

HUNTER INDUSTRY, COMMUNITY, SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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PAGE 25

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CLIMBING NEW HEIGHTS

LEAH MILLER IS NSW MINING'S 2020
EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG WOMAN IN MINING.

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HELLO SPRING!

SPRING IS HERE AND THINGS ARE STARTING TO WARM UP. INCLUDING YOUR HEART WHEN YOU READ SOME OF THIS MONTH'S FEEL GOOD STORIES!

People and community are the bread and butter of our magazine and this month we have slathered it on thick. From our heartwarming story on Mangoola's kind donation to Upper Hunter Homeless Support, the inspiring story of Leah Miller, NSW Mining's Exceptional Young Woman in Mining, to Jess Briggs who entertainingly shares her My Mining Life story. There's plenty to keep you smiling and feeling good.

We also paid tribute this month to Singleton legend and former Mayor, Neil McNamara. Neil contributed greatly to the early stages of coal mining expansion in our region and did much to shape the Singleton that we know today. He will be sorely missed by his family and the whole community.

This month we chatted with former Newcastle Knights player and passionate underground miner Nathan Ross. He was very candid about some of the hurdles he had to overcome to make it as the mining leader he is today. It's a great read that you won't want to miss.

In fact, you don't want to miss anything, it's all a great read!

@THE COALFACE

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OPINION

STEPHEN GALILEE, CEO,
NSW MINERALS COUNCIL

STILL MUCH TO CELEBRATE AT THE VOICE FOR MINING FAMILY DAY

REVENGE CAN BE SWEET, SO I'M TOLD...AND THE KNIGHTS' VICTORY OVER THE NORTH QUEENSLAND COWBOYS AT HOME ON THE 23RD OF AUGUST SEEMED PRETTY SWEET AFTER THE SHOCK LOSS TO THE COWBOYS EARLIER IN THE SEASON.

The 12-0 final score was sweeter for Hunter mining families given the Knights secured the gritty victory in their famous replica hi-vis mining jersey on this year's Voice for Mining Family Day.

Unlike previous years, this time NSW miners and their families were encouraged to support the Newcastle Knights from home as our industry continues to play our part in helping keep the community safe and the economy moving.

DESPITE THIS YEAR'S CHANGED FORMAT, THE VOICE FOR MINING FAMILY DAY CONTINUES TO BE ONE OF THE BIGGEST ROUNDS OF THE FOOTY SEASON FOR THE KNIGHTS AND OUR MINERS. IT'S A POSITIVE REMINDER FOR FOOTY FANS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC EVERY YEAR OF THE HUGE CONTRIBUTION OUR MINE WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES MAKE TO THE HUNTER, AND TO NSW MORE BROADLY.

As Newcastle Knights CEO Philip Gardner commented, the players always wear the hi-vis mining jersey with pride in support of the mining families they

represent on the field.

The Voice for Mining Family Day held special significance this year as the thousands of people working in the Hunter mining industry continue to play our part to keep the Hunter and NSW moving.

By implementing strict COVID-19 safety measures, Hunter mines have generally been able to keep operating, meaning many other local businesses have also been able to keep their doors open. This has only been possible because the men and women who work in our mines have shown their commitment and determination to working safely during the pandemic.

There's no doubt 2020 has been tough. But like the Knights on the field, our miners, their families and our mining communities have shown a resilience that helps keep the Hunter region strong.

It's a key reason why the Knights are so proud to wear our jersey in support of what we do.

Stephen Galilee, CEO, NSW Minerals Council

OPINION

THE LONG RUN

WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY OF AUSTRALIA'S MINERALS SECTOR, THE MCA IS A PROUD PARTNER WITH THE PROSTATE CANCER FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA (PCFA) TO BOOST AWARENESS ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER AMONG THE MINERALS INDUSTRY'S 240,000-STRONG WORKFORCE.



TANIA CONSTABLE

While mining is working hard to improve its gender balance – and recognise the increasing number of female high achievers – it's a fact that most miners are male, including in the Hunter's world-class coal mines.

It's also a sobering fact that one in every seven Australian men are likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetime, making it the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australian men.

Tragically, about 3,500 Australian men die of the disease each year.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT 200,000 AUSSIE MEN ARE ALIVE TODAY AFTER A DIAGNOSIS.

So the MCA and the PCFA are working together to educate mining

workers on screening and treatment options and also support for survivors and loved ones.

With greater understanding of prostate cancer in the mining sector, men and their families will know more about the risks and the benefits of early screening while raising awareness about available support.

Investment in awareness is vital to ensure our workmates, fathers, brothers and sons don't die before their time.

Pre-COVID, PCFA ambassadors supported by the MCA were getting out and about to mine sites, offices and projects. Now with movement restricted, the MCA is providing financial support to the PCFA so it can continue its great work.

WE WERE ALSO EXCITED TO HEAR ABOUT A NEW ONLINE COMMUNITY EVENT FOR PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH THIS SEPTEMBER.

The campaign is known as The Long Run and challenges people to walk, run, or wheel 72km to raise awareness of the physical and mental toll prostate cancer takes on Australian lives.

All of us know someone who has been impacted by prostate cancer and this campaign will empower the PCFA to help men over The Long Run, together.

This is a big issue for men and their families in the Hunter and other great Australian mining regions, because men in regional areas face a 24% higher risk of death

from prostate cancer.

OVER THE PAST 35 YEARS, PROSTATE CANCER SURVIVAL HAS JUMPED FROM 60% TO 95%. IF WE KEEP UP THE PACE OF PROGRESS WE CAN SAVE MANY LIVES.

Every kilometre we cover as a community this September will bring us closer to a world where prostate cancer can be effectively treated, where side effects can be overcome, and where all men have access to life-saving care and support.

If you work on site, this is a great opportunity to get fit during your breaks and before or after a shift by walking, running or wheeling for an incredibly worthy cause.

Get on board at thelongrun.org.au

Tania Constable
CEO, Minerals Council of Australia

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IN THE NEWS...

NEWS ANNOUNCER JESSICA ROUSE FROM RADIO HUNTER VALLEY HAS THE LATEST NEWS STORIES

PEABODY CAN'T SELL THEIR PRODUCT EITHER

Peabody Energy has announced they will be scaling back production at their underground mine at Warkworth near Singleton. The company has said they will be reducing the workforce at the Wambo Underground mine by around

half due to the incredibly challenging market conditions caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Where possible Peabody says affected employees will be offered roles at the company's other operations. All affected employees will receive full redundancy entitlements, employee assistance and counselling.

GLENCORE TAKING A SCHOOL HOLIDAY BREAK

Mining giant Glencore is taking a school holiday break, temporarily shutting down sites and equipment at the end of this month, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Glencore will be working to reduce their product by 7 million tonnes in a bid to ease pressure amid the pandemic which is making it increasingly difficult to sell product. They said in a statement the temporary shutdown will be a combination of temporary site and equipment shutdowns at a number of operations to align production levels with market demand. The shutdown will be over the September school holidays and workers are required to take leave during that time. Glencore's half yearly results show a huge \$3.7 billion-dollar half-year loss to June 30 - revenue for the last six months fell to \$99.8 billion-dollars down from \$151 billion-dollars the same time last year.

BYPASS

There isn't a dozer in the ground, but work is happening on the Singleton Bypass. Planning is moving ahead to the finalised detailed design work on the bypass after community feedback wrapped up. There is one concern though, the bypass won't be dual carriageway but Upper Hunter MP Michael Johnsen said the NSW Government has bought the land on either side of where the bypass will be to construct the dual carriageway in the future.

AUSTRALIA PACIFIC COAL'S FIGHT NOT UP YET

Australia Pacific Coal isn't giving up on their Dartbrook Mine proposal near Aberdeen. In August the company was going through a merits appeal in the NSW Land and Environment Court in a bid to reopen the mine. The Independent Planning Commission (IPC) ruled in August last year that the mine could reopen but only operate

for three years using bord-and-pillar methods to extract six million tonnes of coal. Australia Pacific Coal wanted to operate the mine for a minimum of seven years so they lodged an appeal against the decision. The company provided a Response to Contentions which contains further environmental studies. The public was able to provide feedback to that and the deadline has now passed.

LIDDELL SITE TURNING RENEWABLE

The Liddell Power Station site at Muswellbrook will soon also be home to an integrated battery system. Energy giant AGL has announced that they have lodged a scoping report with the NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment for a grid-scale battery system to be located alongside the existing coal power plant. The Liddell Battery is part of the 850 megawatt multi-site integrated battery system AGL targets to develop by the 2024 financial year. AGL's Chief Operating Officer Markus Brokhof said the technology is now at an investment level that allows them to lead the transition to decarbonisation in Australia.

RAIN RAIN, COME AGAIN

Plenty of rain has fallen across the Upper Hunter in August, but not enough to make much of a difference in the catchments. The Glenbawn Dam that supplies town water for Aberdeen, Scone and Murrurundi is sitting on 45.8% as of September 5 2020, and the Glennies Creek Dam is at 39.4% capacity - both have only risen a few percentage points.

All of the Upper Hunter region is on Level 2 water restrictions, with the exceptions of Cassilis and Merriwa who are on Level 1 restrictions. It is good news in the Liverpool Plains Shire however with the Quipolly Dam catchment rising from 89% to more than 100% - that flows into Borambil Creek which charges the Quirindi and Willow Tree water supplies.

THE RUMOURS ARE FINALLY TRUE FOR BHP

BHP will be looking to divest some of its coal assets including here in NSW. BHP has announced in their financial year results briefing they will pursue a strategy focused on higher quality coking coal for steel making which could mean a demerger is on the cards for the Mount Arthur site at Muswellbrook. Mount Arthur General Manager Adam Lancey addressed employees and said there is no decision at this stage and it could take up to two years for anything to happen. The company also said that "part of the reason for the divestment review is to explore ways to make all of our coal assets stronger and able to thrive in the future - whether at BHP or via another ownership structure". There has been years of speculation about whether or not the mine was for sale and whether or not BHP intended to hold on to the asset.

ANOTHER MINE FIGHT STILL NOT OVER

It could be several weeks before the NSW Land and Environment Court makes a decision on the judicial review into the IPC's rejection of the Bylong Valley mine project. South Korean mining company Kepco was rejected by the IPC last year when their project was ruled not to be in the public's interest. Kepco told the court the IPC didn't properly consider a number of environmental impacts and didn't follow the correct procedures in making their decision.



'HANDS OFF OUR BENEFITS'

THE CFMEU HAVE LAUNCHED A NEW NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN URGING MPS IN MINING COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT THE RIGHTS OF LONG-TERM CASUAL MINeworkERS AGAINST AN EMPLOYER PUSH TO LEGALISE 'PERMANENT CASUAL' EMPLOYMENT.

New TV and social media ads have hit our screens featuring a naked coal miner explaining that rights won for casuals are now under threat in Canberra, leaving them exposed. Targeted at mining communities like us in the Hunter, the ads aim to encourage locals to email their MPs and urge them to back coal mineworkers' rights. Over 40% of the Northern District coal mining workforce is contract labour hire rather than directly employed, costing the Hunter region nearly \$300 billion a year in

economic activity. The Federal Court has twice ruled that casual coal miners working regular, full-time hours on advance rosters are not casuals by law and should therefore be able to claim permanent benefits like paid leave. Since then employer groups have been attempting to overturn its effect through legislation.

CFMEU NATIONAL PRESIDENT TONY MAHER SAID IT WAS VITAL TO ENSURE THE INTERESTS OF MINERS WERE REPRESENTED IN THE DEBATE.

"We know multinational companies are very good at making noise in Canberra. This campaign is about ensuring the voice of Australian mineworkers is heard just as loud and just as clear," Mr Maher said. "For a decade now, mining companies have been steadily eroding quality, permanent mining jobs and replacing them with casual labour hire jobs on less pay and with no benefits. If you work full-time on an Australian mine you should get the conditions you're legally entitled to as an Australian worker, like sick leave and holidays. It's that simple." "THE UMPIRE HAS RULED - TWICE NOW, IN FACT. WE CAN'T LET BIG BUSINESS CHANGE THE RULES JUST

BECAUSE THEY DON'T LIKE THE DECISION. MINING COMMUNITIES ARE DEPENDING ON THEIR POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES TO DEFEND THEIR INTERESTS."

A recent report by the McKell Institute found that around a billion dollars had been stripped from coal mining regional economies each year as a result of the widespread replacement of permanent mining jobs with outsourced casual labour hire on lower pay. "Anyone with any exposure to the mining industry knows the toxic effect of casualisation on mineworkers, their families and communities. It's unsafe, with casual mineworkers fearful of speaking up," Mr Maher said. "Our Federal Court win clarifies that in the context of mining - where casuals typically work full-time hours on rosters a year in advance - it's also illegal. Mining community MPs should be cheering this court decision and giving their commitment that they'll protect casual miners' rights in Canberra." Alongside the ads, the CFMEU Mining



and Energy's Protect Casual Miners campaign includes tools to make it easy for workers to tell their local MPs how important it is to stamp out casual exploitation in mining.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO WWW.PROTECTCASUALMINERS.COM.AU

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Learning TO LEAD

THIS MONTH WE SHARE THE INSPIRING STORY OF HOW LEAH MILLER BECAME NSW MINING'S 2020 EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG WOMAN IN MINING. WE CAUGHT UP WITH LEAH TO HEAR ABOUT HER JOURNEY AND WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BECOME A ROLE MODEL FOR YOUNG WOMEN.



Leah is the CHPP Maintenance Delivery Superintendent at Yancoal's Mt Thorley Warkworth Mine. She's not only the first female to hold the role, but also the first to do so without a trade or engineering qualification. Her story is proof that with determination, hard work and a willingness to learn there really are no limits to where a career in mining can take you.

Raised on a dairy farm in Victoria, Leah's a country girl at heart. Life on the farm meant not being scared to get your hands dirty. It also instilled in Leah the attitude to 'get in and get the job done'. Growing up, Leah also moved schools a lot which was a tough but valuable experience.

"MOVING AROUND A LOT TAUGHT ME HOW TO MAKE CONNECTIONS AND TO INTERACT WITH PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE," LEAH SAID. "IT'S A SKILL THAT HAS SERVED ME WELL AND I WOULDN'T BE WHERE I AM TODAY WITHOUT IT."

When it came time for university, Leah did a Bachelor of Business and Commerce at Bond University on the Gold Coast. Upon finishing her degree she entered a Rio Tinto Graduate Program as a Business Analyst in 2012, expecting to spend the next 18 months working at Hunter Valley Operations before moving on.

"I hadn't really considered a career in the mining industry but the program seemed like a great opportunity so I decided to give it a go. It was while I was in this role that everything changed. The downturn hit and I began working with teams all across the business to identify ways to save money. I'm proud to say that during this challenging period working as part of a team we identified millions of dollars of cost savings."

"Before that happened I was feeling a little unsatisfied with the predictability of the role. These new challenges gave me a real sense of accomplishment and I saw what you could achieve as part of a bigger team. I got to see how one side of the business could tangibly improve the other side. It made me want to learn more and do more. It was then I decided I wanted to move to an operational role."

Leah knew that it would be a difficult transition to move from the

commercial to the operational side of the business. She began to look for other people with her background who had moved across to other roles thinking they could provide a road map on how to transition, but it turned out only rarely had it ever been done before.

Despite this Leah was determined to take on an operational role and began exploring options within mining, maintenance and CHPP. Thanks to her persistence, and no doubt her skill at connecting with people, before long she was promoted into a Specialist Contractor Management role.

"This role really opened my eyes to the art of influencing people and what you could achieve as part of a team and was a good stepping stone. I continued to build relationships and chase down opportunities and thanks to a manager who had faith in me I got the role of Rebuild Coordinator with the maintenance team in 2017."

For the next year Leah oversaw over 150 HME rebuilds leading a team of 140 personnel. Where some might have struggled being thrown in the deep end, Leah thrived. She established herself as a strong leader and managed her first capital project to completion, on time, on budget and, most importantly, safely.

"NOT MINDING GETTING MY HANDS DIRTY SURE CAME IN HANDY FOR MY FIRST CAPITAL PROJECT," LEAH SAYS WITH A LAUGH. "IT WAS ONE OF THOSE PROJECTS WHERE YOU JUMPED ONE HURDLE AND ANOTHER WOULD COME UP. IT WAS EXTREMELY STRESSFUL BUT I RELISHED THE CHALLENGE."

Then after only 10 months in the role Leah stepped up into the role of Project 8 Shutdown Superintendent when the former leader unexpectedly became ill. It was a stressful time for her and her team but Leah kept them motivated and continued to deliver high value outcomes despite the pressure they were under.

With so many successes under her belt and a reputation established as a respected leader it was no surprise when in October 2019 Leah was rewarded with the role of CHPP Maintenance Delivery Superintendent where she became responsible for leading a large team while managing

maintenance priorities.

"We've had our challenges since I stepped into the role, especially with the pandemic, but we have exceeded our availability target by 1.5% thanks to the entire team. I'm proud to have been able to lead them and help them maximise their skills so we could achieve this together."

Through every role Leah has shown that she can step up to any challenge and is a role model not just to women, but to everyone. A worthy winner of the award, yet Leah says she was very surprised to be nominated let alone win.

"I'm really very grateful and honoured to have won, it's recognition of all the hard work I've put in. During the presentation of the award so many people were there with me. All the people who contributed. From the warehouse to HR to the infrastructure to the managers. People that believed in me and helped me and taught me. I wouldn't have got to where I am today without those people."

Although she's now a strong advocate for the awards, Leah said she didn't know too much about them before being nominated but now recognises how important they are.

"AWARDS LIKE THESE ARE VITAL, NOT ONLY TO RECOGNISE ALL THE WOMEN OUT THERE DOING FANTASTIC THINGS, BUT TO PROMOTE THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE AVAILABLE IN THE MINING INDUSTRY AND SHOW YOUNG GIRLS WHAT'S POSSIBLE."



"Our business like many in our industry still needs more female representation in the workforce. Here we have only 12.1% of female representation and only 2 out of 13 operational superintendent roles are filled by women. The business has done a lot in terms of improving facilities and spaces but we still have a way to go."

"I'd like to be able to tell young people and especially young girls who are still in school or considering careers that there is more out there than you can ever imagine. In our industry there are roles and jobs that most people don't even know about."

Leah has plenty of advice that she's keen to share. Her drive to learn has been a key element in her success. "If you haven't got the skill, get out there and look, see, touch, feel. I've found that nearly every person I've

worked with has been willing to teach me.

If you show you are interested people will respond and happily share their knowledge."

Leah also advises that you should take every opportunity that comes along. Be willing to say yes and take that chance.

"THE BEST ADVICE I WAS EVER GIVEN WAS DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE READY FOR YOUR NEXT JOB BEFORE YOU GO FOR IT. YOU MIGHT NEVER BE READY. I THINK THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR WOMEN WHO ARE MORE LIKELY TO UNDERESTIMATE THEIR SKILLS."

And those skills don't have to come from a degree or qualification. Leah has learnt that experience often means more than a piece of paper. Whilst study is important nothing beats real world knowledge.

"The other advice I have to give is find mentors and people who will support you. 'You can't be who you can't see'. And don't necessarily look for mentors who are at the top, often the people who are one or two rungs above you are the ones who can help the most. Think outside your department or role for mentors too."

"I've also found programs like WIMnet to be valuable. LinkedIn is great too, not only for the contacts you can make, it also has a lot of online courses and resources and most of them are free. At the end of the day it's about expanding your awareness, getting out and trying things, you never know where you'll end up. I never thought I'd be doing this that's for sure but I would never go back. It's challenging and rewarding and fulfilling."

After talking to Leah, I was impressed by her story, but what impressed me even more was discovering later that she has achieved all this whilst facing the challenges of managing an autoimmune disease, a disease which has severely impacted her work and home life. Instead of allowing the illness to obstruct her, it seems instead she has used it to strengthen her by giving her a greater understanding and empathy towards others in the workplace.

What's next for Leah? "I'm not really sure," she muses. "I'll be looking to my mentors for direction, maybe a little soul searching, and of course I'm always looking for what can I do next."



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PUBLISHERS OPINION

MINES EMPLOY AUSSIES TOO

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RECENTLY IT WAS REPORTED THAT SOME HUNTER VALLEY MINES HAD APPLIED FOR AND RECEIVED SUPPORT THROUGH THE JOBKEEPER PROGRAM. WHY IS THIS EVEN NEWS?

Personally I find it hilarious that employees of large national and international news outlets have the audacity to call into question mining companies receiving support for employees to keep them on when the alternative might well be layoffs and redundancies.

During this pandemic and historically there are media businesses who have treated their own people with little respect or loyalty. At the first sign of winds of change great media talent and assets have been cut off and thrown away like they were a cancer.

In many cases media outlets have also received Jobkeeper support and taken advantage of the range of government grants available. As they should. That is in fact the very purpose of why these support payments and grants have been created. To keep businesses alive and to keep people employed. No matter what industry.

MINING AND MINING WORKFORCES HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN THEY ARE RIGHT NOW. THE INDUSTRY IS PLAYING A HUGE PART IN KEEPING THE ECONOMY FUNCTIONING. MINE WORKERS AND MINING COMPANIES HAVE A RIGHT AND A DUTY TO PRESERVE AS MANY JOBS AS THEY CAN.



That is precisely what the great majority are trying very hard to do. Mine workers being supported by Jobkeeper is not only a good thing, but the right thing.

Obviously there is the constantly fluctuating coal price, but at the moment that downward price trend is largely due to the global pandemic and its global effect on economies, industry, and life everywhere. That is the same for most companies large and small and that includes the coal industry. We really are all in the same boat on this

one. If mining needs a bit of the same support as everyone else for exactly the same reasons as everyone else, then thank God that support is there to keep mine workers employed.

ANYONE WHO HAS A PROBLEM WITH THAT SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF THEMSELVES FOR THINKING THEY ARE ANY MORE WORTHY THAN ANYONE ELSE.

I've also seen some negative media on the shutdowns that some mines have recently taken, and will most likely have to continue to do until the crisis has passed. Yet not once have I seen anything but utmost sympathy for every other business that has done

exactly the same thing. I've seen firsthand local businesses who have stood down workers with no pay, no notice, and no communication as to when they might be able to get back to work. If they go back to work at all.

Mining is a long-term business and the one that will bear the heaviest load to get us out the other side. All I want to see is the same fair treatment for the mining industry that other industries take for granted.



MINES ALL OVER NSW HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONTINUE SAFE OPERATIONS WITH THE HELP OF THEIR COVID SAFE PRACTICES, SUPPORTING NOT ONLY OUR MINERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, BUT THOUSANDS OF SUPPLIERS AND OUR COMMUNITIES.



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE

The health and safety of our mine workers, their families and mining communities remains the industry's top priority amid the current global Covid pandemic. As we adapt to new ways of living and working, we have been able to safely continue operations at mines across NSW.

When Covid hit in early 2020 the industry sprung into action, implementing new protocols and procedures across all NSW mines. Things like health monitoring, cleaning and sanitation, physical distancing, travel and shift changes and alternative work arrangements have all contributed to the safety of our workers and wider community.

It was this prompt response that has kept thousands of local people employed and the NSW economy moving.

"There are around 40,000 people working directly in mining in NSW. There are many thousands more working in over 7,000 local businesses in Sydney and regional NSW that are supplying our mines with goods and services," said NSW Minerals Council CEO, Stephen Galilee.

"THESE BUSINESSES, ALONG WITH SO MANY LOCAL COMMUNITY-BASED BUSINESSES IN OUR REGIONS, ARE BENEFITTING FROM THE COVID-SAFE PRACTICES AT OUR MINES. BECAUSE OUR MINES ARE STILL WORKING, THESE BUSINESSES CAN KEEP WORKING TOO.

"Our priority has always been to ensure the health and safety of our mining workforce, mining families and mining communities, while maintaining the important economic contribution that our industry is known for and relied upon.

"Today, the continued operation of our mines across NSW is helping to support the state economy as well as the economies of regional communities at a time when it is needed most."

NSW MINING HAVE NOW LAUNCHED THEIR COVID-19 WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY INFORMATION CAMPAIGN, FEATURING A NUMBER OF LOCAL SINGLETON BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS THAT SUPPORT MINING IN NSW.

Businesses like cafes, pubs and clubs that benefit from mining families

spending locally and the continued functioning of our communities.

Those like Quest Singleton who offer 35 serviced apartment style hotel rooms, welcoming guests on holidays and many workers in mining and other local industries.

Quarry Mining use advanced manufacturing right here in NSW to produce high-quality drilling equipment for multiple industries including mining.

Lindy Harris from One Agency is an experienced real estate professional helping our mining families to buy, sell and rent properties across the Hunter Valley.

Based in Newcastle, ALL-PRO Chemical and Cleaning Supplies is the largest supplier of cleaning agents to the Australian coal industry in addition to many other industries throughout Australia. It's the type of business that is more vital than ever to ensure that our workplaces can be cleaned effectively, and the health of our mine workers can be protected.

Businesses like The Albion Hotel Singleton, Club Singleton and Cervoz Café and Catering provide a place for our mining communities to connect, relax with friends and enjoy entertainment and quality food.

Mines like Bulga coal, operated by NSW Council member company Glencore, provide hundreds of jobs to our region. They employ approximately 750 employees and contractors with many from the Hunter Valley.

THE NSW MINING INDUSTRY HAS ALSO PROUDLY SUPPORTED THE WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE FOR MORE THAN 35 YEARS; A VITAL SUPPORT GROUP FOR OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

Ensuring the industry and community works together to stay safe and keep our economy moving is at the core of our NSW mining industry. All of the businesses that make up our community, all of our miners and their families, all of the local organisations in our mining regions – they all benefit from the continued operations of our mines during this time.

It's fantastic to see businesses and community members unite to promote NSW Mining's COVID-19 workforce and community information campaign and show just how important it is to work together.

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SINGLETON BEEF & LAND MANAGEMENT ARE HELPING TO EDUCATE MORE FARMERS AND STUDENTS THAN EVER BEFORE WITH A CREATIVE NEW APPROACH TO THEIR ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION DAY.

INDUSTRY EXPERT NEIL NELSON SHARES HIS KNOWLEDGE IN FREE ONLINE LESSONS.

CHECK OUT THE FREE EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL ON SINGLETON BEEF & LAND MANAGEMENT'S WEBSITE.

Lessons include: Feeding cattle for showing, the importance of record keeping and early preparation, pastures and poultry keeping.

WWW.SINGLETONBEEFANDLAND.ORG.AU/CATTLE-EDUCATION-DAY

Every July, Singleton Beef and Land Management run an Agricultural Education Day with a usual attendance of over 300 students from schools all over the region, including the Hunter Valley, Central Coast and Tamworth. The days are about providing valuable experience and teaching opportunities that are often not available at school with experienced industry and producer speakers providing practical instruction and hands-on tuition to the students attending.

This year Covid restrictions forced the event to be cancelled and so the group came up with a novel approach to the problem. They developed a series of free virtual lessons for teachers and students to use in their classroom or at home. The lessons cover topics like pastures, cattle and poultry and include videos featuring local industry experts.

SINGLETON BEEF & LAND MANAGEMENT PRESIDENT GREG BALL SAID THE PROJECT WAS AIMED TO PROVIDE AVENUES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE THAT COULD BE APPLIED TO THEIR SCHOOL'S AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS.

"With Covid restricting our ability to physically host the event we had to look at alternatives so our students wouldn't miss out. This is the first time our group has put together presentations of this type. We have for many years been able to provide practical demonstrations and field days but with support from Glencore, we have been able to come up with a new way to support agricultural education," Greg said. "Their co-operation has been valuable to achieve these presentations and videos and we very much appreciate their support and technical input with the video and drone footage." Glencore's Community Relations

Manager, Craig Strudwick said it was fantastic to see the group continue to provide students with valuable education material despite challenging circumstances.

"WE ARE DELIGHTED TO CONTINUE OUR SUPPORT OF THE SINGLETON BEEF & LAND MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION AND HOPE TO SEE THEIR EDUCATION DAYS CONTINUE WELL INTO THE FUTURE, WHETHER THEY'RE AT SINGLETON SHOWGROUND OR ONLINE."

Neil Nelson, one of the featured presenters and a member of the group, said the topics chosen were similar to those to be presented at the field day and would allow more people the opportunity to learn without even leaving their homes or classrooms.

"Our aim was to provide practical information that was backed up by video footage to increase interest and provide visual context. This is even more important now that many experiences are limited by Covid lockdowns, which means students are missing out on gaining the practical experience they need. We hope the video footage will not only be informative but create interest and discussion."

"The response we have for this project already has been great. Within an hour of it going up on our site we had teachers from Tamworth, Singleton and the Central Coast respond," said Neil. "Teachers of Years 9, 10 and 11 agriculture and primary industries are already taking advantage of the presentations and are, in fact, eager for more."

"And it's not just for students and teachers," adds Neil. "If you're a farmer or have a general interest in agriculture it's well worth having a look."

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Worth THE Wait

Festival organisers said the potential health risks of mass gatherings at events and the increasing possibility of having to cancel the festival closer to the scheduled October 2020 dates made the choice to postpone until 2021 a "difficult but responsible decision". The Hunter Coal Festival is owned and organised by the Singleton Business Chamber. Chamber president Sue Gilroy said the Covid 19 situation would be closely monitored and formally reviewed in November when the 2021 dates for the festival events would be announced.

MS GILROY SAID THE CHAMBER REMAINED COMMITTED TO STAGING THE FESTIVAL'S THREE MAIN EVENTS IN 2021 – A CAREERS AND INNOVATION EXPO IN MUSWELLBROOK, THE MINING LEADERS LUNCH IN SINGLETON AND THE SINGLETON COMMUNITY DAY.

Organisers had also been working with other groups with plans to stage other events during the festival; those discussions would continue and hopefully the 2021 timing



THE 2020 HUNTER COAL FESTIVAL WILL BE POSTPONED UNTIL NEXT YEAR DUE TO COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS.

would allow those events to remain under the festival umbrella.

On the positive side, much of the festival's organisation was well-advanced and the festival had attracted strong support from sponsors.

"All of that organisational work is transferable to the festival in 2021 so a large part of the administration facets of the organisation is complete and won't have to be completed again for 2021," Ms Gilroy said.

"While they were disappointed that the festival was not going ahead in October 2020, our sponsors and other stakeholders have been very understanding and have pledged their support for a bigger and better festival in 2021."

"That's great because I think we are all going to be ready for a big celebration in 2021."





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LEARN FROM THE LAWMAN

STUART BARNETT IS OUR MINING INDUSTRY'S LEADING PERSONAL INJURY LAWYER. THIS MONTH HE HAS SOME IMPORTANT ADVICE ABOUT YOUR EMPLOYER'S OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE YOU WITH SUITABLE DUTIES FOLLOWING AN INJURY IN THE MINING INDUSTRY AND WHAT HAPPENS IF THEY DON'T.

It is often the case following an injury in the coal mining industry that an injured worker will, after the initial recovery, be certified fit for suitable or restricted duties. In many cases this is for the short term. Unfortunately, in some cases, it is forever.

One of the aims of the workers compensation system is to rehabilitate the injured worker back to their pre injury employment. This is usually initiated by the treating doctor providing a certificate setting out the type of work that the worker is capable of, any restrictions on what they can do and for how many hours or shifts they can perform that work. The Insurer and employer will then put together a Return to Work Plan.

The injured worker is obliged to cooperate and participate in the return to work plan. The employer is required to provide the suitable or restricted duties. In the event that the worker suffers a loss of wages as a result then a claim can be made for top up weekly compensation, which is capped. Examples of situations where an entitlement to top up compensation might arise include, but are not limited to, working reduced hours or inability to work overtime.

THE EMPLOYER HAS AN OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE SUITABLE DUTIES. IN SOME CASES EMPLOYERS ARE UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO PROVIDE THEM. THE "PENALTY" OR RESULT IS THAT THE INJURED WORKER IS DEEMED TO BE TOTALLY INCAPACITATED FOR WORK AND COMPENSATED ACCORDINGLY. FOR THOSE IN THE COAL MINING INDUSTRY COVERED BY AN ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT WITH AN "ACCIDENT PAY" CLAUSE IN IT OR THE BLACK COAL AWARD

THIS NORMALLY RESULTS IN AN ENTITLEMENT TO ACCIDENT PAY FOR A DEFINED PERIOD.

In order to be deemed to be totally incapacitated for work as a result of a failure to provide suitable duties certain criteria or steps are necessary. The injured worker must have a suitable or restricted duties certificate and be ready willing and able to undertake those duties. The injured worker must submit the certificate to their employer and ask for suitable duties and the employer must fail to provide those duties.

In the event that you find yourself in a situation where there are no suitable duties available there is no need to get the certificate amended to read totally incapacitated. Just keep obtaining the suitable duties certificate whilst ever it is appropriate to your injuries.

This is general advice and because your individual circumstances will vary, I recommend seeking out specific advice for your needs.

STUART BARNETT, SLATER & GORDON LAWYERS

'AVE A LAUGH WITH

As a mother was bribing her little boy with a dollar so he would behave and she said, "Why do I

always have to pay you to be good? Why can't you be good for nothing like your dad?"

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PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

THE UPPER HUNTER MINING DIALOGUE'S WORKING GROUPS WILL MEET VIA ZOOM IN SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS THE LATEST FINDINGS AND RESULTS FROM A NUMBER OF KEY DIALOGUE PROJECTS.

THE UHMD WORKING GROUPS WILL BE REVIEWING MANY PROJECTS IN SEPTEMBER INCLUDING REHABILITATION.

The Working Groups will meet through the web conferencing platform due to the ongoing restrictions on gatherings and physical distancing requirements from Covid-19.

Across seven meetings, along with discussing other Dialogue initiatives, the working groups will review and discuss the latest information from a variety of current projects, including:

REHABILITATION PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS – This annual project tracks the amount of land disturbed in the Upper Hunter and the amount of mined land rehabilitated in the same year. Data from the 2019 calendar year has been sourced

from industry and will be collated with historical data back to 2012 to provide an updated snapshot of mining disturbance and the resulting progressive rehabilitation in the Upper Hunter.

WATER ACCOUNTING FRAMEWORK – This annual project records the mining industry's use of water from the Hunter River and compares its extraction to other approved water users including agriculture, other industries, and community users. With the 2019 report being finalised, the project has now recorded six years of water usage data.

ANALYSIS OF UPPER HUNTER AIR QUALITY MONITORING NETWORK DATA – This study is examining

long-term air quality data gathered via the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network to assess long-term trends of air quality in the Upper Hunter. The analysis focuses on two key questions: 1) Has the air quality in the Upper Hunter Valley changed since monitoring began?; and 2) Are air quality changes in the Upper Hunter Valley measured at the monitoring stations different from air quality measured at other locations in NSW?

The working groups are scheduled to review the figures from the Rehabilitation and Water Usage Projects and Group members will examine a report on the Air Quality Project which has been updated to include a peer review by the CSIRO.

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PARALLEL ECONOMICS

TRAIL TOWN

IN THIS BRAVE NEW WORLD WE LIVE IN, SOLO OR SMALL GROUP FITNESS PURSUITS LIKE RUNNING AND WALKING HAVE BECOME INSANELY POPULAR. IMAGINE IF THERE WAS AN EPIC SIZED HOME FOR ALL FORMS OF LEG WORK THAT ATTRACTED PEOPLE FROM EVERYWHERE.

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A nice scenic jog or walk along trails at your own pace or competitively is a great way to spend time. Competitive running like orienteering and cross country are also sports on the way up. However, whether you like to run or walk, there are plenty of reasons a dedicated venue to pound out the km's would work.

YOU ONLY HAVE TO CONSIDER THE MAGNET FOR THIS ACTIVE PURSUIT THAT THE BLUE MOUNTAINS AND OTHER LOCATIONS DRAW IN.

Sure the places like the Blue Mountains are super spectacular scenery and track wise, but there are dozens of locations on mine, buffer and offset land throughout the Hunter that would offer trails as picturesque as they are able to challenge all levels of difficulty.

This idea is low impact on its surrounding environment would be relatively low on the development cost and difficulty side of things. Be it competitions, recreation or training, the venue could be a running nirvana to use alone, with friends and family, for organised sporting groups, schools or for use for training for sporting teams. Even the military and emergency services could use it for training and fitness purposes.

ORGANISED RUNNING GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS COULD HOLD A PLETHORA OF COMPETITIVE PLANNED EVENTS.

Positioned and set up for all levels and challenges there would be something for everyone. Flat courses, bush, steep climbing, scenic, competitive and much more could all be accommodated. Distances and difficulties ranging from an easy hour or two with the family or friends to courses that take a couple of days to compete could all be in the one place. Infrastructure such as defined and improved tracks, water stations and toilet and first aid amenities at points along the way, along with wayfinding signage would all be easy to develop. Stepping in difficult terrain would provide accessibility as well as challenges.

A central 'Base Camp' village with campgrounds, amenities and information centre shop could all be easily developed.

As previously written about, perhaps mountain biking could be incorporated.

All in all, it would work and attract thousands per month.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...READY, SET, RUN!

OPINION

'LABOR IN CHANGE'



I RECENTLY CAUSED A BIT OF A FUSS BY EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY. THE COUNTRY'S OLDEST AND BIGGEST POLITICAL MOVEMENT IS BEING CHALLENGED BY A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD.



Born out of nineteenth century industrial disputes on our wharfs and in our shearing sheds, for decades Labor has largely focused on the welfare of working class-people. Those people typically worked in our coal mines, steel mills, abattoirs, and other manufacturing plants. Trade unions were stronger because legal protection for workers' rights were weak, and union leaders were able to organise in businesses with large workforces. While the work is never complete, the labour movement has been very effective in achieving its workplace safety, fair pay and job security objectives.

Along the way our economy changed substantially. The services sector has grown enormously, as has retail. Sadly, many of our manufacturing plants are no longer. Car manufacturing, textiles, and steel-making are but a few examples of industries which have either disappeared or shrunk considerably. This is a great tragedy.

This change has challenged the Labor Party in three substantial ways. First, blue-collar workers no longer feel as dependant on the Party for their job security and working conditions. Second, the workers most likely to feel a need for Labor's protection in the 21st Century work in the retail, health or services sectors.

THIRD, THE GENTRIFICATION OF FORMERLY WORKING-CLASS SUBURBS IN OUR CAPITAL CITIES HAS RESULTED IN THE RISE AND RISE OF THE "PROGRESSIVE CLASS" WHO ARE MORE FOCUSED ON THE STATE OF OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT THAN THE FORTUNES OF OUR TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES OR JOB SECURITY. WHILE IT IS ALWAYS DANGEROUS TO GENERALISE, MANY OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE LITTLE OF THEIR OWN FINANCIAL SECURITY INVESTED IN MANUFACTURING, COAL MINING OR THE OILS AND GAS SECTORS.

These progressives are drawn to the Left on voting day. Their options are either the Greens, or Labor as the major Party with the better record on environmental policy. The emergence of the "progressive class" has created a second base for Labor. It now juggles the interests of the progressive class on the Left, with the interests of its traditional blue-collar base further to the Right. Satisfying the two bases with the right policy balance is not an easy task.

Labor is always the largest political party in the House of Representatives – the Chamber where Government is formed by the party that holds the most seats. But unlike the Liberal and National Parties, our task is to secure those seats in our own right. The Libs and Nats say different things

during the election campaign, but they then combine under a secret Coalition Agreement to say the same thing once they get to Canberra. For most of the post-war period, their combined seats have numbered more than Labor's. Therefore, they've held Government more often.

So, Labor's task is a massive one. To form a government, it must both defeat two parties and balance two competing support bases – the old and the new. Supporting blue-collar workers in the coal and gas sectors loses votes in inner-Sydney. Taking strong action on climate change loses it votes in the regions.

THIS IS THE POINT I WAS MAKING IN MY CONTROVERSIAL PODCAST. LABOR MUST WORK HARDER AT BALANCING ITS COMPETING SUPPORT BASES. IT CAN'T WIN ALONE WITHOUT ITS TRADITIONAL BASE, AND IT CAN'T WIN WITHOUT ITS PROGRESSIVE BASE. IF IT SERVES FOREVER IN OPPOSITION, IT CAN DO NOTHING FOR EITHER BASE.

So, the right policy balance must be found. I didn't say the Party should split, I said there is a risk it could if we don't find that balance.

**Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP
Shadow Minister for
Agriculture and Resources and
Federal Member for Hunter.**

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THEN AND NOW

WE'RE BACK WITH ANOTHER MONTH OF GETTING TO KNOW OUR INDUSTRY LEADERS AND WHAT LED THEM TO THE MINING INDUSTRY. HERE'S THE STORIES OF OUR @ THE COALFACE MATES THAT CALL THE HUNTER VALLEY THEIR HOME.

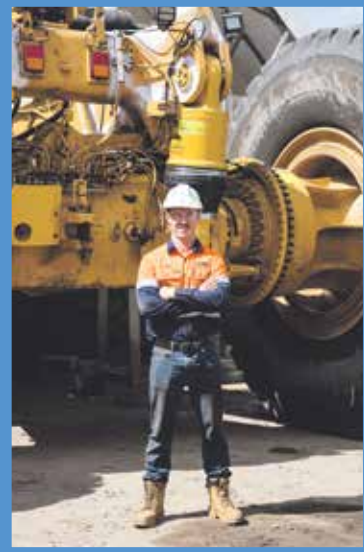


ALEXANDER COOPER

MANAGING DIRECTOR, CPR PLANT REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

My family have been a part of the Hunter Valley mining industry for generations and I've always aspired to continue on with the tradition. Growing up on a farm in Branxton, I was always helping my dad fix machinery. I'm fascinated by how things work and wanted to turn this interest into a career. At the age of fifteen I was offered an Apprenticeship as a Plant Mechanic and I jumped at the opportunity. Whilst completing my apprenticeship I also completed my Auto Electrical trade and Automotive Air Conditioning competency. At the time I was lucky enough to be working for a company that gave me great

insight into maintenance in the mining industry. After finishing my trades, I worked as a Field Service Technician and noticed a gap in the market for highly skilled field labour. Out of this, CPR Plant Repairs and Maintenance was born. It started with a toolbox in the back of my Hilux and has since grown to a wonderful team of over thirty employees. Over the years we've developed a close knit, family culture with safety as a main priority. In four years of operation we've had zero LTI's. It's been an incredible journey so far and I look forward to where we're headed into the future.



KYLE PAYNE

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, AUSTRALIAN MINING EQUIPMENT

I grew up in Stockton and in my youth rugby league was my passion. I got my start in the mining industry with Delta SBD as an operator in the Hunter Valley. I had relocated from coast to country to play, what would turn out to be, my last season of rugby league for the Singleton Greyhounds. Although my footy career was ending my career in mining was just beginning. I continued to work in the Hunter Valley mines for many years as an underground operator and crew leader. At the age of 29 I decided to undertake a mature age electrical apprenticeship. It was a big financial decision at the time, my wife was on maternity leave and we had a young

family, but I was eager to expand not only my skills but my future career prospects. Ampcontrol sponsored my apprenticeship and I remained with the organisation joining their Underground Field Service team working as an OEM representative at mine sites throughout the Hunter Valley, Western NSW and the South Coast. I'm excited to have now recently joined the team at Australian Mining Equipment (AME) who are experiencing incredible growth and have recently expanded their service offerings to include AS3800 overhauls. It's a new challenge, and I look forward to bringing exceptional customer service to both new and familiar faces.



RENATA ROBERTS

CHIEF CORPORATE SERVICES OFFICER, THE BLOOMFIELD GROUP

My first job after university was not with "miners" but "minors". I was a Psychology and Mathematics Teacher in Victoria. I hadn't heard much about Newcastle and didn't know anyone in mining. After very quickly realising I wasn't that thrilled with Year 10 all boy's maths classes after lunch on a Friday, I got a role in recruitment. My colleague soon decided to put me forward for a HR junior role with a company called Pasminco who had mines and smelters around Australia and internationally. That was the first I had anything to do with

mining....and I haven't left the industry since! From the Head Office in Melbourne and then with progressive HR, Systems and Safety and Health roles and project opportunities in Tassie, Qld, SA, NSW and also US, Switzerland, Netherlands, Peru and England, I never imagined the journey mining would take my husband and I on. Now after 8 wonderful years in the Hunter with The Bloomfield Group, our little family of three are so proud to call this home, and the amazing Bloomfield team and mining industry colleagues our extended family.



MARK OSTERMANN

MANAGING DIRECTOR, MECHLEC

Growing up I had the best mentor possible, my dad. With a background in mechanical and as a TAFE teacher he would have me in the shed or out in the field teaching me the ins and outs of cars, trucks and tractors. After leaving school I started an electrical apprenticeship with Komatsu where I was exposed to training and experience that was second to none – spending almost 8 years with the OEM and completing trades in electrical, auto electrical, automotive air-conditioning, mobile plant and heavy

vehicle I felt I was well prepared to take on the step in my career as a sub-contractor. Fast forward a few years from there with the support and driving force of my wife and kids we have grown a business to specialise in all areas of electrical and auto electrical and air-conditioning. With a great close-knit team of now 35 employees including 3 apprentices we have a passion for delivering a high-quality service and being active members of our local community



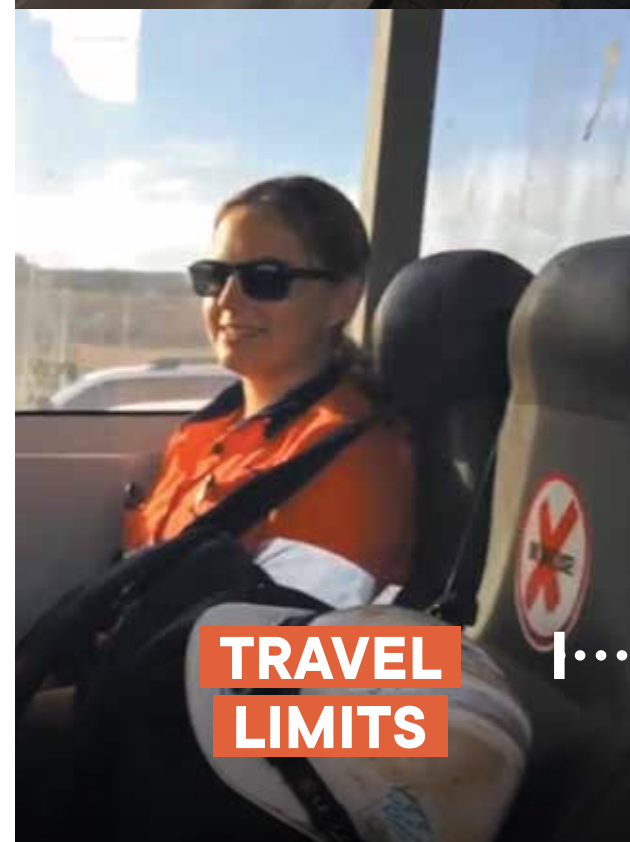
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SUPPLIER INSIDER

BTP

MT THORLEY



Who are you and what do you do?

Matt Roberts, Customer Support Sales Advisor for BTP supplying used, aftermarket and rebuilt parts to support our customers planned maintenance and breakdown requirements.

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

My introduction to the mining industry in the Hunter Valley was as a rigger inspecting and installing lifting equipment and height safety systems. I found a passion for sales when I was promoted to an area management sales role.

After a few years looking after mining customers in this role an opportunity came up to take on a sales role with a company supplying electric drive

truck components to clients in the Hunter Valley and Bowen Basin. I spent 4 years in the electric drive world when another opportunity arose to immerse myself in CAT equipment when I joined the team at BTP 2.5yrs ago.

Describe a typical day at 'The office'.

Although each day is different a typical day would be taking enquiries by phone or email and compiling quotes/proposals, following up on submitted quotes and proposals, cold calling potential customers, creating marketing material, searching social media such as LinkedIn for leads, sourcing parts through industry contacts, and talking to planners regarding upcoming component changeouts and interacting with our rebuild workshop for lead times on rebuilt parts to supply planned changeouts.

What's the best thing about your business?

The people and the product. We have a great team filled with years of knowledge and experience here in Mt Thorley. All our parts are rebuilt to high standards using only OEM parts.

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

We are transferring 32 pieces of rental equipment from Wambo over to the United Wambo JV.

What is the biggest opportunity for your business right now?

Service Exchange and rebuilding parts. BTP started out as a dismantler and used parts supplier and we are still seen that way by some but over the years BTP has evolved and offers a large inventory of rebuilt service exchange parts as well as some of the Hunter Valleys most experienced component builders to

rebuild or repair just about any CAT part.

What are the biggest challenges facing your business?

Tough opposition. There is a healthy stream of suppliers dealing with rebuilt CAT parts keeping us on our toes here in the Hunter Valley.

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

BTP started out in QLD in 1996 before establishing a branch in Mt Thorley NSW in 2004.

Community or other causes close to its heart and values?

We are sponsors of the Singleton Greyhounds Rugby League club.

How big is the crew in the Hunter Valley?

BTP Mt Thorley is the smallest of BTP Groups branches with 21 office, workshop, and site employees.

What's the best thing about your job?

Having the confidence that the product we provide is of high quality. And the team I work with every day, experienced, knowledgeable, and never a dull moment at the Mt Thorley office.

The worst thing?

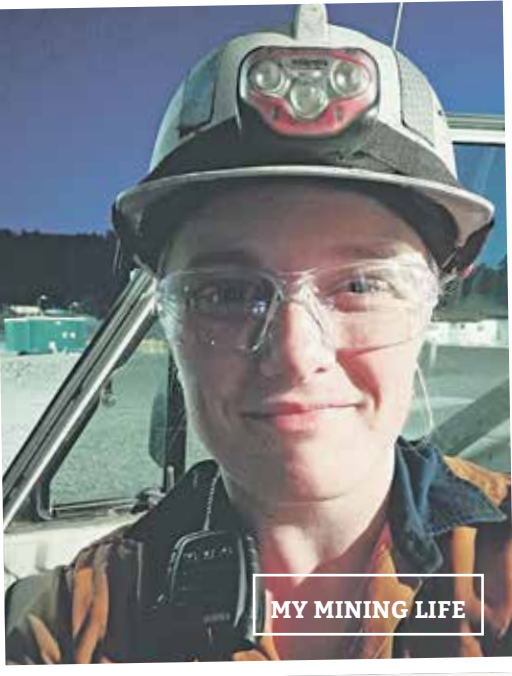
Being beaten on a quote. In sales, having to record a lost sale in the CRM is not a good feeling.

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

Pranking a colleague by leaving a note on their desk asking them to call Col Sanders regarding a bucket and wrote down the phone number for KFC.

Anything else you want to say?

It has been a tough year for everyone, I hope you are all staying safe and well. Contact us at BTP Mt Thorley for all your planned maintenance or breakdown requirements. GO PARRA!



MY MINING LIFE

JESSICA BRIGGS

Who are you and what do you do?

Jessica Briggs, diesel fitter at Mount Owen.

Any nicknames good or bad?

Messy Jessy. I work hard and get so engrossed in a job that by the end of the shift I can be pretty scruffy.

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

I live in North Rothbury and I've lived in the Valley for 9 years.

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

I started in 2012 and it's been hard,

rewarding, empowering, fascinating and I'm really grateful. I was the first woman to be hired as a fitter by Mt Owen in 20 years of operation. They were making a big stride towards women in mining. I took the responsibility of being the first seriously and I feel over the last years I have proven my worth.

What's a usual day at work entail?

My typical day. Making fun of each other's weekend exploits. Getting a hand over from the previous crew and seeing how "fun" our day is going to be. Repairing, diagnosing,

changing out components, field service and servicing the gear. Proving how odd I am by the useless information I know for the pub quiz at lunch. Then cursing myself when I answered a song question and then have to sing it for a bonus point. Back to work and then cleaning up and getting things ready for the next crew.

How big is the crew?

Usually about 12 people. Ours is a break down crew so its smaller than the servicing crews.

What's the best thing about your job?

It's amazing, physical, fun, rewarding, interesting and no two shifts are the same. The job allows me my independence and a beautiful home I love. But mostly it's the guys I work with. We have a lot of time for each other and without

their support, I may not have the job I love.

What's something about your job that would surprise people to know?

The amount of climbing and flexibility involved. Anyone who's been in a dozer hell hole or an EH4500 axle box knows what I mean. Everything is super-sized, and I knew that going in but climbing all over an engine the size of a large car hits it home. Luckily, I still find it easy.

The worst thing?

It's no secret that night work isn't good for the human body. Being at work is fine. Forcing yourself to rest during the day when you'd rather be doing something else is hard, but you have to do it.

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

We were trying to bend a handrail back into shape on a dozer. I was heating the rail to make it more malleable and another guy was applying weight to it in an effort to get it to bend back into shape. In retrospect we should have swapped places. I'm a heavy girl and the guy I was with was all ribs. I saw another guy go past and without thinking I said, "Hey you are way heavier than this guy can you swing off the bar for us?" He yelled back "what are you trying to say? That I'm FAT!!!" Cut to two years later and we are still trading fat jokes. My latest was in the lunch quiz. The question was, "What covers 3/4 of the earth's surface?" I shouted the guy's name.... I'm still paying for that one.

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

As a kid I've always been really jealous of useful people. As a fitter I have so much to learn. I've only been doing it for 8 years. But every shift I get better, learn more and help train others. I also never wanted a typically female job but maybe most women don't. So, my job is exactly what I wanted as a kid.

What would your mum say about you when you were a kid?

My mum would say noisy, interested in lots of things, scruffy, friendly and maybe not the sharpest tool in the shed. In year 1, I had a report card that asked me to write what I found hard that week. I wrote a rock! Not being funny I had found an amazing rock that week. Apparently, that got passed around the teacher's staffroom like a meme. The guys training me have an uphill battle.

Family?

My family are very supportive and without their support I wouldn't have the job and home I love.

What do you do in your downtime?

Look, I'm pretty nerdy so usually its video games, films, puzzles. But I also love camping, kayaking and I've recently gotten some fancy French chickens. Bring on the eggs!!!!

What is one thing about that you that would surprise people to know?

I bloody hate mangoes. I know that's probably Un-Australian, but the heart wants what it wants, and it doesn't want bloody mangoes.

WIN!

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HONOURING THE LATE NEIL MCNAMARA

AS WE REMEMBER THE MOMENTOUS MARK THE LATE NEIL MCNAMARA LEFT ON SINGLETON AND THE SINGLETON COMMUNITY AS FORMER MAYOR, BELOVED COMMUNITY MEMBER AND WAMBO COAL SINGLETON OF HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE; JOHN FLANNERY PSM REFLECTS ON NEIL'S SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO OUR REGION.

Neil McNamara was a great all-rounder and, in many respects, represented all that is good in a human being. He was a hard worker, a good sportsman and coach, a successful farmer, astute businessman, an intuitively smart politician and, most importantly, a loving husband and father. He had exceptionally high morale characteristics and exuded empathy. He might have had some faults, but they were minor in comparison to his achievements and standing in the community.

I had a long and close relationship with Neil during our service to Singleton Shire and I cannot recall us ever having a personal clash or major argument. Ours was a truly remarkable partnership; Neil told me when we met after he was elected the first Shire President (Mayor) and I was appointed Shire Clerk in 1976, that he would leave the management of the Shire to me and he would look after the Council business. This was how it was for the next 22 years. In fact, in all that time we never socialised together and never allowed our mutual respect to be challenged.

He had some difficult people to deal with from time to time both in the Council meeting room and in the public arena. He was very tolerant and patient during debates, an excellent moderator and very appreciative of the need for good public relations. Every Friday afternoon he was in town, Neil would walk through the Council office saying hello to staff in every department. He was loved and admired by the staff. He also had an open-



FROM LEFT: JIM JOHNSTONE, 1976 MANAGING DIRECTOR, BUCHANAN BOREHOLE COLLIERIES; NEIL MCNAMARA 1976 SINGLETON SHIRE PRESIDENT;

door policy with ratepayers and clients and was extremely effective in making Singleton a good place to do business. His energy was prodigious; how else did he manage to attend so many community events, patronise so many good causes day and night and endlessly give that rousing and

endearing speech! How he did this for so many years while milking his dairy herd twice a day beats me. He told me recently, just after Joan had passed away, that despite all those nights away at Council meetings and community events, Joan never went

to bed, no matter how late the hour, until he came home and they had a cup of tea before retiring – prodigious, voluntary and meritorious service to our community.

THE SUCCESS WE HAD IN ASSIMILATING THE COAL INDUSTRY INTO THE SHIRE IN THOSE DAYS AND GROWING SINGLETON'S POPULATION WAS BASED ON GOOD POLICY, STRONG COMMUNICATION WITH THE INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, LOCAL LEADERSHIP THAT EMBRACED CHANGE. NEIL LED THIS REVOLUTION IN OUR SHIRE; HE MODERATED THE COUNCIL DEBATES, FACILITATED NEGOTIATIONS WITH DEVELOPERS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND ENCOURAGED PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVERY STEP OF THE WAY. HE WAS EVER MINDFUL OF THE INTERESTS OF HIS RURAL CONSTITUENCY BUT REPRESENTED ALL OF SINGLETON. FROM MY POINT OF VIEW, HE LISTENED TO AND TRUSTED HIS OFFICERS, GAVE US THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE RISKS, BACKED US WHEN TIMES WERE TOUGH AND ALWAYS GAVE CREDIT WHEN IT WAS DUE.

During Neil's political leadership there were so many highlights that it is almost impossible to list them all or even rank them. Bringing two councils together in 1976 with the amalgamation of Patrick Plains and Singleton Municipality and within 12 months having the new Singleton Shire Council win the AR Bluet Award for being the most progressive Council in the State was a good start. Opening the first Singleton Coal Discussion Day in 1977 and initiating Coal Community Consultative Committees after the Rix's Creek Coal Inquiry was ground-breaking politics. Dedication to fixing rural roads



JOHN HAMMETT, 1976 MANAGING DIRECTOR, WAMBO MINING CORP

and rural community services; such as taking coal trucks out of Singleton with the Mitchell Line Road construction, the Mt Thorley Industrial Area construction and bringing water supply and waste services to the regional areas were all dear to his heart.

The list of achievements during Neil's leadership of the Shire is impressive. They include the construction of the Civic Centre in 1982, the Swim & Gym Centre in 1983 and the 50-metre pool in 1997 (which Neil christened with the first lap). The revitalisation of John Street in the 1980s with the construction and sale of the Gowrie Street Mall site, Rose Point Park and the Ryan Avenue by-pass road. Council's dominant role as land developer at Singleton Heights and The Retreat and consequent doubling of the town population was also accelerated during Neil's leadership.

I also recall Neil's active participation in the rallies to save the Singleton Army Base in 1984 when it was proposed to relocate the Army so the land could be exploited for its resources. He was in the Civic Centre when the hailstorm hit Singleton in 1996 and rallied up the government to act quickly to assist us. Neil also served the Hunter Region through his chairmanship of the Regional Organisation of Councils in the 1990s and his chairmanship of Shortland Electricity.

ALL IN ALL, A LIFE LED TO THE FULL, LOVED AND MISSED BY ALL, BUT ESPECIALLY AT THIS TIME WE FEEL FOR HIS FAMILY IN THEIR LOSS.

JOHN FLANNERY PSM

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POSTPONED: 2020 Memorial Day to honour lives lost in mining

The CFMEU Northern Mining and NSW Energy District's 25th Annual Memorial Day to remember lives lost in mining has been postponed due to COVID restrictions.

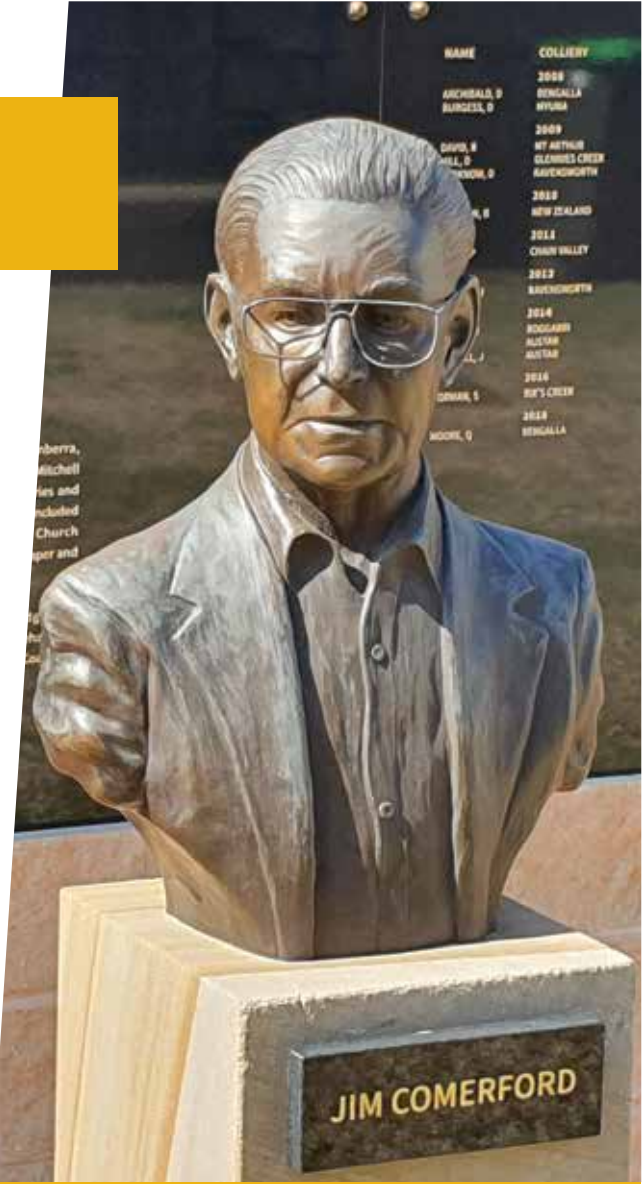
The annual service at the Jim Comerford Memorial Wall, usually held on the second Sunday of September, is the most important day of the year for the District.

It is an acknowledgment of the almost 1,800 men, women and boys who have lost their lives in the Northern District Coalfields.

District President Peter Jordan said the Union was working towards holding an event in November.

"We are saddened to postpone this year's Memorial Service. It is an important time to come together and remember the sacrifices made by coal miners through our District's history, to comfort bereaved families and to recommit ourselves to making safety our highest priority.

"We look forward to holding this service at our newly-restored Memorial Wall at the earliest opportunity."



RIDE TO
SAVE
LIVES

ON AUGUST 29, MARK SHEPHERD EMBARKED ON A 3 WEEK, 3,484KM CYCLING CHALLENGE TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AND ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO REGISTER TO SAVE LIVES.



in 1981 at Burwood Colliery in Newcastle, Mark is now the Industry Support Manager for Coal Services where he shares across industry best practice dust controls and provides education to mineworkers so they can make smart choices to protect their health and keep lung disease out of our industry. With his background in educating and raising awareness about health on site, it was an obvious choice to attribute his ride to raising awareness about another important subject – organ donation.

Mark started the ride on August 29 from his home in Newcastle, that by the end will see him riding the equivalent distance of Newcastle to Cape York. The schedule of the ride will mimic the daily distances of the 2020 edition of the Tour de France which also started on August 29 in Nice in the south of France.

Over 23 days (21 stages and 2 rest days) the challenge will see Mark ride each day from 'home to home', backing up every day to complete the kilometers the professional riders will endure during each stage. "On September 20 when the cyclists are rolling into Paris to complete their tour, I will be rolling into my driveway to put my feet up and probably have a beer," Mark chuckled. "At the time of writing, I have just completed stage 5 and have covered a total of 886km – only 2,598km to go!

Mark said the body is holding up well for now, but the cumulative fatigue of week 2 and 3 will take some managing and is uncharted territory; but he's looking forward to the challenge. Great work so far Mark. Be sure to enjoy a well-deserved cold beer or 5 when you cross the finish line!

What started out in June as simply an idea for a personal challenge, has now become a ride with a greater goal for Mark Shepherd - to use the challenge to raise awareness and encourage us all to think about organ donation, make a decision, and register that decision on the Australian Organ Donor Register.

Despite the majority of Australians saying they support organ donation, just over 1 in 3 people in NSW are registered. It's these statistics that pushed Mark to spread the Donate Life mission through his mammoth cycling challenge. "My wife and I have raised two healthy boys," said Mark.

"I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW PAINFUL IT WOULD BE BEING TOLD THAT AN ORGAN TRANSPLANT IS THEIR ONLY CHANCE OF SURVIVAL AND THEN HAVING TO WAIT IN HOPE, ONLY FOR THAT LIFESAVERING PHONE CALL THAT A SUITABLE ORGAN HAS BEEN DONATED, TO NEVER ARRIVE.

"Increasing the number of people registered as an organ donor is the answer; organ and tissue donation saves and transforms lives."

Starting in the underground coal mining industry

VISIT DONATELIFE.GOV.AU FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION.

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RUGBY LEAGUE
RAIN CHECK

IT IS WITH MUCH REGRET THAT 2020 A-PLUS CONTRACTING HUNTER VALLEY MINING CHARITY RUGBY LEAGUE DAY HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL MARCH 2021.

The Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service remained optimistic about hosting the event this year, pouring a considerable amount of energy and effort into the planning of the event with the hope that they could provide the community a chance for an escape during these challenging times.

Unfortunately based on risk assessment and consideration of the current Government restrictions they have made the decision to postpone. Danny Eather, Westpac Rescue Helicopter Community Liaison Officer said it was a difficult and sad decision but they remained positive about the 2021 event.

"Following consultation with all of our teams, we have settled on a revised date of Saturday 20 March 2021. It is anticipated that the event will have to take a different shape with a much "slimmed down" version of the event in March compared to what we have all come to know and enjoy each year," said Danny.

"The biggest change we anticipate is that spectators will not be able to attend the event due to the 500 person capacity of the venue based on current restrictions. However we are confident that we will

continue to have a high level of engagement with the community and are currently working through the logistics at present to ensure that we can have all games streamed live directly from Pirtek Park, Singleton throughout the day."

EVEN WITH THIS CHANGE IN FORMAT THEY ARE ESTIMATING THAT THEY SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO RAISE APPROXIMATELY \$80,000 TO \$90,000 WHICH WILL HAVE CONSIDERABLE POSITIVE BOOST FOR THE WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER GIVEN THE VAST MAJORITY OF FACE TO FACE FUNDRAISING THIS YEAR HAS BEEN CANCELLED OR SUSPENDED DUE TO COVID-19.

"We again express our gratitude and sincere thanks to all of our team sponsors and in particular our event partners, A-Plus Contracting, Jennings Print, Pirtek-Singleton & Muswellbrook, Tyre Doctor, Mine Super, Slater & Gordon, Mader New South Wales, NSW Mining, Hunter Valley Operations, Yancoal, All-Pro, Aletek, At The Coalface, Bowers Heavy Haulage, Coal Services Mines Rescue, Oiltest, Walton Mining Service and the Singleton Untied Rugby League Club."

ADDITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS WILL BE MADE CLOSER TO THE EVENT VIA THE WEBSITE: WWW.CHARITYRUGBYLEAGUEDAY.COM.AU.

HELP FOR
HOMELESS

MANGOOLA OPEN CUT HAS PROVIDED A \$5000 DONATION TO UPPER HUNTER HOMELESS SUPPORT, HELPING THEM SUPPORT EVEN MORE PEOPLE DURING THESE DIFFICULT TIMES.

Mangoola Open Cut is no stranger to providing support to those in our community. With the assistance of the operation's workforce, their most recent donation went to Upper Hunter Homeless Support.

General Manager of UHHS, Lewis Millington-Blazey, said that their case load has increased significantly in recent months, with the most needy in our local communities heavily impacted by a pandemic led economic downturn.

At the presentation of funds Lewis said, "At



such difficult times within our country, the team at Glencore's Mangoola Open Cut mine are committed to ensuring organisations like Upper Hunter Homeless Support are well-supported throughout our busiest time in history."

"This incredible donation is going to go toward

enabling our team to work effectively in our remote communities while staying safe with integral GPS tracking SOS pendants. The remainder of the funds will go towards funding training for our team to assist with cultural awareness. We are grateful for the generosity of the team at Mangoola Open Cut Glencore."

CHRIS MARCH, MANGOOLA CHPP MANAGER SAID SUPPORTING THEIR COMMUNITY IS SOMETHING THE ENTIRE WORKFORCE IS COMMITTED TO.

"Most of our workforce are from local areas, so we're naturally keen to do whatever we can to help groups such as UHHS deliver services that are so important to our communities in these challenging times. We had nominated UHHS as the beneficiary of our annual golf day but when this was cancelled due to the current health guidelines our donations committee raised funds from other activities that allowed us to deliver what we'd promised."

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With the ferocious bear charging at him from a distance, the preacher prayed, "O Lord, I'm so sorry for skipping services today. Please forgive me and grant me just one wish, make a Christian out of that bear that's coming at me!"

At that very instant, the bear skidded to a halt, fell to his knees, clasped his paws together, and began to pray aloud at the preacher's feet. "Dear God, please bless this food I am about to receive."

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GENEROSITY FOR GLOUCESTER

STRATFORD AND DURALIE COAL HAS GRANTED AROUND \$48,000 IN FUNDING TO LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, AIMING TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE TO THE GLOUCESTER REGION.

The Stratford and Duralie 2020 Community Support Program is funding a variety of projects including new playground equipment, community workshops, educational resources, medical equipment, training and event sponsorship.

Stratford and Duralie Coal Operations Manager John Cullen was delighted to be funding local initiatives.

"We are proud so many local organisations raised their hand for assistance by applying for funding in the latest round of our Community Support Program," said John.

"WE RECOGNISE THAT LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE THE BACKBONE TO OUR COMMUNITY. THEY MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO MAINTAINING

AND CREATING A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY. IT ALWAYS PLEASES ME TO SEE THE DIFFERENCE EVEN A SMALL AMOUNT CAN DO FOR A COMMUNITY ORGANISATION."

"This funding means that some of our local schools and preschools can upgrade their sunshade, sandpit and playground facilities or install new technology in the classroom, one of our aged care facilities can purchase lifesaving defibrillator units, our local fire brigade units can source new storage, equipment, education and training resources and many local shows or events get the support they need to go ahead."

Bianca Gilfillan, Stroud Public School Parents & Citizens Association (P&C) was one of the happy recipients to the generous funding.

"We are so grateful for Stratford Coal's contribution to our P&C to enable us to purchase a much-needed defibrillator for our school. Having access to this lifesaving equipment is an invaluable asset to our school," said Bianca.

The Yancoal Community Support Program invests in community groups working in the areas of health, social and community, environment, education and training. It aims to make a positive difference in the local community and to the lives of the people who work and live in the areas it operates.

"WE LOOK FORWARD TO SUPPORTING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES IN OUR COMMUNITY FOR MANY MORE YEARS TO COME," SAID JOHN.



SUCCESSFUL GRANT RECIPIENTS AT THE STRATFORD AND DURALIE COAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM PRESENTATION NIGHT (PHOTO TAKEN PRIOR TO COVID-19 SOCIAL DISTANCING PROTOCOLS)



GLENORE'S MT OWEN/GLENDELL OPERATION HAS NOT LET THE PANDEMIC STOP THEIR COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

This year the MGO team had to think outside the box after their annual community gatherings at Mt Olive Hall and Hebden Community Hall were hampered by Covid restrictions.

Rather than bunker down, the team hosted two 'Community Coffee' events. The Environment and Community team along with Thiess personnel met with the community to listen to their opinions and concerns and to provide some insight into what they do on site, all while enjoying a cuppa.

MGO Environment and Community Manager Jason Desmond said that it was important to them that the events go ahead, albeit in a new format, as they provided the community the chance to hear about what they are doing and to give feedback.

"Each year these community gatherings have grown as community members see it as a way to catch up and meet with neighbours and not just ourselves (MGO). This year with so many events being cancelled because of Covid it was important for us to find a way to still have this interaction with the community to help lift spirits. Even before Covid people in rural communities can

often feel secluded, so opportunities to bring people together are very important."

"WE WERE PLEASED TO HAVE A GOOD ATTENDANCE FROM MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. IT GAVE US THE CHANCE TO INTRODUCE OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS, LET THEM KNOW WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO, GIVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS AND SHOW THAT WE CARE ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY."

Jason said another reason they decided to go ahead with the events was to provide assistance to a local business doing it tough. Addicted to Coffee is run by two brothers who were coal miners before starting up the business. During the pandemic most of their scheduled events have been cancelled and they have also been impacted by the RMS closing the Golden Highway rest area where the 'green strobe light' would be seen most mornings by passing motorists, mainly mine workers. They have since relocated to the corner of Swain Street and the New England Highway at Belford.

"Addicted to Coffee are not only about handing out a coffee at the start of the shift, they are also there to talk about issues in the industry, like fatigue and mental health. They've been greatly impacted since the shutdown in April with all the community events which are their bread and butter being cancelled. Inviting them out over the two days to provide refreshments was our small way of helping a great local business during these difficult times. MGO will continue to seek ways in which we can assist in supporting Addicted to Coffee."



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CRUISIN'
WITH THE
KIDS

HAVING KIDS CAN SURE MAKE THE SIMPLE THINGS IN LIFE A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT TO FIT INTO YOUR SCHEDULE, LIKE GOING FOR A LEISURELY BIKE RIDE FOR INSTANCE. WELL BUNCH HAD MUMS AND DADS IN MIND WITH THEIR NEW PRODUCT.

The Original 2020 edition Family Cargo Bike by Bunch makes taking that much needed bike ride easy. Featuring a cart that has benches and seat belts, you can fit up to 4 kids on your cruise. With ultra-powerful front and rear Tektro hydraulic disc brakes, it's completely safe for the little ones. And don't worry, if it gets too hard to peddle simply chuck on the electric feature!

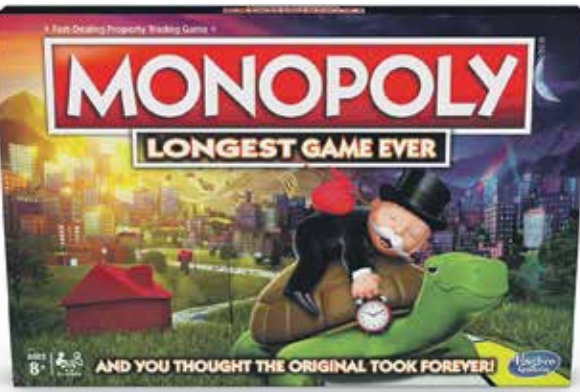
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MAD FOR
MONOPOLY

IF YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE RARE PEOPLE THAT HAVE PLAYED THROUGH AN ENTIRE GAME OF THE ORIGINAL MONOPOLY AND LOVED IT, THEN YOU NEED TRY OUT THIS UNTHINKABLE EDITION, EXCLUSIVE TO AMAZON.

I know what you're thinking – who on earth has played an entire game of monopoly without getting distracted and quitting? Well the original Monopoly has nothing on Monopoly's 'Longest Game Ever'. Yep, Monopoly have released a game even longer than the original. I'm talking more properties, only one die and no more doubles. Better get started now if you want to finish by Christmas!

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CREATOR'S
CAMERA



IN A WORLD OF INFLUENCERS AND SOCIAL MEDIA CREATOR'S, CAPTURING YOUR BEST LOOK IS EASY WITH THE DIGITAL CAMERA ZV-1 BY SONY.

Whether you're capturing content for your socials or making a new video for your work website, this little baby does it all. Not only does it make all skin colours look vibrant and natural, but you can also use Soft Skin Effect mode if you're looking to hide a pesky pimple or blemish. Catch every moment with the fast and precise focus transition, ready to switch focus from a face to the background with ease. Time to start creating!

WWW.SONY.COM.AU



GAME ROOM
GOALS

IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR GAMING EXPERIENCE TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH SAMSUNG'S 49" G9 QLED GAMING MONITOR WITH 1000R CURVED SCREEN.

The out of this world design features 1000R curved screen technology designed to match

the contours of the human eye. You'll feel like you're inside the game as scenes wrap around your view and fill your peripheral vision. At a whopping 49 inches, you won't miss any of the action. Add to that a sleek design, futuristic feel, vibrant resolution and minimal delay – it's a game changer.

WWW.SAMSUNG.COM



FORKLIFT FUN

IMAGINE THE LOOK ON YOUR KID'S FACE WHEN THEY FIND OUT THEY CAN DRIVE A FORKLIFT LIKE MUM OR DAD! WELL IT'S TIME TO MAKE THEIR LITTLE DREAMS COME TRUE.

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GLENCORE

TESTING YOU CAN TRUST

A LOCAL FAMILY OWNED COMPANY, PERSAS MAY HAVE BEEN AROUND SINCE 1985 BUT THEIR LATEST INVESTMENT IN NEW TECHNOLOGY PROVES THAT THIS IS A COMPANY THAT IS LOOKING TO THE FUTURE. A SAFER FUTURE.



For Persas and owner Brett Williamson, safety is a core value of the company. With three ISO Accreditations (ISO 9001, ISO 1408, AS/NZ 4801) to their name, this is not a claim but a simple fact. Already well established as leaders in pneumatic tooling and hydraulic equipment services, recently they shared with @ The Coalface a new game changer for them – 700bar dynamic testing.

As Brett proudly gave me a tour through their workshop he explained how they are a one stop shop for testing and rebuilding hydraulic, pneumatic, torque and a variety of other specialised equipment used in the mining and heavy industrial industries, and his passion and pride for what they do was evident.

“WE WANT EQUIPMENT TO LEAVE THE WORKSHOP LOOKING AND OPERATING AS GOOD AS THE DAY IT WAS MADE, BACK TO OEM SPECIFICATIONS” SAYS BRETT. “AND THANKS TO OUR NEW CAPABILITIES IN 700BAR HYDRAULIC DYNAMIC TESTING, WE KNOW IT’S GOING TO BE AS SAFE AS THEY DAY IT WAS MADE TOO,” SAYS BRETT.

Persas are already heavily involved with providing onsite equipment testing, especially for the mining industry, and with their new dynamic testing capabilities they are now going above and beyond what any other company

is doing and taking safety to a whole new level. Brett said that the company has always aimed to diversify and grow but it was a big risk for them to take this new step. He shared how it came about.

“When it comes to testing of 700 bar lifting equipment, most companies are simply doing a visual and



operational inspection, or perhaps conducting a static test. Neither of these can tell you if the equipment is completely safe and will hold load over the full stroke of the piston. Only a dynamic test can accurately tell you if the equipment is functioning correctly. I started investigating and was surprised that I could not find a single company in Australia conducting dynamic testing of hydraulic lifting equipment. I expanded my search and found a UK company and looked at what they were doing and how much safer it made things

for their customers. I knew then that it was path I wanted to take for Persas.”

Brett spent the next year heading overseas for consultations and undertaking a lengthy design

and production process. The result, Persas now boasts two 100t units for onsite dynamic testing and a larger 200t purpose-built unit at their workshop, specifically designed for large jacks and jack stands.

“IT WAS RISK, THIS NEW DIRECTION FOR OUR COMPANY. IT WAS A BIG INVESTMENT, BUT I’M PROUD WE DECIDED TO GO FOR IT. AT THE MOMENT THE STANDARD IS ONLY FOR A VISUAL INSPECTION OR AT BEST A STATIC TEST. I DON’T BELIEVE THAT’S GOOD ENOUGH. WE ARE GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND THE STANDARDS. FOR US IT’S ABOUT MITIGATING RISK AND KEEPING WORKERS SAFE.”

“I make no apologies when I advise our customers that we are not the cheapest,” Brett adds. “We don’t want to be the cheapest. We value quality and safety too much.”

As with any new technology Brett says it takes time for people to adapt to it, but so far they’ve had a fantastic response and many clients are embracing it and they are very positive about the future. Brett says he hopes to see standards catch up with this new and safer technology here in Australia.

“We are so proud to be helping improve safety. Having a reputation for quality and safety has always been our number one goal. We are proud to be a local company employing local people and giving back to our community and we are especially proud to be helping those people stay safe.”

MIND OVER MATTER



HAS SPRING SNUCK UP ON YOU AND YOU’VE JUST COME TO THE REALISATION THAT THE BODY YOU’VE BEEN HIDING ALL WINTER IN BULKY SWEATERS MAY SOON HAVE TO BARE ITSELF IN A BIKINI OR BUDGIE SMUGGLER?

It’s normal for a bit of weight to creep on during the Winter months. But this Winter we’ve also had to deal with a pandemic causing isolation, anxiety and panic buying (quickly followed by panic eating as you realise those 50 boxes of choc chip cookies are almost out of date).

What can you do? Well you could self-isolate until Winter rolls back around again, maybe sign up for a gym membership that you’ll probably never use, or how about trying one of the wacky diets we featured a few months back. Most of them won’t actually kill you.

OR YOU COULD START USING YOUR BRAIN TO BEAT THE BULGE. I’M NOT TALKING ABOUT WILLPOWER HERE; I’M TALKING ABOUT A NEW WAY OF GAINING CONTROL OF YOUR EATING HABITS CALLED MINDFUL EATING.

For many of us an example of how we eat is a bag of chips in front of the

TV and you only realise you’ve eaten the entire family size bag once your hand has been scrambling around the bottom of the bag for a few minutes and your brain finally gets the message. That’s mindless eating.

Mindful eating is not a new idea. Based on the Buddhist concept of mindfulness, it’s about learning to be fully aware of what is happening to you and what you are doing as you are doing it. Sounds easy?

Actually, it can be quite difficult to break eating habits you have developed over a lifetime. Most of the time we eat food purely from habit and not from hunger. Mindful eating is about learning the difference between hunger and want, about eating in a thoughtful way, and about creating healthier eating habits.

There is a ton of information out there on mindful eating. TED talks, apps, studies, blogs, you name

it. But all of it comes down to the following basic principles.

NO DISTRACTIONS - only eat food when you are entirely focused on it. No TV, no eating in the car, no eating while working.

APPRECIATE YOUR FOOD - place the food in front of you, look at the food, smell the food and then slowly, slowly eat in small bites, chewing every mouthful well.

HUNGER OR HABIT - by fully focusing on what you eat, it is easier to recognise the signs of being full. When you go to get a snack ask yourself if you really want it. Why do you want it? Listen for physical cues and learn to read the signs of when you are turning to food due to other reasons such as anxiety or boredom.

REWIRE THE REWARD SYSTEM - when you overeat or eat something unhealthy, analyse how it makes you feel. The reward system in your

brain can be rewired after as little as a dozen times of acknowledging something that makes you feel bad. For me personally, I can’t wait to start spending some quality time with my snacks and giving them the love and devotion they deserve.

‘AVE A LAUGH WITH

ZERO5
PERFORMANCE

BUILT TO WIN

The owner of a drug store walks in to find a guy leaning heavily against a wall. The owner asks the clerk, “What’s with that guy over there by the wall?”

The clerk says, “Well, he came in here this morning to get something for his cough. I couldn’t find the cough syrup, so I gave him an entire bottle of laxative.”

The owner says, “You idiot! You can’t treat a cough with a bottle of laxatives!”

The clerk says, “Of course, you can! Look at him; he’s afraid to cough!”

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TOGETHER WE DELIVER.

Monadelphous is a leading Australian engineering group providing construction, maintenance and industrial services to the resources, energy and infrastructure sectors. We employ more than 7000 people, with major offices in Perth and Brisbane supporting our operations in projects, facilities and workshops spread across Australia and neighbouring countries including Papua New Guinea.

Monadelphous’s New South Wales regional operations are part of the company’s national network of local facilities, all strategically located in or near mining and energy related resource precincts. We have had a presence in the Hunter Valley for more than 13 years, with fully equipped workshops in Singleton, Muswellbrook and Gunnedah.

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The 12.5t bucket stand by Composite Stands reduces the risk of personal injury related to the manual handling of equipment support



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stands and improves functionality by removing locking devices and pins. They have a 1600mm reach and weigh in at only 59 kg, featuring a solid steel engagement head, 125mm square composite column, anodised CNC machined aluminium base, chromoly bracing tubes corrosion resistant powder coating and 10-year UV vinyl wrap. Protect your people with stands that can take the weight!

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BELLY DUMPER

SOUNDING MORE LIKE A DIG MY WIFE MIGHT HAVE AT ME, THE ‘BELLY DUMPER’ OTHERWISE KNOWN AS A BOTTOM DUMPER IS A TYPE OF OFF-ROAD HAUL TRUCK THAT UNLOADS ITS MATERIAL THROUGH A DUMP GATE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TRAILER.

Differing from the standard rigid off-highway rear dump truck, they are located across many mine sites globally, however, are most commonly found in the United States. In Australia, they are used in specific coal, and bauxite applications in Queensland though are increasingly being decommissioned with age. Available in articulated or rigid configurations, they are most suited to lighter and finer materials that include coal, bauxite and salt. In their articulated ‘config’, these machines have three axels incorporating a tow tractor and dump trailer with two two steer tyres in the front and four tyres at the rear of the truck and a further four tyres at the back of the trailer. Their rigid sibling is a stranger looking beast and as the name suggests, present as one integral unit fitted with two axels front and rear and the belly located in the middle.



THANKS TO COMPONENTS ONLY, OUR HEAVY EQUIPMENT EXPERTS

COMPONENTS ONLY

The choice for the size and type of dump trucks at any mine depends upon a lot of variables, such as the type of mine, size of mine, minerals being mined, capital and loading machinery available. Belly dumpers are no different and are best suited to large-scale sites with ramp gradients of 5% or less. **GENERALLY USED IN STRIP COAL MINES, THEY ARE PARTICULARLY SUITED TO APPLICATIONS WITH LONG CYCLES THAT REQUIRE HIGH AVERAGE SPEED. OFFERING A HIGHER PAYLOAD FOR THE SAME ENGINE HORSEPOWER, THESE TRUCKS PROVIDE HIGH PAYLOAD TO WEIGHT RATIOS WITH THE ADDED ADVANTAGES OF WEIGHT**

BALANCE, STABILITY, LONG HAUL TYRE PERFORMANCE AND HIGHER SPEEDS ON FLAT HAULS. Highly manoeuvrable, these trucks offer up to 85 degree steering angles in both artic and rigid formats and are highly mobile in moving around working areas. Fitted with clamshell dump gates in the floor of the dump trailer, operators can control the discharge rates of the hauled material by the degree of the gate opening. Despite their success, the off-road belly dumper is not for everyone. These trucks often require dump stations with a bin designed to allow the coal to fall from below the truck

into a hopper/crusher. While offering the prospect of high transport speeds over longer hauls they require well-maintained haul roads, that are of course not universally available at mine sites around the world. While not household brands, the manufacturers of these machines are held in high regard and include Kress, Mega and Rimpull in the United States as well as our very own Kador Engineering in Australia that still build these weird and wonderful machines with capacities in excess of 240 tonnes. If you’ve not seen one in action, take a look at <https://youtu.be/8P6xy2AJubE>.



WITH ALL THAT’S GOING ON IN THE WORD RIGHT NOW INCLUDING OVERSEAS AND SOME INTERSTATE TRAVEL BEING OFF THE CARDS, SPENDING SOME TIME EXPLORING YOUR LOCAL 4WDING TRACKS HAS NEVER LOOKED MORE APPEALING. IF YOU’VE JUST SPENT UP ON A NEW RIG SET-UP AND ARE READY TO GO, BUT NOT REALLY SURE WHERE TO START - THEN THIS ARTICLE IS FOR YOU!

WHAT TO TAKE

Whether you’re driving a standard 4WD or something highly modified, you’re going to want pack some basic recovery items. Most people don’t go out with a plan to get bogged but eventually the inevitable is going to happen. It’s nothing to fear however, and providing you’re well prepared, most situations will just require a bit of elbow grease and a bit of recovery gear. A shovel is the most underrated piece of recovery equipment and sometimes you would be surprised at what can be achieved by digging out around stuck components. If you’re travelling solo, a set of recovery tracks are a must. Placed under the wheels of the vehicle when you are bogged, they are the cheapest option for performing a self-recovery and will get you out of 90% of situations. A winch is the ultimate self-recovery tool and will get you out of 99.9% of recovery situations and is worth factoring into your budget when buying a 4WD. Otherwise, you’ll want to take a snatch strap, with a couple of rated shackles and have a rated recovery point to snatch off. The

most common type is one that slots into your towbar hitch receiver. A tyre deflator and portable compressor are also handy tools for lowering and raising tyre pressures. **WHERE TO GO** The beauty of the local area is the abundance of tracks, but if you travel in any direction for a couple of hours, you will find a whole lot more. If beach driving is your thing, you’ll want to check out either Stockton Beach, Lemontree Beach or Blacksmiths Beach. Although Blacksmiths is the closest, it’s also the most challenging and we recommend cutting your teeth on Stockton or Lemontree first if you’re new to the game. The sand is generally harder packed and easier to drive, especially if you’re in a standard 4WD. Permits will be required to access these beaches with Stockton passes issued by Worimi Conservation Lands with a list of places you can purchase permits at <https://worimiconservationlands.com/beach-driving/>. Lemontree Beach will require a National Parks Pass available online <https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/passes-and-fees>.

[nsw.gov.au/passes-and-fees](https://www.nsw.gov.au/passes-and-fees). Blacksmiths Beach will require a permit issued from Belmont Wetlands State Park with a list of outlets you can purchase from on their Facebook page. Tyre pressures are a crucial part of spending less time bogged on a beach. On most hard-packed beaches, lowering pressures to 18psi will be adequate to give the tyre a bigger bulge and longer footprint in the sand so that it floats over the sand rather than trying to cut into it. Softer beaches require lower pressures - 15 or even 12psi. Be sure to re-inflate tyres back to normal road going pressures once off the beach. **IF YOU’RE LOOKING AT TACKLING BUSH TRACKS IN THE LOCAL AREA, THE WATAGAN MOUNTAINS IS A GREAT PLACE TO START. THERE’S A MAZE OF EASY TRACKS WITHIN THE NATIONAL PARK AND STATE FOREST AND MILD TRACKS SUCH AS GREENS BREAK RD TO WILD TRACKS SUCH AS CTP80.**

Adjusting tyre pressures to suit the terrain will also help here and we always recommend having an experienced spotter to guide you through tight, rocky and slippery terrain. Picking the right line to get you through obstacles can be much easier when someone outside the vehicle can see exactly where you’re placing your wheels. Being well prepared and setting your vehicle up right is the key to hassle free and enjoyable 4WDing and luckily, we live in an area that has a wide range of 4WDing experiences. Joining a 4WD club is also a great way to learn the 4WDing ropes and meet like minded people with some local knowledge and experience. Whatever way you look at it, it’s a perfect time to get out there and start enjoying your 4WD.

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For Applications or further information about the ACDF please visit: www.machenergy.com.au/acdf

ON THE MARKET

SPRING IS HERE AND AFTER WHAT FEELS LIKE ONE OF THE LONGEST WINTERS EVER, WE ARE ALL WANTING TO POP OUR HEADS OUT AND EMERGE FROM HIBERNATION.

With COVID restrictions still taking out events left, right and centre there's one place you can go, soak up some rays, grab yourself some delicious treats and mingle in a world that is COVID safe... our local markets.

Perhaps you haven't been to the markets in a while, if that's the case let me tell you now more than ever, is the time to get your market back on for a range of reasons.

Firstly, you will be supporting local farmers and producers. Secondly, it will put a spring in your step as you get out and about and thirdly, you will be blown away by how hard our market organisers have worked to make these events safe.

INCREDIBLY, MANY MARKETS AROUND THE HUNTER VALLEY HAVE RIDDEN THE WAVE OF LOCKDOWN AND AFTER BEING DEEMED AN 'ESSENTIAL SERVICE' THEY HAVE PIVOTED THEIR BUSINESS MODELS TO RUN A SAFE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENT.

Kevin Eade from Newcastle City and Lake Macquarie Farmers Markets said there was simply no hesitation when it came to continuing on; it was a challenge they accepted and rose to.

"After we got the green-light to continue operating, I contacted

all the farmers and producers and it was a unanimous yes to continue trading, so we researched everything we needed to do and went from there," Kevin said.

"There are very clear rules which have been laid down by the Government but we have implemented them all and market-goers are really great at sticking to the rules, so there have been no issues."

DON'T DESPAIR THAT THE ENJOYMENT OF WANDERING AROUND Musing OVER PRODUCE AND STIMULATING THE SENSES HAS GONE.

According to Kevin, simply spacing out the market stalls has meant that they are able to have a steady flow of numbers, families can still all come together, and you still have a wonderful vibe.

"It's lucky," Kevin laughs, "we have so much space, so we just moved everyone out. And funnily enough, I think people actually like it more, things aren't crowded and it's relaxed and enjoyable and everyone has space to move."

When it comes to those all delicious tastings, Kevin said they are working on finding safe ways so market-goers can 'try before you buy'.

It's a sentiment that is echoed across



the Hunter with many of our popular markets continuing to trade with their new look operations.

If you find yourself at The Levee in Maitland on a Thursday morning, you may be pleasantly treated to a range of fresh produce from the Earth Markets Maitland. The markets are on the first and third Thursday of the month and run from 8.30am to 1.30pm.

Meanwhile if you are at a loose end on a Saturday morning, you can pack up the troops and head to Pokolbin for the Hunter Wine Country Markets or Handmade in the Hunter.

Located at De Bortoli Wines and Kevin Sobel Wines respectively, you can enjoy a large range of produce, artisan stalls and live music to invigorate the senses.

As for Newcastle and Lake Mac, Kevin says you'll enjoy an enormous range of produce from farm fresh meats to oysters with new producers being added to the line up on a regular basis.

"Just come on out and support your

local market," Kevin said in closing.

"SUPPORT YOUR FARMERS, LOCAL PRODUCERS AND THINK LOCAL. IF WE MAKE OUR HUNTER VALLEY GREENER, IT'S FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY."

Details of all markets can be found at their various Facebook pages.

HAPPENIN' IN THE HUNTER IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY NICKY AINLEY, EDITOR OF THE HUNTER APP. DOWNLOAD THE HUNTER APP FOR ALL YOUR UP TO DATE INFO ON WHAT'S HAPPENIN' IN THE HUNTER!



Electrical coordinator



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em POWERING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Yancoal Community Support Program call for applications

Mt Thorley Warkworth is a proud and active member of the local community. Yancoal's 2021 Community Support Program offers community groups the opportunity to apply for funding to support projects, events and initiatives that help make a genuine positive difference to the Singleton Region.

If you have a project or idea with the potential to benefit others across the areas of health, community, environment, arts, culture, education or training, please visit: <https://insite.yancoal.com.au/community>

NEED FUNDING TO HELP IMPROVE OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Yancoal Community Support Program

Applications close on 6th November 2020

YANCOAL
MT THORLEY WARKWORTH

Helping keep the community safe and the economy moving.

Things are pretty tough. But without mining, it'd be a lot tougher.

During the pandemic, mines all over NSW have kept going. And that's helped to keep our state going too.

All of our mines have strict COVID-safe practices.

Which means thousands of businesses supplying the mines and local businesses across our community can keep going too.

nswmining.com.au/covid-19-community





TREATED LIKE ROYALTY

WITH A MODERN ELEGANCE, THE ROYAL FEDERAL HOTEL BRANXTON HAS CREATED A SOPHISTICATED YET CLASSIC PUB AESTHETIC THAT HAS SET THE BAR HIGH FOR PUBS IN THE HUNTER VALLEY.

We love a good pub feed here @ The Coalface, and I'll tell you what...we have done the rounds when it comes to pubs in the Hunter Valley. So, when a pub stands out, we're not shy about sharing the news.

A STUNNING, CLOUDLESS FRIDAY SAW MY COLLEAGUE AND I VISIT THE ROYAL FEDERAL HOTEL FOR AN AFTERNOON PUB LUNCH THAT LEFT US DAZED AND AMAZED. CLASSY, REFINED AND MODISH, THE COUNTRY PUB HAS SKILFULLY FUSED A CLASSIC PUB FEEL AND MODERNISED MENU WITH THAT OF A HIGH-END RESTAURANT.

As you walk through back entrance of the impressive two-story hotel, you're met with a traditional, classic style bar that encompasses that Aussie pub experience. The beautiful wooden features and exposed brick make it a homely stop for a post work bevvy.

Moving upstairs to the bistro the setting effortlessly shifts towards a more contemporary, quirky and artistic design. Beautiful artworks and private function areas lead you through a quaint little library archway, filled wall to wall with books you can borrow.

We were lucky enough to be seated in one of the available function spaces, a stunning room decorated with empty frames placed artistically along the walls. We sat down at the head of the huge dining table and placed our order.

For starters, we shared the Bruschetta - a toasted sourdough topped with prosciutto, tomato salsa, burrata cheese, pesto and balsamic reduction. Fresh and flavourful, this dish was a delightful way to kick things off.

Then came our entrees and mains. The twice cooked Pork Belly was served with sweet and sour sauce, kumara puree and roast baby vegetables. The meat was tender and succulent, and the puree and vegetables complimented the dish with their vibrant presentation and flavours.

We also had the Seafood Chowder with flathead, clams, squid, prawns, smoked bacon and vegetables served with dinner rolls. The warm soup of fresh seafood and vegetables made for a tasty winter entrée.

Our mains consisted of the Portuguese Chicken, marinated in peri peri sauce with a Caribbean style salad and grilled corn; and the 200g Eye fillet, pan seared with butter, garlic and thyme serviced with potato gratin, greens and red wine jus.

THE EYE FILLET WAS ABSOLUTELY TO DIE FOR. THE MEAT WAS TENDER AND JUICY AND WITH EVERY BITE I WAS ENCHANTED. MY COLLEAGUE STOLE THE LAST FEW BITES AND WAS EQUALLY IMPRESSED.

The Portuguese Chicken had a peri peri flavoured, spicy kick that was lively and enjoyable. This dish was huge and would be sure to satisfy even the biggest of eaters.

Finally, we shared a Baileys cheesecake. We absolutely LOVED this dessert. The flavours were rich, and the biscuit base was crunchy and delicious. It was the perfect ending to a feast fit for two queens.

The Royal Federal Hotel will be heading into Spring with a fresh, new menu in mid-September 2020 and we can't wait to see what's in store.

TO MAKE A BOOKING CALL (02) 4938 1335.
TO KEEP UP TO DATE WITH SPECIALS AND THE NEW SPRING MENU VISIT WWW.ROYALFEDERAL.COM.AU



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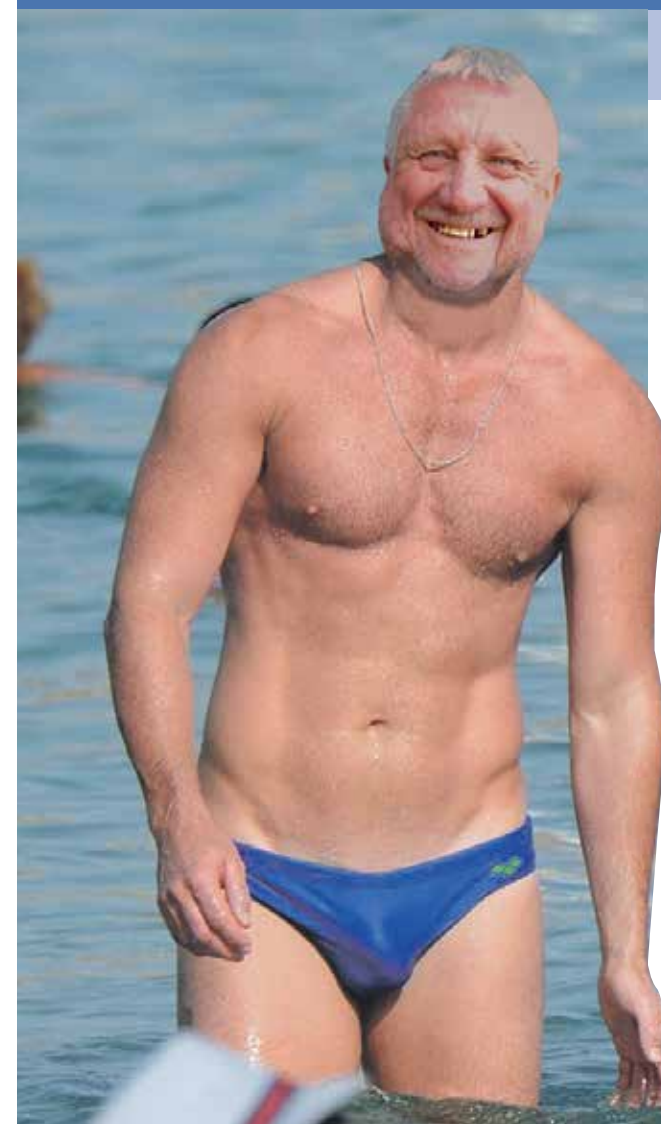
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PIEMINISTER

I'M SEXY AND YOU KNOW IT

GOODBYE FROSTY THE SNOWMAN AND HELLO SPRINGTIME SEXY SOL. THAT'S RIGHT MY FRIENDS, YOU'VE JUST SPENT THE WHOLE WINTER CHUBBING UP, BUT NOW SPRINGTIME IS HERE, IT'S TIME TO CHUBB DOWN.



As I do each year, I use the changing of the seasons to fine tune my immaculate frame. Come Springtime I break into a sweat to ensure my body is budgie smuggler ready for the summer perving season.

This year I am going to go all out and kick off with a bang by swimming the length of The Hunter River from Muswellbrook to Maitland in the name of charity, physical perfection and, of course pies. It's a bit like swimming the English Channel only inland and it has the added convenience of numerous pie shops along the way in order to keep the strength up.

Starting off in Mussy I will 'Pie Load' a heap of energy with fresh home-made jobs from the Cattle Dog Café. To make sure I make it to Denman I will then load a few Crofts from Aberdeen into a floating esky along with a few refreshing cans of Gold. I will then tie it to my foot with a bit of

string and drag it along the way.

My support crew of Holtzy and Rooster will wait at pubs along the way making sure pies and cold beers get delivered to the riverbank at each stop. For safety they will duct tape a baby monitor to melon and keep in contact the whole way. Let's just hope Rooster doesn't get distracted by some random bird at one of the pubs and completely forgets about me. Same goes for Holtzy if he gets carried away on the rumbos and punt. I expect citizens from each Village will line the riverbanks along the way cheering with pride.

AS USUAL, MY CHOSEN CHARITY IS THE RETIRED BAKERS FISHING CLUB.

Six pies from Denman Bakery and maybe a cream bun and it's on to Jerry's Plains where I will indulge in a few two-week-old servo pies. The pub's closed so the support crew will just wait by the bank doing crowd control.

From there will be a swimming equivalent of a sprint to Singo. Where huge crowds are expected to gather throwing confetti from Dunolly Bridge while crying with pride. The local bakeries intend on making a commemorative pie

as I understand it and restoking my esky on the bank.

On the home stretch to Maitland I expect to fly home with the smell of a Blakeney's pie in my nostrils and my willy shrunken to the size of a pea from being in the drink for so long, reducing considerable drag.

At the finish line I will have my Spring body ready to roll. Get physical guys, Summer is coming. Best to you and yours...Sunny Sol.

'AVE A LAUGH WITH

ZERO5 PERFORMANCE

BUILT TO WIN

My neighbour texted me, "I just made synonym buns!" I texted back, "You mean like grammar use to make?"

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DIFFICULT

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8		9			3			
	1				2			
2	5					1	7	

@ THE COALFACE
PRIZE WINNERS

Volume 4 – No 9: August - September 2020

Crib Bag	Jenny Jones
Roberts Meats Raffle	Anthony Field
Banlaw Fuel Voucher	Jason Lodge
Hunter Pet Motel Voucher	Fiona Murray
Newcastle Distilling Co. Spirits	Elisha Carter
F45 Singleton Memberships	Leah Rumbel

WINNERS!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR WINNERS!

STRANGE BUT TRUE!

Did you know...

➤ People don't sneeze in their sleep due to their brain shutting down the reflex.

➤ Expedia.com, Hotels.com, Hotwire.com, Trivago, Travelocity, and Orbitz are all owned by the same company, Expedia Inc.

➤ Dead people can get goosebumps!

➤ 'lbs' comes from the Latin word 'libra' which means pound.

➤ When watermelons are grilled or baked, they lose their granular texture and can even be used as meat substitute, a 'watermelon steak'.

➤ Some cat breeds (called 'puppy cats') are bred specifically to exhibit dog-like behavior.

➤ "Bluetooth" technology was named after a 10th century king, King Harald Bluetooth. He united Denmark and Norway – just like the wireless technology united computers and cell phones.

➤ The word "Jurassic," which we so often associate with dinosaurs, comes from the Celtic word for "forest".

➤ Rowan Atkinson – also known as Mr. Bean – is the voice of Zazu in The Lion King.

HAPPY CAMPERS

THERE'S A C WORD THAT'S BEEN ON A LOT OF OUR MINDS AS THE WINTER MONTHS COME TO A CLOSE ALONG WITH OUR BORDERS... AND NO IT'S NOT COVID.

Track down your fold up chairs, throw in the sleeping bag and get practicing on those tent building skills – it's time to go camping. The pandemic hasn't done us any favours when it comes to holidays and travel, so I'm sharing my new favourite camping spot located right here in beautiful NSW, plus my new favourite camping gear must have I've recently discovered.

LOADING UP THE CAR, MY PARTNER AND I HEADED TO FRAZER BEACH. A HIDDEN COASTAL GEM TUCKED AWAY IN THE MUNMORAH STATE CONSERVATION AREA AROUND 45KMS SOUTH OF NEWCASTLE, NSW.

Driving into the national park, you're taken on a winding thoroughfare amongst towering trees and lush vegetation – almost as though its surroundings are untouched. The short, tranquil drive through the park is effortless with signs throughout leading you straight to the sandy shores of Frazer Beach.

MY PARTNER AND I LOVE COASTAL CAMPING AND THIS LOCATION HAS BEEN ON OUR LIST FOR SOME TIME. WHEN WE REACHED THE CARPARK THAT SITS DIRECTLY AT THE ENTRANCE DOWN TO THE SAND, WE WERE ABSOLUTELY BLOWN AWAY WITH THE CAPTIVATING VIEWS, CLEAN SURF AND THE ENLIVENED FEELING THAT YOU'RE LET IN ON A SECRET THAT ONLY LOCALS KNOW ABOUT.

Arriving at around 4pm in the afternoon we were expecting a bit of a crowd, but apart from a few surfers the beach was ours. The park has been set up with a small carpark and only 4 camping spots to ensure this, so it's important to book your spot early.

The sun was starting to set, and we decided to explore some possible fishing spots for the following day. Taking one of the tracks we saw on the way in we discovered an absolute beauty – Snapper Point. This spot has a magnificent, endless view over the ocean and Frazer Beach, and a sea cave that blew our minds. We could

have watched the waves crash up onto the rocks and into the sandy tunnels for hours.

OVER 4 DAYS WE ENJOYED MULTIPLE BUSHWALKS DOWN DIFFERENT TRACKS, SOME GREAT FISHING AND FISHING SPOTS, SWIMMING IN AND AROUND THE BEACH, PICNICS FURTHER INTO THE FOREST-LIKE SHADED PARK AND SURFING. OF AN AFTERNOON WE CHOSE A NEW SPOT EACH DAY TO SET UP A BLANKET AND WATCH THE SUN GO DOWN, MOST OF THE TIME WITH NOT ANOTHER SOUL IN SIGHT.

Around a 1.5-hour drive from Singleton, NSW Frazer Beach is a camping spot you could spend a week exploring.

THE MUST HAVE CAMPING COMPANION

THE SELK'BAG – ORIGINAL 6G FROM GEAR SUPPLY

One thing I can't stand about camping during the colder months is having to climb into my sleeping bag for any kind of warmth, especially when I have a coastal paradise to explore. Thank god I came across the Selk'Bag.

I was running around for hours after dark in my new sleeping bag. I'm talking a wearable sleeping bag shaped like the human body.

I was like a little purple Michelin Man effortlessly dancing around the beach in absolute warmth and comfort. The booties are removable, and the hood is weather resistant in case it starts to rain. It even has pockets!

I won't be camping anywhere without my Selk'Bag from now on that's for sure.

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