

# Mining Accident News No.0813

Monday 21 July 2008

## 56 trapped in coal mine flood in southern China

BEIJING - A state-run news agency reports 56 people are trapped after a coal mine flooded in southern China.

Xinhua News Agency said rescuers were unable to make contact with the miners at the Nadu mine in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region after the flood late Monday afternoon.

Tuesday 22 July 2008

## Beaconsfield mine inquest resumes

The inquest into the death of Beaconsfield miner Larry Knight will resume in northern Tasmania today, more than two years after a fatal rockfall.

Mr Knight was killed in the Anzac Day 2006 rockfall which trapped his fellow miners Brant Webb and Todd Russell for a fortnight.



The inquest into the death of Beaconsfield miner Larry Knight could take up to three months. (supplied by family)

The inquest began briefly last September when special investigator Greg Melick completed a 700-page report that found a mining-induced rockfall killed Mr Knight and trapped Mr Russell and Mr Webb 900 metres below the surface.

But Mr Melick was unable to say whether the rockfall could have been prevented if the mine had provided more structural support underground.

The counsel for Beaconsfield Gold argued at a preliminary hearing two weeks ago there was

no need for the inquest because the Melick report had already covered the issues.

But Coroner Rod Chandler has ruled that he is required to conduct an inquest, as Mr Knight died at a workplace.

The inquest, which could take up to three months, will begin with opening statements today.

About 30 witnesses are expected to give evidence.

## Beaconsfield widow seeks answers

The widow of the man killed in Tasmania's Beaconsfield goldmine two years ago hopes an inquest will help answer why her husband died.

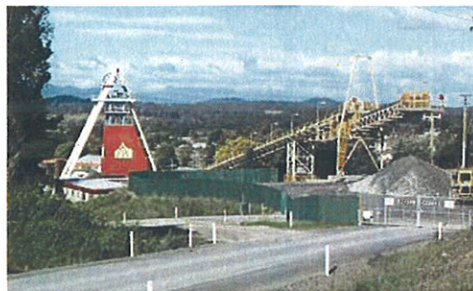
Coroner Rod Chandler this morning will begin looking into the death of Larry Knight in the Anzac Day rockfall in 2006.

Mr Knight's widow Jacquie Knight says she knows the inquest will not bring her husband back, but she hopes it will answer questions like why he died, could his death have been prevented, and what can be done to prevent other mining deaths.

The mother-of-two says she does not want another mining family to experience the pain she and her family have been through.

The inquest will investigate the circumstances surrounding the rockfall that killed Mr Knight and trapped his colleagues Todd Russell and Brant Webb 936 metres below ground. It is expected to take up to three months.

Journalists have just been briefed on how the hearings will proceed and opening statements are beginning.



Beaconsfield Gold Mine: the Hart Shaft discharge conveyor



## Mining dictionary

A guide to common mining terminology

### I

**incline** An inclined shaft or passage. An inclined shaft was sometimes called an underlay.

**inclined tramway** A tramway linking a mine and/or mill located in the bottom of a gorge with the top, or linking a mine on a slope with a mill at the lower level. Called a self-acting incline if the descending loaded trucks were used to pull up an empty truck on the other end of the cable. The tramway had a section of double track halfway up the incline so that trucks could pass each other. Some had three rails to simplify the cross over. Where the filled trucks had to be hauled up the incline, a winding engine was located at the top. See example below.

## Katoomba Scenic Railway

It's the steepest railway in the world (Guinness Book of Records), and originally part of the Katoomba mining tramways constructed between 1878 and 1900.

The funicular railway line descends through sandstone cliffs, via a rock tunnel beside Orphan Rock, then emerges to spectacular views and lush fern-filled rainforest.

Right: Without the lush vegetation, the railway's steepness is obvious in this c1900 photo. At the time, it was dual track.



### Facts and Figures

- Operates every 10 minutes, every day of the year.
- Maximum gradient: 52 degrees or 1 in 0.82 or 122%.
- Length of incline: 415 metres (1360 ft).
- Vertical descent: 178 metres (587 ft).
- Speed: 4 metres per second.
- Capacity (theoretical): 840 passengers per hour.
- Roof: metal mesh, with transparent cover in wet weather.
- Type: Variously known as an incline railway/railroad, funicular railway, cable railway or cable incline.

### History of Katoomba Scenic Railway & Mine:

[http://infoblue mountains.net.au/rail/ksr/kat\\_tram.htm](http://infoblue mountains.net.au/rail/ksr/kat_tram.htm)

