

@THE COAL FACE

Vol 2 No 3: November - December 2017



MINERS RAISE \$80,000

THE 2017 A-PLUS CONTRACTING HUNTER VALLEY MINING CHARITY RUGBY LEAGUE COMPETITION RAISED A RECORD \$80,000 FOR THE WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE. MEET TWO OF THE AMAZING PEOPLE THAT HELPED MAKE THIS POSSIBLE.

PAGE 14-15



AUSTRALIAN CHAMPS

PEABODY ENERGY'S WAMBO MINE ARE THE 55TH AUSTRALIAN UNDERGROUND MINES RESCUE CHAMPIONS.

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PIT STOP

SINGLETON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT RIX'S CREEK COAL MINE FOR THE SCHOOL MINE TOURS PROGRAM.

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OPEN & SHUT

THERE'S A LOT GOING ON IN OUR INDUSTRY RIGHT NOW THAT WILL POTENTIALLY HAVE HUGE IMPACTS ON OUR FUTURE, SO WE HOPE THOSE IN CHARGE MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS.

When it comes to the approvals for the opening of mines, or for things like the extension of a mine life, there are an enormous number of hurdles that must be overcome. There's always going to be people who are for the project and those against it, and it's important that emotions and politics are set aside, and each project is judged simply on its merits. This month we look at what's going on for some of these proposed projects and we also went out onto the streets to find out what you think.

We've got some wonderful stories about kids this month as they get the opportunity to know the insides (and the outsides) of our coal mines. We hope it inspires them to pursue a

future in our industry.

There's so much great work going on in the community that it's hard to find the room to showcase it all. We really must commend all the amazing people that go above and beyond to make a difference in the community, and that includes all the ones that go unnoticed.

If you're thinking of a road trip over the coming months, check out our travel story to Broken Hill. Even though we are headed into warmer weather, that just means you have more excuses to stop frequently for a cold one to keep you chilled.



We hope you enjoy this month's magazine!

HUNTER MINING'S COMMUNITY SPIRIT ON DISPLAY

ONE OF THE BEST THINGS ABOUT MINING IN THE HUNTER IS THAT OUR WORLD-CLASS MINERS ARE A BIG PART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

The strong community spirit of our local mining workforce was recently on display at the Hunter Valley Mining Charity Rugby League Knockout Competition. Over 350 local miners did their respective mines proud as they competed for the coveted Charity Shield. The event raises money for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service and has raised \$135,000 for this worthy cause since 2014.

I was able to attend some of the event and watch a few high-quality games between teams from our local mines. It was great to see so many local families there to support their friends

and loved ones on and off the field. Congratulations to the Hunter Hawkettes, the Women in Mining Series Champions and to the Ravensworth Rhinos, Men's Champions. Their victories were well deserved.

Importantly, the organisers of the knockout competition should be applauded for putting on an amazing community event that brings rugby league fans, miners and their families together and at the same time raises money for the Westpac Rescue Chopper.

Congratulations to Danny Eather and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter



Stephen Galilee
CEO, NSW Minerals Council

Singleton Volunteer Support Group for their outstanding efforts to ensure an exciting day of community rugby league, all for a worthy cause.

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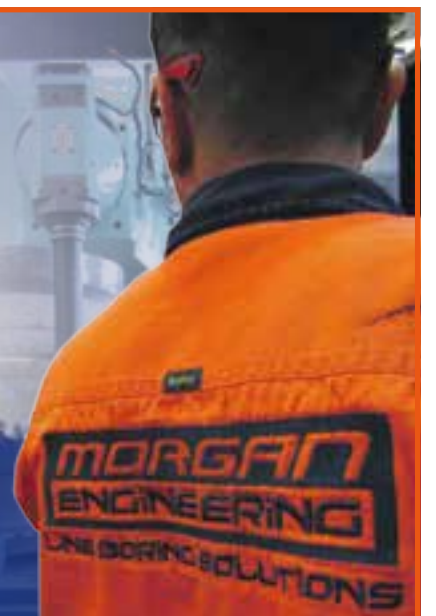
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Astronomers got tired of watching the moon go around the earth for 24 hours.

So, the decided to call it a day.

Two men are playing golf. One of them is about to take a swing when a funeral procession appears on the road next to the course. He stops mid-swing, takes off his cap, closes his eyes, and bows his head in contemplation.

His opponent comments: "That must be the most touching thing I've ever seen. You are a very feeling man." The man, recovering himself, replies, "Yeah, well we were married 35 years."

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COAL IS CRUCIAL

COAL IS THE MOST RELIED UPON FUEL SOURCE FOR PRODUCING CONSTANTLY AVAILABLE POWER TO BUSINESSES AND HOMES ACROSS NSW - A HUGE IMPORTANT PART OF OUR ENERGY MIX.



THE HON. DON HARWIN,
MINISTER FOR RESOURCES

The best of it is found in the Hunter and while our society transitions to a cleaner energy future, thermal coal will continue to play a vital role in keeping the lights on and energy prices down.

But we have to remember that the majority of the coal we mine is exported to key trading partners, and this will continue if there is international demand and we remain competitive.

The NSW Government wants the market to make decisions around energy – both domestically and for export – and we want to give the market confidence to invest how it sees fit.

WE KNOW IN NSW WHAT LABOR AND THE GREENS STAND FOR - SHUTTING YOUR INDUSTRY DOWN. OUR GOVERNMENT WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN. WE VIEW MINING AS A CRITICAL EXPORT SECTOR FOR THE JOBS AND INVESTMENT IT BRINGS TO OUR REGIONS.

In October, this Government's commitment to securing the future of local jobs and placing downward pressure on power prices in NSW was made crystal clear.

We acted swiftly to ensure the future of Springvale mine and the continued supply of coal to Mount Piper Power Station. This step was taken after a Court of Appeal ruling put the mine's operation at risk this summer.

In August the court determined the Planning Assessment Commission had used an incorrect formula to assess Springvale's environmental impact on the Cox's River. This assessment had the potential to lead to the closure of the sole supplier

of coal to the Mount Piper Power Station ahead of summer, which generates 11 per cent of our state's energy needs.

While we respect the court, our decision to legislate and keep the mine open was vital for energy security and affordability in our state. The impact of a closure to the mine would have had a devastating impact – that outcome was not acceptable to our government.

In keeping Centennial Coal-operated Springvale open, we not only ensure supply of coal to Mount Piper which supplies more than 1.1 million homes, but we also protect the livelihoods of 600 Lithgow workers and their families, 300 of them working in the mine.

Importantly, the new legislation includes significant protections for the environment. In the case of Springvale this supports the construction of a state-of-the-art water treatment plant.

The good news is that this new plant will see zero mine water discharge into the river. Zero. Construction of the water treatment plant is supported by the EPA, WaterNSW and the Planning Assessment Commission.

As the warmer months approach we are acutely aware of the challenges our hot Australian summers bring. Reliable and affordable energy supply is a priority for our government.

It's pleasing to know we will have you at the coalface working hard to provide the people of NSW with reliable energy supply to their homes – that's a win-win for us all.



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A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

MINE WEALTH + WELLBEING AND THE NSW MINERALS COUNCIL ARE LAUNCHING A NEW EVENT TO SHOWCASE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF WOMEN IN THE NSW MINING INDUSTRY.



The new NSW Women in Mining Awards will be held in March next year to recognise the growing number of women making an important contribution to a successful NSW mining industry. Mine Wealth + Wellbeing's Chief Engagement Officer Glenda Abraham said they are delighted to help highlight the impressive work of women breaking new ground and leading the way in our industry.

"It's great to again support women in mining through this fantastic awards program, which is an important way to recognise and celebrate the extraordinary achievements of women in the resource sector," Glenda said. BHP is also supporting this event strongly as a Silver Partner and will present awards in four categories - Exceptional Young Woman, Outstanding Tradeswoman/Operator/Technician,

Gender Diversity Champion and Excellence in Company Programs and Performance. NSW Minerals Council CEO Stephen Galilee thanked Mine and BHP for their sponsorship and leadership in diversity in the workplace. "These awards recognise the achievements of women in NSW mining in various stages of their careers, as well as company initiatives that support or retain women

working in mining. It's great that we can put this event on with the support of these leading businesses who share a desire to see women achieve in the mining industry." In addition to the four categories presented by BHP there will also be the category - Exceptional Woman in NSW mining. Entries close on Monday January 8.

nswmining.awardsplatform.com

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In a looming labour market of extensive skills shortages, Alliance Labour Solutions continues to ensure they are combatting the shortage by focusing efforts on training their people in all areas.

Eliza Thomson is an example of the training provided by Alliance and in July she completed her certificate 3 in Business Administration.

Eliza's training was completed through Novaskill Newcastle where she was recognised for her outstanding skills as the Novaskill Trainee of the Year for 2017 at their October awards.

Eliza was thrilled at her achievements in being named trainee of the year and contributes her success to hard study and Alliance giving her the opportunity to enhance her skills.

Alliance's General Manager Jason Barry was very proud of Eliza's achievements and her dedication to ensuring her studies were of a very high standard. Jason said, "With Eliza's results and focus, it was a simple decision to enrol her in the next course of Certificate 4 in Business Administration."

"Novaskill has been instrumental in Eliza's success with their support and professionalism. One of the main things that stood out to me was the personal approach with the way they conduct business and supported both Eliza and the Alliance team throughout her study period." Said Jason.

Jason went on to say, "Alliance is committed to train our people and assist our client base to upskill people in specific skill sets. Our major success has been through partnership with our clients that recognise the benefits of working closely together to upskill people."



LEFT - Eliza Thomson (Alliance Trainee) RIGHT - Susie Russell (Novaskill Trainer)

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KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON

THE NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT IS INTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO ENSURE CENTENNIAL COAL'S SPRINGVALE MINE KEEPS POWERING MOUNT PIPER POWER STATION.

With environmental concerns regarding water quality legislation in the Sydney Catchment before the courts, the mine was facing the prospect of closure, potentially costing jobs and revenue.


Energy Minister Don Harwin said the new laws would ensure the Springvale mine could continue to supply Mount Piper, which now generates about 11 per cent of the state's electricity.


"My top priority as energy minister is to ensure NSW households and business have an affordable, secure and reliable energy supply - this

decision supports that." Minister Harwin said.

The government has also ensured that environmental concerns are addressed with a new water treatment plant due to be completed in 2019.

NSW Minerals Council CEO Stephen Galilee was in full support of the government's action. "The NSW Government has made a responsible decision to introduce legislation that will maintain water quality in the Sydney Catchment, and at the same time allow the Springvale mine to keep Mount Piper supplied with coal."





UNION VOTE

IT'S A WELL EARNED CONGRATULATIONS FOR GRAHAME KELLY AS HE MOVES ON FROM HIS ROLE AS CFMEU'S NORTHERN MINING & NSW ENERGY DISTRICT SECRETARY, AND TAKES UP THE NATIONAL POSITION AS GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CFMEU MINING & ENERGY DIVISION.

At the age of 18, Grahame joined the Union, back then the old Miners Federation, when he started work as a Trades Assistant at the Warkworth Mine. He understood the important role the Union plays in our industry and decided to do his part to help.

Over those years he has worked tirelessly in many roles within the Union, so it was no surprise that our local District overwhelmingly backed him in the recent ballot with the declared result seeing Grahame receive 6,074 votes, whilst the other candidate received 2,125.

Grahame said he felt humbled and honoured by the support and that so many of the Members took the time to vote.

"I'M DELIGHTED FOR THE OPPORTUNITY AND PREPARED FOR THE CHALLENGES IT WILL BRING, AND I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO GETTING ON WITH THE JOB OF WORKING COLLECTIVELY WITH DISTRICTS, LODGES, DELEGATES AND MEMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY."

"I've always believed the most important part of the job is to always put the Members first and I will continue to do so in my new role as I work with the various Districts across the country. The CFMEU has a great history of looking after its Members and being the best we can be, but that doesn't mean we can't do better in the future." Grahame said.

ALL FOR FORUM

COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDING THE UPPER HUNTER MINING DIALOGUE'S ANNUAL FORUM WILL GET A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT THE DEVELOPING VISION OF FUTURE LAND USE IN THE UPPER HUNTER.

The November 22 forum will include an update from the Upper Hunter Synoptic Plan Review working group's progress on a renewed plan for post-mining landform in the Upper Hunter.

The review aims to provide an updated integrated plan across the Hunter for restoration of mined areas to achieve visual amenity, biodiversity conservation and land management practices for ecologically sustainable development.

Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue Chairman Dave O'Brien said forum participants would also have the opportunity to hear about the progress of current Dialogue projects including the initial results from the Hunter River Water Quality Study, key findings from the Cattle Grazing Trials, School Mine Tours Program update and final voids use research as well as help shape the future course of the Dialogue through feedback and discussion sessions.

"IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE DIALOGUE TO HAVE THE COMMUNITY INVOLVED AND PROVIDING ITS INPUT TO ENSURE THE DIALOGUE'S WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL."

The Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue will be held at Club Singleton on November 22. As seating is limited, people should register their interest in attending at info@nswmining.com.au



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@ the Coalface believes our people are the number one consideration in this proposal. Competing industries are clearly very important too, as is the economic health of our communities. Like the people we randomly spoke to on the street, we believe this can work for all with next to no negative impacts. Without exception everyone we spoke to wants to see this happen and no we didn’t omit any negative perspectives – people really want to see this happen.



Greg of Muswellbrook It’s a common-sense thing and that’s what scares me the most, there is not a lot of common sense left these days. If they can go underground and cause no problems then well why not, go for it. We’ve got to start putting people first and then consider all the other issues after that.



Les of Muswellbrook I can’t see that there is an issue with the horses with this being underground. I worked at Coolmore and Arrowfield in the ‘70s and they knew then that there were coalmines over the fence into the future. I’m probably a little biased as I worked in the industry for a few years, but I can’t see how an underground mine can affect them that much. I’d like to see it go ahead and with everything already there to process the coal it makes sense. I hope it has a strong preference for local workers and local suppliers though. It’s definitely a good thing.



Alex of Muswellbrook I agree with the proposal to go ahead with this new plan because I feel like the town needs it and the economy and the town will improve a lot by bringing more workers and stuff on. It will do the town a world of good. I believe they can coexist with the horses as they have previously. I feel this new plan would be much less invasive on their property and I can’t see how this would affect them on a trading level. It could really be a win win for all.



Gus of Muswellbrook This is a no brainer. In some ways I can understand some of the previous worries that inevitably go with open cut plans, but now that this new proposal takes it underground and on top of that uses some existing infrastructure instead of building more, it’s a great option. This really can keep the neighbours happy. On the business side I reckon it’s even better for the town as an underground will bring plenty of new opportunities to local businesses that open cut doesn’t. Really this is a good option that can solve a lot of issues if everyone is honest about it.



Skip of Muswellbrook For the community it's vital that we keep maintaining jobs for the region. The infrastructure is already built, and it would be very minimal harm to the environment. The mining industry is vital to the Upper Hunter and has been for as long as I can remember. I think that they can both work together, but I think that one industry is trying to basically heighten the issues and impacts on the opposing industries. We can coexist and the vital thing is that we have many different ways that we create income within the community and everything has its strengths. Diversification is important, and we have to find a happy medium to coexist. This projects existing infrastructure combined with going underground would change a lot of what the horse studs problems were from the beginning.



Bronwyn of Jerrys Plains Going underground I can't see it affecting me too much. It's a much better plan than open cut that should mean everyone can get along a bit better. Anything that's good for the local economy and done right should be given a chance.



Scott of Singleton I think it's great, keeps people employed. It's definitely a better outcome for the horses. I'm no expert, but I would hope they could co-exist. It seems to be a win-win so I hope everyone can be happy. Keep Muswellbrook going a bit. We can't have the horse industry going. We need a few winners!



Rod of Muswellbrook It shouldn't have been closed down. If they keep a good distance away from the studs it'll work and should be positive. Personally I think it should never have closed down and going underground is good for everyone. Everyone can work together and this mine could do plenty for us. It's a positive thing overall I would say.

Dianne of Muswellbrook I think anything for local employment is good and if it can work well with the other industries, which it should, do then I think it's good. Coexistence has happened for many years, and if both industries remain aware of everything that's going on I don't see any reason it can't work.

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FAKERS ARE TAKERS

PUBLISHERS OPINION

COMPO IS A BLOODY GREAT SAFETY NET FOR OUR INDUSTRY FOR WHEN THINGS GO WRONG AT WORK. UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE HONEST ONES, THERE ARE A FEW RIPPING OFF THE SYSTEM AND MAKING LIFE HARDER FOR THE GENUINE CASES.

I'll probably cop a few comments about shutting the hell up on this one but I really don't care. Lately I have been reminded that there are some out there who think that compo is a good way of getting out of work or landing a cash bonus and the system unfortunately lets them get away with it.

BEFORE I REALLY GET GOING I WILL FIRST SAY THAT I KNOW FOR MOST WHO HAVE GENERALLY FOUND THEMSELVES IN A BAD SITUATION THAT THE FINANCIAL SAFETY NET HAS LITERALLY BEEN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FUTURE AND FINANCIAL RUIN. AND SO IT SHOULD BE.

If you genuinely hurt yourself at

work, then work must cover you till you are good to go again. If it's a permanent problem then a healthy lump sum is only fair. If it stops you ever working again then the compo should be enough to well and truly cover you for life – not to mention a bit extra for the huge amount of stress and worry that would come along with that.

Unfortunately, I know of two or three examples in recent times who have been able to manipulate the system and take it for a ride. From old injuries done in personal time that have then been claimed to have happened at work, to medical and mental issues that simply don't exist and are difficult to prove wrong. I have even heard boasting

from some silly enough to brag about their exploits.

It's not up to me to dob anyone in and I won't, but it makes my blood boil when I see the effects it can have on those on the other side and for the honest ones who for whatever reason can't convince the system when they clearly qualify. Sometimes it just doesn't make sense.

I hope you never need to claim workers compensation, but if something does go wrong, you should be thankful it's there. Let's hope that those who do unfairly claim it don't destroy a system that it is so important to our industry. Stay safe people.

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ROCKY HILL ON ROCKY GROUND

THE NSW DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT HAS RECOMMENDED THE REFUSAL FOR THE PROPOSED ROCKY HILL OPEN CUT COAL MINE NEAR GLOUCESTER.

The Department's Executive Director of Resource Assessments and Compliance, Dr Oliver Holm said, "We have carefully weighed up the community benefits and concerns and found the potential impacts to the community and environment are too great for this project to be recommended."

The announcement has received mixed responses in

the community with many groups like Lock the Gate Alliance and The Greens celebrating, while others like Advance Gloucester have been left disappointed and frustrated.

Advance Gloucester Deputy Chair Rod Williams said the mine represented a significant opportunity for Gloucester providing jobs and economic sustainability. He said he

found it very frustrating that the Department would issue an Exploration Licence and allow a company to explore for coal in an area over many years, and then subsequently say the area was unsuitable for mining.

The final determination for the mine proposal by Gloucester Resources Limited will be decided by the Planning and Assessment Commission.

COOL CRIB

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TAKE A TOUR

RIX'S CREEK MINE BECAME A GIANT, OPEN-AIR CLASSROOM WHEN 25 SINGLETON HIGH SCHOOL YEAR 9 STUDENTS TOURED THE BLOOMFIELD GROUP RIX'S CREEK COAL MINE SITE ON OCTOBER 25.

The tour was part of the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue's School Mine Tours Program which is scheduled to see about 1200 local Year 9 and Year 5 students visit mine sites across the Upper Hunter over the next year.

The School Mine Tours Program aims to educate Upper Hunter students on all aspects of coal mining including its impacts on the community and the benefits it provides in

our day-to-day lives. The program gives students and teachers the unique opportunity of seeing mining operations up close while presenting factual and unbiased information. Dialogue Chairman Dave O'Brien said the tours were designed to teach youth the facts about mining including its impacts and benefits.

"THE DIALOGUE'S SCHOOL MINE TOURS PROGRAM AIMS TO DEMYSTIFY THE

MINING PROCESS WHILE TEACHING THE FACTS INSTEAD OF OPINION OR EMOTION," MR O'BRIEN SAID.

With all the Dialogue's mining industry partners supporting the program, tours will be conducted at most open cut mine sites across the Upper Hunter.

In conjunction with the tours program, a working group including teachers is developing in-class materials which will align with the Year 9 syllabus.

The Dialogue is also developing a virtual reality video which students can use to learn about mining and how it and its products are part of their day to day lives.

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FLYING HIGH

WHEN IT COMES TO COMMUNITY WORK THERE ARE PLENTY OUT THERE WHO DO A HELL OF A LOT, BUT THE RECENT 2017 A PLUS CONTRACTING HUNTER VALLEY MINING CHARITY RUGBY LEAGUE COMPETITION REMINDED US OF TWO PEOPLE WHO TAKE COMMUNITY SERVICE TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL.



Danny and Jayne Eather have dedicated their lives and most of their spare time over the last decade to making sure the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service stays in the air and at the top of everyone's minds.

These guys started volunteering for the Singleton Support Group in 2009, thinking they had a few spare hours and raising money for the Helicopters sounded good. After about six months they put their hands up and took over running it and those few spare hours have instead consumed up most of their lives. But that wouldn't have it any other way.

Their group of 15 or so is a great combination of people who help all year, with others at Xmas and when needed at events like the mining league day. "People do as much as they can and it's usually more than we can believe. Young or old everyone pitches in. When the job is over we all enjoy a drink. There's a serious side to it, but we all have a lot of fun at the end of the day." Jayne said.

Despite all they have achieved Jayne reckons she does very little, a point that Danny laughs at. Talking to them it was clear to us that both have no ego about what they do, just get on with the job and they give more credit to the rest of the support group and the community and their support.

Jayne said, "Being local there is a lot of trust built over the years and the group have worked hard to raise the profile and keep it up there. People think it would all still work without the local community support but it just wouldn't. We don't see it as work and it's a lot fun.

A RECORD \$80,000 WAS RAISED FOR WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE AT THIS YEAR'S 2017 MINING CHARITY RUGBY COMPETITION. ORGANISED BY THE SINGLETON VOLUNTEER SUPPORT GROUP, 350 MINING EMPLOYEES MADE UP THE 18 TEAMS WHO COMPETED AT PIRTEK PARK, CHEERED ON BY OVER 1800 SPECTATORS.

Danny told us that they inherited the idea and worked hard at how they could put it together to get the most out of it. "Obviously miners and one of the area's most popular sports were the key combination to that success," said Danny.

Danny said that he is in awe of all the miners, the community and the businesses that backed the competition.

"This year's event exceeded expectations in terms of spectators and the amount of money raised. We are just blown away by the result. Our team of committed volunteers have worked hard to establish the event to be very highly anticipated on the local sporting calendar. We were thrilled to have teams of miners from as far as Mudgee, Boggabri and the Gunnedah Basin join in this year's charity competition." Danny said.

More than 70 local businesses backed teams to help their fundraising targets with major sponsorship secured from A-Plus Contracting, Mine Wealth & Wellbeing, Pirtek, Slater & Gordon, Jennings Print, Minetek, Betts Bower Haulage and Hunter Isuzu Utes. On top of that, Coal Services Mines Rescue,

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Group 21 Rugby League Referees Association, Singleton Rugby League Club and the Singleton Rotary and Lions clubs all provided support and assistance on the day.

'The Upper Hunter community, and the mining sector, are well aware of

vital work that the Rescue Helicopter provides to our region and are very supportive of fundraising event like this to ensure that the Service is available free-of-charge all year round.' Danny said.

BARRY WALTON FROM THE



CHOPPERS SAID, "THE SINGLETON SUPPORT GROUP ARE AN AMAZING GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS LED BY JAYNE AND DANNY EATHER. THE COMMITMENT AND RAW ENERGY THEY DISPLAY TOWARDS FUNDRAISING FOR THE SERVICE IS TO BE COMMENDED. THE SERVICE WOULD NOT BE WHAT IT IS TODAY WITHOUT THEM."

Back on community, we asked Danny about his proudest moments and he said it's the football competition and what everyone has achieved. It was interesting that Danny also failed to mention recently being awarded citizen of the year, which really summed him up to us.

Plenty else happens throughout the year with Xmas wrapping sponsored by Charter Hall and Big W, Xmas lights at the Hannigans at the Heights, the huge trivia night at Club Singleton, golf day, bowls day, the weekly Impy raffle, Broke Fair, Gresford Rodeo, SES day and there's also plenty of other one offs throughout the year. They said they try to make sure they do a bit of everything to touch the whole community and that awareness was sometimes as important as money.

When asked what community means to them Jayne said, "Trust and honesty. They know where the money is going and they know we will get it there. We all own a stake in it. Whether its 20c or twenty bucks. We hardly ever have an event without hearing a local story that's saved and changed a life. Friendship. In a word that is it."

Danny told us, "It's home, it's the

lifestyle, it's who we are, and in this little part of the world it's pretty amazing. As volunteers, we are so very grateful for the support of the community, the Rescue Helicopter Service, and our Volunteer Coordinator Jacqui Bailey. If you don't feel supported then you don't get that drive and motivation to do what we do."

On their biggest mistake or disappointment, they told us that ordering too many sausages for BBQ's when it rains was right up there. Jayne said, "It's not worth thinking about disappointments."

When asked what they get up to off the job they said, "We don't. There is no off the job! We are gluttons for punishment, but this is our passion."

On funny stories they can share Danny and Jane said, "Ask Kylie Hannigan at the Xmas lights. It will take a big donation to get it out of her though. It's a bit risqué."

Their goals for the future include raising a lot more money! Keep going, have fun and bring the younger generations into it to keep it all going.

On a finishing note it's worth mentioning that all this hard work has recently convinced the Rescue Service to bring Danny on full time in his new job as Community Liaison Officer for the Upper Hunter.

Our industry and our community have a lot to be proud of these two. Buy 'em a beer when you next see them in the pub. Oh and make sure you buy a few raffle tickets as well.



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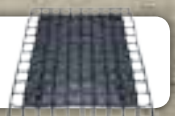
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MINING BEGINS



THE MINE TODAY



BIRTH OF A COAL MINE

40 YEARS HAS PASSED SINCE THE BLOOMFIELD GROUP’S RIX’S CREEK MINE WAS BORN, A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE THAT IS WELL WORTH CELEBRATING WHEN YOU LOOK AT WHAT THEY’VE OVERCOME.

In 1977, an Authorisation to Prospect was issued to a small Hunter Valley mine. A mine owned by a local family in an industry that was flush with large corporations.

It took over 10 years of exploration work, acquisition of properties, submissions, planning and applications before Bloomfield’s Rix’s Creek Mine was rewarded with a Development Consent on October 19, 1989. One day later the Coal Lease was signed and work began. When the first coal was finally shipped in 1993 it was a testament to the years of determination and dedication from a group of people that dreamt of a mine where family and community would be the backbone.

Bloomfield Director Reg Crick still remembers the day the Lease was signed. It was at the Singleton Coal Day (a pre-cursor to the UHMD Annual Stakeholders Day) and word had started to pass around the event that Rix’s Creek Mine had been approved. When the official word finally came through Reg was overwhelmed with relief and full of optimism for what lay ahead.

Over the decades of mining at Rix’s

Creek Mine the local community, Singleton Council and State Government and have all come to trust The Bloomfield Group’s management of operations. Open and positive lines of communications have been the hallmark of community respect and engagement.

After all these years Rix’s has come to be the standard bearer in how to operate a coalmine. Human, resourceful and open are just a few words that come to mind here @ *The Coalface*.

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Malabar Coal has developed a radically different proposal for EL5460, previously known as Drayton South. This new underground proposal has been designed to address community and stakeholder concerns about past proposals and minimise any possible impacts on our neighbours.

We understand that, if a coal mine is to be successful, it must coexist with local industries and gain its social licence from the community.

Malabar’s plan will use the existing processing, handling and rail infrastructure at the Drayton Mine for the any future project, so that there are no new impacts for our neighbours.

Benefits of the underground only project include about 350 new direct, long term jobs for the region and many more indirect jobs.

Malabar’s proposal will also generate significant economic and social benefits for the local area, for NSW more broadly and for the national economy. The project will provide ongoing support for local businesses and, over the 30 years of this project, provide \$1.7 billion of royalties to the State.

How is Malabar’s proposal different from past proposals?

1. Malabar will only mine underground.
No need for blasting, with no dust and noise related impacts or impact on equine health or nearby properties. Mining operations will be invisible to the horse studs addressing any impact to the reputation or operations of the horse studs.

2. The portion of EL 5460 beneath and south of the Golden Highway has been relinquished.
This includes the land beneath the Godolphin and Coolmore horse studs and Golden Highway.

3. Better rehabilitation outcomes
Malabar will deliver a far more visually appealing final outcome at the existing Drayton Mine-site by using reject stone and rock from the underground mine at Spur Hill or an underground mine at EL 5460 to fill the legacy voids at the Drayton Mine.

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ANOTHER ACCOLADE

A FEW MONTHS AGO, WE FEATURED A STORY ON CESSNOCK LOCAL BEN MCDONALD WHEN HE WON THE 2017 HUNTER REGION TRAINING AWARDS APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR. HE’S NOW TOPPED THAT HONOUR TAKING OUT THE APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AT THE 2017 NSW & ACT GROUP TRAINING AWARDS.

Since he began his electrical apprenticeship in 2012 with HVTC Hunter and accepted a position with host employer Peabody at their Jerry’s Plains site, Ben has received numerous awards and scholarships. Ben credits it to the hard work he has put in and the support he has received from HVTC and Peabody. “Being named the NSW &

ACT Group Training Awards Apprentice of the Year is an amazing honour and it feels great to have all the hard work I’ve put in recognised in this way. I’m looking forward to continuing on my career path and passing on the skills and knowledge I’ve acquired to the next generation of electrical apprentices,” Ben said. Congratulations Ben!

HOME SWEET HOME

THE HISTORIC RAVENSWORTH HOMESTEAD MAY POTENTIALLY BE MOVING TO A NEW HOME AS GLENCORE LOOKS TO EXTEND THE LIFE OF GLENDELL OPEN CUT.

Mining at Glendell is approved to 2024 but recent exploration drilling has confirmed the presence of mineable reserves to the north of its existing operations where the Ravensworth Homestead is located.

The Homestead was acquired by Glencore in 1997 and since then Glencore has undertaken extensive repair and restoration works, recognising the historical importance of Homestead.

AS PART OF THEIR PROJECT PLANNING GLENCORE IS PROPOSING TO FORM A COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE OPTIONS TO RELOCATE RAVENSWORTH HOMESTEAD AND CONSIDER OPTIONS FOR ITS FUTURE USE AND MANAGEMENT.

“After initial discussions with key stakeholders, including Singleton Council and the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage, we believe the Advisory Committee would provide the best opportunity for the community to have input on a project

of significant local cultural heritage,” a Glencore spokesperson said.

“We’re committed to identifying and delivering a preferred option that recognises the Homestead’s cultural value, allows for improved community access, and enables our Glendell operations to continue. We believe a committee that includes representatives from the local community, Council and Singleton’s heritage, arts and business sectors, would capture the broadest possible range of options.”

GLENCORE HAVE A HISTORY OF SUCCESSFULLY RESTORING AND RELOCATING ICONIC COMMUNITY BUILDINGS. IN 2014 THEY HANDED OVER A FULLY REFURBISHED HEBDEN HALL TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AFTER RELOCATING AND RESTORING IT IN A \$250,000 PROJECT.

The relocation was a co-operative effort between Glencore and the community resulting in not only the preservation of the historical building, but improved access and better facilities.

Glencore’s commitment to community consultation will ensure the future of Ravensworth Homestead regardless of its location.



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PARALLEL ECONOMICS

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE MINE



RIGHT NOW, READY TO GO ARE DIVERSE ASSETS ACROSS MANY HUNTER MINE SITES WHICH COULD EASILY BE REDEPLOYED OR REPURPOSED INTO UNIQUE UNIVERSITY FACULTY CAMPUS HUBS FOR USE BY MULTIPLE AUSTRALIAN AND INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES.

In as little as six months to a year the Hunter mining industry could create what would essentially be a big university made up of faculties from different universities looking for a high value, low cost opportunities to create additional

centres of learning.

This kind of Future Hub for learning would see individual mines and mining companies identify as many as possible and suitable surplus and underutilised sites. Within their mines currently

exists suitable surplus industrial, office and agricultural assets and other infrastructure that could easily be repurposed.

ESTABLISH THE PROGRAM ACROSS SEVERAL MINE LOCATIONS AND ESTABLISH A SINGLE CENTRAL INDUSTRY ADMINISTRATION TO MANAGE THE MINING INTERESTS SIDE OF THINGS AND THE OVERALL PROGRAM.

Promote and offer to universities around the world as a cost-free opportunity to establish a significant 'campus' to run programs and courses with a strong emphasis

on innovation and the future. Look for some that may also have a positive impact on the industry. This would be a learning, development and innovative campus designed, encouraged and promoted to be a significant national education asset.

We already have many of the brightest minds working within our industry, so contributing to the creation of many more is not such a big stretch. This is a legacy our industry could achieve.

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Walking down the street I was accosted by a homeless man asking me for a couple of dollars.

I took out ten dollars and asked, "If I give you this money, will you buy some beer with it instead of dinner?"

"No, I stopped drinking years ago," the homeless man replied.

"Will you use it to go fishing instead of buying food?" I asked.

"No, I don't waste time fishing," the homeless man said. "I need to spend all my time trying to stay alive."

"Will you spend this on hunting equipment?" I asked.

"Are you NUTS!" replied the homeless man. "I haven't gone hunting in 20 years!"

"Well," I said, "I'm not going to give you money. Instead, I'm going to take you home for a shower and a terrific dinner cooked by my wife."

The homeless man was astounded.

"Won't your wife be furious with you for doing that?"

I replied, "Don't worry about that. It's important for her to see what a man looks like after he has given up drinking, fishing and hunting."



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NICE JOB!

HOW BUSINESS IS DONE CAN BE AS IMPORTANT AS WHY BUSINESS IS DONE AND QUARRY MINING'S DECISION TO TAKE ON A JOBSEEKER WITH A DISABILITY IS AN EXAMPLE OF DOING BETTER BUSINESS.

In a partnership between Glencore and Quarry Mining, a valuable opportunity has been created to provide a jobseeker with a disability

new skills and experiences, while working within a workshop team environment with an exceptional culture for safety and comradery.

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With this great initiative, Quarry Mining has been exploring the possibility of casual employment of a person through specialist disability employment service, Mai-Wel Group to assist in the ongoing recycling of drill bits. Mai-Wel was able to put forward a person well suited to the role, who has the necessary skills and work ethic to undertake the specific task of drill bit de-brazing.

The initiative of refurbishing drill bits to achieve two to three uses of them is no longer economical as the manufacture of new drill bits is now undertaken off shore – this is where the new team member, 26-year-old Dale Charlesworth comes in.

Dale's job involves drill bits being collected from Glencore sites and returned to Quarry Mining's premises at Beresfield for processing where he will then collate, clean, de-braze, sort, and ship carbide for recycling.

Kari Armitage MD of Quarry Mining said about the project. "It is inevitable that some manufacture will be taken offshore, so we need to be creative and ensure clever jobs remain here. I think this opportunity does that on a whole new level – it brings a job opportunity that is rewarding and ultimately offers openings for varied work to someone who may find it a challenge to obtain employment. This work offers the threefold advantages of the niche employment, affords employment where there would ordinarily have been jobs lost, and enables an environmentally responsible work practice to be undertaken in a cost-effective manner."

Quarry also told us that they will bear all costs associated with the

employment in what they believe will be a very solid investment in culture, community and the business itself.

Kari went on to say she would like to thank Glencore for their support in this endeavor, "Partnering with our clients for better solutions is always our priority but this is a truly rewarding initiative and hopefully the beginning of more things like it."

ON DISABILITY RECRUITMENT AND PROGRAMS WITHIN THE WIDER MINING INDUSTRY HAYS RECRUITMENT, IN ITS DECEMBER QUARTER REPORT, SAID DIVERSITY REMAINED A PRIORITY FOR MINING COMPANIES. MINING COMPANIES ARE PURSUING POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE A DISABILITY AS A NEW METHOD FOR INCREASING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY.

"We are now also receiving requests for candidates with a disability to further diversify workforces," Hays reported.

In other industries, programs like this have been comprehensively proven in virtually every case to have an overwhelmingly positive effect on the broader workforce and team spirit. These programs create amazing team cultures that benefit more than the worker with a disability.

@ The Coalface has the highest praise for Quarry and Glencore and if you know of anyone else running something similar then we would love to hear about it. Talk to your mining company about looking into a similar program too!

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MY MINING LIFE



JASON 'SALA' STEVENS

WHEN I SHOWED UP TO TALK TO JASON, I INTERRUPTED A DEBATE ABOUT HOW THE CREW HAD EMPTIED OUT THE FRIDGE AND LEFT NOTHING FOR THE BOSS TO WIND DOWN AFTER WORK. A NEW COMPANY RULE WAS BEING SET THAT ANYONE WHO DIDN'T LEAVE THREE BEERS IN THE FRIDGE AFTER THE TOOL BOX TALK AT THE END OF THE DAY WAS DISMISSED. THAT OUT OF THE WAY, WE TALKED ABOUT LIFE OVER A BEER.

Who are you and what do you do?

Jason 'Sala' Stevens and I run Hunter Coatings an industrial painting company in mining.

Any nicknames good or bad?

Sala, Mouse, TPH - The Pig Hunter, (Self proclaimed the boys said). The missus calls me Big Boy, Genius.

Where do you live and how long you been in the Valley?

I live between Elebana and the farm at Mt Thorley where I spend a few nights a week. When I was 15 or 16 I started working up here when they were building Mt Thorley machinery. That would be about 30 years ago. I started as an apprentice painter for my dad after I was politely asked to leave school. It was go and work for him or go to jail. It went well though, and I had trade by 18.

When did you go out on your own and what's the ride been like?

August 1994. The early years were a hard ride with a lot of family sacrifices. I actually worked seven Christmas' straight doing shutdown work. It's getting better now thanks to my Operations Manager Robbie. Robbie reckons that now he doesn't get any sleep.

What's a usual day at work entail?

Up at 6.30 and in the office, doing emails but mostly making sure the day is good to go. The last four years have been a challenge, I think anyone will tell you that. Now we can't find enough workers. We're actually knocking jobs back to keep up the service to our most loyal customers. We won't take on more without quality labour because it's just not worth it. It's taken too long and been too

bloody hard to risk it for us and the customers we work with.

How big is the crew?

We have about 13 running around at the moment and they're a really good crew. Not that I can say anything else, but honestly they really are.

What's the best thing about your job?

Working for myself I guess (Robbie chimed in and said it was his him). Now that the company is established it would also be the flexibility for me and the variety of work we get asked to do. You might have to work a Sunday but I can now take a Monday off.

The worst thing?

Dealing with people who just don't have the practical experience for what the job entails. Payment in the industry is also a challenge but that is the same for everyone.

What's a funny story from work that you can tell?

We were loading a dump truck at a mine and one of the boys picked up a lizard and put it in another fella's lunch box. He opened it and obviously wasn't real happy. About two days later for payback, this bloke grabbed a baby goanna and put it in the fella's boot. He's then opened the boot and put his crib bag in and starts to head home but there's no goanna. We're following him on the way home. Anyway, turns out its crawled through the roof lining. You have never seen a bloke pull up so quick. Needless to say they never worked together again. It wasn't my company at the time and it was ages ago.

How different is your job to what you wanted to do when you were a kid?

All I wanted to do as a kid was fight, drink and shoot stuff. These days hunting

is the thing that's still part of life. Honestly though, probably a butcher or a jackaroo. It's all worked out pretty well though.

What would your old man say about you when you were a kid?

His old man interrupted saying "How long have you got?"

Family?

Missus, two kids. Married 24 years. Daughters 18 and my son's nearly 15. The daughter's actually joining the company in two weeks in the office.

The boys yell out that his son is going to play for Manchester United, but Jase is quick to correct them with Chelsea.

What do you do in the down time?

Ride motorbikes, shoot pigs and enjoy a beer.

With that we sat down and blew the froth off a few.

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THE ROTHBURY RIOTS MEMORIAL

'THE BATTLE FOR ROTHBURY'

WHO KILLED NORMAN BROWN ON DECEMBER 16TH, 1929?

As the Great Depression began to affect Australian workers, Hunter Valley collieries including Rothbury were asked to take a pay cut. At the time, these blokes were earning the minimum award wage set by the Federal Government. It was illegal to work for anything less than the award. A coalition of State Government politicians and the colliery operators asked the miners to accept a 12.5% wage reduction, which, if they accepted, would mean that they were breaking the law (not to mention breaking their backs for less money). The miners refused to accept the pay cut, so the colliery locked them out. A note was handed to the miners, which gave them 14 days' notice and said they would be no longer required to work.

10,000 HUNTER VALLEY MINERS AND THEIR FAMILIES NOW FOUND THEMSELVES WITHOUT A JOB AND NO MONEY FOR FOOD, RENT AND BILLS.

When the Miners Federation union got word about the lockout they organised a protest and gathered a parade of workers and supporters to protest outside the closed collieries. For 14 months the protests continued while the miners went without work.

Come December 1929, the State Government made the decision to re-open three of the mines and staff them with volunteer labour. The first mine selected for reopening was Rothbury. Trains began to roll in loaded with all sorts of building materials and tradesmen. These 'Free Labourers' were put up in army tents erected just outside the mine, and were guarded by police who were already protecting the mine.

By the time the free labourers were brought in, the hopeful, peaceful atmosphere of the miner's protest was beginning to fade, soon to be replaced by outrage at this latest

move by the colliery owners and State Government. Word quickly spread to the other protest sites and workers soon converged on Rothbury.

5000 MINERS MARCHED ON THE GATES OF ROTHBURY TO STAGE A MASSIVE PROTEST, SPURRED ON BY THIS LATEST MOVE TO BRING IN 'FREE LABOURERS' TO WORK IN THEIR PLACE.

The miners marched up to the Rothbury colliery in a fury of fanfare, nervous excitement and building tension, loudly protesting the 'scabs' set up inside. The police met with the protesters at the gates telling them, "you can't come in here boys". One protester was heard saying, "we've got no strife with you, we only want to speak to the blokes in those tents".

All of a sudden, one of the police officers snapped and hit one of the protesters in the face with a baton. Blood was drawn, and the riot was on.

The miners, young and old, rushed the gates and scrambled through. Mounted police troops appeared and, according to eyewitness accounts, they began to mercilessly beat up the miners, young and old, before drawing their guns to try and stop them from going any further. Some reports say they were ordered to fire into the ground and into the air, but bullets soon began to fly through the scrub, past protesters and policeman's heads alike. One old timer described it as a whining sound as the bullet passed his head. Then, a bullet struck one of the miners, Norman Laurence Brown, killing him almost instantly. Dozens of other miners were shot and wounded.

15 months after the lockout started, living in poverty and starvation, the miners capitulated and went back to work on reduced wages. However, the lockout did ensure the determination and resolve of the miner's union to keep fighting for fair pay.

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SCHOOL'S OUT

A LUCKY GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE DITCHED THE CLASSROOM FOR A HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE AT MOUNT THORLEY WARKWORTH AS PART OF YANCOAL'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

Three students studying engineering, science and teaching donned safety helmets for the day and got up close and personal with a haul truck, visited the mechanical workshop and Integrated Operations Centre (IoC) and met with site professionals to learn more about the career pathways available in the resources sector.

Yancoal MTW General Manager Jason McCallum said the site tour was a good way for the students to engage with the workforce, learn about the variety and diversity of career options and the role technology plays in improving safety and efficiency of mining processes.

"THESE STUDENTS ARE FUTURE LEADERS AND IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND PROVIDE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTRACT THEM INTO THE INDUSTRY." SAID JASON.

University of Newcastle student and local Singleton resident Nicholas Hough, is studying a Bachelor of Engineering (Chemical) and Bachelor of Science and was excited to take part in the tour and meet the people at the coalface.

"It was a great opportunity to see first-hand the workings of an open cut coal mine, the technologies used in the industry and talk to people who are undertaking graduate programs about their experiences. I gained a valuable insight into the broad range of disciplines in the sector and I look forward to pursuing a career in my chosen field of studies," said Nicholas.

The program provides scholarships worth \$10,000 each to students, helping them to undertake their university degrees and develop skills in their chosen professions. 125 scholarships have been provided since the program began in 2007.



HIGHLIGHTING A GOOD CAUSE

MRS SERVICES GROUP IN MUSWELLBROOK ARE HELPING THE NATIONAL BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION AND THE PROSTATE CANCER FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA IN A VERY COLOURFUL WAY.

Employees and their families proudly stood before the dozer outside the MRS workshop in blue or pink hi-vis shirts, all to raise awareness for breast and prostate cancer.

The group's employees had the option to purchase the pink or blue hi-vis shirts for themselves and their families. Nearly 100 shirts were purchased with proceeds going to the charities.

MRS Services Group Mechanical

Superintendent Stephen Fairhall said the business had supported both charities for many years, with this being the third year that they have painted equipment to raise awareness.

"These are two very worthwhile charities that we are proud to support, and we will continue to do so in the coming years. We thank all the employees and their families who got involved to make this possible." Stephen said.

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A COAL IN ONE

MUSWELLBROOK GOLF COURSE WAS AGAIN HOME TO THE BLACK COAL CUP CHARITY GOLF DAY NOW IN ITS 18TH YEAR.

The Black Coal Cup was created by Muswellbrook couple Joe and Margaret Matthews to raise money for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service and since its inception has raised well over a million dollars.

This year saw 30 teams competing on the day for the coveted trophy. Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service Community Liaison Officer Richard McGovern said they cannot express enough gratitude to everyone involved.

"We have to give a big thank you to previous organisers Joe and Margaret for their work over the last 17 years. This year the service took over the reins and we couldn't have done it without the players and the continued support of the Muswellbrook community."

"We also must thank all the sponsors including NSW Mining, Orica, Bengalla, Mine Wealth & Wellbeing, J & S Engineering, Mt Owen Lodge,

Platinum Electrical & Power Services, Scone Grammar School, Mangoola Coal, Muswellbrook Chronicle, WesTrac, Muswellbrook Holden, Aberdeen Sport & Recreation Club, Hitachi and Wear Parts." Richard said.

The Black Coal Cup is an important event on our local calendar and it will be back next year.



STAR TREKKERS

A GROUP OF MAULES CREEK MINERS HAVE HELPED SHINE A LIGHT ON MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AS THEY RETURN FROM AN INAUGURAL MENTAL HEALTH CHARITY TREK NAMED BEYOND FRASER ISLAND.

It all started with Whitehaven miner Robbie Chappel, who knows first-hand that anxiety and depression can be real issues for those in our industry.

Last year when Robbie was going through a tough time he headed off to Fraser Island with family and workmates for a getaway and was amazed by how much spending time together and talking helped him through it.

So, this year knowing others were also having a hard time and wanting to raise awareness of mental health issues, he organised a 1000km trek from Boggabri to Fraser Island.

Robbie said that the trek was a success with their target of \$5000 raised for Beyond Blue, but just as importantly the awareness raised along the way.

"Everywhere we went, people saw the signage on the cars and our shirts and wanted to talk to us. Everyone knows someone with a mental health issue or is suffering themselves and it was great how open and supportive people were." Robbie said.

"I have to thank Whitehaven for their ongoing support and everyone who got behind this. We will definitely be back next year even bigger."



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*CAMPER TRAILER GIVEAWAY T&C'S: TO GIVE THOSE AN OPPORTUNITY WHO HAVE ALREADY BOUGHT A CAR OFF US THE WINNER WILL NOT BE LIMITED TO THOSE WHO BUY A CAR THROUGHOUT THE PROMOTION. IN SHORT IT WILL RUN FOR 3 MONTHS AND THE WINNER WILL BE DRAWN FROM THOSE WHO WITHIN THE PROMOTION PERIOD EITHER HAVE THEIR VEHICLE SERVICED WITH US, PURCHASE SPARE PARTS FROM US OR BUY A CAR. FULL TERMS AND CONDITIONS ARE ON DISPLAY AT THE DEALERSHIP. PRIZE WILL BE DRAWN ON THE 1ST OF DECEMBER.



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BRENTON HUBERT
WITH THE STUDENTS



GREEN THUMBS UP

THERE WERE MINI-GREEN THUMBS GALORE AT GLENCORE'S HILLCREST BIODIVERSITY OFFSET PROPERTY THIS WEEK AS CHILDREN FROM SINGLETON HEIGHTS PRE-SCHOOL JOINED FORCES WITH RAVENSWORTH OPEN CUT ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES.

In a unique partnership between Ravensworth and the pre-school, the youngsters are growing native seeds for use in the mine's rehabilitation and offset planting work. Ravensworth set up a nursery at the pre-school in 2015, enabling the children to grow up to 1000 seedlings each year. When the seedlings reach 10cm, Ravensworth purchases them for \$1 each, providing an income stream for the school but also teaching the children about our environment and sustainability.

This week's planting exercise was organised by Ravensworth's Environment & Community officer Brenton Hubert. "It's a partnership that's all about the future: our next generation of mums and dads helping grow and build a landscape they'll be enjoying with their children," Brenton said. The children planted a selection of eucalypt seedlings this time on an area of Hillcrest that is being returned to native bushland after past grazing practices.



THE COAL FACE PEDAL IS BACK!

QUARRY MINING IS THROWING OUT THE CHALLENGE TO THE MINING INDUSTRY FOR NEXT YEAR'S KURRI COAL FACE PEDAL MOUNTAIN BIKE EVENT IN SUPPORT OF THE WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER.

Held on April 8 for its fourth year, they've upped the ante by adding an exciting new mining teams challenge. Teams of 3 will take on the tough 60km course and the first team with all 3 riders crossing the line will take the home the trophy and the glory. For those that aren't up for the 60km, there's still the shorter course options along with the family ride and schools challenge. Online entries will be up on Westpac Rescue Helicopters website late November and all entries before February 21 will receive a free T-Shirt.

www.rescuehelicopter.com.au



COMMUNITY GIFT

THIS MONTH OUR \$500 COMMUNITY GIFT WENT TO A SPOOKILY GOOD CAUSE. A HALLOWEEN THEMED DISCO AT SINGLETON PCYC FOR OUR KIDS.

The Singleton PCYC had been approached by parents concerned about their kids roaming the streets on Halloween and so we were only too glad to help them put on a Halloween themed Blue Light Disco at the club. All the witches, ghosts and vampires agreed it was a great night!



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AUSTRALIAN CHAMPS

PEABODY ENERGY'S WAMBO MINE HAVE TAKEN OUT THE HIGHLY CONTESTED 55TH AUSTRALIAN UNDERGROUND MINES RESCUE COMPETITION AND WILL BE HEADING OFF TO RUSSIA TO REPRESENT AUSTRALIA NEXT YEAR.

The eight teams of elite brigadesmen were put through their paces as they responded to a variety of scenarios in different environments. Surface and underground exercises included firefighting, first aid and a series of search and rescue, emergency response and risk management challenges.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE COMPETITION'S HISTORY THE EVENT WAS HELD IN THE NORTH-WESTERN NSW COALFIELDS AT THE WHITEHAVEN COAL NARRABRI MINE.

Narrabri General Manager Steve Bow said that Whitehaven Coal welcomed the opportunity to host the 2017 competition.

"Our goal is for zero workplace injuries or illness and for every person to go home safe and healthy after each work day. Hosting this competition reinforces that commitment and acknowledges the importance of this region to the coal industry," Steve said.

NSW Mines Rescue's General Manager Matthew Fellowes applauded the expertise and camaraderie displayed by competitors, organisers and assessors.

"It was a highly contested competition and all teams performed exceptionally well. These volunteer brigadesmen provide invaluable safety leadership every day in their workplaces and are the ones who

are ready, willing and able to respond should the unfortunate need arise, something that should provide some peace of mind to all of our fellow coal miners," Matthew said.

When Wambo's team captain Warren Kirk was asked about the win he said, "I want to thank Peabody for supporting the team. I want to thank the team for giving up hours of their personal time to ensure we are equipped to deal with any scenario we are presented with. I also want to thank our families for their support over the years we have all been involved in mines rescue. I have no doubt my team is the best mines rescue team in the world."

The team will now travel to Russia in 2018 to represent Peabody and Australia, and compete in the 11th International Mines Rescue Competition for the second time.

'AVE A LAUGH WITH

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A Roman walks into a bar, holds up two fingers, and says, "five beers please."

DIAGNOSE DIABETES

DIABETES IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST HEALTH PROBLEMS OF THIS CENTURY WITH 280 AUSTRALIANS DEVELOPING DIABETES EVERY DAY. THAT'S ONE PERSON EVERY 5 MINUTES.

1.2 million Australians are diagnosed with diabetes making it the fastest growing chronic condition in Australia. It's estimated that it's costing \$14.6 billion a year, a shocking figure that continues to rise.

About 10% of all cases of diabetes are Type 1 Diabetes, an auto-immune condition in which the

immune system is activated to destroy the cells in the pancreas which produce insulin. There is no cure and no prevention.

Type 2 Diabetes is a progressive

condition in which the body becomes resistant to the normal effects of insulin and gradually loses the capacity to produce enough insulin in the pancreas. Type 2 is preventable simply by changing your lifestyle. Maintaining a healthy weight, regular exercise and good food choices are key.

THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 500,000 UNDIAGNOSED CASES OF DIABETES IN AUSTRALIA. THIS COULD BE YOU OR YOUR WORKMATE AND YOU NEED TO BE AWARE OF THE SIGNS BEFORE SERIOUS COMPLICATIONS OF DIABETES SUCH AS A HEART ATTACK, VISION PROBLEMS OR A FOOT ULCER OCCURS.

10 SIGNS YOU MAY HAVE DIABETES

1. Increased thirst or frequent urination may be a sign that your kidneys are trying to get rid of the extra glucose in your blood.
2. Unexplained weight loss can be caused by increased sugar levels.
3. Fatigue is a sign that the glucose in your body is being stored incorrectly and starving your cells of energy.
4. Continuous hunger can be due to drastic highs and lows in your blood sugar levels.
5. Numbness or a tingling feeling in your hands or feet can be

caused by constant highs in your glucose level.

6. Skin problems such as itchy or dry skin is often your body warning you that something is wrong.
7. Slow healing or becoming easily bruised is when blood vessels are damaged due to high glucose in your blood.
8. Yeast infections are a sign that your immune system is weakened, a symptom of diabetes.
9. Constant irritability can be caused by low blood sugar.
10. Blurry or double vision is a result of high blood sugar and can lead to serious complications such as blindness.

If you or someone you know are suffering from any of these symptoms and especially if you are overweight or have a diet with excessive sugar, you should head to your doctors for blood and glucose tests.

Studies have shown that most Australians are not aware of how serious an illness diabetes is, and most people believe they have a lower risk of developing it than they actually do. With severe complications like amputation, blindness, and nerve problems, not to mention a higher risk of heart disease, stroke and certain cancers, you don't want to mess around with diabetes.



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fik.com/big-daddy

THE BACKYARD IGLOO

NO MORE DEALING WITH PESKY FLIES AND MOSQUITOS THIS SUMMER.



It's hard to enjoy time outdoors without being harassed by insects, but with this garden igloo you can safely relax inside your dome and enjoy the sunshine. Not just for the summer months either, as it will keep out the cold during the winter months and you can even use it as a greenhouse. gardenigloo.com

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suzukimotorcycles.com.au



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LTPM/16/01100

NOVEMBER TIPS - ACTION CHECKLIST FOR INSIDE YOUR HOME

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Close doors, windows and vents | 5. Soak towels and rugs and lay them across external doorways |
| 2. Fill baths, sinks, buckets and bins with water | 6. Move furniture away from windows |
| 3. Confine pets to one room | |
| 4. Place ladder next to roof access hole so you can check for spot fires | |

Proudly celebrating 75 years in the Hunter.

This year The Bloomfield Group celebrates 75 years of operating in the Hunter.

As one of the few Australian family-owned mining companies in Australia, we are pretty proud of this achievement.

Our success is the result of a loyal workforce, an innovative approach to work and great relationships with the community and our suppliers.



P.S... SURF'SUP!

COME NOVEMBER, IT'S NOT ONLY THE V8'S THAT'LL BE MAKING WAVES AROUND TOWN. BIRUBI BEACH IS SET TO HOST THE PORT STEPHENS NSW PRO, DUBBED THE LARGEST WOMEN'S SURFING EVENT... IN THE WORLD!

More than 1000 of the world's best surfers and grommets are set to drop in to beautiful Port Stephens to watch 114 pro surfers compete for major points in order to qualify for the 2018 World Surf League (WSL) Women's Championship Tour. Birubi Beach was officially announced as the venue to host next month's crucial season-ending event, which could help Hunter local, Philippa Anderson make the cut for the 2018 WSL championship tour. This means the Hunter region is set to host three major surfing

events in the space of four months with the World Surf League (WSL) women's qualifying series finale being added to the mix. This 6000-point competition, scheduled for November, will be followed by the 2017-2018 Australian Boardriders Battle final at Newcastle Beach in February (14-16) and time-honoured Surfest at Merewether the next week (February 19-25). The competition features top class men and women's events, including Men and Women's WSL qualifying events, plus a number of Surfing NSW age group events.

THE SHOUT'S ON US!



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THE NEW(Y)

NEED FOR SPEED

THE SMELL, THE SPEED AND THE SOUND OF A PACKED FIELD OF HULKING V8'S ROARING AROUND THE STREETS OF NEWCASTLE. HOW GOOD IS IT! WE ASKED LOCAL BOY RACER, AAREN RUSSELL, WHO SITS BEHIND THE WHEEL FOR LUCAS DUMBRELL MOTORSPORT, WHAT IT'S LIKE TO FEEL THE NEED FOR SPEED IN NEWY.

G'day, Aaren, Thanks for sitting down with @ TheCoalface. So, how did you get into racing V8's?

It all started with my family. My old man, Wayne, has raced all kinds of things, from Go Karts and Speedway right up V8 Supercars, so I guess you could say I grew up around it.

I can still remember when I was young playing around in the muddy puddles one wet Bathurst Sunday watching my dad race and thinking I wanted to do that one day! But, I'm pretty sure if you ask my dad he'd say he wished he'd given me a tennis racquet or a golf club earlier!

Maybe you were born to race? When did you first start racing?

I started racing go Karts when I was 7 which was the earliest you can start. That lasted all the way up until I was 16. Then, my first proper car race was when I was 15, we flew over to New Zealand to get my racing license as my father is a Kiwi and raced in a series called Star Cars. I did this for a year then raced a Formula Vee for two years until I stepped up to what they now call the Dunlop Super2 Series, back in 2000.

When did you first race in the V8 Supercars?

My first ever V8 Supercars

start was at Bathurst in 2015. Our team Novocastrian Motorsport competed as a wild card entry into the Bathurst 1000. After a long gruelling race we finished 17th and on the lead lap, which was a massive achievement for a privateer team.

Yeah, that was an unreal race and unbelievable result. What's your favourite thing about racing V8 Supercars?

That's a hard question to answer. I love everything. Really... the whole sport is a massive attraction for me: The passion, the fans, the cars, the speed and the challenge... It all drives me to keep coming back

for more, I seriously eat, sleep and breathe it. I just love racing!

Can you describe what it's like to drive a V8 Supercar?

It's a dream come true. Every time I get to sit in that seat it's a privilege. There's people out there that would give up everything to have the opportunity that I have so I think keeping a level head is very important.

As for the driving aspect, the acceleration is amazing, although for me the incredible part is probably the braking and cornering speeds. We can go from 300km at Bathurst flying down Conrod Straight and shave off over half that speed in less than 120 meters. These cars have massive stopping power, which can be bloody exciting.

That's insane! Not sure how a 785D would go up along Skyline...What goes through your mind once the race begins?

Honestly, I just forget about everything. It's almost like everything in the world stops, and the only thing going on in your brain is the car and road that you're driving on.

But, look, this is a job for us, and when we step into the race car we are there to do a job, so you must be professional. Once race mode switches on all you think about how to get to the checkered flag first at the end of the race. Obviously, you don't want to crash or make any mistakes. I've had crashes and made mistakes before, it's the worst feeling letting your team down, and letting yourself down.

Have you seen much of the track in Newcastle? What's got you most excited about the circuit?

The Newcastle track is going to be fast and difficult. Mainly due to the rise and fall of the track. I mean, race tracks are hard enough when they're flat, but when you add in elevation, especially in short distances it makes it so tough on the driver, particularly when it comes to braking.

How are you feeling about racing here at Newcastle?

I love Newcastle... the town, the people, we all love our sport and you see how passionate they are. I think the thing I'll enjoy most is how much this town is going to rally behind this race, I truly believe it's going to be one of the biggest races each year. I think driving around Nobby's beach and the foreshore is going to be a special moment for me. Sleeping in my own bed is going to be a pretty good feeling too.

ACTF: Haha! Good luck, Aaren. The Hunter mining industry will no doubt be cheering you on!

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OFF THE ROAD!

RIGHT HERE IN THE HUNTER THERE ARE A GROUP OF PEOPLE PASSIONATE ABOUT OFF ROAD RACING. @ THE COALFACE SAT DOWN WITH MEMBERS FROM THE HUNTER VALLEY OFF ROAD RACING ASSOCIATION (HVORRA) TO FIND OUT WHAT FUELS THEM.

HVORRA was established back in 1987 by Ian & Jan Hedley, Marion & Grahame Baxter, Errol Smith and Bob Stansfield to promote the sport of (Off Road Racing) in the Hunter and to offer local enthusiasts a place close to home to come together.

For those of you who aren't familiar with off road racing, it's where a driver, and sometimes a navigator, race specially modified vehicles such as buggies on courses consisting of dirt, mud, sand, water, grass and trees, all while hitting speeds in excess of 200km.

But it's not just these unbelievable speeds that make off road racing so addictive, it's the strategy required to navigate the courses, the challenges that only training can prepare you for, and the adrenalin of pushing your vehicle and yourself to the limit.

AS ONE MEMBER TOLD US "YOU ARE PUMPED FULL OF ADRENALIN, AND A HEALTHY DOSE OF NERVES AND FEAR, BUT THE EXCITEMENT AND SHEER ENJOYMENT MAKES YOU KEEP COMING BACK FOR MORE."

Currently, HVORRA have nearly 100 members and it's clear the bonds between them go above and beyond those on the track. Rival teams are part of one big extended family and

competing safely and fairly is always more important than winning. For these guys the sport is not about money or fame, it's about the love of the race and sharing that experience with others.

It was clear talking to these guys that they were all proud to be a part of HVORRA. Not just the racing side of things, but also the tireless work they do for charities like Camp Quality, Canteen, Witmore Enterprises and Simply Loving Taylor Inc.

HVORRA also run their own event, The Milbrodale Mountain Classic, which is held each year as part of the State Championship, and they tell me it is hands down the best off road track in the competition. For thirty one years the Milbrodale event has been made possible thanks to the hard work of HVORRA and the great support by the local community and businesses. And without the generosity of the land owners allowing HVORRA to use their land for the weekend, the Milbrodale Mountain Classis would not exist. We can't wait to check out the action when it's back on in July next year.

If you are interested in learning more about HVORRA, head to their website hvorra.com.au



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enter here: nswmining.com.au/events



A BIG SLAB!

PLENTY OF REASONS TO GET A SESH IN

THE CONDITIONS ARE PRETTY GOOD AND THE FISH ARE PRETTY FRIENDLY AT THE MOMENT, SO GRAB A FEW MATES AND THROW A FEW BAITS AT YOUR FAVOURITE THIS MONTH, OR CHECK A FEW OF THE SPOTS WE THINK ARE WORTH A CRACK BELOW.

OFFSHORE

With the warm water starting to push down the coast the Pelagics won't be far away. Recently a few whispers have snuck off the decks of "Rarely in" skippered by Mark Marlin Brown that the Kings on Allmark Mountain are thick as at the moment after a recent trip out dropping a few live slimers down to the Kings while out looking for the early season Marlin.

The FADs are also back in action so the Dolphin fish will be worth a shot over the coming weeks.

Newcastle
32.55.333 151.59.935

Swansea
33.10.005 151.48.976

Port Stephens
32.46.967 152.24.703

DAMS

Bass fishing continues to prove to be a great option for a quick arvo flick as we move closer to summer, fishing spinner baits and plastics around the steeper banks has been the best method of attack while targeting the bigger fish. The surface bite is also firing up with the traditional paddler style surface lures doing the damage.

INSIDE - THE BAY-LAKE MAC

Its time to inspect the prawning and crab gear as reports from the last dark is that the prawns and crabs started to move around on the last full moon/dark in the lake and up the Bay. Reports of some cracker Jew

are coming in also from up the bay with a good mate getting into a few beauties recently fishing live baits in the deeper holes and around the break walls. Flathead and Whiting are becoming active around the shallows in both the bay and lake.

BEACHES

All the local beaches are fishing well at the moment. Fingal has been fishing well for Whiting, Bream and the odd Tailor.

Stockton south of the Lavis Lane track has also been fishing well especially for Jew with Tailor and Salmon mixed in as well.

YOUNG GUN OF THE MONTH

Cooper with a Bass he caught while fishing with his old man Steven using spinner baits on Lake Glenbawn Well done buddy great effort.

Cast away... **The Thriftys**



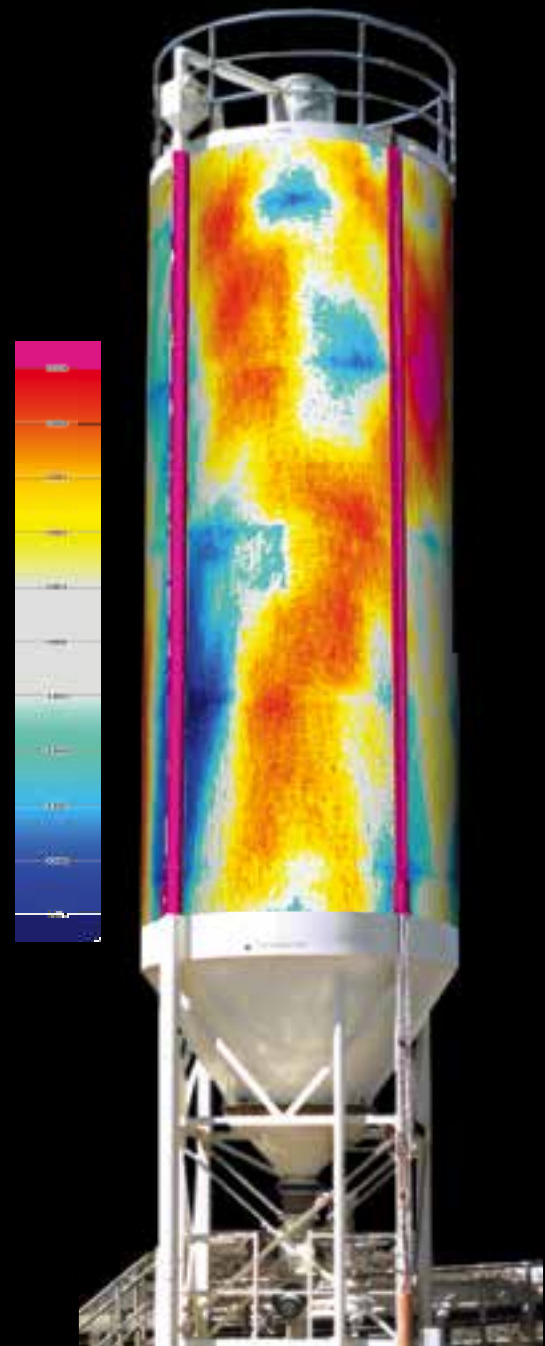
SEND US A PIC OF YOUR YOUNG GUN TO WIN A \$50 BCF VOUCHER IF IT GETS PUBLISHED!



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A MATTER OF BRAND (OR IS IT?)

HANDS UP WHO OWNS A HOLDEN COLORADO OR AN ISUZU D-MAX? BETTER STILL, ANYONE HERE PLACED AN ORDER FOR THE NEW MERCEDES BENZ X-CLASS UTE ARRIVING IN 2018? AND WHAT DOES YOUR CHOICE OF CAR HAVE TO DO WITH THE FUTURE OF THE HEAVY EQUIPMENT INDUSTRY?


Please bear with me, for my point is not about the cars, rather the globalised economy we now live in. Perhaps if I put it to you another way, are we as modern consumers concerned about the commonalities that underpin our favourite brands? Do we care that

our Mercedes Ute shares its DNA with a Nissan Navara (ok you got me, I would)? If we compare the Holden Colorado and Isuzu D-Max, on what are we exactly basing our decision, price, perceived quality, 'brand' or warranty? These were the thoughts

that whizzed through my head on a recent trip to China, when observing just how far the Chinese have come. A continued and committed advancement in quality and attention to detail, that was not present five years ago. There is no doubt that in

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An American, a Vietnamese, a Mexican, a Brazilian, a Canadian, a German, a Turk, and a Russian walk into a fancy restaurant.

When they got to the front desk, they were kicked out because they did not have a Thai.

their haste to become an economic powerhouse (the world's economic powerhouse), the Chinese undeniably cut corners; heck, I think if you'd ask them directly, they'd admit to the odd copyright or trademark infringement as well as reverse engineering a design (or two).

While such behaviour should not be condoned, I can't help but think that the Chinese are not completely to blame. Rather, it is we (our Westernised corporate culture), that fed the beast, in pursuit of larger profits and shareholder returns. Ladies and gents, the Chinese are coming of age and the we are benefiting from it.

So, what has this got to do with heavy earthmoving machinery, components

and parts? Everything really, when you consider that we're all pursuing cost effective solutions with similar if not more reliable outcomes.

Our continued pursuit of competitive prices, has in essence forced companies to collaborate, necessitating a sharing of ideas to create new product. If this sharing therefore is leading companies to converge towards a 'norm' and the underlying products are becoming one and the same, the key question is, at what point does the discount or warranty justify our change to the unknown or an unrecognised brand?

What does this all mean for the big equipment brands we mine with? Will past pedigree equal future quality?

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SAND UP

THIS MONTH WE HEADED TO ANNA BAY FOR SOME SERIOUS FUN SANDBOARDING WITH THE GREAT TEAM AT SAND DUNE SAFARIS.

What's makes a perfect day out with the family? Sun, sand, blue skies and of course laughing yourself silly as your family stacks it on the slopes again and again.

The whole family was excited about testing out our board skills on the biggest moving sand dunes in the Southern Hemisphere, and you can imagine there was plenty of boasting going on as we jumped onboard the safari bus and headed to the dunes.

Sand Dune Safaris are the only certified operators for stand-up sandboarding in the area so we all agreed we had to try it. After a quick safety talk and a demonstration, we grabbed our boards and it was on.

But as we all stood looking down from the top of the daunting sand dune, the boasting faded away and there was a round of, you first, no you

first. Maybe we try sitting down first I suggest, to an immediate chorus of yeah, good idea. I sat down on my board and before I could change my mind gravity took hold and I was sliding down the slope. Or more like flying.

AND THAT'S WHEN I DISCOVERED NOT ONLY IS SANDBOARDING EASY, BUT IT'S INCREDIBLY FUN. AND BY THE EXCITED YELLS OF THE OTHERS COMING DOWN I WASN'T ALONE.

As we fervently debated at the bottom on who had done the most awesome ride, it was then I realised the one downside of sandboarding. We had to walk back up the sand dunes to go again.

And that's how we spent the next few hours, flying down to squeals of delight, and then trudging back up to the top, every time saying this was

AT THE COALFACE BOOK



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WIN!

the last time. But then once at the top it was impossible to resist having one more go.

None of us mastered the stand-up boarding, though we all had some cracker attempts that mostly resulted in rolling down the dunes, but it was undeniably one of the best family

days out I've had in a while. Sand Dune Safaris also offer different types of tours for those who aren't up for the sandboarding. And you won't beat their instructors for their professionalism. I didn't catch them laughing at us even once...

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THERE'S NOTHIN' MORE RIDGY DIDGE THAN A XMAS PARTY PUB & PIE CRAWL

HEADING INTO SANTA SEASON, OR AS I REFER TO IT... DRINKING SEASON, I AM CONTINUALLY HARASSED ABOUT IDEAS FOR END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS. THE PUB & PIE CRAWL IS MY FESTIVE GIFT TO ALL TO END 2017 IN STYLE ON THE TILES.

I recently sat down to think this through by slapping on Michael Buble's last Xmas album and the Xmas t-shirt my gran gave me just before she passed on in '82. I then whipped out an old map of the Hunter before sitting down to a Gold snuggly wrapped in the Xmas stubby holder the kids got me last year featuring a fetching topless female elf. Thinking back to all the different parties I'd been to, thrown, thrown up at and been thrown out of over the years, I had plenty of inspiration. But one memory stood out. My walk down festive season memory lane began at Pielament house years before I took possession and turned it into our most important building. This particular year was Santa themed

fancy dress. So I went as Rudolf taking the first three letters of his name as inspiration. The costume consisted of a big box wrapped like a Christmas prezzy with Rudolf's head bursting out the front of it. Being the '70's I used whatever tackle I could find (if you know what I mean), to make the outfit. I fashioned his antlers from a bit of my own 'bush', a couple of eyes from old stubbie caps, stuck 'em on, and I'll let your imagination figure out what I used for Rudolf's red nose. Let's just say he had a very big nose. The Xmas crawl started at The Clubby before heading Cessnock way via every pub and bakery in a loop towards Kurri. Near the end we landed at the Denman Hotel Abermain. A quick

schooner later an unmistakable ridgy didge aroma of a pie with a superior interior wafted my way. What I found next door was the ridgyest didgyest pie shop ever. Ridgy Didge Pies. I BURST THROUGH A HUNGRY PACK OF BLUE HEELERS WAITING FOR SCRAPS AT THE FRONT DOOR AND BEGGED FOR ONE OF THEIR MINCE, TOMATO, ONION AND CHEESE LUMBERJACK PIES. AMAZEBALLS! UP THERE WITH THE BEST. POOFY PASTRY. HOME MADE. DELICIOUS. Wolfing it down out the front the pack of dogs wanted a bite. I wasn't sharing though. Just then one of the starving dogs grabbed Rudolf by the nose thinking it was a giant sausage. I screamed and passed out in pain waking 24hrs later in the Weston Hospital emergency ward with Rudolf looking like he'd been to war. They said it was the funniest thing they'd ever seen and the best Xmas party ever. Give it a try people, but a word of warning... wear pants. Yo bloody ho... Sol

CHOP CHOP

ONE OF THE MORE POPULAR (AND UNUSUAL) PUB EVENTS OF THE YEAR IS THE ANNUAL SINGLETON WOOD CHOP COMPETITION.

This year the event heads to the Clubhouse Hotel ('Pielament House') for an action-packed evening of post splitting and music with few cold beers with our resident 'Pieminister' thrown in to wash the sawdust down. THIS IS THE KIND OF EVENT OUR MINING COMMUNITY LOVES AND THERE WILL NO DOUBT BE MORE THAN A FEW WATCHING AND TAKING PART IN THE ACTION FROM 5PM NOVEMBER 18.

Round one will see the Men's Teams Post Split comp go hell for leather. At 6pm the round two Iron Man Teams Post Split will fire up followed by the round three Calcutta Post Split competition at 7.30pm. After all the action Jason Ray will then fire up his pipes to entertain you all for the rest of the night. Be there or be square.



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In an ever-growing hipster food culture where burgers are being transformed into 'gastro burgers' with deconstructed toppings such as micro pressed kale, cheese foam and seared foie gras, it's hard to find a place that does fair dinkum burgers. I'm talking the best of old school burger ingredients like

beetroot, pineapple, chutney, mayo, great big homemade beef patties, chicken snitties, caramelised onions, cheddar cheese and of course the Aussie staple – fried egg. Ingredients bursting out of a bun that needs two hands to handle.

A BURGER THAT'S GUARANTEED TO MAKE A LITTLE BIT OF A MESS, BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT THE BEST BURGERS DO.

Of course, they do have gluten free and vegan options and a couple of dishes that would please any new age food guru, but first and foremost the Mine Shaft caters for those who just want a bloody good traditional burger. Fresh,



flavoursome and filling. Burgers that would tempt any miner after a 12-hour shift to head straight back into the shaft!

To complement their great burgers, there's ice-cold beers both bottled and on tap. I sampled the Murray's Brewery Moon Boy ale as I washed down a starting snack of BBQ pulled pork topped

fries. Delicious.

Checking out their cocktail list I was intrigued by their Coal Chute Cocktail but it would have to wait for my next visit unless I wanted to risk showing up on RBT. They also offer BYO but with the selection on offer I doubt you could bring anything better.

In between bites I had a chat with Owner/Chef Jonathan Rigby who passionately talked about what was in store for

the restaurant. Soon they would be screening movies in the function hall attached to the restaurant. Jonathan plans to introduce other event nights featuring musos and comedians. He also intends to run nights specifically targeted at disabled persons or seniors.

"I WANT THIS PLACE TO BECOME MORE THAN JUST A RESTAURANT. I WANT IT TO BE AN ENTERTAINMENT HUB WHERE EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY IS WELCOME." JONATHAN SAID.

Recently receiving the Hunter Business Excellence Awards for best New Start Business, this place is on its way to becoming a great asset for the local community and of course an asset to stomachs everywhere.



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What was the name of the miner killed in the Rothbury Riots?
What critically endangered plant is found in North Rothbury?
What road is the Rothbury Riot Memorial on?
Answers next month.

- 1. Where is the Aberdare Central Colliery Poppet Head located? **Kitchener**
- 2. What is the oldest pub in Cessnock? **Cessnock Hotel**
- 3. What road contributed to the settlement of Cessnock?
Great North Road



@ THE COALFACE PRIZE WINNERS

VOLUME 2 – NO 2: OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2017

- Bridge St Thai Voucher** - ritamiddlemiss68@yahoo.com.au
- Roberts Meats Monthly Meat Raffle** - chris.thew@bigpond.com
- Ascella Organic Wine** - meganhickman11@gmail.com
- Clubhouse XXXX** - srudyk@y7mail.com
- CAT D10 Tractor** - bizkitjing@gmail.com

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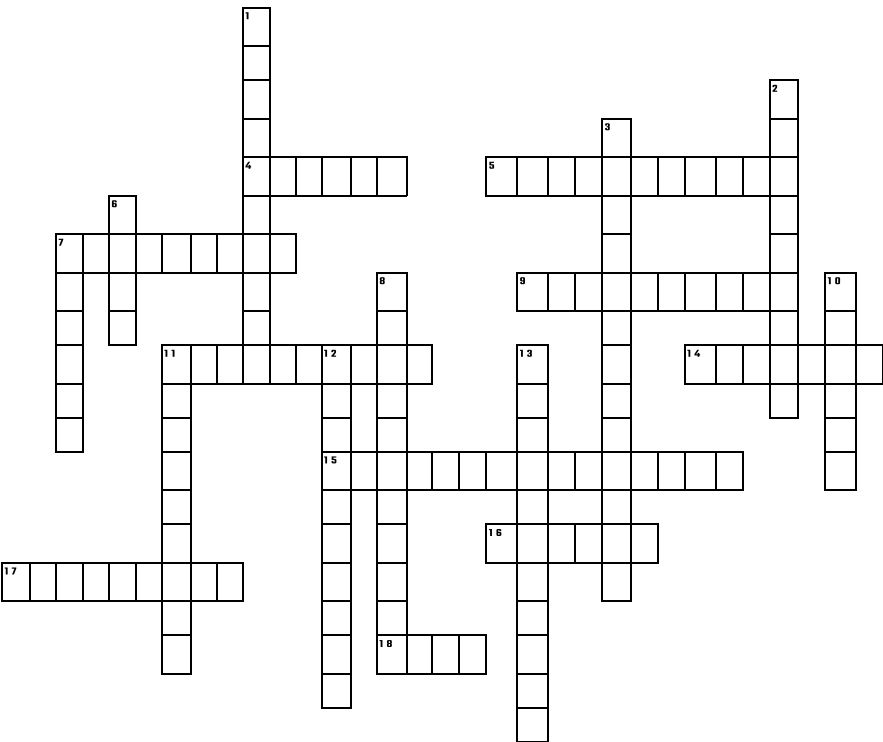
@ THE COALFACE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 4. How many ships in the First Fleet (6)
- 5. Which horse won the 2002 Melbourne Cup (5,6)
- 7. Who recorded 103 albums (4,5)
- 9. A koala's diet consist of these leaves (10)
- 11. Dorothy Wall created this famous children's character (6,4)
- 14. Where is the Big Prawn (7)
- 15. The first Prime Minister of Australia (3,6,6)
- 16. What is the floral emblem of Australia (6)
- 17. Where was Ned Kelly's last stand (9)
- 18. The winning yacht of the first Sydney to Hobart race (4)

DOWN

- 1. In which SA town was Bob Hawke born (10)
- 2. Movie with the phrase "tell him he's dreaming?" (3,6)
- 3. What is the tallest waterfall in Australia (8,5)
- 6. How many countries are larger than Australia (4)
- 7. Which Australian city has the highest population (6)
- 8. What band did Daniel Johns front (11)
- 10. Who was the longest serving presenter of Playschool? (6)
- 11. What animal is on the Western Australia flag (5,4)
- 12. Body of water separating Tasmania from the mainland (4,6)
- 13. Who sang You're the Voice (4,7)



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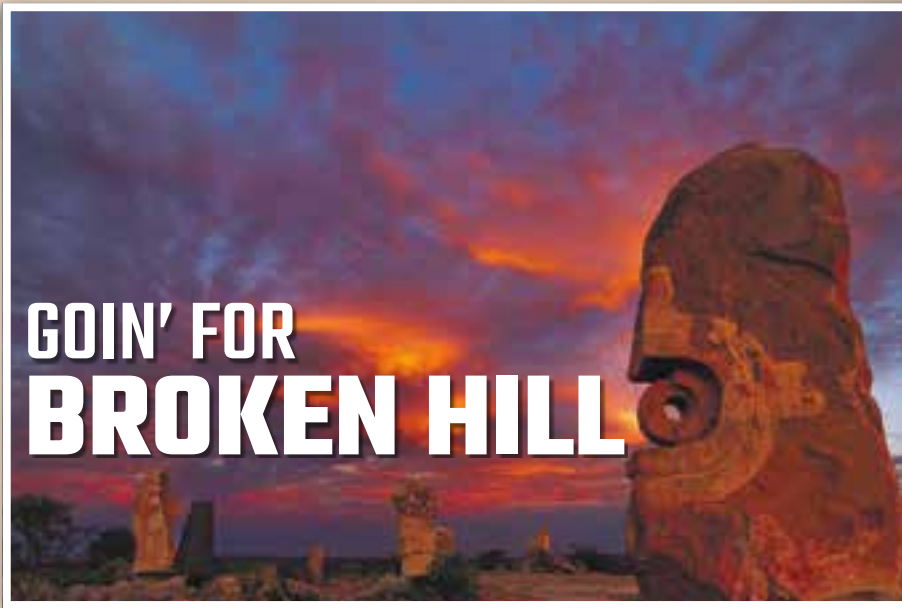


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HOW ABOUT HEADING WAY OUT WEST THIS SUMMER? DESTINATION: BROKEN HILL. SURE, IT'S A BLOODY LONG WAY TO GO, BUT TO SEE THE HILL IN ALL ITS BROKEN GLORY IS MORE THAN WORTH IT.

The drive alone is what road trips are made of, and if you take a little detour here and there, and include a few pub stops along the way, you're guaranteed to see some of the most spectacular sights our country has to offer.

The idea to head west beyond the Great Divide has been on the boil for a while now, but always seemed to be replaced by a northern trek that hugs the coastline and keeps the beach and sea breezes within reach. We decided enough was enough and it was time to go west.

The idea was to drive from the Hunter to the Hill, via Dubbo and White Cliffs on the way there. Over 3000km there and back. We packed up the truck using years of Tetris game play as space engineering practice and headed off. First stop Dubbo via Dunedoo.

DESPITE THE NAME, THERE'S NOT A LOT TO DO IN DUNEDOO, SO WE ONLY STOPPED TO STRETCH THE LEGS. THE MISSUS HAD A WANDER THROUGH TALBRAGAR COUNTRY ANTIQUES AND, OF COURSE, THERE WAS AN OLD PIECE OF SOMETHING MADE BACK IN 18-DICKETY-2 THAT SHE WAS KEEN ON, BUT FORTUNATELY THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH SPACE TO TAKE IT WITH US. SUCH A SHAME, REALLY.

Time was getting on, so we high tailed it to Dubbo before dark. Dusk driving out in these parts, just like at home, is not the wisest thing to do because of the bloody kangaroos. We arrived at camp a bit before five and pre-purchased our Taronga Western Plains Zoo pass for the next day. Then it was off to the pub for a feed. The Commercial is rated for food, but the South Dubbo Tavern has a play area for the kids. Since the kids weren't with us on this trip, we opted for the finer dining option. Give me clean taps and hot crunchy chips and I'll give you five out of five, every time. Try the pizzas. The 'Merish Special gets our vote.

Next day we spent the morning hanging around the animals at the Western Plains Zoo. Seeing zebras and giraffes wandering out around was a sight for sore eyes. The meerkats are funny buggers too, but the Sumatran Tigers were the highlight. Beautiful creatures they are.

WE COULDN'T HANG AROUND FOR TOO LONG. WHITE CLIFFS WAS

CALLING, SO WE SKIPPED TOWN AND HEADED OFF VIA COBAR TO CHECK OUT THE COBAR OPEN CUT GOLD MINE. GOLD IS FAR BETTER LOOKING THAN COAL, THAT'S FOR SURE. ON THE WAY TO WHITE CLIFFS, THERE'S NOT A LOT TO SEE, UNLESS YOU LIKE LOOKING AT SALT BUSH FOR HOURS ON END. AT ONE POINT, THOUGH, JUST OUTSIDE OF WILCANIA, A COUPLE OF EMUS RACED UP ALONGSIDE THE CAR. I GUESS THEY THOUGHT THEY COULD BEAT US TO POOPELLOE LAKE. NO CHANCE.

White Cliffs is a tiny outback town, a couple of hundred clicks north east of Broken Hill and our destination. Opals were discovered here back in the 1800s and people have been living out here, underground, ever since. Not keen on being reminded of work, we opted to set up camp at Pioneer Reserve and watch the sunset through the heat haze as kangaroos bounded across the horizon.

The next morning, we checked out some of the underground residences and went on a tour of the opal fields. While we didn't find our fortune, it was still a beautiful and strange site to see all the white mounds of opal mines, which look like oversized ant hills.

Before we knew it, it was time to get on to our final destination. The frontier mining town of Western New South Wales, the 'Silver City', the 'Oasis of the West', the 'Capital of the Outback'. Home of BHP, where zinc and lead and silver have been mined here since the late 1800s.

We spent a few days exploring the city in the desert and were surprised at just how much there is to see and do. Eating and drinking was a bit of no brainer with plenty of restaurants, cafes and pubs around town. At one point we stopped into the famous Palace and West Darling Hotels for cold beer and a chat with the locals. A few kms out of town you'll find Silverton, the place where they shot Mad Max and many other famous movies. This is where we camped the night. Incredible. We'd never seen the stars shine more beautiful and bright.

A FAR AS ROAD TRIPS GO, BROKEN HILL IS ONE NOT TO BE MISSED. MAKE A PLAN TO PACK UP THE CAR AND... GO WEST.



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