

The Cockfighter

Linking the Communities of Broke Fordwich Bulga & Milbrodale

FREE



BROKE
FORDWICH
WINE REGION

The tranquil side of the Hunter Valley

January/February 2016



A Little Bit of Calabria
in Broke
Somerville Wines

The Cockfighter

Our magazine - named after Cockfighter Creek - So named in 1820 by John Howe and B. Singleton because one of their horses called Cockfighter was bogged here on their return trip from Wallis Plains (Maitland) to Patrick Plains (Singleton)

The Wonnarua are the First Nation people in an area that covers the Hunter and beyond including, of course, the Broke Fordwich Region

Sacred to them is Lizard Rock (known to many as Yellow Rock). Overlooking the village of Broke, Lizard Rock has been recognised as the geographic icon for the area.

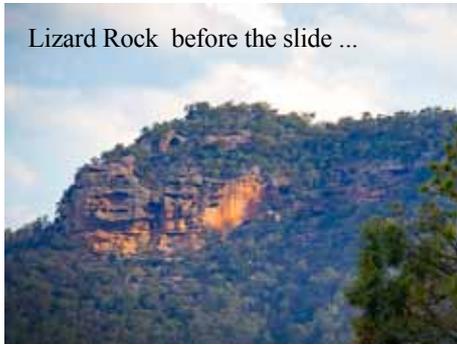
A recent rock slide has added a very visible feature to this millennia old guardian and Wonnarua member Pat Hanson, has submitted this account:

Wednesday, January 6, 2016 Lizard Rock, that is the main feature of Broke, the giant lizard that many thousands of years ago made its way from the coast making all the

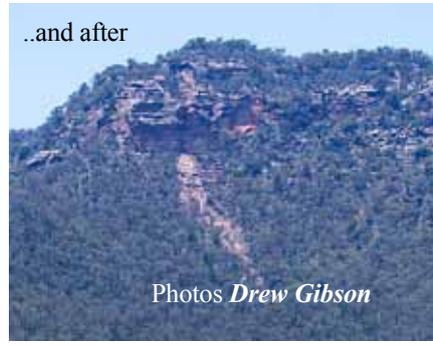
rivers as it wandered and killed by the two warriors on the right hand side, shed tears really big sad tears in the night resulting in a rockslide down the middle of its face. Waking residents and sending dogs crazy As Wonnarua we have a great spirit connection with the Lizard, and know Lizard was shedding great tears of sadness - for it is high and can see as we Wonnarua can see from the ground, the environmental destruction that is going on around us. As one we cry, we cry big tears for our once beautiful land.

Pat Hanson

Traditional Custodian Wonnarua.



Lizard Rock before the slide ...



..and after

Photos *Drew Gibson*

Jan/Feb 2016

December Rainfall	120 mm
TOTAL 2015	879 mm
January Rainfall	232 mm

Diary Dates

12th and 13th of March 2016.
Bulga Beats
 Robert McLaughlin on 0405555901 or
 rob.mac46@hotmail.com
 -
9th -10th April 2016
A Little Bit of Italy in Broke
 italyinbroke.com.au
 -
First Sunday of the Month
Community Markets
 -
SPECIAL MARKET
28th February 2016
 -
Wollombi Classic Film Festival
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FROM THE EDITOR

HOW AGL DRILLED ITS OWN GRAVE

Space problems prevent me from boring you more than the usual somewhat at this heady time of complete and utter vindication, but stay with us. Simply, the early February news of AGL's coal seam gas capitulation deserves mention in every conceivable record of the little guy's win over rampant, rapacious and potentially ruinous invasion of one's backyard. And, speaking or writing as a Day One of Year Zero opponent of AGL's ill-considered foray into Gloucester, it's deliciously ironic that the company originally intended to make an announcement about that project later this month. Chairwoman of Groundswell Gloucester, Julie Lyford, told the Sydney Morning Herald that three days of protests (over the weekend of February 5-7) now would become a celebration.

Indeed—and as Julie Lyford added—it ain't over yet: not as long as that financial basket-case, Santos, ignores the voice of the people of the Pilliga and continues its Narrabri project 350 kilometres northwest of Gloucester.

For the moment, let's savour the cave-in nearer home, with that heady observation from my Ancient Roman buddies: Vae Victis, or more colloquially, up yours AGL!

(Tom Jackson)

Bill Lawson Memorial - Large gathering farewells local resident

Over 200 people gathered at Catherine Vale Vineyard recently to say their final farewell to William (Bill) Lawson, co-founder of Catherine Vale Vineyard.

Bill passed away at his home on the 10th January 2016 aged 78 years.

The memorial service took place inside the cellar door which was filled to more than capacity so that 30 to 40 attendees had to sit outside.



Some of the large crowd outside after the memorial service

The assembly heard about Bill's role as coach and teacher at Knox and his early life

Family and friends gave attestation to his steadfastness as a father and friend, his commitment to honesty and integrity his wonderful sense of humour.

A celebration of his life was held at the Knox Grammar School Chapel, some days before the Catherine Vale Memorial.

Vale Bill

WINE EXPORTS IN RECOVERY MODE

Australian wine exports surged in 2015 to \$2.1 billion, a 14 per cent increase on the previous year and the highest value seen since 2007.

It's the first time in more than 20 years that the value of Australian wine exports have grown in all top 15 markets, a feat Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Senator Anne Ruston, said

was made possible by the hard work of the industry and increased access into Asian markets.

"I would like to congratulate the Australian wine industry on the export figures... as they are first and foremost a reflection of the collective hard work of our industry," Senator Ruston said.

"Internationally, we are now seeing large-scale retailers put more focus on the Australian category, and a number of importers, including some of Japan's largest, have started importing new Australian wines, giving more energy to the market place.

"Hopefully we soon see these great figures

for wine exporters reflected at the farm gate with high grape prices."

Hunter Valley vigneron John Drayton of Drayton's Family Wines said the export boost was great news for the local wine industry because the growth was recorded across both bottle and bulk categories.

"Whilst the Hunter Valley is not necessarily known for its volume of production, our wines are world-renowned for their uniqueness, quality and distinct terroir," Mr Drayton said.

"The fact bottle exports have risen is a fantastic opportunity for the Hunter Valley to bring our premium wines to burgeoning markets across the world."

The United Kingdom was Australia's largest overall export market by volume, accounting for 33 per cent of wine exported. The largest market by value was the US market, worth \$443 million each year.

However, much of the growth recorded in 2015 was driven by massive expansion into Asian markets opened up by new free trade agreements.

Triple digit growth was recorded in some sectors, with the volume of bulk white wine exports growing by 455 per cent in the Japanese market. Red wine bottle exports to China rose by 67 per cent in value to \$331 million.

...455% growth
in the Japanese
market

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Opportunity - Bulga Beats Festival 2016

The Bulga Beats Festival organisers are reaching out to businesses and individuals to support the second festival on the 12th and 13th of March 2016.

Bulga Beats is a community organised music, market and arts festival that focuses on community building, attracting people to the Hunter Valley and our district, supporting / promoting sustainable industries, local businesses, wine & tourism in our area.

After a very successful inaugural event the organisers are planning to have a bigger and better 2016 festival. This means looking for local sustainable industries and businesses to join with us and help sponsor the event.

The first festival was held on the 20th of June 2015 with over 40 food/market stalls and 8 bands from across NSW.

Donations of wine and other produce, accommodation and meal vouchers, art supplies, candles, toys and a vast range of goods were some of the fantastic prizes that were auctioned on the day.

Actor Michael Caton was even attracted to our inaugural event. He signed a special guitar on the day and spoke in support of the town and the Bulga Beats Festival.

The little town's big festival attracted people not only from the Hunter Valley but also from Sydney, the Central, Mid and North Coast. There were even some festival goers from Brisbane, from Victoria and even Tasmania. The festival received many fantastic reviews and the overall consensus from the crowd was that they would certainly be attending the next Bulga Beats Festival in 2016.

The main events of Bulga Beats 2016 will be held at the Bulga Recreation Ground where there is free camping available for



the entire weekend. Additional activities/exhibitions will be held at Bulga's iconic Cockfighter Tavern, the Bulga Hall and the historic St Marks Church.

The event will start on Friday the 11th of

March at 5pm and conclude on Sunday the 13th at 2pm.

The main day is Saturday the 12th where markets, art, food, dance and music will take place from 9am till 11pm.

Bulga Beats is looking to gain sponsorship for a number of reasons, to:

Help cover the cost of running the festival.

Continue along our theme of supporting sustainable industries and local businesses and provide an opportunity to transition away from a reliance on the mining industry in the Hunter Valley whilst keeping the same employment levels or better..

Create long lasting relationships between businesses and industries in surrounding areas.

Provide an ideal location for like-minded local industries and businesses to advertise to the local, state and national communities.

The event team are looking for support by way of a cash donation or goods and or services that may be auctioned on Festival Day.

If you wish to have a stall at the Festival please contact bulgabeats@gmail.com.

All supporters and donors are publicised on our Bulga Beats Festival facebook page, named and thanked a number of times from the main stage during the weekend and signposted at the raffle and auction site.

To contribute to the promotion of the Bulga Beats Festival and the sustainable future of the Hunter Valley payment can be made to the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association. EFT BSB 062-599 Account No. 00920389 Cheques Payable to: BMPA Inc

Postal Address PO Box 1032

A/c Name BMPA Singleton NSW 2330

For collection of donations (goods, vouchers etc), please contact Robert McLaughlin on 0405555901 or rob.mac46@hotmail.com

AGL PULLS THE PIN AND STARTS THE SPIN

AGL Energy has pulled the pin on gas exploration and production, including a contentious coal seam gas operation, as the commodity price slump bites at its revenue base.

The energy heavyweight has announced it will scrap the controversial Gloucester coal seam gas project and sell out of a string of other assets as a consequence of the decision.

It will write \$640 million off the value of its assets — impairments to be reflected in the group's first-half results next week — in the wake of the move.

AGL has changed its shift from the days when it demanded acquiescence from the community because we desperately needed the gas - there was simply not enough to supply the Australian market so prime agricultural land and rural communities were a necessary sacrifice to ensure AGL could look after our needs.

Now the media spin is that there is no need to worry about the collapse of their gas mining activities because there is enough gas already to go around. Something the protesters kept saying.

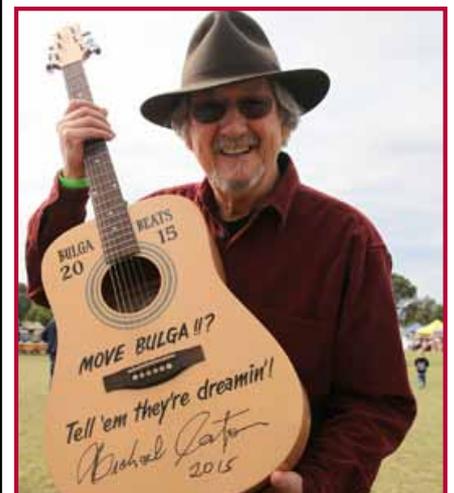
As for the government - there is a wonderful spin - from a position in which govern-

ment representatives fought and fiddled to shore up their big business buddies to a position of re-writing history.

Now that AGL has collapsed out of the market, the government angle is to say that their 'hard-line' approach may have caused the exit but they don't regret it because they were supporting the community!!.

As Guy Rundle the global correspondent-at-large for Crikey says:

"When a crisis-ridden system starts to seep into the natural world, to undermine its ground, then what draws people together — marginal farmers and vegan warriors, Plains ranchers and Gomerioi, the stalwarts of Bulga and the city people who have taken up their cause, from Broome to the Galilee Basin, from the quiet forests of the Pilliga to the rainbow patchwork of the mountain-fringed plains — is not the process of burying their differences, but the discovery of a deeper commonality. At some point, such a battle simply becomes that of life against death since, as the poet Hölderlin observed, we cannot live in the air. What is offered in return for the destruction proposed is nothing, literally nothing."



SAVING BULGA WAS NOT A PRIORITY FOR SINGLETON COUNCIL

The case to defend Bulga was not supported strongly by Singleton Council and by negotiating an early Voluntary Planning Agreement with Rio Tinto prior to the PAC decision, Council certainly undermined the case for Bulga and the environment.

The Voluntary Planning Agreement which they negotiated did not involve the people most impacted by an expansion, the residents of Bulga. Agreement was reached between Rio Tinto and Council to provide water and sewer, spending half the value of the \$11,000,000 agreed under the VPA but without proper consultation with the residents. 'Placemaking' is not proper consultation when it comes to selecting projects and service for a VPA.

The residents of Bulga have not been demanding water and sewer and believe the proposal should be put to the Bulga residents for their view. Most see this water and sewer as the responsibility of Council and not a Mining Company. Under this proposal Council provides infrastructure at no cost to themselves and provides a future cash flow from water and sewer rates raking in the benefit of something they did not pay for.

Why doesn't the VPA clean roofs and tanks?

What about consideration being given to Warkworth Mine and installing multi filter water purifications systems on every house in Bulga and Milbrodale? In addition provide a continuous water tank and roof gutter cleaning service paid for from the VPA and continued for the life of the mine. To the residents of Bulga this would lessen the impact of the Mine expansion and give

residents clean water.

Residents who are currently self-sufficient with rain water (albeit polluted) and septic systems feel the whole of the \$11m would be better spent as compensation for the Bulga and Milbrodale residents on projects which will improve our village and life-style. Council should discuss these matters with Bulga and not unilaterally announce our future without reference to the people who are most affected. Of course Council is claiming half of the \$11m for other projects in the Singleton Local Government



Water discharging from the Warkworth site on Friday 16 Jan on its way to the Wollombi Brook about the time fish died from low dissolved oxygen levels which extended for more than 40 kilometres of the Hunter River, from Hinton to near Fern Bay

Area and that does not sit well with the residents of Bulga or others. It is clear that Council has succumbed to the coercion by Rio Tinto who wants Wallaby Scrub Road closed and the Council's claim they are short of money.

Having this Warkworth Mine approved must have appealed to Council particularly

when you read in their latest request to increase rates, that 35.59% of their income is from the special mining rates category.

For Council to have supported Bulga and actively campaigned against the expansion of the mine would not have been in their financial interests.

The mine may have a future by going under-ground. This will leave intact Wallaby Scrub Road, the Warkworth Sands Woodlands, pro-vide a barrier between any mining activity and Bulga, reduce noise and air pollution, and save what is left of the aboriginal heritage sites.

The Non Disturbance Area One as promised to Bulga residents in the Deed of Agreement of 2003 (set aside by this current government) could be reinstated as a conservation area in perpetuity.

The Bulga Community demanded in writing to the Premier and Planning Minister to reinstate the protection promised for NDA1. So far no response.

If the government would work with the proposed purchaser of the Warkworth Mine and established this no-go area as originally proposed, a small amount of faith would be restored both in human nature and the State Government.

To date the New South Wales Government, whilst giving the appearance of starting to turn this monster around, has faded away.

*Extract form the THE BULGA BUGLE
The Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association Inc*

17 January 2016

Vol 1 Edition 2

The Willows Restaurant & Broke Village Store

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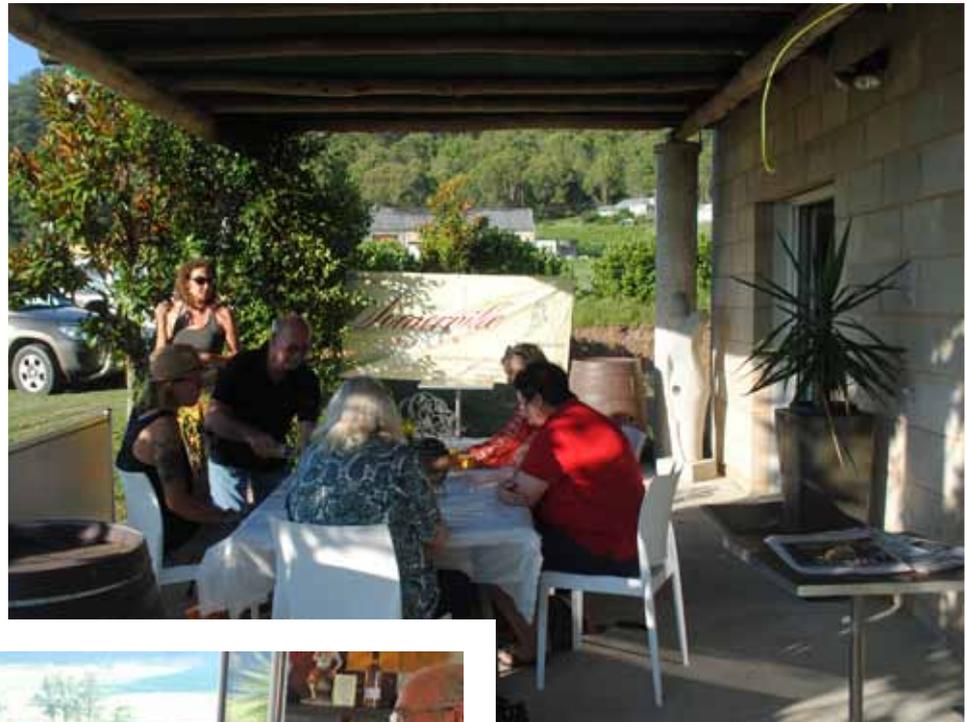
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till late.

Somerville Wines



There is no doubt you are made to feel at home in the Somerville Wines cellar door.
ABOVE: Manager Paul Alexander

Dining in or out is a relaxed affair. The menu is basic reasonably priced with generous proportions and is a mix of Mediterranean and 'Aussie'



Somerville Wines -A Little Bit Of Calabria In Broke

One of the endearing things about the upcoming Italian event - 'A Little Bit of Italy in Broke' is the casual friendliness of the event. Inspired by the laid back enjoyment of good wine, food and company that epitomises the Italian rural lifestyle, the event brings a lot of enjoyment to a growing number of fans.

Somerville Wines is owned by the Barbalace family, the family head, Pasquale Barbalace emigrated to Australia from Calabria, Italy and built the cellar door over weekends and now has opened it for sales.

Pasquale is the president of the Manly Vale Calabria Bowling Sports & Social Club

Casa mia...casa tua 'my house is your house' is the Italian version of an ancient tradition going back millennia ensuring travellers were honoured guests. This could well be the theme of the Italy in Broke event and according to cellar door manager Paul ('Paulie') Alexander it is his modus operandi as well.

"I come from a Mediterranean background which means the minute you step into

my house you are treated as a special guest - you are offered food and drink and entreated to rest and relax. And I apply this philosophy to my customers as well." He said.

And there is no doubt you are made to feel at home in the Somerville Wines cellar door.

The cosy, cleverly designed interior overlooking the vineyards and back by impressive hills is indeed very inviting.

Over 40 acres of grapes are planted on the property, including Italian varieties such as Barbera. Somerville have a winery on site and process all their own grapes.

Typically, as in rural Italy, herbs, vegetables, sheep, pigs and cattle make up the farm/vineyard and much of the produce ends up in the kitchens on the property.

Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Somerville Wines is the place to visit for a 'country breakfast', lunch or dinner. The menu is basic reasonably priced with generous proportions and is a mix of Mediterranean and 'Aussie'

Add the tasting of some extremely com-

petently made wines and the beautiful surrounds, the Somerville experience is another great addition to the Broke Fordwich pallet.

Broke Fordwich is an internationally registered region, recognised officially world-wide as a sub region of the Hunter Valley With 12 cellar doors now registered as members of Broke Fordwich, the wine lover can be assured that a visit to the region will provide enough varieties and excellent quality of wines to satisfy the most selective visitor

Somerville Wines

845 Wollombi Road, Broke

For bookings and information phone Paul on 0429 037 555 or 02 6579 1459

A Little Bit of Italy in Broke is on Friday 8, Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 April 2016

A weekend of Italian food, wine, festivities and fun hosted throughout Broke Fordwich.

For more information visit:

italyinbroke.com.au



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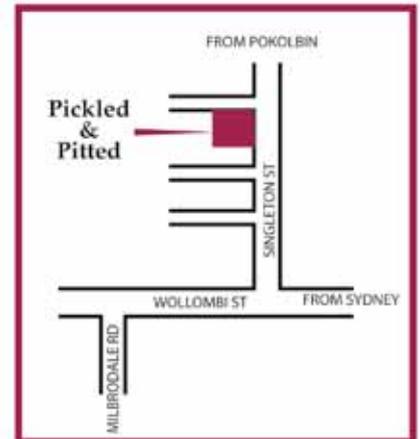
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BULGA COAL

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Environment and Community Contacts

Ralph Northey - Bulga Coal
Environment and Community Manager
T: 6570 2539 M: 0418 439 874
ralph.northey@glencore.com.au

Ned Stephenson - Bulga Underground
Environment and Community Coordinator
T: 6570 2541 M: 0400 266 877
ned.stephenson@glencore.com.au

Community complaints line, 24 hours a day,
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BROKE ROAD REALIGNMENT TO OPEN SOON

As part of the Bulga Optimisation Project, a section of the road leading from Broke to the junction of The Golden Highway has been realigned.

Bulga Coal received approval for the Bulga Optimisation Project in December 2014. The approval extends the life of the open cut mine to 2035

The Bulga Optimisation Project optimises and consolidates the open cut and underground mining operation of Glencore's

Bulga Mine and includes:

Realignment of Broke Road, including associated town water main and private irrigation water main.

Realignment of 11kV and 330kV electrical power transmission lines.

Construction of new haul-roads across the new Broke Road and rail tracks.

The Broke Road realignment is nearing completion and will potentially be open

over the next few days (weather depending). Once the road is open it will become the responsibility of Singleton Council.

On a recent tour, residents of Broke and Bulga were shown the near completed roadworks and some of the construction methods, visual screening and other aspects of the development were explained.

Because the new road will provide a different viewing perspective that may draw driver's attention away from the road, drivers are being asked to be careful.

Additionally, because of the newly sown grass along the new route, it has been observed that kangaroos are frequenting the roadside and may not be very traffic aware and for this reason drivers are being asked to be doubly vigilant.

The new road is a 100 km/h road and an additional 1.9 km longer adding just over 1 minute longer than the previous route.

For more information, contact:

Ralph Northey

*Environment and Community Manager
Bulga Coal*



Residents of Broke and Bulga receive an overview from Bulga Coal managers prior to embarking on a tour of the nearly completed realigned section of Broke Road.



SINGLETON PROVES TO BE A POPULAR HOLIDAY DESTINATION

Domestic tourism is booming in Singleton with an increased number of locals dropping in to the Singleton Visitor Information and Enterprise Centre.

Singleton Council has reported increased visitation from local residents enquiring about events, attractions and purchasing local giftware.

Lake St Clair, national parks and camping locations are the top enquiries from visitors to the area with vineyard and restaurant enquiries for establishments in Broke and Hermitage Rd also proving popular.

Singleton Council Acting General Manager Gary Thomson says that news about the newly revitalised town centre is also attracting visitors.

"Our tourism staff have received lots of positive feedback about the new CBD with many visitors requesting directions to the new space that they have heard about in the media and via verbal referrals," he says.

The centre recorded 2,745 visitor enquiries in December leading into the festive season.

"As a popular thoroughfare for holiday travelers, it's fantastic to see people stopping in Singleton to explore what we have to offer," Mr Thomson says.

The Singleton Visitor Information and Enterprise Centre answered almost 31,000 tourism enquiries about the area in 2015, many hailing from overseas.

Destination NSW announced that international visitors to NSW in 2015 spent more than \$8 billion, an increase of 15 per cent compared to last year, with a significant jump in visitors from China.

New counselling service available for young people in Singleton

Singleton Council has partnered with Evolve Psychology Service to address a gap in mental health services for young people identified during development of the Singleton Youth Strategy.

Evolve Psychology Service specialises in providing psychological therapy to people aged 11-24 years, who are presenting with mental health and/or general counselling issues, such as: depression, suicidal thoughts, self-harm, anxiety, panic attacks, bullying, stress, grief and loss, trauma, sleep, substance use, behavioural management, and adjustment problems.

Moira Sylvia is the principal psychologist of Evolve Psychology Service and she is an AHPRA registered psychologist and Medi-

care health provider. Moira has extensive experience working with people who have presented with a range of mental health issues and she is passionate about helping people lead satisfying and fulfilling lives.

Moira conducts both assessment and therapy sessions; and she is an effective practitioner in the application of evidence-based therapies such as (but not limited to): Cognitive Behavioural Therapy; Dialectical Behavioural Therapy; and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. Moira works from a holistic perspective believing that happiness and wellbeing involves optimal mental and physical health.

This service is free, however, it may mean visiting a doctor for a Mental Health Care Plan (a Medicare rebate scheme). A general

package of care can usually last between 4-6 sessions, however, depending on eligibility people may be able to receive more than six sessions per calendar year.

Sessions are conducted at Singleton Youth Venue, corner of Pitt and Bathurst streets, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and are 50 minutes long.

To book an assessment session or for more information contact Moira on 0404 377 233 or email contact@evolvepsychologyservice.com

Evolve Psychology Service is not a crisis service. In an emergency please phone Triple Zero '000' or Lifeline on 13 11 14.



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Singleton fans married in Star Wars premiere line

Star Wars fanatics Caroline Ritter and Andrew Porters were married last December outside the famous Chinese Theatre in Hollywood.

The couple, from Singleton, described the wedding as "a dream come true".

They travelled to Los Angeles and camped in line for almost two weeks to be the first to see Star Wars: The Force Awakens at the theatre.

Their wedding was officiated by a jedi knight, with Darth Vader having walked Ms Ritter down the aisle.

Chewbacca and R2-D2 attended the ceremony in a tuxedo and bow tie.

Mr Porters wore a traditional suit, while the bride wore a white gown decorated with silhouette patterns of X-wing starfighters from the film franchise.

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Phone:

Community Info line - 1800 727 745
 Complaints Hotline - 1800 656 892

Blasting hotlines:

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 MTW: 1800 099 669

Read:

Singleton and Muswellbrook Community Newsletters, distributed direct to your letterbox

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TRAINING - LESSONS

After the mine closes - Security Deposits - will they fill the void?

It is the responsibility of Resources & Energy to ensure that land disturbed by mining activities is returned to a sustainable post-mining land use.

A security deposit that covers the full rehabilitation costs is required on all authorisations. This requirement ensures that the State does not incur financial liabilities in the event of an authorisation holder defaulting on their rehabilitation obligations.

The authorisation holder is required to provide an estimate of rehabilitation costs for consideration when determining the security deposit amount.

Resources & Energy will assess and determine when rehabilitation obligations have been met and the security deposit can be released. Partial release of the security deposits may occur when successful rehabilitation has been demonstrated for part of the site.



Department of Planning... "not aware of the total size" of voids in the Hunter area.

If you know where to go (http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/miners-and-explorers/applications-and-approvals/environmental-assessment/mining#_rehabilitation-security) a Rehabilitation Cost Calculation Tool is available to assist in calculating the security deposit for a mining site.

A simple Excel spreadsheet, it enables the user to accurately assess the cost of closing down a mine. The outcome of the calculation then becomes the 'Security Deposit'

Based on a mid-sized mine of say 5000 hectares, by the time you calculate the removal and reparation of buildings, roads, rail line, power grids, washeries, pipes, cap tailings etc the sum is about \$80,000,000

Then you need to fill the voids - another \$200,000,000

The average security deposit held by governments is about \$120,000,000

According to the NSW Auditor-General, as of 30 June 2012 there were about 573 derelict mine sites in NSW (including gold and other minerals, as well as former coal mines). And only a small fraction of those derelict mines were being rehabilitated.

The Hunter Valley mines may leave more than 10,000 hectares of land consumed as "final voids", or giant holes left by mines, calling for a push towards the state government to consider the culminative impacts on the region's water table and agriculture.

The independent Planning Assessment

Commission has pushed the government to do a study of mining giant Rio Tinto's proposal for a 950-hectare final void at its Mount Thorley mine site, which has been deemed as "unacceptable", and a prime example of giant holes left by mines.

The advice of the commission has been commented on by the Department of Plan-

water that may migrate off the site and therefore not act as a groundwater sink.

The main concern of the commission is they want the impact that voids have on the water tables and agriculture looked at by the government.

Since the commission's report the government has been considering their options.

So it looks like the security deposits will not be sufficient to fill the voids - and to part fill them until the money runs out is not a viable option.

Why not, instead, use the funds to build a sustainable project that will work towards creating jobs and income for the local communities. Build a solar farm that feeds back into the grid and the profits go back into a local community fund to enhance the region by funding local medical care, activities and infrastructure for the local youth population and the generation of employment through the support of local businesses.

eration of employment through the support of local businesses.

This would be a boost to mining industry's corporate citizen image and a perfect election vehicle for aspiring political candidates or incumbent government.

Such community owned power generators are now becoming common as Australia moves to being one of the most 'switched-on' green energy countries.



ning quoting it was "not aware of the total size" of voids in the Hunter area.

The commission opposed the departments assurance that it is only a small amount of the region's land where there are large areas of mining voids across the Hunter Valley.

The issue had been raised as part of the commission's report on an expansion of mount Thorley-Warkworth, which concluded that the project could be approved but suggested the company be forced to reduce sizes of the mine's proposed final void.

Rio Tinto claims the expansion would be less than that of the total two separate voids it has already approved of at existing operations.

"The final void will be largely hidden from view due to the surrounding landscape and extensive rehabilitation works planned after mining," a company spokesman said.

Rio Tinto has also said that it would not be reasonable to impose a condition that requires them to completely or even partly backfill the final void, referring to an estimation that it would cost the department \$2 billion to fill them.

Rio Tinto has also expressed that there may be risks associated with filling the void, such as saline

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The Cockfighter Editorial:

Tom Jackson phone: 6574 5266

Eden Anthony 65791259

fighter@broke.nsw.au



COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

Broke Bulga Landcare Group Inc.

C/o President, Wendy Lawson
PO Box 120, Broke NSW 2330

Broke Fair Committee

Eden Anthony
President, Eden Anthony
0498 633 864 mail@hunterstay.com.au

Broke Fordwich Wine & Tourism Assoc.

President, Eden Anthony
0498 633 864 mail@hunterstay.com.au

Broke Bush Fire Brigade

C/o Broke Post Office, Broke NSW 2330

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Kathleen Everett (02) 6579 1470

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Principal/P&C Association,
Cochrane Street, Broke NSW 2330

Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association

President - John Krey
6574 5376
PO Box 1032, Singleton 2330
bmpa.contact@bigpond.com

Bulga Rural Fire Brigade

President: John Lamb
6574 5205
Captain: Michael Bendall
6574 5193
Permits: M Bendall 6574 5193
A Gallagher 6574 5100

Bulga Community Centre Inc.

Secretary Belinda Passlow 65745113
Treasurer and bookings Phillip Reid 65745237

NSW Rural Fire Service Hunter Valley District

Phone 6575 1200, Fax 6574 5266,
email huntervalley.team@rfs.nsw.gov.au
Manager, Inspector Martin Siemsen

Justice of the Peace

Tom and Sue Jackson 6574 5266
Graeme O'Brien 6574 5185
John Darr, Broke 0437 173 277
Joan McNamara 6579 1057

Milbrodale Public School

Principal/P&C Association
Putty Road, Milbrodale NSW 2330

National Parks and Wildlife Service- Upper Hunter Area Bulga and Scone

Peta Norris, Putty Road, Bulga
NSW 2330 6574 5555

Palliative Care Volunteers

for Singleton & Cessnock
Kath Watkinson (02) 65722121

PID Admin

Saywells
12 Vincent St CESSNOCK
office@saywells.com

PID - Private Irrigation

admin@bfpid.com.au
Water On/Off 1300 767 118

St Andrews Anglican Church Broke

Parish Secretary at 6571 1414

St Marks Anglican Church

C/o Marie Mitchell
Inlet Road, Bulga NSW 2330

The Immaculate Conception Catholic Church Broke

Paul O'Toole
C/o Broke Post Office, Broke NSW 2330

Wildlife Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release

www.wildlifeaid.org.au 04 4766 7737

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Editor: Tom Jackson

Secretary: Sarah Purser

Production: Eden Anthony

Accounts: Ken McCraw

Advertising: Chris Hagan



OUR WILDLIFE

Photo: This specimen was photographed in Bulga by Judith Leslie

CRIMSON HONEYEATER,

The scarlet myzomela (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*) also known as crimson honeyeater, scarlet honeyeater, sanguineous honeyeater or, colloquially, bloodbird, is a small passerine bird of the honeyeater family Meliphagidae native to the east coast of Australia, Indonesia and New Caledonia. It is the smallest honeyeater in Australia. The male is a striking bright red with black wings; the female is entirely brown. The male scarlet myzomela is 10–11 cm (4 in) long with a bright red head, breast, back and rump, black tail and wings (wing feathers have white margins) with a white abdomen. The female is a pale brown with a whitish abdomen. Both have black bills and eyes. A variety of calls have been recorded, including a bell-like tinkling.[3]

Males could be mistaken for the similar looking red-headed myzomela in north Queensland where their ranges overlap, though the latter's red colouration is restricted to the head.

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1300 803 300
0404 494 482
Catherine@taylorproperty.com.au
Taylorproperty.com.au
PO Box 3 Broke NSW 2330

VINEYARD SERVICES

Bright Vine Services
Vineyard consulting
0410625540
jennybright@bigpond.com
www.brightvineservices.com.au
563 Wollombi Rd, Broke NSW 2330

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