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Media Release:

Collie Public Library digitises maps

Around 500 maps of historic Collie Coal Basin underground coalmines are currently stored at the Collie Public Library for historical conservation purposes. Over 200 of these maps will be accessible digitally via the Collie Public Library, thanks to financial support from Premier Coal.

The \$3,500 donation from Premier Coal and trial funding from the Shire of Collie will enable a complex and detailed project to come to life for the benefit of the Collie community and history buffs.

The Collie Public Library recognised the importance of preserving the historical information for a few key reasons:

- the subsurface mine data is important, as it informs future developments and potentially hazardous areas;
- the data is critical for historical research and community use as new projects are designed and developed in the area; and
- by converting the maps to digital, it ensures everyone is accessing the most-up-to-date information, which is important from an information accuracy point of view.

Cr Ian Miffling, Shire President said he was pleased to have the project trial completed.

“The main goal of the initiative is to preserve and allow the Collie Mine Maps to be easily accessible, and keyword searchable via a database of records for both private and public use.

“We regularly receive requests for information in person, over the phone and via email from all over Australia. Majority of the requests relate to historical reference and awareness around the scale of underground mining that occurred and its importance to the energy industry in Western Australia.

“With this information now available digitally, we can respond to these community and government project requests immediately and direct them to the high quality, digitised maps.

“As part of project planning, we have also been consulting with other state agencies that have Collie mining maps in their collection and this has been great from a communication and connection perspective.

“We are thrilled to have the maps now through the digitisation process and appreciate Premier Coal’s support to make this happen,” said Cr Ian Miffling.

The Collie Local Studies unit, attached to the Collie Public Library, was formed in 1974 by a group of volunteers. As of 2018, the Shire of Collie stepped into manage the collection. It houses a large collection of varied materials from multiple sources including Collie coal mining history, research material, photographs

and maps, oral histories of Collie identities, original rate books and collie local newspapers. The Local Studies Collection is managed by the Shire of Collie's Public Library Manager and Library Officer.

Premier Coal Operations Manager, Braedon Gaske, was happy to help the Collie Public Library.

"Digitising information makes it simpler to preserve, access and share data. We are happy our funding ensured this digital project could go ahead for the benefit of the community in terms of management and accessibility of the maps, efficiency and accuracy.

"The digital maps should prove to be valuable for future community planning and development," said Braedon.

The donation was part of the Premier Coal Community Support Program, which is funded by Yancoal and aims to make a positive difference in the local community and to the lives of the people who work and live in Collie.

For over 20 years since 2004, Yancoal has grown to be one of Australia's largest coal exporters: owning or operating eight producing mines across the country, employing almost 5,500 Australians, contributing to the national economy, and investing in regional communities.

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