key player in one of the most diverse and unique parts of Australia. It really is time that we all recognised that mining is critical to our everyday lives, and it underpins every other sector of the economy and life.

It was certainly clear on the day that BHP works hard to achieve a lot in the Hunter and it was refreshing to hear it from someone who sits near the top of the tree.



PUBLISHERS OPINION



# WHY CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

**YOU PICK UP THE PAPER AND READ THAT THE COAL INDUSTRY IS DESTROYING OUR FUTURE AND WE NEED TO SWITCH ENTIRELY TO RENEWABLES. THE NEXT DAY THE SAME PAPER IS RUNNING A STORY ON HOW COAL IS OUR FUTURE AND NEW COAL PLANTS ARE BEING CONSIDERED. ISN'T IT TIME FOR BOTH COAL AND RENEWABLES TO START PLAYING IN THE SAME SANDPIT.**

I want my children to be able to have the best future possible and to live in a world that hasn't been destroyed by climate change, but I also want them to grow up having access to all the

much-needed things in life that are currently powered by coal. You know, the basics, like re-frigerated foods, lighting, transport, heating and cooling and their x-box. With both of our government's major parties fighting a war on energy and climate it leaves us with uncertainty and most of us have no idea what's true or what's just convenient policy making. Why is there still an ideological and political struggle over climate change? Scientists know climate change is real, the insurance industry know climate change is real, the finance industry know climate change is real. Most people agree that climate change is real. Yet our politicians continue to treat it as a debatable issue. Currently we cannot run our power on renewables and with each coal plant being shut down energy security is lost, as we all know from recent blackouts due to power shortages. We need to ensure our coal production continues to meet our energy demands until renewables are able to do so. No-one wants to sit in front of a black TV screen on a 45 degree day fanning themselves as they wait for the power shortage to resolve. Money needs to be spent on energy security. And that security must consist of both renewables and coal. Investment needs to be in renewables and coal. Politicians need to stop arguing about who is right and who is wrong and come together to plan an energy future that transitions to renewables, but continues to use coal until that transition is possible. I know it's naïve but imagine a world where our politicians worked together for our energy future and where coal and renewables could become playmates.

# COAL KICKS GOALS

**THE UPPER HUNTER 2017 YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM IS AN AMAZING YOUTH PROJECT WHICH HAS BEEN FUNDED BY COAL AND ALLIED FOR THE LAST 12 YEARS. THE 2017 PROGRAM WILL RUN FROM 28 MAY - 3 JUNE AND APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR INTERESTED STUDENTS.**

The program sees Coal & Allied sponsor 90 year 9 and 10 students from across the Upper Hunter that are enrolled at Singleton High, the Australian Christian College, St Catherine's, Muswellbrook High, Merriwa High, Scone High School, Scone Grammar and St Joseph's, Aberdeen. The program is run by Outward Bound Australia and is proven to be an effective way of equipping students with the skills they need to be passionate, engaged, and positive contributors to the Hunter community. The theme of the program is to "Build stronger communities by inspiring the next generation of leaders". The outdoor education program challenges students to step outside of their comfort zones in an expedition journey which entails hiking, abseiling, canoeing, mountain biking, high ropes courses, leadership workshops, team initiatives, camping and bush cooking. Suzie Fawcett is the Outward Bound Client Manager for New South Wales and Queensland and says this program is unique. "It is the only one running in these two states sponsored by a company



and we are so grateful to Coal & Allied for their ongoing support. When I meet past students of the program they often tell me it was the best experience of their school lives which shows just how valuable this program is." Coal & Allied Community

Relations Specialist, Travis Bates, said the program is one of the ways they can support the community and invest in the region's future. "Coal & Allied's significant investment in this program for students continues to prove well worthwhile. It gives students the opportunity to develop into young leaders. Over the years, we have seen the program bring together young people in the Hunter region to have a shared experience, meet new friends and increase their social support networks." The program is a fantastic opportunity for our Upper Hunter students and to apply they can contact Suzie at [suzie.fawcett@outwardbound.org.au](mailto:suzie.fawcett@outwardbound.org.au) or speak to their school year advisor.

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# YOUNG LIVES BLOOM

FOR 17 YEARS, THE BLOOMFIELD GROUP HAS BEEN SUPPORTING THE YOUTH OFF THE STREETS PROGRAMS HERE IN THE HUNTER, AND IN THAT TIME, HAS HELPED IMPROVE THE LIVES OF 20,000 YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Father Chris Riley’s ‘Youth Off The Streets’ outreach program works with marginalised young people in our community and provides a friendly, safe and supervised environment for them to interact, socialise and meet. It helps equip them with practical skills, education

and support needed to make positive lifestyle choices and to achieve positive long-term life outcomes. The Bloomfield Group has now topped the \$1.2 million mark in collective donations, and this partnership was commemorated at an Outreach program awards night. Bloomfield

Group CEO John Richards attended the award night to mark this significant event, and to present awards to recognise the good work from 10 students of the East Cessnock outreach program.

As program creator Father Riley looked on, Mr. Richards presented the awards in recognition of the student’s commitment to their education and he praised their efforts. “Remember your education is something special that no one can ever steal from you”. Mr. Richards said, and his words resonated with the students.

Mr. Richards said the support from Bloomfield will continue into the future with corporate donations, payroll giving and volunteering. “Bloomfield value the work of the Youth Off The Streets’ Hunter Valley teams and will continue to support Father Chris Riley and his community work assisting our local youth.”

These contributions so generously given will undoubtedly change the lives of many of our local young people and in turn our community will only benefit. Thank you to Bloomfield for supporting our youth.

CENTENNIAL CHAMPIONS

## CENTENNIAL SADDLES UP

FOR THE NINTH TIME THE GUYS AT CENTENNIAL COAL ARE PUTTING THEIR BODIES ON THE LINE TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE.

This year the 11 guys and girls from the Centennial Coal team will spend 5 days riding their mountain bikes through mud, dirt, rocks and sand as they loop the beautiful Lake Macquarie in the 2017 Cycle Classic. The event runs from 15-19 March and will see them riding over 350kms, all to raise funds for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. But it’s not just undertaking such a huge ride that makes these guys champions. It’s the countless hours they have spent fundraising, training and gathering support that is to be applauded.

Katie Brassil, Executive General Manger External Affairs for Centennial Coal is one of the team members and has been proud to be a part of the event since 2009. “It’s a great event and more importantly an absolutely great cause. We all hope to never need the Westpac

Rescue Helicopter services but to know that they are there if you need them is crucial.”

The event is in its 22nd year and the contribution it has made to the rescue service in that time is fantastic. Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service CEO, Richard Jones said Centennial Coals involvement and commitment over the years is highly commended.

“We are proud to see the event in its 22nd year and this would not be possible without the support of our long-standing community and business and mining partners such as Centennial Coal which has helped to raise greatly needed funds and awareness for the service,” Mr. Jones said.

Last year the event raised over \$90,000 and this year they hope to top that. Show your support by making an online donation at [cycleclassic2017.gofundraise.com.au](http://cycleclassic2017.gofundraise.com.au)

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ATTENDEES FROM THE 2016 MINE REHAB CONFERENCE

## TIME TO GO TO REHAB

MUSWELLBROOK RSL WILL BE HOST TO THE 2017 ANNUAL MINE REHAB CONFERENCE WHICH AIMS TO BRING MINE REHABILITATION STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE FUTURE OF MINING REHABILITATION.

The 7th Annual Best Practice Ecological Rehabilitation of Mined Lands Conference is organised by the Tom Farrell Institute for the Environment (TFI) and is a significant event on the Hunter Region calendar. With more than 300 delegates anticipated to attend, it is one of the largest mining rehabilitation conferences in Australia.

Professor Tim Roberts is the Director of TFI and said “I am hoping that our seventh annual conference will bring together practitioners, professional rehabilitators, researchers, regulators and the general public to hear the latest research,

on-ground experiences both successful and not-so successful, and to discuss ideas for future productive uses of the lands post-mining that fit with growth plans for the region and with the maintenance of endangered ecological communities.”

The event will be held over 3 days on the 29, 30 & 31 March. Delegates will have the opportunity to participate in various activities, including workshops, mine tours as well as the main conference.

For more information or to book tickets go their website: [tomfarrellinstitute.org/2017-mine-rehab-conference.html](http://tomfarrellinstitute.org/2017-mine-rehab-conference.html)

## SHOWTIME FOR MINING DIALOGUE

THE UPPER HUNTER MINING DIALOGUE (UHMD) IS HITTING THE ROAD TO DRIVE ITS MESSAGE OF HOW THE MINING INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY CAN SUCCESSFULLY WORK TOGETHER TO LESSEN THE IMPACTS OF MINING.

As part of an increased focus on interacting with communities in 2017, the Dialogue will stage displays at community events both within and outside the Upper Hunter. The Dialogue’s expanded calendar of events saw its first stop on February 24 and 25 at the Cessnock Show.

Through the Dialogue’s display, showgoers learnt about the Dialogue’s history, ongoing projects and plans for the future through a series of information posters and discussion with Dialogue consultants.

The Dialogue is also surveying people at the community events. The surveys aim to gauge people’s knowledge of the Dialogue as well as their thoughts on what should be Dialogue priorities.

The responses will be collated with earlier survey results – including the survey of Dialogue stakeholders conducted by the Hunter Research Foundation in late 2016. The overall survey data will help the Dialogue chart its priorities in terms of future direction and projects.

## Congratulations Jordan on your emerging leadership award!

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THE ALBION HOTEL PROVIDED THE RELAXED SETTING AND GREAT FOOD AS WE SAT DOWN REMINISCING ABOUT THE GOOD TIMES AND THE BAD TIMES WITH SOME OF SINGLETON'S RETIRED MINERS.

Who are the Singleton Retired Miners Association? It all started 48 years ago, when a bunch of recently retired miners from the Singleton area got together to discuss their pensions, not realising the legacy they were about to create.

The association is about mateship, giving back to your community, supporting people in need, and having a bloody good laugh while you're at it. All the same things that were a part of being a miner have carried on even as the tools have been laid down.

Mateship is a word you hear all the time in mining, and no more than here in Singleton where people would work together, live together and even holiday together. The association provides a continuation of that culture long after leaving site.

With social gatherings, trips away, fundraising events and meetings, the calendar stays full and it's a way to keep those social connections you had on the job and make many more.

**GIVING BACK**

Whether it's running fundraising events to raise money for Harry's House, Red Cross, Jodie's Place or the Leukemia Foundation, or simply volunteering their time on the gates at the Singleton show, these guys

know how to find charities in need and then throw all the support they can their way. Not much happens around these parts without these guys knowing and so they are always there to lend a helping hand.

**JUST KEEPS GROWING**

There's now more than 200 members currently on board and these numbers grow every year. For just \$10 per year you can become an active member and be a part of all the events they hold, and let me tell you that you will never get a better rate for a weekend away or a day trip then what you will get heading off with them. Spouses and widows of retired miners also receive free lifelong honorary memberships and make up a large amount of their numbers. And we all know that when it comes to mining it's not just about the person working on site, the whole family is a part of the culture and the life that comes with it.

**STORYTELLING AT ITS BEST**

The stories we heard had us laughing one minute and wiping away the tears the next, but due to political correctness, safety regulations, defamation and risk of arrests, we can't tell you most of the stuff we heard. You will just have to find a way to sit down with these amazing people to hear the stories

first hand. But here's a couple of teasers...

One guy wanted a week off work and leave was denied so he sent his twin brother in to cover for him. At the end of the week all had gone to plan and nobody was the wiser. Until his brother went to head office to ask for his own job.

Back in the day the bus used to pick you up as no-one had their own cars. In Singleton, the favourite pick up spot just happened to be out the front of the Clubhouse Hotel.

A favourite trick was to get the new shotfirers assistants to touch the explosives and rub their forehead as it caused headaches. A lot of the guys didn't notice though as they already had a hangover headache.

When you had a missus who oversaw your pay packet, some guys used the cash in an envelope system to their benefit. A ploy was to work overtime and be paid extra but then swap your pay docket with another guy who had worked less hours, rip his name off the top and then pocket the extra cash to be spent at the pub.

Marbles was a favourite game to play during crib time by the light of cap lamp. No-one wanted to discuss what happened when you lost your marbles.

**MYSTERY OF THE MISSING MINUTES**

It's been 48 years since the association started but there is much debate over what they got up to in the early years. Secretary and Treasurer, Alice Muller says that

no-one really knows what went on because somehow all the meeting minutes from the first 10 years have disappeared. We are left to wonder if it is as innocent as misplacing documents though rumours abound.

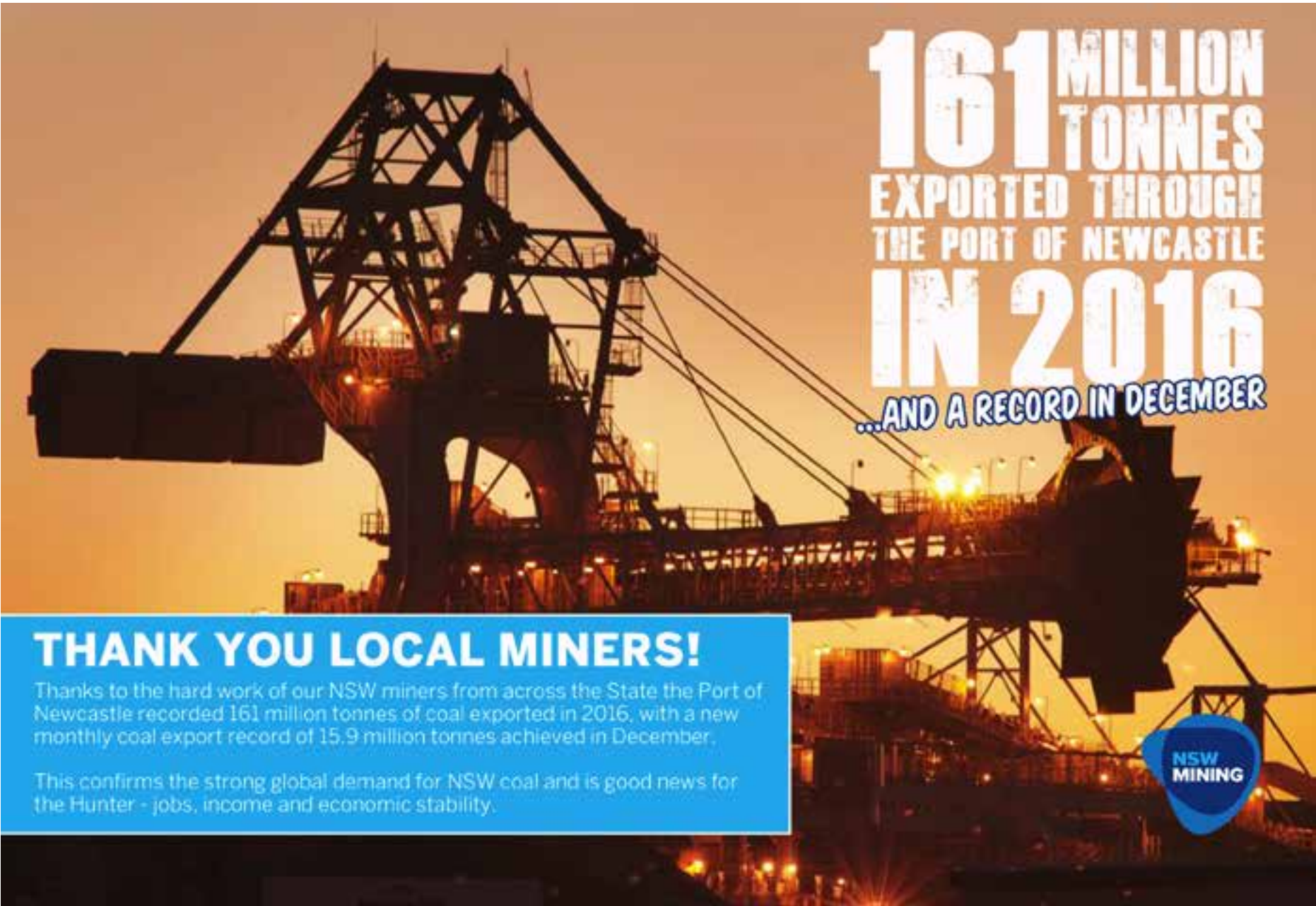
**TOUGH AND DANGEROUS WORK**

Fun stories aside, most of these guys worked tough jobs, working with pick and shovel at the coalface and walking in and out lugging a ton of heavy equipment. Or at least they walked out when they couldn't sneak a ride on the belt for a lift out. (Obesity sure was not an issue like it is today, back then you worked the tools and could only fit one sandwich and a piece of fruit in your crib tin.)

Every one of these retired guys has seen the worst of the job and has been on site when someone lost their life or a terrible accident has occurred. But every one of them always showed back up for their next shift because you never considered doing anything different.

**GET INVOLVED**

Who wouldn't want to be part of a family like this, because that's exactly what they are, an extended family that goes back generations and is willing to welcome anyone into their fold. Give Alice a call on 02 6572 2402 or just grab any old bloke walking down the street. Chances are he's already a member, or his dad is, or his sister.



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THE PORT OF NEWCASTLE  
IN 2016  
...AND A RECORD IN DECEMBER

THANK YOU LOCAL MINERS!  
Thanks to the hard work of our NSW miners from across the State the Port of Newcastle recorded 161 million tonnes of coal exported in 2016, with a new monthly coal export record of 15.9 million tonnes achieved in December.  
This confirms the strong global demand for NSW coal and is good news for the Hunter - jobs, income and economic stability.

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# INNOVATION IS IN THE BLOOD

Evolution and innovation in the hydraulic hose industry really got moving 39 years ago with the development of the mobile service model bringing a virtual workshop and technician direct to the customer experiencing hydraulic hose failure.



It all started under the Enzed brand in Auckland in 1978 when Wally Davey assembled the first mobile hose service unit in a red Ford Transit van in his garage at home. It was an industry game-changer. From that time he has been at the forefront of the industry and its evolution. To say that hydraulic hoses are the veins that pump Wally's blood is an understatement. In 1980 Wally came to Australia and founded Enzed here and the journey gathered pace. In 1984 the Pirtek brand was developed. Wally then drove the Pirtek brand and marketing development, supplier relationships and the franchise system growth leading to international market expansion in the UK & Europe, USA & NZ. Pirtek is one of the few Australian franchised operations with international presence. In 2000 he branched out to develop change and growth in other industries but with hoses in the blood he returned to his industry of first love and delivered a 3-year brand and market development program for Hydraulink.

After almost a lifetime innovating in the hydraulic hose niche, Wally identified the need for a comprehensive supply chain market shift that was long overdue – a one-stop source for industrial, hydraulic and irrigation hoses, valves and fittings. The three categories were previously connected then separated by application and industry – a segregation whose relevance has dissolved as industry and needs have evolved.

## NOW MAXIMUS IS BORN AND THE GAME HAS CHANGED AGAIN

At 60 something years old, Wally Davey is about to lead a new phase in the hoses, valves and fittings industry. Customers across the three streams of high and low pressure hose and fittings; industrial hoses and fittings, hydraulic hoses and irrigation products, can now consolidate the supply chain, reduce management of multiple suppliers, travel time, order cycles

and drive down the increasing costs of field service. Maximus has established key suppliers across the three distinct hose and fittings fields plus a range of ancillary products, pumps, valves and lubrication products. Supporting this are local service partners in hydraulic mobile field service, installation repair and systems design in irrigation. Under a new dynamic brand developed and trademarked, Maximus Industrial Group has launched the first of a planned network of company owned and franchised trade centres at Rutherford NSW. The Rutherford/ Newcastle area was chosen as the pilot market for its diverse market opportunities across industrial manufacturing, agriculture, mining and transport. The area is entering a new phase of growth and prosperity - Maximus is keen to be part of that growth and the continuing Hunter innovation trend. Maximus – an innovative One-Stop solution offering quality products from trusted brands, competitive prices, and complementary services – all in one convenient location.



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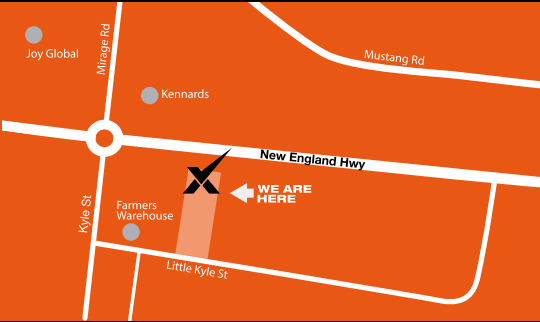
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### SEND THE KIDS TO MINING SCHOOL!

A STUDY BY GRADUATE CAREERS AUSTRALIA SHOW MINING ENGINEERING GRADUATES TOP THE LIST OF EMPLOYABLE GRADUATES.

The study lists the employment statistics of Australian graduates from 1982 to 2015, and shows that overall, mining engineering has an employability index of 92.3 per cent across the period, making mining engineering the most employable of all engineering fields. This is before civil and electrical engineers.

There are only two fields overall which fare better than mining engineering which are pharmacy with an employability index of 97.3 per cent and medicine with 98.9.

And no surprise at the least employable are visual and performing arts graduates, with an employability index of 56.8 per cent.

## ATLAS PUTS DEEPER ROOTS INTO THE VALLEY

COMMUNITY AND COMPANY CULTURE IS THE FOCUS FOR ATLAS COPCO IN MUSWELLBROOK OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

Mad keen Marlin fisherman and family man Drew Brazaitis who runs the Hunter Valley branch of Atlas Copco got in touch with us to put the word out that the local crew want to get behind the community and are looking for some ideas about how they can roll up their sleeves to help out.

To celebrate successfully putting 16 rigs out the door last year along with delivering plenty of rotary blast hole drill service work, new capital equipment sales and new

machine builds, the team thinks it's time for a bit of community work as well.

Drew said, "Our success is great testament to the resilience of the industry as well as strong economic output for Muswellbrook. Atlas Copco might be a big company, but here in Muswellbrook we approach what we do with the genuine values that are so important to us and communities like ours here in the Hunter. I'm Hunter born and bred and so is most of the team of around 20 that we have.

We drive a culture here where we all have each others back and we all try get the job done. We work with companies like Yancoal, Peabody and Rio and the people we work with there feel the same about community as we do so it's important to us all."

Being more involved and pushing hard for strong regional support for the local coal industry is their priority. If you've any genuine ideas for who they should be getting behind, Drew would love to hear from you.



THE ATLAS COPCO CREW

## PARALLEL ECONOMICS - THE HUNTER NATIONAL SCULPTURE PARK

CREATE A CREDIBLE NATIONAL ARTISTIC LANDMARK AND MAKE SINGLETON OR MUSWELLBROOK ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST SIGNIFICANT AND RESPECTED TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A WORKING MINE.

A number of mines close to both towns have the positioning and geography and buffer lands perfectly suited to develop into something special. 'The National Sculpture Park' (as it could be known) has the potential to create an economic, social and artistic statement of national and international significance while creating an experience of scale, wonder, drama, beauty and emotional impact that appeals to all.

'The National Sculpture Park' would be a centre of thought-provoking large-scale sculpture. Once open it

could attract thousands of tourists per week to Singleton or Muswellbrook and empower the local economy in a once in a generation type of way while rehabilitating perception of mining. Examples in other parts of the world are proven to attract millions of visitors per year.

Along with about 60 large-scale sculptures when completed, The National Sculpture Park and complementing infrastructure could also accommodate significant conferences and events, accommodation, restaurants, cafés,

NO COMPARABLE OR SIGNIFICANT NSW OR NATIONAL ATTRACTIONS EXIST THAT COULD COMPETE AND IT WOULD MAKE THE LOCATION ONE OF THE MAJOR CENTRES OF HUNTER VALLEY TOURISM.

major concerts and performances on the scale of Hunter Valley Gardens or even bigger across a site of many hundreds of acres.

Due to scale of many of the installations it could also create a significant parallel engineering and manufacturing and economic pipeline for the local economy.

The National Sculpture Park would be in perfect proximity to the greater Hunter, Newcastle and Sydney - with a new freeway straight to the edge of the area and it would neighbour one of NSW's most visited tourist areas and would easily link and extend on the already popular and famous vineyards.

To get an idea of what we are talking about take a look at [www.gibbsfarm.org.nz](http://www.gibbsfarm.org.nz)



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'AVE A  
LAUGH WITH

Mike and Rob were laying tile on a roof when a sudden gust of wind came and knocked down their ladder.  
"I have an idea," said Mike. "We'll throw you down, and then you can pick up the ladder."  
"What, do you think I'm stupid?" Rob replied. "I have an idea. I'll shine my flashlight, and you can climb down on the beam of light."  
"What, do you think I'm stupid?" Mike answers. "You'll just turn off the flashlight when I'm halfway there."

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DARE TO DERBY

THE ANNUAL GRESFORD BILLY CART DERBY IS BACK ON SATURDAY APRIL 15, AND THIS YEAR GLENCORE WILL BE NOT ONLY BE SPONSORING THE EVENT, BUT ALSO COMPETING IN IT.

For 4 years Ravensworth Open Cut have been supporting this fun family event, but this year they have decided to take that support one step further and have entered their own team.  
Once word got around to their sister mines then the competition was on! Liddell, Mt Owen and the Prep Plant (CHPP) all decided to enter and the fight for winners bragging rights began.  
And boy is the competition being taken seriously. At each site, everyone from engineers, apprentices and staff are all getting on board meticulously going over planning, engineering, design and construction all to be able to cross that finish line first, claim the winning trophy and bask in the glory.  
Ravensworth Environment & Community Manager, Luke Bowden is the driving force behind the challenge and says that the competition is fierce.  
"What's great is everyone is coming on board and getting involved. We have apprentices getting to work alongside senior engineers which is a great experience for them." Luke said. We asked Luke to tell us about the Ravensworth billy cart but it's a closely guarded secret. He did tell us it was based on the F1!  
Be sure to head out to Gresford on Easter Saturday where the main street will host all the action as young and old compete in some of the most inventive, kookiest and extreme billy carts you can imagine. You'll also get to enjoy local stalls, place a bet on the cowpat lotto, toss a boot in the gumboot throwing competition and eat some fabulous foods, guaranteeing this will be a great day for all.

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TAKE A  
LOOK BACK

WELCOME TO THE HISTORY OF COAL MINING IN THE HUNTER. EACH MONTH WE WILL TAKE A RIDE DOWN MEMORY LANE AND SHOWCASE THE LONG HISTORY OF MINING IN OUR COMMUNITY. WELL, WHAT WE REMEMBER ANYWAY...

BAIT TIN

This month we are taking a look at the gear used back in the early days compared to todays modern counterparts.

CRIB TIN

These days a crib tin comes as big as your appetite, with cooling or heating sections and decked out in any colour, style or superhero image that takes your fancy. Back then the 'bait tin' as it was known was a galvanized tin that you were lucky to fit a sandwich or two and a piece of fruit in... And the mice out.

WATER BOTTLES

You got to lug around a galvanized water bottle with a cork for a lid, which held about 1.5 litres and had to keep you going for your entire shift as it was a long walk for a refill.

SELF RESCUER

Today a self-rescuer is a portable oxygen system that can provide hours of oxygen. Back then it was a cotton mask you put over your face and nose. At least it could keep you safe from germs.

SAFETY LAMP

These old lamps were carried by Deputies and used as a gas tester underground. If you knew how to read the flame you could detect methane, a lack of oxygen or presence of carbon dioxide. A far cry from today's modern sensors.  
Coal miners back then lugged around a huge amount of heavy, dirty, and cumbersome gear when walking was the only way to get to the coalface. Makes you appreciate the gear we have today!

IMAGINE LUGGING ALL THIS GEAR AROUND!

50% OF ALL INJURIES  
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# RIDE FOR YOUR LIFE



THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL KURRI COALFACE PEDAL IS BACK ON SUNDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL AND THIS YEAR WE WANT TO SEE MORE RIDERS, MORE MONEY RAISED AND OF COURSE, MORE DIRT.

The event is thanks to Kurri Rotary Club and the Kurri Mongrels, a bunch of people who are always there for the community and love supporting a good cause. And there's no better cause than raising money for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service.

The ride will start and finish at Pelaw Main School from 8am and caters for families as well as those looking for a bit of a challenge. The mix of tracks and distances means that everyone can have a go regardless of ability.

This year thanks to Cougar Mining they have introduced a Schools Challenge. Each team will consist of two riders and all entries have a chance to win vouchers up to \$300.

Barry Walton from Westpac Rescue Helicopter Services says that events like these are so important to keeping the service going. He hopes to see more riders than ever out there this year.

"It's a great day out for the community and brings families together. We are so thankful to all the people that support it, from the riders and their families, to all our great sponsors this year, and of course the community."

Online entries will close on Wednesday 29 March. Entries will be taken on the day but what are you waiting for? Sign up now! [rescuehelicopter.com.au/events/2017kurri-coalface-pedal-charity-mountain-bike-ride](http://rescuehelicopter.com.au/events/2017kurri-coalface-pedal-charity-mountain-bike-ride)





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# COMMUNITY GIFT

WITH ALL THE AMAZING STUFF WE SAW THIS MONTH FROM OUR YOUNG'UNS, WHO BETTER TO DONATE THIS MONTH'S COMMUNITY GIFT TO THEN THE SINGLETON PCYC.

The PCYC has long played a pivotal role in supporting the youth of Singleton. They offer a range of safe and fun activities to keep those kids busy and out of mischief!

Thanks to the kind donation from Titan Wheels, the Singleton PCYC will be the recipient of this month's \$500 Community Gift which will go towards much needed air conditioning.

Drop into the club today and see what they are all about.

# A WORK OF ART

THE 44<sup>TH</sup> MUSWELLBROOK ART PRIZE RECEIVED A RECORD 710 ENTRIES ALL HOPING TO WIN THE PRESTIGIOUS AWARD AND THE \$70,000 UP FOR GRABS IN PRIZE MONEY.

For over 20 years the Bengalla Mining Company has been supporting this great local bi-annual event which first began in 1958.

What started as the Festival of the Valley Art Prize has grown over the years to become an excellent collection of modern and contemporary Australian paintings, works on paper and ceramics.

This year The Finalists Selection Panel have chosen 31 finalists for the Painting \$50,000 major prize, 23 for the Works on Paper \$10,000 prize and 16 finalists for the \$10,000 Ceramic prize.



THE VERY FIRST WINNING PAINTING, *DEATH OF VOSS* BY TOM GLEGHORN BACK IN 1958.

The exhibition of the finalists works will be running at Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre from the 12 March to the 7 May 2017.

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Three men were walking down a street and found a bottle laying on the side of the road. They picked it up and a genie popped out. The genie said, "You will each get one wish."

The first man wished he was 20 times smarter. The genie made him 20 times smarter. The second man wished he was 30 times smarter. The genie made him 30 times smarter. The last man wished he was 60 times smarter.

The genie turned him into a woman.



# BENGALLA BRIGHTENS FUTURES

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT DANIELLE NICOL AND BENGALLA CEO, CAM HALFPENNY

**BENGALLA MINING COMPANY IS CONTINUING TO SUPPORT LOCAL STUDENTS FROM THE UPPER HUNTER BY AWARDING ST JOSEPH'S HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE, DANIELLE NICOL, WITH A \$34,000 ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIP.**

The annual scholarship programme has now run for ten years and is open to students from Muswellbrook High School, St Joseph's Aberdeen, Scone High School and Scone Grammar who plan to complete an undergraduate engineering degree.

Scholarship recipient, Danielle Nicol said "For the first time in my life, I was speechless when I was told that I had been given the scholarship. I felt very privileged and excited for the opportunity I had received."

In addition to financial support, the scholarship provides valuable industry experience through ten weeks of paid vacation work at Bengalla each year.

Bengalla Chief Executive Officer, Cam Halfpenny said: "Engineering is an exciting and challenging career and Bengalla is pleased to provide this scholarship to Danielle to support her in her study and career goals. We look forward to having Danielle join scholarship students from previous years on site to undertake vacation work as part of the scholarship programme."

Danielle's high achievements and hard work ethics must run in the family as brother Hayden was awarded the Bengalla Engineering Scholarship in 2012 and, after five years of Engineering studies commenced work with Bengalla as a Mining Engineer.

It's great to see Bengalla not only give our kids a kick start in education but to also help them start successful careers.



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# DREAM ON TRUCKIN'

MERCEDES BENZ WANTS TO PLAY WITH THE BIG BOYS WITH STYLISHLY RUGGED NEW X-CLASS...



YOU'LL NEVER LOOK AT A BENZ THE SAME WAY AGAIN

Now, we doubt that Wolverine would be caught dead in something like this, but nonetheless, Mercedes-Benz has unveiled its new premium pick-up truck: the stylish and sleek

X-Class. This midsize truck comes with permanent all-wheel drive and high-torque V6 engines, and is set to hit markets in Europe and South

America late 2017... Save your pennies, there's no Aussie release date just yet!

There are two major versions of the truck, one focused on off-road use and the other highlighting Mercedes' premium stylings.

The drivetrains set to be offered include a four-cylinder turbo diesel, which is expected to be the same 2.3-litre twin-turbo unit seen in some high-spec Navara models. Those engines have 140kW of power and 450Nm of torque.

Both X-Class variants look unmistakably like a Mercedes-Benz (you can pick 'em a mile away without seeing the badge) but come with a few

differentiating features. The off-road focused model has a higher ride-height and ground clearance, along with extra protection on the wheel arches, an electric winch at the front, and a metal hook at the back. While the other version has more of an SUV feel to it, with cleaner running lines, flared wheel arches, and 22-inch light-alloy wheels. Both have all the usual technological extras we expect from Merc, including a central touchscreen display and driver assist.

With an Aussie release date still a few years away, we'll keep on dreamin' for now.



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# ULTRA BY NAME, ULTRA BY CLASS

MENTION THE WORD ULTRA AND ONE MIGHT NATURALLY THINK OF SOMETHING LARGE OR EXTREME IN NATURE. DEFINED, THE WORD ‘ULTRA’ MEANS ‘GOING BEYOND WHAT IS USUAL OR ORDINARY; EXCESSIVE; EXTREME’.

An ultramarathon for example is any footrace longer than the traditional length of 42.195km (for many an absurd distance to be consider other than in the comfort of a car) likewise, an Ultra High Definition TV quadruples the pixels

used in a ‘standard’ 1080p screen, more pixels than the average eye can see or appreciate. As it is with mining machines today, extracting a greater number of tons, in less time and more economically than has ever been achieved in the past.



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In the beginning was the Plan. And the Plan was without substance. And the Workers went unto their Supervisors and said, “It is a pile of crap, and none may abide the odor.” And the Supervisors went unto their Managers, saying, “It is a container of excrement, and it is very strong.” And the Managers went unto their Directors, saying, “It is a vessel of fertilizer, and none may abide its strength.”

And the Directors went unto the CFO, saying “It contains that which aids plant growth, and it is very strong.” And the CFO went unto the CEO, saying unto him, “This new plan will actively promote the growth and vigor of the company, with powerful effects.” And the CEO looked upon the Plan, and saw that it was good. And the Plan became Policy. This is how S\*\*t Happens.

The mind boggles when one thinks that not so long ago the Caterpillar 769 Dump Truck was considered a large machine, a 35 ton, 23.3 cubic yard capacity rear dump truck with a top speed of circa 66km per hour. Fast forward to present day machines and consider the vast fleets of ‘ultra class’ dump trucks now being used, machines technically defined as haul trucks capable of carrying 272 metric tons or greater, with the largest truck able to carry a whopping 450 metric tons. Manufactured in the Republic of

Belarus, the BelAZ 75710 is 20m long, 8.16m high, 9.87m wide and powered by two (not one) 65 litre 16-cylinder diesel engines, each with 2,300 horsepower, enabling it to achieve a maximum speed of 64km/h. So, what’s next? Longer, wider, higher, stronger or something fundamentally different? Will our mammoth machines of today be considered small in retrospect or will our mining methods advance to a point we no longer require truck and shovel mining techniques? Your guess is as good as mine.

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— KARI ARMITAGE, MANAGING DIRECTOR QUARRY MINING.

Quarry Mining once made a hundred parts for mining companies in a week. Now, they make a hundred in just one morning. For Kari Armitage, the key to growing was continually reinventing the way they worked. When they needed new skills they invested in retraining and discovered that old hands could learn new tricks in CAD design and computer programming.

When the market was in a downturn, they put on more apprentices and graduates, continuing to provide employment and support the local economy.

What began with Kari’s father, then became one of the world’s premier manufacturers of drilling consumables.

As Kari explains, “There will always be great opportunities for us because the world will always need what Australian mining produces. Our homes, our mobile devices, everything about modern society requires elements we get from the ground. Without mining, we don’t have any of that.”

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# WALKING ON WATER

BRANXTON BAREFOOT SKIER, ELAINA MCCLUNG AND HER FAMILY ARE WALKING ON AIR - AND ON WATER - AFTER SMASHING THE COMPETITION AT THE ASIA OCEANIC BAREFOOT WATERSKIING CHAMPIONS IN NEW ZEALAND THIS YEAR.

Branxton local, Elaina McClung is the 2016 junior girls Australian champion and recently she smashed the competition by winning the slalom section and coming second in the jumps to become the overall best point scorer in the competition in Auckland, back in February. The latest win saw her ranking rise to number three in the world. “It’s such a great feeling to win,” says Elaina. “All of the hard work and practice is finally paying off and that shows from getting personal best scores in competitions. I’m very happy with the achievement.” Remarkably, 15-year-old Elaina started skiing at two and a half years old. On the water, she can reach speeds of up to 70km/h! She added this recent title to her Australian junior girls championship, which she won in 2016. Water skiing is a bit of a family affair with her brothers Alex and Riley both world-ranked skiers in their

own right. Their old man, Peter, works as a fitter and turner at HVO and couldn’t be prouder of Elaina’s recent success. “Dad has always skied and he taught me to barefoot ski,” Elaina explains. “He broke an Australian record in his division in 2015. My two brothers also barefoot water ski. All four of us have been competing at a national level for about five years,” says Elaina. Elaina will be competing for the NSW title in March before heading to Perth in April for the national titles, with the next world titles coming up in Canada in 2018. Elaina’s mum, Tina said the local communities have been incredibly generous in supporting Elaina to compete at the national and international events. “We’ve had a lot of local businesses in Branxton, Greta and Rutherford support Elaina, with donations and prizes to



raise money to help her to compete at these big events,” Tina says. @TheCoalface wishes Elaina and the whole McClung team all the best in upcoming competitions! Go you good thing!

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What do you give injured lemons? Lemonade.



# TOUGH TACKLERS

THIS YEAR THINGS HAVE GOTTEN SERIOUS FOR THE HUNTER VALLEY GROUP 21 WOMEN’S RUGBY LEAGUE 9’S. SERIOUSLY TOUGH THAT IS.

With contact rugby being introduced this year to the Upper Hunter you can imagine the response from many rugby league fans thinking the girls just wouldn’t cut it. Little did they know. From the very first game these Upper Hunter girls shut down that talk as quick as they shut down their opponent in the first tackle. Teams from Aberdeen, Muswellbrook, Singleton, Denman and Merriwa have had the chance to show their talents on the field and the quality of the playing has astounded many. Tina Kirby is a player on the Singleton team and says the response they have received from the community is fantastic. “We’ve had so much positive feedback by people impressed with the talent across the teams and the huge crowds showing up for our games is amazing. All the girls are having an absolute fantastic time playing and we really hope that we can turn this into a permanent competition. There’s really nothing else like this available to women in the Upper Hunter so it’s important that we can keep it going.” These girls have proved that on the field they are tough and committed as their male counterparts, but really is it any surprise?



# SURFEST SURF’S UP!

MAKE NO MISTAKE, NEWCASTLE HAS THE BEST COAST LINE IN THE WORLD. JUST ASK THE PROS AT SURFEST, THEY’LL TELL YOU.

Newy’s local pros and grommets were out in force last month, competing against the best in the world at Merewether Beach for the world-class Surfest surfing competition. Merewether Surfboard Club President, Craig Long praised the talents of many of its members, including its younger board riders, Morgan Cibilic and Jesse Adam.

“Our club was represented in 10 out of the 11 events over the course of Surfest,” said Craig, “and we finished second in the Orica Team Challenge over at Stockton Beach. Our younger members, particularly Morgan and Jesse performed well in their respective competitions and we were able to see the fruits of Junior Development Program with a bunch of junior surfers competing in the Cadet Cup.” Local pro, Philippa Anderson said she loves the opportunity to compete against some of the best female surfers in the world in her hometown. “I love Surfest, especially seeing my hero’s, like Steph (Gilmore), surf my home break. It’s great to be able to sleep in my and see my friends after competition too,” said Philippa. “Obviously, there’s a bit of added pressure to do well, but I feel blessed to have the support of the local Newcastle and Hunter communities that help us to host and compete at such a world-class event.” This year the competition was fierce, and after giving 100% in each and every heat, Philippa eventually bowed out in the 3rd round.

Ryan Callinan also carried the weight of the hometown crowd on his shoulders when he caught his last wave with less than a minute to go. No local has ever won Surfest, not even the legendary Mark Richards, so the pressure was on the young surfer to deliver. Unfortunately, he didn’t get the score he needed to progress to the next round, falling an agonizing 0.27 points short! If you reckon you’ve got what it takes to compete against Philippa and Ryan next year, why not join the Merewether Surfboard Club and make sure you keep your board in the back so you’re ready to go next time the Newcastle surf’s up! [www.merewethersurfboardclub.com.au](http://www.merewethersurfboardclub.com.au)



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# THE FISH ARE SINGING

JOHNNY CASH WOULD SAY, "I WALK THE LINE"... WE THINK A BETTER IDEA WOULD BE TO THROW ONE OUT IN FRONT OF YOU THIS MONTH!

**MARLIN ARE TEASING**  
As we hit Autumn the marlin season is yet to really fire up in big numbers off Port Stephens and the inshore blacks have been patchy this month. With some luck we should see better numbers as the beautiful blue stuff pushes inshore.

Slow trolled live slimies in areas such as the Gibber and off the light at Fingal Island will be the place to hunt.

For those looking for a stretching, the blue marlin have been very active out wide with a few short bill spear fish, big dollies and the odd striped marlin in the pack - the trick is finding a good weather window to get amongst them.

**NORTH COAST RAZOR GANG INVASION!**  
It might have been a slow start to the mackerel run, but things are boiling on the mackerel grounds at the moment with bag limits of spots and plenty of spanish in excess of 20kgs to report so far.

Long tail tuna have been reported caught as far south as Newcastle, so LBG boys it's time to gear up and swing off a few.

Impoundments on the boil - the extreme temps have forced the natives to take cover in the depths over the past month and deep

diving lures like the Feral Catts and AC invaders trolled have been proving the most effective way to score a few. Hopefully the cicadas start to hit the high notes and the surface activity follows suit.

The Golden soil - the beaches have still been fishing well with good numbers of whiting, tailor and school jew on the chew. We should start to see the numbers of bream pick up as the mullet run begins between now and Easter.

**TIME TO CHALLENGE OURSELVES AND THE MATES!**

- The Pirtek fishing challenge date has been set for the 19<sup>th</sup> of March for more information visit the website: [pirtekfishingchallenge.com.au](http://pirtekfishingchallenge.com.au)
- The Port Stephens Trailer Boat Fishing Tournament on is the weekend of the 31<sup>st</sup> of March.

**LOCAL FISHING CLUB DIG DEEP FOR CHARITY**  
It goes to show there's more to fishing then catching the PB's or beating the mates as Singletons Caledonian Hotel family fishing club has been hard at it again with raffles on Friday nights to gather the funds to make there annual donations of \$750 to both the Westpac chopper and Ronald McDonald House.

...Hook in! - **The Thriftys**

THE PIEMINISTER'S GRAND KIDS

# BLOODY EASTER!

THE EASTER BUNNY WOULD ALREADY BE DEAD IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE LITTLE TERRORS PICTURED ABOVE, AND THIS YEAR MIGHT JUST BE HIS LAST ANYWAY IF I GET MY WAY.

Years ago when rabbits were in plague proportions I proposed legislation to tackle the rabbit problem. While they aren't a real big issue anymore, I am still proposing reintroducing the idea so my grandkids can understand that Easter is really about celebrating the life of Sweet Baby Jesus and the importance of family and not chocolate eggs - rabbits don't even lay bloody eggs!

This inspired and tasty plan involves turning the Easter long weekend into a national rabbit hunting festival and bakeoff. So bright and early Easter Saturday morning I'm packing the grandkids and the old four ten shotgun into the Kingswood and we are heading bush up around Lake St Clair to rid our lands of those cute fluffy little hoppers - The idea will quite literally blow everyone away - especially the rabbits. My plan is to hunt the Easter bunny and all his friends, cousins and family until I have enough rabbit meat to supply every bakery in The Hunter with

enough to make rabbit pies for every Easter loving man, woman and child. With all of the leftover skins I am going to get warm fluffy gloves made up for all the kiddies to keep their hands warm over winter.

Come Easter Sunday we will gather our families around the table and chow down on hearty rabbit pies with a side of carrots and celebrate the life of Sweet Baby Jesus and our love of the family pie. Afterwards we will hand out the cosy rabbit skin gloves to the happy and excited kiddies.

Now I understand not everyone has a gun or knows a good place to hunt rabbits, so for the city slickers out there it is as easy as hunting the kids pet rabbit around the back yard. Instead of a four ten, just grab a trusty old shovel and give me call and I'll shoot round to grab the carcass for the pies when you've done the job!

Happy Easter everybody! From Piement House....Tha, tha, that's all folks! Sol

# ON YOUR MICE, GET SET, GO!

MAKE SURE YOU HEAD DOWN TO THE ALBION HOTEL ON SATURDAY APRIL 8 FOR THE EVENT OF THE YEAR AS THE SINGLETON MOUSE RACES RETURNS.

The event will be in support of the Singleton Cricket Association so take a break from the rat race and head to the mouse races.

@ The Coalface is getting behind the action as a sponsor and you should too.

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# GUNS N ROSES

THERE WAS A LOT OF TALK ABOUT WHETHER GUNS N ROSES STILL HAD IT OR IF THEY WERE PAST THEIR PRIME. I'M SURE SOME FANS MADE THE DECISION TO GIVE THEIR SYDNEY CONCERT A MISS RATHER THAN BE DISAPPOINTED. BIGGEST MISTAKE EVER!

This tour was the first time we got to see Axl Rose, Slash and Duff McKagan together on stage since their Use Your Illusion Tour in 1993. Even the name of the tour 'Not in this Lifetime' came from Axl Rose saying those very words in response to a question about another tour. Yet somehow the three members put aside their differences and set out on a world tour to the delight of millions of fans.



The Sydney show saw 50,000 fans cramming into ANZ stadium to bring back the glory days of 90's rock. A few technical difficulties in the first half hour didn't look very promising but once the tech guys sorted it out the band proved that they were still hard core rockers, even if they looked more like middle-aged men reliving their glory days. But then so did a lot of the audience. When classic songs like Live and Let Die, Sweet Child of Mine and November Rain played the crowd went absolutely wild. Axl hit all the high notes, Slash & Duff thrummed out amazing solos and the expected fireworks and pyrotechnics serenaded every song. And then to top it all off legendary Australian rocker Angus Young joined them on stage to perform Whole Lotta Rosie and a mélange of iconic riffs turning the night into a truly epic show. Guns n Roses might be getting on in age, but they certainly proved that their guns still fire with a bang and their roses haven't wilted.

## @ THE COALFACE CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

2 A term for small or fine coal

6 A term for a fist sized lump of coal

7 A term for any mixture of methane and air

10 Coal suitable for the manufacture of coke

12 A means for transporting coal

13 A gas analyser used in underground mines

15 An instrument for measuring air velocity

16 Term for the semi-permanent or permanent closure of a roadway

17 Location of belt drive mechanism

18 A term for carbon monoxide mixed with air

19 Crushed limestone

20 A block of coal left to hold up the roof

21 A brownish black coal

DOWN

1 A term for a hand shovel

3 The direction along a roadway away from the face

4 A term for carbon dioxide

5 A term for a large hanging or fallen lump of stone

8 A term for the coal walls of a roadway

9 The light worn on a miner's helmet

11 An elevated structure on the surface

12 The name for tunnels that join the bords

13 A controlled explosion

14 Coal cutting machine used in longwall system

17 A container to carry crib in made from galvanised tin

# NANNA KERR'S KITCHEN

NANNA KERR WOULD WELCOME ANY STRANGER INTO HER HOME, OFFER THEM A WHOLESOME AND HEARTY MEAL, AND BY THE TIME THEY LEFT THEY HAD BECOME PART OF THE FAMILY. AND THAT'S THE DINING EXPERIENCE THE OWNERS OF NANNA KERR'S KITCHEN HAVE MANAGED TO REPLICATE.

Owners Jimmy and Matty are the type of people that you instantly warm to, their welcome makes you feel like you're a friend over for dinner and not just another paying patron. Even the dog that came in with some other diners got greeted with cuddles!

Nanna Kerr's Kitchen offers a selection of dishes that could compete with any fine dining restaurant I've been to. What's so refreshing about this place is they've managed to do so in a laid-back way, no overbearing waiters, no miniscule serving sizes, and no over the top prices. Instead it's all about offering a new approach to traditional dishes in a comfortable setting.

The restaurant is also well known for its approach to organic and vegan foods, which to be honest, made me a little hesitant. I've never been one for the 'organic' way of life, but Nanna Kerr's Kitchen has opened my eyes (and my stomach). For them, organic simply means using local fresh produce to create dishes that are healthy and delicious.

We left it up to Chef Adam Frey to select our dishes for the three course dinner option, and after a tasty little Nanna's treat brought out to get our appetites rolling, my entrée of Oven Baked Gnocchi with Wasabi Mushy Peas and Pumpkin arrived. Too polite to tell our waitress Courtney I wasn't a fan of gnocchi, I got stuck in and was amazed to find it was the best plate of food I'd had for a long time. And then to find out it was a vegan dish was when I really started to rethink everything I thought I knew about vegan and organic food.

I was also lucky enough to sample their Pate, Smoked Salmon, Chicken Breast, Trout, Brulee and Truffles & Doughnuts. Each dish was delicious, and while all still made with familiar ingredients each had been tweaked to create an interesting new taste.

Every dish only became more palatable with the picture perfect setting I was in. The old style county charm building overlooks vineyards with the Brokenback Mountains as backdrop giving this place a serenity that you won't find in many dining establishments. The spacious



FOOD YOU CAN GET STUCK INTO



PICTURE PERFECT



OWNERS, MATTY & JIMMY

layout also adds to the private and intimate feel. As I sipped from a local organic Tamburlaine wine and watched the sun set in the distance, I was left feeling completely sated and true to their promise, I felt like I had was home.

Nanna Kerr's Kitchen is open all day Thursday to Monday from 8am for breakfast, lunch and dinner and due to popular demand will be open 7 days from March 23. [nannakerrskitchen.com.au](http://nannakerrskitchen.com.au)

## CATCH A CAT!

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## TIME TO TAME THE BEAST

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OCEAN SIDE



# COASTAL CHILL

THERE'S NOTHING QUITE LIKE A PUB FEED, ESPECIALLY ONE WITH WATER VIEWS, AND THE BEACH HOTEL, MEREWETHER, HAS A COUNTER LUNCH YOU CAN COUNT ON...

Picture this: You've just knocked off five days' worth of day shift and the weekend is looming large. Friday, Saturday, Sunday are all yours, to do what you like with. So, you head to Merewether beach for swim or a surf, where you work up a huge hunger that needs something good to really satisfy (more than a Snickers).

The Beach Hotel in Merewether is the original beachfront foine diner for those of us who enjoy a

midday steak or schnitzel with a side of chips and a cold beer. Order up at the counter from one of the handsome blokes or gorgeous girls behind the bar, grab a number, collect your cutlery and take it all outside for some fresh air and ocean spray.

There's a good selection of beers, from the classics like New and Old (and that piss they call VB), plus a few tasty ones right out of the craft beer stables. Plus, they have over 30 scotches

and gins, 21 bourbons and 45 vodkas, which should make cocktails a bit of a no brainer, later on.

You'll hardly need to wait long before the order arrives – a juicy looking sirloin still on the bone, and cooked to absolute perfection, and a classic golden crumbed and crispy chicken schnitty, one soaking in a bit of Diane sauce, and the other pepper gravy, both with a side of crunchy, piping hot chips and a salad to make you feel good about your protein



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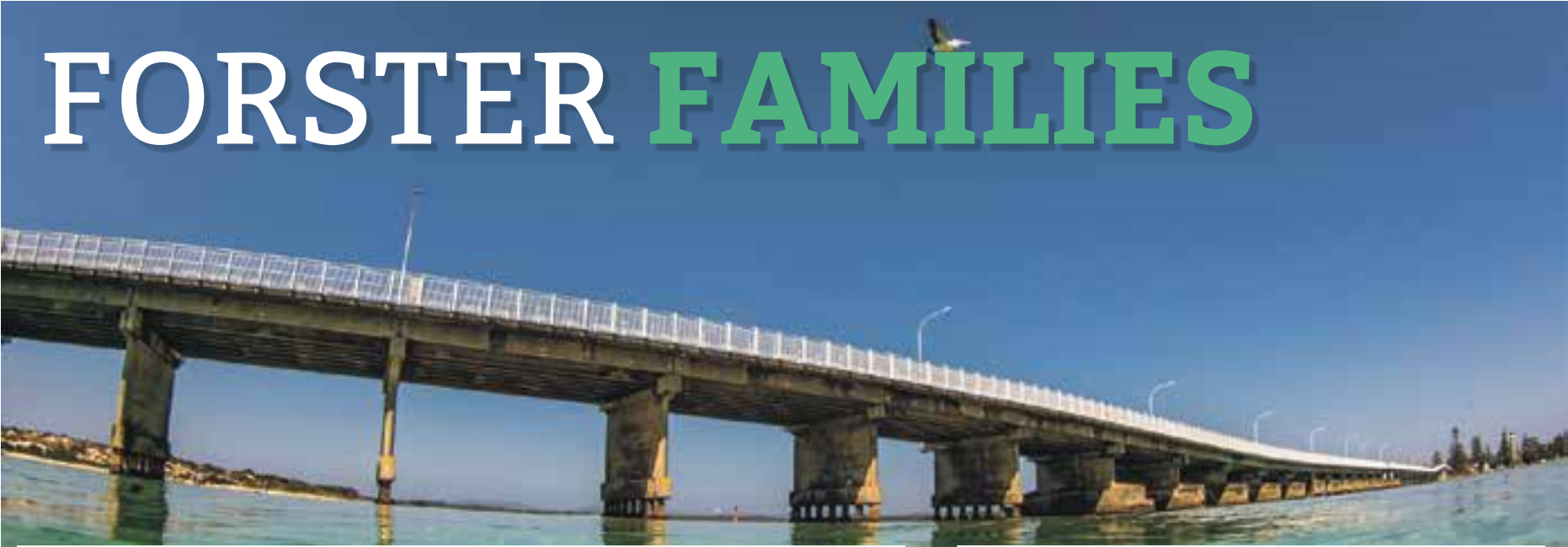
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THIS PICTURESQUE SEASIDE TOWN IN THE BEAUTIFUL GREAT LAKES AREA IS A HAVEN FOR HUNTER FAMILIES, AND WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO CREATE CHILDHOOD MEMORIES HERE.

Forster is probably not the most exciting destination, no bright city lights, no crazy dance parties or bustling nightlife, but what it does offer is some of the most beautiful scenery and outdoor activities around. First there's the beaches. Forster Main Beach and One Mile Beach are where you'll find most of the tourists so if you are after something a little more secluded try Burgess Beach. This lovely little beach is framed by Booti Booti National Park allowing you to hit some trails if you want a break

from the water. If you are looking to try your hand at surfing then Boomerang or Blueys beaches are for you. The lake offers a ton of water activities, from boating to water skiing to scuba. Visit one of the boat sheds on Little Street and hire some gear. We hired stand up paddle boards and headed out onto the water to test our skills. After a few unplanned dips we mastered the art and spent a few leisurely hours enjoying the beauty around us. Just as we were heading back in a couple of dolphins

came right up beside us! I couldn't resist yelling out shark and then watching the family try to take off on paddleboards. Not the speediest mode of escape. The dolphins stayed with us for a while and it was an incredible experience. **SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE** With tons of restaurants and food outlets available you are guaranteed to find something for every budget and even the fussiest eater. The Reef Bar Grill, Restaurant 26 and the Spice Monkey will all guarantee great meals and a great atmosphere. Best pick would have to be the Sea Change Bar & Grill. From the outside it doesn't look as impressive as some of the other joints but the service is always great and the food delicious. After dark we took out some kayaks and tried our hand at fishing. Before you knew it we had caught brim, leatherjackets and one big old catfish. The kids had tons of fun playing spotlight with the torches and especially trying to spotlight the odd octopus.



PERFECT FOR FAMILIES



MAKE NEW FRIENDS

Needing to dry out we spent the following day exploring some of the great trails the national parks around there offer. Whether on foot or mountain bike you'd be hard pressed to even cover a tiny portion of these magnificent trails. Try the Booti Hill/Lakeside walking track and make sure you take your camera. There is an abundance of wildlife and during winter

migrating whales can often be seen. All of this is and more is what makes Forster a timeless holiday destination. Spending time outdoors with the family and creating memories that you will treasure forever. And of course providing material for stories that you'll be able to laugh at every time you get together.



PRETTY CITY

## GO DOWN SOUTH

WITH OUR CUNNING GUIDE TO 48 HOURS IN HOBART, YOU'LL HAVE THE MAP OF TASSIE'S CAPITAL LICKED IN NO TIME!

There's never been a better time to grab a partner and go down south... to Hobart, Tasmania. Spend a couple of days wandering the state's capital. Soak up the history and heritage while doing a bit of shopping at Salamanca Markets, next to the marina at Constitution Dock. Make sure you stop in at Lark Distillery's Cellar Door to sample some of Tassie's finest distillations, including a delicious range of single malts, rum, gin, and other liqueurs. They say eating's cheating, but not if you're trying to keep it on the road after all that booze. Back in the centre of town, tucked away on a little side street, you'll find Hobart's best

burgers at, The Standard. Push a Heisenburger with side of fries into your face and wash it down with a bloody delicious Oreo Malted Shake. You'll probably feel fat afterwards, but that's OK, you're on holidays, so go straight to the pub. In fact, make it a brewery. Catch a cab and head just out of town for a few brews and a brewery tour at Cascade Brewery. Now that you've strapped your sea-legs on, book an unforgettable experience

and sea birds up close and personal. See if old Pennicott can drop you off at Bruny Island so you can go camping and fishing for free, near the beach. Next day, watch cheesemakers make cheese and then eat some at Bruny Island Cheese Co. Next, have a few huge Pacific

oysters from Get Schucked Oyster Bar before drinking some delicious Bruny Island Wine as the sun sets and the Southern Lights light up the night sky. Before you go, make sure you check out MONA – Museum of Old and New Art – where you'll see some of the weirdest and most wonderful artworks and ancient museum pieces you're ever likely to see. There's always a new exhibition on and plenty of cool things to explore, plus a few restaurants and bars to sit down and recharge.

You won't want to leave the little Apple Isle because there's so much more to see and do. You'll just have to find another excuse to come down south, again, soon...



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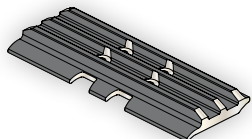
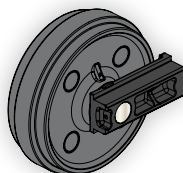
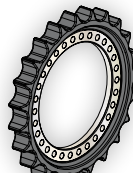
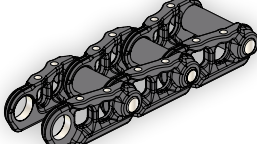
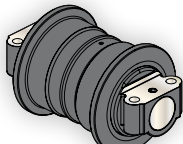
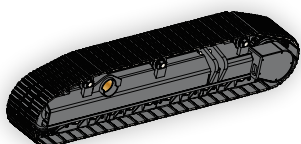
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