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HUNTER BUSINESS REVIEW
Connecting & informing business people

Jennings Print, Behind The Best Of Newcastle

“

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our Foundation since day one.
We truly value having them as
a Corporate Partner ”



MARK HUGHES
FOUNDATION



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From the Editor



This issue includes HBR's annual Training & Education feature.

We are all very much aware that Australia's future economic prosperity is very much dependent upon knowledge and skills.

The explosion and increasing reliance on technology and automation have changed developed economies to be much more reliant on intellectual capital and less reliant upon raw materials and

production processes.

Successful businesses need to continually come up with new and improved solutions for the global marketplace.

This ongoing revolution has also made successful training and education vastly different to previous generations.

Gone is the need for memorising vast amounts of information – this is easily accessible at our fingertips. The skills that are most important today are being able to apply knowledge and being flexible enough to adapt to a rapidly changing world.

After all, most children currently commencing their schooling will end up on jobs that do not even currently exist.

Ideally, people need to have a thirst for knowledge that helps them adapt to rapid changes in their occupation or completely different jobs.

Employers are increasingly valuing employees that not only understand what they are doing as part of the bigger picture but also can see what could be.

Businesses that are best at meeting the needs of the rapidly changing world encourage and harness the intellectual input from all their staff, rather than just a few managers.

So what does this mean for training and education?

The most successful educators will be those that can inspire students to develop a skill base that is valued by a wide range of employers, to always want to develop new skills and to be not just problem solvers for current challenges but to consider better ways of doing things.

For most individuals, their working life needs to be a continual process of learning, in both formal training and by informal means.

Our educators and politicians must have a clear understanding of evolving training and education needs and to develop plans to ensure courses, policies and structures are kept current and effective in developing our most valuable economic resource.

Garry Hardie
Editor and Publisher

On this month's cover

Training & education image
courtesy of Atwea College



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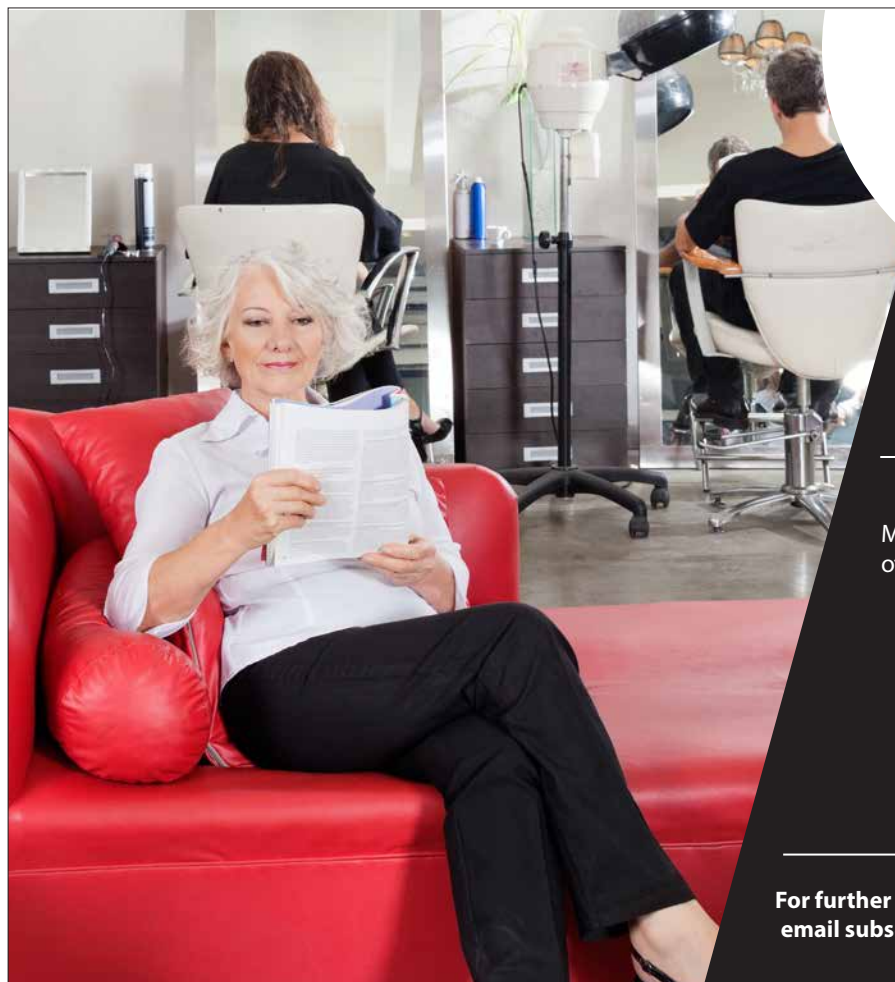
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A Region Ready 2021 | Newcastle & Hunter

A Region Ready has relaunched for 2021

as an updated showcase of the assets and benefits of the region, free for all to use to help promote their own business and, in turn, the Hunter. First developed by Out of The Square Media in 2019, this self-funded campaign collated positive and significant information, neatly packaged in a way that had not been so freely available before.

This initiative was a resounding success with over 80 local organisations downloading and using it for free, from recruiters to developers, vets to educators, and charities to sporting organisations.

"With the hard fought and well won announcement of the Newcastle Airport runway upgrade we knew it was time to help all local business capitalise on this great news. We created an updated video (and brochure to come) to allow businesses big and small to go to market with a tool that helps them recruit, promote, educate and attract investment," said Marty Adnum, Founder and Managing Director of Out of the Square.

"These passion projects are a substantial investment for us, and some people can't get their head around why we just give them away", said Marty. "Well, on face value it does help our brand, but it goes much, much deeper than that. We just believe that by helping others, we all lift. If this can help our quality of life, children's futures and community sustainability, then why not just do it – oh and there's karma also."

"The Airport announcement is by far the most significant piece of proposed infrastructure development for our region that I am aware of in my lifetime. This will be a game changer for us.

Peter Cock, CEO and the team have been relentless in championing this and deserve overwhelming praise for this achievement. With that said, we can by no means rest on our laurels, we need to go for it. Post-COVID, I believe we still have a



long road to recovery and competition will be fierce. So, we need to rally and better explain and showcase our outstanding regional benefits. Our contribution to this is A Region Ready. Which is in keeping with Out of the Square's own core mission to 'play a role in Newcastle and Hunter becoming a global success'."

The 2021 Region Ready free video can be found here <https://outofthesquare.com/a-region-ready/>

It covers not only our well-known assets of lifestyle and manufacturing, but also the evolving diversification that is under way with new sustainable energy solutions pioneered right here in the Hunter.

Out of the Square is extremely grateful to all the organisations that came forward to contribute and offer the additional footage required to bring this together. To have over 15 key businesses do this in such a short period truly is indicative of the will of so many to act as one to help all business within our region.

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New environmental management contract for Summerhill Waste Management Centre

City of Newcastle Councillors have awarded AECOM a tender for specialist services at Summerhill

Waste Management Centre which will allow staff to quickly identify and respond to environmental risks onsite.

The service will add further specialist skills to complement the existing on-site expertise, to deliver extensive environmental monitoring and reporting programs to lead Summerhill into a more environmentally sustainable future.

In addition, the City, together with the specialist services AECOM, will invest in developing a long-term electronic data management approach to housing environmental data captured at Summerhill to improve efficiencies and aim to improve transparency following a robust monitoring and data review. This will ultimately provide for ease of public access to information.

The contract value is estimated at around \$750,000 per annum, over three years. This includes the investment in a new data approach, and access to a significant number of specialists from various environmental disciplines.

Newcastle HR firm lands a double at Stevie Awards

FiveSeven Consulting has been recognised for taking the ordinary and making it extraordinary when it comes to human

resources (HR) management solutions. Their unique approach and response to the global pandemic, saw them take out one gold and one silver Award at the 2021 Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards.

The Wickham-based business received a Gold Stevie Award for Innovation in Human Resources Management, Planning and Practice, and a Silver Stevie in the category of Most Valuable Corporate Response to COVID-19.

FiveSeven Consulting were one of the only HR Consultancy firms to win an Award at the event with other HR Awards given to internal HR departments of large companies or HR technology and software companies.

FiveSeven Consulting Director and Principal, Jane McConville



On an international scale this is a huge achievement for the group. Innovating HR practices to propel businesses into the future The Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards are the only business awards program to recognise innovation in the workplace across all 29 nations within the Asia-Pacific region.

FiveSeven Consulting Director and Principal, Jane McConville said being awarded not one, but two Stevie Awards was acknowledgement their game-changing approach to HR is warranted.

"Our business model allows others to move away from a dependence on traditional HR methods, which can be quite boring to implement and learn, and are simply outdated," Jane said.

They are necessary, however, for any business which is why we like to shake things up.

"By providing a more interesting way for businesses to access support and manage internal processes, we ensure our clients build depth of capability and longevity within their business, not external to it.

"This Award recognition is proof that our growth as a company has fostered a sound philosophy and vision for our clients and is dynamic to the HR industry."

JENNINGS PRINT SUPPORTS LOCAL BUSINESSES POST-COVID

As a family-owned and locally operated business, Jennings

Print knows how difficult and disruptive the COVID-19 pandemic has been for many small businesses in the Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Hunter Valley and Central Coast regions. Some valued and respected local businesses haven't survived, while others are hanging on by a thread and in desperate need of support.

Newcastle and the Hunter have long been hailed as a close-knit, supportive and generous community with an unerring sense of local pride, and it's a reputation we're proud of. In true Australian spirit, when we are called on to lend a hand, the Hunter Region is well known for digging deep and doing whatever we can to help each other out.

Because we are firm believers in the value of supporting local businesses, Jennings Print have always made – and will continue to make – a concerted effort to promote the importance of the "Trade Local" initiative. Right now, we're taking extra steps to encourage the Newcastle community to band together and support local small businesses, so more of us can make it through the tough times.

The message from Mark Jennings, CEO of Jennings Print, is black and white – "Jennings Print started as a local small business whose mission was to service other local small businesses. We take so much pride in what we do, and we've worked hard over the last 45 years to deliver high quality products and excellent service, but our business has become the success it is because our community has made the conscious choice to trade local.

Jennings Print is positive proof that together we are stronger."

Our "trade local" campaign, on the other hand, has been emblazoned on local buses in full colour, combining the power of great, eye-catching graphic design with the increased visibility of public transport, in an effort to spread our 'Printspirational' message far and wide.

Federal funding for upgraded airfield at Newcastle Airport

The Prime Minister Scott Morrison travelled to Newcastle Airport on 7 May to announce the much-

anticipated funding for a significant upgrade to the airfield that Newcastle Airport accesses from RAAF Base Williamtown.

The upgrade works, which will commence this year in conjunction with the RAAF's scheduled runway maintenance program, will see the runway upgraded to Code E status. This will allow wide-bodied, long-haul aircraft to fly in and out of Williamtown, connecting the rest of the world to the people and businesses of the Hunter, Central Coast and Northern NSW.

Newcastle Airport CEO Dr Peter Cock said the upgrade was a game-changer for the region.

"I want to thank the Prime Minister and the Federal Government for the confidence and trust they have shown in our airport and the region more generally.

"Attracting this funding has been the result of a huge effort from the entire region. The support we have received from all sectors of our community in advocating for this project has been extraordinary.

"Now we can focus on the potential that this infrastructure upgrade will unleash. It will permanently change our region for the better in so many ways," he said.

"Of course, it will offer convenience for travellers from our region who want to fly internationally. But more importantly, it will drive huge, sustainable economic benefits into the whole of northern NSW. It is truly a nation building project.

"From local tourism operators and hospitality owners to agricultural producers and freight and logistics providers, this project will drive significant jobs and economic return for generations to come."

Also speaking at the announcement, Chair of Newcastle Airport

Kirby Clark was elated to see the funding delivered for what has been the Board's priority project for some time.

"It's difficult to put into words how important this project is for the airport and the 1.2 million people that it services," he said.

"Measured in purely dollar terms, we estimate the economic benefit will exceed \$12 billion across the life of the runway, diversifying the local economy and generating 4,000 full time jobs.

"But beyond that, it offers hope and confidence to our industry, the wider business community and our community at just the right time after a very challenging 18 months."

The project, which will cost \$55million in addition to the \$115million upgrade that Defence is already undertaking, is due to commence in June and will be completed in early 2023.

\$4 million in funding for Cessnock bridges

Cessnock City Council has received \$4 million under the NSW Government's

Fixing Country Bridges program that will see Kline Street Bridge, Weston, Watagan Creek Road Bridge, Laguna and Westcott Street Bridge, Cessnock replaced.

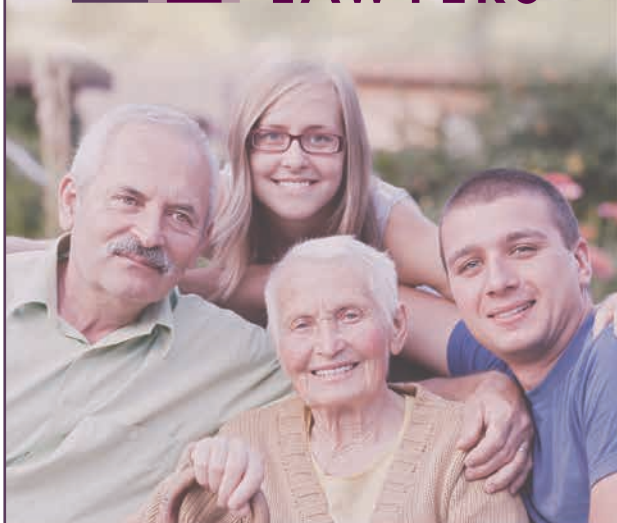
Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent welcomed the funding to continue Council's work in upgrading local roads and bridges.

"Our large local government area means with it comes a significant road network that includes a lot of old timber bridges. Our Council has delivered a number of new bridges over the last few years including more recently Paynes Crossing Bridge and Fosters Bridge."

"Shortly Council will be commencing works on Anvil Creek Bridge and now we have added another three projects to the list. It's all about making a trip to school, work or the shops safer and more convenient for our residents."



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Hunter Valley Legends & Wine Industry Awards

The 2021 Hunter Valley Legends & Wine Industry Awards gala dinner held on 20 May at Oaks Cypress Lakes Resort in front of more

than 300 guests, with Scarborough Wine Co and Margan Wines & Restaurant coming away as big winners.

Recognising the unprecedented challenges faced by the industry over recent times, this year saw the creation of a new Award for Innovation. The 2021 Hunter Valley Award for Innovation honours the achievements of forward thinking companies and/or individuals that have exceeded in innovative product or service development by taking their business to the next level in the current climate. Judged by Siobhan Curran from the University of Newcastle, this inaugural award for Innovation went to Scarborough Wine Co for their commitment to always challenging the average. Their agility and intrinsic ability to stay ahead of the competition was recognised and judges recognised the introduction of clever and market leading winery experiences created as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

Scarborough Wine Co also took out the title of Wine Selectors 2021 Hunter Valley Cellar Door of the Year, an award purely judged by a mystery shopper and rated across all areas of service, compliance, staff knowledge and visitor experience. Scarborough previously won Cellar Door of the Year in 2009.

At the helm of Scarborough Wine Co, Merralea Scarborough was also recognised for her hard work and ethic by being named 2021 Hunter Valley Tourism Industry Living Legend for her more than 30 years' service to the local industry.

It was a quadfecta for Scarborough Wine Co with their Viticulturist Liz Riley being jointly awarded the 2021 Hunter Valley Award for Excellence alongside Scott Bartlett from Tyrrell's.

It was also a night to remember for the team at Margan Wines & Restaurant when Andrew Margan was named First Creek



Andrew Margan of Margan Wines & Restaurant, winner of named First Creek Winemaking Services 2021 Hunter Valley Winemaker of the Year award

Winemaking Services 2021 Hunter Valley Winemaker of the Year. No stranger to achievements such as this Andrew Margan, who was previously named 2015 Viticulturist of the Year, has consistently produced outstanding wines year after year, and has been recognised as 5 Star winery by James Halliday every single year since 2009. Planting their own small vineyard in 1991, Margan has a focus on environmental sustainability and now operates a successful winery, cellar door, restaurant and events business in the Broke-Fordwich sub region of the Hunter Valley.

"What I like to think I bring to the table in this ultra-competitive wine world is the important connection between growing our own grapes and making our own wine. Over more than 40 vintages I have developed my own unique style of winemaking. I make wines of structure, balance, elegance and texture. Wines that speak of their variety and the soil in which they are grown. And importantly, wines with their own sense of place," said Andrew Margan.

Margan, a well-known haven for harvesting talent, joined the rest of the industry in celebrating their winemaker Nicole Wilson, named Riedel 2021 Hunter Valley Rising Star of the Year. A Rising Star recognises any person associated with the wine or tourism industry as well as young achievers consistently working for the benefit of the Hunter Valley as a destination. Nicole is a hugely worthy recipient of this accolade with her commitment to becoming the finest winemaker she can be while inspiring others to strive to do the same.

The prestigious Jurds 2021 Viticulturist of the Year was awarded to Steve Ferguson of Mount Pleasant Wines. Steve has displayed a commitment to restoring vines that were planted as early as 1880 which earned him this recognition.

The 2021 Hunter Valley Wine Industry Heritage Award was awarded to Hunter Valley Heritage Cairn Trail. A Trail that acknowledges the landmarks or items of historical importance which have influenced the course of, or made a significant contribution to, the Hunter Valley Wine industry. The Heritage Cairn Trail was launched last night and guests were provided with a copy of the new brochure.

The biggest gong of the evening – 2021 Hunter Valley Wine Industry Living Legend – was awarded to one of the region's most well-known personalities. The Living Legend Award is bestowed to honour a Hunter Valley grape grower or winemaker who has been involved in the industry for more than 30 years and is recognition of their significant contribution to the Hunter Valley Wine Industry. Recently retiring after more than 30 years as the helm of Brokenwood where he was managing director and winemaker and worked since 1982, Iain Riggs AM was the worthy recipient of this recognition. In retirement Iain and his partner Sally Margan have become custodians of the famed Mistress Block that has produced many iconic Shiraz wines over the years. Iain, under his new guise Riggs Winemaking also continues to provide winemaking consulting services in the Hunter Valley.



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Maitland Council secures funding to improve High Street

Maitland City Council has secured \$594,000 in funding as part of the NSW Government's Your High

Street grant program to unlock public space, improve amenity and functionality with improvements to High Street, Central Maitland, between Grant Street and the Ken Tubman Drive roundabout.

The proposed scope of work includes increased shade, garden and green spaces, a parklet, additional seating suitable for outdoor dining, creative street and footpath treatments and an enhanced shared zone experience in nearby streets.

The vision of Council's Your High Street project is to create a vibrant, engaging and greener public space that will build on the local heritage character, support the unique mix of businesses and strengthen the link between The Levee Precinct, Maitland Regional Art Gallery, Maitland Administration Centre and Maitland Regional Sporting Complex.

In January 2021, Council asked the community and businesses what they wanted to see from the Your High Street grant program in this space, with the result being overwhelming support for improved green space and seating. Council will continue to work closely with businesses and the community to design and deliver this project for Central Maitland.

A range of concept design works was undertaken as part of the application process, with further planning to progress those and bring the project to life starting immediately, with the project expected to be completed within 12 months.

Lake Mac Council to commence with largest land rezoning in 10 years

Lake Macquarie's north is set to be home to up to 1000 new houses, 2000 more people and support 540 new jobs, following Council's

endorsement to submit a Planning Proposal to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to start the rezoning process.

Council's Manager Integrated Planning Wes Hain said the 169 ha site north of Glendale and adjacent to City of Newcastle is well located for future urban development.

"This exciting new suburb, straddling the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie LGAs, in the heart of the Greater Newcastle area, will create homes, jobs and outstanding public spaces on the doorstep of existing community infrastructure and services, the Newcastle Link Road, M1 Motorway and Hunter Expressway," Mr Hain said.

"To support our City's growth, as outlined in the Hunter Regional Plan 2036, the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036, and the Lake Macquarie Local Strategic Planning Statement, we need greater housing choice, more jobs and new community infrastructure in strategic locations."

"Submitting the Planning Proposal to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment is the first of several steps of the rezoning process leading towards achieving those outcomes."

While it is early in the process, it is envisaged that the future development of the land, owned by Eden Estates, will result in protection of important natural areas and offer a diversity of housing for people with different lifestyles, community facilities, open space, sports and recreation facilities, active transport networks, jobs and schools.

Council's Director Development, Planning and Regulation Glenn Bunney said the value and impact of residential development in places like Glendale, Cameron Park, Charlestown, Belmont, and Cardiff reflects the transformation of Lake Macquarie.

"It shows how we are fast becoming a true interconnected regional City, rather than a city of suburbs. This is a growth area for our City and Council's endorsement to start the rezoning process will enable a coordinated approach to the planning and future development of this site," Mr Bunney said.

Lake Macquarie City Council staff are working with City of

Newcastle and Eden Estates to ensure a holistic approach to the planning, assessment and future development of the entire site to achieve the best outcomes for the community.

Following rezoning of the site, a development application would be submitted.

\$45 million for stage 3 of Muswellbrook Hospital

The NSW Government will deliver stage 3 of the Muswellbrook

Hospital Redevelopment with the planned \$45 million project announced on 10 May by the Deputy Premier John Barilaro alongside the NSW Nationals candidate for the Upper Hunter Dave Layzell.

Mr Barilaro said the proposed Stage 3, which has been in planning since 2018, will complete the hospital's redevelopment by consolidating all acute clinical services into one building including Maternity Services which are currently in an isolated building.

"The people of the Upper Hunter deserve state-of-the-art infrastructure, facilities and services, especially when it comes to health," Mr Barilaro said.

"The improvements we are announcing today include a new 26 bed inpatient unit, with two palliative care beds, a four-bed maternity inpatient unit and two birthing suites to ensure the best care for local mums and bubs.

"Construction on the new operating theatres will begin next year. This redevelopment will ensure we provide the most contemporary models of care across the board."

Stage 3 of the redevelopment will also include:

- paediatric suite
- two new operating rooms
- new central sterilising service
- staff zones
- eight additional staff overnight rooms
- refurbished inpatient unit, Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD) outpatient unit into community health spaces.

Stage 1 of the Redevelopment was completed in 2015 which included a new Emergency Department. This stage cost \$6.5 million, including a \$2.5 million donation from BHP and \$4 million from the Restart NSW – Resources for Regions program.

Stage 2 was completed in 2019 at a cost of \$20.1 million to the NSW Government.

Compeat Nutrition expands partnership with Football Australia

In May Compeat Nutrition extended and expanded its partnership with Football Australia through to August 2022, giving access to its digital platform

to Footballers from the Westfield Junior Matildas and Joeys to the Westfield Matildas and Socceroos.

Designed to deliver scientific and proven dietetic advice in an online environment that builds resilience, helps forge good habits and ensures a truly individualised solution, Compeat Nutrition's app-based platform removes the barriers of geography and time to ensure Australian Football's elite global player base have real-time access to 24-7 nutritional support.

For the past two years Compeat Nutrition founders Alicia and Dan Edge have provided nutritional support to the Westfield Matildas, Westfield Young Matildas and Future Matildas, with the expanded partnership meeting Football

Australia's goals to help football players at all levels cope with performance expectations and improve holistically as athletes and people during and after their professional playing careers.

Co-Founders / Co-CEOs Dan and Alicia Edge



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Specialist heavy lift ship delivers 750 tonne piece of cargo to Port of Newcastle

One of the largest single pieces of machinery to be brought into the Port of Newcastle arrived 16 May.

At over 62 metres high and weighing 750 tonnes, the \$35 million bulk ship unloader is set to become a prominent part of Newcastle's maritime landscape as the port diversifies.

A specialist heavy lift ship, the 19,000-tonne Happy Star delivered the important cargo ahead of a meticulously-planned operation to safely transfer it onto Port of Newcastle's K2 berth in its Bulk Precinct at Walsh Point.

Happy Star is a 156 metre long vessel featuring two 1,100 tonne heavy lift mast cranes which make her ideally suited to handling heavy project cargoes. The Big Lift vessel had been on a two-week journey from Vietnam to deliver the crane to Port of Newcastle.

The bulk ship unloader is being installed at Newcastle Bulk Terminal and has capacity to unload bulk cargo – such as fertilisers, meals, mineral sands and various other bulk cargoes – at up to 1,200 tonnes per hour.

This unloading rate would be available as part of the second phase of the project, which includes the latest conveyor infrastructure to link the berth directly to nearby customer storage and load-out facilities. This will be a significant increase on current discharge rates, vastly improving berth efficiency.

Port of Newcastle CEO Craig Carmody said the arrival of the state-of-the-art unloader was a significant milestone in optimising bulk handling efficiencies at the Port.

"The previous two unloaders were built in 1968 and were decommissioned in 2018 in order to be replaced with machinery that delivers the highest standards in safety and environmental management and a superior commercial outcome for customers," Mr Carmody said.

"This investment is part of Port of Newcastle's commitment to providing the most efficient supply chain for internationally-trading businesses and, ultimately, support the Hunter's economic growth."

The new unloader will now undergo a commissioning phase, which includes rigorous testing and training for crane operators and maintenance teams. It is expected the commissioning will take approximately four months with the ship unloader ready for operation in late 2021.

Maitland irrigation projects completed in collaboration with Hunter Water

Maitland City Council has collaborated with Hunter Water to develop and install multiple irrigation

projects across the Maitland area throughout 2020 and 2021. These projects will improve sporting fields and the city's water use efficiency.

Council secured \$100,000 from the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund Phase One to help fund the recently completed irrigation redevelopment at John Wilkinson Sports Complex, Bolwarra. The project followed other finished installation works at A&D Lawrence Oval, Thornton, Maitland Park, Maitland, Somerset Sports Complex, Thornton and Coronation Oval, Telarah.

The new irrigation installations have a centralised control system with multiple moisture sensors installed in the ground at all sites. Moisture sensors provide soil moisture information to the control system to assist in deciding when and how much irrigation is required to maintain optimum moisture levels for growth.

Council's Operations Manager Recreation Works Caine James says, "It's excellent Council has aligned with Hunter Water to continue our ambition of making our irrigation water usage sustainable for the future."

"The new automated systems used in the irrigation projects undertaken across Maitland will not only ensure an efficient use of water, but will also provide greater support to volunteers from local sporting clubs to maintain the areas."

Hunter Water Group Manager Water Conservation and Revenue, Ardie Morris says, "This is a great opportunity to work with Maitland City Council, who share our focus on building water resilience in our region."

"This means, in times of water scarcity, we can still support the health and wellbeing of our community with green open spaces and sporting fields."

Caine James, John Bettley, Ardie Morris



Youth Committee for the Hunter

Following a successful recruitment drive across the Hunter,

the Committee for the Hunter has appointed the first nine members of its inaugural Youth Committee for the Hunter.

The Youth Committee delivers on the Committee for the Hunter's commitment to expand opportunities for young people and provide them with a voice on regional priorities.

The Youth Committee is a diverse group of motivated young people who are engaged in the issues affecting young people and the region and are committed to working collaboratively to do something about these.

The 2021 Youth Committee members are:

Lauren Armstrong - Newcastle
Claire Bertholli - Newcastle
Isaac Conway - Port Stephens
Melanie Gibson - Maitland
Kelsey Gray - Lake Macquarie
Shaun Guilfoyle - Cessnock City Council
Ryan Maginnity - Lake Macquarie
Gabriella Maughan - Newcastle
Dylan Shoesmith - Lake Macquarie

Selection panel member, Wayne Johnson, ARTC Group Executive Hunter Valley Network, said that the announcement of the members of the Youth Committee for the Hunter is a positive and exciting step toward ensuring the youth in the region can impact our future initiatives.

The group convened its first meeting in May to discuss its terms of reference and nominate a representative to serve as a director of the Committee for the Hunter, giving young people a voice on the board.



Let's Talk With.....

BOB HAWES

visionary and ideas people including Richard Owens and Paul Broad. I am also lucky enough to have always enjoyed my work and sometimes to my detriment. Getting the work life balance is important and something easy to lose sight of at times. I feel I have a very busy life and my wife Jenny never sits still which ensures we never have a dull moment. In a strange way, I do get energy and inspiration from being busy. I don't know any other way.

1. In a few words tell us about your current role.

I am the CEO for Business Hunter, formerly the Hunter Business Chamber. I lead the Business Hunter team as we seek to advance the interests of our members and businesses in the region. We do this from a platform of events, stakeholder engagement, advocacy and policy development and delivery of products and services to assist business to improve their performance. I really enjoy engaging with business and I'm inspired by the tenacity, adaptability and innovation that so many of them show.

2. How have you reached this point in your professional life?

My wife Jenny and I originally moved to the Hunter in the 1980's. I started my working life in Sydney having completed a Bachelor of Economics degree at Sydney University. I had a long stint in the property industry across land development, retail, industrial and residential investment working in employee and consultant capacities. As a consultant, I was also drawn into the realm of regional development and economic strategies. This work was highly stimulating and dynamic and combined statistical, demographic, economic and social elements which provided significant variety in the work I was doing. It was even more pleasing to see strategies I worked on put into practise and generate activity. As General Manager of the Hunter Development Corporation I was fortunate to be part of and witness an enormous amount of activity and change in the city of Newcastle and across the region. I'm fortunate that my current role at Business Hunter has kept me in tune with the continuing wave of change albeit from a different perspective.

I never believed I would stay in Newcastle but the longer I did stay the less likely it was that I would leave. This is despite some appealing opportunities along the way. I'm proud to be an 'associate' Novocastrian and to have raised a family here and have always been taken by the supportive and friendly nature of our community.

3. When you're not at work, where can we find you?

I do a lot of bike riding (a MAMIL morphing to an OMIL); I am still an active rugby referee and president of the local referee association. My wife and I take long walks and we have done a 300km stint as part of the Camino trail through Portugal and Spain. I also seek to get a fix of snow skiing as often as I can.

4. Where do you find inspiration?

I wish I could say I am an ideas man but that wouldn't be true. I have been lucky enough to work with or for people I would call

5. What advice would you give to someone just starting out in your field?

Loyalty and persistence are big things for me, and they seem to be qualities that get brushed over in many facets of our contemporary society. It might be old fashioned however I believe they both help with focus which is highly desirable in a world increasingly burdened with distractions, many of which we worry about but over which we have little or no control.

6. What's something most people don't know about you?

I grew up in Sydney in a family of six children. They weren't easy times and my mother instilled in us a strong sense of independence and helping others from a very early age. I have carried many of those lessons with me throughout my life. I get great support from my wife Jenny and I like to think we do our share of community work to assist others and we also get the sense of satisfaction this often brings.

7. How would you like to see the Hunter evolve over the next decade?

When I arrived in the Hunter, it was a period of slow growth and at times, you could have been forgiven for thinking much of the region was stuck in second gear. When the change came, it was relatively slow initially but increased rapidly over the last ten years. This brings challenges and opportunities and I would very much like to see the region remain and develop as a region of opportunity. One pleasing trend is how our younger generation can find and sustain work in the area. The concept that you must leave the region to be successful is now less so than it was 15 to 20 years ago. As we grow and our diversity of businesses and industry increases, I'm hoping this trend will accelerate. There are a lot of good people doing a lot of good things in a collaborative way to make sure this happens.

8. Do you have a favourite sport or team?

I have been a rugby tragic for a long time and recently played in a 'Dads and Lads' game with my old club, Merewether Carlton. I started playing for the Greens in the 1980's and am a life member of the club. More broadly, I am supportive of our regional teams including the Knights and the Jets and believe the way the region gets behind these teams through thick and thin says a lot about our local character.

9. What's the best line from a film you've ever heard?

I don't have a particular line from a movie, but I'm often caught quoting classics like the Monty Python movies, Flying High and other comedies. I can watch these over and over again.

Dynamic property markets present a movable feast for buyers and sellers

Steve Dick Movable

At the time of writing in late May, there is an unprecedented change in every sector of the Newcastle property market, including residential, commercial, and industrial.

Some of these changes are caused by local issues, others by cyclical factors, and others by the lingering COVID-19 effect. Yet all changes are, and will, continue to impact our lives over the coming months. What's more, being embedded in these changing dynamics across all sectors the team at MOVABLE, can provide market insights not seen by others.

The broader impact of historic low vacancy rates for residential property

Like many major metropolitan areas around Australia, record low vacancy rates in Newcastle are a double-edged sword. Typically, a healthy vacancy rate for Newcastle is usually about 2%. However, with just two houses vacant out of our 900-strong property management portfolio, we have a vacancy rate of 0.2%.

Lack of rental supply puts pressure on rents as desperate tenants seeking a place to live offer landlords more than the asking price. On the other side of the coin, rental arrears and tribunal hearings are at record lows as tenants do whatever it takes to stay put.

High rents and minuscule vacancies, in turn, feed investor demand and push up prices. However, vendors are reluctant to sell as they laugh at the alternatives – zero returns from dumping the sale proceeds into a bank account. On the flip side, those buyers who can get a crack at a property are paying more. The conversation goes something like, "You went higher than I expected?" The buyer returns serve with, "Well, I'm getting 0.25% in the bank, so 3, 4, 5, or 6% in a property is a whole lot better."

More space, government moves and COVID impacting commercial real estate

Oversupply is the dominant theme for local commercial markets in Newcastle, especially with the proliferation of new space and as the NSW Government consolidates into the Old Store Building office tower.

Also, this region isn't escaping the COVID-19 effects that are rolling through Australia as a whole as businesses revisit their commitment to bricks and mortar rental space for office and retail use. Some employees love the concept of working from home, which has also added to the residential pressures I mentioned earlier.

Additionally, Sydney-based employees are discovering the lifestyle benefits of living in the Hunter while working in the capital for only a couple of days per week.

Therefore, the adage I have spruiked for years, "Price", "Presentation", and "Promotion", holds truer than ever in this market. Presentation has become more important as the labour market tightens. Employees have more choice in a tight labour market, and the working environment is high on their list of tick boxes. In response, employers and landlords must present their property in the best possible light – even upgrading the kitchens and bathrooms so the building looks and feels desirable to attract and hold staff.

Industrial hotspot

The industrial sector is experiencing dynamic change because of COVID-19. Consequently, supply chains, logistics and manufacturing are now undergoing unprecedented growth as the economy recovers. The COVID effect has also caused industrial firms to become

increasingly frustrated with the old, "just in time" ethos as international borders were disrupted.

These changing attitudes have created more demand for manufacturing space and larger warehouses to hold a more extensive inventory. Australia Post, for example, apparently experienced six years of growth in six months during the pandemic. In this region, the supply of industrial land is scant resulting in dramatic price increases. Another trend involves developers taking a second bite at the cherry by not selling land unless a buyer chooses them to build the required industrial facility.

The Hunter Economic Zone (HEZ) has no such restrictions. Located 11 minutes from the M1 on a B-double route that has no traffic lights, (HEZ) has industrial land from 4,000 to 1,000,000 square metres available ready to go now for lease or sale. There's no waiting for contamination to be removed – the zone is clean. There's no waiting for rezoning or Development Approval, as the land has subdivision approval. The Hunter Economic Zone is ready to roll with all the services such as gas, water, power and fibre in place. The HEZ is the game changer the region and NSW needs.

For further information contact Movable on (02) 4915 3000



Steve Dick is a director of Newcastle's leading residential and commercial real estate firm, Movable.

Principal at Spillane Property shortlisted for REB Women in Real Estate Awards

Donna Spillane, Principal at Spillane Property has been named as a finalist in the REB Women in Real Estate Awards 2021 for Principal of the Year - Regional.

The Women in Real Estate Awards is the benchmark for excellence, recognising the outstanding women influencing the Australian real estate profession. Founded to celebrate the female leaders, role models and future champions of the industry, this esteemed accolade provides a platform for women leading in their field to be acknowledged and celebrated for their achievements and contributions to the industry.

The finalist list, which was announced on 26 May, features over 170 high-achieving professionals within the real estate industry, across 22 submission-based categories.

Donna Spillane, Principal at Spillane Property, said that she was humbled to be recognised and proud to be named as a finalist in the REB Women in Real Estate Awards 2021.

"Spillane Property's recognition for our outstanding contribution to the real estate industry reinforces the strength of our service and dedication to provide a quality and positive experience," she added.

The winners of the awards will be announced at a black-tie dinner on 15 July in Sydney.

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HIA

Laurence Antcliff, the Hunter based HIA Apprentice Manager, has recently taken on the expanded role of HIA Apprentice Manager for Northern NSW. Laurence has been with HIA for 8 years and simplifies the process of managing an apprentice for hosts. He enjoys detailing the employer benefits of engaging an apprentice or trainee and has made lifelong mates with HIA Apprentice hosts who trust him to sort out any issues that may arise.



UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

The UoN has appointed Professor **Kent Anderson** to the role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Global. Professor Anderson is highly respected as an innovative leader with a passion for engagement in communities and internationalisation in the higher education sector. He is returning to the University of Newcastle after working for the institution as Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Advisor in 2019 before moving across to his current role as the senior advisor on higher education to the Federal Minister for Education.



ENIGMA COMMUNICATIONS

Brad Stevens has joined Enigma Communication in the role of Creative Director, Brand. Brad has worked in brand studios including M&C Saatchi's RE, Landor Paris, FutureBrand, DesignWorks and Moon Communications Group. Brad was a co-founder and creative director of brand agency Born & Raised, and more recently was Creative Group Head at Six Black Pens across Sydney and Melbourne offices. Brad's career has taken him through traditional media, web and mobile, which inspires his brand solutions to be flexible, dynamic and idea-driven.



PEOPLEFUSION

Kerri Richards has joined the team at PeopleFusion Recruitment as a Recruitment Specialist. She has more than 20 years of experience in administration, sales coordination, account management, events and training. Kerri's grounded nature is a welcome addition to the team. Kerri enjoys interacting with a vast array of people and learning about businesses and their teams.



PROSPERITY ADVISERS GROUP

Prosperity Advisers Group has announced the appointment of **Phillip Bures** to the role of Financial Adviser, based in its Newcastle office. Phillip has over eight years' experience working within the financial planning industry. Prior to joining Prosperity, Phillip was a Financial Adviser at Perpetual Private in Sydney where he developed and delivered detailed investment management and strategic financial planning advice to a broad range of clients including wealth accumulators, retirees, not for profits and endowments.



HIA

Greg Elsworthy, Owner and Principal of Newcastle based Elsworthy Solicitors, has been re-elected to the Housing Industry Association National Board for a period of two terms. For over 20 years Greg has volunteered his time to the HIA while operating Elsworthy Solicitors, a general practice law firm that specialises in building and construction law, property law, planning and development law amongst other areas.

LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR PEOPLE!

We would be pleased to receive information about your new appointments.

Just email around 80 words on the employment plus a high resolution head shot to editorial@HBRmag.com.au.

Submissions are **FREE** but subject to editorial control.



HUNTERNET

HunterNet has announced the appointment of **Ivan Waterfield** as CEO. He was chosen after an extensive and competitive selection process and brings a wealth of leadership experience from the manufacturing, logistics, mining and transport industries. Ivan has held previous executive general manager roles along with project management and operational experience within all the sectors in which HunterNet represents.



ALLIANCE LABOUR SOLUTIONS

Alliance Labour Solutions has promoted **Paris O'Toole** to manage their Western Australia workforce. Paris joined the Alliance team in their Newcastle Head Office over a year ago, beginning on the front desk and quickly progressing to a planning and mobilisation role, looking after the Queensland clientele base and supply of labour in Queensland, coupled with the Induction Management with NSW based clientele. She has relocated to Perth to take on this new dynamic role and is thriving.

Hunter apprentices and trainees shine in local Awards

The 2021 HVTC Excellence Award winners were announced earlier this year, with the Awards to be presented in Newcastle on 16 July. Award winners were selected from finalists across HVTC's 10 regional branches in NSW.

Maitland's Joshua Ralston received the Apprentice of the Year Award and Lisa Bevan took out the Indigenous Apprentice/Trainee of the Year categories, respectively. Newcastle's Joel Hartley was named Trainee of the Year, while Samuel Vaughan – an electrical apprentice with Glencore – won the RTO Student of the Year in recognition of his performance during the 2020 Work Readiness Program delivered through the Central Coast Community College (RTO 90304).

Lake Macquarie's Christopher Birch – an HVTC apprentice hosted to Centennial Coal who also completed the Work Readiness Program through the College in 2020 – won the RTO Achievement Award.

HVTC CEO Sharon Smith said this year's winners reflect the diversity of vocational education and training (VET) pathways that are available and how people of all ages can benefit.

"VET pathways can open the doors to so many career opportunities," Smith said.

"VET provides an alternative pathway for school leavers like Joel who don't think university is right for them. Joel instead opted for a Business Administration Traineeship directly with HVTC and quickly demonstrated a lot of talent and potential. Joel has now rolled over into a Marketing and Communications Traineeship.

"For hands-on learners like Josh Ralston, an apprenticeship provided the best platform where he could apply his passion for knowing and understanding how things work. Josh completed an Engineering Mechanical apprenticeship hosted to Origin Energy – Eraring and in his spare time volunteers on train restoration



Top – Joshua Ralston, Samuel Vaughan and Christopher Birch;
bottom – Joel Hartley and Lisa Bevan

projects with organisations like Transport Heritage for NSW and the Maitland Steam and Antique Machinery Association.

"Then you have Lisa Bevan, a 47-year-old mother of nine and grandmother of twelve who completed a Certificate II Construction Pathways traineeship with HVTC, hosted to Multiplex Constructions through the different sub-contractors working on the new Maitland Hospital. Lisa has not only proven to herself and her family that she is capable of anything, but she has proven herself as a woman in a male dominated industry.

"Our winners are different ages, genders and come from different backgrounds. One thing they have in common is that VET provided them with the skills they need to forge successful careers. Skills really do change lives."

HVTC is looking forward to celebrating their 2021 winners, including our other regional HVTC Excellence Award recipients, in July.



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Scholarships to boost academic careers for 132 PhD students

The University of Newcastle has recognised the recipients of the prestigious Vice-Chancellor's Training Priority Scheme, aimed at providing a pathway for Honours students to undertake a PhD and gain teaching skills to enhance their academic career prospects.

The 3.5 year scholarship, presented to 132 students, includes acceptance into the Academic Career Preparation (ACP) pathway to complete alongside their PhD. Of the 132 scholarships awarded, 50 were in the first round in 2020 but COVID restrictions prevented a formal presentation from being held last year.

The ACP enables candidates to develop a portfolio of academic experiences, including core competencies in university teaching. Students complete 12 modules designed to develop their teaching skills in readiness for an application as an Associate Fellow of AdvanceHE, an international recognition of tertiary education capability.

The University of Newcastle Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Alex Zelinsky AO, said the scholarship aimed to retain and develop the best and brightest students in the region and beyond.

"We have some exceptional minds at our university and this scholarship offers students a great opportunity to further their research interests and develop their academic careers," Professor Zelinsky said.

"Each of these students has demonstrated their talent and commitment through their undergraduate and Honours studies and we want to foster and develop that talent for the benefit of our regions and beyond."

Recipients of the scholarship represent a broad range of academic disciplines and their research projects cover diverse topics. These include the influence of taste function and mood

"Each of these students has demonstrated their talent and commitment through their undergraduate and Honours studies and we want to foster and develop that talent for the benefit of our regions and beyond."

The University of Newcastle Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Alex Zelinsky AO



Celeste Ferraris, one of the recipients of the Vice-Chancellor's Training Priority Scheme

and cognition, the role of social media in creating divisive communities, the influence of female hormones on expression of asthma, the impact of criminalisation processes on first nations people and Australia's defence relationships with declining powers.

The Vice-Chancellor's Training Priority Scheme is a key pillar of the 'life ready graduates' component of the University's Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

"We recognise the rapidly changing environment our students will be entering when they graduate so we offer an education experience that will help develop life-ready graduates who are community-minded, resilient and ready for work," said Professor Zelinsky.

The Vice-Chancellor's Training Priority Scheme is supported by the Australian Government Research Training Program.

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State-of-the-art learning facilities for Muswellbrook

On 27 April the NSW Government announced a \$1 million upgrade to the Muswellbrook TAFE to give communities in the Upper Hunter greater access to modern learning spaces and equipment.

NSW Deputy Premier John Barilaro and Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education Geoff Lee said the TAFE will receive two new connected learning classrooms, brand new equipment and a new learning space to offer fit-for-purpose hair, beauty and business training on campus.

In addition to this investment, more than \$300,000 in upgraded equipment will be delivered to Muswellbrook campus as part of \$100 million in stimulus funding from the NSW Government. New equipment will include gas welders, welding bay extraction fans, and auto-mechanical teaching equipment.

Mr Lee said the new facilities will support a more integrated learning experience for locals.

"Currently hair, beauty and business students have to drive from the main Muswellbrook TAFE campus to attend classes at the council-owned Tertiary Education Centre. This new investment will ensure students can access modern, industry-grade facilities right here at their local campus," Mr Lee said.

"Students in the Upper Hunter deserve access to industry-grade equipment to aid practical training and this latest investment will ensure local classrooms and tools simulate what an apprentice will be doing within the workplace."

Initial planning has already commenced on the \$1 million Muswellbrook facility with construction works to begin this year. The new equipment will be delivered by mid-2021 and the connected learning classrooms will be completed by mid-2022.

Ben launches two new careers in the middle of a pandemic

A Newcastle dad who reinvented himself as a start-up entrepreneur after his industry was decimated by the pandemic has urged locals to consider a career pivot to position themselves for the post-COVID jobs market.

Ben Ogden, 33, had a successful career as an international corporate event manager before the industry was hit by the COVID-19 outbreak. At a crossroads and with a young family to support, he decided to pursue a "COVID-proof" career in teaching and turned to TAFE Digital to refresh his qualifications.

Locked down during the pandemic, he also launched a side business called Newy Rides that combined his loves of cycling and Newcastle by helping visitors discover the best of Newcastle by bike. The business is thriving and he has just signed on as a part-time events and tourism teacher at TAFE NSW Hamilton.

"COVID has curtailed the events industry so much and I was already starting to feel burned out and ready for a new challenge," Mr Ogden said.

"I love the idea of helping people upskill and passing on my knowledge, so teaching seemed a good fit.

"I also thought having another qualification under my belt would just bolster my CV if things went pear-shaped."

Mr Ogden completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and completed a Diploma of Event Management through TAFE Digital to ensure he had the latest, up-to-date training. He was able to complete the Diploma in just six months, earning credit for previous study and his experience in the industry.

Mr Ogden said the flexibility of studying with TAFE Digital meant he could focus on his studies where and when suited him best.



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TAFE NSW

Investing in education

As a community based educator, Atwea College works with job service providers, employers and the wider community to develop training and education options that are tailored to the local community and its current needs.

Atwea's role has always been to provide a stable learning platform that could flex and adjust to the ever-changing needs of the community. There have been many challenges over a long and rich 100-year history to providing adult workers with access to education, but perhaps none quite as impactful as the COVID-19 pandemic.

In March 2020 at the time the COVID-19 pandemic started to unfold, the Hunter's unemployment rate was at 4.6%. 12 months later in March 2021 there has been an increase to the unemployment rate to 7.1%*. While this is not a complete shock to organisations and people working in and around business, education and employment pathway sectors, this fact serves to underline further the importance of our region working to ensure that we have the right support structure for the region's eventual recovery.

Partnering with Training Services NSW, Atwea is one of the Registered Training Organisations providing the NSW JobTrainer program to help make it easier to make vocational training and skills development across NSW easier and more accessible. The program offers free and low fee training options to boost skills with full and part qualification course options, as well as personalised support to assist people navigating the skills and training opportunities available in NSW. Training is available for new staff who meet the eligibility criteria and existing staff who are at risk of unemployment and require retraining in order to secure ongoing employment.



As the Hunter region responds to the impacts of unemployment and job displacement, Atwea is well prepared and is working with businesses, organisations, the not-for-profit sector and the wider community to develop the right courses and learning experiences now and into the future.

* <https://lmp.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/EmploymentRegion/NewSouthWalesACT/Hunter/UnemploymentRateTimeSeries>



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What makes for good leadership development training?

Sam Robinson
LKS Quaero

I'm really lucky to do work I love – and, because that work is in leadership development, it's a pleasure to help make organisations and people's careers work better, too. Because learning is a two way street, being in front of the classroom has also helped us at LKS Quaero to keep improving what we do, honing our ideas about how to support people to improve their leadership practice.

What have I learned, then, about what makes for good leadership development training? Here are some ideas for getting it right.

Link learning to genuine organisational requirements

Link back the skills your leaders learn to what they actually need to do at work, matched to the capabilities your organisation requires of its leaders. This is a practical approach, but it's not a simple one. We tailor our programming for the values, capability frameworks, policies, and procedures of each organisation, requiring participants to make genuine improvements back at work as part of their program tasks. Another way of putting this is to make sure that the learning can be usefully applied in practice – and demonstrate how to do that as part of the learning experience.

Equip people

All too often, you hear vague or generic statements about the kind of person who makes a good leader. These statements are routinely underpinned with baseless assumptions and prejudices. You can't separate good (or bad) leadership from the environment and social context. There are certainly poor leaders – but often this is because they don't know what good looks like, let alone having been given an opportunity to practice good leadership themselves.

Equipping people with the knowledge and tools to do leadership well in the context of an organisation, giving them a sincere opportunity to be an excellent leader, is a much more clear-eyed approach. Our facilitators talk about leadership as

creating conditions in an organisation where people can work constructively to their full potential. Providing those “conditions” for leaders – regular feedback (positive and constructive), informally reviewing how things are going regularly with a leader (one of our clients calls this “normalising feedback”), and listening well – gives a person in a leadership role the best chance of succeeding as a leader. This also gives the leader a template to equip their own teams with the tools to achieve their potential.

Measure it

Track the results against those capabilities that match what your organisation really needs from leaders, and keep up that tracking over time. For instance, are planning, performance management, expectation setting, or other priority areas demonstrably improving, and how do you know this? By tracking the long-term impact and priority areas for improvement, you can leverage future training accordingly. If there's a strong theoretical underpinning tying together the training, and it's paired well with your organisational strategy, then you'll be able to effectively drive results for both individuals and the organisation.

Learning shouldn't be left in the classroom, or stagnate until you go back to business as usual. If that's been your experience, try a new approach. I enjoy helping organisations to support their leaders to reach a consistent standard of leadership capability, resulting in a high-performing culture that delivers consistent results. Done well, leadership development should reward organisations for the long term and reward leaders for their whole careers.



Sam Robinson is Managing Director of LKS Quaero. He works in leadership development, change management, organisational structure, and culture. Sam helps leaders to succeed by connecting people, relationships, systems, and structures. He has worked across the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors.

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Australian mining contributes record tax and royalty payments

Australia's minerals industry paid record taxes and royalties to federal, state and territory governments in 2019-20 even as the COVID-19 pandemic started to push the economy into recession.

The record payments are highlighted in the latest Deloitte Access Economics report commissioned by the Minerals Council of Australia which estimates company tax payments and royalties from the minerals sector at \$39.3 billion in 2019-20; \$24.1 billion in company tax – around half the annual Defence budget – and \$15.2 billion in state and territory royalties, both record amounts.

Between 2010-11 and 2019-20, the minerals sector contributed \$238.8 billion in taxes and royalties to federal, state and territory governments – \$132.8 billion in tax and \$106 billion in royalties.

The total amount of company tax paid by the minerals sector has grown from \$14.5 billion in 2017-18 to \$22.3 billion in 2018-19 and \$24.1 billion in 2019-20.

Australia's minerals sector contributes 30% of all federal company tax payments, with strong production and commodity prices – particularly for iron ore amid strong Chinese demand and continued weakness in supply from our global competitors – boosting earnings from Australia's mineral exports and increasing company tax payments.

Mining profits are expected to further improve throughout 2020-21 in line with higher prices and export volumes for Australian resources, outweighing a decline in the value of coal exports.

Company tax payments from the minerals industry help fund better services for the community including mental health, aged care and women's programs. The Australian minerals industry pays its fair share of tax while providing royalties to state governments to pay for improved roads, hospitals and other infrastructure and services.

Mining companies also support thousands of regional businesses around Australia and their workers who provide essential services that keep the industry operating.

In addition, the mining industry has been supporting local communities through the COVID-19 pandemic, providing substantial donations to hospitals, charities, child care centres and schools.

\$75 million Resources for Regions Round Eight now open

Mining communities across regional NSW are set to receive a greater share of mining royalties with Resources for Regions Round Eight applications now open for projects that will improve local amenities and infrastructure.

On 17 May Deputy Premier John Barilaro joined the NSW Nationals candidate for the Upper Hunter Dave Layzell in Singleton and said Round Eight has been boosted to \$75 million, which will help deliver even more projects that make a difference to 24 Local Government Areas across regional NSW.

"Round Eight of the Resources for Regions fund will build on the success of the previous round, which provided \$50 million for 84 projects that helped create new jobs and stimulated local economies through infrastructure and program delivery," Mr Barilaro said.

"We know that the mining industry can put extra pressure on local infrastructure in regional towns and this fund is about giving back to these mining communities that contribute so much to the NSW economy.

"You've heard me say there is more to come and here it is, another \$75 million to fund projects and programs that will ensure our mining communities remain strong for generations to come.

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"It's absolutely crucial that we continue to support regional mining towns that supply our state with the resources we need and the Resources for Regions program is just another example of the NSW Government's commitment to the future of our regions."

Under Round Eight, 24 councils are allocated a base amount of \$1 million, with a further \$51 million weighted to those communities that need it most.

Since its inception in 2012, the Resources for Regions program has delivered 149 projects worth \$345 million to the state's mining communities.

Applications for Resources for Regions Round Eight are now open and will close at 12pm 12 July, 2021.

For information including guidelines and eligibility criteria visit www.nsw.gov.au/regional-growth-fund/resources-for-regions

Solar solutions transform Singleton Council's energy use and cut expenditure

Benefits are set to shine on Singleton Council with an investment in solar panels at 12 sites expected to be paid off in seven years and total energy savings calculated at \$126,652 per year.

Council awarded the tender for the supply and installation of solar panels, inverters and LED lighting at this week's meeting, with the project expected to be complete at the end of the year.

The cost of the project amounts to \$977,425.10 (ex GST).

The project also revealed solar energy will deliver Council's biggest user of energy, the Gym & Swim at 220.40 kW per year, a \$43,381 annual saving in energy bills, while the second biggest user, the sewer treatment plant – which uses 210.6 kW per year – would save \$40,211. The list of 12 sites also includes:

- Booster Pump at Whittingham (10.10kW)
- Administration Building and Auditorium (99.50kW)
- Colleen Gale Children's Centre (10.10kW)
- Library (35.10kW)

- Visitor Information Centre (35.10kW)
- Waste Management Facility (10.10kW)
- Youth Venue (7kW)
- Waste Depot (6.63kW)
- Water Treatment Plant (35.10kW)
- OOSH (10.10kW)

Council will now work with the successful contractor to order the panels and inverters and schedule installation across all 12 sites by the end of 2021.

"It's about realising the opportunity to reduce our electricity expenditure to divert those savings back into the community, and at the same time to role model good environmental sustainability with the solar panels and inverters," Mark Ihlein, Council's Executive Manager Projects said.


"We know our community takes sustainability seriously as we've seen through the development and adoption of the Singleton Sustainability Strategy 2019-2027.

"The installation of solar and LED lighting is another action we can add to what we're doing on behalf of and for our community, now and into the future.

"Best of all, it's an investment that pays dividends in so many other ways, beyond economics and the environment. Our littlest residents at Colleen Gale and OOSH will be part of the social shift in sustainability from an early age, it's a symbol for our staff to continually look for innovative solutions to minimise our footprint in the way we do things, and hopefully, encouragement for everyone in our community to look at ways we can all play a role in the sustainability of our local government area."



Singleton Council's Executive Manager Projects Mark Ihlein and Electrical Engineer Ibrar Shah at the Sewer Treatment Plant.



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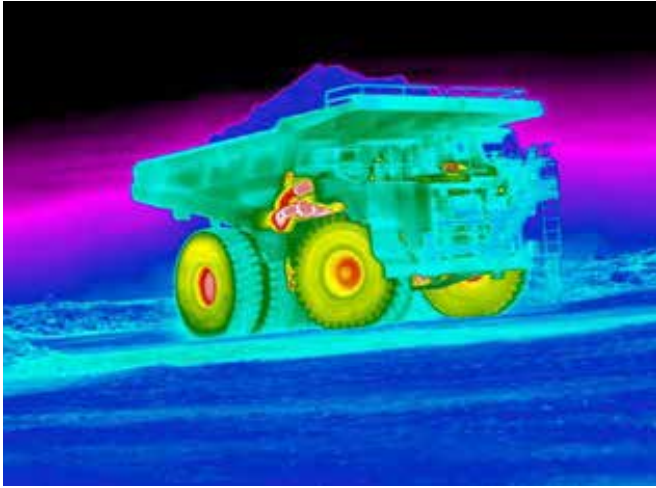


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Major international award for Newcastle's Pitcrew AI's Autonomous OTR Tyre Inspection system

Pitcrew AI, an innovative Australian computer vision company, has been recognised among the best in machine vision and imaging in the Vision Systems Design 2021 Innovators Awards program.

The judging panel of esteemed experts from system integrator and end-user companies, awarded Pitcrew AI as a Silver Honoree for its innovative Autonomous OTR Tyre Inspection system - a first of its kind automated inspection system for off the road tyres, designed specifically for mining vehicles and to not require changes to site workflows. Built around longwave infrared imaging and a multilayer R-CNN architecture, it is self-contained in a solar-powered skid that can be deployed at the side of a road within a few hours, and detects tyre separation and hot tires with detailed inspection reports.

"The Vision Systems Design team would like to congratulate Pitcrew AI for their score in the 2021 Innovators Awards program," says Chris Mc Loone, Editor in Chief.

"Each year this unbiased and increasingly competitive program aims to celebrate the most innovative products and systems in machine vision. The Pitcrew AI team should be very proud."

Tim Snell, Managing Director of Industrial Monitoring & Control Pty Ltd (Pitcrew AI) said, "We developed the Pitcrew AI OTR Tyre system to answer an immediate market problem.

"The move to autonomous mining fleets meant that even minor tyre damage could escalate into a catastrophic tyre fire before it was noticed.

"We built the system to solve this problem and have found that it delivers safety, financial and environmental benefits to mine operators.

"Having it recognised in this Awards program and by experts from around the world is a huge honour, and we're excited to see what comes next."

Pitcrew AI is an autonomous vehicle fleet enabler to keep vehicle and equipment fleets moving safely and effectively. It uses distributed IIoT systems to provide heavy vehicle fleet condition monitoring and analytics.

There is a rapid trend towards autonomous vehicles. Enormous resources and effort are being directed towards autonomous driving and autopilot systems and these systems now surpass human drivers under most operating conditions. However, a driver provides functions beyond just piloting the vehicle. For example, noticing a flat or bald tyre at pre-start checks, feeling or hearing a rattle, smelling fumes from the engine bay or smoke from tyres or brakes. Replacing and improving upon these lost driver functions is critical to realising the full benefits of the autonomous fleets of the future.

Pitcrew AI uses distributed IoT sensors and artificial intelligence to provide a team of virtual mechanics to watch over mobile assets 24/7

365. Pitcrew keeps mobile assets productive and helps owners to extract the full value to of investment into autonomous fleets.

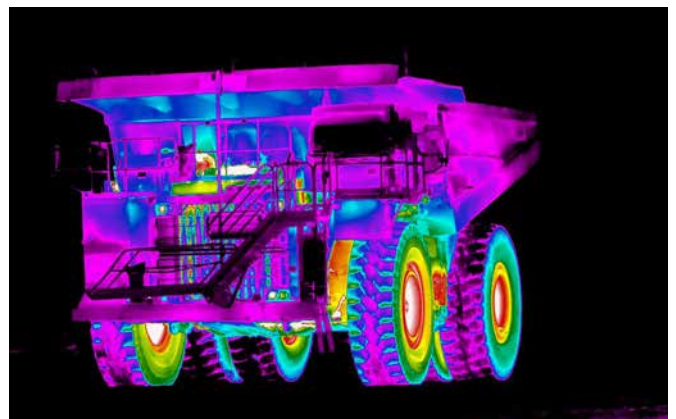
The system is supplied as a rapid-deployment, self-contained, solar-powered skid that can be installed at the side of a haul road within a few hours. The system includes a military-grade thermal imaging camera and an advanced artificial intelligence machine vision processor. The system is commissioned remotely by Pitcrew AI engineers. There are no changes to site operations required. The system can inspect every machine without requiring the vehicle to stop. Every vehicle that passes the system is inspected, 24/7-365 without any human intervention.

The system has the ability to detect small tyre injuries, such as rock drill, missing lug, or rock incisions. Each individual damage event can be tracked via an individual damage ID. After the initial detection, the tyre can be inspected and if it is repairable then the tyre can be removed and repaired, delivering savings on the site tyre spend. Tyre repair is much kinder to the environment than the new equivalent and can play a major role in helping mines achieve sustainability targets.

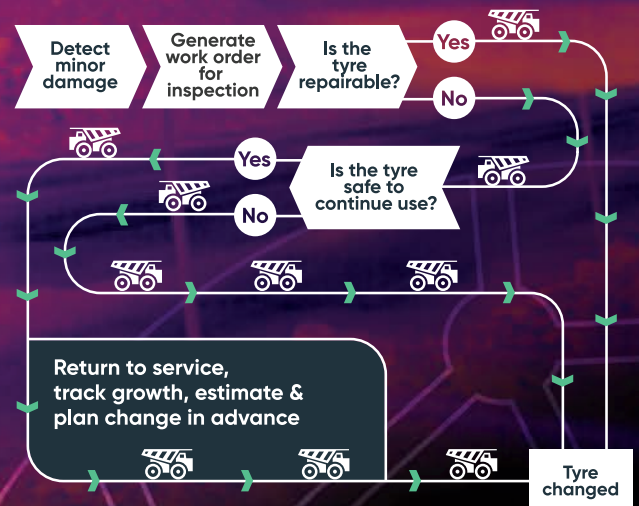
If the tyre is damaged beyond repair, then, if it is safe to operate the vehicle, the tyre can be returned to service. In the case of damage like a rock-cut, the separation can be tracked on each pass of the Pitcrew AI system and the growth monitored. Machine learning models are used to project the damage growth and predict when a tyre change is necessary. This allows vehicle downtime to be planned well in advance, minimising unplanned tyre changes and allows tyre stock to be managed efficiently.

Similarly, by predicting the trajectory of tyre damage many of the risks associated with hot-tyre events and tyre fires can be avoided. However, hot tyre events can still occur and the Pitcrew AI system can detect hot tyres and immediately alert personnel via email, SMS or multiple other communication options. This allows a vehicle to be isolated as quickly as possible improving mine safety. The system offers the additional benefit of offering a remotely controlled thermographic inspection system that management can use to assess a vehicle remotely, improving visibility and intelligence during a mine safety event.

The system can be trialled, there are no lock-in contracts or commercial risk.



Autonomous OTR Tyre Inspection



A solution for Mining 4.0, IIoT system leveraging emerging technologies including FLIR thermal imaging, artificial intelligence and machine learning

Improve mine safety through early hot tyre detection

Increase mine productivity by reducing unplanned fleet downtime

Identify damage early, repair rather than replace, save money and improve environmental outcomes

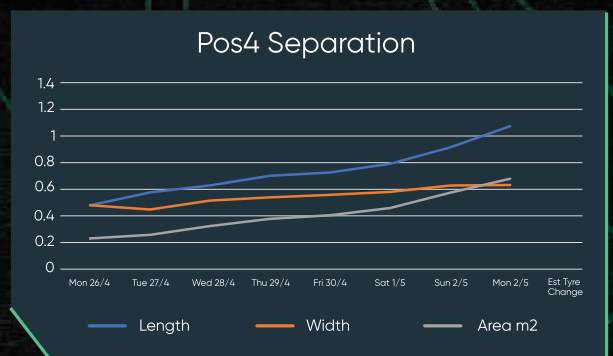
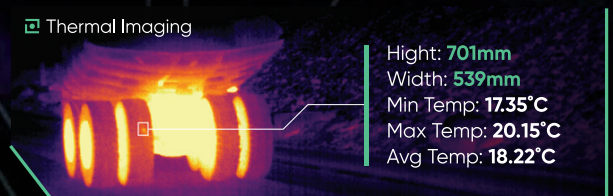
No changes to site workflow, system operates from side of haul road, 24/7 365 without human intervention

No disruption or impact on production during installation

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System can be trialled, no capex, no lock-in contracts

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Proposal for Australia's first 'Hydrogen Valley'

A group of leading global energy players brought together by Energy Estate has formed to enable Australia's first 'hydrogen valley' in NSW's Hunter region, potentially unlocking the world-class energy resources of the Central West, New England and Hunter-Central Coast renewable energy zones.

The Hunter Hydrogen Network (H2N) project – a large-scale hydrogen production, transportation and export project – has proposed a plan to enable the development of the hydrogen economy in the Hunter Valley, in partnership with hydrogen users and exporters.

The organisations include leading integrated energy utility AGL, leading energy infrastructure business APA Group, global equipment suppliers including ITM Power, global energy suppliers and traders Idemitsu and Trafigura, and large renewable energy developers RES Australia and WalchaEnergy. Energy Estate is working closely with Beyond Zero Emissions on renewable energy industrial precincts in the Hunter and engagement with other regional stakeholders to ensure the project is developed utilising local skills and resources, with the aim of bringing new domestic manufacturing opportunities to the Hunter.

"H2N's ambition is to enable Australia's first hydrogen valley in the NSW Hunter, transforming the region into a global superpower of renewable energy supply", Energy Estate Principal Vincent Dwyer said.

"A hydrogen economy and thriving supply chain in the Hunter has the potential to support local industry and workers into the jobs of the future and positions the Hunter in the race to be one of Australia's leading renewable energy exporters."

The organisations are engaging with Energy Estate to conduct further due diligence and assess the scope and concept of the project.

The first stage of the project aims to produce green hydrogen and associated green feedstock for mining, vehicles and other industrial uses in the Upper Hunter.

The second phase of the project will assess the transportation of hydrogen through a dedicated hydrogen pipeline to Newcastle, supplying future local users and exporters, including producers of green ammonia for export, green feedstock into the chemical sector, green fuels and hydrogen turbines to



provide green dispatchable energy solutions.

Energy Estate Principal Simon Currie said creating a local supply chain will help ensure that Australia is a competitive producer of green hydrogen for domestic and export markets.

"The project will be critical in enabling new long-term, sustainable jobs and will underpin the clean industrial precincts across the region," Mr Currie said.

The H2N project is being developed under Energy Estate's HydrogenGrowth platform, which focusses on developing green hydrogen opportunities throughout Australia and internationally. It builds on Energy Estate's existing projects in the region, including the Walcha Energy Project, which proposes to connect directly to the Hunter through WalchaLink. H2N will also facilitate Idemitsu's Muswellbrook energy, training and industry precinct, which will repurpose an existing coal mine and establish a clean industrial hub incorporating pumped hydro, solar, battery storage, green hydrogen production, training facilities and a new manufacturing precinct.

Visit www.hunterhydrogennetwork.com for further information.



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CSIRO and partners launch \$68 million Hydrogen Industry Mission

A new Hydrogen Industry Mission launched by CSIRO will help support the world's transition to clean energy, create new jobs and boost the economy.

Whilst hydrogen can be used as an emissions-free fuel source to generate electricity, power or heat, it is expensive. The research mission will help drive down the cost of hydrogen production to under \$2 per kilogram, making the fuel more affordable and helping to position Australia to lead the world in exporting hydrogen by 2030.

Over the next five years, more than 100 projects worth \$68 million have been planned by partners including: Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (DISER), Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), Fortescue Metals Group, Swinburne University, the Victorian Government, the Future Fuels CRC, National Energy Resources Australia (NERA), and the Australian Hydrogen Council, along with collaborators Toyota and Hyundai.

CSIRO Chief Executive Dr Larry Marshall said the unique mission-based partnership was the key to creating a new industry for the future energy needs of Australia and the world.

"Australia can become a renewable energy leader through the production, use and export of hydrogen, but it will only become a reality if we breakthrough the \$2/kg barrier. That needs Australia's world class science working with CSIRO's commercialisation expertise turning breakthrough science into real-world solutions," Dr Marshall said.

"Taking a Team Australia approach is essential to creating the 8,000 jobs and \$11 billion a year in GDP that hydrogen can contribute to Australia's economy as we build back better from the impacts of COVID-19."

CEO of the Australian Hydrogen Council Dr Fiona Simon said the Mission came at a critical time for the emerging Australian hydrogen industry.

"We need a coordinated series of investments in industrial-scale research and demonstration activities, along with the supporting research and infrastructure that can bring the technologies that are available and emerging to the industry that needs to deploy them," Dr Simon said.

"Taking a Team Australia approach is essential to creating the 8,000 jobs and \$11 billion a year in GDP that hydrogen can contribute to Australia's economy as we build back better from the impacts of COVID-19."

CSIRO Chief Executive Dr Larry Marshall

"Focussed efforts like the Hydrogen Industry Mission will help realise these goals, and the Hydrogen Council is delighted to be part of it."

The Mission will focus on delivering four key programs of work, some of which have already begun:

- **Hydrogen Knowledge Centre:** to capture and promote hydrogen projects and industry developments across Australia. The first module, HyResource, was launched in September with NERA, the Future Fuels CRC and The Australian Hydrogen Council.
- **Feasibility and strategy studies** to deliver trusted advice to government, industry and the community. This builds on recent hydrogen cost modelling and barrier analysis provided as part of developing the National Hydrogen Strategy.
- **Demonstration projects** that validate hydrogen value chains and de-risk enabling technologies. Development is underway at a new facility in Clayton, Victoria, with Swinburne University and the Victorian Government.
- **Enabling science and technology** through investment in breakthrough science, including a \$20 million partnership with Fortescue which focuses on the development and commercialisation of new hydrogen technologies.

CSIRO is forming broad coalitions of multidisciplinary partners behind each one, which in addition to hydrogen, tackle formidable problems like antimicrobial resistance, transforming plastic waste, reducing the impact of drought, and helping business to navigate climate change uncertainty.

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STRATA MANAGEMENT



Jill and her husband went to the restaurant for the first time in ages.

Upon arrival they were greeted by a Waiter who said, "I am sorry but we are so busy tonight. Would you two mind waiting for a bit?"

Jill said no problem.

He said "well take these drinks to table 10 and this food is for table 9."

A man walks into a crowded bar on a Friday night, and there's a big commotion going on.

Curious, he walks into the crowd and tries to find what is so exciting. Looking up, he sees several pieces of meat hanging from the ceiling. Even more curious now, but also rather thirsty, he works his way to the bartender. The man asks the bartender, "Why are there pieces of meat hanging from the ceiling?"

The bartender grins. He replies, "We have a special going on right now. If you can jump up and hit all of the pieces hanging, then you'll earn free drinks for the rest of the night. However, if you miss even one, the entire bar's drinks are on your tab for the next hour. Do you want to give it a try?"

The man looked up again, weighing the odds. "No thanks, the steaks are too high."

Did you hear about the architect who had an unhealthy obsession with designing overly intricate shopping malls? He had a complex complex complex.

A man passes away and his funeral is set to be held in his hometown where one of his sons lives.

The other, a wealthy businessman, unfortunately can't make it to

the ceremony so instead he offers to pay for the entire thing.

A few months later, the businessman is looking over his finances and notices a recurring bill of \$120 a month.

Confused, he called up his brother and asks him if he knows anything about it.

"Oh yeah," the brother replies. "Dad always wanted to go out in style so we rented him a tuxedo."

A robber pulled a gun on the bank clerk and manager saying, "Give me all the money! I need it to set myself up in a trade or profession. You know, initial investment is needed to cover the overheads until my cash flow is established."

The bank manager said to the clerk, "You'd better do what he says, I think he means business."

House prices had been booming so my wife and I went to see a real estate agent to get an idea of what our home was worth.

"Have you guys considered moving houses?" he asked.


I said, "No, we don't like caravans."

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"You don't learn to walk by following the rules. You learn by doing, and falling over."

- Richard Branson


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