

# Chinese miner celebrates festival with friends

It was the night of the Chinese Moon Festival – one of China's grandest festivals – and the 15th day of the eighth month of the Chinese lunar calendar was welcomed in style at a special function held in Gunnedah late last month.

Mining giant Shenhua Watermark hosted an evening at Quirang Country Gardens and invited guests enjoyed a night befitting one of that country's most important festivals

As festivals go, the Moon Festival is second only to the Spring Festival. Renowned for its moon cakes and displays of brightly-lit lanterns, the Moon Festival is one of China's most significant cultural events, celebrated every year when the moon is roundest and brightest.

The ancient Chinese observed that the movement of the moon had a close relationship with changes of the seasons and agricultural production.

Hence, they expressed thanks to the moon and celebrated the harvest and last Tuesday's event presented the company with the opportunity to welcome and entertain the region's community leaders and stakeholders.

In modern times the event is celebrated by family and friends coming together to wish good will, longevity and good fortune.

More than 150 invited members of the local community, industry stakeholders and local government representatives flocked to Quirang Country Gardens to meet Shenhua Watermark Coal Chairman, Lui Xiang, Director/CEO Wang Ningbo and the team that are behind the Watermark project, south-east of Gunnedah near the village of Breeza.

and Mr Ningbo and were entertained by country singer Katrina Burgoyne.

Guests also enjoyed a finger-food feast of Thai fish cakes with sweet coriander dipping sauce, pancetta wrapped tiger prawns, Peking duck spring rolls and sweet soy sauce, pan-fried scallops and Peking Duck pancakes, to name but a few of the mouth-watering dishes.

There was Chinese Butterfly cake, Osmanthus pies, Tuna sushi rolls, puffy almond cookies, sweet sticky rice balls with coconut flakes and of course, Chinese Moon Cake.

Councillors Col Murray, Owen Hasler and Ian Lobsey – the three mayors of the shires and regions which will be most involved with the proposed coal mine venture, also addressed the gathering.

They welcomed the Shenhua and stressed the importance of vibrant, sustainable coal mining project to the economic future of the region.

Mr Liu Xiang, said it was fitting that Shenhua celebrated the Moon Festival with friends, both old and new.

"As we work towards the fruition of our Watermark Project, Shenhua's goal is not just to operate a mine but to become an important and valued member of the local community," said Mr Liu.

"We take our commitments in this regard very seriously, and our success will be measured by not just the economic benefits we can deliver to the region but on the relationships we forge with the local community.

"One of our most important ventures so far in this regard has been the work of our Community Reference Groups. They were established to work directly with the project

were identified and addressed in the Watermark Project's Environmental Impact Statement.

"These groups have been essential to our work and I wish to express Shenhua's immense appreciation to all of those community members who have been involved in the past years for their co-operation," Mr Liu said.

The evening also saw the announcement of the final round of funding from the Watermark Community Fund by Director and CEO of Shenhua Australia and Shenhua Watermark Coal, Mr Wang Ningbo.

The Community Fund was pledged by Shenhua as part of the grant of its Exploration Licence in 2009, and includes a commitment of \$1 million per annum for up to five years of exploration.

"Over the last four years Shenhua Watermark has sought to be an active member of the local community and the wider New England region.

"Our community fund has been one way we have achieved this," Mr Wang said.

"One million dollars will be available to community projects and this year we will seek to focus on applications for environmental and indigenous projects in particular.

"We are looking forward to once again working with the community to support valuable projects that will make a lasting impact on the region," Mr Wang added.

Full details of the application process, including eligibility criteria and the application deadline, will be made available via the Shenhua Watermark website in coming weeks



*Peace and Prosperity, Cutting the cake at last week's celebration of the Chinese Moon Festival. From left, Wang Ningbo, Director/CEO Shenhua Watermark, Cr Colin Murray, Mayor Tamworth Regional Council, Liu Xiang, Chairman, Shenhua Watermark, Cr Owen Hasler, Mayor, Gunnedah Shire Council and Ian Lobsey, Mayor Liverpool Plains Shire Council.*