

## Premier to Clermont – “Let’s start mining!”

*Queensland Premier Anna Bligh radios to equipment operators to start mine operations at Clermont Mine. (l-r) Rio Tinto Coal Australia Managing Director Hubie van Dalsen, Mines and Energy Minister Geoff Wilson and Clermont Mine General Manager Dave Lamb.*



Queensland Premier Anna Bligh officially started mining operations at the \$950 million Clermont Mine at a ceremony at the site last month.

The Premier radioed to equipment operators to start earthworks and the commencement of digging the mine’s pit.

Ms Bligh, Minister for Mines and Energy Geoff Wilson, Rio Tinto Coal Australia Managing Director Hubie van Dalsen and guests attended the 2 May ceremony, which also featured a ‘welcome to country’ from Traditional Owners.

The Clermont Mine has been a hive of activity, as heavy machinery has arrived on site for assembly.

A maintenance workshop is being set up and the go-line area, where equipment is parked up ready for use, has been completed.

Colin Mackey, Operations Manager, said there was a buzz on the site as a next important phase began.

“The team includes a good mix of willing and capable people, who clearly recognise the importance of safely working as a team,” Colin said.

“They understand their individual accountabilities for Clermont Mine’s success and want to be part of a new operation, and to have the opportunity to continue to grow and improve that operation.”

The first heavy equipment has been delivered including two EX5500 excavators and a EX1800 excavator, a L1850 loader, a rope shovel 4100XPC and miscellaneous ancillary equipment.

“Our challenge is to safely deliver the box cut (the mine pit) by the first quarter of 2010,” Colin said.

“To do that we need to concentrate on people, planning, costs and continuous improvement.

“We want to make sure our people are healthy and injury free, we need to plan what we do and deliver that plan.

“We are understanding our costs and control variances daily and we need to safely deliver the box cut in a way that can take advantage of the buoyant resources market.

“Our aim is not just to be part of the community but to have earned the support of the local community.

“That will be one of the keys to our success and the longevity (17 years) of the Clermont Mine.”

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## Blair Athol Mine

### From the General Manager Operations



The first three months of 2008 challenged every one of us in one respect or another. We saw rain like we haven't seen for a long time, which brought with it heartache for some and opportunity for others. We were gratified to see people join together to help one another, especially for those in desperate need in the outer reaches of our community.

For Blair Athol Mine, the rain and associated flooding brought immediate challenges and as it turned out, a great opportunity.

In mid-January, when the rain started and Sandy Creek was threatening to cut the town off from the mine, I initiated the Disaster Management & Recovery Plan. The Blair Athol team had practiced this a few times in 2007 using simulated exercises but not the real thing. As it turned out the team managed exceptionally well through the January and again through the February floods, leaving nothing to chance.

This was only possible because of the training the disaster management team had received and the Blair Athol workforce who remained willing and flexible wanting to help.

By mid-February the significance of the flood impact in the outer reaches of the Belyando region had become evident and we engaged the help of a specialist disaster management coordinator, Grant Chisnall, to help the council and community. What had also become evident was the significant impact the rain had had on the other coal operations in Central Queensland. By March, Blair Athol Mine's opportunity had emerged with most Bowen Basin coal operations producing significantly less than their rated capacity. We quickened our recovery pace pumping water out of pits and repairing mine haul roads ready to deliver. As it turned out Blair Athol Mine set two new production records in March producing 50 per cent more coal than planned (see story on page 3).

In the midst of this high energy environment two new managers joined the Blair Athol team, landing squarely in one of its busiest periods. Both Wayne (Production Manager) and Maurice (Technical Services Manager) have been with Rio Tinto for some time and brought with them new ideas and energy. Please join me in welcoming Wayne, Maurice and their families to Clermont.

A quieter but more important achievement along the way has been the team reaching its 250 days Lost Time Injury Free milestone. This milestone simply helps confirm that we're heading in the right direction to achieve ZERO injuries.

2008 has a new challenge on the horizon. The Maintenance team has planned a two-month overhaul to our largest piece of equipment, the dragline, which should keep all of us busy for a while yet.

**Andrew Cole**  
*General Manager Operations*

## Clermont Project

### From the General Manager Construction



There is a sense of excitement at Clermont Mine as we embark on the next important stage of this project.

In May we were pleased to welcome distinguished guests, including the Premier and members of the community, to mark the commencement of our box cut excavation.

I have been very pleased with the enthusiasm and quality of the 36 new operators and maintainers who have joined us on site to begin phase one of the mining operation.

We aim to have a people focus with this operation, because it is the people who have already joined us, and those who bolster our team over the coming months, who will make this mine a safe, efficient and productive success.

As with all other mining operations in Central Queensland, we were affected by the heavy rain in January and February.

The construction of roads and creek diversions is dependent on fine weather, but where possible we have instituted wet

weather mitigation strategies to maintain the progress of the project.

While we have been affected, we are still working towards uncovering our first coal in January 2010.

There have been numerous milestones recently.

The new equipment arriving on site has aroused a lot of interest, particularly for those people on site who have never seen mining equipment on such a large scale.

Rio Tinto's new logo and branding, along with new signage at the entrance and around the mine site, has started to appear.

The Clermont team has also taken occupancy of the administration building.

Unlike many other mine site office buildings, the new Clermont building is open-plan, modelled on the new headquarters offices in London and the planned new Brisbane office due in 2010.

Open plan offices are a new approach for a mining environment, but we made a conscious decision to take this route.

There are some considerations when working in an open plan office, but the first indications are it is working well, with the break-out rooms for meetings being well utilised.

The open plan office is designed to promote team work and break down the barriers between work groups, just the sort of work practices we want to foster across the site.

Similarly, we are also committed to ensuring a safe working environment on the site.

The project recently recorded 12 months Lost Time Injury Free, and is currently at 830,000 hours worked Lost Time Injury Free.

This is a commendable achievement, and one which should remind us all to continue our efforts to reduce the risk of injury for everyone who visits or works on our mine site.

**Dave Lamb**  
*General Manager Construction*

## BA Fund supports 59th young trainee

The Blair Athol Mine Community Development Fund has given the green light for Clermont State High School's 59th young trainee to complete the school's successful apprentice and traineeship programme – 'Looking out for your future'.

Blair Athol Mine General Manager Operations Andrew Cole said Clermont State High had partnered with the Fund since 2006, allowing students to complete apprenticeships and traineeships in their chosen field while still at school.

"The Blair Athol Mine Community Development Fund is committed to capacity building and providing opportunities for Clermont residents to develop their skills," Andrew said.

"Graduates from Clermont State High School's programme have become skilled in hairdressing, hospitality, boilermaking, landscaping and welding, to name a few."

Clermont State High School's Principal Julie Guthrie said: "Training apprentices to become competent employees in their chosen field provides vital support to local industries and assists in addressing the skills shortage."

In its first meeting for the year, the Fund's Board pledged \$44,524 to Clermont State High School and also approved funding for MRAEL's two new school based apprentices. MRAEL has been supporting local businesses to host apprentices since 2003.

Applications for the next round of Blair Athol Mine Community Development Fund funding close in August 2008. Potential applicants should contact Sam Faint on 0447 599 990 to receive a guidelines booklet, application form and to discuss their application.

## Heavy rains bring challenges and opportunities

Blair Athol Mine set two new records during the first quarter of 2008 in an effort to make up for lost production earlier in the year.

The mine set a new weekly production record, producing 354,000 tonnes of coal compared to the previous record of 336,000 tonnes recorded in 2003, and a monthly production record of 1.3 million tonnes in March, well above the plan of 0.8 million tonnes. These records were set at the same time the operation recorded a 250 days lost time injury free period. (See story, page five).



## Clermont pioneers new branding

The Clermont Mine is Rio Tinto's first operational site to roll out the new global logo and branding.

The new logo will be progressively implemented throughout the business, and is designed to show Rio Tinto's many different mining operations are part of the one organisation.

"In opening a new mine site there are thousands of items which feature a company's name, from heavy machinery, to mine site signage, down to uniforms and pens," Fiona Nicholls, General Manager External Relations said.

"The Clermont team is providing information about what works, and what doesn't work, to Rio Tinto's head office in London to assist other mines around the world when they embark on the branding change."

## Clermont plans preferred future

Clermont residents seeking a say in their town's future have been given a boost, after Rio Tinto Coal Australia and Isaac Regional Council announced they will partner to fund a new position to help implement the locals' plan.

The Isaac Regional Council has been leading the development of a Preferred Future Strategy for the town, with Rio Tinto Coal Australia's participation, to explore the needs and challenges facing Clermont in coming years.

Local residents had input into the town they want to see develop, including infrastructure, business development, transport, liveability and lifestyle, cultural heritage, health, and housing requirements.

The council launched the report last month and will now work with Rio Tinto Coal

Australia, as well as local industry and community groups, to firm up additional projects under the strategy.

The mining company will spend \$50,000 towards the funding of a Preferred Futures Implementation Officer, who will work in the council and with the community, to implement the strategy.

Dave Lamb, General Manager Construction of Rio Tinto Coal Australia's Clermont Mine, said the strategy, and the new position, aimed to empower the local community.

"We believe the future success of the Clermont Mine relies on a positive working relationship with the Clermont community," Dave said.

"We want to be part of the local community, not just adjacent to it."



*Shorty Bryant, Alan Reilly, Kourtney Neil, Doug Wellington, Estelle Wellington and Pauline Reilly at the show.*

## Raw Metal treats mine employees



*Raw Metal cast and crew.*

Blair Athol Mine employees were treated to an evening of dance when Queensland's "Raw Metal" performed at the Civic Centre in April.

Nearly 400 people turned up to watch the show, an innovative mixture of funk tap, hip-hop, acrobatics and percussive rhythms.

"Blair Athol Mine employees have faced a number of challenges this year, including two major flood events, increased production targets and the introduction of ABS," Blair Athol Mine General Manager Operations Andrew Cole said.

"I am proud of how we have all worked through these challenges and wanted to show the company's appreciation by treating employees and their families to an evening of fun and entertainment."

And entertain they did. Raw Metal is part of the Australian Raw Dance Company and has performed to more than three million people across the world.

Fifty lucky children also took part in a one-hour dance workshop, "Get Up and Go", encouraging them to achieve their potential in and through the arts.

## Hello from Cooberrie Park

The former residents of Blair Athol's zoo have settled in well at their new home, an animal sanctuary on the Central Queensland coast.

The kangaroos, peacocks and native birds were moved at Christmas to Cooberrie Park Wildlife Sanctuary at Yeppoon, to help free up land for residential housing in Clermont.

"The animals are healthy and happy and enjoying life on the coast," animal handler Kieron Smedley said.

"The cockatoo has joined ten others and is teaching them how to say 'hello' in exchange for other phrases.

"The \$4,000 donation from RTCA is allowing us to build a brand new enclosure for the cockatoos, called Cockatoo Land, a project we couldn't have afforded without the company's help."

Cooberrie Park successfully breeds endangered, threatened and rare Australian animals including koalas, cassowaries, parrots and marsupials.



*Blair Athol's cockatoo is looking forward to Cockatoo Land.*

## Opera comes to town

Thirty-one local students gave their voices a workout when the Opera arrived in Clermont recently.

*Moving Opera!* an initiative of Opera Queensland, arrived in Clermont on 28 April, and ran through to 2 May when a concert was held at the Clermont Civic Centre.

It was the first time Rio Tinto Coal Australia, a sponsor of Opera Queensland's Young Artist Programme, has brought the Opera to Clermont.

The programme offered students from Clermont State High School, Clermont State School, St Joseph's School, Kilcummin State School and Mistake Creek State School the chance to work with Opera Queensland professionals and learn how to make opera and musical theatre.

More than 200 community members attended the concert, a bigger turnout than at a similar concert in Emerald.

Rio Tinto Coal Australia General Manager External Relations, Fiona Nicholls, said Blair Athol and Clermont mine employees were also encouraged to participate in the concert and demonstrate their own musical talents.

"Students worked with director Sean Dennehy, three Opera Queensland professional singers and a pianist, and then showcased their talent at the concert," Fiona said.

"They also received invaluable instruction in music, voice, style, technique, characterisation, interpretation and improvisation."

Fiona said Rio Tinto Coal Australia was proud of its work to support and develop opportunities for the communities which neighbour its mine sites, and which focus on business and economic enhancement, vocational learning, personal development and the environment.

The concert raised \$350 from gold coin donations for local school music programs.

## Koala Venture discovers new arrival

An orphaned koala, rescued by a Blair Athol Mine employee, has recently had a baby.

Scientists from The University of Queensland say the discovery shows the koala's rehabilitation back into the wild has been successful.

In August 2006, Blair Athol employee Lance Benney discovered the orphaned koala on his property located close to Blair Athol Mine.

"She was so small she could sit in the palm of my hand. We knew she needed specialist treatment," Lance said.

At just five months old and weighing 200 grams, Shirley the koala would have died without human intervention. Studies from Koala Venture suggest young koalas remain with their mothers until about 12 months old.

After being cared for at the Moggill Koala Hospital in Brisbane, Shirley was returned to Lance's property wearing a tracking collar.

Since her release, Shirley has been tracked by researchers from The University of Queensland.

"Shirley has put on considerable weight and has obviously worked out which eucalypts are good to eat in central Queensland," koala researcher, Dr Sean FitzGibbon, said.

While tracking Shirley in early February this year, Dr FitzGibbon was delighted to find a second set of eyes peering down at him from the tree above – those of Shirley's baby. This one-time orphaned koala is now a first-time mother.

"The fact that Shirley has come full circle and now has young indicates her rehabilitation back into the wild has been extremely successful."

*For the past decade, Blair Athol Mine has partnered with The University of Queensland in Koala Venture, a research partnership which enables mine site rehabilitation strategies to enhance koala habitat values in central Queensland.*



Shirley and Pepper

## Clermont recruitment milestone

Clermont Mine has been recruiting personnel with some positions open for operators who have never worked in the mining industry.

Advertisements have been placed in The Clermont Rag and on the internet for truck drivers and heavy equipment operators.

There are currently 59 Rio Tinto Coal Australia employees on site at Clermont Mine with an extra 70 expected to start by July.

"We have been looking for individuals who want to be part of a team and work at a mine which is focussed on safety," Dave Lamb General Manager Construction said.

"In our experience, most recently with our Hail Creek and Bengalla mines, the ideal attributes of a new member of a safe and high-performing mining operation do not necessarily include previous mining industry experience.

"Our ideal team members have a willingness to learn, will have initiative and will constantly seek to improve how they and their team work."

Interested applicants can apply through the Rio Tinto Coal Australia website, [www.riotintocoalaustralia.com.au](http://www.riotintocoalaustralia.com.au) and click on Careers.

## Mines reach safety milestones

Blair Athol Mine employees and contractors have been congratulated for reaching 250 days without a lost time injury.

The milestone, which was reached on 10 June, followed an increased emphasis on reducing injuries and working towards a zero-injury workplace.

Andrew Cole, General Manager Operations, said the achievement was significant, but there was more work to do.

"We've kept this a quiet achievement because whilst significant, we have had injuries in our workplace that resulted in people needing medical attention, but not time off work," Andrew said.

The mine is working towards zero injuries, and has recently started a programme to emphasise the danger of hand injuries.

Rio Tinto Coal Australia Managing Director Hubie van Dalsen paid tribute to the efforts of all employees and contractors in focusing on safety.

"I have been pleased to see, across all of our mines, a willingness to focus on safety and ways in which all of us can contribute to a safer workplace," Hubie said.

"But safety is something we have to continually strive to improve.

"We are committed to striving for a zero injury target and I encourage all of the people who work at our mines to embrace that goal."

Employees and contractors working on the Clermont Mine Project have just recently achieved one year without a lost time injury.

Following the start of mining operations at the mine last month, and with more equipment and vehicles being used, employees and contractors are being reminded that a safe workplace requires constant vigilance.



*Carly Fresser, Community Reference Group community representative, David Bridgeman, CRG LandCare representative, and Hennie du Plooy, RTCA General Manager, Growth Projects.*

## Community visits new Clermont Mine

The new Clermont Mine has given a group of locals a close up look at the site's progress as part of a programme to build links with near neighbours.

Members of the Clermont Mine Community Reference Group, which was set up to focus on environmental issues relating to the new mine, visited the site to gain a better perspective and understanding of the project.

The reference group provides a formal link between the near neighbours and landholders, the community and Rio Tinto Coal Australia and aims to develop open and cooperative communication on aspects of the new mine and in particular, environmental issues.

Carly Fresser, a community representative

in the group, said the committee members now have a greater understanding of the size and nature of the work.

"Without visiting the site it was difficult to visualise how big it really is," Carly said.

The Community Reference Group members were given a tour of on site facilities and an overview of the project work before eating dinner in the mine's dining hall with managers of the project, construction employees, and contractors.

"As a community representative I am able to raise any concerns the community might have about the new mine.

Environmental reports and results are explained to us, and we are able to ask questions and raise any concerns about the new mine," Carly said.

Hennie du Plooy, Rio Tinto Coal Australia's General Manager, Growth Projects, said the group meets quarterly, and on request interested members of the community can attend as observers.

"The purpose of the Community Reference Group is to continue an open dialogue with neighbouring residents, the community and Rio Tinto Coal Australia concerning environmental issues regarding the Clermont Mine," Hennie said.

The visit to the Clermont Mine was included in the group's fourth meeting since its formation in August 2007.

Minutes from previous CRG meetings are available at: <http://www.riotintocoalaustralia.com.au/media/276.asp>

## Lysaght family heartened by support

Blair Athol Mine contractor Darren Lysaght and his wife Jenny are continuing treatment and are both doing well.

The Lysaghts have been battling illness for the past few months, and have been heartened by the generosity shown by the Clermont community.

Blair Athol Mine held two breakfast barbeques and a golf day, while local Clermont businesses, including Clermont Supermarket IGA, Clermont News and Runnamuck, donated hamper items, toys, gifts and homewares.

The community has raised \$10,000 for the Lysaghts and donated more than \$700 to the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

"Thank you to the employees at Blair Athol Mine and the wider community, who have boosted our spirits through their kindness," Darren said.



*Jenny and Darren Lysaght with daughters Dymity and Kymberley.*

## Extra accommodation opens in Clermont

An extra 40 rooms are now available in Clermont following the reopening of the Single Persons' Quarters by Blair Athol Mine.

Blair Athol Mine Human Resources Superintendent Troy McMillan said the mine decided to reopen the facility as part of its regional accommodation strategy to address the housing shortage in Clermont.

"The additional rooms will provide flexibility and extra housing options to our workforce and contractors, which is particularly important now the new Clermont Mine has commenced," Troy said.

"This is an important step in easing the housing shortage in Clermont and helps

not only Blair Athol Mine employees but those in the general community as it eases the pressure for those seeking accommodation in the open market."

The accommodation facility reached full capacity mid 2008, with additional contractors who have been employed at Blair Athol Mine to help with a routine dragline shutdown.

Clermont Mine has also refurbished nine former Blair Athol houses to provide additional accommodation options for families moving to town to work at the new mine.

The mine has provided new employees with accommodation support including rental assistance, or mortgage assistance for employees who choose to buy a home in town.

Meanwhile, the Blair Athol Town Office has also reopened its doors at the Single Persons Quarters' Administration Building in Jellicoe Street.

The office provides administration services for the accommodation facilities and housing maintenance services for employees in Blair Athol Mine housing.



*The Blair Athol Town Office in Jellicoe Street.*

## Clermont shaves for a cure

Blair Athol Mine's John Smith was among the brave participants in this year's *World's Greatest Shave*, helping the Clermont community raise money for the Leukaemia Foundation.

John farewelled his long locks during the event, held at the Grand Hotel.

"I'm still getting used to my new look, but am happy to have taken part and supported such a good cause," said John, who raised nearly \$1,600.

"It was a bit hard to part with my long hair but family and friends agreed it was time for a change.

"I've actually received a lot of compliments, – the ladies seem to think I look younger with a shaved head."

The Clermont community, with the support of family, friends and the team at Upacutz hairdressing salon, raised an impressive \$6,000.



*Blair Athol Mine's John Smith before and after.*

## RTCA promoting a healthy lifestyle

Blair Athol Mine and the Clermont Mine promoted a healthy lifestyle at the Clermont Show, which ran from 27 to 28 May.

"For this year's show, we partnered with a number of local and regional organisations to provide information to the community about how to stay healthy," Blair Athol Mine Occupational Health Advisor Kimberley Smith said.

"The stand featured information about exercise, diet, men's and women's health issues and cancer awareness. During the show a number of short workshops were held on health and wellness topics.

"We are committed to providing our employees and the community with information about the benefits of leading an active and healthy lifestyle."



*Ivan Bettridge on his new lawn mower from Blair Athol Mine.*

## Green project reaches 20 year milestone

A project to provide green space on the Town Flat will reach a milestone this year.

It has been 20 years since Greening Australia became involved in an effort by Blair Athol Mine and the local community to plant trees near the lagoon.

And in that time, local resident Ivan Bettridge, 84, has seen a lot of changes from atop his ride-on lawn mower.

In all of that time, Ivan has never been paid, instead he volunteers his time out of a sense of town pride.

Ivan is modest about his contribution, which was recognised in a small way with the naming of part of the Town Flat 'Ivan Bettridge Park'.

After the memorial to the 1916 flood was erected in 1980, workers at the mine decided to plant trees from Drummond Street to the lagoon, and later to Charles Street, with help from the mine.

That help has included a ready supply of ride-on lawnmowers from Blair Athol Mine, with the mine having recently provided a new mower, and fuel to keep them going.

It is a far cry from when Ivan was a child and the site was still littered with debris from the flood.

"If you cantered a horse across there you had to be very careful, cellars were still there from the hotels."

New families are moving to town, a new generation of children are using the Flat, and the construction of a new mine is picking up pace.

But as Ivan continues his work on the Town Flat, some things never change.

## Blair Athol Mine welcomes new managers

Blair Athol Mine is pleased to welcome two new managers to its team.

Wayne Johnson started as Manager Production on 12 March, bringing with him extensive operational experience following roles with Port Waratah Coal Services, Bengalla Mining Company and Peabody Resources.

Wayne relocated to Clermont from New Lambton in New South Wales with his wife, Kylie and daughter, Claire.

Maurice Schneider joined the team as Technical Services Manager on 7 April. Maurice is a mechanical engineer with

experience in operational, technical and project management roles with Rio Tinto Aluminium and WMC Resources Ltd.

Maurice, his wife Lorelle, and their two sons, Lachlan and Cameron, have relocated from Weipa.

"On behalf of all employees at Blair Athol Mine I would like to extend a warm welcome to Wayne and Maurice," General Manager Operations Andrew Cole said.

"I hope they settle well into their new roles and that they and their families enjoy their time as part of the Clermont community."



*Clermont State High School Principal Julie Guthrie with scholarship recipient, Melissa Robertson and Blair Athol Mine General Manager Operations Andrew Cole.*

## Scholarship awarded to nursing student

The Blair Athol Mine Community Development Fund and Clermont State High School have selected Melissa Robertson as the recipient of the Leadership/Citizenship scholarship.

The scholarship, supported by the Fund, will provide Melissa with \$7,500 towards her three-year nursing degree at James Cook University.

## Congratulations Barb and Tiger

Barb and Tiger Huston celebrated their 50th anniversary over dinner at the Peppercorn Motel, courtesy of Blair Athol Mine. The couple, married in the Central Methodist Church in Ipswich on

28 March 1958, has four children, 15 grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Barb has worked at Blair Athol Mine since Easter 1990.

