

Fly-In Crime?

John Scott

Mining, rurality and social disorder

Dispossession from traditional lands. Alienation. Invasion. Violence. Is this Australia circa 1788? No, it's Australia 2013. It's now. It's rural and regional Australia and the alleged victims are more often than not non-Indigenous people. The Australian mining boom has seen an unlikely coalition of interests form in rural and regional Australia, comprised of pastoralists, environmentalists and small business people. These groups have expressed opposition to mining practices, especially fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) and drive-in-drive-out (DIDO), on environmental, economic and social grounds. But as might be expected of such a broad ranging coalition, the vision of what they are fighting for and against has not always been clearly articulated. Sure, they are fighting to save so-called communities and traditions, but this also begs the question, which communities and what traditions?

Opposition to mining has cited increased crime as a social impact of mining. There is a perception among residents and in the media that cashed-up and bored non-resident workers are responsible for an increase in alcohol and drug related violence and a range of other socially undesirable behaviors, ranging from littering to sex in public places. There have also been suggestions that non-resident workers are responsible for increasing rates of sexually transmitted infections in states such as Western Australia and Queensland. The idea of non-resident workers as a deviant or criminal group has shifted attention away from youth and Indigenous populations who are typically blamed for crime and other anti-social activities in rural locations. These groups are considered to have failed to integrate into the mainstream community and are regarded as unproductive or failing to contribute anything of value to the community. Non-resident workers are

considered especially vulnerable to engaging in crime because they are not socially embedded into the places where they work. 'Home', is somewhere else, often a city.

Any understanding of the social impacts of mining should account for crime, but measuring the impacts of crime in mining regions is fraught with difficulty. Regardless of whether or not crime is increasing in mining regions, increased fear of crime has impacted negatively on the quality of life of many residents of such areas. At the same time, talk about crime has been useful in articulating what it means to 'belong' in a community and what might be considered threats to the social order.

Previous research I have been involved in has examined violence in rural locations, both in terms of its real impacts and the social reactions (or non-reactions) towards violence. This research involved extensive consultation with people who live in mining and agricultural centres in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. My current research is examining the health and social impacts associated with non-resident sex workers in mining regions. While much research has examined the economic impacts of mining, the social impacts of mining remain relatively unknown.

Which Community?

Rural Australia, especially in conservative ideology, has always been a special space of hard work and traditional values. Agricultural towns have always seemed purer than mining towns—places where families, not unions, thrived. These places are presented as *communities*. Early social research in Australia never strayed too far from national myth making, adopting the view that such places represented *gemeinschaft* (communal) qualities, as opposed to the *gesellschaft* (social) relations typically encountered in cities. With respect to this, rural spaces were imagined as cohesive and integrated, typified by harmonious social relations. In contrast, urban space was imagined to be fragmented and normless, the space of immigrants, criminals and other social undesirables.

It was not until the 1970s and 1980s that social researchers began to provide a more critical account of rural and regional social relations, with a focus on marginalisation and exclusion, especially as it related to Indigenous peoples and women. Ron Wild's seminal 1974 study, *Bradstow: A Study of Status, Class and Power in a Small Australian Town*, presented small-town life as structured around rigid hierarchies and inequality. It was not until 1987 that crime, a prime indicator of social

←←←

Fly-In Crime?

John Scott

John Scott is a professor in the School of Behavioural, Cognitive and Social Sciences at the University of New England.

a ←

disorder, was examined in a rural Australian context. O'Connor and Gray's research in the agricultural town of Walcha found that crime was associated with outsiders and events that brought outsiders into the town. They suggested that blaming the outsider for crime assisted in the promotion of internal social order in the town. More recently, Hogg and Carrington's excellent *Policing the Rural Crisis* (2006) examined how Indigenous people and young people are considered a significant part of 'the crime problem' in rural and regional communities and are subject to disproportionate levels of community angst and policing.

What Crime?

When considering fear of crime, as it manifests in both rural and urban settings, it is important to note that fear of crime will often exceed actual risks, not least because crime operates as something of a 'condensation symbol' around which various anxieties regarding imagined and real threats to established social orders are made intelligible.

The rapid growth of mining in rural and regional Australia has produced considerable concern among long-term residents of mining regions regarding the environmental, social and economic impacts of mining. On the economic side there is the elevated cost of living associated with mining and the 'fly-over' effects of a failure to reinvest economic capital in regions. On the social side, mining regions have often witnessed a rapid influx of young, well-paid men who hold few social affiliations within local regions. These 'boomtown' dynamics have been associated with serious social problems, especially crime. On a broader level, social commentators have long associated population growth and residential instability with social disorder, so it seems natural that fast-paced change in what were often 'sleepy' towns would create social problems.

At one level there may be debate about whether crime has increased in mining regions, but, at another level, any measure of crime will be influenced by what is defined, policed, reported and recorded as crime. What 'counts' as crime, will be influenced by local dynamics. What is crime is a product of distinct social relations and structures. For example, in rural places male violence has been relatively underreported and under-policed, while there is much evidence to show that such crime occurs in rural areas at greater rates than in urban areas. In this way, a hierarchy of crime exists, which is very much ideological in character, often reflecting the interests and concerns of powerful groups within a locale. This hierarchy determines what is defined as crime and influences reactions to crime.

Sex, Drugs and Alcohol

The mining boom has been linked to an increase in what might be considered urban or 'street crime' in rural and regional areas. A particular focus of concern has been sex work and violent crime.

If we take sex work, there can be no doubt that large numbers of well-paid male miners, many of whom are separated from their regular partners, provide an ideal market for the sex industry. For long-term residents of mining regions, sex work embodies the threat that mining poses to a community. Sex work presents as an archetypal urban phenomenon that is antithetical to families and family values. This noted, the presence of the sex industry in rural Australia is not something new. What is unique in the current mining boom is the extent of sex work and the fact that most sex workers operating in mining regions are 'outsiders', many being non-resident workers.

Claims that the sex industry disrupts amenity must be treated cautiously, as the majority of those working in mining regions are professionals who understand the need for a discrete service, especially in a rural location. In contrast to urban areas, street work, which is considered to disrupt amenity, is extremely rare in mining regions and largely unsustainable, again, because of the need for clients to maintain confidentiality. There have also been claims, largely from doctors who neither live nor work in rural areas, that sex work has created a public health threat in mining regions, with increased rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), but, as yet, there is little evidence to support such claims and rates of STIs among Australian sex workers are lower than those in the general population.

Non-resident workers have been closely associated with violent crime in mining regions. While there can be no doubt that the influx of a large male workforce has created tensions in regional areas, it is

Mining regions have often witnessed a rapid influx of young, well-paid men who hold few social affiliations within local regions. These 'boomtown' dynamics have been associated with serious social problems, especially crime.

not always clear whether non-resident workers or locals have been responsible for perpetuating violence. Moreover, it may not be the case that male violence and other alcohol related problems have increased, but that the causes of such violence has shifted. Disputes over local women, for example, may have increased since the mining boom. The idea, however, that one group of males (non-resident workers) are more prone to violence than longer term residents, is difficult to prove. For example, in March 2012, after a country race meeting, police were called to a mining camp near Narrabri where fifteen men were brawling. Eight cars and three units at the camp were damaged in the incident and a forty-eight year old camp resident hospitalised with head lacerations. A local resident was arrested. Police linked the incident to a day of heavy drinking at the races.

Certainly, specific company or camp structures may encourage and facilitate masculine cultures that are more prone to both risk-taking and violent activity, but we need to be cautious not to generalise this.

100 YEARS AND STILL HOLDING UP - LOCALS CELEBRATE BULGA BRIDGE CENTENARY





History of Bulga book launch

LOCAL research will be on display at the History of Bulga book launch 12:30pm on June 28 at the Bulga Community Centre.

The book contains the history of Bulga and Milbrodale from the area's discovery by John Howe in 1820 to the present day. Chapters include details of discovery, early settlement, social and commercial progress and the transition to modern lifestyle. Pioneer families and historic properties are also described in detail.

The information contained in the book is based on early recorded history by local settlers, anecdotal accounts of important events with extensive input from our community and is complimented with data from official archival records.

The book was jointly funded by the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association (BMPPA) supported by fundraisers and a \$20,000 grant from Bulga Coal.

The original committee was set up in 1994 to start gathering information on the history of the area. The committee was made up of Jenny Scholes, a local historian and former Bulga resident, Harold and Betty Harris, Stewart and Marie Mitchell, Noelene Smith and Helen Upward. The information was recorded

on disc by Diane Lamb. But because of other commitments work on the history book ceased for a few years.

Research was continued in 2011 the association decided production they needed the book to ensure the history of Bulga was recorded for future generations. This resulted in the formation of a new committee consisting of Stewart and Marie Mitchell, Leslie Krey and Judith Leslie with Pauline Rayner volunteering her services as recorder/typist.

Finally the committee's goal has been achieved and a very informative and attractive book has been published and will be on sale for \$30 at the book launch on 28th June, at 12.30pm with light refreshments provided.

The launch will be performed by well-known local author and journalist Sharyn Munro – "The Woman on the Mountain".

All are most welcome to attend especially those with an interest in local history.

An RSVP by June 20 stating numbers of adults and children would be appreciated to assist with catering.

Email: bmppa@savebulga.org.au or
Phone: 65745152 or 65745303



BOOK LAUNCH: Members of the Book Launch Committee - Back - Leslie Krey, Melanie Caban, Judith Leslie - Front - Marie Mitchell, Helen Upward

Heartland

History of Bulga book launch

LOCAL research will be on display at the History of Bulga book launch 12:30pm on June 28 at the Bulga Community Centre.

The book contains the history of Bulga and Millbrodale from the area's discovery by John Howe in 1820 to the present day. Chapters include details of discovery, early settlement, social and commercial progress and the transition to modern lifestyle. Pioneer families and historic properties are also described in detail.

The information contained in the book is based on early recorded history by local settlers, anecdotal accounts of important events with extensive input from our community and is complimented with data from official archival records.

The book was jointly funded by the Bulga Millbrodale Progress Association (BMPA) supported by fundraisers and a \$20,000 grant from Bulga Coal.

The original committee was set up in 1994 to start gathering information on the history of the area. The committee was made up of Jenny Scholes, a local historian and former Bulga resident, Harold and Betty Harris, Stewart and Marie Mitchell, Noelene Smith and Helen Upward. The information was recorded

on disc by Diane Lamb. But because of other commitments work on the history book ceased for a few years.

Research was continued in 2011 the association decided production they needed the book to ensure the history of Bulga was recorded for future generations. This resulted in the formation of a new committee consisting of Stewart and Marie Mitchell, Leslie Krey and Judith Leslie with Pauline Rayner volunteering her services as recorder/typist.

Finally the committee's goal has been achieved and a very informative and attractive book has been published and will be on sale for \$30 at the book launch on 28th June, at 12.30pm with light refreshments provided.

The launch will be performed by well-known local author and journalist Sharyn Munro – "The Woman on the Mountain".

All are most welcome to attend especially those with an interest in local history.

An RSVP by June 20 stating numbers of adults and children would be appreciated to assist with catering.

Email: bmpa@savebulga.org.au or Phone: 65745152 or 65745303



BOOK LAUNCH: Members of the Book Launch Committee - Back - Leslie Krey, Melanie Caban, Judith Leslie - Front - Marie Mitchell, Helen Upward

100 YEARS AND STILL HOLDING UP - LOCALS CELEBRATE BULGA BRIDGE CENTENARY

Residents of Bulga are proud of their bridge particularly as it has just reached its Bridge centenary and the locals celebrated with great style with a tape cutting and a procession over the bridge by vintage cars and motor bikes, residents in period costume, a brass band, horses, and a bullock team.

About 300 people attended the festivities in Bulga that accompanied the formal celebration of 100 years of the historic Dare designed wooden truss bridge. The celebrations were organised by the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association. After the symbolic cutting of the tape The Mayor of Singleton, John Martin spoke at the gathering in the recreation grounds. Diana Heuston, the President of the Singleton Historical Society, also spoke. The ceremony was attended by Singleton Councillors, and the General Manager Lindy Hyam.

Old photos and memorabilia were on display in the Bulga Hall. The bus tours around Bulga proved very popular with the

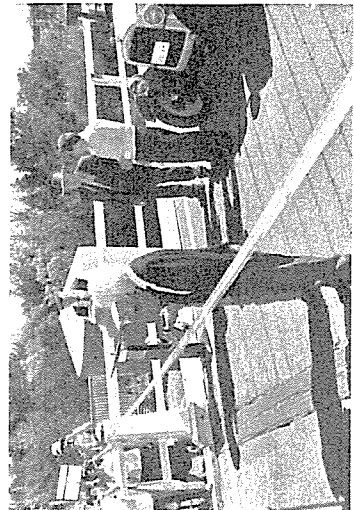
visitors and residents alike.

A Formal Ball held in the Bulga Hall on Saturday evening completed a very successful celebration of the centenary of the Bulga Bridge.

John Krey

BELOW: Cutting the tape is Harold Harris assisted by Nina Pike, long time residents of Bulga. Looking on: Stewart Mitchell, President Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association, John Martin, Mayor Singleton Joe Krsul, NSW RMS Pic John Krey

More Pics Page 15



Pics above: Jackson family



Heartland



LARGE CROWD: The large crowd of guests fill the Bulga Community Centre at the History of Bulga book launch (front row left to right) Marie Mitchell, Jenny Scholes (obscured), Lorna Partridge, Noleen Partridge, Joyce Partridge, Sylvia Bates and Rodney Bates.

Bulga history celebrated

ON Saturday June 28 in excess of 200 people gathered at Bulga Community Centre to witness the launch of "A History of Bulga" which was written and published by Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association.

Guests travelled from far and wide for what was likened to a reunion of past and present Bulga residents.

Derek Partridge was Master of Ceremonies for the event and kept the guests entertained with memoirs of his childhood growing up in Bulga

and relating these experiences to excerpts from the book.

The launch was performed by Sharyn Munro, well known author of numerous books. Sharyn also commented on interesting excerpts from the book and congratulated the Progress Association on producing such a wonderful record of Bulga's history.

A large celebration cake was cut by local historian Jenny Scholes who assisted members of the Association in the production of the history book.

Light refreshments were enjoyed by all present and numerous copies of the book were sold.

The book is available for purchase at a cost of \$30 from Singleton Historical Society Museum in Burdekin Park, Singleton Books Etc. in George Street and from The Bridge Café at Bulga.

It will soon be available from the Singleton Visitor Information Centre at Townhead Park.



Lights, camera, Bulga



By Louise Nichols
BULGA could well be home to Australia's most photographed orange orchard.

The Harris family's "Hillsdale" property with its productive 4000 orange trees has been in Vogue, Hunter Lifestyle and now is the location for a new Australian TV show.

With filming in progress, the film "Love is a Hive of" the film "Love is a Hive of" district orchard is a hive of

activity that includes some pretty famous fruit pickers.

The film stars Eamon Farren best known for his role as Dave in the film 'Red Dog' and Claire van der Boom a Logie winning actress who has starred in the remake of Hawaii Five-O are joined by veteran actors.

ner Behren Schulz. Their company Eponine Film is based in Sydney and the Hunter Valley with funding for the film coming from local investors.

They have also formed a partnership with Nikon and are evaluating the property as a grazing property with the Wollemi National Park.

The beautiful orchard

pick up a new screens.

Hillsdale Orchard Co. Ltd.



ACTION: Actors including Dustin Clare (standing holding the ute door) prepare for another scene to be shot on the set of the film 'Love is Now'.



HILLSDALE: Bulga farmers Sue Harris and her father-in-law Harold Harris have been busy assisting with the filming on their property 'Hillsdale' Bulga.

Movie making in Bulga

•from page 1

During the filming at "Hillsdale" on Tuesday one of the Harris family's old cattle dogs enjoyed all the commotion but the highlight was wandering around the catering van to pick up a few scraps.

The beautiful orchard and grazing property which adjoins the Wollemi National Park was selected by the director for the film due to its scenery, its

homestead and orchard and the fact it had lots of character.

Sue Harris said the family had been on the 700 acres property for three generations.

"Last year we had a 16 page fashion shoot for Vogue Australia in the orchard," she said.

According to her father-in-law Harold Harris watching models wearing \$5000 dresses and \$1200 shoes picking fruit was a real eye opener.

"They looked pretty fancy up a ladder picking fruit in those outfits," he said with a chuckle.

But once the film crew depart its back to farm work fattening steers and marketing their navel and valencia oranges.

The family sell much of their fruit at the Newcastle Farmers Markets where people see the name Bulga and ask how the mine is going said Sue.

Lights, camera, oranges in Bulga

By Louise Nichols

The beautiful Hillisdale Orchard at Bulga was chosen as the setting of a new Australian feature film *Love is Now*.

With the Wollemi National Park as the backdrop, the 4000-tree orange orchard owned by the Harris family could well be Australia's most photographed.

The 700-acre property has been in *Vogue*, *Hunter Lifestyle* and now this film, which is expected to be released in December.

With nearly 100 people involved in the production of *Love is Now*, the Bulga district orchard was a hive of activity that included some pretty famous fruit pickers.

The film stars Eamon Farren, best known for his role as Dave in the film *Red Dog*, and Claire van der Boom, a Logie-winning actress who starred in the remake of *Hawaii Five-O*.

They were joined by veteran Australian actor Chris Hayward and *McLeod's Daughters'* Dustin Clare.

A coming-of-age film about an itinerant worker, *Love is Now* is written by director Jim Lounsbury and produced by his business partner Behren Schulz.

Their company Eponine Film is based in Sydney and the Hunter Valley, with funding for the film coming from local investors.

Mr Schulz, originally from Maitland and a trained mining engineer, spent a good deal of time in the Broke district as it was home to one of his good friends.

"I knew the district pretty well and we thought it would be an ideal place to make the film, we just needed to find the right property," he said.

Once they saw Hillisdale they knew it would make the ideal location for the film, in particular the property's

old homestead.

It was selected by the director for the film due to its scenery, its homestead and orchard and the fact it had lots of character.

The crew spent 10 days in the Hunter Valley in July, mostly at Hillisdale but also at Tocal Homestead near Paterson where the final end-of-harvest party scene will be shot.

During the filming at Hillisdale, one of the Harris family's old cattle dogs enjoyed all the commotion, but the highlight for the canine was wandering around the catering van to pick up a few scraps.

Sue Harris said the family had been on the 700-acre property for three generations.

"Last year we had a 16-page fashion shoot for *Vogue Australia* in the orchard," she said.

According to her father-in-law, Harold Harris, watching models wearing \$5000 dresses and \$1200 shoes picking fruit was a real eye opener.

"They looked pretty fancy up a ladder picking fruit in those outfits," he said with a chuckle.

The family sell much of their fruit at the Newcastle Farmers Markets, where people see the name Bulga and ask how the mine is going, Sue said.

Fruit pickers are only used during the Valencia season when the fruit is sent for juicing, otherwise the fruit is picked and packaged for the fresh market by members of the Harris family.

With excellent underground water the trees thrive on the Millbrodale Creek flats, on land protected from the strong westerly winds that sweep through most of the Hunter.

In addition to the oranges the Harris family runs a steer-fattening operation on the farm at Bulga and also on their Carrabolla district property.



RIGHT: Sue Harris and father-in-law Harold Harris hosting a film shoot on their Bulga property.

Picture by LOUISE NICHOLS