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@THE COAL FACE

Vol 1 No 8: May - June 2017

THE FUTURE OF DRAYTON COAL MINE AND THE DRAYTON SOUTH PROJECT IS AGAIN THE SUBJECT OF MUCH SPECULATION WITH ANGLO AMERICAN ENTERING INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH MALABAR COAL TO SELL THEIR 88.17% SHARE.

DRAYTON SOUTH SOLD

Anglo American ceased mining activities at the Drayton mine during 2016 and the loss of jobs hurt the community. When the South Drayton project was refused by the PAC for the 4th time in February and Anglo American declaring they would not make another application, many thought that was the end for Drayton South.

With the news of the sale many are of the opinion that Malabar Coal would not have agreed to the purchase without intending to pursue the project. The equine industry believe this to be the

case and have made it clear that they will fight any applications.

The proposed project would see 500 jobs and 15 years of coal production and although each application was approved by the Department of Planning and Environment it was refused by the PAC because of the believed risk to the local horse studs and environmental concerns.

At this time all Anglo American have said about the sale is that it is subject to several conditions and its terms are confidential.

A BIG DEAL

THIESS HAS SECURED A \$500 MILLION DEAL FOR MINING SERVICES WITH MACH ENERGY AT MOUNT PLEASANT.

The deal will see Thiess undertake mining operations at the Muswellbrook mine until 2021 and services will include mine planning and engineering.

Thiess Managing Director, Michael Wright said the company was proud to develop the world class Mount Pleasant coal operation.

"Our focus is on achieving successful outcomes for our clients and the community," he said. "We are very pleased to continue our long-standing presence in the Hunter Valley."

THIESS IS COMMITTED TO OPERATING OUT OF MUSWELLBROOK TO MANAGE THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION FOR THE SITE.

MACH Energy's Managing Director Scott Winter remained passionate about supporting local businesses and believed the on-going benefits provided a sustainable future for the broader community.

"We expect Thiess to seek-out those who have the right attitude and having a recruitment centre based in Muswellbrook opens-up the opportunities for workers in the region to become involved in the operation," Mr Winter said.

The Mount Pleasant coal mine has an estimated 474 million tonnes of total marketable coal reserves to be mined.

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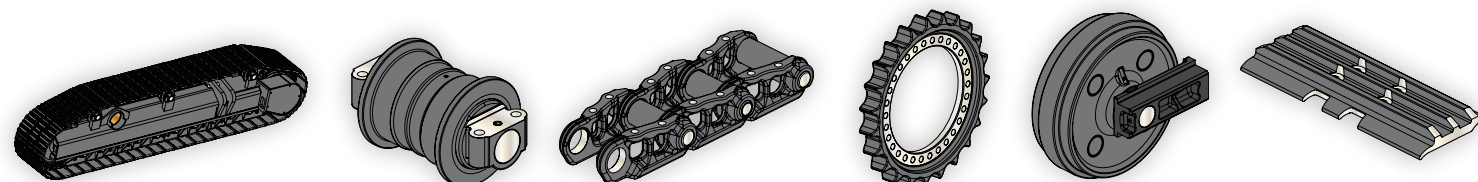
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PLAY IT SAFE

THIS MONTH SAFETY HAS BEEN FOREMOST IN OUR MINDS AS WE PAY TRIBUTE AND REMEMBER LIVES LOST.

With Anzac Day and Worker's Memorial Day both taking place in April, we've had the chance to remember the lives that have been lost whether it's due to heroic acts in war or poor safety standards on the job.

Personally, I think that being a miner back in the day and heading underground with just a pick and shovel would have taken as much courage as heading out onto the battlefield!

These days safety standards in our industry are the best in the world but accidents happen despite the best preventions so always remember to take that extra minute to do the job safely.

It's also been a whirlwind of

fun this month, doing loops in an AeroHunter plane, sampling delicious beer at the grand opening of Ironbark Hill Vineyard's new brewery or holidaying in the world's destination of fun - Sentosa Island.

For the nerds we've got robots and space mining this month and for the revheads check out our driving page and tools and toys.

We showcase some everyday people who prove that with the right attitude you can make your mark on the world, or stand on top of it!

We hope you enjoy this month's edition!

KNIGHTS AND MINING TOGETHER AGAIN

KNIGHTS AND NSW ORIGIN GREAT PAUL 'THE CHIEF' HARRAGON IS AN ICON IN THE HUNTER. MANY OF HIS FORMER TEAM MATES CAN STILL REMEMBER HOW THE CHIEF WOULD RALLY THE KNIGHTS IF THEY WERE DOING IT TOUGH, REMINDING THEM THAT THEY WERE 'PROUD SONS OF COAL MINERS'.

Just like mining, rugby league has a long and proud history in the Hunter Valley. Way back in 1908 the Newcastle Rebels were a foundation team in the original competition. Many current and former Knights and their families have worked in local mines. Current Knights winger Nathan Ross virtually stepped out of an underground mine and into a Knights jersey.

This great link between mining and Rugby League is one of the reasons the Knights host the Voice for Mining Family Day in Newcastle every year. It's an awesome event that brings together

two significant contributors to the Hunter community.

On July 2, this year the Knights will again wear their special hi-vis mining jersey when they take on the West Tigers at the 2017 Voice for Mining Family Day at MacDonald Jones Stadium.

Thousands of miners and their families along with thousands more that work in mining-related businesses are expected to pack Hunter Stadium for the Round 17 NRL clash.

Things are looking up for the local mining industry, with commodity prices bouncing back and demand for our coal on the rise. We're hoping for a big show of support for our miners and mining communities right across NSW at this year's Voice for Mining Family Day.

As with previous years, we want our miners, their families and mining supporters to wear their high-vis workwear to the game or grab a free



Stephen Galilee
CEO, NSW Minerals Council

vest at the gate. We want a show of support for miners and their families that will make it all the way to the decision makers in State Parliament in Sydney.

We want our politicians to see that a strong mining industry means a strong local economy and more jobs for local people and their families. Let's show our support for the Newcastle Knights and our Hunter miners at this year's event.



Publisher
Shane Davey
shane@thecoalface.net.au
0408 759 088

Editor
Rebecca Connolly
rebecca@thecoalface.net.au
0408 769 699

Business Development Manager
Brett Collier
brett@thecoalface.net.au
0456 737 888

Editorial Contributor
Daniel James

Design
Catch Creative

@ The Coalface
7B/169 John Street
Singleton NSW 2330

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SAFETY FIRST

THE LAST FRIDAY IN APRIL MARKED WORLD DAY FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK AND IT GOT ME THINKING ABOUT THE WORK WE ARE DOING WITH THE NSW COAL MINING INDUSTRY.

Improving the work, health and safety performance of the mining industry in this State is a priority for our Government.

With around 21,000 people employed directly by the industry in NSW, protecting our workers is a responsibility we take extremely seriously.

I believe NSW has strong, practical legislation in place to regulate work, health and safety performance in mining.

All mine site operators are required to systematically and comprehensively manage risk through a safety management system. This system must address all risks relating to their operations.

The NSW Resources Regulator is also implementing the Mine Safety Regulatory Reform: Incident Prevention Strategy, in consultation with the Mine Safety Advisory Council and external

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industry stakeholders.

This reform ensures that the regulator is delivering on the

LETTER 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.

Dear Editor,

What is it with all this women in mining stuff? And no I am not against women working in the industry quite the opposite. My missus drives haul trucks and I know plenty in other areas as well and they do a good job.

The point I want to make is that while all this equality stuff is all well and good the very nature of singling out the girls for special attention creates a few divisions in itself. Why can't we all just be recognised for who we are – miners. Women or blokes, we all do a lot of the same jobs yet the girls seem to

be singled out for special attention and us guys get a little bit tired of that special attention from time to time. Where are the special Men in Mining Awards? It pisses me off to be honest. I believe it is now time to simply award recognition based on doing a good job regardless of which way you go to the loo.

If we want true equality then we have to treat everyone the same and I know plenty of men and women in the mines who feel the same as I do.

Jack - Singleton

We here @ The Coalface don't totally disagree and it has been said to us more than a few times. Women are playing an increasingly important role in all areas of our industry and if we are going to have a mining woman of the year we at least should look at having a mining man of the year. Or better yet we would love to see a woman winning a non-gender specific award for miner of the year.

recommendations of the review and is modelling best practice and deploying resources to where they are most needed.

The strategy is focusing on targeted assessments and interventions, critical controls, centralised industry reporting and the role human and organisational factors play in the success or failure of control measures.

The NSW Resources Regulator will continue to work and communicate with stakeholders as further changes are implemented.

With mining responsible for employing so many people across our state it's important we set the highest standards and ensure best practice is always in place at all sites.

Our State has an impressive health and safety track record, which is a testament to the collaboration and dedication of government and industry in the sector - but I won't be complacent.

Workplace health and safety is everyone's responsibility. We must continue to work together to deliver the best possible health and safety outcomes every day.

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GLENCORE BEEFS UP

IN ITS 5TH YEAR, GLENCORE'S CATTLE GRAZING TRIALS ARE SHOWING PROMISING RESULTS.

Since 2012, Glencore's Liddell mine has been undertaking cattle grazing trials on rehabilitated mine land to determine whether rehabilitated pastures can successfully sustain cattle grazing to the same extent as un-mined land.

By monitoring the livestock, soil and vegetation over the study they hope to establish guidelines on ways to create and maintain rehabilitation areas and to prove cattle grazing is a suitable rehabilitation option.

The initial trial involved two groups of 30 Charbray steers positioned on either the natural or rehabilitated land and after 18 months they identified that overall the cattle on the rehabilitated pasture were 79kg heavier per head.

The second phase of the trial conducted over 12 months using 20 steers found cattle grazed on rehabilitation pastures still gained weight, although the difference was less than the first trial, with the steers on rehabilitated land 17kg heavier per head.

The third trial found a substantial increase with 54kg per head heavier steers on the rehabilitated land.

These positive results show cattle on rehabilitated land grew quicker and had a greater fat coverage allowing for better returns at sale. Glencore has yet to complete the study but these initial results indicate another successful use for rehabilitated mine land.



JOSEPH FRANCIS JOY

A LITTLE JOY GOES A LONG WAY

KOMATSU LIMITED HAS PURCHASED JOY GLOBAL INC. FOR \$2.89 BILLION. THAT'S A HECK OF A LONG WAY FROM WHERE IT ALL BEGAN.

In 1895, 12-year-old Joseph Francis Joy went to work as a slate picker in a coal mine in Cumberland, Maryland, which eventually led to him working underground with a range of hand held augers, picks and shovels.

It sparked a passion in him for ways to mechanise the coal mining progress (or perhaps he was simply looking for ways to make his own job easier) and in 1919 he obtained his first patent on a gathering arm type loader and Joy Mining Machinery was born.

Over his lifetime, Joy accumulated 190 patents and his major inventions were recognised at

milestones in the history of underground mining mechanisation. He pioneered new concepts in hydraulics, modern control and power circuits, trackless mining equipment, efficient gearing and seal designs and many other industry firsts.

His company Joy Mining Machinery is the largest producer of high productivity underground mining machinery in the world and accounts for over half of Joy Global's total revenue. Komatsu has not only purchased a company which is a world leader in mining, but also has played an instrumental part in making mining what it is today.

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REMEMBER OUR MINERS

LAST MONTH WE DID A STORY ON COAL MINER JOSEPH HENRY LITTLEFIELD 'HARRY', WHO LEFT HIS MINERS LAMP BEHIND AT NEATH HOTEL WHEN HE WENT OFF TO FIGHT IN WORLD WAR 1. THAT WAS ONLY THE START OF HARRY'S STORY AND MANY MINERS JUST LIKE HIM.

Harry and many other survivors of Gallipoli were then thrown into an insane battle in July 1916 in Pozières France. 16,000 men were wounded and 7,000 were killed. Of those who sacrificed their lives, 4,112 of them have never been found or identified. This is over 12% of the losses for Australia in WW1 and it happened in only 6 weeks.

The Battle has never been commemorated by Australia and the tremendous sacrifice made by these young Australian men is largely unknown to most of us.

Barry Gracey is the President of the Pozières Remembrance Association which was established to bring the recognition that is deserved to these men and ensure their legacy lives on.

When an entrenching tool was recently discovered at the site and given to Barry he realised that the digging tool could have belonged to Harry or a young miner just like him and so he decided to present it to the Neath Hotel where it could sit with Harry's mining lamp and commemorate his memory.

AWARE OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF ALL THE MINERS IN THE GREAT WAR, BARRY CONTACTED THE CFMEU TO BE A PART OF THIS MEMORABLE MOMENT.

Barry said, "Many miners like Harry didn't come home when they could have because they wanted to stay and help their mates. Their history has been overlooked so it's great to see the support of CFMEU."

CFMEU were honored to be part of the presentation with members Todd Hardy and David Simm presenting Neath Hotel owners David and Michelle Horton with the shovel and a certificate.

Todd said it was important to recognise all the miners who sacrificed their lives and the story of Harry and all his comrades should not be forgotten.

"These miners fought for what they believed in alongside their mates and in doing so many of them gave up their lives. It's now over 100 years later but being there for your mates is still what we are all about."

SACRIFICE A FEW DOLLARS TO KEEP THE MEMORY ALIVE

The association is building a Memorial Park at Pozieres for these brave men who made the ultimate sacrifice. You can help by going to their website and purchasing a brick for \$50 which will be used to build part of the wall. The brick can be inscribed with your name or a loved one who bravely gave up their life.

www.pozieresremembered.com.au

TODD HARDY, MICHELLE HORTON, BRETT HORTON & DAVID SIMM

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CHINA CLEANS UP

SOME SAY CLEAN COAL IS A MYTH. AS THE WORLD LEADER IN COAL GENERATION EFFICIENCY AND EMISSIONS, CHINA IS PROVING THAT CLEAN COAL IS REAL.

Feng Weizhong is the General Manager of Waigaoqiao Number 3 Power Station, a large Shanghai power plant that is using the latest in clean coal technology which is light years ahead compared to what we have here in Australia.

The plant produces 138 per cent as much electricity as the Yallourn coal-fired plant in Victoria's Latrobe Valley and yet only emits 13 per cent as much carbon dioxide equivalent. Efficiency wise, (measuring how much of the energy in the coal ends up as electricity) it is 166 per cent that of Yallourn.

How do they do this? "Simple!" Mr. Weizhong says, "It's clean coal!"

Renewable energy is good, but for China, and for other countries, depending only on renewables makes no sense. We can't discuss power without discussing coal and so we are bringing new life to an old industry."

China's national energy administration has enlisted Mr. Weizhong to help in renovating outdated power plants and developing new ones that meet its growing need to make more energy from lower fuel inputs, while emitting far less pollution and carbon dioxide.

China plans to keep reducing coal use and power station emissions while relying on coal to provide at least 55 per cent of its massive energy demand for decades to come.

Here in Australia many of our power stations are coming offline or are using outdated technology even as our energy demands are growing. We have the technology to build large capacity power stations with much lower pollution levels that what we are using. So, why aren't we?

Investors are shying away from any new clean coal projects because of the uncertainty in our energy future and because of the vocal opposition against coal. For a new project to get off the ground it will likely take government support which as we all know changes from week to week.

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COOL YOUR HEELS TOUGH GUY

BULLYING AND DISAGREEMENTS IN THE WORKPLACE ARE NO WORSE IN MINING THAN ANY OTHER INDUSTRY BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT DOESN'T HAPPEN - IT DOES AND IT'S HAPPENING PRETTY MUCH EVERYWHERE ACROSS THE HUNTER.

This month's opinion isn't about getting all PC and going soft to make sure no-ones feelings ever get hurt, it's about dealing with tensions onsite in better ways. At the end of the day people are going to work together who just

find a way to get on with your lives.
HOW YOU DEAL WITH IT IS A SIGN OF WHO YOU ARE, NOT THE PERSON YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH OR HAS A PROBLEM WITH YOU.
As hard as it might be the shortest route to a workable situation is for two people to 'have it out' and we don't mean in the punching way we mean in the talking sensibly way. If you are the 'bully' so to

not, you need to do it for your sanity as much as the other person, believe it or not. How it affects other areas of your life and career could be costing you more than you think. If you are being bullied, if possible you need to stand up for yourself. Sensibly working it out before it escalates too far and needs to become official is a way smarter way to go than making it a bigger situation.
BOTH SIDES NEED TO REASONABLY LOOK AT THEIR BEHAVIOR.
At the end of the day if it needs to be reported, then do it as soon as you think it's out of control or heading that way. Bullying in the workplace is 'repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety', according to Safe Work Australia.
An asshole is an asshole at the end of the day, but no one should pretend for a second that they know everything going on in someone else's life. Whichever side you are on, try to understand where the other person is coming from and you may just figure out the short cut to sorting the problem.

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THE DI IN DIALOGUE

THE COMMUNITY HAS A NEW VOICE WITH THE UPPER HUNTER MINING DIALOGUE FOLLOWING THE APPOINTMENT OF WELL-KNOWN LOCAL DI SNEDDON TO THE DIALOGUE'S KEY STRATEGY GROUP.

Mrs Sneddon was selected from applicants to join the Dialogue's Joint Advisory Steering Committee (JASC) to fill a vacancy created by the recent resignation of Dr John Drinan.

As with Dr Drinan, Mrs Sneddon has been involved with the Dialogue since its inception in 2011 including facilitating the Dialogue's last two annual workshops.

MRS SNEDDON COMES TO THE DIALOGUE VERY MUCH AWARE OF LOCAL ISSUES DUE TO HER LIFE-LONG RESIDENCY IN THE UPPER HUNTER, ONGOING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND FORMER LOCAL NEWS MEDIA CAREER.

"I am a fourth generation Singletonian, the daughter of a coal miner who worked underground from the mid 50s to the 80s and have two sons in the industry so I am well aware of past, present and future challenges of the coal mining industry," Mrs Sneddon said.

"As a senior journalist at the

Singleton Argus, I reported on many issues but it was my time as editor for nine years up until 2014, that I became even more involved in addressing the issues and concerns of the broader community and the challenges of the coal industry to address these concerns.

I have been involved in the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue since its inception and can see the benefits that this format has for both industry and communities in the Upper Hunter."

Dialogue Chairman David O'Brien welcomed Mrs Sneddon's appointment to the JASC.

"Di brings a vast knowledge of the Upper Hunter and its interaction with the mining industry. She is strongly involved in the community and will provide an intelligent, realistic and respectful voice to the JASC," he said.

The JASC is responsible for guiding the Dialogue's strategy; on it Mrs Sneddon joins fellow community members Gill Eason and Jim Morgan.

A DAM GOOD JOB

SINGLETON BASED COMPANY DAMSTRA TECHNOLOGY HAS BEEN NAMED A WESTPAC TOP 20 BUSINESS OF TOMORROW PROVING THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A CITY SLICKER TO MAKE IT BIG.

William Damstra started Damstra Mining Services back in 1999 as a labour hire company servicing the coal mines around the area. William was an experienced dragline operator and open cut examiner giving him firsthand knowledge of the industry.

When his son Christian came on board with the family business in 2002 it was already expanding to incorporate training into its services. Like his dad, Christian had a background in mining, he'd started at Drayton as an electrician before becoming an electrical engineer and then getting his open cut examiners ticket. Christian saw the growing need in the industry for workforce management systems and began to develop the technology in this area.

Damstra Mining was sold to the Skilled Group in 2006 and Christian went with it, continuing to expand the technology, but in mid-2016 he decided it was time to put the family name back where it belonged so he reacquired

it and Damstra Technology was launched.

And it's launched with a bang, firmly establishing itself as a leader in the market.

THE WESTPAC BUSINESS OF TOMORROW PROGRAM RECOGNISED 20 OUTSTANDING BUSINESSES OUT OF A POOL OF OVER 2000 AND DAMSTRA TECHNOLOGY WAS ONE OF THESE.

Christian said receiving the recognition was a huge accolade for the company and will provide many great opportunities for them.

"It's put me in the same room as influential business leaders and has given me the opportunity to be mentored by the best in the business. Not only that, I will be heading out to the US and China on an international study tour which will help us as we expand on a global scale."

The hard work that Christian and his team have put in has seen the company achieve a 30% growth over the last year and they are now on over 900 sites and have offices in Melbourne and New Zealand.

But Singleton will always be home Christian said. "We've built the company from right here in Singleton proving you don't need to be in a big city to be successful. Singleton will be a major part of our future and we will always maintain an office here."



CHRISTIAN DAMSTRA

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CHLOE REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

WHETHER IT’S STANDING ON THE SUMMIT OF MT KOSCIUSKO OR WINNING THE EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG WOMAN IN NSW MINING AWARD AT THE RECENT 2017 INDUSTRY AND SUPPLIER AWARDS, CHLOE PIGGFORD IS CLIMBING HER WAY TO THE TOP.

At 29 and already a manager at Integra Underground, it’s easy to see why this unassuming young woman took home first prize.

Chloe said when she first found out she was nominated she was shocked and humbled and that the last thing she expected was to win, especially considering the other strong contenders in the category.

Chloe’s not one for the spotlight but she realised that by winning the award she was representing all the people out there in our industry who just get the job done. Her quick progression from a graduate to manager is a story that will hopefully inspire others to pursue a career in mining and showcase the amazing opportunities available in

our industry for those prepared to work for it.

“The awards are great for drawing attention to all the great things that people and companies in our industry are achieving. It promotes collaboration and encourages you to go above and beyond. It’s a privilege to be part of that.” Chloe said.

Glencore was out it in force on the evening to support not just Chloe, but also Tiffany Hunt who was one of the three finalists for the Outstanding Tradeswoman/Operator/Technician category.

A PASSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT STARTED IT ALL

Chloe’s passion for the environment and outdoors made pursuing a Bachelor of Environmental Engineering at the University of Queensland a no brainer.

With the option to head into a variety of different industries at the completion of her degree, Chloe decided mining was her choice. “I felt that mining offered more diversity and more possibilities than other industries. I was thrilled to start a graduate program with Xstrata (now Glencore) and though

it meant moving away from my family I thought the benefits far outweighed any hesitations I had. So, in 2009 I moved to Singleton and started at United Collieries in Jerry’s Plain. I then went on to Bulga Open Cut and then Mangoola where I spent 7 years.”

Chloe said it was important to learn about both open cut and underground mining and this was supported as part of her graduate program. At the completion of her graduate program she became

a permanent Environmental and Community Officer and continued to grow and learn under Glencore’s support.

Chloe’s dedication and hard work clearly paid off as late last year she became Integra Underground’s Environment and Community Manager, a role that has her leading a dynamic team to ensure environmental compliance and community engagement is not just done, but done well. Chloe’s goal which is strongly supported



CHLOE PIGGFORD IS THE WINNER OF THE EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG WOMAN IN MINING AWARD

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by Glencore is not to just stay compliant but to go beyond and exceed expectations.

“I love the job and working with so many varied specialists to achieve the best possible solution. My passion is strategic planning and working towards achieving the best possible outcome. We hold ourselves to account and work to set new standards and that’s what keeps me excited to go to work every day.”

CHLOE’S PASSIONATE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT ON THE JOB AND OFF

When she’s not at work she’s out experiencing our environment first hand. She’s visited Canada to see polar bears, trekked through Alaska’s national parks and is planning her next trip to the Arctic to see the caribou run across the snowy tundra. Just a couple of weeks ago she stood on the summit of Mt Kosciusko when most of us were probably enjoying a lazy weekend on the lounge.

Chloe said that though some people may think that being a passionate advocate for sustainability while working in the mining industry might not seem compatible, for her it’s a perfect fit. “I love the outdoors

and wildlife and I have attained skills to see that it’s restored to a condition that we can all enjoy. At the same time, I am part of an industry that contributes so much to our society and our economy.”

Her choice to enter the mining industry has not only brought Chloe a career that most of us would envy, but she also met her partner James through the industry. He’s also an Environmental Specialist and so he understands and supports Chloe’s passion and commitment to her job.

WHAT’S IN STORE FOR THE FUTURE

“The coal industry here in the Hunter still has a long future ahead of it, so there are endless possibilities for what’s in store for me. Right now, I’m focusing on the work ahead in my role at Integra. We have approval for two longwalls and we also have exploration underway so my team and I have a lot of work ahead of us.”

As for the awards Chloe is just happy that the industry is receiving recognition and that all the hardworking men and women have a chance to see their efforts rewarded. Congratulations Chloe!

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GREENLIGHT FOR
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YANCOAL

THE FOREIGN INVESTMENT REVIEW BOARD (FIRB) HAS APPROVED YANCOAL'S \$3.2 BILLION ACQUISITION OF RIO TINTO'S HUNTER VALLEY COAL ASSETS.

It's been a media frenzy lately with much speculation about whether the sale, which was announced back in February, would be approved by the Australian government and whether it would be able to raise the required capital.

With some voicing the opinion that the government would not approve the sale as it would give too large a monopoly on coal assets to the Chinese owned company, that speculation has been laid to rest with the Australian Government's foreign investment watchdog having no objection to it purchasing Coal & Allied Industries.

The FIRB approval is "a critical milestone", according to Yancoal Chief Executive Officer Reinhold Schmidt. "The FIRB approval is a positive step forward for Yancoal, its shareholders and the Hunter Valley, demonstrating the Australian Government's support for continued investment into the local resources sector."

The acquisition remains subject to additional conditions, including approval from shareholders of Rio Tinto and Yancoal's majority owner, Yanzhou Coal Mining.

SMARTER POWER COMING YOUR WAY

WHILE COAL FIRED POWER CAN HELP KEEP COSTS DOWN, WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT TO KNOW EXACTLY HOW MUCH POWER THE VACUUM CLEANER USED SO YOU HAD AN EXCUSE TO CUT DOWN ON ITS USE?

Conventional smart meter systems used by energy companies provide data on how much power is being used but gives no further information. They can jump up and down in price over each quarter leaving you wondering what's causing the spikes and how you can prevent them. But that's all set to change.

The CSIRO has teamed up with Ecocentric to develop a 'Numen' energy system. The system will bring together a building's total energy signal, identify all the appliances present, then break down the usage by each appliance.

The cloud based technology will measure the energy consumption data in real time and provide opportunities for more efficient energy use, resulting in cost savings and a reduced carbon footprint.

For use in homes, commercial buildings and industrial facilities this new system will undoubtedly help contribute to a more energy efficient future.

And of course, let us know exactly how much power that stupid vacuum is using.

HIGH FLYING MINER

YOU WON'T FIND TWO JOBS FURTHER APART THAN UNDERGROUND MINER AND PILOT, BUT FOR SUCCESSFUL LOCAL BUSINESSMAN BEN WYNDAM, BOTH COMBINED TO BECOME AN INSTRUMENTAL PART OF HIS LIFE AND CAREER JOURNEY.

As the owner of successful Scone based airline Airspeed Aviation, Scone Chamber of Commerce President, ex underground miner and lifelong flying enthusiast, Ben talked to us about how his day job now sees him flying high rather than digging deep.

Ben became a qualified pilot at the age of 23. Discussing his journey Ben said, "I was asked to set up a charter service for Valley Longwall before things got tough around August 2001 and 9/11 and I got a start working on drill rigs underground for what I thought would be a few months. 6 or 7 years later I was still there. I continued living and working in Scone as an instructor throughout those years and enjoyed the best of both worlds."

"My old man worked in the industry along with other family members so mining wasn't as big a stretch as it may seem. I stay in close touch with what's happening as a mining supplier and have been lucky enough to be a frequent award finalist of the NSW Minerals Council award for Small Business Excellence which I won in 2016."

"I LOVE FLYING BUT I LOVED MY TIME UNDERGROUND AS WELL. SITTING IN A PLANE CAN BE LONELY AT TIMES, SO I MISS THE MATESHIP THAT ONLY OTHER UNDERGROUND MINERS CAN UNDERSTAND."

Ben told us with a laugh about some of his 'infamous' mining mates but said the best stories need to be kept untold to protect those still alive. As for flying, his most famous passenger has been Bob Hawke. "Bob is a very entertaining and genuine guy and the chance to chat for so long was an opportunity I'll never forget. Along with mining charters we also regularly fly polities around and do work with TV shows like Getaway so interesting passengers are part of the job," said Ben.

He told us his scariest moment in the sky was flying across Australia at night and looking down to see these great big areas of white which he thought was fog, meaning he had nowhere to land and not much fuel. Ben then realised it was salt plains, but not before spending an hour or so thinking he was stuffed. His scariest moment as a miner was in the Kyooga box cut which collapsed within minutes of him being there.

Life these days revolves around family; the business and being an active part of a small-town community where you can make a difference.

As Scone Chamber President, Ben understands the need to balance mining, equine and agriculture. "With 10% of the Scone community employed in some way connected to mining it represents a big part of our economy and will for a while yet, but now is also the time to start planning for what the next generation will have to work with," said Ben.

Talking with Ben you get a sense of a bloke who still has a lot of living and working to do, be it in the air, the mining industry or in Scone. We hope this local success story keeps his head in the clouds for many years to come.

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PARALLEL ECONOMICS

WATER WORLD

RECREATIONAL AQUATICS ARE A NO BRAINER FOR VOIDS IF THE CONDITIONS AND LOCATION ARE RIGHT.

Glencore's Westside Mine at West Wallsend is a terrific example of a mining operation that has gone full cycle from opening, through its production years to finally closure and extensive successful rehabilitation. It's now reasonably

close to being considered for its post mining future.

There's an idea that has been tossed around for a while that would be perfect for Westside, or that could be considered for any number of

voids at other mine sites across the Hunter.

IT COULD BE A HUGE ASSET FOR NEWCASTLE, SINGLETON OR MUSWELLBROOK AND THE HUNTER'S LEISURE ATTRACTIONS.

Along with the birds, other wildlife and significant bush regeneration, Westside has a perfectly formed final void that could accommodate a cable ski and aqua park with surrounding bush-based activities.

The idea and amenities are pretty straightforward and tested the world over as hugely successful and popular attractions and destinations for everyone from adrenalin junkies to families and everyone in between.

Just a few of the ideas, amenities and attractions that could be considered are:

- Cable or boat pulled skiing and wakeboarding depending on size of void
- Inflatable aqua fun park
- Sailing
- Giant water slides
- Recreational ornamental rowing park and gardens
- Purpose built artificial environment scuba diving centre
- Cycling and running tracks
- Separate dog swimming and recreation area

Add BBQ, playground facilities and anything else you might be able to conjure up and its not a question of is this a good idea but - 'When can we get this party started!'

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Titanic:
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Beauty and the Beast:
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ASTEROID MINING WILL
SOON BE A REALITY

WATCH THIS SPACE

THE IDEA OF MINING RAW MATERIALS FROM ASTEROIDS HAS BEEN AROUND FOR A WHILE. BUT WHAT'S THE LIKELIHOOD OF IT HAPPENING?

It's more than a likelihood, in fact it's expected that within the next decade asteroid mining will no longer just be an idea from science fiction novels but a reality.

Already there is fierce competition in the space mining industry as companies come up with ambitious plans to tap into outer space resources. Deep Space Industries, Kepler Energy and Space Engineering, Moon Express and Planetary Resources are all busy working on a variety of projects and launches are already under way in exploratory missions.

The initial goal of most companies is to provide basic resources for space travelers or robotic space operations. Space mining is not just about mining asteroids for rare metals or resources and bringing them back to Earth. There's also a lot of value in keeping the resources in space and using them to continue exploration and even colonisation.

WHAT WILL WE BE MINING?
It's a risky and expensive business sending resources into space, even basics like water. To send an Olympic size swimming pool full of water into space would cost about \$1 billion. Water is used not only to sustain life, but for also for cooling systems and the two components of water – hydrogen and oxygen, are the main components of rocket fuel.

Transforming asteroid water into rocket fuel will make a huge difference to our space going capabilities and with many of the 13,000 near earth asteroids being made up of around 20 percent water there is no shortage available.

As for rare metals, the moon alone is estimated to contain trillions of dollars in valued materials such as helium3, titanium and platinum.

WHY AREN'T WE ALREADY MINING?
The main holdup is the cost of launching and transporting. Even with the reduced launch costs thanks to SpaceX and Blue Origin, sending anything into space remains hugely expensive. The cost of space transportation needs to drastically reduce before it will be economical to transport minerals back to Earth.

Most experts believe it's only a matter of time before the space mining industry overcomes the hurdles of transportation and successfully utilising water for fuel.

As the industry grows a space mining supply chain would naturally develop following the same practices as what our terrestrial mining companies follow - exploration, development, operations, and closure. Skills in our industry will be sought after and who knows, maybe some of us will be putting them to use among the stars.

HORSING AROUND

PIT PONIES WERE USED IN UNDERGROUND COAL MINES FROM THE MID-18TH UNTIL THE MID-20TH CENTURY AND THEY PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN THE COAL MINING INDUSTRY THAT HAS GONE LARGELY UNRECOGNISED.

The term 'pit pony' came from the small hardy breeds of ponies used in British and European mines. Here in the Hunter, where our coal seams tended to be thicker meaning higher tunnels, larger breeds of horses were commonly used such as Clydesdales.

The main use of pit ponies was to haul coal to the surface, pulling heavy skips of coal along tracks out of the mine.

In the early days, a wheeler was a young boy of around 14 who would lead the pit pony through the mine tunnels to collect the coal and then take it up to the surface. The horses responded to voice commands and knew their way through the tunnels and back to their stables.

Conditions for pit ponies changed throughout the years and at different collieries, with their treatment generally improving as time went on. Some ponies would spend their entire lives working underground and never see the surface while others would spend the working week underground and rest in underground stables at night and only be brought to the surface for a weekend of rest in the mines paddocks. Others were returned to the surface at

the end of each day, washed down, fed and reshod when required.

During their working life, the pit ponies formed strong bonds with their handlers and the other miners around them. Their even temperament made them suitable for the never-ending darkness and loud noises.

THE SIXTH SENSE OF THESE ANIMALS SAVED THE LIFE OF MANY A MINER.

There are many stories of ponies who refused to enter a section of mine that subsequently collapsed soon after. Some miners said the horses knew exactly what time knock-off was and refused to take another load, and most agreed that they intuitively knew when it was time for crib.

Horses played such an important part in our coal mining history and for most miners they were so much more than a mere tool and became dear companions instead.

The last pit ponies used in Australia were retired in 1990 but their contribution should never be forgotten.

Last Pit Pony, Collierville 1986

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A DAY TO REMEMBER

ON FRIDAY 28TH APRIL, IT WAS WORLD DAY FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK BUT EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR WE SHOULD PUT OUR HEALTH AND SAFETY FIRST.

The day was not only to bring awareness to work health and safety, but was also Workers’ Memorial Day, a day to stop and remember those who have died on the job. More than 1800 mine workers have been killed in Hunter Valley coal mines since mining began back in the early 1800’s. Today, safety is first and foremost and ensuring that it remain so takes a collective effort between employers, employees, government, unions and stakeholders working towards a goal of zero harm for our industry.

SAY CHEERS WITH BEERS!

This month we got a chance to attend the grand opening of Peter Drayton’s new microbrewery at his Ironbark Hill Vineyard on Hermitage Road and sample a delectable selection of beer’s and ciders. And because beer is best shared with mates we are giving 5 lucky readers the chance to take a mate out to Ironbark Hill Vineyard’s new brewery and enjoy a beer tasting board each.

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WIN!

As the Specialised Health and Safety Scheme for the NSW coal mining industry, Coal Services plays an important role in helping to attain that goal.

Managing Director/CEO of Coal Services, Lucy Flemming said Workers’ Memorial Day is a reminder of the importance of continuous improvement in the areas of health and safety.

“Our multi-pronged approach focuses on the four key pillars of prevention, detection, enforcement and education, and we are constantly working with industry to ensure workplace injuries and illnesses are avoided,” Ms Flemming said.

SAFETY IS THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY FOR EVERYONE WHILE AT WORK AND WE SHOULD ALWAYS STOP AND THINK BEFORE DOING ANYTHING THAT COULD JEOPARDISE IT.

Here are 5 simple steps to follow:

1. Stop and really think about the job
2. Look around carefully for hazards
3. Talk with your mates about what could go wrong
4. Decide how you can all make it safer for everyone
5. Don’t start the job until everyone is clear about how to do it safely

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A PAIN IN THE... BACK

SIT DOWN WITH FIVE OF YOUR MATES AND YOU WILL LIKELY FIND THAT FOUR OF YOU HAVE SUFFERED FROM BACK PAIN, AND THAT ONE OF YOU IS DEALING WITH BACK PAIN RIGHT NOW.

Despite so many of us in the industry being affected by back pain, in most cases there’s no clear-cut answer as to why there is pain and how to fix it. Most of us just get used to it being a part of our daily lives and learn to live with it until it becomes the norm. So far there is not much research being done on back pain in our industry though it seems clear that we are more at risk than other industries.

Long hours being bounced around in a dozer or truck, hours and hours on your feet each day or hunched over your desk, regardless of your role back pain can be a problem for all of us. Guy Higgins, Principal of Singleton Physiotherapy and Allied Health is hoping to find some answers to the issue of back pain in the mining industry. He’s working on researching a few different areas and to assist



GUY HIGGINS, PRINCIPAL OF SINGLETON PHYSIOTHERAPY AND ALLIED HEALTH

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him in his studies he will be using a cutting-edge technology new to Australia.

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Guy has purchased for Singleton Physiotherapy a range of Class 1 Medical devices that have the tick of approval from the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration. They accurately measure pain, mobility, strength and flexibility and use computers to monitor and analyse every moment in real time.

“These machines allow us to evaluate, monitor and resolve a person’s problem in a way that exceeds options currently available.” Guy said.

“A lot of the time back pain sufferers receive treatment but then go out and get hurt again, but this rehabilitation treatment uses preventative treatment methods. Mines do a lot of maintenance on equipment to make sure it’s working in perfect order. You could look at this as doing maintenance on people, which I believe is more important.”

These machines will be a big part of the research Guy will be doing and will hopefully provide answers on the issue of back pain in our industry. Singleton Physiotherapy is also offering a free introductory assessment with the machines for people who are suffering from back, shoulder or neck problems.

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The Globe Pinner Classic Walnut 40" complete longboard promises stable, easy pushing thanks to a wide wheel base. From stability at high speeds to carving with responsive turning, they're chosen to appropriately fit styles from fast downhill lines to cruising, carving, and street skating. What helps this deck really stand out are the hand-adorned details, like an embedded anti-brass badge and mother of pearl inlays.

kickpush.com.au



SURF THE STREETS

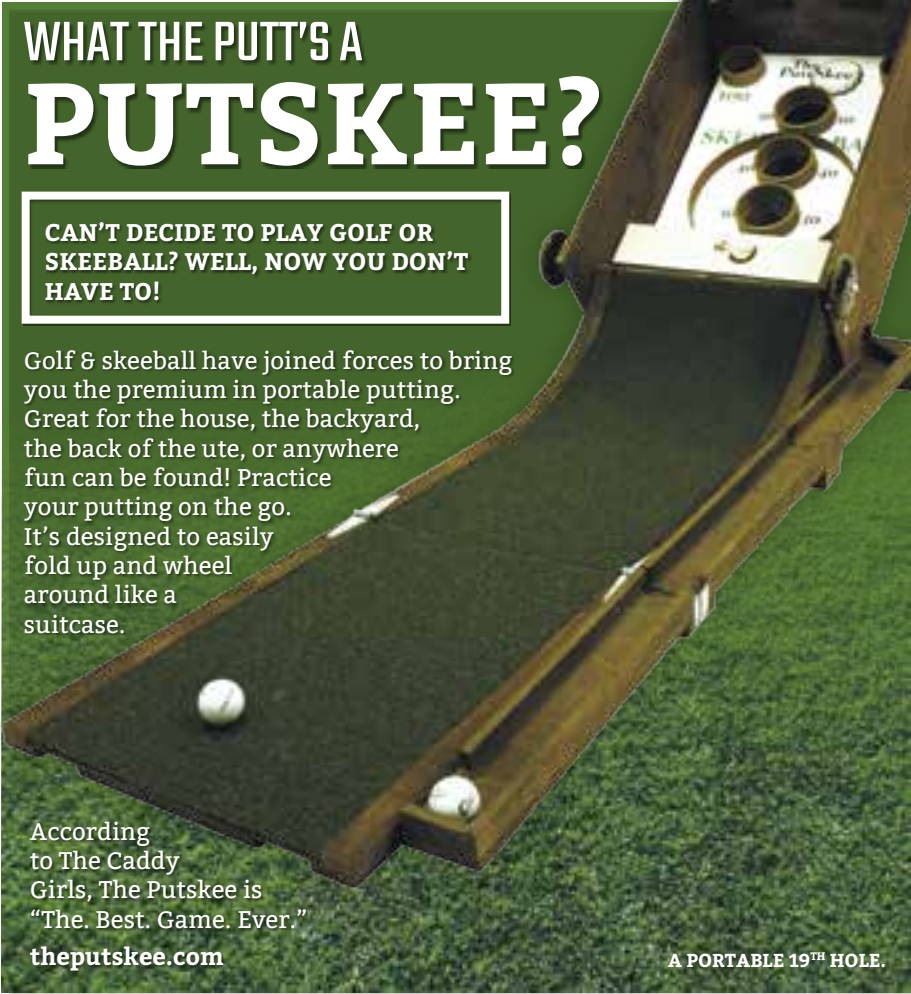
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theputskee.com



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KATY PERRY LOVES THESE BEARS, AND WE LOVE KATY PERRY. THEREFORE, THESE BEARS ARE AWESOME.

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wmctoys.com



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frasermotorcycles.com.au



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PROBLEM SOLVED!

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT, "MY WIRELESS EARPHONES ARE JUST TOO BIG?" OR "I REALLY WISH MY HEADPHONES TOLD ME THEIR BATTERY LIFE WHENEVER I SWITCHED THEM ON?"

Apple's new AirPods solve a lot of these problems. Problems we're not entirely sure needed to be solved, but they are problems, nonetheless. After a simple one-tap setup, AirPods are automatically on and always connected.

Using them is just as easy. They can sense when they're in your ears and pause when you take them out. And the AirPods experience is just as amazing whether you're listening to your iPhone, Apple Watch, iPad or Mac. Go on, stick 'em in your ear!

apple.com.au



STICK 'EM IN YOUR EAR!

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CHAMPION ICE BREAKERS



WHO IS NEWCASTLE'S MOST DOMINATE SPORTING TEAM? IT'S NOT WHO YOU MIGHT THINK. @THECOALFACE RECENTLY LACED UP OUR SKATES TO HIT THE ICE WITH THE NEWCASTLE NORTHSTARS.

Did you know Newcastle has an ice hockey team? It's true, they're called the Newcastle Northstars and they're the most successful sporting team in town. Yep, the Northstars have won more premierships than both the Newcastle Jets and the Newcastle Knights combined. Not bad, eh...
"The Northstars were born out of the Newcastle Red Wings who would compete at the old Wharf Road

Rink in Newcastle, back in 1980," says Northstars Communications Manager and Volunteer, Peter Lambert. "When the rink was closed in '82, we had to wait twenty years until Newcastle had a team back in the national competition."
The Northstars play in the Australian Ice Hockey League (AIHL) and compete against eight teams; Sydney Ice Dogs, Sydney Bears, Canberra

Brave, Melbourne Ice and Melbourne Mustangs, plus the Adelaide Adrenaline, and Perth Thunder. The season has just kicked off and will run until September with all eight teams vying to win the Goodall Cup, which has been played for since 1909!
"It's Australia's biggest ice hockey prize," says Peter. "The Northstars have made the finals thirteen times out of fifteen seasons and we've won the cup six times (2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2015, 2016)."
See, we told you they were good! Northstars Captain, Robert Malloy is a

dual national American/Aussie who currently plays for Australia in the national team, while co-captains Mat Lindsay and Matt Wetini are Hunter Valley born and bred.
The 2017 season is about to face off and you can cheer the Northstars onto victory at Hunter Ice Skating Stadium on Hillsborough Rd, Warner's Bay. Check the website for game and skate times and bring kids for some fast and furious action, out on the ice, this winter.
northstars.theaihl.com

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RIDIN' DIRTY AT THE ROLLER DERBY...

@ THE COALFACE CHECKS OUT THE RUFF & TUMBLE COMMUNITY OF NEWCASTLE'S FLAT TRACK ROLLER DERBY LEAGUE.

If you ever find yourself thinking about roller-skating, you might think of the words, balance, poise, and grace... but what about roller-derby? Combining all those things, plus balance and speed with agility and power, roller derby is like rugby league on wheels! The competition is made up of all women teams who come from all walks of life.
"We've got mums, students, academics, hairdressers, doctors and businesswomen, just to name a few," says Newcastle Roller Derby League's Kris Cone, aka Sparkles. "We aspire to create a community of skaters that advances the sport of women's Roller Derby and promotes the empowerment of women in a safe and organised environment that fosters the health, well-being and personal growth of skaters. All league members are unique, but we all share a few common goals," explains Sparkles. "That is, to have fun and push our physical limits."
If you go to a 'bout' at Exhibition Hall at the Newcastle Entertainment

Centre, in Broadmeadow, chances are you'll see more brutal big hits and stampeding charges than you would in a game of Friday Night Footy. Semi Radradra has got nothing on these fierce females, and there's no such thing as 'The Bunker' to hold up play at these games!
"ROLLER DERBY TEACHES YOU TO CHANNEL YOUR AGGRESSION SOMEWHERE POSITIVE, ACHIEVE AN AMAZING LEVEL OF FITNESS, STEP OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE AND FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF," says Sparkles. "The season has just started, with last season's premiers Fort Smashley's looking to defend their title against a strong competition that includes The Dockyard Dames, The South Side Derby Dolls aka 'The Force', the Harbour Hellcats, and the Bogey Rollers," continues Sparkles.
The games are family friendly, with men encouraged to attend matches and even join the league as referees and volunteers. The organisers place a huge importance on being part of the community.



"We have a strong focus on family and community, and we believe in making our events and fundraising family friendly and accessible to people from all walks of life," explains Sparkles. "We love roller derby and want to bring that same enjoyment, inspiration and

fun to our family, friends and the greater community."
To find out more info, attend a 'bout' in town, and maybe even join one of the teams and have a go, log on to newcastlerollerderby.org.au



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ROCK HOPPING TIME OF YEAR

IT'S PROBABLY THE BEST TIME OF YEAR TO BE A LAND BASED FISHO AS WE MOVE INTO WINTER. WITH SO MUCH ON OFFER FROM THE LOCAL ROCKY OUTCROPS AS THE DRUMMER AND GROUPE BITE STARTS TO FIRE. IT PAYS TO FISH FRESH CUNJEVOI, GREEN AUSSIE BANANA PRAWNS OR RED CRABS IN A BREAD BURLEY FOR THE BEST RESULTS 'AND HOLD ON!'.

OFFSHORE
Great reports of some solid snapper and pearl perch have been filtering through from Norah Head to Port Stephens reacting well to lightly weighted baits in a burley trail and flicking soft plastics around the reef edges. All sorts of deep

doing the damage. Areas to consider are Allmark Mountain off the bay and Texas off Norah head but prospecting anywhere along the edge of the shelf will turn up the goods.

INSIDE
Bream and black fish are on the move and will be found in good numbers as we roll into winter especially around the headlands and breakwalls.

Jewfish have been very active around the bottom half of Newcastle Harbour and the top half of the bay behind Middle Island.

TALK ON THE IMPOUNDMENTS
Bass in the local dams are continuing to be targeted with great results. Throughout May, and as we move into winter, the fish will be found schooled deep in the water column and will be best targeted with metal blades, ice jigs and lightly weighted soft plastics. There's a fair bit of talk about some big Cod out west bashing lures off the surface, with some luck a trip over the range is on the cards later in the month.

Keep a danglin' kids!
The Thrifty's



BROWNIE CRACKING THE PEARLY CODE RECENTLY OFF PORT STEPHENS



TAKE IT TO D-MAX

THE NEW 2017 ISUZU D-MAX HAS FINALLY HIT AUSTRALIAN ROADS, AND 4X4 FANS ARE EXCITED.

Australia is the number one export market for Isuzu, so it makes sense that they regard us Aussies as a country of VIP's and a very high priority in the development of their products. Obviously, this is so their utes and trucks are fit for our tough conditions and our high expectations, as drivers. So, what's new?

Well, big news coming out of camp Isuzu is from the launch of the all-new, Euro-5-compliant, 3.0-litre common-rail turbo-diesel powerplant, developed exclusively for the tough Australian market. The 4J1-TC Hi-Power engine carries over the 130kW output from the previous

model and has significantly up'd the torque. The 2017 throws out 430Nm at 2000-2200rpm, which is not only 50Nm higher than previous models, but is now available across a far wider rev-range, with 380Nm on tap from 1700-3500rpm. Beautiful, aye?

Tech hasn't been forgotten either with a rear-view camera now standard on all LS models, but is optional on the EX/SX. The cabin has been updated with a 7.0-inch touch screen in the LS-M, and an 8.0-inch touch screen in the LS-U and LS-T. GPS is standard in the higher spec models too. The LS models also have three USB ports put about the cabin. Two in the front and one for

rear seat passengers (the one near the screen feeds info to the media system, while all the others are just for charging). Bluetooth phone and audio connectivity, DVD, CD, MP3, radio and auxiliary jacks are all present and accounted for, as well.

To celebrate Isuzu's 100th anniversary, the company has also released a limited-edition X-Runner model which drives as good as it looks.

Take the X-Runner, or one of the other new Isuzu D-Max Utes for a test drive at Hunter Motor Group at Rutherford.

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'CHEAP AT HALF THE PRICE'

I MARVEL HOW CHEAP INKJET PRINTERS ARE TODAY. YOU CAN BUY YOURSELF A TIDY MULTIFUNCTION INKJET PRINTER WITH ALL THE BELLS AND WHISTLES FOR LESS THAN \$200 BUCKS.

Fair dinkum, I tell you no lies, a photo quality, duplex printer with scanner and ink cartridges. Crazy stuff, makes you wonder how manufacturers even turn a dollar these days.

However, as with most things in life at some stage we all pay the Pied Piper. So, what's the catch? When it comes time to replace the ink. Flop me, that can't be right, the ink is as much as I just paid for my printer! Now suddenly, you're managing your print runs by page, printing in greyscale and your kids are now banned from using the printer unless it is deemed critical to their future development.

WHAT'S THIS ALL GOT TO DO WITH MINING AND EARTHMOVING EQUIPMENT?

Absolutely nothing, until you consider the strategies used to entice customers to purchase, operate and maintain their equipment. Let's face it, we all like things shiny and new, even more so when it's the real deal, made by the company, for the people. There's nothing like the feeling you get when you unwrap that original

part for your treasured machine.

In a report published by Macquarie Equities Research they lifted the bonnet on some of the large machinery manufacturers to understand what made them tick and more importantly, where they made their money. Macquarie's findings revealed that the profit margins for their maintenance and spare parts operations are higher than those attained when selling equipment.

They go on to highlight that this type of revenue tends to be less prone to downturns (think about all the existing machines operating in Australia today), providing companies with a steady and reliable source of revenue.

How does this apply to me I hear you ask? According to one of the 'Big 3' Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM's), the revenue generated from maintenance (including components and parts) through the life cycle of equipment tends to be two to



three times more than the original purchase price of the machine. My goodness, sounds just like my printer. How very, very clever, cunning even.

So, what's the alternative? Before the downturn in 2011, when companies were awash with money, new for many was the only way to go. OEM components and parts, through and through. If only the goods times could last. With the mantra of 'cash is king' and the core focus of cost savings, equipment owners, maintenance teams and miners have re-evaluated their alternatives and in recent years increasingly purchased used

and rebuilt components as well as replacing non-core parts with non-genuine options.

Now, we all know that upfront savings don't always result in long-term cost effective outcomes however, if managed right, they can achieve incremental savings with similar, if not, better results. I'm a fan and believe in the merits that such solutions provide if you do your homework. Just like my printer, if you asked me if I'd use refillable ink over plug and play cartridges, I'd have to admit I'm a sucker for the real deal.

LET'S GET LOOPY!



IF YOU'VE WATCHED AIR SHOWS AND ALWAYS DREAMED OF GETTING UP IN THE AIR AND EXPERIENCING THEM FIRST HAND THEN LOOK NO FURTHER THAN AEROHUNTER AT RUTHERFORD.

This month to give you an insight into the world of stunt planes, I didn't hesitate to put up my hand to be the one to go up in the air in a tiny little plane, hitting speeds of over 4G's all while performing stunt maneuvers. Even though that hand was shaking just a wee bit when I realised exactly what I was up for.

When I arrived at AeroHunter on New England Highway at Rutherford, I met up with pilot Glenn Graham. Glenn's a two-time Australian acrobatic champion and it was reassuring knowing I couldn't be in safer hands. At least his weren't shaking.

Glenn runs your through all the pre-requisite information that you need to know before getting up in the air but once he strapped me into my seat everything he just told me

when completely out of my head as I started to wonder what the hell had I got myself in for.

Luckily for me Glenn's seen it all over the years, the screamers, the gigglers, the pukers, nothing fazes him and he'll just keep talking to you through the headset all the time making sure you are getting the most out of the experience. He'll start you off with the easier maneuvers and build up as your confidence grows. Before long you are doing barrel rolls, loops, G-Force, Cuban eights and a bunch of other aerobatics.

THE FEELING OF WEIGHLESSNESS AS I LOOKED UPSIDE DOWN OVER THE HUNTER VALLEY WAS AMAZING.

From takeoff through to landing, every minute was exhilarating and no pun intended, time flew by. Lucky

@ THE COALFACE TRIVIA

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE SINGLETON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

What was the original name of Muswellbrook?

When did underground mining start in Muswellbrook?

What famous Jockey was born in Muswellbrook?

Answers next month.

LAST MONTHS ANSWERS

1. What year did the railway reach Singleton? - 1863
2. What is the original name of the Albion Hotel? - The Railway View
3. When was the first coal found in Singleton? - 1830

for me I wasn't one of the pukers but instead just had a huge silly smile on my face the whole time, which was literally stuck there when we hit maximum G's.

I recommend this experience for everyone, Glenn and the team of pilots will cater the flight specifically for you, the more game you are, the more hardcore the maneuvers.

They've got a bunch of different planes and flight experiences on offer including historic military planes where you can reenact war missions.

Head to their website now to find out more and I promise you'll be flying high!

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@ THE COALFACE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 2 Scotland's national dish (6)
- 5 What number is a bakers dozen? (8)
- 7 The fortune cookie was invented here (9)
- 9 The ingredient that cause bread to rise (5)
- 10 What popular beverage once contained cocaine (4,4)
- 11 Cooking food by submerging in liquid at a low temperature (8)
- 13 Gumbo originates from this state (9)
- 15 Liquor made from the blue agave plant (7)
- 19 Australians eat over 250 million of these each year (4-3)
- 20 The name for any game animal (7)
- 21 Colloquial name for freshwater crayfish (5)

DOWN

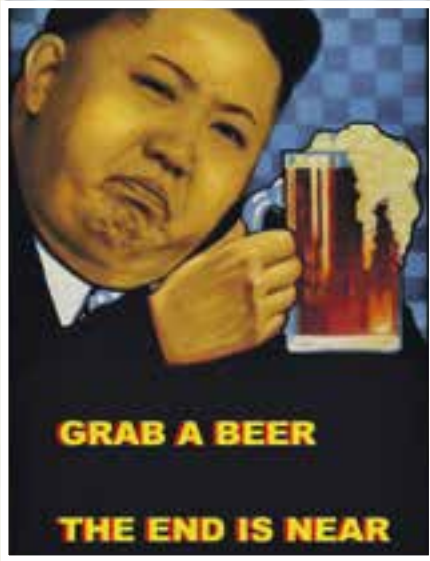
- 1 The noodle soup Pho is from this country (7)
- 3 Ireland first brewed this beer (8)
- 4 Australian's favourite spread (8)
- 6 Pupusas are corn stuffed tortillas made in which country? (2,8)
- 8 A tandoor is a type of what? (4)
- 10 Sauerkraut is made from which vegetable? (7)
- 12 What is the white part of the inside of an egg (7)
- 14 A teetotal will not drink this (7)
- 16 The main ingredient in guacamole (7)
- 17 The highest number of Michelin stars possible (5)
- 18 A condiment found in Japanese restaurants (6)



PIE MINISTER INTRODUCES NEW TAXES AND LAWS

IT'S BUDGET TIME FOR MY GOVERNMENT/DICTATORSHIP SO I AM RAISING TAXES AND INTRODUCING LAWS TO SUPPORT MY 'PIE IN THE SKY' DREAMS FOR THIS GREAT COUNTRY OF MINE.

Some will say that many of my policies are delivered in tyrannical despot fashion, but I am yet to be introduced to anyone with as much meat in his melon as me, so until I do I will reign supreme and you will all



bow in my presence. **AS THE KING-LIKE LEADER OF OUR WIDE BROWN LAND, 'I PUT THE KIM JONG UN IN AUSTRALI-UN'. THESE ARE TOUGH DECISIONS KIDDIES SO SUCK IT UP.**

First and most importantly will be the new 'pie tax' where each of you from the far flung corners of The Hunter will be required to buy and deliver the best pie on offer from each of your local bakeries once a month. That equals 620,530 pies per month and should just about be enough to cover my three meals a day. From Newy to Murrurundi and every stop along the way I expect

to see a procession of pies heading Singo way by the 1st of each month. I'm commandeering two of the Mt Thorley Maintenance sheds and turning one into a giant fridge and the other into the mother of all pie ovens. As your dear leader, certain subjects will be invited over each Sunday for a Royal Banquet of pies and cans and the opportunity to watch the footy on the big screen I've also installed – unless of course they are Manly supporters.

I am also getting tough on health this budget so in the interests of kids health and happiness everywhere, new laws making it an offence to sell anything but pies and sausage rolls in school canteens comes into effect immediately. No longer will kids be subjected to the hippie crap that has been forced on them over the last few years.

THIS INSPIRED GESTURE WILL ENSURE ALL KIDS BODY SHAPES RESEMBLE MINE WITHIN A GENERATION – WELL ROUNDED AND PERFECTLY FORMED.

And on a last note I am also changing the names and colours of all NRL teams. Red and white will now be all teams colours and will all be called St George to promote unity in the game and guarantee I always get a win... In all my glorious greatness... pie pie for now...**Sol**



COALFACER CROCHETS RECORD

RESIDENT COALFACE HARD MAN AND OVERACHIEVER BRETT COLLIER DECIDED THIS MONTH WAS THE PERFECT TIME TO CROSS 'WORLD RECORD HOLDER' OFF HIS BUCKET LIST.

The team was pretty impressed when Brett boldly declared he was going for the record books this month... that was until he revealed it was to be part of the "Most People Crocheting Simultaneously" world record. The last laugh came from Brett however as he emerged victorious from Singleton Civic Centre along with around 700 other crafters after smashing the Guinness world record this month as part of the Singleton Festival. They were hoping for 480 people to beat the record. They ran out of Certificates at 700. Given the dangerous nature of record breaking, Brett donned the Hi Vis and after a quick induction and some

valuable on-site training, he was hooking in along with the mums, sisters, aunts and daughters of the Hunter coalmining community. **BRETT SAID OF THE EFFORT, "YOU ONLY GET OUT OF LIFE WHAT YOU PUT AND I DIDN'T WANT TO BE LYING ON MY DEATH BED SAYING, 'WHAT IF?'"** In all seriousness though it was great to see the community out in force and coming together in an event that was way more fun than I thought it would be." Given the solid level of support, we expect crib rooms across Hunter mines to now be 'hot beds' of crotchet activity into the future.



THE AUSTRALIA HOTEL AT CESSNOCK KNOWS THE WAY TO AN AUSSIE'S HEART WITH ICE COLD BEER AND A BLOODY GOOD FEED.

The Aussie has always been a favourite pub among Cessnock locals, and its Bistro is packed out every night because it guarantees a great meal at decent price. I've been going since I was a wee lass, whether to enjoy a punt and beer in their TAB area on a Saturday afternoon, to have a relaxing Sunday lunch while the kids wear themselves out in the playground, or just a fun night out for dinner and drinks

with family and friends. Whatever the occasion, the friendly atmosphere always ensures it's a pub you want to keep coming back to. **IN THE INTEREST OF GIVING YOU GUYS AN UP TO DATE ACCOUNT OF WHAT THEY HAVE ON OFFER, I WAS ONLY TOO HAPPY TO HAVE AN EXCUSE TO HEAD BACK THERE FOR DINNER THIS WEEK AND I WAS NOT DISAPPOINTED.** It was a full house so it was

a good thing we'd booked a table and once I'd given the menu a read over I was delighted to see their homemade corn bread was still on the menu. Apparently, I'm not the only one who thinks their corn bread is the best thing since sliced cheese as I luckily managed to score the last serve before it sold out. Unfortunately for my dinner mates I did not share. The menu is extensive with all your usual pub

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fare - burgers, pastas, light meals, and fresh seafood, but unless you are a vego I recommend ordering from their great selection of steaks, ribs and chicken. Or get a rib and rump

combo like I did and you'll be licking your fingers and smacking your lips in no time. Open 7 days for lunch and dinner, drop on by and maybe I'll see you there!





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WHAT'S BREWING?



PETER DRAYTON AND JUSTIN HODGES



IT'S A TOUGH JOB!

IMAGE COURTESY OF GARY DANIELS - LARGS

POKOLBIN HAS LONG BEEN THE WINE CAPITAL OF NSW, BUT A GROWING DEMAND FOR CRAFT BEER IS SURE TO MAKE THE NEW MICROBREWERY AT IRONBARK HILL VINEYARD A HIT.

The Drayton name is synonymous with wine, but for Peter Drayton it was time to diversify from the family tradition and so he set about building a brewery on his Ironbark Hill property. With the grand opening bringing in a huge crowd to show their support, and of course sample the new beers and new menu, it looks like the decision will certainly be the right one.

WITH 10 BEERS AND 2 CIDERS ON OFFER, ALL AT THE REASONABLE PRICE OF \$5 A MIDDY OR \$7 A SCHOONER, PLUS THE OPTION FOR TAKEAWAY BEER, WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND DIVERTING PAST HERMITAGE ROAD ON YOUR WAY HOME OR HEADING OUT ON YOUR DAY OFF. With great beers (and great names) like Old Nessie

Scottish Strong Ale, Brexit English Ale or Hefeweizen (have fun asking for that one!) as well the classic pear and apple ciders, it's lots of fun trying to decide with your mates which is the best. They've also got a great selection of food on offer that will perfectly compliment your beer – chicken wings, pizza, burgers, ploughman's and cheese platters and even meals for the kiddies.

The building is all open and it's fascinating to have a look at the insides of the brewery where all the magic happens, and soon people will have the option to do more than look. They will be letting groups can come along and brew up their own beer, and of course drink afterwards! The property on Hermitage Road doesn't just house the new brewery, wine lovers can still check out

the cellar door. It also has a chapel, function room and accommodation and with all of this it's little wonder that they do tons of weddings each year. Live entertainment is planned for Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons and the combination of beer, wine and music, all in a beautiful and relaxed setting, make this venue a must to visit.

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\$26,990 DRIVE AWAY*

PUMPED-UP 3.0L ISUZU TURBO DIESEL

- TOUCHSCREEN AUDIO w/ USB & BLUETOOTH* AUDIO STREAMING
- FUEL EFFICIENT 7.2L/100KM*
- HUGE 2,550MM LONG ALLOY TRAY*
- CRUISE CONTROL & POWER WINDOWS

**MU-X 4X4
LS-T 7 SEAT AUTO**
\$51,990 DRIVE AWAY*

PUMPED-UP 3.0L ISUZU TURBO DIESEL

- 17" ALLOY WHEELS, FOG LIGHTS, SIDE STEPS & ROOF RAILS
- TOUCHSCREEN AUDIO w/ SATNAV, USB & BLUETOOTH* AUDIO STREAMING
- PASSIVE ENTRY & START SYSTEM
- LEATHER APPOINTED SEATS*

**MU-X 4X2
LS-T 7 SEAT AUTO**
\$44,990 DRIVE AWAY*

PUMPED-UP 3.0L ISUZU TURBO DIESEL

- 17" ALLOY WHEELS, FOG LIGHTS, SIDE STEPS & ROOF RAILS
- TOUCHSCREEN AUDIO w/ SATNAV, USB & BLUETOOTH* AUDIO STREAMING
- PASSIVE ENTRY & START SYSTEM
- LEATHER APPOINTED SEATS*

SERVICE+PLUS

5 YEAR WARRANTY* 5 YEARS RUSTPROOF ASSET 5 YEARS CAPPED PRICE SERVICE*

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5-star ANCAP safety rating on 4x4 D-MAX Crew Cab models built from November 2013 onwards, 4x2 D-MAX Crew Cab High Ride models built from November 2014 onwards and all MU-X models. *5 years/130,000km whichever occurs first, for eligible customers. Excludes trays and accessories. >The Capped Price Servicing Program ("CPS Program") applies to Eligible Vehicles with a Warranty Start Date on or after 1/1/15 at Participating Isuzu UTE Dealers only. The 5 years Capped Price Servicing covers the first 5 Scheduled Services for 16.5MY and later vehicle models for up to 5 years/50,000km (whichever occurs first). CPS Program is subject to change. For full terms & conditions and current pricing visit isuzu.com.au/service-plus. >5.5 tonne braked towing capacity on D-MAX 4x4 and 4x2 High Ride models and 3.0 tonne braked towing capacity on all MU-X models when fitted with an optional genuine Isuzu UTE tow bar kit. *Includes economy alloy tray fitted at motorpool. *Fuel consumption and emissions figures based on ADR 81/02 (combined cycle test) and are to be used for vehicle comparison purposes only. Actual fuel consumption and emissions will vary depending on many factors including, but not limited to, traffic conditions, individual driving style and vehicle condition. *Leather on body contact areas of the seats. *Private and ABN holders only. Excludes government, fleet, rental & non-profit buyers. Includes one year business vehicle registration, CTP insurance, dealer delivery and statutory charges. Metallic/mica/pearl paint \$450 extra. Only at Participating Isuzu UTE Dealers from 1/3/17 until 30/4/17 unless extended, varied or while stocks last. Excludes demonstrators.



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218	4000	\$330,000	51.5
219	4032	\$330,000	40.5
233	5064	\$340,000	Corner
234	4661	\$300,000	23.56
235	4286	\$300,000	23.56
236	4394	\$340,000	Corner

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P.S... I LOVE YOU. AND SO DOES PORT STEPHENS

IT'S GOT A BIGGER BAY THAN SYDNEY, THERE'S LESS PEOPLE, AND IT'S TWICE AS BEAUTIFUL. THERE'S LUXURY ACCOMMODATION, FISHING CHARTERS, WHALE WATCHING, MOUNTAIN CLIMBING, PLUS IT'S GOT ITS OWN WORLD FAMOUS BREWERY, PLENTY OF THINGS TO SEE AND DO WITH THE KIDS...

... And, it's less than an hour's drive from Newcastle! Port Stephens may just be a teeny weeny dot on the global tourist map, but the place is brimming with big time attractions. It's a place well known amongst Hunter Valley holiday makers and day trippers. There's almost 1,000 square kilometres and just as many things to do. From bushwalking and camping, to fishing and sailing, jet skis, go karts, surfing and kayaking. Craft beer and wine, farm fresh food, including seafood straight off the boat, as well as whale and dolphin watching, (sorry, you can't eat those) koala cuddling, and seal spotting on Broughton Island. There's plenty of places to

play in Port Stephens that easily caters for young and old, solo trekkers, romantic couples, groups, families and all other combinations in between. **STAY** – For a romantic getaway for two, you can't beat throwing on your robe and putting your feet up at The Anchorage, where luxury meets the sea. Each of the Hampton style guest houses face north across the water where you'll catch glorious sunsets while sipping a glass or two of the Hunter's finest bubbly grape juice. Or, take the hassle out of camping, grab the kids and book a few nights at Shoal Bay Holiday Park and stay in one of their super comfy Safari Tents. Otherwise, if you don't mind

roughing it, there's plenty of spots dotted around the bay to pitch a tent or fold out your RTT for some back to nature max relaxed camping underneath a million stars. **SEE** – Down by Nelson Bay Marina you can watch the sailboats and superyachts glide across the glassy waters, over towards Broughton Island where its volcanic peaks and craggy headland hosts silver gulls and other wildlife, including its very own seal colony. Take a hike around Tomaree Headland then up to the summit of Mount Tomaree to see striking views for miles and miles. You may even catch a glimpse of a humpback whale breaching or dolphins playing down below. Maybe

you simply want to relax beside the rolling waves at one of the beautiful beaches, like Zenith, Samuri, One Mile, Birubi, and Box Beach. **DO** – There's plenty of things to do by land or by sea. Take a trek out amongst the largest continuous sand dunes in the Southern Hemisphere on the back of a camel, a horse, or a quad bike, then slide down the face of some massive dunes nearby the Worimi Conservation Lands. Book a dolphin and whale watching cruise around Nelson Bay. Hire a kayak or catamaran and go at your own pace upon the waves, or, just sit by the water and watch the days go by while you eat and drink at some of the best restaurants and cafes in our region. Whether it's a day out or a week long adventure, find out more info and what's on, and book your next trip to Port Stephens online at portstephens.org.au



THE MYSTIC MINER'S MAY 2017 HOROSCOPES

CHECK WHAT YOUR FUTURE HOLDS THIS MONTH WITH OUR ASTROLOGICAL FORECAST TAKEN STRAIGHT FROM THE STARS AND URANUS.

 GEMINI MAY 21 - JUNE 20	Be very specific when dropping hints about your birthday present Gemini. Some people think Aldi caters for every occasion and unless you're one of them you're at serious risk of disappointment.	 SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 21	You love a bargain Sagittarius, but items marked "Final sale – no returns" are ones they can't sell. Carefully consider why no one else wanted to buy them before you stock up.
 CANCER JUNE 21 - JULY 22	Remember to be nice to your family this month Cancer. They might drive you insane, but the feeling is mutual and they still take your calls.	 CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22 - JANUARY 19	It's time to book a holiday Capricorn. It's cheaper to go to Thailand than to the movies these days, and you'll look much better with a tan.
 LEO JULY 23 - AUGUST 22	The full moon on 11 May will make you feel like a change Leo. Before you make any decisions, remember that the moon won't be paying your \$3million waterfront mortgage.	 AQUARIUS JANUARY 20 - FEBRUARY 18	You will be mortified to discover that the new person at work is an old flame. You have 2 choices Aquarius – find a new job, or spend the next 3 months sabotaging their probation period.
 VIRGO AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 22	You will find your missing set of car keys safely stashed in the back of the cereal cupboard Virgo. Take it as a sign that you need to get more sleep.	 PISCES FEBRUARY 19 - MARCH 20	Before undertaking a "quick" DIY task this month Pisces, consider that paying a qualified tradesperson a few dollars to assist may save your relationship as well as your electrics.
 LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 22	If you're thinking of getting a new pet this month Libra, pause for thought. It's getting cold and your mornings and evenings may be better spent indoors than shivering in a park.	 ARIES MARCH 21 - APRIL 19	Do not leave your lunch unattended at work this month Aries. Everyone loves a practical joke, but remember that the funnier it is for them, the worse it will be for you and your leftover spag bol.
 SCORPIO OCTOBER 23 - NOVEMBER 21	Overexposure to TV cooking shows this month will make you doubt your culinary abilities Scorpio. Take comfort in the fact that your mum never made carrot foam and you turned out fine.	 TAURUS APRIL 20 - MAY 20	It's time to clean the house Taurus. There is a big difference between having a "relaxed" home and one that would qualify for an episode of Hoarders.



SINGAPORE'S PLAYGROUND


IF YOU'RE AFTER A HOLIDAY WHERE YOU IMMERSE YOURSELF IN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND EXPERIENCE PRISTINE WILDERNESS, WELL, YOU NEED TO GO SOMEWHERE ELSE. BUT IF YOU'RE AFTER A 100% MAN MADE EXTRAVAGANZA THAT IS PACKED TO THE BRIM WITH FUN AND EXCITEMENT THEN SENTOSA ISLAND IS THE PLACE TO GO.

Lying half a kilometre off the southern coast of Singapore, Sentosa Island has entertainment and activities catering for every holiday goer. The hardest thing about a holiday here is trying to fit everything into your itinerary! Three completely artificial beaches make up 2km of its southern coast and the combination of palm trees, red and yellow clad lifeguards, gazebos and loungers make it feel like you are stepping straight into a postcard. You're not going to catch any waves at any of these beaches but if surfing's your thing then check out the Wave House and try your skills on their artificial waves. Or sit back in the one of their bars sipping a cocktail and having a good laugh as the other tourists try. Sentosa is a place for kids and for parents who love to act like kids. The number of attractions will have you struggling to try them all so here's my three favourites. **Universal Studios** – Get there at opening time to beat some of the queues and try to go midweek when it's quieter. If you really want to hit all the rides all day long then buy a front of line pass, it's worth the extra bucks. **iFly Singapore** – Haven't got the guts to try skydiving for real? Indoor skydiving gives you the experience without the fear. And laughing at your partner's face as they are buffeted around by winds between 100 – 300km p/h. Priceless. **Adventure Cove Waterpark** – It's muggy


and hot in Singapore – so this is the best way to beat the heat. The best part of this waterpark is a man-made river that winds around the entire park so you just jump on a tube and float along to the next wild ride. Other attractions include the Aquarium, Skyline Luge & Skyride, Megazip Park, Butterfly & Insect World, Nature Discovery, Kidzania, Madame Tussauds, Wings of Time, 4D Adventureland, Casino, Serapong Golf Course and the list goes on. By the time, you've finished reading this they've probably even built a couple more! There's also lots to sightsee, when you're needing a break from the adrenalin and especially if your wallet needs a break. Check out the statue of the








Merlion, walk along Sentosa Lookout or catch one of the free trams or buses around the island. **SO, YOU'VE PLAYED HARD. NOW IT'S TIME TO REFUEL.** With a promenade filled with restaurants as basic as McDonalds and all the way up to restaurants with Michelin star ratings and celebrity chefs, you're only limited by your taste buds. For a romantic night out try the Joel Robuchon Restaurant, this fancy French restaurant is going to set you back a lot of coin but it is critically acclaimed for good reason as it promises a dining experience you won't forget. Stuck with the kids? Head to Kebab House where I had the best kebab ever. Sentosa is not cheap. The exchange rate is almost 1-1 and food and drinks are more expensive then here at home. Especially alcohol! But it makes a great holiday for the family that loves to play. Or for the adult that's still a kid at heart.

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