

@THE COAL FACE

Vol 1 No 4: December 2016 - January 2017

MONEY MACHINES

THE SPENDING FREEZE OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS HAS HIT MANY OF THE BIG SUPPLIERS HARD. IN DEALS TOTTALLING 50 MILLION DOLLARS, HEAVY EQUIPMENT OEM'S WESTRAC AND HITACHI FINALLY HAVE SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT IN THE HUNTER.

Heavy mining equipment sales over the last few years have been as rare as a Greens candidate in a hard hat celebrating a mine opening.

Layoffs, machines being parked up and maintenance contracts being stripped back to the bare essentials, have all created a perfect storm of pain for companies like WesTrac, Hitachi and others.

It is great news to hear that Mt Thorley Warkworth has inked a deal to invest tens of millions of dollars on new equipment.

On Top of this, in May 2016 HVO also got an EX5600 replacement. This kind of news is great for these companies and their employees and hopefully signals a new wave of carefully considered mining equipment investment for the industry.

THE DEAL INCLUDES FIVE NEW CATERPILLAR ULTRACLASS 795F'S AND A REPLACEMENT EX5600 EXCAVATOR.

The flow on effects to other suppliers will no doubt inject substantial revenue into associated businesses across a range of disciplines, who have been crying out for just this kind of news.

Confidence is gaining more and more momentum with each month and even Sydney papers are starting to tell some good news mining stories.

Going into Christmas all have plenty to celebrate for once, and with these machines getting parked under the MTW Christmas tree it will be a very welcome gift to unwrap.



FIVE NEW CAT'S FOR MTW

DEAL OR NO DEAL

ALTHOUGH WE WERE UNABLE TO GET A CONFIRMATION FROM EITHER PARTY AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRINT, SOURCES ON THE GROUND SAY THE MTW DEAL IS ALMOST DONE.

Rio Tinto Coal Australia has been a huge part of the Hunter coal industry but if rumours are true then it may soon be time for the curtain to close as they take a final bow.

With the sale of Bengalla completed earlier this year, and Mount Pleasant sold to Mach that left Hunter Valley Operations (HVO) and Mouth Thorley Warkworth (MTW) still on their dance card.

MTW has 1300 employees who rely on it to support their families. If rumours are true as, media speculation and pub talk widely reported last week, then this integral asset to our mining community could soon be in the hands of Yancoal. And with Yancoal's share price leaping from 14 cents in September to 38 cents in November this could be because of market speculation about the sale. Though recent increases in coal prices are more likely responsible.

HVO is a vital part of our community and rumours abounded that Glencore was ready to buy up this asset if the price was right. Despite the huge amount of speculation about the proposed sale our sources tell us it probably won't happen. Yancoal are the odds here as well.

Rio Tinto Coal Australia has been a valued contributor to our industry and supporter of our community, so many will see their selling as a loss. But with new owners and a new lease of life on both sites that will hopefully mean good news for employees, stakeholders and the community.



THE LAST FEW MONTHS THE RUMOUR MILL HAS BEEN GOING CRAZY ABOUT RIO TINTO COAL AUSTRALIA SELLING ITS HUNTER COAL ASSETS MOUNT THORLEY WARKWORTH AND HUNTER VALLEY OPERATIONS. BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS IT MAY ALREADY BE FACT.



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JUMP INTO CHRISTMAS

IT'S TIME TO PUT DOWN THE TONKA TOYS AND PICK UP A TURKEY LEG, COLD BEER OR WINE, BE NICE TO THE IN-LAWS, TAKE OFF, HIT THE SAND, GO BUSH, SPOIL THE KIDS AND PREPARE FOR A FEW HANGOVERS. YOU'VE EARNED IT THIS YEAR.

What a year it has been. Who would have thought that twelve months ago with things being as tough as they were that we would be seeing out the year with a renewed confidence we hardly dared dream about.

Supplier after supplier are slowly picking up and the cautious optimism is putting many a smile on people's faces. The only people grumbling this year seem to be the naysayers who had written our industry and livelihoods off. The reality of the role our industry plays in life is well and truly proving them wrong. We are not going anywhere just yet.

WIN MORE STUFF THAN EVER BEFORE IN OUR BIG CHRISTMAS GIVEAWAY!

This month across the Hunter mining communities, we cover off a bit of this and that, including wakeboarding and a few predictions and hopes from leaders of our communities and industry. We hear an inspiring story about a miner and his penny-farthing. Our resident Pie Minister takes a swipe at Santa and the spirit of Christmas, and Thrift Bros fishing legends show you how to bait a finger. Austar celebrates a Century and we cover the fact that the best coal in the world comes from right here. We catch up with a young Knights legend and mine leco and head over to Vegas for a bit of R n R.

My love affair with Quarry Mining continues... Check out the ad of the year in the following pages. The quarry people are as funny as they are bloody good at what they do. It's Christmas time people and as the year closes the @ The Coalface family hope every dream and wish comes true for you and yours. Celebrate what you have achieved, celebrate renewed confidence, but most of all celebrate with those you love and cherish. A very Merry Christmas to you all and a Happy New Year. See you in 2017.

A POSITIVE END TO ANOTHER TOUGH YEAR

AS 2016 DRAWS TO A CLOSE WE'VE SEEN INDICATIONS THAT THE HUNTER COAL INDUSTRY IS TURNING THE CORNER. THERMAL COAL PRICES HAVE NEARLY DOUBLED THIS YEAR, AND THE COKING COAL PRICE HAS NEARLY TRIPLED.

Local developments are adding to this positive outlook. Recent approval of Glencore's Mt Owen expansion project means mining will continue there until 2031, protecting existing jobs and creating new opportunities. Glencore is also set to restart its Integra mine, creating an additional 275 jobs. Mach Energy has also confirmed it intends to develop a new coal mine at Mount Pleasant, creating local business and job opportunities during the construction phase,

and local mining jobs once production commences.

These positive signs confirm that the coal industry and those that work in it will continue to be a big part of the Hunter well into the future.

The NSW Minerals Council has fought hard for mining in 2016. We've ensured the best possible outcomes for our industry, our communities, and our people. Together with many of you across the Hunter we've raised our voices in support of coal mining and the people that make up our great industry during some tough times together. Let's hope the positive signs we've recently seen mean we can share more good times together next year.

Whatever the future holds you can be sure that in 2017 the NSW



Minerals Council will continue our efforts to keep our Hunter mining industry strong.

I wish all our miners and their families, our industry suppliers and everyone in the Hunter a Merry Christmas and a safe New Year.



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CHEERS TO A GOOD YEAR

THIS MONTH I MARK THREE YEARS AS MINISTER FOR RESOURCES AND ENERGY AND IT IS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THAT PERIOD THAT THE COAL PRICE IS FINALLY HEADING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

While we all know coal is a cyclical commodity, that doesn't make it any easier for the miners and workers on the ground when a downturn hits. The ripple effect is felt across all the state's mining communities. However, what has never been in doubt is the resilience and strength of the mining communities of the Upper Hunter.

The export thermal coal price has doubled and the coking coal price has trebled. These significant coal price increases in the second half of this year is having a real impact and great news for the wider industry.

This year we passed new laws to protect workers from illegal protest activity. These new laws were a commitment at the last election and the

government has delivered. While we respect the right to protest peacefully, we do not condone the actions of individuals that put the lives of workers, and indeed the protesters themselves, at risk.

The NSW Government also believes we've made significant improvements this year in regard to workplace health and safety for the state's mining communities.

I'm sure many of you would be aware or have seen first-hand, the safety risks posed by illegal 'lock-on' devices or reckless interference with mining equipment and even explosives. This behaviour is, quite simply, unacceptable. As the industry regulator, I'm pleased to see these new laws are now in place to protect the workforce.

As you would be aware there has also been some concern around the re-emergence of suspected 'black lung' cases in Queensland. I am proud to say the Queensland Government has reached to us for advice and support due to the fact the NSW health and safety regulatory model is considered the national benchmark in this area.

I can assure you that health and safety is of paramount importance to the NSW Government and we will continue to work with industry, workers and independent experts to ensure this remains the case.

From my family to yours, Merry Christmas and our best wishes to you for a happy, safe and rewarding new year.

LETTER FROM YOU

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

My partner really loves a drop of wine, she works in one of the cellar doors in Pokolbin and I work in the mines. While I try to stick to beer, I've slowly come around to the taste of fermented grape juice. We're so lucky to live so close to the places we both work. It makes spending time with the kids and each other so much easier, plus with some of the job insecurity in the mining industry, we know we'll be ok for a little while at least, because of my partner's full time work. But, talking with a few of her work mates, and even

with a few of my mates in our industry, it always seems like there's tension between the two. Without sounding like a hippy, I don't see why we can't all get along. Our home is here in the Hunter. It's where we want to raise our kids and expose them to the great things our region has to offer. We want to give them the best of both worlds, and that includes wines and mines for us. It'd be great to hear how both industries are or could work together for the future of our region and our families.

Ryan Roberts, Cessnock

@ The Coalface thinks this is a good point and we believe there's room for both industries to survive and thrive. Working together is the most important thing we can do to secure the future of both sectors and the community. Let us know your thoughts.



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"Because," he said, "Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear."

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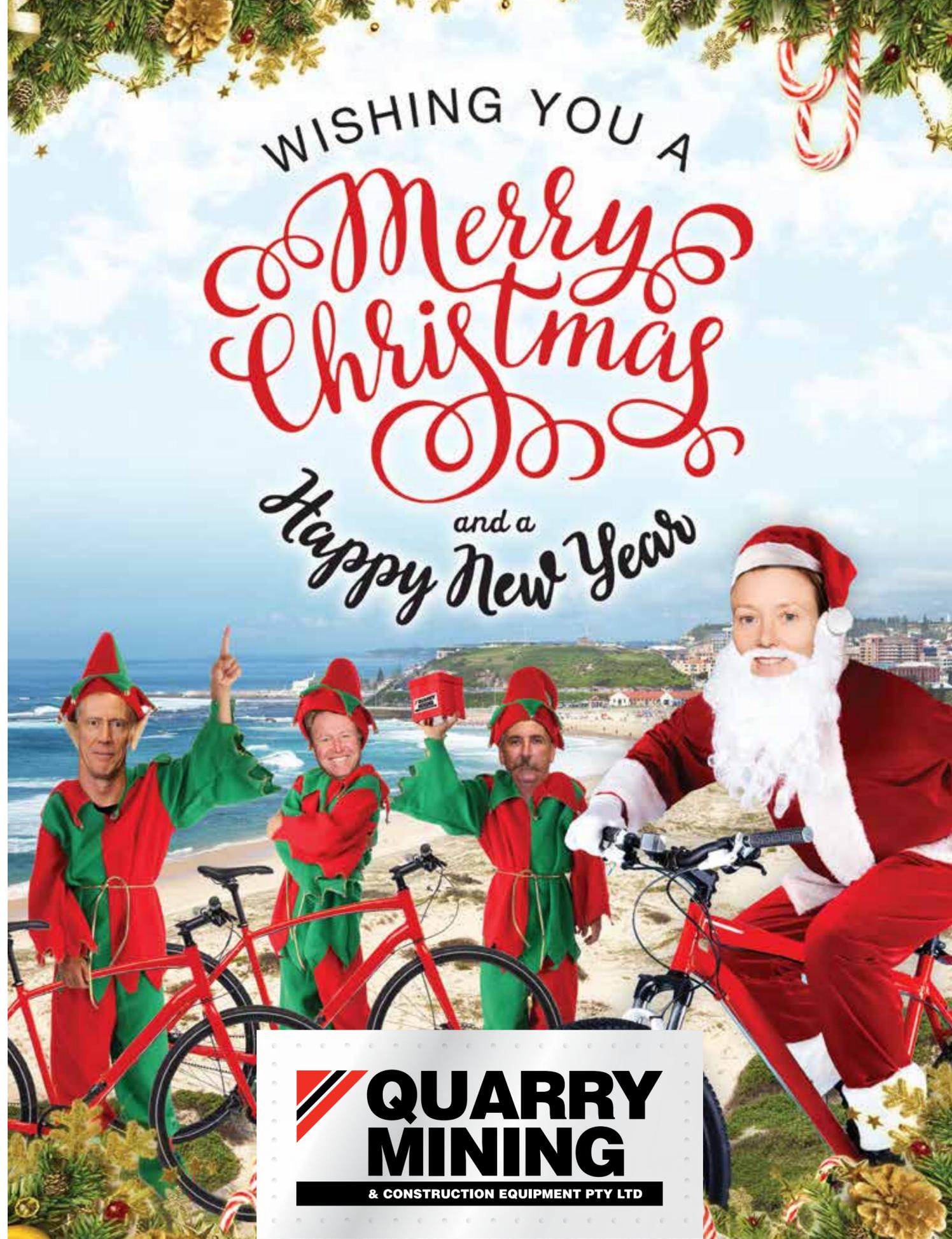
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AFTER 23 YEARS AS AN CAT DEALER NETWORK SENIOR MANAGER, CRAIG TANZER MAKES A BIG MOVE TO COMPLETE PARTS AS GENERAL MANAGER.

Craig said on the move, "Changes in the market over the last few years have transformed the heavy equipment market, driving major growth in the used and reconditioned parts to the mining and heavy vehicle industries across Australia. I see huge opportunity in this space.

This shift in approach has seen companies like Complete be able to grow in a down market and this and the ability to respond quickly, along with the opportunity to be part a fast growing organisation is why I made the decision." Craig has worked with every

mining customer in the Hunter Valley, Mudgee and Gunnedah. Not many have his breadth of knowledge, experience and professional respect at the big end of mining equipment. Being a Cat specialist obviously stands Craig in good stead selling and dismantling used Earthmoving and Mining Equipment from all the major suppliers. He said that the vision and investment owner Sean Dyson has committed to the

company's future, such as their new Singleton facility, was also a major factor. "He started with nothing and was smart in his approach and what he achieved in five years in a poor market is pretty impressive. The next five years will see major expansion and I want to be a big part of driving that," Craig said. We wish Craig success as a new part of Complete Parts.

MEDIA ON SHAKY GROUND

RECENTLY WE'VE SEEN SOME MEDIA OUTLETS BLAMING COAL MINING FOR EARTHQUAKES AND TRYING TO DRUM UP A BIT OF HYSTERIA, BUT WHERE'S THE EVIDENCE?

A US academic once blamed the 1989 Newcastle earthquake on coal mining activity. However, the paper was based on suppositions and had no hard evidence to support its theory. The paper became highly controversial with many scientists believing that because the quake happened deep within the Earth's crust

it was more likely a result of natural events than mining. **DOES MINING ACTIVITY CAUSE EARTHQUAKES?** Daniel Jaksa of the Geoscience Australia's Earthquake Alert Centre said on ABC radio some time ago. "No, the minerals we mine are generally caused by earthquakes in the first place, hence the areas are prone to

seismic events. It's the other way around; we have mining because of earthquakes," Mr Jaksa said. "So it's not unusual that you will find earthquakes near mines because mines are near faults and interestingly enough, so are people." It must be noted that mining activities do induce very small seismic events but it is known as rockburst in metal mines and bump in coal mines and are not earth shattering earthquakes. The science is still a work in progress and media

reports are often lacking any references to scientific evidence. While we in no way are suggesting that mining may not be a small contributor, it is only one of many human activities that may be having an effect. Australia sits on the Indo-Australian plate and we have more quakes than other regions that sit in the middle of plates and are considered relatively stable and yet no one knows why. When it comes to what causes earthquakes there are still more questions than answers.



The Bloomfield Group.
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
— SEE YOU IN 2017

From our family to yours, we wish you the best for the festive season.
Have a happy and prosperous New Year.
Stay safe over the holiday period.

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DONATING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

MEMBERS OF THE CFMEU NORTHERN MINING & NSW ENERGY DISTRICT IN 2016 HAVE, ONCE AGAIN, CONTINUED TO SHOW THEIR ONGOING SUPPORT FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES THROUGH DONATIONS TO A GREAT NUMBER OF WORTHY RECIPIENTS.

This year alone, both the District and its Lodges from many mine sites across the industry have generously donated more than \$220,000, which doesn't include the \$1.5 million they donate annually to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. Some of these well-deserved recipients include:

- Hunter Medical Research Institute
- Ronald McDonald House
- Sids and Kids Hunter Region
- Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service
- CanTeen
- Calvary Mater Oncology
- Variety the Children's Charity

The District also gave grants to St Mary's Maitland, Gloucester High

School, Singleton High School, St Joseph's Lochinvar, Maitland Grossman High School and Muswellbrook High as part of their Schools Grant Program in 2016. **HELPING EVEN AS THEY CLOSE THEIR DOORS** Because of mine closures some of the Union's long standing Lodges, Drayton, Teralba and West Wallsend have been closed but that didn't stop their Members donating to the community one last time with many local community groups receiving donations. **A big thank you to all the Union Members who so generously donate, playing a vital role in making sure our communities have the services we need.**



DRAYTON SADDLES UP

FOR THE FINAL TIME, ANGLO AMERICAN MAKES IT CASE TO THE PAC FOR DRAYTON SOUTH APPROVAL, BUT DON'T EXPECT A RESOLUTION ANYTIME SOON.

With the final layoffs of the Drayton North employees leaving some in the community in turmoil, the recent PAC meeting in Muswellbrook was an opportunity for their opinions to be heard and more importantly, for the facts to be reviewed. However, many chose not to attend and when you ask them why, their response is they feel the PAC is a waste of time and resources and they have serious doubts that the PAC is basing its decisions on facts or is instead being influenced by political and media opinion. Nathan Tinkler gave it to the studs in terms of the squeaky clean image they try to project and it was food for thought without taking anything away from the many fine people in that industry. The studs stacked the room with many

people, and to be fair the great majority clearly were not locals. Both sides of the paddock fence are blaming the government for allowing our two industries to be pitted against each other in this drawn out battle and a decision needs to be made to stop our community being torn apart any further. @ The Coalface would love to see the Commission approve the project and the much needed jobs go back into our community, but more importantly, we think both industries deserve to have an answer so we can go back to working alongside each other as we have done throughout the years. Unfortunately the PAC has not indicated how long until they make the decision so it remains a waiting game.



A SAD DAY FOR OUR COMMUNITY



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BEST COAL IN THE WORLD



AUSTRALIA IS THE SECOND LARGEST EXPORTER OF COAL WORLDWIDE. HERE'S WHY WE SHOULD BE NUMBER ONE.

We are the second largest coal exporter in the world and if we stopped exporting, people would just start buying coal elsewhere and the consequences would be disastrous, especially for our economy.

If coalmines in Australia shut down immediately to reduce our carbon footprint what would happen? For one, most of us would be sitting in the dark, unable to work or feed our kids, and looking at dark mobile screens unable to even lament our

sorrows on social media.

EMERGING ECONOMIES AND NATIONS WILL SEE USAGE RISE

Would worldwide emissions be reduced? No.

What would happen is that environmental outcomes would drop considerably due to poor mining practices in other parts of the world. The planet would be worse off and the environment would be worse off. The other little problem is that

many people would die due to poor safety standards, but being out of sight, very little of those facts are of relevance to activists.

WHY WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO EXPORT COAL

As Australians, we have the best of everything, the best beaches, the best sportsmen, the best babes, and of course, the best coal.

And by having the best, or as we often hear, the cleanest coal in the

world, it means that when our coal is used it can result in reducing emissions worldwide. Ceasing our exporting of coal would have a more harmful effect on worldwide emissions than continuing to export. Let's look at thermal coal which represents about 80% of the world's coal usage. Thermal coal in Australia has lower levels of sulphur, ash, mercury, selenium and other trace elements than coal from other exporting countries. A higher quality coal produces fewer emissions per unit of electricity used.

Also to be considered, is the moisture content in the coal. The more moisture found in the coal means that less useful energy is recovered. Our exported coal is around 10 percent moisture whereas Indonesian coal is closer to 30 percent.

But cleaner coal is a misleading term, more appropriate would be efficient coal, because if Australian coal is used, less coal is burnt to get the same energy compared to other producers. Less coal burnt for the same job means fewer emissions. Combine that with next gen Hele power stations and few could deny it's a compelling story.

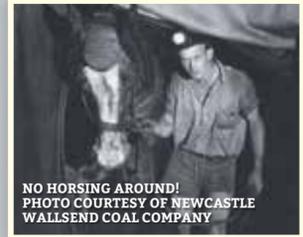
Knowing this, it seems only logical that until renewables come into play and worldwide coal usage begins to cease, then we should do as Australians do best. Strive for first place.

100 NOT OUT



THE BEGINNING OF PELTON COLLIERY - PHOTO COURTESY OF A. GALLOWAY, ED TONKS COLLECTION

ON 15 APRIL 1916 SURFACE OPERATIONS COMMENCED AT PELTON COLLIERY IN THE SOUTH MAITLAND COALFIELDS.



NO HORSEING AROUND! PHOTO COURTESY OF NEWCASTLE WALLSEND COAL COMPANY

100 years later, Pelton Colliery, now part of the Austar Coal Mine, is the last remaining coal-producing mine in the Cessnock area.

When it started, 36 men and boys were employed with only a third of them ever having worked underground before. Today, Austar Coal Mine employs 240 men and women and has been a vital contributor to our community for the last 100 years.

PLAYING IT SAFE

So much has changed in the industry in the 100 years since it opened and the biggest differences are in safety and technology. Back then, PPE consisted of a hardhat, a pair of shorts, singlet and shin pads. Miners used naked flames to see, air flow was created by an underground furnace and coal was cut by hand.

NOT A BAD DAY'S WORK

Although they may not have had the top of the line safety gear that workers now wear, they did work shorter shifts than most miners do today. In 1943, a typical miner's shift started at 7am and lasted eight hours. Actual work time underground was about six hours a day. The rest was taken up in travel-time to and from the coalface.

YOU CAN LEAD A HORSE ANYWHERE

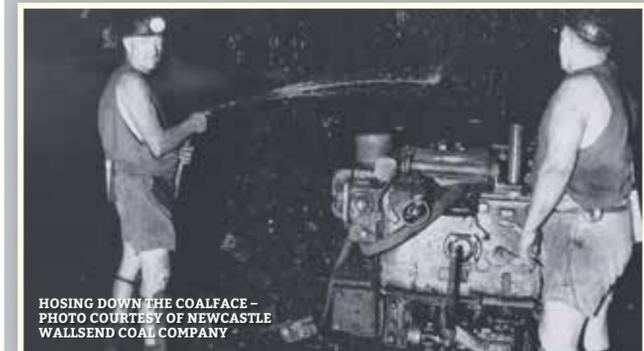
Pit horses were part of Pelton Colliery's operation until 1972 and early records show stables and a feed storehouse were built during 1922. In 1926 there were 37 pit horses. Each one had their own stall, in which to rest and recover after a hard day's work hauling coal. Nowadays, all the beasts used by Austar are of the mechanical type.

STILL GOING STRONG TODAY

Coal continues to be crushed and washed at Austar's Coal Handling and Preparation Plant at the site of the Pelton Colliery, producing a product that's been boosting our economy and supporting our families for 100 years.

Austar Operations Manager, Brian Wesley had this to say. "Throughout its many owners and operators, the Austar Coal Mine has been an important part of the history of Cessnock and the surrounding region, providing employment and training opportunities for entire generations of local families."

Congratulations Austar!



HOSING DOWN THE COALFACE - PHOTO COURTESY OF NEWCASTLE WALLSEND COAL COMPANY

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When I was six years old I got a lump of coal from Santa. The next year I decided to get back at him and poison the cookies. Somehow, the bastard found out and killed my dad.



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PUBLISHERS OPINION

While I write about mining and tell lots of people how passionate I am to be working in it, the truth of the matter is I'm about as close to being a miner as I am to being a Melbourne Cup jockey.

Real miners are a special breed who work long hours at difficult times and under very difficult conditions. Anyone who doesn't think it's about as hard a day's work as a person could do is kidding themselves. It's challenging underground, and in the pits they might have a bit of aircon, but driving around, digging, drilling or keeping it all going in maintenance for twelve hours is something that really tests the stamina and brain.

The mining people in our mining communities put in just as much effort off the job. I don't know

of a sporting team, charity or similar, that would survive without our mining people. They step up when needed and they step up even when they are not. Mining people have been instrumental in building our communities over many generations.

The families I have gotten to know are built on proud foundations of hard work, respect, love and selflessness. They are more often than not generational mining families and the work ethic and community involvement is passed down. It's special to see.

Our people ride the ups and downs of the industry and like pro bull riders they hang on for their lives.

I AM INSPIRED BY EVERY ONE OF YOU MAGNIFICENT BASTARDS!

It's not easy in a down turn when they or their friends lose work or go belly up, but when the shit hits the fan they come together, close ranks and look after each others backs.

The changes in the industry, while sometimes necessary, don't make it any easier. I couldn't imagine the stress of trying to keep a family with three or four kids (and a dog or two) going, when you are living as a contractor. Yes it's the way of the industry these days, but no holidays and other conditions,

plus the financial implications and no certainty, sure do make life difficult. Mining people just get on with it.

To finish... Don't change anything about who you are, keep working hard. Keep joking around. Keep loving and protecting those around you as magnificently as you do. You are a bloody credit to yourselves and I've never been more proud to know a bigger bunch of rat bags. Inspiring is the only way to describe you.



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**"WOW! LOOK AT THAT!
THAT'S AWESOME!"**



THIS WAS THE OFTEN-REPEATED EXCLAMATION WHEN MANGOOLA COAL'S MINE SITE BECAME A MASSIVE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM FOR 60 STUDENTS FROM MUSWELLBROOK'S ST JAMES PRIMARY SCHOOL ON NOVEMBER 24.

Organised by the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue, the students were hosted by the Glencore mine for a bus tour of its mining operations and rehabilitation program. The Mangoola tour gave the students a rare opportunity to see first-hand what they are studying in their classroom.

The Years 5 and 6 students are studying coal mining as part of their science unit including learning about the process of coal formation, how it is transformed into electricity, the role of coal in our day-to-day lives and the impacts the industry can have on our everyday lives.

Glencore's Nathan Lane, Damien Ryba and Rae O'Brien talked to the students about coal mining, how coal is used and how mines rehabilitate the land after mining has moved on.

The Upper Hunter Mining

Dialogue plans to roll out the mine tours on a much larger scale next year; the Dialogue is finalising a program which would see all primary and secondary schools in the Muswellbrook-Singleton area offered mine and rehabilitation tours.

The purpose of next year's tours program will be to educate youth on the impacts and benefits of mining in the Upper Hunter as part of the Dialogue's role to foster communication between the mining industry and the community.



BUSY BEES



GLENCORE'S RAVENSWORTH OPEN CUT EMPLOYEES HAVE ONCE AGAIN PITCHED IN FOR THEIR ANNUAL COMMUNITY WORKING BEE, THIS TIME COMPLETING A PACKAGE OF WORKS AT ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE, SINGLETON.

A team of 50 employees volunteered their time on Saturday, November 26, to deliver a number of projects on the school's "wish list".

Key projects were construction of an amphitheatre and seating, truck sand box play stations, seats and tables for senior students, shelters, an outdoor chess board and other play areas.

Principal Maryanne Finder said the school was "overwhelmed" by the gesture. The key projects will enable children to learn



through play, such as problem-solving through games of chess. The amphitheatre will enable the students to produce concerts and take part in performance classes. Another great example of Glencore giving back to the community.



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DREAMS DO COME TRUE

LATE TO THE INDUSTRY THROUGH A TRAINEESHIP AT CENTENNIALS AT THE AGE OF 40, NOW 45-YEAR-OLD MICHAEL COWAN IS THE KIND OF COAL MINER YOU DON'T MEET EVERY DAY. ACTUALLY HE'S THE KIND OF BLOKE YOU DON'T MEET ANY DAY.



When he first applied, 1000 applicants were reduced to 10, they took 8 and Michael missed out. His coal mining dream was put on hold. We'll come back to coal mining a bit later. How he got there is a story of selflessness, community, commitment and a healthy dose of insanity thrown in for good measure. It's been a bumpy ride, but never being one to sit, or for that matter stand around for long, he took the long road there.

Before mining he was a part time builder, part time sports therapist and full time asthmatic. Michael had been committed to community service and fundraising most of his adult life. One day he decided to raise some money for the Asthma Foundation and rode a 16-inch uni cycle a record distance for time and raised eleven grand which gave him a thirst for volunteer work. In 2010 he built two 1880s penny-farthings and raced one over a thousand kilometers in a week for the Asthma Foundation and nearly killed himself along the way. He said, "I basically spent two years fitness training, boxing and cycling. Riding a penny-farthing with no brakes, no

gears; it's uncomfortable. Along the way they thought I had a stroke, I did two achilles tendons and was so exhausted I had basic decisions taken off me. But it was worth it because that one week generated more than twelve months of media for them and had me visiting parliament, schools and doing radio and newspaper interviews. \$100,000 was raised and then I raised another 100 grand in speaking engagements." Through all of this he didn't keep a cent.

IT ALL CAME AT GREAT COST AND TOOK A TOLL ON THE FAMILY. Michael said, "My wife Amanda made tons of sacrifices for me and so did my beautiful three kids, Jasmine 17, Hanna 16 and Ruby 12. But through it all they've learnt valuable lessons in life about the gift of giving and living within your means. Sacrificing meant no restaurants, no holidays and a lot more, but they were always by my side. Then recognition started to come.

Michael became NSW Volunteer of the Year and went on to represent NSW and became Australian Volunteer of the Year. If that wasn't enough Lake Macquarie Citizen of the Year followed.

THEN STUFF REALLY STARTED TO HAPPEN. Michael was invited to the World Volunteer Organisation Conference in Amsterdam where the top six countries in the world were up for the world's most outstanding volunteer. He won. He went on to say, "It was funny, I had no money to get there and had to beg Emirates for a ticket. The life of a volunteer!



AND THAT'S WHERE MINING COMES IN.

Volunteer work led him to become a motivational speaker and a month later he had a gig talking for Centennial, which completely changed his life. Volunteering allowed him to land a talk at a HSEC conference where all of his potential employers were in the audience. He cleverly prompted an audience member about what his plans for the future were. His response? "I want to be a coalminer."

HE WAS OFFERED A JOB THAT DAY. "It was a pretty emotional day. I actually cried. The missus had said I had to get a job in no uncertain terms and I agreed. So you can imagine the weight of the world lifting off my shoulders not to mention the family." He then told us, "My grandfather, great grandfather, cousins and uncles were all coalminers and it appealed to me. I didn't get into it after school but it was a passion and was a big part of where I lived in Lake Macquarie.

"My hero is my dad, a self made man who started in a tin shed and is now one of the worlds leading manufacturers of hyperbaric pressure chambers for diving. He taught me to follow my dreams and never give up and I never did and now I am living it. Living my coalmining dream. People at work say what is wrong with you? Why are you always smiling and working so hard? It's an easy answer, 'I enjoy it and I am so thankful for it. In a nutshell I just bloody love it."

Anyone out there needing motivation or reminding just how much mining means to people and brings to peoples lives... you don't have to look much further than Michael!

COW MINER



COW MINER...

TONY SUTCLIFFE IS AN UNDERMANAGER AT AUSTAR COAL MINE AND A PASSIONATE CATTLE FARMER, AND LIKE MANY OTHERS IN OUR COMMUNITY, IS PROOF THAT THE TWO INDUSTRIES DO CO-EXIST.

Tony's been in the mining game for 34 years and for the last 15 years he's also been slowly building up his own cattle farming business. Today he manages 160 head of commercial cattle on 600 acres of land at Duns Creek and Quorrobolong with the help of his wife Liz.

HE MIGHT BE UP AT ONE AM ASSISTING A CALVING EVEN WHEN HE'S WORKING 14 HOUR DAYS ON THE WEEKEND SHIFT AT AUSTAR

Like many farmers, Tony works as a miner not just because he loves the mining industry, but because these days it's almost impossible for anyone to be able to buy the amount of land that's required to run a successful agricultural business. Unless you've been passed down a farm or land through the generations, it's highly unlikely you'll be able to kick start your own business.

Some might call Tony a hobby farmer, but spending every spare minute when you're not at work artificially inseminating cows, spreading tons of chicken manure and all the other hard tasks that make up a cattle farmer's life means that Tony spends more time working the farm than down in the mine.

When you ask Tony why he does it, he says he's passionate about both mining and farming. "It can be difficult juggling both but also very rewarding. I like being a leader at work

and managing a good crew, but sometimes after the stresses of a work day it's good to hang up the HIVIS and don the Akubra hat. Out on the farm, it's peaceful and I like the manual labour. It lets you just focus on the simple task on hand and forget about the rat race."

People like Tony are the backbone of our community and most people agree.

Tony said, "Most people support that I'm both a miner and a farmer, especially as most of the farmers around these days are also supporting their families working in a second industry. You get a few die-hard anti-miners but they are few and far in between. And mining certainly supports my farming as Yancoal leases me 200 of the 600 acres I use. You can't get much more support than that."

With plans to expand his stud and get into embryo transfer to increase the quality of his cattle, we know Tony won't stop working hard anytime soon.



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BRING ON 2017!!



IT'S BEEN A BIG YEAR FOR EVERYONE NAVIGATING THE WATERS OF LIFE IN OUR INDUSTRY, COMMUNITIES AND REGION IN 2016. WE ARE FINISHING STRONG AND WE ARE GOING TO LEAP INTO NEXT YEAR STEEL CAPPED BOOTS AND ALL.

A few things that we would like to see for 2017 are a new spirit of coexistence and conversation with the horse industry, closer ties with our wine industry and a commitment to continued diversification alongside a vibrant and productive mining industry. We want the confidence, vibrancy and the mood of our local communities to continue to get back to where it should be and we want our workers to be confident in their future. Better conditions for contractors and suppliers alike are high on the list, and stability and confidence for our mining companies. May the renaissance and growth of the city of Newcastle continue at

supercar speed, and the roar of the engines of NSW's greatest non capital city be cheered along the way...and of course, may the mighty Newcastle Knights rise to reign supreme on sacred ground!

With all that in mind we also spoke to a cross section of our industry and community leaders and asked them to tell @ The Coalface what they wish for as we look forward to a prosperous 2017.

Anthony Roberts, Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy
I believe the industry has a lot to look forward to in 2017. The year will begin with a strong coal price which is a

great platform for the industry, which I hope to further jobs growth in our mining sector, both in terms of mining jobs and other forms of employment across mining towns and communities. In 2017 the NSW Government will also be putting in place its new Strategic Release Framework for the potential release of new areas for coal exploration. This upfront assessment of potential areas will give certainty to everyone about where future coal exploration could take place.

Stephen Galilee, CEO, NSW Minerals Council

As an industry we've slogged through some tough times recently and 2016 was no different. Through it all we've remained resilient. With things starting to look up, let's hope together we can enjoy a better 2017. Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

Joel Fitzgibbon, Federal Member for Hunter, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Shadow Minister for Rural and Regional Australia

My wish for the Region's coal mining industry is for continuing higher prices for both steaming and coking coal. Coal has a future. Developing countries growing out of poverty will need our cleaner and more efficient product for many years to come. That's a win for them, a win for the environment, and a win for the Hunter's economy and local jobs.

Katie Brassil, Executive General Manager External Affairs, Centennial Coal

I wish that every single one of our people returns home safely to their families each day and that our region again enjoys the benefits of a prosperous mining industry. More broadly, I also wish mining is seen and appreciated for the essential role it plays in providing reliable and affordable energy domestically and internationally.

Michael Johnsen, MP Upper Hunter

Mining has played a role in the fabric of the Upper Hunter for over a hundred years. In that time many families have thrived and survived thanks to the mining industry, and many communities have been enriched. History proves not only the social and economic importance of mining in the Upper Hunter, but also that coexistence between mining and other equally important industries, has, does and will continue to work.

Brian Wesley, Mine Operations Manager, Aустar Coal Mine

Having been a part of the Cessnock and surrounding community for the past 100 years, Aустar would like to wish all readers a safe and happy Christmas. Aустar looks forward to continuing its relationship with the local community for years to come and will continue to support our workforce, their families and community by leading the way in safety culture and practices.

Cr Sue Moore, Mayor of Singleton

Resilience and prosperity are well-worn economic terms, especially in discussions about the booms and busts of the mining industry. My wish for 2017 is that we not only look at the ups and downs, but also respond to what these terms mean to people and what our community needs to enhance our feeling of well-being and harmony.

Suzie Messner, Community Liaison Manager, The Bloomfield Group

To see all members of the community embracing and celebrating the amazing attributes of the whole of the Hunter Region.

To celebrate the fabulous tourism opportunities, geographic beauty, employment choices, strong economy and biodiversity reserved land that makes the Hunter the place we all love to call home.

Cr Bob Pynsent, Mayor of Cessnock

My one wish for our wonderful local government area would be to see it continue as a thriving community. Predominantly a mining town until recent years, the City of Cessnock is now prospering in other ways including with the growth of the tourism industry and residential development as our population increases. I look forward to what we can achieve over the next 12 months and know our future remains strong.

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JUMPIN JUKEBOX IS JUST ONE OF THE ACTS THAT WILL BE APPEARING AT THE SUMMER MUSIC SERIES



GET JIGGY WITH IT

THANKS TO SPONSORSHIP FROM GLENCORE, SINGLETON COUNCIL IS PROUD TO PRESENT THE SUMMER MUSIC SERIES THAT WILL KICK OFF ON FRIDAY NIGHTS IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY WITH THE FIRST GIG ON DECEMBER 9.

Glencore's Craig Strudwick said Glencore is proud to support this new initiative. All Ways Entertainment have come up with an excellent band line-up and Singleton residents can expect to experience some great bands.

"It is about creating a family-friendly free event where the community can come together and just enjoy being in the outdoors and listening to good music," Mr Strudwick said.

Held smack in the centre of town the location is a win-win situation for Singleton Junior Rugby League who have allowed access to their building and will open the canteen to raise a few funds.

The site was chosen because of its close proximity to John Street which will allow families to purchase some

takeaway tea before settling back on a picnic rug or fold-up chairs to enjoy the music.

It is also ideal because of the natural stage created by the hill and access via the pathway will make it easy for everyone to attend.

The initiative is in line with Singleton Council's economic development strategy which recognises that events enhance liveability and lifestyle in Singleton.

"Really, it is about enjoying our town and what could be more enjoyable than sitting at Cook Park, one of the best outdoor spaces in the Hunter Valley, and listening to music with your family, friends, neighbours and workmates," said Mayor Sue Moore.

Make sure you bring your dancing shoes!

THE CALL OF THE WILD

RIO TINTO HAS TRANSFERRED MORE THAN 2000 HECTARES OF LAND IN THE LOWER HUNTER TO THE NSW GOVERNMENT FOR PERMANENT CONSERVATION WHICH WILL PROVIDE A PROTECTED HABITAT FOR MANY OF OUR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE.

With many important native animals and vegetation in the area, conserving the land will have a positive impact on

many endangered ecological communities. This is another example of how mining companies in Australia can have a positive impact on our environment. Rio Tinto Coal Australia Managing Director Sinead Kaufman said "This land will provide an enduring legacy for the community and future generations by helping to secure a green corridor between the Watagan Ranges and Port

Stephens for conservation."

The land is also home to many sites of the Hunter's coal mining history which includes a steam railway corridor, timber trestle bridges and brick lined tunnels. These will provide opportunities for future uses including recreational cycle ways and walking tracks with an environmental and historical focus including the proposed Richmond Vale Rail Trail.

Time to swap those work boots for hiking boots!



AN HISTORIC OLD RICHMOND VALE TUNNEL

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THE DEDICATED AND BRAVE CESSNOCK DISTRICT RESCUE SQUAD VOLUNTEERS

CESSNOCK TO THE RESCUE

THE CESSNOCK DISTRICT RESCUE SQUAD HAS BEEN HELPING HUNTER RESIDENTS SINCE 1978.

25 dedicated and brave people volunteer their time and skills to make sure the Cessnock and Kurri bases are always there to answer our call in an emergency. Freeing people trapped in motor vehicles, conducting searches, and rescuing or catching animals are all in a day's work for these heroic guys and girls.

James Harris is the Public Relations Officer for the squad and says that they rely heavily on the support of the community and that includes the coal community. "We don't see much government funding, so fundraising and donations are what keep us going. Without the support from council, residents and businesses which include our local coal mines, we wouldn't be able to operate."

But most importantly what keeps this squad going are the selfless volunteers. One of these is Chris Madgwick. Chris is an electrician at Myuna Colliery and has been a volunteer with the squad since 1991. Like most squad members, Chris wanted to give something back to his community and saw joining the squad as a perfect opportunity to do that. "I wanted to help out my community so I joined the squad and I can't believe over a quarter of century has gone by. It's rewarding work even though some of the animal rescues can be testing. One moment you're helping a cute little kangaroo and the next it's like you're in a boxing ring battling it out."

The summer period is the busiest time of the year for the squad



THE SQUAD ARE EXPERTS AT DEALING WITH SNAKES

and though they deal with some intense and confronting situations, especially when motor vehicles are involved, some rescues can lead to entertaining stories. With between 200-300 snake rescue calls a year they've encountered all types of snakes, even a few of those imaginary varieties.

Like the time they were called out for large snake in a bed, only to find it was a large crease in the doona. Or the time the culprit turned out to be some black plastic weed matting.

But humour aside, the job these selfless guys do is important and we should do all we can to support them. It's as easy as buying a raffle ticket next time you see them fundraising or if you want to give back to your community and become a part of a family you can become a volunteer. Just watch out for the kangaroos!

'AVE A LAUGH WITH



PH 02 4946 9800

It was Christmas Eve at the Woolies meat counter and a woman was anxiously picking over the last few remaining turkeys in the hope of finding a large one.

In desperation she called over a shop assistant and said, 'Excuse me. Do these turkeys get any bigger?' 'No, madam,' he replied, 'they're all dead.'



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TRANSPORT & INDUSTRIAL HYDRAULICS



SINI TAKES A TOUR OF HUBBY'S MINE

MINER RESCUED BY LOVE

A FEW SHORT YEARS AGO, SINI ARIELL NEVER IMAGINED FALLING IN LOVE WITH A COAL MINER AND RELOCATING TO A CATTLE FARM JUST OUTSIDE OF SINGLETON - BUT THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THE FAMOUS PIN-UP MODEL FROM FINLAND HAS DONE.

Now very much a local, she reminisces about the day she met her coal miner husband; strapping young Aussie lad, Stuart Bonds. "I was in a tattoo parlor in Thailand and this guy comes in, half pissed, talking some crap about his wallet" she says, laughing. "I thought he was a bit of a d*ckhead, but I really liked the shirt he was wearing and we got talking." The pair became fast friends and kept in touch after Stuart returned to Australia. "He had invited me to come and visit, so I organized my flight and rang him with the good news. He asked where I would be staying - I said "your place, mate!" Sini laughs.

has held workshops in Finland and been a guest motivational speaker on the topic, something she would love to continue to do in her new home country.

Despite the celebrity, Sini is a super down-to-earth gal. "Settling down in Australia with Stuart is the best thing I've ever done. I love him, I love the farm life, and I love the Hunter Valley. The people here have been so warm and welcoming and have such good hearts" she says, "I am one lucky girl!"

Our coal and agricultural community may never be the same and neither will one happy Singleton coalminer's life.

With friendship blossoming into romance it wasn't long before they wed at the Singleton Courthouse, with a weekend-long reception held at their rural property. Friends and neighbours pitched in to help keep costs down and their nuptials were featured on Channel 7's Australia's Cheapest Weddings.

SO WHO IS THIS UNUSUAL COALMINER'S WIFE?
 Sini amassed a huge following and furthered her career by launching the Pin-up Modelling Agency in Finland with profound success. Sini's unique style and confidence has become her signature, and the fame has allowed her to approach another quest close to her heart; empowering all women to realise their own unique beauty and unlock their self confidence. Sini



BOTANIC GARDENS ON A MINE SITE

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are proven successes. Create a variety of inspiring native landscapes and public spaces to enjoy and learn that are a magnet for tourism economy. Do this all within the land and boundaries of a viable working mine site.

Create accommodation areas for all budgets from camping spaces to affordable and five star options. Include significant gathering places and business and private function spaces.

Create and build a permanent indigenous home and gallery that complements and works with the National Gallery of Australia and include a permanent home for the Morrison Collection for local significance. Include an indigenous cultural centre and hub of national significance that co manages or actively participates in the ongoing project.

RESEARCH
 Create a university style campus

of world renown and significance. Make it a one-stop shop for all industry and interest groups to constructively work toward solutions and concepts that deliver workable outcomes and real change that fit in with the reality of the society we live in.

Create opportunities and environments for groups that actually want to work toward change. Invite organisations like universities and the CSIRO to positively participate in a facility dedicated to the worlds best mine rehabilitation, environmental knowledge learning and problem solving and process improvement.

We have the best minds, and we are already doing some of the work. Let's just go a step further and make rehab truly worthwhile in a variety of contexts. Imagine if this was put on the escarpment in front of Coolmore, it would be a big win for them, the mining industry and absolutely everyone else.

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A SAFE HAVEN IN THE HUNTER

IN 2011, OUR COMMUNITY WAS SHOCKED WHEN JODIE JURD WAS KILLED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.



Jodie's Place Refuge in Cessnock was established in her memory in 2013 and since then has provided women and children suffering from domestic violence a safe place to go. With at least one in six women experiencing violence at the hands

of their partner, domestic violence is a serious problem in Australia and without refuges like Jodie's Place victims often have nowhere to turn. If you need help or would like to support Jodie's Place call the Hunter Domestic Violence Support &

Advisory Service on 0488 246 69 or go to their website www.hunterdomesticviolenceservice.com

Jodie's Place will be the recipient of this month's \$500 community gift thanks to a kind personal donation from well known Hunter miner Joe Clayton.

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THE DUSTY MINER, STUART DUFF

set up a nano-brewery in the shed at home." Since setting up the Dusty Miner brewery, which consists of a 3HL mash tun, a 3HL kettle, and six 600L fermenters, plus his own bottling station, all located in the tool shed of his home in Aberglasslyn, Stu has picked up a two silver medals for his Black Bones Dark Ale at the 2015 Sydney Beer and Cider Awards, and at this year's Australian International Beer Awards. His other brews, which include the Shaftman Pale Ale, 3 Daughters Red Ale, and



the American style Stook IPA are winning beer fans from all over the Hunter region, and beyond. "It's great to be recognised and have people wanting to drink your beers," says Stu. "It's a lot of work. Between running the brewery and working as a fitter I get around 5 hours of sleep a day," he continues. "I brew on my days off then keg or bottle and do deliveries before or after my shifts. It's all worth it though" added Stu.

Dusty Miner is stocked in bottle shops and pubs across the Valley, all eager to showcase Stu's brewing talents, and, maybe lure a few blokes away from some of the mass produced sherbets.

"It's usually the younger blokes that are willing to give my beers a go," says Stu. "Personally, I don't have a favourite style I brew because all of my beers are unique but the style of beer I like to drink the most is an IPA which are a bit bitter, hoppy and flavoursome." Stu adds.

Keep up with Stu on the Dusty Miner Facebook page to see which beer event he'll be popping up at next, and then go out and grab a six pack of Aberglasslyn's finest after you knock off for the week.

UNDERGROUND BREW

STUART DUFF DIGS DEEP FOR CRAFT BEER SUCCESS

Husband. Father. Mate. Fitter. Brewer. Stuart Duff is a busy, busy man. For the last 28 years he's worked full-time as an underground fitter at Wambo Mine. For 20 of those years, when he's not underground, Stu has been holed up in his shed in Aberglasslyn, perfecting the art of the brew (and probably providing a bit of peace and quiet to his better half), by experimenting with the four main

magic ingredients we all know and love - water, malts, hops, and yeast - for his, not-so-underground beer label, Dusty Miner.

"I first got into brewing my own beer around '96, mostly so I could drink cheap beer," says Stu. "I started making up my own recipes and would let my mates taste them. I got some good feedback and reviews and around 2 years ago, I convinced my wife (Cathy) to let me

HOW TO MAKE A MINER

UNSW IS OFFERING MINING ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIPS, PROOF THEY BELIEVE THERE IS A FUTURE FOR OUR YOUNGER GENERATIONS IN THE MINING INDUSTRY.

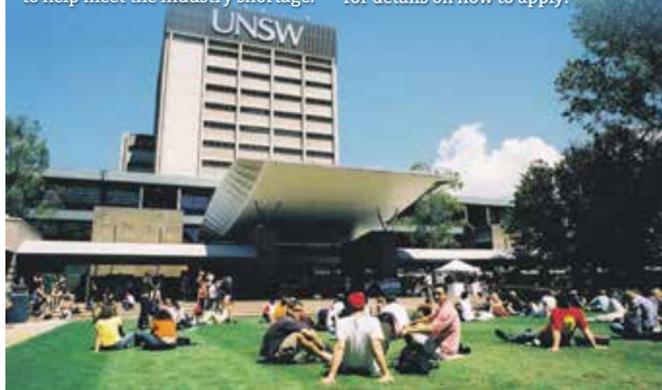
In recent years one of the effects of the mining downturn was to discourage our kids from studying in fields like mining engineering. Enrolments in this degree have been dropping every year, most likely because students think there is no longer a future in the mining industry. Yet the downturn we all suffered through is just one of many fluctuations over the decades and with the recent increases in coal prices the future is looking promising.

However, without new graduates coming through this could have a detrimental effect on our industry in coming years. To prevent this from happening the University of New South Wales (UNSW) is providing \$1.14 million in mining engineering scholarships next year to help meet the industry shortage.

UNSW will offer 25 scholarships, each one consisting of \$48,000 over three to four years, to students beginning either their first or second year studies in mining engineering.

In 2016 the university only had six enrolments which is the lowest it has ever been. With less new graduates entering the workforce, now is the perfect time for people to take advantage of this great opportunity to secure a future in the industry. Paul Hagan is the head of UNSW's School of Mining Engineering and says "Students starting in 2017 are likely to be in high demand by employers by the time they graduate."

If you're interested in finding out more check out the UNSW website for details on how to apply.



THE TOYOTA CRUISER 70 SERIES HAS GOT GUTS

HARD AS NAILS

NO FUSS FUNCTIONALITY MAKES THE NEW TOYOTA LAND CRUISER 70 SERIES SHINE BRIGHT BENEATH THE DUST.

Loved by farmers and diehard 4x4er's across Australia, the Toyota Land Cruiser 70 Series keeps the outback legend alive with more power, more torque, plus a few mod-cons and safety features thrown in for good measure. The latest evolution sees the 70 Series retain its tough and rugged exterior, while boasting enough refinement and in-cabin creature comforts to please the better half, especially when it's date night... It'll still need to be hosed out though!

The new Cruiser keeps its light truck styling, plus its

tough, go-anywhere ability, but, this time around, there's more power and more torque to walk the walk, thanks to a few engine

tweaks (4.5L turbo-diesel V8, 151kW@3400rpm and 430Nm@1200-3200rpm) and new piezo-electric injectors to reduce fuel consumption.



There's also been an upgrade to the old 90 litre fuel tank, which now boasts a single 130-litre tank with a diesel particulate filter, auto regen and manual switch. It's been kited out (at last!) with the addition of cruise control, which we all know isn't new, but it's nice to see this legendary beast thrust into the 21st Century. All in all, it's a much smoother ride than models past, just don't expect to get behind the wheel and think you're driving sports car... or an Amarak!

Another benefit to the 70 Series Cruiser keeping its shape is there's still plenty of head, arm and leg room, as well as enough space for gear down the back, in the wagon. The seats are lined with hard-wearing fabric and are even more supportive than before.

Finally, the engine bay has a new easy-access accessory fuse box up front, making it great for tourers, who love to plug in plenty of accessories when out camping. What hasn't changed is the no-fuss functionality that the farmers and diehards know and love. It has a plain but well laid-out dash and console in all models, with controls, dials and knobs remaining chunky, but always easy to operate.

Now, we hear ya... For a lazy \$76k (RRP) for the base model (Single Cab Work Mate), you could buy a Ford Ranger or Holden Colorado for a lot less, and get heaps more gadgets and other stuff. But, the Toyota Land Cruiser 70 Series is, always has, and always will be, a down and dirty, get-it-done workhorse of a ute; not a show pony!

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ON YOUR BIKE

REV THE KIDS UP THIS CHRISTMAS!

When it comes to Fun Bikes, Yamaha is the leader of the pack. The Yamaha Fun Bike Range kicks off with the nostalgic PeeWee50 (PW50) cruising through to mid-sized play bikes that will rapidly grow confidence and enjoyment in any rider.

With PW50's rider friendly design and weighing in at a low 39kg, it's easy to see why this 50cc 2-stroke is a firm favourite with kids.

The real Christmas miracle this year will be not stealing your present from your kid!
yamahaworld.com.au



MOVE IT OR LOSE IT

HUSQVARNA ARE TO MOWERS LIKE BEER IS TO BLOKES. LIFE IS SO MUCH BETTER WITH ONE.

Husqvarna zero turn mowers are a must have for anyone with a patch of grass to call their own. The individual, hydraulic wheel-drive provides precise manoeuvring allowing you to access those tricky spots and avoid all the kid's toys strewn across the yard.

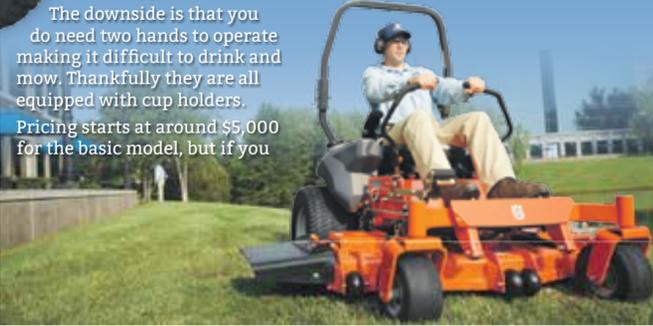
The downside is that you do need two hands to operate making it difficult to drink and mow. Thankfully they are all equipped with cup holders.

Pricing starts at around \$5,000 for the basic model, but if you

want the hard-core top of the line model you will need to shell out triple that.

If you're a garden gnome, a wayward rose bush, or a backyard critter we advise you to get out of the way when Husqvarna is coming your way.

www.husqvarna.com.au



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It's time to be outdoors! And one of the best gadgets going around so you can play your sounds outside is the Divoom Voombox Portable Wireless Speaker. The design and sound quality is outstanding. It's water resistant too, which makes it an especially awesome summertime gadget for impromptu BBQ's, beach days, or while you're working on the car in the garage.

divoom.com

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THE EDDYLINE C-135 YAKATTACK WILL LURE ANYONE IN.

Whether you're a serious fisherman or just looking for an excuse to get out on the water this lightweight kayak is a dream boat. With a hull that can accept most motors, luxurious cloud 10 seating and all the essentials any angler

could possibly need. And they've also included the highly important drink cup holder and can cooler! Best of all, the YakAttack offers an extremely stable platform allowing you to really go at it when reeling in the big ones.

eddyline.com



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Looking to lock work in for the New Year? Want the time to enjoy Christmas and New Years without the stress of job hunting hanging over your head?

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A multi-national company held a reception to celebrate Christmas. The waiter gave each guest a glass of champagne, but on inspection, each guest noticed that their glass contained a fly.

The Englishman demanded to have new champagne in a new glass.

The Russian drank the champagne, fly and all.

The Chinese ate the fly but left the champagne.

The Italian drank two thirds of the champagne and then demanded to have a new glass.

The Norwegian took the fly and went off to fish.

The American sued the restaurant and claimed \$50 million in compensation.

The Australian grabbed the fly by the throat and shouted, 'Now spit out all that you swallowed.'

SINCE 1980



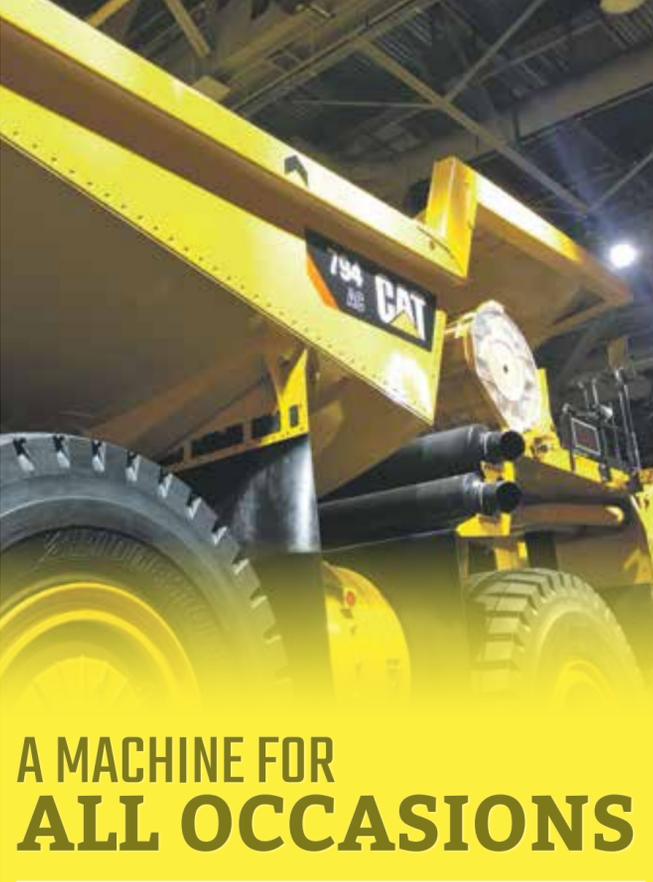
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(Punters in the know estimate that Cat's marketing machine spent USD26 million BIG ones on their display and they certainly didn't fail to impress). Front and centre was their newly badged 794 AC mining dump truck, a colossal beast with 291 tonne (320 ton) capacity. While not as big as its 795F AC brother, it is fitted with the same C175-16 engine and Cat AC power train that has (reputedly) proven faster on grade than the competition.

Looking more like one of its Unit Rig cousins painted yellow, this truck we're told has achieved mechanical availability of 90 per cent or better in recent field testing, on a chassis we suspect has reliably completed many, many, many, more hours; an estimated 18 million to be exact (to the collective relief of all I am sure).

Love them or hate them, you've got to give it to Cat, they continue to evolve and like a modern day automotive company have spawned machines for every possible application.

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JOSH PLAYING FOR THE NEWCASTLE KNIGHTS



KING OF THE GAME

FROM A LONG SHIFT AS AN APPRENTICE ELECTRICIAN AT BULGA OPEN CUT STRAIGHT TO THE NEWCASTLE STADIUM TO PUT IN A STRENUOUS TRAINING SESSION, JOSH KING EPITOMISES THE HARDWORKING ATTITUDE THAT MAKES OUR INDUSTRY TICK.

From a 13 year old Singleton boy who played his first game for the Singleton Greyhounds, to a first-grade fullback for the Newcastle Knights, apprentice electrician Josh King proves hard work and determination pays off.

Josh is a humble guy considering he's reached the top pinnacle of Australian Rugby League and it's his down to earth attitude that makes you realise that this 20-year-old has kept his feet firmly planted in his trusty work boots when they're not kicking up a storm in his footy boots.

Although always passionate about football and dreaming of making it big, Josh had the common sense to realise that he also needed to find a career that would offer reliability and longevity and an apprenticeship as an electrician at Bulga Open Cut provided exactly that.

He's had to work bloody hard this last year with training, games and long hours at work, but thanks to his commitment and dedication he has completed his third year and with all the extra studying and hours worked he's hoping to get signed off soon so he can fully focus on his footy.

So, what's harder, a shift at the mine or an 80 minute first grade rugby game?

"The game takes it out of you, it's a long time to be going at full speed so I'd say it's physically harder than a shift at the mine. But a shift at work is also demanding both mentally and physically and I love that about my job. Although I will be focusing on football for the next few years I have a passion for both and I see both as equally important in my future." Josh said.

With a recent signing for the next 2 years with the Newcastle Knights and an electrical ticket almost done, it looks like Josh has two promising careers ahead of him. And while you guys are enjoying the off season, just remember Josh is down Newy way already putting in a huge pre season - bring on 2017.

JOSH AT HIS DAY JOB



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WAKE UP TO YOURSELF!

SUMMER'S HERE! IT'S TIME TO DUST OFF THE WAKEBOARD AND OUTBOARD AND START PRACTICING YOUR METHOD AIRS AND BASKET FLIPS, BECAUSE THERE'S PLENTY OF PLACES TO RIDE A WAKEBOARD ON THE WATERWAYS OF THE HUNTER VALLEY.

With the 2016/17 NSW Wakeboarding Summer Series about to kick off, now is the perfect time to clean up the boat, tune up the engine, get out the board and get into a bit of wakeboarding on the lakes and rivers of the Hunter Valley.

The adventure starts in Scone, in the Upper Hunter. There's plenty of room to stay and play and work the wake, practice your Method Air or Mute Grab. Pitch a tent by the freshwater's edge, just beneath the

foot of the mountain range at Lake Glenbawn, and head out to cause a bit of chaos on the glassy stillness. Afterwards, cast a line and fish for golden perch then cook up a feed on the BBQ facilities or designated camp fire sites provided.

A little closer to us here @ The Coalface HQ, is Lake St Clair, about 30 minutes' drive from Singleton. Marie Otero is the Park Manager at Lake St Clair and she tells us that the summertime and early morning (when the lake is calm

and still) is the best time to be dragged around behind the back of a boat. Marie also says to watch out for the slow moving canoes and kayaks, and the fisherman too. The lakes are there to share, and the fisherman especially, probably won't appreciate your Toeside Front Flip as much as you or your mates will! Entry fees apply for boat access and camping at both Lake Glenbawn and Lake St Clair and there are a few restricted areas where you can't ride. Check the Scone and Singleton Council websites for details.

Further east, nearby Raymond Terrace, is where most Hunter Valley wakeboarders have fun flipping out! Not even half an hour from Newcastle, right where the

Hunter River meets the Williams River, there hides a wakeboarder's paradise. The riverbanks are much higher than the water level, which keeps the wind away, which means there's rarely any rough water and enough room to ride for days. In fact, @ The Coalface has got the good word that there are plans to develop a full-on wakeboard park in Port Stephens, suitable for beginners and advanced riders, but it's still in the planning stage. We reckon it's a great idea and if it were to go ahead, Hunter wakeboarders would literally flip out!

For more information on wakeboarding hot spots around the Hunter Valley, log onto wakeboardnsw.com

RIDE 'EM COWBOY



care all to scale the heights of professional bull riding in America and accumulate over a million dollars in prize money over his 11-year career. BC, as he is known, now hosts his own bull riding invitational close to home, in Newcastle.

"Having my own invitational bull riding competition is big compliment for me," said Clark. "It's an honour to be able to bring out such great international competitors to compete against Australia's best riders and showcase the sport I love to a home town crowd."

This year, world number one Matt Triplett (USA) proved his worth by being the only cowboy to ride all three bulls at the BCI and posting a massive 90.75 point score in the last ride of the night. This makes it two wins for Triplett on Australian soil, having won the Tamworth Invitational earlier in November.

Local lad, Cody Heffernan, represented the Hunter on a good couple of rides, posting 83.75 in round one and 84.00 in round two before failing to tame Storm Boy in the final round to place sixth overall. @ The Coalface wishes all the boys well in the upcoming PBR season over in the States.

Eight seconds of glory, or a lifetime of pain. Welcome to the roller coaster world of the fearless, adrenalin fuelled, cowboy. Last month, Newcastle hosted the PBR Australia Brendon Clark Invitational (BCI) at the Newcastle Entertainment Centre where 22 crazy iron cowboys competed against one another to be crowned the 2016 Champion and take home \$20,000 in prize money, plus the coveted BCI trophy buckle. Bull riders go head to head against 52 tough bucking bulls in a battle of power, agility and the fight of the

fittest, eight seconds at a time. Riders need to stay on top of a one tonne bull for eight seconds to qualify for a score, which is out of 100; 50 to the bull and 50 to the rider. Points are awarded for poise, positioning and reaction speed, amongst other things.

22 riders were invited to the BCI event, including 5 international bull riders, Rubens Barbosa (Brasil), Cristiano Cunha (Brasil), Edmilson Goncalves (Brasil), Nevada Newman (USA) and PBR's world number one, Matt Triplett (USA). These guys competed against some of

Australia's best riders, including Kurt Shepherd from Atherton, Queensland, and local hero and number one ranked Australian PBR bull rider, Cody Heffernan from Singleton.

A Hunter boy, through and through, Brendon Clark hails from Morpeth and has helped pave the way for Aussie riders, like Heffernan, to compete in the tough, but lucrative, PBR competitions in the USA. He has suffered lacerations to his liver, bruised lungs, broken ribs and had a five-day stint in intensive

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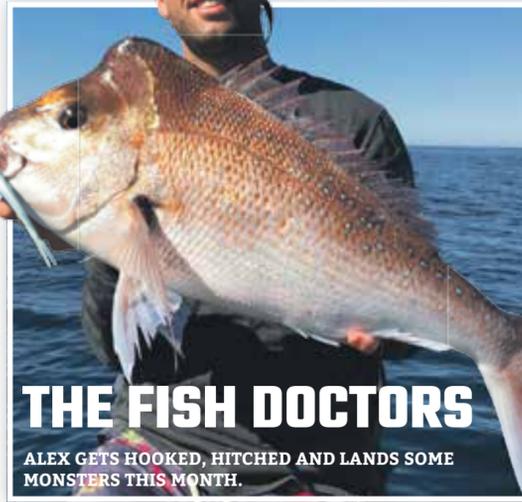
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THE FISH DOCTORS

ALEX GETS HOOKED, HITCHED AND LANDS SOME MONSTERS THIS MONTH.

OUCH!!
The highlight of the month would have to be a bass striking back and Al taking a treble deep in the finger during a surface bite as a fish was being prepped for



YEP! THAT HURT

release. Luckily part time Doc, Neussy armed with a set of rusty plyers and side cutters worked his magic for an hour, poking, prodding and pushing the barb through the skin so the barb could be cut off and the hook removed with some extra love. Some leco tape was applied to the wound and the fishing continued. Hooks have been on point over the last month.

SNEAKY GTs
With Alex signing his life away and jetting off to the Cook Islands for the honeymoon, it would have

been extremely rude not to pay some attention to the local GT population over there. The trip was booked with Blue Water Adventures Rarotonga as a night charter and the skipper was keen to show off the art of catching flying fish. We soon realised we weren't the only ones on the hunt as huge GTs smashed flying fish at the side of the boat. This was just the start of an epic experience, once the lures hit the water the GTs started to flow and it was a couple of hours of mayhem.

If you're into fishing and you find yourself in the Cook Islands, then the hand fed monster GTs in the harbor will surely be beckoning you. Get a spot on Kyle Matherson's boat to experience it firsthand. Details at fishraro.com.

SNAPPER STILL GIVING US THE NOD

The wait for the marlin season is nearly over but the snapper are still on the cards with a few nice fish still lurking in good numbers, though the red gear will be racked as soon as the stick faces flick the switch.

We managed a session early November, though worked

hard as the fish would only react to a fast moving plastic worked high in the water column over the deeper reefs.

THE CLASSIC BASS STITCH UP

Plenty of fun to be had on the dams at the moment with some horse bass working the weed bed. Armed with shallow diving hard bodies you will bring them unstuck as good mate Dave Jones, the bass master, proved recently landing a 50cm fork length fish during an afternoon session.

Keep working your rods boys



HOW BIG WAS IT? HUGE

and girls... Get out there and get amongst it, hook in, saddle up the boat and hit the wet stuff.

Dan and Alex, 'The Zen Masters' of fishing... see ya next year!!



'AVE A LAUGH WITH

PH 02 4946 9800

Did you know that Santa's not allowed to go down chimneys this year?
It was declared unsafe by the Elf and Safety Commission.
What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney? Claustrophobia!
What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck? A Christmas Quacker!

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I HATE CHRISTMAS

THE PIE MINISTER HAS A SET OF FEATHERS YOU DON'T WANT TO RUFFLE ANY TIME OF THE YEAR - EVEN AT CHRISTMAS.

Who the bloody hell does Santa Claus think he is? I don't care how many rug rats, ankle biters or tiny tots the jolly old bugger makes happy.

DOESN'T HE KNOW WHO I AM?
I won't be treated like a mere mortal and I absolutely won't take the Hunter Valley's pie shops being closed on Christmas day! What the hell am I going to eat? Reindeer? An elf? Come on, Rudolph would be tough and full of gristle and those garden

nimby pimby know-it-all's would all get what they wanted while we'd be able to give them a big get your turkey stuffed. I have written to my old mate the Queen and he has fully endorsed the idea.

We don't need a plebiscite, parliamentary debate, union gathering or a Country Womens Association meeting on this one - actually as the best home bakers of pies in the world, the girls from the CWA have endorsed the motion. It's happening people. Your Pie Minister has spoken!

Call it Pieblic holiday, King Sol's birthday or whatever you want. A new king is born. The jolly red bastard has spoken and that's just the way it is going to be. The only thing that going down my chimney this year is a pie.

ALL PIE SHOPS WILL BE OPEN CHRISTMAS DAY.

To finish, happy Piemas to a few of my bakin' besties; Crofts Pies, Blakenys, Coxy, Merriwa Bakery, Harrys, Sylvesters, The Heights, Bakers of Greta, Denman, Le's and the Vietnamese across the road from Piement House. See ya Piemas morning.

Sol

BULGA COAL'S LUCY STUART WITH THE SINGLETON HEIGHTS SCHOOL BAND AND LEE CROUCHER AND ROBERT STEWART FROM SINGLETON LIBRARY.

GLENCORE'S BULGA COAL REACHES 10-YEAR MILESTONE WITH SINGLETON LIBRARY'S SUMMER READING PROGRAM

WE ALL KNOW HOW IMPORTANT READING IS IN SHAPING OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURES, BUT CONVINCING THEM TO PUT DOWN THE XBOX OR FOOTY AND PICK UP A BOOK CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR ANY PARENT.

The Summer Reading Program is one of the most popular reading programs among NSW's libraries and is all about encouraging children to read, especially over the summer holidays. Thanks to Bulga's sponsorship the program provides prizes for children participating and helps make reading fun and accessible for up to 500 children each year.

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POUR ME ANOTHER ONE

NEW OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND ELBOW GREASE BREATHES NEW LIFE INTO TWO FAVORITE PUBS OWNED BY HUNTER PUB LOVER DALE MCNAMARA.

Dale is a big name in the pub game, having breathed life not only into these two establishments, but also the Horse and Jockey and the Lochinvar to name a couple. If you haven't had a chance to check out the results of his hard work yet, here's why you should.



RIVER ROYAL INN
Having being severely damaged in the super storm that swept the Hunter last year, Hunter pub lover Dale McNamara was committed to renovating and restoring this historical pub to its

former glory and worked closely with Morpeth Museum to document the history of the 160 year old property. New licensee Daniel Storey said the massive refurbishment has been tastefully done to

retain the original charm and integrity of the site's heritage. The outdoor beer garden has undergone a major facelift to attract families, and now that they're open for business, the focus is on getting patrons old and new through the doors to experience the family friendly atmosphere coupled with great food and ice-cold beer. Head down the end of Swan Street for a meal and see what all the hype is about, and tell Daniel that @The Coalface sent you.

The River Royal Inn is now open at 97 Swan Street Morpeth, call (02) 4933 6202 for bookings.



ALBION HOTEL

Former coal miner Jamie McNamara is the licensee of this iconic Singleton pub, a job he has undertaken with heaps of determination. Jamie himself is a breath of fresh air and his exuberant personality shines through the place.

Boasting a \$12 lunch menu and \$11 roasts on Sundays, that's just the tip of the iceberg for what this hotel has to offer. Every Friday night you can catch Jamie calling the raffles

which support a variety of local sporting groups and charities. The venue is very family friendly with a huge beer garden and kids playground at your disposal, as well as an indoor games room. The bistro offers casual and formal dining areas with an upstairs function room complete with private bar facilities available to hire for birthdays, weddings or any other occasion.

The Albion is at 2 John Street, Singleton, call (02) 6572 1263 for bookings.



MONKEY MADNESS

TREETOPS ADVENTURE PARK AT OURIMBAH STATE FOREST IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO TAKE THE FAMILY FOR THRILLS, AND MORE THAN A FEW LAUGHS.

I convinced the family that a day out to Ourimbah Treetops Park would be a perfect bonding experience and so we headed out to put our monkey skills to the test.

With an introduction to the basics from our instructor we got into our harness gear with only a little giggling and then it was time to hit the treetops. Of course, that's when one family member remembered they were scared of heights! But with a little encouragement (jeering and chicken noises) we all began to fumble our way through the elevated obstacle course that consisted of wobbly bridges, cargo nets, monkey bars and rope ladders.

And just as there always is one family member scared of heights, activities like these always bring out that one family member who nimbly races ahead, offers unsolicited advice on tricky spots and basically is just an annoying show off. And yes, that person was me.

But even though the obstacles were more challenging for some, we all had a great time and a huge amount of laughing watching each other maneuver our way around. But the best parts of the day by unanimous agreement were the zip lines, buckle in, lean back and enjoy the rush as you whip through the trees hollering Tarzan calls. They have a zip line named the Treetop

Crazy Rider, over 1km of exhilarating roller coaster madness that incorporates a 540-degree loop which had us all screaming. Some in delight, others in fear. Treetops Adventure Park is definitely worth a visit, I can't wait to check out their other locations and you should too.



ZIP, ZIP AWAY

I'M SOLD ON THE CELLAR

ROMANTIC DINNER FOR TWO? YES PLEASE...

I've been to Hunter Valley Gardens many times, but I've never been to the Cellar Restaurant until now. Quite frankly, I can't believe I hadn't discovered this place sooner.

When we rocked up we were greeted with a smile from manager Louise Robertson and shown to our cozy table for two. Even on a Tuesday night, the restaurant was busy with locals and tourists alike. The décor is rustic and classy, the atmosphere relaxed with an air of refinement. The extensive menu is impressive, a twist on Modern Australian cuisine. We settled on a starter of sourdough with dukkah and beetroot relish, with our entrées arriving soon after. Between us we had ordered the Queensland prawns with salt cod fritters and roasted tomato with caper and tarragon mayo - tasty

and light. Next we tried the Indian spiced kangaroo with sweet potato and onion bhajis, pickled carrots, lentil dhal and coriander yoghurt. I've never tasted anything like it; full flavors that were curious yet perfectly blended, and the roo cooked to perfection.

FULL, BUT NOT FINISHED! After some deliberation we placed our orders for our mains. Louise explained that all their produce is locally sourced where possible, and things such as eggs, vegetables and herbs are largely procured from the owner's backyard. You don't get much fresher than that. Perfectly timed, our main meals arrived. From the chargrill: Riverina dry aged rump with green peppercorn sauce, and Milly Hill lamb cutlets doused in rosemary jus. The sides are ample to share; we went with the green beans and almond slivers, along with the cauliflower cheese with jamon crumbs. Despite our best efforts, we couldn't finish it all, nor could we fault any of it.



ROO RUMP



LEMONCELLO PANNACOTTA

The Cellar Restaurant is open for lunch and dinner Monday - Saturday. Ph: (02) 4998 7584 for bookings or visit their website the-cellar-restaurant.com.au

After twenty minutes and some coercion from Louise we glanced over the desert menu. I couldn't leave without trying the lemoncello pannacotta and a glass of Mr T's Very Rare Fortified Verdelho - and yes, it was as good as it sounds. All night the service was of a very high standard, neither water nor wine glass ever reached empty before being refilled by the lovely wait staff. No wonder this place rates so highly on Tripadvisor.

'AVE A LAUGH WITH



Damien was in the Big W buying one of those fake plastic Christmas trees when the shop assistant asked him, "Are you going to put that tree up yourself?" Shocked, Damien replied, "You dirty bastard! I'm going to put it in the living room!"

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Hansen Bailey is a boutique environmental consultancy servicing the mining and related industries.

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Purple Hayes Tapas Bar is offering a lucky reader the chance to win one of their scrumptious Cheese Plates and a glass of Brokenwood Wine for you and three friends.

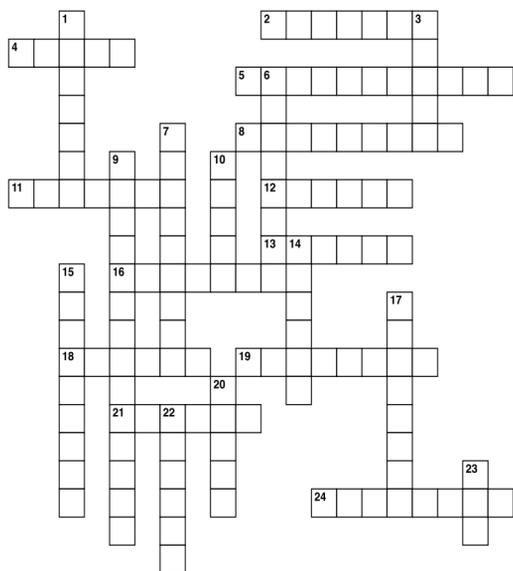
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WIN!

@ THE COALFACE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 2 Who wrote How the Grinch Stole Christmas?
- 4 'Nadolig Llawen' means Merry Christmas in which western European language?
- 5 Who composed the music known as The Nutcracker Suite, for the Christmas themed ballet The Nutcracker, premiered in St Petersburg, 1892?
- 8 What is the name of the cake traditionally eaten in Italy at Christmas?
- 11 The surname Chandler derives from the making or selling of what?
- 12 What holiday drink contains sugar, milk and eggs?
- 13 In which country does Santa have his own personal postcode HOH OHO? 16 What was Scrooge's first name?
- 18 In which modern country is St Nicholas's birthplace and hometown?
- 19 What is the surname of

- the family in the 1989 film 'National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation'?
- 21 What day of the week was Christmas day in the year 2000 (in the conventional western calendar)?
- 24 Which South Park hero leaves little brown stains wherever he brings Christmas cheer?

DOWN

- 1 Name the reindeer whose name begins with 'B'.
- 3 In the song 'The Twelve Days Of Christmas', how many swans were a-swimming?
- 6 In the inspirational 1946 film, It's a Wonderful Life, what's the name of George Bailey's guardian angel?
- 7 Which traditional Christmas plant was once so revered by early Britons that it had to be cut with a golden sickle?
- 9 Under which Puritan leader did the English parliament pass a law
- 10 What colour are the berries of the mistletoe plant?
- 14 The North Pole, said to be Santa's home, is located in which ocean?
- 15 Christmas Island, in the Indian Ocean, is a territory of which country?
- 17 Which southern central US state, whose capital city has the same name, was the last to recognize Christmas as an official holiday?
- 20 In which country, an archipelago of 6,852 islands, is it considered inappropriate to send red Christmas cards?
- 22 London's Trafalgar Square Christmas tree is traditionally given by which country?
- 23 In Mexico, it is said that wearing what colour underwear on New Year's Eve ensures finding new love the following year?

DRIVING UP A DUST STORM



YESTERDAY I WAS A SOCCER MUM DRIVER, THE KIND YOU BEEPED AT TO MOVE OVER INTO THE LEFT LANE. TODAY, I AM PETER BROCK REINCARNATE AND YOU ALL BETTER GET THE HELL OUT OF MY WAY.

Okay, so I might be slightly exaggerating but after spending an adrenalin fueled morning at Rally School's Cessnock course I still can't wipe the grin off my face and stopping in to do the shopping at Coles on the way home had me hard pressed not to start honking up at the aisles with the trolley.

I wasn't keen to get behind the wheel to start, but the hubby had tried it and couldn't stop raving so not wanting to be left out I thought I'd give it a go. And boy am I glad I did, it was amazing! I can't believe how much I enjoyed learning the rally ropes and a big part of that is because of the great instructors at Rally School. The hard core team are all Pro-Rally drivers and these talented guys can teach anyone to heat it up on the course. I hadn't drove a manual since I was a teenager but they still had me spinning up a dust storm in no time.

YOU GOTTA TRY THE HOT LAPS

By my last lap I was flying around the course. Or so I thought, but after I'd

finished as driver, I jumped in the passenger seat for one of their popular hot laps. How anyone can handle a car that fast, on those dirt roads is beyond me and it makes for a one of a kind experience. Just hold on tight!

Mick Ryan is the man behind Rally School and his family orientated business has courses all over Australia. He took over the Cessnock course in June last year and brought in new cars and new instructors turning it into a top notch operation.

So if you haven't bought the hubby, missus, brother, daughter, mate, heck even Granny their Xmas present yet get onto their website now and buy a voucher. Whether you want a full day experience or just to want try a hot lap this is something that you should try no matter age, gender or driving ability. rallyschool.com.au



7 SPEED AHEAD

THANKS TO QUARRY MINING AND THE COMPANY'S PASSION FOR ALL THINGS BIKE, THIS MONTH A LUCKY READER WILL SOON BE HITTING THE ROAD ON THE REID URBAN X0.

This tough and lightweight bike has an Alloy Commuter Frame with Internal Cable Routing and Headset. The reliable Shimano 7-Speed Tourney gearing, mudgear mounts and pannier racks make it a great all rounder, ideal for hacking through

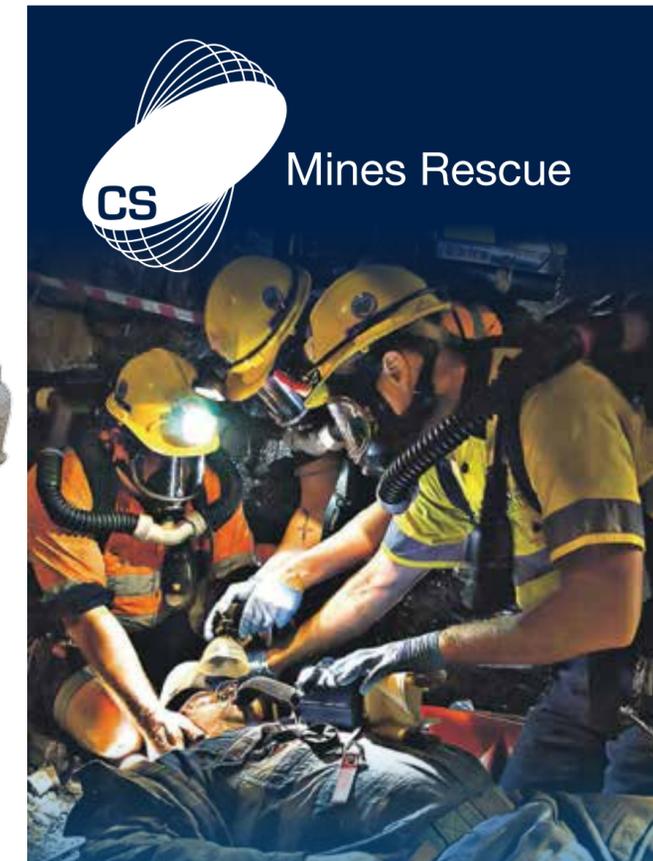
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CARRY ON CAMPING



OVER THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS MANY OF US ARE GOING TO ROLL OUT THE SWAG AND TAKE THE FAMILY CAMPING. HERE ARE A FEW OF @ THE COALFACE'S BEST CAMPING TIPS AND A FEW BEAUTIFUL PLACES TO TEST THEM OUT.

FIVE FAVE SPOTS

Bangalow Campground – Watagans National Park

There's no need to book at this remote campground, pitch your tent and enjoy the walking tracks on offer. Basic facilities among incredible gum forests provide a relaxed getaway for the family.

Seal Rocks – Myall Lakes National Park

With no allotted sites you can pitch your tent anywhere. Beyond the white sandy dunes lies a serene stretch of beach and a rocky outcrop on which



the local seal population hang out.

Blue Gums – Yengo National Park

If you're among the slightly more adventurous then Blue Gums might be for you but we recommend a 4WD if the weather's been wet. Bring your mountain bike and explore the rugged wilderness.

Gloucester Tops – Barrington Rocks National Park

An 80,000 hectare haven for campers who want to indulge in the joys of the wilderness. There are a number of camping sites dotted around the area that offer biking, trekking, fishing, swimming, and canoeing.

The Basin – Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park

The Basin is one the most popular beachside camping

spots in NSW. The national park surrounding it is home to an abundance of native vegetation and wildlife.

TOP TIPS

- You can never take enough water. Carry iodine tablets for backup.
- Avoid camping directly under large trees. When pitching your tent, remember to look up to ensure there aren't any loose, dead or overhanging tree limbs.
- Always pack a first aid kit. A lot of people forget.
- Take advantage of campground reservation systems ensuring you a spot.
- Always set up camp before dark. This should be your first priority after you get the esky filled.
- Poor hygiene on camping trips can have disastrous

effects so take plenty of antibacterial sprays and wipes.

- Strap a headlamp to a 4 litre plastic water bottle full of water for a makeshift lantern.
- Throw sage sticks on fire as it is a natural mosquito repellent. Doritos also make good kindling.
- Protect your toilet paper by using an old container and cut a slit in the side to run the paper out of.
- Take a yoga mat for extra bedding under your sleeping bag.
- Keep a checklist of your camping essentials and organise your gear

before you leave.

- Camp away from facilities for privacy.
- You are most likely not Bear Grylls or the reincarnation of The Crocodile Hunter – so stay within your abilities.
- Under no circumstances should you let your wife go camping with that guy from her pottery class. Same for hubby's yoga teacher.
- Take this simple test to see if you qualify for solo camping. Shine a flashlight into one ear. If the beam shines out the other ear, do not go into the woods alone.
- It's drop bear season – stay safe.

DECKED OUT FOR DIRT

SINGLETON MOTORCYCLES KNOWS EVERYTHING ABOUT MOTORCYCLES AND THAT INCLUDES THE BEST GEAR TO WEAR WHEN YOU ARE OUT ON THE BIKE.



One lucky reader will get the chance to win a Fox dirt bike shirt and cap valued at \$100.



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MINES TO THE RESCUE

IF YOU THOUGHT THAT THERE WAS NO MORE RESCUING TO BE DONE YOU'D BE WRONG. THIS TIME IT'S THE 2016 OPEN CUT MINES RESCUE COMPETITION RIGHT HERE IN THE HUNTER THAT IS PUTTING OUR MINER'S LIFESAVING SKILLS TO THE TEST.

Hunter Valley Mines Rescue station was the host to 110 competitors representing 11 of our NSW mine sites.

From a tricky vertical rescue, to a gruesome impalement and vehicle extrication using hydraulic cutters, this year's participants demonstrated their potentially life-saving expertise when confronted with seven challenging simulated emergencies.

BHP Billiton's Mt Arthur Coal team has claimed top honours ending former back-to-back champions Glencore Bulga's hopes of a winning streak.

With open cut workers accounting for around 89% of production

employment within Hunter coal mines, Mines Rescue Regional Manager, David Connell, said surface emergency responders were critical in ensuring their safety.

'The industry must be confident in the ability of surface emergency responders to step up, take control and stabilise any situation that occurs,' Mr Connell said. 'When a complex incident arises at an open cut mine, the workforce turns to these dedicated individuals.'

It's great to see mines rescue training recognised as an important part of mine safety and let's hope that we only see these skills used in competition.

HELPING HEALTHY HAROLD

MUSWELLBROOK AND UPPER HUNTER KIDS WILL ONCE AGAIN BENEFIT THANKS TO A THREE-YEAR INVESTMENT BY BHP BILLITON MT ARTHUR COAL, PARTNERING WITH HUNTER LIFE EDUCATION.

More than 3000 local students will benefit from the interactive health education programs and Healthy Harold, the loveable giraffe who is the face of the Life Education programs will keep on putting his neck on the line to make that happen.

David Boshoff, BHP Billiton NSW Energy Coal General Manager, said the company recognises the value of providing young people with the opportunity to learn how to stay physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.

"The programs emphasise the

importance of making healthy lifestyle choices and Mt Arthur Coal is proud to partner with an organisation that provides young people with such positive life lessons that will stick with them throughout their lives,"

Sarah Gray, Hunter Life Education Executive Officer, welcomed the renewed

partnership with Mt Arthur Coal and the program's expansion into preschools.

"This program is especially important to the children of the Upper Hunter, as they are at higher risk of obesity and other health disorders when compared with national average."

Since 2005, BHP Billiton has contributed more than \$550,000 towards strengthening its partnership with Hunter Life Education. But the contribution it is making to our kid's health and wellbeing is priceless.



HEALTHY HAROLD HELPS MAKES A DIFFERENCE

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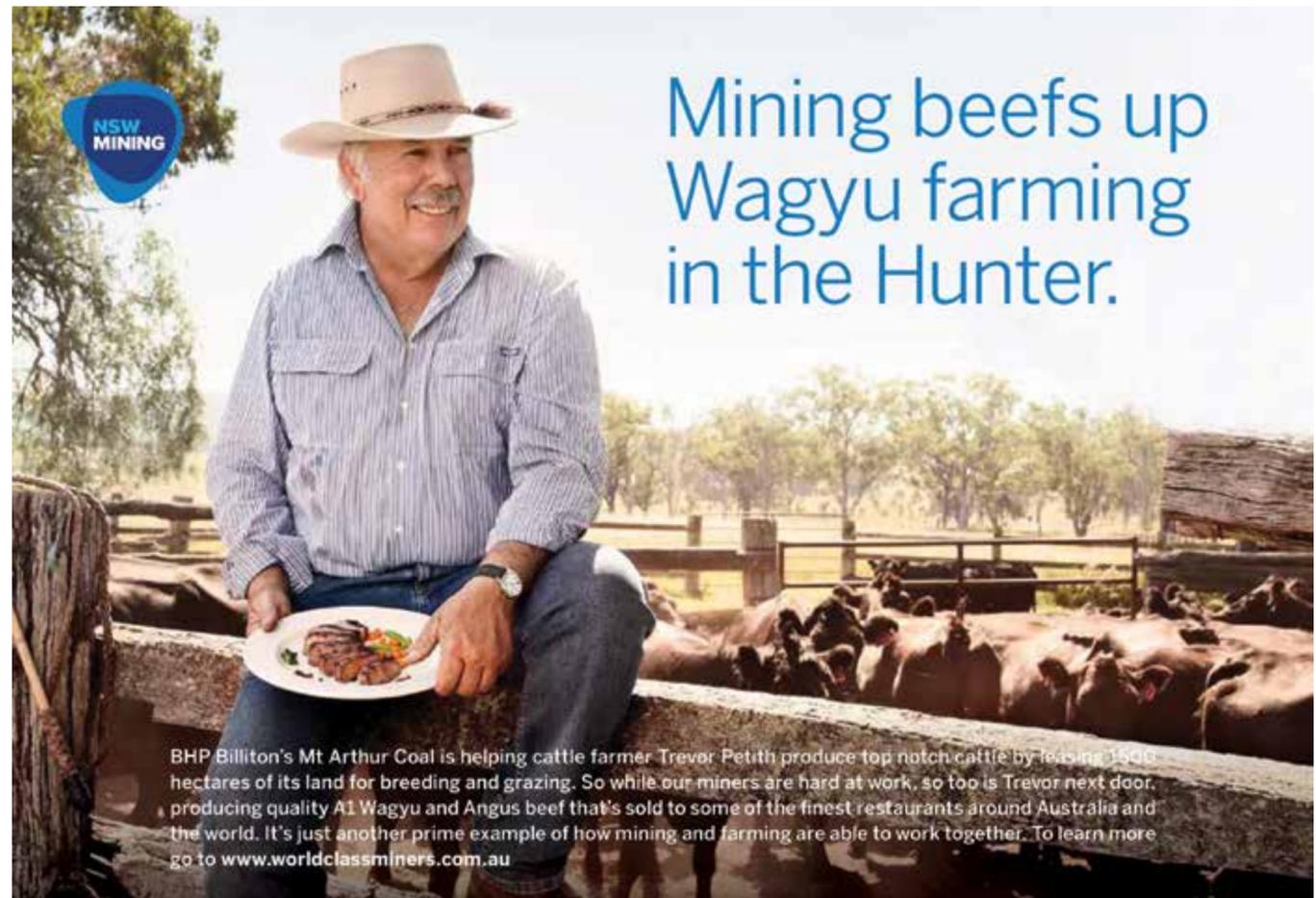
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Mining beefs up Wagyu farming in the Hunter.

BHP Billiton's Mt Arthur Coal is helping cattle farmer Trevor Petith produce top notch cattle by leasing 1500 hectares of its land for breeding and grazing. So while our miners are hard at work, so too is Trevor next door, producing quality A1 Wagyu and Angus beef that's sold to some of the finest restaurants around Australia and the world. It's just another prime example of how mining and farming are able to work together. To learn more go to www.worldclassminers.com.au



SHARON SCHILLING (COAL & ALLIED), SARAH DUNN (WINNER), VIVIEN FRANKLIN (COAL & ALLIED) - PICTURE COURTESY OF HUNTER & COASTAL LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

IRON MAIDENS

COAL & ALLIED AND LIFELINE RECENTLY HONORED THE AMAZING COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS BY LOCAL WOMEN IN THE 2016 LIFELINE UPPER HUNTER STEEL MAGNOLIA AWARDS.

The Steel Magnolia Awards are about honoring women who have faced adversity and instead of letting it overcome them they have instead dedicated themselves to helping their community. Since its inception 9 years ago Coal & Allied have been there every step of the way and they are now the major sponsors of the event.

This year the awards ceremony was held at Singleton's beautiful Sacred Spaces where the winner Sarah Dunn from Singleton was recognised for her tireless community work.

In 2012, a tragic accident involving a truck and school bus saw the life of Harry Dunn tragically cut short at 9 and his brother Luke left seriously injured. Their mother Sarah did not let this devastating event stop her and instead has worked tirelessly for organisations such as Camp Quality, Singleton Family Support and Ronald McDonald House to

help bring a little joy to other people's lives.

The other nominees included Pauline Carrigan from Bunnan who is the founder of Where There's a Will, a not for profit charity that addresses mental health issues in the community. Anthea (Chic) Taylor from Muswellbrook who is a support worker at Overton House and Kelly Moylan from Cessnock who is a long-time volunteer and fundraiser for the Cancer Council.

Each of these women has overcome adversity that would leave many of us unable to go on and each has instead taken their pain and loss and funneled it into something that is making a difference in their communities. Coal & Allied believes it is important to recognise inspirational women like them and honor the work they do for our communities and we congratulate them for it.



TIME TO TATTOO

YOU'VE ALL MET THE TALENTED AND GORGEOUS SINGLETON GIRL SINI ARIELL IN OUR MAGAZINE THIS MONTH AND SINI HAS GRACIOUSLY OFFERED UP HER AMAZING TATTOO SKILLS FOR A LUCKY READER TO WIN SOME BODY ART OF THEIR OWN.

The prize includes a tattoo consultation with Sini and then once you've decided on your own personalised tattoo you will receive \$300 off the price. Check out Sini's Facebook or Instagram pages for inspiration.

[Facebook.com/siniarielltattoos](https://www.facebook.com/siniarielltattoos)
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For your chance to win, simply SMS: TATTOO and your email address to 0438 474 290.
 Limit of one entry per person. LTPM/16/01100

TATTOO ARTIST SINI ARIELL

WIN!



KIDS LIGHT UP

IN THE SWELTERING HEAT OF AUSTRALIAN SUMMERS, REINDEERS CAN'T FACE THE HEAT SO IT'S UP TO THE NSW FIRE & RESCUE AND THE NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE TRUCKS TO ESCORT SANTA ON HIS ANNUAL LOLLY RUNS.

Many of us remember waiting on Christmas Eve for Santa to come by waving and bellowing Merry Christmas from his perch high up on the local fire truck. The mad scramble to grab as many lollies as you could before he rolled on by. The Santa lolly run is a tradition that continues today despite no official government support.

Singleton Fire Rescue's lolly run was run early this month and has grown into a large scale event with 5000 lolly bags given out to sugar hungry kids this year thanks to their major sponsor Glencore.

But many of our local fire services don't receive the support that Glencore provides to Singleton and it's often the fireies themselves buying the sweet treats out of their own pockets. Because of this

lack of support some of our towns unfortunately miss out on this iconic Christmas tradition.

The fireies and their families put a lot of time, money and resources into keeping this tradition alive and it would be great to see support from our industry to keep it going for years to come.

Here's a list of some of the Santa runs coming your way. Some stations are still looking for funding or haven't confirmed a date yet so make sure you check out their Facebook pages to find out more.

- Rutherford – 16th, 17th, 18th December
- Raymond Terrace – 17th December
- Bellbird – 18th December
- Abermain & Neath – 18th December
- Denman – 24th December



PUT YOUR PEDAL TO THE METAL

IT'S TIME TO GET YOUR TEAM TOGETHER AND START TRAINING FOR THE 2017 COALFACE PEDAL AND SUPPORT THE WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE.

The Coalface Pedal is all about encouraging family, friends and workmates to get on their bikes and have fun in the bush while raising money for the lifesaving Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service.

With a bunch of different off road bikes events ranging all the way through from a 10km family ride to the tough 60km Quarry Mining sponsored ride, there's something for every skill level.

Because we think this a great

cause to support, @ The Coalface will be slogging it out in the main race and we challenge you to get out there and try to beat us! Anyone who manages to cross the finish line before us will get a free subscription to our magazine for life! We might also buy you a beer back at the Station Hotel when we sit back and have a laugh at the day's escapades.

So get your team together now, start training and we'll see you out in the bush!

Wishing the people of the Hunter a safe and happy festive season!



COAL & ALLIED

Managed by Rio Tinto Coal Australia

SYDNEY SECRETS

WELL THEY MIGHT NOT BE ACTUAL SECRETS, BUT THESE ARE SOME OF THE BEST THINGS TO CHECK OUT IN SYDNEY THAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT.

WENDY'S SECRET GARDEN

Grown from grief, Wendy's Secret Garden was created by Wendy Whiteley in homage to her late husband Australian artist Brett Whiteley and is a living, breathing piece of art. Step outside of the city bustle and be enchanted as you stroll along winding gully paths while birds serenade you.



DIN THAI FUNG

With locations at Pitt Street Westfield, World Square and Central Park Mall, this worldwide chain dumpling restaurant is like nothing you've experienced before. Looking more like a hospital operating theatre than a restaurant you may need surgery after overdosing on their soup filled dumplings.

BALMAIN PUB CRAWL
Thanks to a proud working class history, Balmain has a ton of watering holes. For a polished boutique head to the East Village or the London. If you're more into footy games you can't beat a sports bar like Dick's Hotel

or Unity Hall or for a family friendly pub try the Balmain Hotel. Looking for old school? Try the William Wallace or the Dry Dock. Just follow the well-worn footpath along the Balmain pub circuit.



LOVE, TILLY DEVINE

For a unique bar experience, pop into Love Tilly Devine wine bar in Crown Lane, Darlinghurst. With eclectic décor and over 40 different wines to savor, this intimate venue is highly underrated in the mainstream but has a dedicated following. And yes, the name is a nod to the era of notorious 'Madame', Tilly Devine.



JUSTICE & POLICE MUSEUM

If you want something a little different than your typical museum, then take a walk in the dark history of Sydney's past. This interactive museum will appeal to those who like the gruesome and the macabre and you'll learn everything you ever wanted to know about crime and punishment. And probably a few things you didn't want to know.

SIN CITY

WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS, STAYS IN VEGAS.



In the 1930's when construction began on the Hoover Dam, it created a huge influx of workers looking to let off steam and Sin City was born. With all the casinos popping up it didn't take long for mobsters and crime to find their way to the desert town and Las Vegas became the place to go to have fun... and get into trouble.

But it's come a long way from those times and now this glittering paradise in the middle of nowhere is more like a futuristic amusement park than a Wild West gangster city. The 6.8km strip of mega casinos and hotels has been constructed on such a grand and spectacular scale that although garish and over the top, you'll still be awestruck at the sheer immensity and audacity of the place.

The casinos are set up to lock you into stasis, free drinks, no clocks and no outside light are some of the tricks to keep you at the tables and it's hard not to get suckered into it. Although the drinks are free when you're gambling, if you get stingy and tip your waitress low you'll be stuck nursing an empty glass forever.

When heading to and from your room stay focused and get in and out before all the flashing lights and addictive sounding chimes have you emptying your pockets.

TOURIST TRAPS

Take a tour to the Grand Canyon, you can see the spectacular views from a helicopter or look up at the immense canyon walls from a raft. Check out the Hoover Dam while you're there. It's hard to believe that such an impressive feat of engineering was completed 80 years ago.

Want to take the best holiday snaps? Go into Madame Tussauds and take on the challenge to come up with inventive interactive shots with the wax figures.

Head to the top of the stratosphere to take in the views from the tallest freestanding observation tower in the US at 350 metres. If you're game, try one of their exhilarating rides where you can be thrown

over the edge or left dangling over the strip.

LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU

Shows, shows, shows, you'll be bombarded with the all the different options for your evening's entertainment.

Magic is alive in Las Vegas with tons of magicians displaying their talents. Strange that they haven't made their competition disappear though.

Every night you have music acts by the dozens performing, in fact it's kind of like a retirement village for music legends as some of them were superstar's decades ago.

And of course, there's the adults only shows, but we'll leave the details of those ones up to your imagination.

YOU WON'T JUST LOSE TRACK OF TIME; YOU'LL LOSE TRACK OF DAYS

So, what shows to decide on? Here's a couple well worth your time.

Cirque du Soleil for it's amazing acrobatics although sometimes it crosses the line from artsy to just plain weird.

Tournament of Kings will let you sit down and enjoy a rustic dinner while you raise your cup of ale to the knights and kings jousting in the arena before you.

Your holiday experience in Vegas will come down to a few key factors. First is budget, most shows and meals are well priced but they will start to add up. If you're going to partake in any of the adults only experiences, then you'll find your funds dwindling fast and you'll be in trouble if you can't pull yourself away from the tables.

Second is your travelling companions, heading out with your mates will be quite the different experience then with the family. There's a reason for the slogan 'what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas' and a trip with the family probably won't see you needing to adhere to this code.

Regardless of budget, age, gender and travelling companions, Vegas is a once in a lifetime experience.



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