

## Minister Scrymgour's recommendation

On 28 August, MRM welcomed the conditional recommendation of the Northern Territory Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts allowing the proposed conversion of its zinc mine from underground to open pit operations.

MRM General Manager Mr Brian Hearne said the recommendation follows the assessment of a Public Environmental Report which took the design and planning for the proposed development to an extremely detailed level.

"This is great news for our team but it is the first of three approvals we must get before the development gets over the line," Mr Hearne said.

"We invested an enormous amount of time and effort in ensuring the PER showed the mine is economically and environmentally sustainable.

"We appreciate Minister Scrymgour's recommendation and now await the Government's final decision."

MRM is now working with the Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries and Mines to develop the 2007 Mining Management Plan for the open pit development incorporating action on the conditions recommended by the Environment Minister as required.

The Minister for Mines and Energy, the Hon Kon Vatskalis, announced on 31 August that he would consider the MMP and a Commonwealth report on the development before making his final decision on the future for MRM.



From left to right: Bill Baird, Brian Hearne, Bruce Joy, Damien Vincent, Jemima Miller, Chloe Mulholland, Thelma Douglas, and Nancy McDinny

### MRM CRG MORWELL TRIP

Community members have visited a coal mine in Victoria to see first hand a successful river diversion designed to mimic the surrounding environment.

Organised by the MRM Community Reference Group (MRM CRG), nine guests from the Borroloola region including the Sir Edward Pellew Islands toured the Morwell River and the Maryvale Coalfield Development on 24-25 of July.

The objective of the trip was to provide community members with a first hand view of what a river diversion looked like so they could have a better appreciation of what was being proposed for the reaches of the McArthur River near the mine site.

Overall the feedback from the group was positive with most people stating they now had a better appreciation of the proposal for the McArthur River.

Particularly noted was that although the Morwell River diversion was only about one year old:

- Water quality was very good with no indication of down stream siltation resulting from the diversion
- The fish population both within the diversion zone and downstream appeared to have returned
- A population of platypus had made its home in the waterway and its banks.

On 1 August, MRM also organised a tour of the site for the proposed diversion of the McArthur River while the Morwell experience was fresh in their minds. This showed what this part of the river is like.

The two trips have proven to have been very worthwhile exercises. They enabled the guests to actually visualise what the diversion may look like, see how issues such as erosion and silt can be managed, and be reassured that aquatic life can adapt when the diversion is well planned.

The benefit of the Morwell River example is that while it is not a tropical river, the science and engineering had to take into consideration many of the same factors as the McArthur River diversion.

These included maintaining fish passage, enhancing aquatic habitat, reinstatement of large woody debris, channel meandering and riparian vegetation.



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### MESSAGE FROM THE GM

It is good to be able to report in this newsletter that we have finally received a recommendation from the NT Environment Minister regarding the MRM open pit development.

This is the first good news we have had on this development since we lodged the draft EIS in August 2005.

While the recommendation is welcome, we are conscious there are a few critical steps to go before we have the development approved.

We still need an approval from the Commonwealth Environment Minister (who takes into consideration the effect of the development on the endangered freshwater sawfish and migratory birds) and the NT Minister for Mines and Energy.

I would like to congratulate all our team who have worked tirelessly to help progress our development proposal to this stage.

This edition of Memorandum also contains news about the success of this year's Mines Rescue Team Competition.

I'd like to acknowledge the tremendous commitment of our team who invest a lot of their own time to hone their skills for the benefit of all who work with them and the community in which we operate.

The past few months have actually been very busy for MRM as a good neighbour in Borrooloola. The stories in this edition show that our support for the community comes in various forms – sponsorship funding, transport, accommodation and even sponsoring jerseys for new teams.

I hope you enjoy reading this bumper edition of MemoRanduM.

**Brian Hearne**  
General Manager



*Bill Baird at the MRM display Katherine High School Career Day*

### CAREER DAY DISPLAY

On Monday 21 August MRM hosted a display at the Katherine High School, Career Day.

The display provided local high school students, educators and parents with the opportunity to get careers advice and information about MRM and the mining industry.

help them make the trip to the nearest facility in Katherine. MRM covered the group's accommodation expenses for the trip in recognition that this type of screening is really essential for women's health and no one should be disadvantaged by their location in order to access the service.

### MRM WORKING WITH NT HEALTH

The NT Department of Health has identified Aboriginal health standards as one of the greatest challenges under a Building Healthier Communities policy.

In recognition of this issue, MRM has been partnering with the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services on a number of fronts.

#### Dialysis Unit

The major project at the moment is the provision of a specially modified accommodation unit providing a home for the dialysis unit in Borrooloola. A Memorandum of Understanding is being discussed with the NT Department of Health and Community Services, bringing the project one step closer to fruition.

The unit needed to consider the water supply and quality requirements for use in the dialysis process, as well as special hospital grade floor coverings, the provision of verandas and wheel chair access ramps etc, before it is completely fit for purpose.

#### Breast Screening

When nine local women from Borrooloola needed to undergo essential breast screening recently, MRM was pleased to

### LATEST PRODUCTION STATS

For the year ending December 2006, MRM is set to treat some 1.8 million tonnes of ore at an average zinc grade of around 11% Zn.

For August, the operation is on target to mill 160,000 tonnes of ore at an average grade of 11.5% zinc and 4.5% lead.

This will realise some 27,000 tonnes of zinc concentrate containing 45.5% Zinc, 10.1% lead and 123 grams per tonnes of silver.

Ore being mined from the pit during August is from what is referred to as the 'transitional zone' which is ore still effected by surface weathering.

The actual zinc grade within this zone is slightly higher than predicted due to a 'supergene' effect in the upper parts of the ore zone, where the zinc grade is enriched due to the effect of this weathering.

Unfortunately, this additional zinc is in the oxide form, and cannot be recovered by the mill. This 'supergene' effect decreases quickly with depth, and is largely absent in the lower parts of the current pit, where the ore is considered fresh and the mill can recover up to 80% of the available zinc.



**Borroloola Rodeo which has been sponsored annually by MRM for 11 years**

## BORROLOOLA RODEO

**By Roz Kerr – President Borroloola Amateur Race Club**

2006 saw Borroloola hold its 39<sup>th</sup> Rodeo, with the Gymkhana and Campdraft held on 18 to 20 August, featuring countless thrills and spills.

Many competitors went home with only bruises, some went home grinders, and for some it's onto the next rodeo, but all will be back again next year.

Dwaine Fishlock's bull "Boombastic" put on a show and was a real crowd pleaser, throwing some cowboys into a spin through the air.

Henry Baker earned the top score, John Harrower's horses bucked well and quite a few riders received very quick and unpleasant dismounts.

Jandarmah and Last Chance put Eddie Shadforth and Allan Judas equal with top scores.

On Sunday, we had celebrity Ernie Dingo from the Great Outdoors in the audience, which was a real treat for the people of Borroloola, especially the kids.

Eddie Shadforth took first place in the MRM Saddle Bronc with Henry Baker taking out first in the MRM sponsored Bull Ride.

First place in the MRM sponsored Open Draft event was won by Ian Hoare on Zorro.

For full results of the Carnival please contact Roz Kerr on 08 8975 8713.

## BORROLOOLA SHOW TURNS 21

This year celebrates the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Borroloola Gulf Show, a great tradition in the Gulf Region of the Northern Territory.

The show provides Gulf folk with a pleasant local holiday and the opportunity to get together and enjoy the unique aspects of life in and around Borroloola and the Gulf Region.

The show was held on Friday 18 August and proudly supported by MRM and onsite contractors, JJ McDonald and Sons Group, Eurest Catering, Emeco Ltd and Dassa-Harry Pty Ltd.

## ZINC ABOUT IT

### Did you know?

- Zinc is found as a mineral in the earth's crust, usually associated with other base metals such as copper and lead
- Zinc deposits are widely distributed throughout the world in countries including Germany, Spain, India and Canada
- Zinc is the 23rd most abundant element in the Earth's crust
- Zinc was recognised as a new metal in Zawar, India, around 1374 AD
- Centuries before zinc was discovered in the metallic form, its ores were used for making brass by the Romans in the time of Augustus 20 BC - 14 AD
- Zinc compounds were also used for healing wounds and sore eyes
- Zinc ornaments more than 2500 years old have also been discovered
- Metallic zinc is most commonly used in galvanising to protect steel from rusting
- It is also used as a chemical additive in rubber and paints
- Rolled zinc forms part of the container for common dry cell battery used to supply power for portable radios and flashlights
- Zinc is an essential element in the growth of humans and animals
- It has been proven that a zinc-rich diet promotes fast healing of wounds
- In agriculture, zinc compounds are used as a nutritive supplement to promote growth.



**Local children at MRM's Borroloola Show display**

## CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY FACILITIES

MRM has made a significant contribution to the upgrade of community facilities at Robinson River and Borroloola, with the donation of two ablution blocks and irrigation equipment.

The ablution blocks are being delivered in partnership with community organisations.

MRM is providing the facilities, for the Borroloola Rodeo Ground and the Robinson River Sports Field, with the local communities taking charge of installation.

MRM is also providing irrigation pipe to the Robinson River community for installation on the sport fields to make the fields more "user friendly" for the community.

## ARMY TRAINEES

The army recently completed their house construction and training project in Borroloola.

The project was praised as being a highly successful and worthwhile exercise which delivered four new houses.

The legacy of the exercise was the training provided to twelve local youth who emerged from the 12 week exercise with basic welding and trade skills.

MRM is proud to be able to offer five of the twelve entry level positions at the mine.

The work ethic and discipline instilled during the military exercise are essential skills for any future direction the five may take either with the company or the mining industry.

## KING ASH BAY ROAD

If you are a local to these parts, you will know of the perils for any road trip to King Ash Bay.

Breathe easy all you keen fisher folk and other visitors to King Ash Bay, the road has been repaired and there is a good chance you will now make the destination with your trailer still attached, thanks to joint effort by the NT Department of Planning and Infrastructure (previously Transport and Works) and MRM.

As part of our commitment to the local community MRM has provided the resources and labour to grade the road to King Ash Bay and Batten Point at no charge. This means the sizeable budget earmarked by the Government for this

work will be invested in better engineering the road to improve it long term.

MRM contracted local Indigenous company Central Desert Enterprises, led by Syd Rusca, to complete the grading work.

## BING BONG HOUSEBOAT FOR SEA EAGLES

While the Aburri is a purpose built vessel, the designers' probably never realised one alternate use was going to be the provision of a nesting site for a breeding pair of sea eagles.

The birds have recently taken residence on the highest point of the Aburri after trying several other nesting sites on structures around the Bing Bong loading facility.

While this nesting location has provided the birds with million dollar views of the Gulf, it has come with one of the big risks associated with house boating – that is – the boat can move.

Fact is, if you fly away for a little food collection for the wife, there is no guarantee that your home will be where you left it.

This was the case recently when the Aburri departed on one of its regular loading runs. The male eagle returned to the nest to find it missing. Undeterred, the eagle was able to locate his house boat home, some 17 miles out to sea.

While the pair has yet to actually breed in this unconventional nesting location, it does go to show that industry and nature are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

## BOB WHALAN

***What is your role with the mine and how long have you worked with MRM?***

I have worked for MRM for two years on 28 of September

### ***Position***

MST Supervisor looking after:

- All aspects of maintenance, minor works and capital works for the Accommodation Village
- Aerodrome facilities including maintenance and day to day operations
- The Security Contract and anything else the boss thinks I should do in my spare time

### ***What is your nickname?***

Depends who you talk to but "Fish" seems to be the latest

### ***Do you have any hobbies or what do you do on the weekend?***

Hobbies – Are home brew beer and reading

On weekends I spend time with the family, mainly the grandkids, take the dogs for walks and work in the garden

### ***What are your top 5 favourite TV programs?***

I don't watch much TV so I couldn't name 5 favourites. I enjoy Star Trek and most other Sci Fi series, movies and some documentaries.

### ***What is your favourite food?***

Chicken





*The Palmerston La Faek Soccer team in the Indonesian Independence Day Parade*

**PALMERSTON LA FAEK SOCCER TOUR TO WEST TIMOR**

While it might not be well known, Palmerston has a sister city relationship with Kupang in Timor.

It was as a result of this relationship that the Palmerston La Faek Soccer club's senior men's team was invited by the mayor and Governor of West Timor to play in an inaugural competition.

This was a real opportunity for the club to take their talents to a country where soccer is more of a religion than a pastime.

MRM was pleased to be able to contribute to assist the team with this exciting milestone for NT soccer and relations with our neighbours in Timor.

The trip went well with the team playing three games. The first game was

against the provincial capital side, containing a player from the Indonesian national side.

The NT team fought exceptionally well but were beaten by the host team.

The second game was a great contest against the provincial university with the NT putting up a great fight, however the NT team went down 1-0 to the home side.

The final game was a mixed team comprising members of the NT squad, members from the Nusa Cendana University and East Timorese players against the provincial representative side.

The Palmerston Lafaek squad opened their team to include 7 East Timorese refugees, excellent players living in a camp outside of Kupang.

The boys bought boots for the Timor Leste members and strong links were forged between the players.

The NT lads also made a visit to a local orphanage to play soccer and made a large donation to the orphanage to assist with purchasing shoes.

The Palmerston Lafaek Club has decided to provide ongoing support to the orphanage and their new friends in the refugee camp.

This trip coincided with the Indonesian Independence Day celebrations. The NT delegation was given pride of place in the two hour street parade. A presentation was made to the Governor of the Province.

Plans are now underway to further strengthen the diplomatic ties between the NT and the Eastern Provinces through sporting goodwill exchanges. The Governor and the provincial parliament have indicated strong support for a competition that embraces other provincial centres including East Timor.

This plan supports the ongoing work to develop a trilateral zone of cooperation between, West Timor, East Timor and the Northern Territory.

The challenge was raising funds to allow the squad of players, coaching staff and manager to participate in this one week event.

**SOCIAL CLUB CRUISE**

The Social Club are busy planning the next event for members.

On 30 September and 7 October, there will be a Sunset Harbour Cruise onboard "Anniki" from 5pm to 8.30pm.

Please contact Chriss Ellem [cellem@xstratazinc.com.au](mailto:cellem@xstratazinc.com.au) or Claire Bigmore [cbigmore@xstratazinc.com.au](mailto:cbigmore@xstratazinc.com.au) for more information.

**LOGO COMPETITION WINNER**



Congratulations to Kristy Reid, the winner of the MRM Social Club Logo Competition.



*Presentation of a Territory Flag to the Provincial Governor Piet Tallo*

## JACKPOT WINNERS

Congratulations to the Social Club Members who have won the \$50 Jackpot Draw during July and August.

July – Bruce O'Dea and Ed Carrigan

August – Anthony Robertson and Brian Banfield

## PROMOTION

Congratulations to Daniel Armstrong who has recently been promoted from Supply Officer to Inventory Controller (Supply Department).

## MINE RESCUE COMPETITION

The rivalry was fierce at this year's Mines Rescue Competition organised by the NT Mineral Council Mine Rescue Committee.

Seven teams from mines across the Northern Territory and Western Australia competed to win the coveted Champion title.

The MRM Mines Rescue team entered the competition as 2005 Champions, ready to defend the title.

The various challenges included a vertical rescue involving the recovery of someone who had fallen from a height, or down a hole, for example a mine shaft or a tall building.

The teams also had to battle real fires and perform rescues in smoke.

There was fresh blood in the team this year, due to the MRM move from underground to open pit mining.

The team of new recruits was lead by the experienced Captain Dominic McGuane, who lead last year's team to victory.

This year, the rookies achieved third place overall with special mention to Luke Chandley who was awarded Best Individual.

The team's Captain, Dominic McGuane was awarded runner-up for Best Captain.

The team celebrated after the competition with a few quiet drinks before heading back to Borroloola.

There is already talk about starting training earlier next year to get a head-start on the 2007 Competition.



*The team in action at the 2006 Northern Territory Mines Rescue Competition*