



ALSO EXCITED: Members of the Werris Creek men's shed, from left, front, Jake Thomas and Peter Cunningham and back, Jill Gay, Henry Porter and Barry Constable are pleased with the funding allocation. 051012G0A01

Community funds help nine projects

By **Jacqueline van Aanholt**

NINE community projects in the Liverpool Plains Shire will share \$1 million in funding from Shenhua Watermark Coal's Community Fund.

Among the beneficiaries are the Australian Railway Monument and Railway Museum which will receive \$97,960 to establish a number of new displays.

Quirindi's Bell Park will undergo a huge renovation worth \$214,590 and the Werris Creek Community Shed will have a \$118,284 purpose-built shed installed.

"Bell Park will notice the most changes as the result of the funding announcement.

Based on a local mother's design the redevelopment of the park will include the installation of new play equipment including a flying fox, swings, a g-pod swinger, infants play structure and spring rockers, tables and chairs, bench seating and shade sails.

Quirindi mother Donna Lawson who has two small boys, Jack and Heath, said the idea for the redevelopment of the park came after a drive through Guyra.

"I saw they had a new playground there and thought, well they're a small town, we could do something like that," she said.

Mrs Lawson developed the design and worked with Liverpool Plains Shire Council to hone it.

"I was thrilled to hear that we had been awarded the funding. We are hopeful if the playground isn't

finished in time for Christmas it will be early in the New Year," she said.

The Community Shed couldn't be happier - thanks to the grant they will finally have their own, real shed.

The shed's members operate out of the 50-year-old school hall at the local Catholic church.

Each week the members, there are more than 30 of them at the moment, meet at the shed - which is open three days a week - and participate in activities designed to help improve their social well-being and psychological health.

The new shed will allow the group to expand further and undertake new projects in a larger, specialised space.

The Shenhua Community Fund was pledged by the mining giant as part of its exploration licence granted by the Department of Primary Industries in 2009.

Under the pledge Shenhua committed \$1 million per year for up to five years of exploration or up to \$5 million.

The shire's funding announcement follows an announcement Tamworth Regional Council will be awarded \$250,000 from Shenhua for the redevelopment of Marsupial Park and a community playground slated for development in Bicentennial Park.

Projects in the Gunnedah Shire were awarded more than \$460,000 in funding for four different projects and programs from the fund this year.



NEW PLAYGROUND: Quirindi mother Donna Lawson, holding son Heath, pictured with Liverpool Plains Shire Council deputy mayor Col Stewart, mayor Ian Lobsey and Donna's elder son Jack, are thrilled the Bell Park playground redevelopment project has been awarded more than \$200,000 from Shenhua's Community Fund. Photo: **Geoff O'Neill** 051012G0C01