

@THE COAL FACE

Vol 2 No 9: June - July 2018

REHAB DONE RIGHT

THE REHABILITATION OF
MACQUARIE COAL COMPLEX
IS NEARLY COMPLETE AND IT'S
HARD TO BELIEVE THIS WAS
ONCE A BUSTLING MINE SITE.



PAGE 14

TOUR TIME

PAGE 11

SINGLETON'S KING STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL TAKE OVER MT OWEN MINE AS THE UPPER
HUNTER MINING DIALOGUE'S SCHOOL MINE TOURS HITS THE ROAD AGAIN.



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FANTASTIC FUTURE

THERE'S NO BETTER PROOF THAT OUR INDUSTRY'S FUTURE IS LOOKING PROMISING THAN SEEING ALL THE GREAT TRAINING TAKING PLACE RIGHT NOW.

This month we are seeing plenty of new apprentices and trainees getting their start in the industry and being rewarded for their hard work and dedication.

Apprentices like Luke Warhurst at Yancoal's Mount Thorley Warkworth who has been awarded the Bert Evans Apprentice Scholarship. Or Brandon Bendeich who is completing his apprenticeship at Ravensworth Mine and was named RTO Student of Year at the HVTC Excellence awards.

We also had to acknowledge the great training programs that are helping kickstart careers in the industry. Stellar Recruitment and Mt Arthur Coal saw the first 11 of 65 trainees graduate with a Certificate 2 in Surface Extraction Operations and the TAFE NSW Mining Skills Program has also seen 38 students successfully pass the program.

Programs like these will benefit the industry in years to come.

This month our history page paid tribute to the canary. Over the many years that canaries were used in coal mines they contributed to saving countless lives and for a little creature it has certainly had a big impact.

A big thank you to all of you who entered your 'Young Guns' in our fishing competition through our Facebook page. We were overwhelmed with all the responses. Keep them coming as we will pick a new winner every month.

We hope you enjoy this month's magazine! We'd love to hear your thoughts so send us an email or message us on Facebook.

WORTH CHEERING FOR

ON JUNE 9, THOUSANDS OF HUNTER MINERS AND THEIR FAMILIES JOINED THE 20,000 PLUS CROWD AT MCDONALD JONES STADIUM FOR THE VOICE FOR MINING FAMILY DAY, AS THE KNIGHTS TOOK ON THE SYDNEY ROOSTERS.

The Stadium was a sea of high-vis orange as fans supported the Knights wearing their replica mining jerseys for the game. The Voice for Mining Family Day has become a major community event that celebrates all the good things that mining, and Rugby League bring to the Hunter and to our State.

WE HAVE A LOT TO CELEBRATE. OUR MINING COMMUNITIES IN THE HUNTER MAKE A MASSIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY AS WELL AS TO THE STATE.

We recently released our annual spending and jobs survey which shows how much our 26 participating member companies contribute to the region. In the Hunter, mining companies

injected \$4.5 billion in direct spending in 2016-17, including \$1.7 billion in wages for 12,604 full-time employees, and \$2.8 billion in purchases from 3,070 local businesses, along with community contributions and payments to local government.

SOME OF THE BEST NEWS CAME FROM THE IMPROVED JOB NUMBERS. THE NUMBER OF DIRECT HUNTER MINING JOBS INCREASED TO 12,604 LAST FINANCIAL YEAR - 1,386 HIGHER THAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

With mining jobs on the rise, it's important that we see a consistent level of NSW Government funding returned to our mining communities for infrastructure projects. That's why we're calling on the NSW Government



Stephen Galilee
CEO, NSW Minerals Council

to commit at least \$60 million per year to the Resources for Regions program in the upcoming State Budget.

Supporting our mining towns with consistent funding for roads, schools, hospitals and other resources will help improve quality of life for the people of our region and enable our Hunter mining communities continue to deliver economic benefits to our region and our State for decades to come.

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THE HON. DON HARWIN,
MINISTER FOR RESOURCES

COAL COUNTS

THE COAL INDUSTRY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A KEY PILLAR IN THE NSW ECONOMY. AS AN ESSENTIAL ENERGY PROVIDER TO THE REGION AND THE WORLD, THE INDUSTRY IS A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND GROWTH AND JOB CREATION IN OUR STATE.

According to the latest Expenditure Survey from the NSW Minerals Council, the 26 participating mining

companies across the state injected an astonishing \$10.4 billion into the NSW economy in 2016-17 with

nearly half of that (\$4.5 billion) flowing directly into the Hunter. This \$4.5 billion in direct spending in 2016-17 included \$1.7 billion in wages for 12,604 full-time employees, and \$2.8 billion in purchases from 3,070 local businesses, along with community contributions and payments to local government. The survey also reported that direct mining spending



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in the Newcastle Local Government Area totalled nearly \$1.1 billion in 2016-17, including \$189.4 million in wages to 1,673 full-time employees and \$959.5 million in purchases with 745 local businesses. **THERE IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS AND THESE NUMBERS PAINT A VERY CLEAR PICTURE FOR THE NSW GOVERNMENT. MINING IS THE BEDROCK INDUSTRY IN THE REGION FOR CREATING LOCAL JOBS, INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.** The NSW Government continues to ensure that

mining delivers more jobs, more opportunities, better safety and a greater sense of security for our Hunter mining communities. The future is strong for Australian coal and nowhere is this more apparent than in Australia's own engine room, the Hunter. This is why the NSW Government refuses to waver on its commitment to coal miners and will continue to fight for what is, without a doubt, one of the most important sectors across the state of NSW. **The Hon. Don Harwin, Minister for Resources**

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THAT'S A LOT OF COAL

NSW MINING COMPANIES BOOSTED THE NSW ECONOMY LAST YEAR, INJECTING A WHOPPING \$10.4 BILLION.

The NSW Minerals Council's latest annual Expenditure Survey has found that the 26 participating mining companies directly injected \$10.4 billion into the NSW economy in 2016/17, supporting thousands of jobs and generating further billions in additional spending across NSW, particularly in many regional communities across the state.

"These survey results cover the end of the previous mining downturn and the start of the current recovery, and with over \$10 billion spent by the industry during this period it's clear that mining is a resilient and consistent contributor to the NSW economy," said NSW Minerals Council CEO, Stephen Galilee.

THE \$10.4 BILLION INCLUDED \$2.9 BILLION IN WAGES TO 22,821 FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

WITH \$5.9 BILLION SPENT ON PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES FROM 6,681 LOCAL BUSINESSES, COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS, AND PAYMENTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT. \$1.7 BILLION WAS SPENT IN TAXES TO THE NSW GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING ROYALTIES.

Direct spending in 2016-17 was down just slightly by 3.5 percent compared to the previous year, while the number of direct jobs increased strongly by 8.7 percent.

The Hunter region received the largest share of direct spending, accounting for \$4.5 billion or 43.4 percent of direct expenditure by mining in NSW.

This survey, now completed for a sixth year, demonstrates the scale of mining's contribution and the importance of mining to the broader NSW economy.



SAVE THE DATE!

THE GUNNEDAH SHOW SOCIETY IS HOSTING THE INAUGURAL ENERGY, INNOVATION, MINING EXPO (EIMEX) AT GUNNEDAH SHOWGROUND FROM NOVEMBER 1 - 3.

Supported by the Gunnedah community, the Gunnedah Shire Council and the Gunnedah Chamber of Commerce, the expo is promising to be an exciting new addition on the Gunnedah calendar.

The proposed event will comprise exhibitor sites, breakfasts, forums, conferences and workshops all highlighting the energy and mining industries, and of course, innovation.

GEORGE AVARD IS THE EIMEX PROJECT MANAGER AND SAYS THE EVENT WILL BE A WAY TO UNITE THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING.

"The event is a great way to bring recognition for our town and to build better bridges between all the industries in our community, from mining, to farming, to gas. We also want to highlight innovation and will be running an innovation competition with a prize of \$2000. More on this will be revealed in the coming months." George said.

Also planned is a dinner at Gunnedah Town Hall on the Friday evening with Murray Hartin as MC and featuring a prominent guest speaker.

There are plenty of sponsorship and exhibitor packages available. For more information contact 0409 368 444 or email eimex.gunnedah@gmail.com



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IN THE NEWS...

WHITEHAVEN TAKES OVER

Whitehaven Coal has received approval to acquire Idemitsu's 30 per cent stake in the Tarrowonga mine in the Gunnedah Basin, giving Whitehaven total ownership of the coal operation.

Whitehaven's Managing Director and CEO, Paul Flynn said, "The completion of the acquisition further consolidates Whitehaven's position in the Gunnedah Basin, the source of some of the highest quality coal available in the seaborne market."

GOOD NEIGHBOURS

MACH Energy and Bengalla have settled their legal proceedings with both companies agreeing to act in good faith from here on. Bengalla has agreed to support MACH's two lodged applications to modify their Mount Pleasant development consent and they have also agreed to provide land to MACH for construction of its long-term rail and associated infrastructure. In return, MACH has agreed to remove its existing, short-term rail and other infrastructure to make way for continuation of Bengalla's mining operations south of Wybong Road.

JOINT DEALS

MACH Energy have struck a deal with a Japanese power station consortium, which will allow them to purchase the majority of the mine's coal over the next 3 years, and to acquire a five percent interest in the mine.

MACH Managing Director Ferdian Purnamasidi said the transaction represented a major endorsement of the Mount Pleasant operation. "MACH is delighted to secure JCDA as our joint venture and offtake partner at Mount Pleasant," he said.

NEW CHIEF IN TOWN

The World Coal Association (WCA) has announced Glenn Kellow as their new Chairman. Glenn is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Peabody and is replacing Mick Buffier of Glencore who will stay on as Vice Chairman.

Glenn said: "It is a privilege to be appointed to chair the WCA Board. I'd like to thank Mick Buffier for his years of service and I look forward to working with the global industry as we approach the challenges and opportunities ahead. The WCA has a vital role to play in deepening understanding of the role coal plays in the global energy mix and supporting greater use of advanced coal technologies, including today's high-efficiency, low-emissions coal-fueled generation technologies and carbon capture, use and storage."

LONGWALL AT A STANDSTILL

All underground longwall production activities at Austar Coal Mine have ceased following a significant coal burst event on May 17.

No workers were injured however the coal burst reportedly caused significant damage to the longwall shearer. The burst saw an estimated 60 tonnes of coal ejected from the longwall face.

The Resources Regulator had previously prohibited cutting at the longwall as a result of a coal burst event earlier this year, and the mine had only recently received permission to resume work under strict conditions.

As an investigation by the Resources Regulation is currently underway.

DONE DEAL

The HVO Joint Venture between Yancoal and Glencore is now established with Glencore completing their acquisition of a 49% interest in HVO, joining up with Yancoal who owns the other 51% stake.

Glencore's Australian coal chief operating officer, Ian Cribb said "We look forward to successful partnership with Yancoal at the HVO joint venture and expect it will bring significant benefits for both companies and their shareholders."

The HVO JV will be jointly controlled by Glencore and Yancoal through a joint venture management committee comprising three representatives of both JV participants. An independent management team will run the operations on a day-to-day basis and will report to the committee.

TERMINAL TERMINATED

Port Waratah Coal Services have scrapped their plans for the development of the controversial Terminal 4 stating that the capacity of existing coal terminals is likely to be sufficient to cater for future growth in coal exports.

Chief Executive Officer Hennie du Plooy said, "With significant growth capacity available in the existing terminals, we do not expect that the conditions to support an investment of the large and long-term nature of Terminal 4 will be in place before the development approval lapses in September 2020," Mr du Plooy said.

RIDGELANDS

Ridgeland Coal Resources has relinquished its control over a \$5 million community fund, allowing the money to flow to projects in Muswellbrook area.

The announcement has been welcomed by the Muswellbrook Shire Council as it will allow the funds to be used for 27 community projects.

Mayor of Muswellbrook Martin Rush said, "Some of the recipients have been fundraising for years and years to get their projects off the ground. These allocations will make it possible to progress those projects to completion which is simply fantastic."



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HYDRO FOR HUNTER

THE UPPER HUNTER COULD BE HOME TO A PUMPED HYDRO
PROJECT IN THE NEAR FUTURE. OR MAYBE EVEN TWO.

Muswellbrook Council have announced they are looking to sell its options to buy a pumped hydro storage site in the Upper Hunter, while AGL are working on a deal to transform Muswellbrook Coal into a pumped hydro storage facility.

Last year Muswellbrook Council engaged with experts at the Australian National University and the University of Newcastle to investigate the potential for pumped hydro as an economic development initiative. In these discussions several existing mine voids were identified as having the potential to be used as lower reservoirs.

THE POTENTIAL SITE REMAINS CONFIDENTIAL, BUT MUSWELLBROOK MAYOR MARTIN RUSH HAS SAID IT IS NOT A COALMINE VOID.

"When Council consults with community, there is a repeated and consistent concern threaded through all our feedback - where will our kids work in twenty years from now? This is why we continue to explore opportunities like this Pumped Hydro project and why we welcome the opportunity to partner with Industry on projects aimed at delivering future jobs for our Shire," Muswellbrook Mayor Martin Rush said.

"We look forward to seeing the next stage of this project and for what is likely to be a \$200million infrastructure project for Muswellbrook Shire with around 200 jobs in construction and 25 ongoing operational jobs."

Council will now progress with the EOI process to facilitate the sale of land option for the reservoir and the progression to the next stage of feasibility for the project.

MEANWHILE, IT'S LOOKING LIKE AGL WILL BE SETTING UP A PUMPED HYDRO STORAGE FACILITY IN MUSWELLBROOK. IT IS REPORTED THAT AGL ARE FINALISING A CONTRACT WITH IDEMITSU TO RE-PURPOSE MUSWELLBROOK COAL MINE.

"AGL is investigating the feasibility of establishing a pumped hydro project in the Upper-Hunter," the company told Fairfax Media. "Bringing energy storage of this kind to the market puts downward pressure on power prices," the spokesperson said.

Last month, AGL revealed that they would be building a \$400 million new 252 MW gas-fired plant at Tomago as part of the first phase of its \$1.4 billion plan for life after Liddell. Other plans include an upgrade of Bayswater and 300 MW of solar capacity. Last year they revealed that they would be looking at pumped hydro at Lake Liddell.

It is not known at this time whether AGL will be purchasing Muswellbrook Council's options to buy a pumped hydro storage site in the Upper Hunter, though there is speculation that they will do so and incorporate the site into the plans for the Muswellbrook Coal mine site.

AN EXCELLENT AWARD

THE RECENT SINGLETON CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS SAW A WHO'S WHO OF LOCAL BUSINESSES STRUT THEIR STUFF ON THE BIG STAGE, WITH INDUSTRY FAVOURITE NIVEK INDUSTRIES TAKING OUT THE EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION GONG.

@ The Coalface have been following local success story Nivek for a while now and the news of the win was no surprise to us. From the moment we heard they'd entered our gut feeling was that they would be in for a good shot. This little company is taking on the world with genuine innovation and success. They are exporting all over the country and the world and the mining industry can't get enough of their revolutionary machine that really does save lives, money and headaches. General Manager of Wambo Coal, Albert Scheepers said when presenting the award to the team, "This takes the person working safely out of the line of fire. Every mine site should have a TED!"

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TED is the only remote controlled, all-terrain belly plate jack, in the world, designed to keep fitters safe from suspended load crush injuries,

whilst removing and replacing belly plates on heavy plant machinery. Since its inception in 2011, TED's capabilities have increased hugely with the development of many attachments, meaning that it can now take the weight out of many mechanical maintenance and repair tasks, saving fitters not only from life threatening crush injuries, but also helping cut down on workplace injuries such as chronic back problems, and strain injuries.

NIVEK HAVE NOW MOVED THROUGH TO THE HUNTER BUSINESS AWARDS AND NO DOUBT FURTHER ACCOLADES.

The 2018 Singleton Chamber awards were a huge success with one of the biggest crowds in recent memory and Kerri-Anne on hosting duties. Other @ the Coalface favourites including Gritfit and Invent Air who also took out honours. The great winners on the night prove the point of just how much Singleton businesses bring to the region. Well done to all winners, sponsors and of course the Singleton Business Chamber.

Most Outstanding Business - Ourcare Services Inc

Excellence in Business - Ourcare Services Inc

Excellence in Small Business - Joplin Lawyers

Excellence in Social Enterprise - Witmore Enterprises

Excellence in Innovation - Nivek Industries

Owner/Operator Business Excellence - Gritfit Training

Start Up Superstar - Kong Au

Outstanding Young Entrepreneur - Peter Butcher (Hunter Electrics)

Outstanding Business Leader - Joplin Higgins (Joplin Lawyers)

Employee of Year - Samantha Heuston (The Eye Place)

Outstanding Apprentice - Michael Quilty (GJ Gardner Homes)

Highly Commended - Invent Air (Excellence in Small Business)

Highly Commended - Dolly's Shop (Start Up Superstar)

Judges Award - Bev Young (Witmore Enterprises)



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WE RECKON IT'S ABOUT TIME WE CELEBRATED THE HUNTER'S BEST COALMINERS

@ THE COALFACE BELIEVES IN CHAMPIONING OUR INDUSTRY AND OUR HARDWORKING COALMINERS. SO, AROUND THE OFFICE WE CAME UP WITH AN IDEA TO RECOGNISE AND CELEBRATE THE EVERYDAY WORKERS SLOGGING IT OUT AT THE COALFACE AND IN OUR SUPPLIER BUSINESSES.

The idea? First up we decided that the coal mining community deserved an awesome annual party! Where we can get together and have a bit of fun over a few drinks and some quality tucker and recognise all the bloody legends among us.

THE COALY AWARDS – AN EVENT TO CELEBRATE OUR FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES.

Make no mistake, this

wouldn't be your usual kind of awards show – if it goes ahead we want it to be the workers party of the year. We reckon it should be free to attend as well.

This proposed new awards night would aim to recognise outstanding everyday achievements within the Hunter Valley's coal industry's rank and file that are currently not recognised in existing

award programs. You know who they are but they probably don't.

IN A NUTSHELL, THESE AWARDS WOULD BE ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO ARE THE HEARTBEAT OF THE COAL INDUSTRY, THE LEGENDS, THE GOOD EGGS, THE ONES WHO ALWAYS HAVE YOUR BACK, THE ONES WHO GO ABOVE AND BEYOND FOR THEIR CREW AND JOB, THE EVERYDAY

MINING PEOPLE WHO STEP UP TO MAKE OUR INDUSTRY GREAT.

The idea is for this to be a night of entertainment, music, food, drinks and surprises in a relaxed cocktail party atmosphere to thank the people who go above and beyond in their roles. While the night is planned as an awards night, the award presentation

itself will be run to allow plenty of time to enjoy the festivities and celebrate the industry and catch up with friends old and new.

We'll let you know how the plan is coming together over the next few months and in the meantime if you know anyone worth putting up for a gong or have any thoughts on how to make the night great – drop us a line.



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ON THE ROAD AGAIN

THE UPPER HUNTER MINING DIALOGUE'S SCHOOL MINE TOURS PROGRAM IS BACK ON THE ROAD FOR 2018 WITH THE FIRST STOP AT MT OWEN MINE.

Over 40 Year 5 students from Singleton's King Street Primary School visited the Glencore mine site on May 9 as part of the Dialogue's School Mine Tours Program which will see an estimated 1000 Year 5 and Year 9 students from Upper Hunter schools tour mine sites in 2018.

THE KING STREET PRIMARY STUDENTS WERE AMAZED BY MT OWEN MINE'S SHEER SIZE AS THEY GOT UP CLOSE TO MASSIVE MINE MACHINERY AS WELL AS GAINED A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE OPEN CUT MINING OPERATIONS IN ACTION FROM THE MINE'S LOOKOUT.

As well as touring the mine site, the Year 5 students also saw a presentation which explained in detail the entire mining process from exploration to the end of a mine's life including uses of coal, impacts of mining and how mined

land is rehabilitated.

This year the Dialogue's Mine Tours Program has 27 individual tours scheduled with students from 18 participating Upper Hunter schools visiting 13 different mine sites across the Upper Hunter.

THE TOURS PROGRAM AIMS TO OFFER A FACT-BASED, FIRST-HAND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE TO TEACH LOCAL STUDENTS ABOUT THE IMPACTS AND BENEFITS OF COAL MINING IN THE UPPER HUNTER.

The Dialogue offers the free tours to all schools in the Singleton-Muswellbrook educational catchment and the program uses educational materials and messaging developed by a Dialogue working group made up of teachers, community members and industry and local government representatives.

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A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. When the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps

improving by the regular killing of its weakest members.

In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. If we apply the same principle of natural selection, then it makes sense for the alcohol to attack the slowest and weakest brain cells first. Therefore, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. That's why you always feel smarter after a few beers.

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CHLOE
CONNAUGHTON



SET TO SKILL

38 STUDENTS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE AWARD-WINNING TAFE NSW MINING SKILLS PROGRAM, KICKSTARTING THEIR CAREERS IN THE MINING INDUSTRY.

The Mining Skills Program prepares students with the skills, knowledge and experience to be job-ready on completion of the course and places a strong emphasis on safety awareness. It covers training in basic hand tool skills across four different trades including electrical, fitting and machining, metal fabrication and welding plus automotive.

TAFE NSW MUSWELLBROOK MINING SKILLS PROGRAM MANAGER, KIERAN KELLY, SAYS THE PROGRAM CONTINUES TO CAPTURE THE INTEREST OF LEADING INDUSTRY PARTNERS WITHIN THE HUNTER VALLEY.

"The feedback we're getting from industry is that the Mining Skills Program is an investment in their apprentices; it's paying dividends long term. This is not only because of their increased safety awareness but also a more advanced skill level in the workplace. The apprentices are educated on a broad range of topics and we have fantastic support from industry. It's particularly impressive to see these big companies work not only with

TAFE NSW, but with each other, to ensure a positive outcome for not just their own apprentices, but all apprentices participating in the program."

CHLOE CONNAUGHTON FROM SINGLETON IS ONE OF THE STUDENTS WHO IS PROVING THAT IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO MOVE TO A CAREER YOU LOVE.

First trained as a medic with the army, then working as a fly-in, fly-out paramedic in the mines, Chloe decided it was time to relaunch her career and the Mining Skills Program provided the perfect opportunity.

Chloe said one of the reasons an electrical apprenticeship appealed to her most, other than being home for her kids, was so she could use her hands-on skills and apply them every day in her job.

"After working fly-in, fly-out, I wanted to choose a trade where I had the ability to be home every night for my two boys. I wanted to be able to learn new skills that I could put into practice every day in my job," Chloe said.

'AVE A LAUGH WITH

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Tom was at the hospital visiting with his best friend Larry who was dying.

Tom asked, "If there is footy in heaven will you come back and tell me?"

Larry nodded yes just as he passed away.

That night while Tom was sleeping,

he heard Larry's voice in a dream, "Tom..."

"Larry! What is it?!" asked Tom.

"I have good news and bad news from heaven."

"What's the good news?"

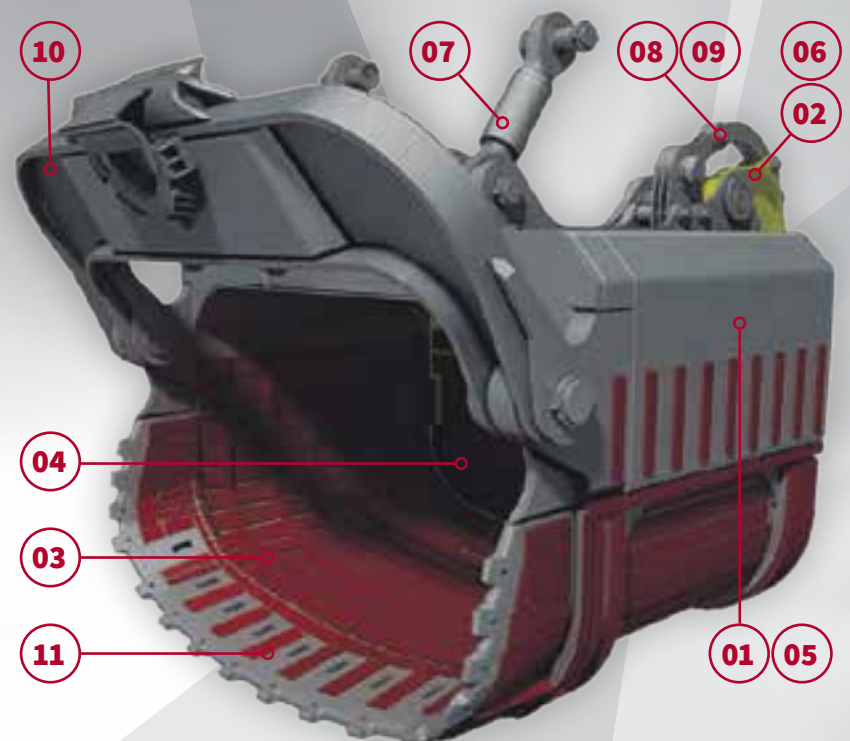
"There is footy in heaven after all, but the bad news is you're playing on Tuesday."



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WHEN IT COMES TO CLOSING A COAL MINE, GLENCORE KNOWS HOW TO DO IT RIGHT. AT MACQUARIE COAL COMPLEX, MADE UP OF WEST WALLSEND UNDERGROUND, WESTSIDE OPEN CUT AND THE MACQUARIE COAL PREPARATION PLANT, THE WORK SO FAR HAS BEEN EXEMPLARY AND EVEN THE BIGGEST CRITIC WOULD BE IMPRESSED.

There's always going to be plenty of things written and said when a mine closes, so it can be hard to discern the real story through all the negativity. Sure, mining from times long past has left legacies to contend with,

but that is no different from a great many historical industries that helped build this country. Modern mining companies, in particular Glencore, approach closure and rehabilitation with an intent to leave a post mining

landscape that they can be proud of, to maximise the future use potential of mine sites that will leave a legacy for future generations. We recently had the royal tour of Macquarie Coal Complex with

Operations Manager Mark Munro and Ben Clibborn who heads up the Environment and Community department. Speaking to these guys it's clear that like all mining operations this place had its challenges, but they were far outweighed by the many successes. It was a great operation before production finished in early 2016 at West Wallsend Underground. **IN THE LAST MONTH OF MINING THE CREWS WENT OUT ON A HIGH RECORDING THE HIGHEST EVER PRODUCTION IN A MONTH.** Sealed in late 2016, the modern longwall mine has been a part of the community since the early 80's. Mining in the area has been a key contributor in supporting the local community, and a significant employer for generations. Some employees were at the mine for around 40 years. "There's a lot of tradition on this site with fathers, sons and grandsons all sharing their history and lives with that of the mine," said Mark. Westside on the other hand finished mining in 2012 and you would already be hard pressed to recognise that mining ever even occurred on the site. When closing the mine, it was important that people had the time to make plans and Glencore wanted to leave a positive legacy for the community and the workforce. Mark told us, "Some of the guys had worked there all their working life, and helping people transition has been a big part of the process whether people

Thank you for supporting our mining families and the Newcastle Knights at Voice for Mining Family Day

#VoiceForMining



retired, retrained for another career or were redeployed to other operations.”

SO WHERE IS THE PROGRESS UP TO?

The coal mining infrastructure has nearly all been removed with the underground access points all sealed to the current industry standards. All that remains visible is an engineered concrete cap. Below these the shafts and drifts have been completely filled with approved material.

Included in the final cap of No.1 Shaft is a memorial stone to perpetuate the memory of the only employee ever lost in a workplace fatality at the mine. A small, solemn ceremony was held with his family, closure staff and a few former employees when this shaft was capped.

Most of the equipment has also gone and on our tour all we noticed were a couple of old mine transports in a shed and parts of the old elevator used to take workers up and down the shaft. The sites immediately surrounding the access areas have already been formed and seeded and within the next year there will be very little indication that a significant

working coal mine operated on the site up until recently.

The intention is to leave the offices, workshop and store facilities in place to complement future land use, and at the moment these are being used for Glencore inductions and the mine closure team. The coal prep plant is currently being demolished and will be but a distant memory by the time you are reading this. Getting the tailings dam capped and rehabilitated will be the next big job.

Enquiries for the future use of the site are already coming in and Lake Macquarie Council is keen to see this area become ‘job creating’ again to support the region’s population growth and the local community.

Currently the site is zoned for mining but into the future an industrial zoning would be ideal with great positioning and a rail loop that can tap straight into the Newcastle to Sydney line and potentially reduce truck numbers on the road. Freight, intensive agriculture or an industrial park? The possibilities are endless.

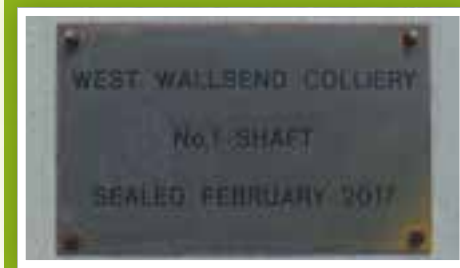
Ben said “We have spent roughly 15 to 20 million dollars in the last year to do the job the right way, with several years to go until all works are complete. As much thought and planning goes into closing a mine as goes into opening a new one. The closure approach has come a long way, and modern standards and knowledge mean the approach is improving all

the time. Our goal is to do it once and do it right.”

ON THE BUSH REHAB SIDE

Seeing different areas of replanted bush at different stages it was difficult to tell what’s new and what has been there all along. First rate flora and fauna management are significant and bush land is extensive. Already in the habitat there are owls, bats and gliders. The last survey showed there to be sixty-nine different fauna species including seven threatened species.

The mantra for the team is to reuse, recycle and rehabilitate and it seems all involved are committed to those three actions.



West Wallsend Colliery was developed in 1969 by Coal and Allied Industries Ltd as a bord and pillar operation working within the Borehole and Young Wallsend seams. A longwall unit was installed in the Borehole Seam in 1989. Coal mining has now been completed at West Wallsend Underground. The last tonne of coal was mined in May 2016 at the West Wallsend Underground after the mine first opened in 1969. Over the life of the mine a total of 80,272,623 tonnes of coal were mined mainly by longwall mining techniques, with some 887 people working at the mine over those years.

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AWARDING APPRENTICES

TWO YOUNG APPRENTICES FROM THE HUNTER WERE RECOGNISED AT THE 2018 HVTC EXCELLENCE AWARDS FOR THE HIGH CALIBRE OF THEIR WORK AT REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATION (RTO) HUNTER-V-TEC IN RUTHERFORD.

Brandon Bendeich is completing a Certificate III in Mobile Plant Technology apprenticeship with Glencore – Ravensworth mine and was named RTO Student of the Year.

Growing up with a father who worked in the mines, Brandon was keen to follow in his dad’s footsteps and begin his own career in mining.

“Throughout school I always had a passion for engines and anything to do with cars. This led me to apply for the mobile plant apprenticeship at Glencore – Ravensworth mine where I’ve been fortunate enough to learn from a range of highly skilled tradesmen,” he said.

SHELLEY HIGGINS TOOK HOME THE RTO ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AND IS CURRENTLY COMPLETING A CERTIFICATE III IN ELECTROTECHNOLOGY –

ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICESHIP. SHE IS EMPLOYED BY GROUP TRAINING ORGANISATION HVTC HUNTER AND HOSTED BY ORIGIN ENERGY.

“I love learning something new every day, and the fact that the work I am doing is relevant and will always be needed. I enjoy knowing how things operate so the hands-on work keeps me motivated,” Shelley said.

HVTC CEO Sharon Smith says vocational education pathways can lead to career success for many young people.

“These awards not only celebrate the great results of our apprentices and trainees, but they also reflect the significant role our business and industry partners play in making sure our young people secure quality employment outcomes,” Sharon said.

STELLAR TRAINEES

STELLAR RECRUITMENT HAVE PROUDLY WELCOMED THE FIRST 11 OF 65 TRAINEES TO GRADUATE WITH A CERTIFICATE 2 IN SURFACE EXTRACTION OPERATIONS AT MT ARTHUR COAL.

Stellar and Mt Arthur Coal developed a unique mining trainee program that focused on providing career kick-starts to members of the local community which enabled them to gain experience in mining for the first time in addition to completing the formally recognised certificate. Stellar partnered with recognised training organisation the Australian College of Mining (ACM) to deliver the trainee program. It was Stellar’s partnership with the ACM that enabled the trainees to earn a Certificate 2 in Surface Extraction Operations.

THE TRAINEE PROGRAM ALSO SUPPORTED MT ARTHUR COAL’S FOCUS ON DIVERSITY

BY ATTRACTING FEMALES AND INDIGENOUS PARTICIPANTS FROM VARIED, NON-MINING BACKGROUNDS TO MAKE A START IN THE SECTOR.

Yvonne Castellana was one of the eleven female graduates to receive a Certificate 2 in Surface Extraction Operations and is continuing on as an operator at Mt Arthur Coal with Stellar Recruitment.

“I was previously an onsite mine cleaner and had been after an operator traineeship for many years. I’ve had a passion to get into the mining game as I was surrounded by family and friends that are already in the industry.” said Yvonne.



PROGRAMMED FOR SUCCESS

LUKE WARHURST, A SECOND-YEAR ELECTRICAL APPRENTICE AT YANCOAL AUSTRALIA’S MOUNT THORLEY WARKWORTH (MTW) OPERATION WORKING WITH PROGRAMMED, HAS BEEN AWARDED THE BERT EVANS APPRENTICE SCHOLARSHIP.

The Bert Evans scholarship is an award given to an apprentice based on criteria including attitude and aptitude to training. Run by Training Services NSW, the scholarship was launched in 2014 and awards \$5000 per year tax-free for the first three years of an apprenticeship to help support apprentices on the road to getting qualified.

ON HIS ROLE AT MTW LUKE SAID, “I’VE REALLY ENJOYED THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK THAT’S INVOLVED WITH THE APPRENTICESHIP. WITH SIX-MONTH ROTATIONS IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE MINE, I GET A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE OPERATION WORK AND I GET EXPOSED TO LOTS OF SITUATIONS

LIKE LOADERS, CONTROL SYSTEMS AND INSTRUMENTATION SO IT’S GREAT EXPERIENCE.”

MTW General Manager Jason McCallum said, “This is a fantastic initiative. Supporting and retaining great young talent with a vision of where they want to go is important to our business. We are proud of the partnership we have with Programmed, it has produced some great talent in the last five years with some going on to be recognised as amongst the best in the state.”

With 35 apprentices currently and 10 being taken on each year, it’s clear that Yancoal and Programmed are really stepping up when it comes to training. Good luck for the future Luke – it looks very bright indeed.





COAL CRUSADER

COAL MINING CAN BE A DANGEROUS GIG WHICH IS WHY WE NEED PEOPLE LIKE STUART BARNETT. WHEN IT COMES TO COAL MINER'S COMPENSATION HE'S PROBABLY FORGOTTEN MORE THAN MOST OTHER LAWYERS KNOW.

Stuart was first introduced to the coal mining industry when he started as a lawyer at Reid and Reid solicitors in 1991. Over the years, Stuart has predominately worked with injured coal miners and their families and you won't find a lawyer in NSW

more experienced when it comes to coal miner's compensation matters. Reid and Reid have a long history with coal mining, they began representing the mine workers union way back in the early 1900's. In 2006 they amalgamated

with Slater and Gordon who continue to represent the union. Today, Stuart is Slater and Gordon's State Practice Group Leader in Workers Compensation and manages their regional offices.

STUART SAYS EVEN THOUGH HE'S NOW WOUND UP

WORKING FOR A NATIONAL FIRM, IT HASN'T CHANGED THE WAY HE OPERATES. WHETHER IT'S A SMALL CLAIM OR A FATALITY, EVERY CASE MATTERS AND EVERY CASE IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT.

"For me this job has always been about the people. When someone comes in and they don't know a way forward and I'm able to help them you can see a weight lifted off their shoulders. That's what's rewarding. That's why I do this job. They are trusting me with their very livelihoods and I take that trust very seriously."

When asked why coal mining Stuart said it clicked from the very beginning. "The people are the salt of the earth and appreciative of my help. If for some reason I couldn't work in the mining compensation area any more, then I wouldn't want to work in law at all. I don't think any other area would be as satisfying as this type of work. There's so much history, so many characters and great stories, it's fascinating stuff and I love it."

When Stuart did the keynote address at the unions' Memorial Day a few years back he still remembers it as one of the more memorable and humbling experiences of his career. Many of the attendees were previous clients so it was

especially significant.

"When you work closely with a family you can't help but become involved personally. I take pride in fact that I'm treated not just as a lawyer, but also as a friend."

FOR UNION MEMBERS IT'S A FREE SERVICE TO TALK TO STUART. HE ALSO PROVIDES GENERAL LEGAL ADVICE AND CAN OFFER GUIDANCE IN OTHER AREAS APART FROM WORKERS COMPENSATION. STUART SAID IF HE COULD TELL MINE WORKERS ONE THING IT WOULD BE TO SEEK ADVICE AND TO SEEK IT EARLY.

"Don't rely on what you or others think might be the answer or way forward, getting it wrong at the start can mean delays going forward. When it comes to legal matters and your rights just come and talk to me. If clients cannot get to one of our offices then I regularly travel to wherever they are from the Central Coast to Narrabri and beyond, Lithgow, Mudgee and everywhere in between."

In his spare time Stuart's passionate about surf live saving. A former president of Dixon Park Surf Club he's now the Chief Training Officer teaching Bronze Medallion, resuscitation and more. Now that's what I call helping people on and off the job!

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BIG WHEELS KEEP ON TURNING

@ THE COALFACE LOVES TO GET TO KNOW OUR INDUSTRY AND SUPPORTERS AND TITAN AUSTRALIA HAVE BEEN A BIG PART OF @ THE COALFACE'S SUCCESS. WE THOUGHT IT WAS HIGH TIME TO SIT DOWN OVER A CUPPA AND A PACK OF MONTE CARLOS AND FIND OUT A BIT MORE ABOUT THIS LEADING SUPPLIER.

Who are you and what do you do?

I'm Greg Lowe the NSW Regional Manager for Titan Australia, a leader in testing, repairs and manufacture of new wheels and rims for all off road applications. We also supply and service the full range of under carriage equipment and solutions for large mining equipment.

Where did you start and how did you end up where you are now?

I've been with Titan since 2005. I was a metal fabricator by trade when I started out and then had ten years working with one of the major tyre companies. I started at Titan in sales on mining projects and went from there.

Describe a typical day at 'The office'.

Hectic! Day to day it's everything from planning around what's happening in the workshops through to working with customers on and off site as well as solving a lot of problems we and our customers never saw coming. Customisation is a big part of what we do and being able to deliver in those unique situations keeps it interesting

What's the best thing about your business?

The industry in general is an evolving

market and that ongoing development and improvement is exciting, so it's fair to say it's challenging and rewarding.

What is the big news in your part of the mining industry right now?

The improvements to the mining sector landscape as times have improved after all the challenges we all faced have made all the hard work worth it. It's good to see people's belief, faith and passion for mining rewarded.

What is the biggest opportunity for your business right now?

Growth across our different segments including agriculture, mining and civil and the knowledge base and experience that diversification delivers.

What are the biggest challenges facing your business?

Probably the whole supply chain process and the changing markets and expectations on a continuous basis. In saying that though, those challenges also deliver plenty of opportunity.

How long have you been doing business and business in the Valley?

I've been here 13 years and Titan Australia have been in the Valley

at Muswellbrook for over 20. The company itself in various incarnations has been going strong since around the late seventies and we have a lot of other locations all around Australia.

Beyond the day to day how does your company get involved in the community or other causes close to its heart and values?

Being involved is important. We particularly try and get involved in regional areas sponsoring local sport and worthy community projects. The Variety Bash is a recent one we have been proud to support through a local customer.

How big is the crew in the Hunter Valley?

We are a relatively small crew of about 6 in Muswellbrook with support from our Sydney and Brisbane operations, but they achieve a hell of a lot for their size. It's a great crew!

What's the best thing about your job?

I wonder sometimes. Haha. It's hectic and complex but it's precisely those challenges that keep it interesting.

The worst thing?

Being away from the family. But that goes with the job.



SUPPLIER INSIDER

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

I'd have to say it's the people in the company itself and there are plenty of characters that I just love working with. There are sometimes funny stories every other day. At the end of the day it's a business and industry of real people and real characters...never a dull moment as they say.

Titan Australia... what's the best thing about it?

It's a great product mix and a company with a can do attitude and desire to be at the top of their game.

Anything else you want to say?

The industry at the moment seems to be in a great place, not just for us, but other suppliers and the mines as well. I hope that consistency continues and the slow times are behind us and both the industry and surrounding communities get to thrive off that.



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WITH AGL AND MUSWELLBROOK COUNCIL'S RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF TURNING MUSWELLBROOK COAL'S MINE VOID ALONG WITH OTHER LOCAL LAND INTO PUMPED HYDROELECTRICITY RESERVOIRS; WE WONDER SHOULD RECREATION ALSO BE PART OF THE PLAN?

Let me start by saying that I have no idea around the practicalities or realities of how these proposals will come together, operate or when they will become a reality. But what has struck me amid the local government and corporate back slapping around the excitement of the proposal is that I haven't seen what other benefits could be

gained from having such a major piece of infrastructure in the local community.

POWER PRICES, SOME GOOD JOBS AND THE ENVIRO CREDENTIALS OF THIS PLAN ARE THE MAIN GAME, BUT IS THERE ROOM IN THE PLAN TO ALSO DELIVER A HUGE RECREATIONAL BENEFIT TO THE LOCAL MUSWELLBROOK AND HUNTER COMMUNITY?

NSW's Snowy Hydro set up

of storage dams is as famous these days for fishing, waterskiing and the whole range of other weekend activities it supports. That man-made water storage facility is also a picturesque destination for tourism.

So, the simple idea here is to make what looks like a reasonable plan on paper further align with its broader potential and the potential

of complementary mine void uses and community benefit that many have floated in recent years.

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My wife accused me of being immature. I said, "get out of my cubby house!"



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MY MINING LIFE GAVIN MASON

FOR MANY IN OUR INDUSTRY THE VIEW IS OFTEN DUSTY DIRT PILES OR THE INSIDES OF A CAB, BUT NOT FOR GAVIN MASON WHO HAS ONE OF THE BEST OFFICE VIEWS IN THE WHOLE INDUSTRY.

Who are you and what do you do?

My name's Gavin Mason. I've worked at Port Waratah Coal Services at the Carrington Terminal for 20 years now and I'm a leading operator. It entails anything from monitoring the control room, loading ships, looking after automated dump stations, reclaimers and stackers and working onboard vessels, as well as working with seafarers for the safe loading of coal into the ships.

Any nicknames good or bad?

Just Maso.

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

I live in Maryville, and been living there for about 15 years. It's right on Carrington Terminal's doorstep,

only a couple of minutes down the road.

When did you start and what's the ride been like?

I started on the 2nd of February 1998, as a trainee plant operator, then about three quarters of the way through I was put on full time. I basically got in and did my best and was lucky enough to get a permanent start.

What's a usual day at work entail?

Its 12.5hr shifts 4 on 4 off, 2 days than 2 nights work.

I could be in the control room for a shift, driving a shiploader, washdown work, or on a vessel overseeing the safe loading and working with the ship's crew, which can be interesting with the language barriers. The best part is definitely working with a great bunch of people. I also had the opportunity to go over to China and see the new shiploaders over there which was a highlight. To see the work standards over there compared to here was a big eye opener.

How big is the crew?

Here at Carrington on our shifts we have 8 operators and 4 tradesmen, and a shift supervisor. During the day there are more people around.

What's the best thing about your job?

I know the miners in the pits will be a bit envious, because it's got to be the location (he

says with a laugh). We're working right on the harbour with a nice sea breeze and seeing the ships come in and out all the time. We definitely have the best seat in the Hunter mining industry.

The worst thing?

Working shift work (he says with a big laugh). There's two sides to it; I do like working it for the advantages of the days off and quality time I get with the family, though you do miss out on some social events like weddings and birthdays. Once you're in the zone its ok.

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

An interesting one would be the Pasha Bulka storm. I guess it's also the downside to living so close to work, when everyone was being rang up to stay at home, I had to come in here and monitor the plant and do a bit of cleanup work. It was a dangerous situation for others to get in.

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

I really didn't have any idea what I was going to do when I left school. I was doing a few other things like teaching kids to swim and doing a bit

of labouring. My dad used to work here, and he said to me these traineeships have come up why don't you have a crack as you'll get some decent skills for life, so I basically followed in his footsteps.

What's the best bit of gear you've operated?

Driving the shiploaders can be challenging depending on the conditions. If we've got big seas outside the swells can come up the harbour and move the vessels around a bit so you have to be on your toes.

Family?

I'm married and have two kids, one is 6 and the other is 1. My wife works as well so working shiftwork it can be challenging, but my parents and her parents chip in and help us out which we are very grateful for.

What do you do in your downtime?

I like surfing. I've surfed all my life. The last few years I've been into stand-up paddle boarding. I used to play football though working shift work and the mixture of not being able to train, missing games and the thought of an injury impacting my work meant that I ended up giving it up.

Port Waratah...what's the best thing about it?

It's a good company to work for, I've been here for over 20 years and it's been a stable ride. Reading the magazine, you see some of the crews up the valley have over 100 people on them which is amazing when you think of it. Having a smaller crew, it's more like a family environment and everyone knows everyone.



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CANARY IN A COAL MINE

IN A MINING TRADITION THAT DATES BACK OVER A HUNDRED YEARS, CANARIES WERE USED IN COAL MINES TO DETECT CARBON MONOXIDE AND OTHER TOXIC GASES BEFORE THEY HURT HUMANS.

The idea of using canaries is credited to John Scott Haldane. Haldane was a Scottish physiologist famous for self-experimentation which led to many important discoveries about the human body and the nature of gases.

Haldane visited the scenes of many mining disasters and investigated their causes, especially the toxic gases which killed most miners. Haldane identified carbon monoxide as the lethal constituent of afterdamp, the gas created by combustion, after examining many bodies of miners killed in pit explosions and testing the effects of carbon monoxide on his own body in a closed chamber.

In the late 1890s, he experimented using sentinel species, that is animals more sensitive to the colorless, odorless carbon monoxide and other poisonous gases than humans. Haldane used both white mice and canaries as due to their faster metabolism, they showed the effects of poisoning before gas levels became critical for the workers, and so gave an early warning of the problem.

BUT IT WAS THE CANARIES THAT PRODUCED THE BEST RESULTS.

Canaries, like other birds, are good early detectors of carbon monoxide because they're vulnerable to airborne poisons. Because they need such immense quantities of oxygen to enable them to fly and to fly to heights that would make people altitude sick, their anatomy allows them to get a dose of oxygen when they inhale and another when they exhale, by holding air in

extra sacs. Relative to mice or other easily transportable animals that could have been carried in by the miners, they get a double dose of air and any poisons the air might contain, so miners would get an earlier warning.

It wasn't long before Haldane's work became known and many companies adopted the practice of using canaries. Britain, the United States, Australia and Canada were quick to take advantage of this cheap and effective warning system.

ALTHOUGH THE PRACTICE OF USING CANARIES MAY SOUND BARBARIC, FOR MANY MINERS THESE BIRDS BECAME TREASURED PETS AND WERE HIGHLY RESPECTED. AFTER ALL, THEY WERE PUTTING THEIR LIVES IN THEIR HANDS, OR WINGS.

Canaries would not regularly go down into the mines, but rather were brought down after an explosion or suspected gas leak. They would be placed in special cages with ventilation holes that were intended to resuscitate the bird after an exposure.

We spoke to one retired miner who shared with us the following anecdote,

"I remember when Athol Lightfoot was Manager at Bellbird Colliery. Back in the late 70's it must have been. They'd sealed off a section because of gases and Athol showed up with the canary in its resuscitation cage. He pushed the canary through a small seal and the poor bugger (canary) keeled over. He pulled the canary out



where it quickly resuscitated, and Athol goes, 'well it's too risky for this little fella, I'll have to go in myself.' Mind you he did have on breathing apparatus."

By the 1980's canaries were phased out and replaced by carbon

monoxide detectors. There is no available information for instances where canaries prevented the loss of lives over the years, but for such a small creature there is no doubt it played an enormous role in saving the lives of countless miners.



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STAR TRUCK

GLENCORE'S RAVENSWORTH OPEN CUT'S INNOVATIVE WAY OF RAISING MONEY AND AWARENESS FOR THE CANCER COUNCIL HAS ALREADY ACCELERATED OFF TO A GREAT START.

Ravensworth Open Cut are a community minded workforce and are always looking for innovative ways to support important causes. The workforce identified cancer

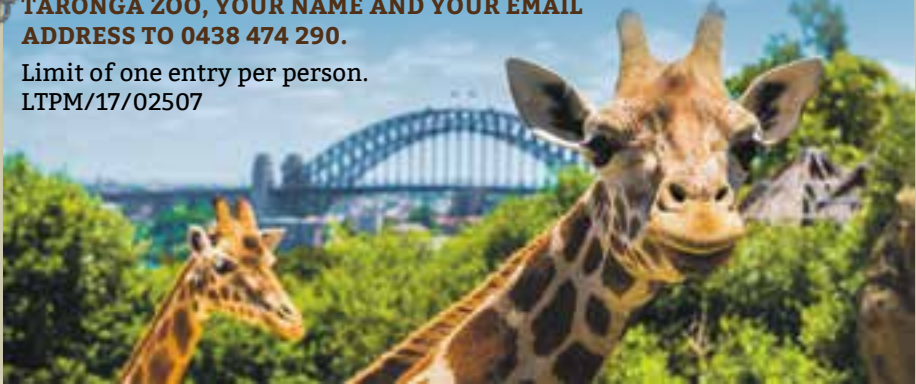
awareness as a key area that needed addressing and the maintenance department put forth the idea to paint their largest dump truck to raise cancer awareness on site.

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Luke Bowden, Ravensworth's Environment and Community Manager said they were proud to support the Cancer Council. "We've had the Singleton Cancer Council come out to site and talk to the workforce about their services and so we wanted to build on that. The painted truck reinforces awareness in the workforce every single day."

NOT ONLY ARE THEY RAISING AWARENESS WITH THE PAINTED TRUCK, BUT THE COMPANY HAS TAKEN IT TO ANOTHER LEVEL BY DONATING \$1 FROM EVERY LOAD TO THE SINGLETON CANCER COUNCIL. THEY HAVE ALREADY RAISED OVER \$5,000 AND EXPECT TO HIT THE \$20,000 MARK BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

Glen Parsons is the Community Programs Coordinator at Singleton Cancer Council and said they are very grateful to Ravensworth Open Cut. "The Ravensworth workforce has to be commended for their engagement in programs like this. All the money raised from this program is spent directly in the local area to support patients and their families. It will be used for free services like transport to treatment, home help, booklets and legal and financial services. It will also be used to offer financial assistance when people are financially struggling. It doesn't matter if you are donating \$2 or \$20,000, every dollar counts, and so this will make a huge difference in so many lives."

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RIX'S CREEK CARE

RIX'S CREEK MINE HAS GOT BEHIND THE SINGLETON OURCARE'S ART AND CRAFT PROGRAM WITH A VERY GENEROUS DONATION OF \$1,000.



Not-for-profit Ourcare Services is using the funds to purchase new supplies for its community art and craft program which was set up for the aged and people with disabilities. The program is an important form of therapy and social interaction for participants. Donated by workers at Rix's Creek Mine and the mine's parent company The Bloomfield Group, the funds will lift the Ourcare Services art and craft program to another level, with a view to works being displayed at Singleton Library and by local businesses. Singleton artist Lynne Bailey, who donates her time to run the art and craft sessions, said so much more could be achieved with the additional funds.

OURCARE SERVICES COORDINATOR TRACEY DAGG SAID THEY ARE TRULY GRATEFUL FOR THE DONATION.

"Our core objective is supporting our clients so that they can continue living independently in the community. Art and craft are simple but important outlets for those we help. It's so rewarding to see our clients engaging through these mediums and benefiting from senses of meaning and achievement." Tracey said. Rix's Creek Mine Manager Luke Murray said everyone at the mine was happy to see the funds go to good use. "We make a point of backing good community causes and the Ourcare Services art and craft program is a wonderful community investment." The Ourcare art and craft program is available to over 65's who have a referral from My Aged Care. For further details, call Ourcare Services Coordinator Tracey Dagg on 6571 2300.

2018'S UPPER HUNTER WINE AND FOOD AFFAIR THE BIGGEST YET!

DENMAN CERTAINLY KNOWS HOW TO THROW A PARTY. THIS YEAR WE SAW OVER 7,000 PEOPLE PACK DENMAN'S OGILVIE STREET TO ENJOY THE HUNTERS BEST STREET PARTY.

Plenty of sunshine and good vibes ensured this year's Upper Hunter Wine and Food Affair was a success, but thanks must go out to those that made it possible.

Upper Hunter Wine and Food Affair Event Manager, Troy Jones said they couldn't thank those who supported the event enough. "Volunteers, local community groups and the committee all gave up their time to make it happen, working tirelessly behind the scenes to pull off this incredible day." Troy said.

"But most of all we have to thank our event partners. Our major sponsor Glencore Mangoola Open Cut came onboard again which was fantastic. I also must thank our long-term event partners Bengalla Mining, BHP, The Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association, Muswellbrook Shire Council and the Winemakers of the Upper Hunter. Without their continued support, plus that of the local business community, the event simply would not be possible." And of course, thanks must go out to all who attended and supported the event. This year's crowd was better than ever and ensures it will be back again next year!



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TVP & THE BLACK DOG INSTITUTE

THIS MONTH COMPLETE PARTS AND @ THE COALFACE ARE GIVING OUR \$500 COMMUNITY GIFT TO THE 'TVP CHARITY GOLF DAY' IN SUPPORT OF THE BLACK DOG INSTITUTE.

Most of you already know about The Virtual Pub (TVP). It's a secret men's mental health, suicide awareness & pub banter Facebook page with over 72,000 patrons.

Brendon Williams is one of the creators of TVP and says they are about raising awareness for men's depression and removing the stigma around mental health incidences. Last year they decided to take it a step further and they hosted their first charity event to raise money for the Black Dog Institute, an organisation dedicated to understanding, preventing and treating mental illness.

Due to the success of last year's Car/Bike Show & Shine at Kearsley Pub which raised over \$22,800, this year on Sunday June 10 they are hosting their second event, the "TVP Charity Golf Day" at the East Maitland Golf Club. All proceeds will again go to the Black Dog Institute.

If you would like to know more about either of these organisations head to the links below.

blackdoginstitute.org.au
facebook.com/thevirtualpubTVP

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THRILLS & SPILLS

THE INAUGURAL BHP MT ARTHUR COAL HUNTER SOAP BOX DERBY WILL BE HELD AT THE PCYC MUSWELLBROOK ON JUNE 23 AND IS PROMISING TO BE AN EXCITING DAY FILLED WITH THRILLS AND MAYBE A FEW SPILLS.

The soap box derby is a fun community event designed to create connections, provide learning opportunities and most of all to have a fun.

Homemade Billy carts will be raced down the hill of Carl Street in Muswellbrook, all in the name of fun and fundraising. All funds raised from this event will go to Hunter Life Education, who work to ensure young people of the Hunter have access to Life Education, helping them lead safer, healthier lives.


HUNTER LIFE EDUCATION'S EXECUTIVE OFFICER, SARAH GRAY SAID THEY'VE HAD VERY POSITIVE REACTIONS FROM EVERYONE THEY'VE TALKED TO SO FAR. "WE CAN'T WAIT TO BRING THIS EVENT

TO A WONDERFUL COUNTRY COMMUNITY AND BRING A SENSE OF FUN AND NOSTALGIA TO THE HUNTER."

There will be loads of family friendly fun, entertainment, attractions and food with racing kicking off at 9am. Race categories include Junior races (drivers aged 7-15), Senior races (drivers aged 16+) and the highly anticipated grudge race between mine sites in the Hunter Valley.


Get the family or work team together, build a Billy cart and enter the race. Lavis Home Timber and Hardware Muswellbrook are offering a huge 20% discount on cart building supplies, so head in store for expert advice.


hunterlifeeducation.org.au





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WINNING TEAM
MANDALONG

MANDALONG WINS!

TEN TEAMS FROM ACROSS THE NSW COAL INDUSTRY CONTESTED THE 2018 COAL SERVICES FIRST AID COMPETITION ON MAY 25 WITH CENTENNIAL COAL'S MANDALONG TAKING HOME THE COVETED TROPHY.

The annual event was held at the Newcastle Mines Rescue station and heralds the beginning of competition season for the coal mining industry.

Mark O'Neill, General Manager CS Health said that the first aid competition is different in that it focuses specifically on first aid and isn't limited to mines rescue responders.

"Many teams include first aid officers, not just those with specific mines rescue training. The scenarios in this competition are designed to reflect everyday situations such as gardening, camping and DIY home renovations where first aid skills may be required," Mark said.

Amputations, allergic reactions, head injuries, and treatment for burns, diabetic shock and asthma were just some of the injuries set to challenge teams and judge the level of proficiency with which they administer first aid.

CENTENNIAL COAL'S MANDALONG TEAM WERE

NAMED OVERALL WINNERS FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR. CAPTAIN CLINT BRYANT THANKED HIS TEAM FOR THEIR UNWAVERING EFFORTS IN THE LEAD UP TO THE EVENT AND ON THE DAY.

"These competitions are a great way to put our training and skills to work and highlight where we need to improve. It was hard this year competing without our previous captain, Iain Pattie, but the team pulled together and we gave our best. On behalf of the team I would like to thank Coal Services for putting on another great event and also to Centennial Coal for giving us the opportunity to train and compete. Alex Lidwinski, a competition veteran, also deserves a special mention for his help and coaching." Clint said.

AMONG THE TEAMS COMPETING ON THE DAY WERE GLENCORE'S MT OWEN MINE WHO PLACED SECOND AND PEABODY'S WAMBO UNDERGROUND TEAM WHO PLACED THIRD OVERALL.



UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY

WE ALL GET STRESSED AND WORRIED AT TIMES, BUT FOR SOME PEOPLE THESE FEELINGS DON'T GO AWAY. ANXIETY IS MORE THAN JUST FEELING A LITTLE STRESSED OR WORRIED WHEN THINGS ARE GOING WRONG.

Anxious feelings are a normal response to a situation where we feel pressure or unease, like when you realise there's no beers left in the fridge. But they usually pass once we are out of the situation, or have taken a trip to the Bottle-o...

Jokes aside, anxiety is a serious condition. For those who suffer from anxiety, anxious feelings don't go away. They are ongoing, debilitating and make it hard to cope with daily life.

ANXIETY IS THE MOST COMMON MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION IN AUSTRALIA. ON AVERAGE, ONE IN FOUR PEOPLE – ONE IN THREE WOMEN AND

ONE IN FIVE MEN – WILL EXPERIENCE ANXIETY AT SOME STAGE IN THEIR LIFE.

There are different types of anxiety, such as generalised anxiety disorder, social anxiety, specific phobias and panic disorder. Each can affect a person in different ways. But in every case make no mistake the person is suffering.

Persistent fretfulness, distractedness, frenzied behaviour, irrational and paranoid thoughts to full-blown panic attacks. These symptoms and more can make simple things like going to work, hanging out with friends or even heading down to the shops almost impossible.

WE LIVE IN A CULTURE WHERE IT'S COMMON TO TELL A PERSON TO TOUGHEN UP, TO STOP WHINING OR TO GET OVER IT. WHICH DOES NOTHING EXCEPT TO WORSEN HOW THE PERSON IS ALREADY FEELING.

Instead we need to support people who suffer from anxiety and stop judging them. Understand how serious anxiety conditions are and how they can affect people and prevent them from leading normal lives. Be supportive and encouraging because the person suffering from anxiety certainly didn't choose to feel the way they do. And always be forgiving of their behaviour because odds are you may be in their shoes one day.

www.beyondblue.org.au

www.healthdirect.gov.au/anxiety

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A man gets his paycheque and when he opens it he discovers that his employer has overpaid him \$2000.

He decides not to tell anybody and keeps quiet.

At the end of the following month when he opens his next cheque, he sees that he's been underpaid \$2000.

Fuming, he goes to have it out with his boss. "Sir, I think you've made a mistake on my cheque."

"And how do you figure

that?" his boss asks.

"It seems I've been underpaid \$2000."

"So?"

"No disrespect Sir, but I want my money."

"Last month I overpaid you \$2000 and you didn't complain so why now?"

"Well Sir, thing is I don't mind if you make a mistake once but if it becomes a habit I have to say something."

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TWISTER IS BACK

I WASN'T MUCH OF A TWISTER FAN AS A KID, THOUGH I DO REMEMBER A FEW GOOD TEENAGE PARTIES PLAYING IT. NOW, IT'S BEEN REVAMPED JUST FOR US GROWNUPS.

Twister was once a fad phenomenon in the toy industry, but now it's gone to a whole new level with the release of the Novelty Twister Print Bed Sheet. No, you are not reading that incorrectly. The physically skilled game of contorting yourself no longer needs to be rolled out and packed away each time. One thing that you must be noted about twister, is it is a two-player game.

www.amazon.com

WHERE'S YOUR HEAD AT?



THE AFTERNOONS ARE GETTING DARK AND THE MORNINGS FOGGIER. BUT THAT'S NO EXCUSE TO STOP RIDING YOUR BIKE TO WORK THANKS TO THE LUMOS LED HELMET.

Bike riding is a great activity especially in the warmer months. But now you can stay on your bike during the winter months thanks to the right safety gear. To protect your melon from any impact and to make you more visible to other road users, Lumos has developed a helmet that features 48 individual

LEDs to ensure your visibility on the road.

That's not the best part, it's the world's first smart bike helmet that also connects to an App and Bluetooth and it even has turning signals.

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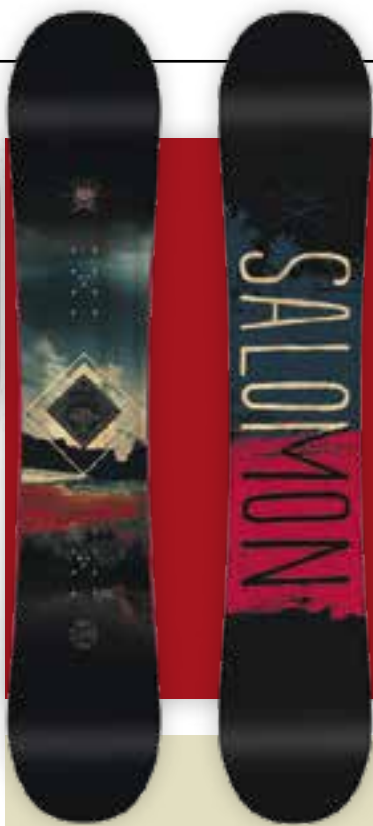
GO PRO'S NEW HERO

JUST IN TIME FOR THE SNOW SEASON, GOPRO HAVE RELEASED THEIR MOST AFFORDABLE GOPRO THAT PACKS IN A TON OF FEATURES FOR AN AFFORDABLE PRICE. NOW THERE'S NO EXCUSE NOW NOT TO HAVE BRAG VIDEOS OF YOUR TRIP.

The new GoPro Hero looks very similar to the previous generations of GoPro cameras like the Hero5 & Hero6, but costs about half the price. The camera has a familiar 2-inch touch display and has been marketed for kids right through to thrill seekers.

At \$299 GoPro is hoping to entice people who wouldn't normally splurge as much for the other models yet want to be able to capture all those trips and action moments on camera.

www.kogan.com



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WINTER IS COMING AND NOW'S THE TIME TO GET YOURSELF A SNOWBOARD AND HIT THE SLOPES.

The Salomon Pulse snowboard is the perfect entry level snowboard that gives you everything you want in an easy to ride package.

The Flat Out Camber profile will give you a stable ride and its directional twin shape makes turning nice and smooth.

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Committed to **WORKING TOGETHER**



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.



BRINGING JOBS AND INVESTMENT TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

WORLD CUP BOUND

TOUCH FOOTBALL HAS PLAYED A MASSIVE PART IN BARRY NICHOLS' LIFE, NOTCHING UP OVER 35 YEARS AS A PLAYER. NOW HE GIVES BACK TO HIS BELOVED SPORT AS A REFEREE, ON BOTH THE LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL STAGE.



"I only took up refereeing as I was retiring from playing, and it's turned out to be bigger than Ben Hur." Barry says of his newfound passion where he's switched the ball for the whistle. "I have been playing touch for 35 years in Singleton and surrounding areas and was a representative for around 10 years or so. I was the president of the Singleton Junior Association for 6 years, though I've been involved with them for over 15 years. I decided to step down from that and concentrate of my refereeing.

THE SHOTFIRER FROM GLENCORE'S RAVENSWORTH MINE ACHIEVED HIS GOAL OF BECOMING AN INTERNATIONAL REFEREE GAINING HIS BLACK INTERNATIONAL BADGE AT THE NATIONALS THIS YEAR.

"I don't usually do specific training, though I did start last Christmas for the upcoming nationals because I had the target to get the



international badge, so I did a fair bit of on holidays beach running and also as a shot firer you're doing a lot of walking during the day which helped." Barry said.

"I was invited to the nationals which is an invitational event where I was lucky enough to get my badge, and then two weeks later I received an invitation to referee at the Youth World Cup in Kuala Lumpur from the Federation of International Touch. I was nominated for the opportunity and was lucky to be selected. There's some really good referees out there and to get down to the top 20 was great." Barry flies out in August to Kuala Lumpur but says unfortunately his schedule is so hectic he probably won't have time to do touristy things.

BARRY'S GOT TO WHERE HE IS ENTIRELY SELF-FUNDED,

HE BELIEVES IT'S IMPORTANT TO GIVE BACK TO THE SPORT YOU LOVE.

"I've never had the benefits of sponsorship and I don't like going out and asking for a handout, but I am very open if any businesses or groups would like to assist. It truly would mean the world to me and there will be plenty of exposure. At the end of the day I will be representing my country on the world stage at an international tournament, and that's not bad for an old bloke from a mine site in the Hunter."

We're sure there are businesses out there who would see this as a great opportunity to help one of our local lads on the world stage. To be put in contact with Barry contact us here @ The Coalface. All the best Barry, don't blow the pea out of the whistle though!

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HAVING FINISHED HIS NRL AND SUPER LEAGUE CAREER, LIAM FORAN WAS LOOKING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE A STABLE AND POSITIVE LIFESTYLE FOR HIS FAMILY, AND HIS MOVE TO THE UPPER HUNTER HAS PROVIDED JUST THAT.

Having moved around for Rugby League most of his life, when it came time to make that decision to plant the feet the decision was easy for Liam. "My family had supported me throughout my life with my dreams and goals, so when it came time to settle I wanted a nice place where we could have a great lifestyle and work balance, and most importantly a place where the kids could grow up in a great environment. So here we are."

NOT LONG AFTER THE MOVE, LIAM FOUND HIMSELF A TRAINEESHIP AT MT ARTHUR COAL THROUGH CHANDLER MACLEOD WHICH KICKSTARTED HIS NEW CAREER IN THE MINING INDUSTRY.

"The traineeship was a great step into the mining industry and besides gaining the skills on the big gear, it provided me with great

LEADER OF THE PACK

insight into the industry and a lot of knowledge I can take into my everyday life. Safety is paramount when you are in this industry,

there is no room for error and you have to be on your game every minute of the shift as it's not just you you're looking out for, you want to make sure everyone goes home safely."

Still playing Rugby League in the Group 21 Competition, Liam steered the Aberdeen Tigers to a premiership in 2017 and whilst they are widely considered competition favorites he remains grounded about the fact.

"YOU DON'T REALISE HOW MANY PEOPLE AROUND SUPPORT GROUP 21. IT'S A TOPIC OF CONVERSATION THROUGHOUT THE CRIB HUTS. ITS ALWAYS GOOD TO HEAR PEOPLE'S

DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEWS, EVERYONE'S GOT THEIR OWN TEAM AND THE LIGHT-HEARTED BANTER IS GREAT AND A GOOD LAUGH."

Asked if he thinks the tigers can go back to back premiers, Liam said, "It's like anything, if you're willing to put the time and effort in, the rewards are there for the taking. This competition is a bit

disadvantaged with shiftwork, and most sides won't have their full complement of players until the end of the year. I think we have a strong chance of being there, but I'm just having fun and if it comes it comes. We're just loving being in the area and the opportunity to play some good footy, have a great career and fingers crossed, I can get a permanent job. That's my main goal."



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WINTER RAMBLE

JULY 18 WILL SEE A GATHERING OF TROOPCARRIERS LIKE NO OTHER ON EARTH, AS TROOPY ADVENTURES HOST THE SIXTH ANNUAL WINTER RAMBLE.

Like most brilliant ideas, the concept for the Winter Ramble started over a couple of frosty beverages between

resident @ the Coalface adventurers Dan and Cal. What started off with seventeen trucks in the beginning

has grown so big that last year it saw one hundred and ninety-four Troopcarriers come through the camp over the weekend. This year they're hoping to break that record and reach two hundred.

With overnight temps getting well below zero (-8 degrees one morning) it's also know appropriately as the 'Freezin' for a Reason' charity fundraiser. Over the years they've helped raise thousands of dollars for different charities from ticket sales and from the huge all-day raffle thanks to prizes donated by businesses and attendees.

LAST YEAR ALONE THEY RAISED FIFTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THE BLACK DOG INSTITUTE.

Troopy owners come from all over Australia to show off their trucks and camp out for the two-night gathering, with bush walking, 4wding, or just getting on the sauce around the giant communal fire and spinning a yarn with other legends. There is something for everyone.

This is a Troopcarriers



only, family friendly event. So, if you own one, love camping and would like to know more contact Troopy Adventures on Facebook or Instagram for more details. Or head to their website to donate now.

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THE CHILLS ARE MULTIPLYING

WINTER IS DEFINITELY HERE, BUT THE FISHING IS STILL FULL ON. HARDEN UP PRINCESSES AND GET OUT THE COLD WEATHER GEAR AND CAST OFF.

OFFSHORE

You wouldn't believe it but as we roll into June we are still hearing reports of Marlin encounters off the coast, but let's face it, we will leave them to the seasoned Bill fishers to battle it out till the end.

With the weather cooling and the whales migrating it only means one thing and that's Snapper time! With recent reports of big reds encountered on the local reefs and with the lumpy swell conditions we have been seeing lately it's well



PAUL WITH A CRACKING SNAPPER TAKEN WHILE FISHING PLASTICS ON THE LOCAL REEFS



YOUNG GUN LOAGIN WITH A NICE LAKE MACQUARIE TAILOR

worth a look.

ESTUARY/LAKE

If fishing the estuary is your thing then now's the time to get out amongst it. Everything from big winter Bream around the structure, Blackfish from the break walls or even the big winter Jewie, it's all on offer at the moment.

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



The lake is seeing healthy numbers of Tailor inside the lake and the Salmon starting to school in Salts Bay.

ROCKS

No better time of year to be fishing from the rocks with so many different things on offer throughout the winter months from Squid from the sheltered bays to Grouper, Drummer and Snapper from the wash.

BEACHES

Similar story on the beaches with Bream,

Tailor and Salmon being the main species to target throughout June.

IMPOUNDMENTS

If you haven't already thrown the idea in the air with the mates about heading to some of the Western Dams to chase the mighty Murray Cod now's the time to do it. Plenty of good reports flowing in already of some huge cod caught especially from Copeton. Watch this space...

Keep floatin' - Thrifty's

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the hill on Carl Street.

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TRAM VS TRUCK

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CONSIDERED WHAT WOULD OCCUR IF A TRAM AND LARGE HAUL
TRUCK CAME TOGETHER IN PERFECT MATRIMONY? A TROLLEY TRUCK.**

Tragic humour I know however, these things are no joke and for many countries with alternative energy sources cheaper (and often cleaner) than diesel, may well be the way of the future.

Their rationale makes perfect sense and the results impressive, including less noise, decreased wear and tear, reduced emissions and importantly, increased productivity, derived from increased haul speeds on steep inclines. So, stay with me, as I explore the wonderful world of Trolley Trucks.

In a previous article 'ACDC', you may remember (or more likely not...) that we discussed electric drive dump trucks. A crash course on how this system works – a diesel engine, coupled with an alternator, creates electricity, that is converted by an inverter into AC current, in turn, driving two electric wheel motors at the rear of the truck. Voila, easy!

Just like a Tesla, they're super quick, have greater power than your mechanical dump truck, generate a more consistent and controlled acceleration curve as well as, stronger braking performance, with greater fuel efficiency. All compelling factors, especially if you're a miner. Like the origin of the first electric wheel motor, this technology was derived from

trains and has been adopted by Hitachi, Komatsu and more recently Caterpillar.

So how does it work? If you're running existing AC dump trucks, does that mean you'll have to buy an entirely new fleet of trucks? Depends of course upon your fleet however, in many cases your existing trucks can be retrofitted with a contraption known as a 'pantograph', that mounted on the roof, rise off the truck, to touch overhead electric cables. The catch of course being, that you require specific infrastructure including, a power generation facility as well as overhead wiring, just like the trams you may have seen in Melbourne. Why bother?

While it is not something we're likely to see running around the Valley anytime soon, the results are no less than remarkable, with trucks in 'trolley mode' achieving twice the haul speed of conventional units (mechanical and electric) up steep inclines, reducing cycle times, noise as well as wear and tear, with their engines reduced to idle. So much to love!

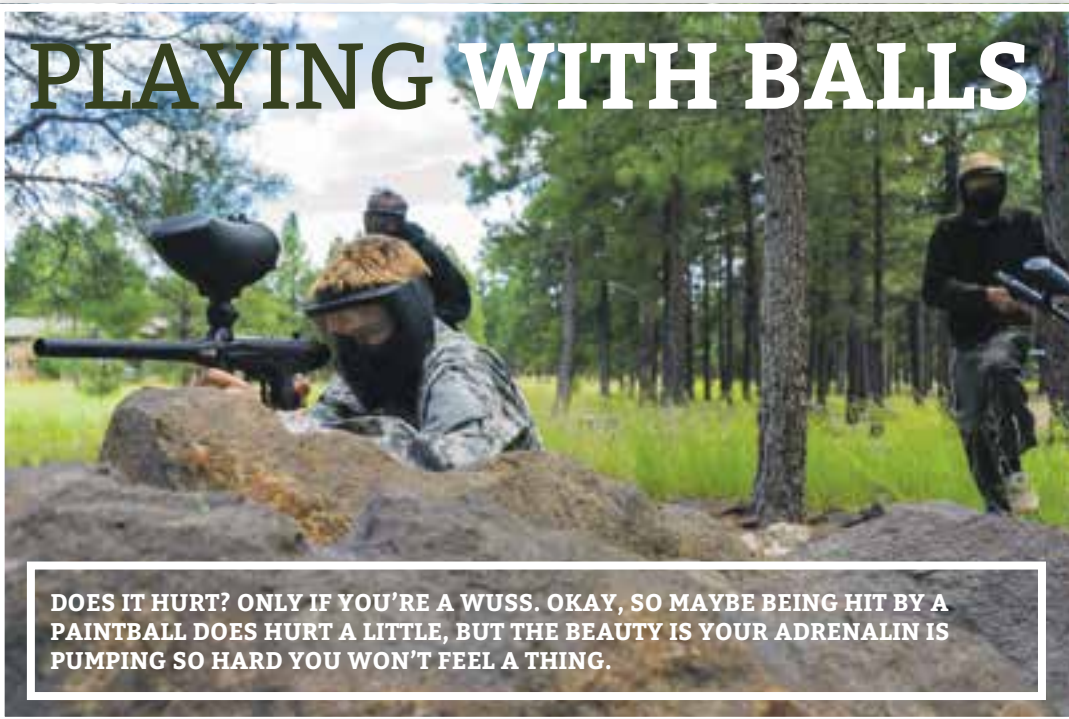
If you don't believe me and it all sounds a little like gobbledygook, check it out for yourselves on YouTube searching 'Trolley Assist' or 'Electric Drive Truck on Trolley'.

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PLAYING WITH BALLS



DOES IT HURT? ONLY IF YOU'RE A WUSS. OKAY, SO MAYBE BEING HIT BY A PAINTBALL DOES HURT A LITTLE, BUT THE BEAUTY IS YOUR ADRENALIN IS PUMPING SO HARD YOU WON'T FEEL A THING.

When I headed out with a group of friends to try out paintballing for myself I must admit to feeling a little trepidation. The most warfare action I've seen is playing shooting games at Timezone. The nerves only increased as we geared up into our camouflage outfits and helmets and listened to a safety briefing.

But then as I was handed my paintball gun a strange thing happened. I suddenly felt my nerves transform into anticipation and my finger

began to itch to pull that trigger. As I looked around I no longer saw my friends smiling faces, I saw the enemy and I knew it was my job, no my mission, to take them all down and to become the supreme warrior...

No, not really.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED WAS AS SOON AS WE WERE GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT TO START I TOOK OFF AND HUNKERED DOWN IN THE FIRST HOLE I COULD FIND. AFTER AWHILE I STUCK MY HEAD UP TO PEEK AND

BAM! YEP, A PAINTBALL RIGHT IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD.

But once that initial hit was out of the way, that's when I really started to play the game. Sneaking around buildings, crawling through long grass, aiming up a target and pulling off a great shot, all while working as a team to take down the opposition. Laughter, excitement, camaraderie. I just couldn't believe how much fun I was having.

If you play paintball it's

inevitable you are going to get hit. After all it's the aim of the game. But how many hits you take comes down to you. You can charge in like Rambo, firing off paintballs left, right and center or you can try to hide and outlast everyone else. But the best bet is to use stealth, strategy and teamwork, rather than frontal assaults or hiding.

TIM MILLER WHO RUNS HUNTER VALLEY PAINTBALLING HAS SOME TIPS FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO TRY PAINTBALLING.

"When it comes down to it, paintballing is a great team building game. People usually come all excited about the prospect of getting even with a mate for a laugh, but once the game is underway and the adrenaline kicks in it's all about strategy and teamwork. They soon realise they are all have the same equipment and are on a level playing field."

So, what's the best method? "Don't race out to get in front. Work as a team and

cover the boundaries and stay alert of your surrounds, not what's just in front of you, and cheating does not help. You will get punished." Tim said.

There are numerous paintball locations around the area with lots of different types of courses. One of Hunter Valley Paintballing's courses even includes a real helicopter. So, if you are looking for something to do for a fun day out with friends or workmates, or you want to show the kids who's the boss next school holidays, we recommend getting out to your nearest paintball site.



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TAKE A BUTCHER'S HOOK AT THIS!

AS A WORLD RENOWN PIEOLOGIST THERE ISN'T MUCH I HAVEN'T SEEN IN THE WORLD OF MEAT BAGS AND WHILE BAKERIES ARE MY UNDISPUTED SHOPPING DESTINATION OF CHOICE, BUTCHERS COME A VERY CLOSE SECOND WITH ALL THEIR SAUSAGEY AND STEAKY DELIGHTS. SO IMAGINE MY SQUEALS OF DELIGHT WHEN I CAME ACROSS A BUTCHER WHO'S HAVING A CRACK AT BEING A BAKER TOO.

Robert from Robert's Meats is a visionary not unlike myself. A man who forges new ideas that challenge the very way humankind understands the universe, a sort of Steven Hawking of the meat world if you like. He is a butcher almost as good as Kel Knight from Kath and Kim, a man with true meaty creativity.

I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT MY INFLUENCE AND LEADERSHIP IN THE WORLD OF PIES INSPIRED ROB TO TRY AND CHANGE THE WORLD. I IMAGINE HE SAT BACK WHILE READING MY MONTHLY COLUMN AND WAS INSPIRED TO 'TRY TO PIE'.

What he's come up with will give you goose bumps. I ran the slide rule over two of his creations; a mighty meaty Bolognese number and a bad ass butter chicken beauty.

Rumour has it that the beef in the Bolognese came from a cow raised on handcrafted mid strength beer and special grass grown on holy land out the back of a secret Hunter church run by a religious order consisting exclusively of retired underground miners who have found

'AVE A LAUGH WITH

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A pirate walks into a bar with an eyepatch, pegleg, and hook for a hand. The bartender notices his leg, "How did you get that pegleg?"

The pirate replies, "It were many years ago. I were walkin' on the deck when a wave swept a shark aboard. The shark bit my leg off!"

"Wow," replies the bartender. "What about that hand?"

The pirate replies, "It were many years ago. I were walkin' on the deck when a wave swept a killer whale aboard. The whale bit my leg off!"

"Oh," replies the bartender. "How about the eye?"

The pirate replies, "It were many years ago. I were walkin' on the deck when a seagull came outta nowhere and pooped in my eye."

"And that blinded you?" asked the bartender.

"No, it twas my first day with the hook."

God. The chickens are the descendants of two grand champion chooks who took out the Champion ribbons of respective Muswellbrook and Singo shows in the early eighties.

The level of inspiration I bestow on my loyal subjects makes me prouder than a greyhound trainer whose champion bitch has throw a litter of 8 pups. I can only imagine what the future holds and what can be created when other people

like Rob make dreams reality. Hot tubs in pubs? Saunas that double as pie ovens? Drive thru bottle shops with a carwash attached at one end so you can buy refreshments and refresh the car at the same time. The possibilities are endless.

So, my challenge to you my friends is to go forward and create like Rob. Make the world a better place.
Inspirationally yours... Sol x

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GLOUCESTER GRUB



OUT ON A LONG SUNDAY DRIVE AROUND THE HUNTER WE FOUND OURSELVES UP IN GLOUCESTER AT THE 'THE KITCHEN' AT THE 'ROUNABOUT INN' FOR SOME CRACKING GOOD PUB GRUB.

As early as 1851, the famous colonial clergyman John Dunmore Lang observed that "Gloucester is one of the best sites for an inland town I have ever seen in the colony." Obviously, it was also a pretty good site to set up a pub with a bistro as well.

Gloucester is a charming little town

sitting in a valley under a range of hills known as The Bucketts. It's within striking distance of most towns in the Hunter to grab a bit of lunch. We took the back roads through Gresford and Dungog to get there and worked up a hunger taking in some of the most beautiful countryside you will ever see.

Landing in the main drag we pulled up out the front of the pub and made a beeline straight for the bar. A Sunday beer on a Sunday drive always tastes damn sweet. The Roundabout is a nice looking joint surrounded by hedges, two beer gardens and a better than average kids play area. The bar area opens to the main garden making access to the beer taps effortless. This place is set up to keep everyone happy. Thirst quenched we headed for the 'The Kitchen', the namesake bistro of this fine ale house.

THE PLACE WAS HUMMING AND IS CLEARLY A FAVOURITE. THE CREW IN THE KITCHEN WERE FLAT OUT BUT THEY STILL OFFERED PLENTY OF FRIENDLY AND WELCOMING HOSPITALITY.

Getting down to business we both decided this was a steak day and the Manning Valley 60 day wet aged, grass fed Scotch Fillet was always going to be the pick. We also grabbed the Peking Duck spring rolls to get going and stop the mouth watering.

As we waited, the quality of food we saw rolling out to other tables

and looks on faces told us we had made the right choice. Despite being busy, the wait wasn't long and the delicious Duck rolls landed. And disappeared moments later. Pretty soon after came the steaks and we weren't disappointed. Beautiful fresh vegetables carefully arranged to hold up a perfectly cooked, beautifully aged buttery tasting steak.

'The Kitchen' is well worth the drive. It's a standard but extensive menu and the quality is high. There's plenty to do in the area on a day trip as well but we decided on another beer in the garden before winding back home very pleased with the world. Get up there... we will again for sure!



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ROCK & ROLL

THERE IS NO AUSTRALIAN LANDMARK MORE ICONIC THAN ULURU AND THERE IS NOTHING LIKE SEEING IT FOR YOURSELF.

As we boarded the bus out of Ayers Rock Airport headed for our resort I got my first look at Uluru. And what a view it was. Although I've seen a million pictures none do it justice. The colours are so vibrant and the sheer immensity is overwhelming. I spent the 20-minute bus ride goggling out the window while listening to

the thousands of camera clicks of snap happy tourists. Our accommodation for the trip was Ayers Rock Resort which caters for all budgets. We stayed at Sails in the Desert which is its five-star flagship, but it offers everything right down to camping. The resort's shaded by great big gum trees with a natural colour palette

throughout complemented with Aboriginal artwork. Very pretty and very relaxing.

THE GREAT THING ABOUT AYERS ROCK RESORT IS IT HAS EVERYTHING ON OFFER. RESTAURANTS, BARS, SPAS, GALLERIES AND ALL THE SERVICES YOU COULD WANT. BEST OF ALL IT TAKES THE HASSLE OUT OF ORGANISING YOUR HOLIDAY AS YOU CAN BOOK ANY ACTIVITY YOU WANT DIRECTLY THROUGH THEM.

The first morning we boarded a bus right outside our hotel headed for Uluru. Watching the sun's rays strike the rock from the viewing area made getting up at the crack of dawn worth it. Even my cynical hard ass felt as if I was undergoing a spiritual awakening.

We then did a self-guided walk around the area as climbing Uluru is highly discouraged as the traditional Aboriginal owners place a great spiritual significance on the climb. Tourists trampling all over it, taking selfies and dropping rubbish is considered highly disrespectful. Never mind the climb is physically demanding and there have been 36 fatalities over the years. Legally there's nothing stopping you if you want to do it, but it's a wanker move.

Instead we opted for a scenic helicopter flight of Uluru and Kata Tjuta. You won't get a better perspective of just how magnificent the region is. Our pilot was informative and funny and in my view, relaxing in the comfort of the helicopter as we soared high above was way better than sweating it out on the ground battling

flies and annoying tourists.

ANOTHER MUST DO WAS THE OUTBACK SKY JOURNEYS FAMILY ASTRO TOUR. THE AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE BEST PLACES IN THE WORLD TO EXPLORE THE NIGHT SKY AND THE KIDS LOVED DISCOVERING ALL THE STARS USING IPADS, TELESCOPES AND BINOCULARS.

We also got to know plenty of camels on our trip, the kids had a great time at Uluru Camel Farm with all the animals. We took a camel sunset tour to Uluru, the camels were surprisingly comfortable and it was great to listen to our guides talking about the history of the area.

There was plenty of Aboriginal culture to enjoy, we laughed at our poor efforts in a dot painting workshop, laughed even harder at our attempts at playing the didgeridoo and when it comes to traditional aboriginal dancing, well let's just say I'm not sharing the footage of that on Facebook.

It's taken me a long time to take a holiday to Uluru and my only regret is I didn't do it sooner. It is an unforgettable holiday experience.



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With NSW scheme incentives due to change in mid 2018, now is the time to get involved in the LED revolution.

Under the NSW Government Energy Saving Scheme, if your business qualifies you could be eligible for discounted energy efficient lighting supply and installation.

"Our average payback period for the mining and industrial sector is 11 months"

Ben Henderson - CEO

For an obligation free assessment contact us

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