



ABOUT 90 people attended a cocktail party held to introduce Shenhua's new CEO Xiang Liu on Thursday.



MAYOR Owen Hasler welcome Mr Liu to Gunnedah.

# Gunnedah gets new resident and a party

**SHENHUA Watermark threw a cocktail party at Bitter Suite on Thursday night to welcome new Chief Executive Officer Liu Xiang and introduce many new Shenhua executives to other residents in the town they now call home.**

New and old councillors were present, as well as representatives of the Liverpool Plains Shire Council and business and community members, all turned out to welcome Mr Liu.

Mr Liu brings extensive business experience to the role, having worked in Belgium in the area of trade for the European Economic Community, the precursor of the European Union, before arriving in Australia to initially work in Melbourne.

Upon appointment to his new role last month, Mr Liu has already taken up residence in Gunnedah and says he plans to make his home here for many years.

Mr Liu took the opportunity to announce the recipients of this year's round of the Shenhua Community Fund and discuss his own vision for Shenhua continuing to aid and helping to grow the Gunnedah community.

He said Shenhua had now invested \$4 million in the community, in projects which he hoped would grow the health, education, recreation capacity and prosperity of all Gunnedah residents and expressed the hope for a continued strong relationship for the company and his own family, with the Gunnedah community.

New Gunnedah Mayor Owen Hasler, in his first official outing in the role, echoed these sentiments, and began by welcoming Gunne-

dah's newest resident to "our wonderful community".

"It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the community of Gunnedah.

"I am sure that [Mr Liu's] extensive experience will be put to the benefit of Shenhua, the second largest energy provider in China and probably around three or fourth largest in the world.

"For many people living in country Australia, the only contact may have had with people of Chinese heritage was that of frequenting the local Chinese restaurant.

"It is interesting to note that many of these Chinese Australian citizens had descended from Chinese workers who had, like many other migrants of the time, arrived in Australia during another mining boom digging for gold during the gold rushes of the 1850's and 60's.

Cr Hasler said Gunnedah today hosted "many Chinese nationals in our town, many working for [Shenhua], and we welcome them as they broaden our cultural base".

"We hope that they are enjoying what Gunnedah has to offer as well as enriching our community with the rich and diverse culture that you have developed over several thousand years," he said.

Cr Hasler referred to his own experience, travelling to China in 2006 with his wife Di.

"We were amazed and impressed by what we saw during our three-week visit.

"That production is not only fueling the significant increase in the standard of living of your own people but is benefitting us here in Australia and seeing you challenge America as

the industrial superpower of the 21st century," he said.

Cr Hasler, who has been a member of the Shenhua Community Fund Committee over the past several years applauded the fund and the distribution of more than \$4 million to local organisations.

"This has, naturally, been extremely well received," he said.

"As a consequence we have seen the new Rural Health Centre opened recently, similarly the kitchen at Gunnedah South School and the enclosure of the heated pool at GS Kidd School, the upgrade of Yal-lambee and many other projects in Curlewis, Premer and other parts of our Shire and the neighbouring Liverpool Plains Shire."

Mr Hasler also applauded Shenhua for its consultative approach to industrial and development issues.

"We have seen Shenhua management develop a very consultative approach in its general operations during its' development stage over the last four years and we hope that this policy continues into the future under your leadership as we recognise that this is to be made public next month.

"I believe that Gunnedah Shire, koala capital and land of opportunity, does in fact face a significant period of growth which will enhance the opportunities for many of our young people while creating some challenges for council and the wider community.

"It is only through working together in true partnership in an open, honest and transparent way that we can maximise the benefits to all and minimise the potential negatives from that increased growth in our burgeoning mining sector."



MANY of the Shenhua executives and their families, who have made Gunnedah their home, were introduced once more to members of the wider community. New CEO, Xiang Liu is on the far right.

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