

BHP Billiton Chronology



Contents



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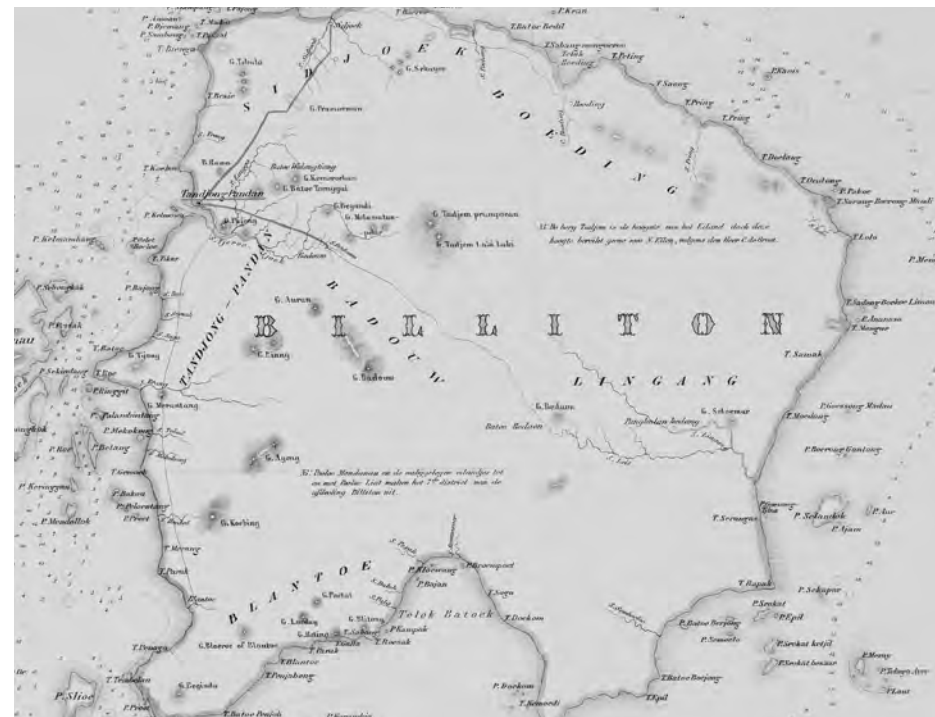
3	1851	A Dutch party discovers tin at Billiton Island	10	1957	BHP opens Central Research Laboratories at Shortland, Newcastle
	1860	NV Billiton Maatschappij is established		1963	BHP and Esso collaborate in search for oil beneath Bass Strait
4	1883	Charles Rasp discovers rich silver and lead at Broken Hill	12	1968	Huge deposits of rich iron ore are developed at Mt. Newman
	1885	Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd is floated		1970	Royal/Dutch Shell Group purchases Billiton
5	1902	Invention of the flotation vessel	13	1984	BHP acquires Utah International from General Electric
	1906	Fire breaks out at BHP underground mine		1990	Escondida in Chile begins producing copper
7	1915	Newcastle Steelworks opened		1994	Billiton is acquired by South African mining company, Gencor
	1930	Billiton establishes a people's fund	14	2000	BHP formally becomes BHP Limited
8	1934	Australian built military aircraft at Port Melbourne begin	15	2001	BHP and Billiton reach an agreement with Shareholders to merge on 18 March 2001
	1935	Establishment of the first bauxite mine on Bintan Island			
9	1939	The BHP fighter planes make up most of front line against Japan			
	1941	Ship building for the navy begins at Whyalla, South Australia			

1851



A Dutch party discovers tin at Billiton Island (Belitung) in the Dutch East Indies. The party is led by Vincent Gildemeester Baron van Tuyll van Serooskerken and John Francis Loudon.

Their discovery is in a tropical region, surpassing Cornwall in England as the world's largest producer of tin.



1860

NV Billiton Maatschappij is established and the company's articles of association are signed at the Groot Keizerhof Hotel in The Hague, Netherlands.

Two months later, the Billiton Company acquires mineral rights to the Billiton and Bangka Islands. It will mine tin on Billiton Island until 1958.



1883



Charles Rasp is a boundary rider on a remote Australian sheep station in the Barrier Ranges in western New South Wales. While at work he discovers rich silver and lead.

Rasp confidently pays for one of the biggest mining leases ever taken out on a payable ore body in Australia at that time.



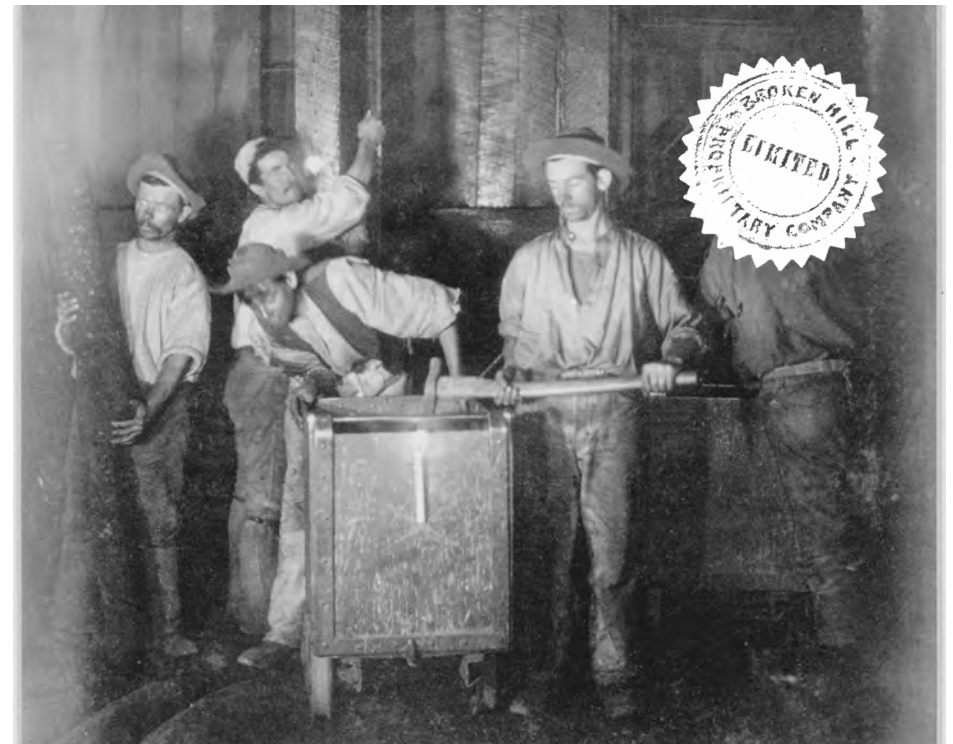
1885

Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd is floated, with its head office in Melbourne. The Company's directors resolve to hire the best mining experts from around the world.

This early emphasis on expertise is the basis of a hiring policy that continues to this day.

THE BROKEN HILL PROPRIETARY COMPANY LIMITED.

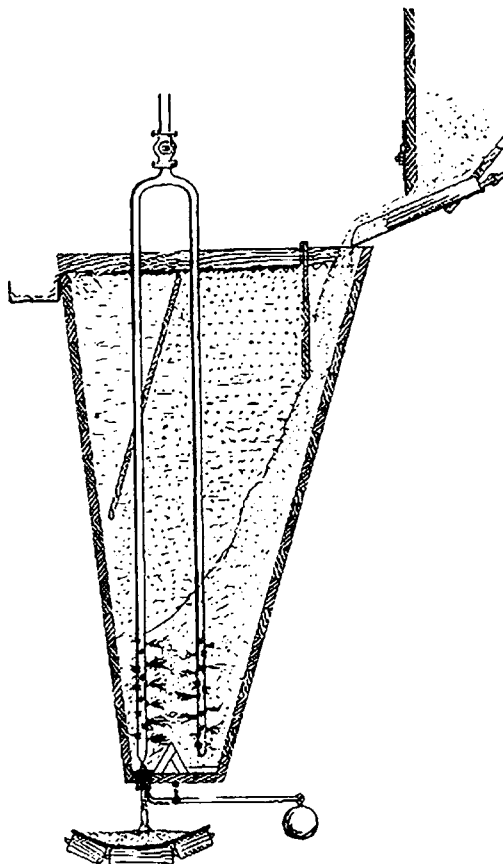
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the First Ordinary General Meeting of the BROKEN HILL PROPRIETARY COMPANY LIMITED, will be held at the Registered Office of the Company, No. 121 Collins Street West, in the City of Melbourne, on Tuesday 15th December 1885, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.



1902

Inspired partly by brewing techniques, the Potter-Delprat Process is developed by BHP to extract huge tonnages of zinc that were not previously commercially viable.

Modern versions of this flotation process are used around the world to extract a wide variety of minerals. Its invention – really a chain of innovations – is a high point in the history of metallurgy.

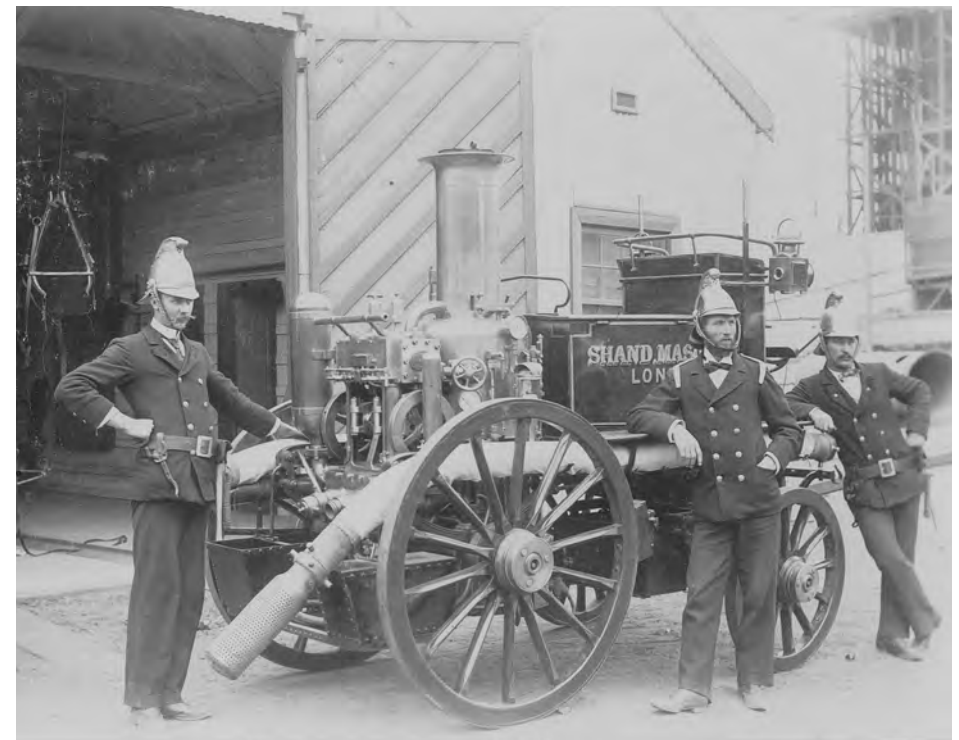


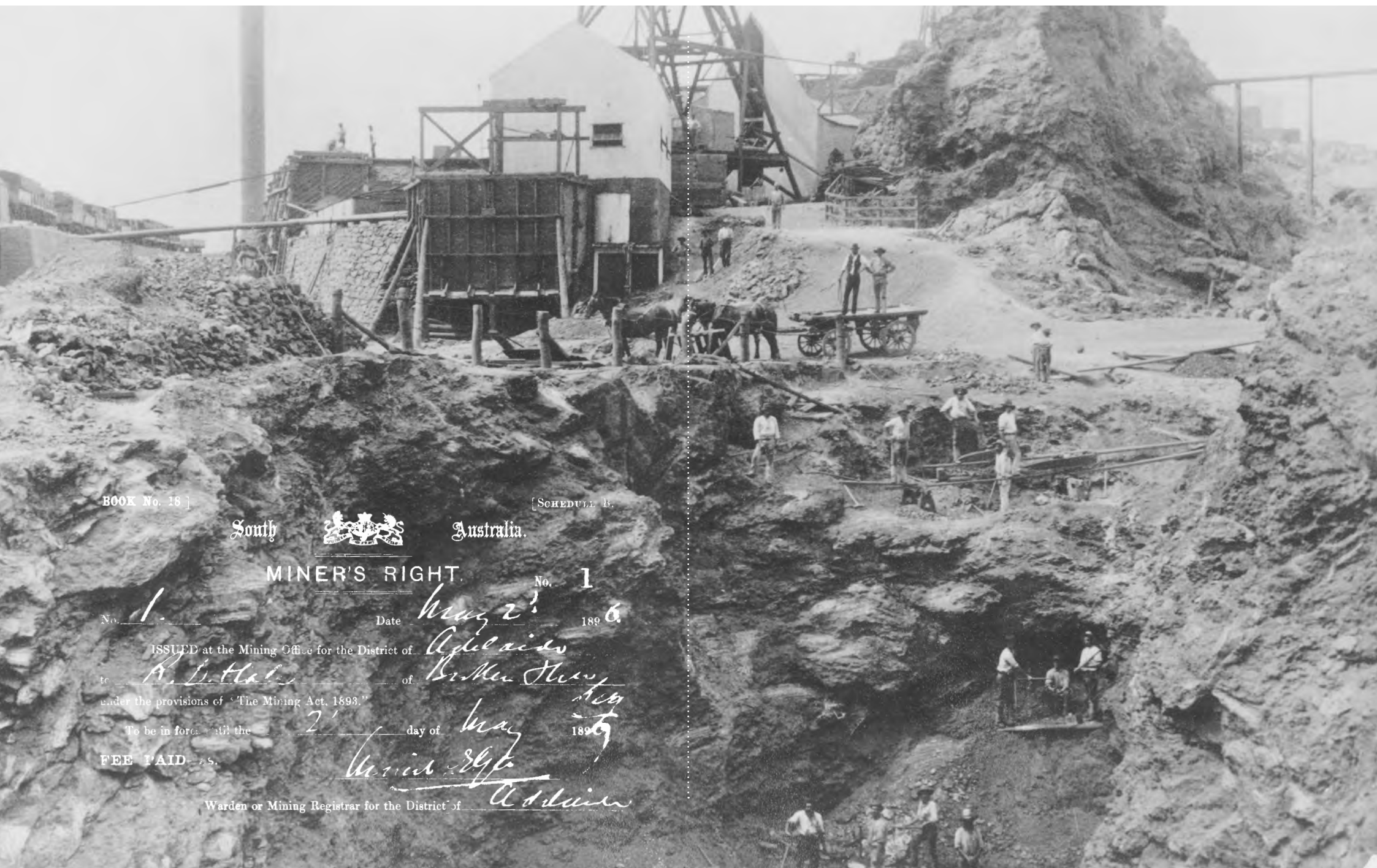
SKETCH G—FLOTATION VESSEL. DELPRAT PROCESS.

1906

Fire breaks out in BHP's underground mine at Broken Hill, resulting in the loss of several lives and emphasising the risks associated with mining.

Rescue efforts by courageous miners are hampered by poisonous gas. More awards are officially conferred for acts of bravery than for any previous event in Australian history.





BOOK No. 18]

[SCHEDULE B.

South



Australia.

MINER'S RIGHT.

No. 1

No. 1.

Date

May 2nd 1896

ISSUED at the Mining Office for the District of Adelaide

to

A. L. Hall

of

Broken Hill

under the provisions of 'The Mining Act, 1893.'

To be in force till the

2nd

day of

May 1896

FEE PAID—£s.

Warden or Mining Registrar for the District of Adelaide

1915



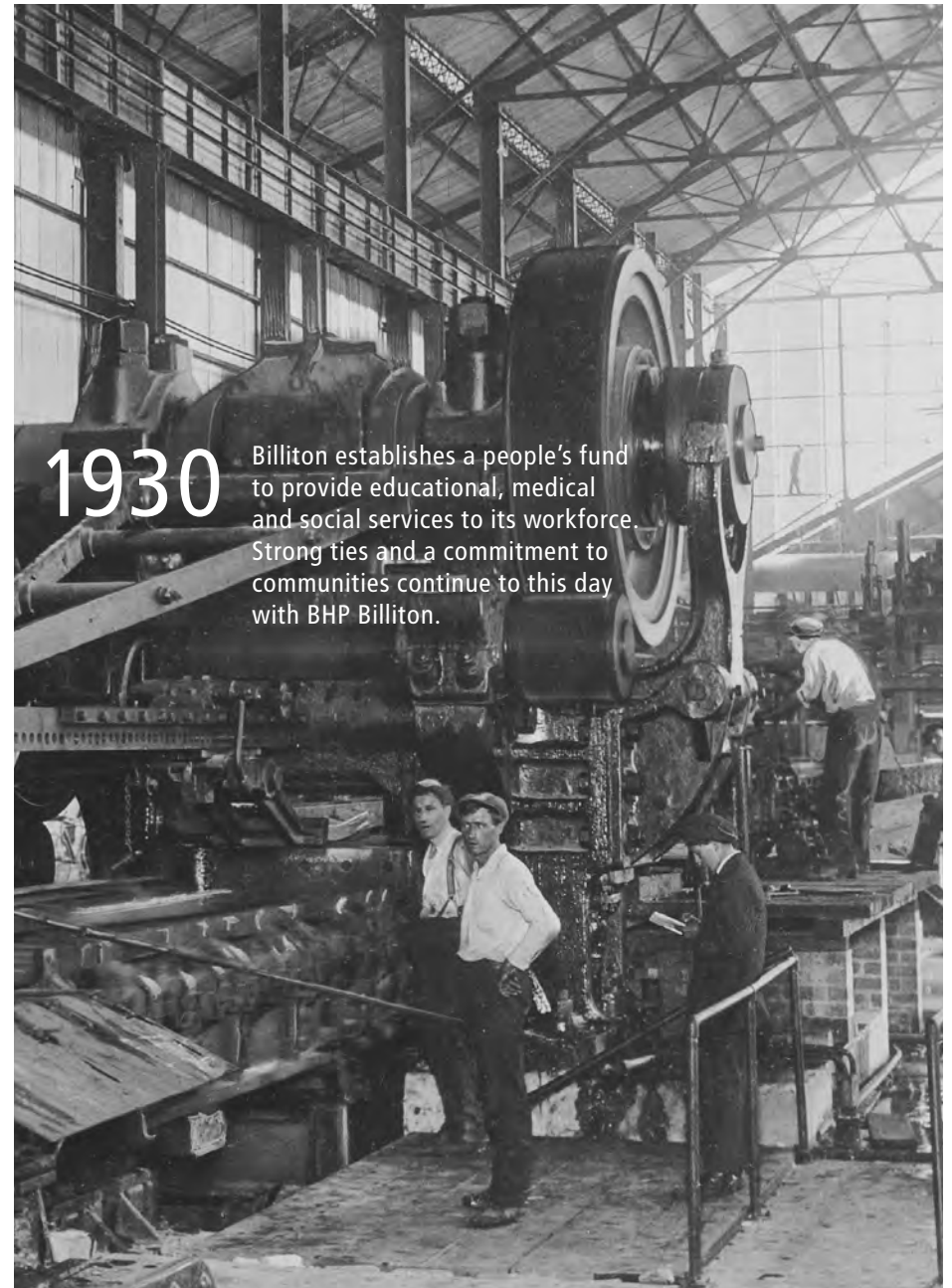
Newcastle Steelworks completed. The first large-scale steelworks in the nation, it will run for the next 84 years.

In the next half century, the company's expanding steelworks, at Newcastle and Port Kembla, attract scores of new businesses and help to industrialise the nation.



1930

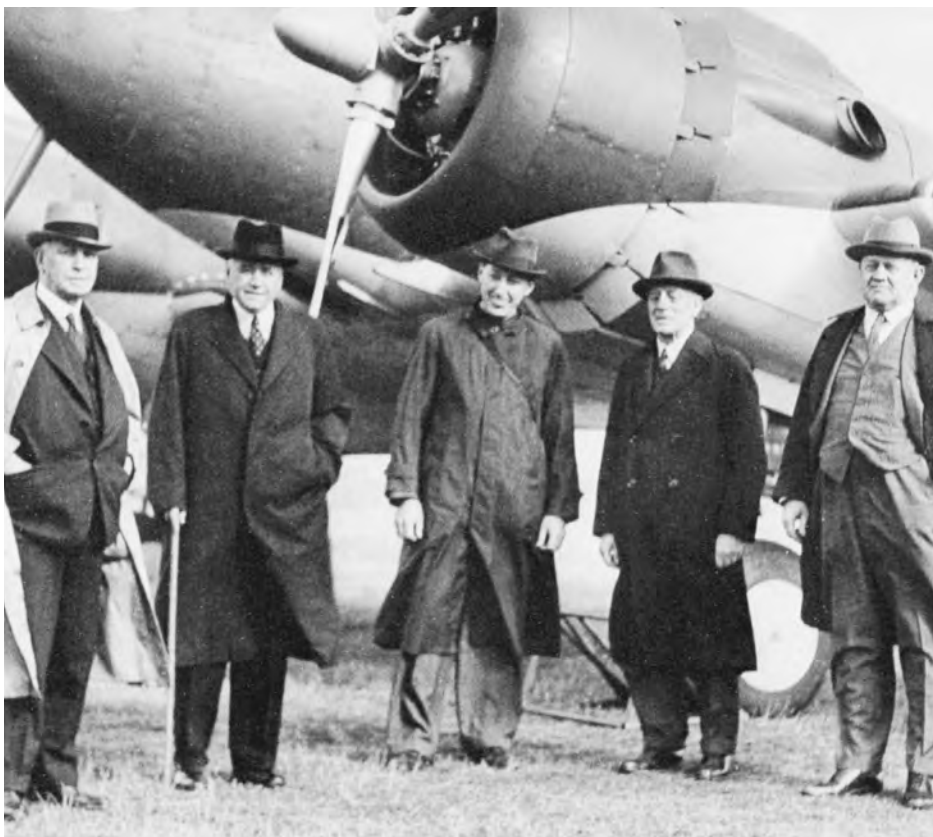
Billiton establishes a people's fund to provide educational, medical and social services to its workforce. Strong ties and a commitment to communities continue to this day with BHP Billiton.



1934

BHP's Managing Director Essington Lewis returns from Japan, convinced it is preparing for war. He forms an Australian syndicate to build military aircraft at Port Melbourne.

During World War II, Lewis is the most powerful civilian in the nation and heads the munitions and aircraft industries with their huge workforces. He refuses to be paid for his work.



1935

Billiton expands its business activities, establishing the first bauxite mine on Bintan Island in Indonesia.

Six years later, Billiton mines bauxite in Suriname, South America. Bauxite is the raw material for aluminium, the lightweight metal for which demand is soaring during World War II.





1941

1939

The BHP-led syndicate, Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation, flies their first planes - the Wirraway – which make up most of the front line fighters when Japan enters the war in 1941.

The Wirraways, effectively training planes, are followed by the faster and stronger Boomerangs, Beauforts and Beaufighters.

Ship building for the navy begins at Whyalla, South Australia – the site of a new BHP blast furnace. The first corvette, HMAS Whyalla, is launched on 12 May.

BHP's willingness to diversify into a range of activities makes it the nation's greatest manufacturing company as well as the largest private shipowner.



1957

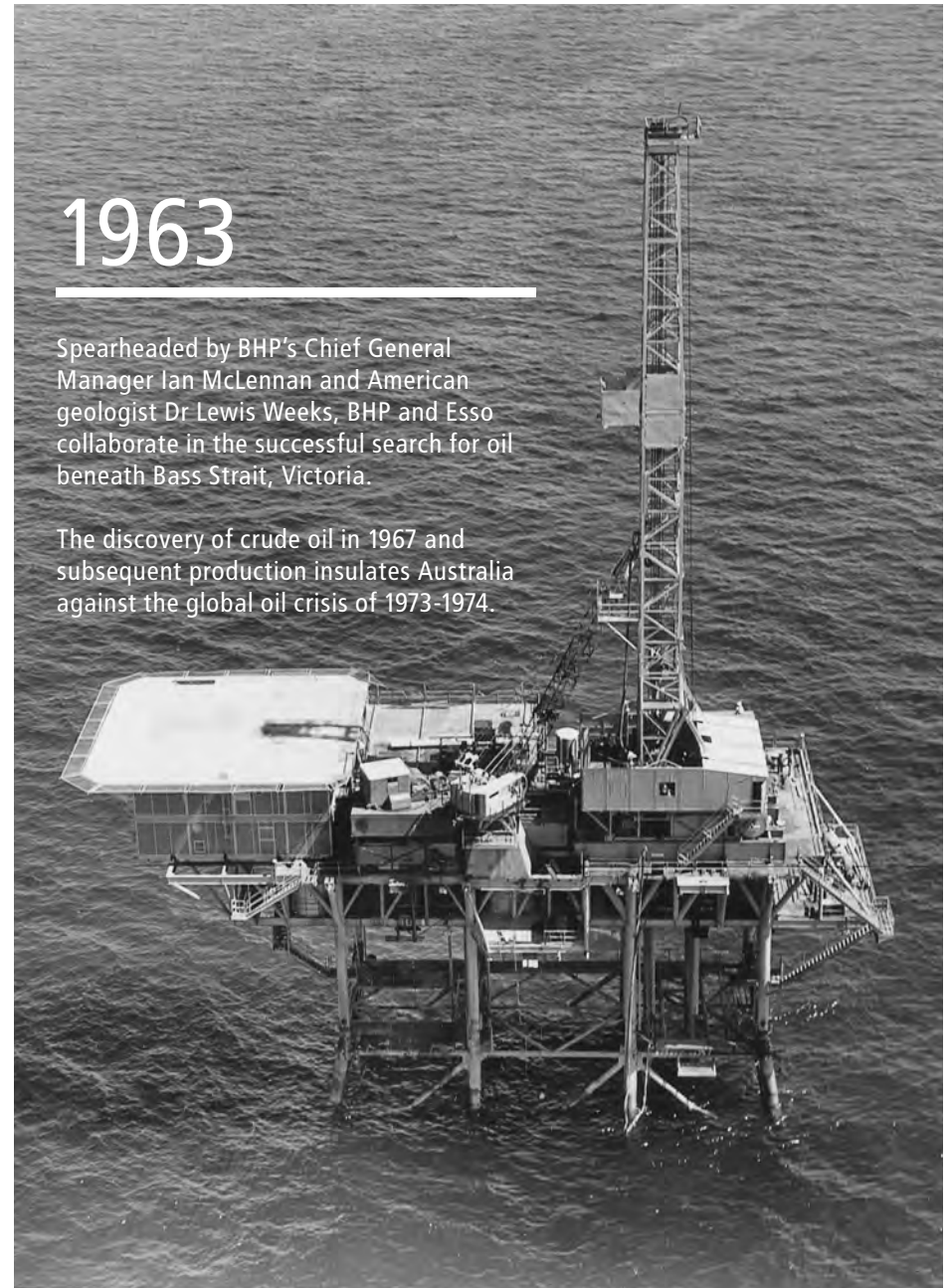
To tackle a wide span of challenges, BHP opens Central Research Laboratories at Shortland, Newcastle. The facility is used to research and develop new techniques in ore smelting, refining and steel-making, as well as research new methods and technologies to aid in the discovery and development of natural resources.



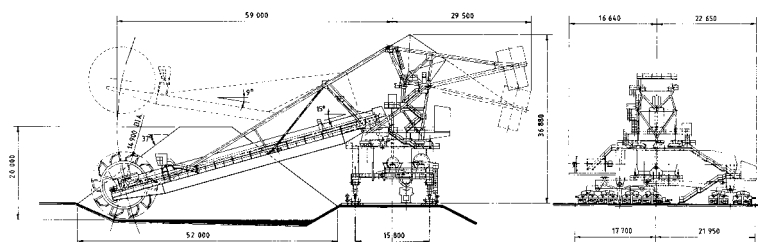
1963

Spearheaded by BHP's Chief General Manager Ian McLennan and American geologist Dr Lewis Weeks, BHP and Esso collaborate in the successful search for oil beneath Bass Strait, Victoria.

The discovery of crude oil in 1967 and subsequent production insulates Australia against the global oil crisis of 1973-1974.







1970

Royal/Dutch Shell Group purchases Billiton on 25 July. In the following two decades, Billiton becomes a mining empire with works extending from Australia to South America.

The Company intensifies its exploration, research and development of new mines. It is also at the forefront of sustainable mining practices.



1968

Huge deposits of rich iron ore are developed at Mt. Newman in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. A long railway is built to the Indian Ocean.

Eventually, Port Hedland in Western Australia becomes Australia's largest port and today, is one of the world's main bulk-cargo ports.



1990



The huge mine at Escondida in Chile – located in the Atacama Desert, one of the driest places on Earth – begins producing copper.

BHP's controlling interest in Escondida makes it one of the world's leading copper miners.

1984

BHP acquires Utah International from General Electric. The purchase makes BHP a major coal exporter in Queensland and extends the Company's operations into the United States, Brazil, Canada and Chile.

The deal transforms BHP into a worldwide minerals company.



1994

A major portion of Billiton, including its stakes in mining and metals in 15 countries, is acquired by South African mining company, Gencor.

Billiton prospers. It is to be divested from Gencor in 1997 and listed on the London Stock Exchange.



2000



BHP formally becomes BHP Limited. It retains the 'Broken Hill' in its name even though the 'Big Mine' at Broken Hill closed in 1940. Not surprisingly, many Australians continue to believe mistakenly that BHP Billiton still operates at Broken Hill.



• 2001



BHP and Billiton reaches an agreement with Shareholders to merge on 18 March 2001. Shareholders agree to the merger on 16 May 2001. The merger receives Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) approval on 5 June 2001 under the conditions that BHP Billiton Group continue a strong Australian focus with headquarters remaining in Melbourne. European Commission approval follows on 15 June 2001.