

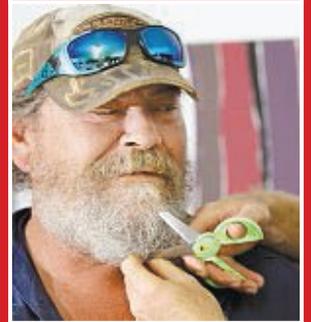
130 MILLION REASONS TO SMILE

COTTON ON TO A GOOD READ

PAGE 11 & RURAL WEEKLY



STEVE'S MIGHTY MOVEMBER MISSION P6



A CUT ABOVE: Owner Reece Gough stands surrounded by valuable sandstone at his Capricorn quarry which has won a top export award for sales to China.

PHOTO: ALLAN REINIKKA, AR27-1010-1

CHINESE TYCOONS USING OUR STONE TO BUILD \$5M MANSIONS

“There's enough here to rebuild Rome - Reece Gough



By **ADRIAN TAYLOR**
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CHINA'S wealthy new elite have boosted demand for the rock that built Rocky.

The sandstone used to construct the city's two cathedrals and other signature buildings is now in demand in Shanghai and Beijing.

Capricorn Sandstone Quarry is expanding to supply millionaires who want it for prestige mansions. Story Page 4.

Rocky's new Olympic pool

CONSTRUCTION dates for Rockhampton's new international standard pool are expected to be announced today.

Member for Rockhampton Robert Swarten will reveal details for the \$5 million project at the southside pool this morning.

The heated international-standard pool is part of a plan to revitalise the south bank of the Fitzroy River.

Funding for the project was pledged in June.

STORY PAGE 3

Officer 'forgot' to note meeting

A FORMER Rockhampton police officer said it was an "oversight on my behalf" that a meeting with a police informant wasn't recorded on a running sheet, a court heard yesterday.

Former Rockhampton CIB chief Graham John Richards made this statement during a CMC hearing in 2006.

Richards and former colleague Paul Alexander Dalton have pleaded not guilty to attempting to pervert the course of justice.

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ROCK STARS IN CHINA



SUPER STONE: Reece Gough from Capricorn Sandstone Quarries at the Stanwell site.

PHOTO: ALLAN REINIKKA, AR28-1010-7

Capricorn Sandstone Quarries wins exporter award

By **ADRIAN TAYLOR**
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IT provided the stone to build the historic heart of Rockhampton and many Brisbane and Sydney landmark public buildings.

And now Capricorn Sandstone Quarries, near Stanwell, is profiting from the exotic and expensive tastes of China's new multi-millionaires.

Owner and manager Reece Gough says the beautiful, high-grade, buff-coloured stone he carves out of his mountain is in big demand for mansions and palaces in Shanghai and Beijing that sell for \$5

million a pop.

He's built a thriving export trade and this week the family firm's efforts were recognised by Premier Anna Bligh at the Queensland Export Awards.

Reece's father Roy revived the quarry – which cut the building material for Customs House, the old post office and Rockhampton's two cathedrals – in 1994.

Since then annual production has increased from 3000 tonnes to 20,000 and it's still rising in line with demand.

But there's plenty left. The quarry holds an estimated million cubic metres of re-



CUTTING CREW: The latest technology has increased production and export potential.

PHOTO: ALLAN REINIKKA, AR27-1010-2

serves – enough to last for 100 years.

"There's enough here to rebuild Rome," says Reece. "The whole mountain is solid sandstone."

Cutting blades are now used to carve 10 tonne blocks, but Reece remembers when he

first started the material was hewn from the mountain with sledge hammers and chisels.

"It's the advances in extraction methods that have opened up greater export opportunities. The focus for many years was on Australian restoration

projects, but now we can produce the volume to satisfy orders from abroad. "The old buildings in Rockhampton are a great selling point." During her address at the export awards in Brisbane, Ms Bligh said the company generated more than \$1.5 million in export sales, making it a worthy winner of the Emerging Exporter of the Year award in the Ergon Energy Business Excellence Awards.

It's a success story built not just on China. Two semi-trailers a week transport stone to Sydney where it is popular with architects and builders.

And it's exported to

America and Taiwan. Reece also has his sights set on cracking the European market.

"The export awards will be a big help. Government recognition goes a long way overseas. It will make us more reputable. I would really like to get into Europe, supplying to the really high-end restorations and new buildings."

The stone, he says, is cherished because it comes in a variety of subtle colours. Some of it is highly patterned and it has many structural, decorative and landscaping uses.

There are now nine full-time staff and the expansion continues.

BULLY BRIEFS

Chest injuries

A MAN was taken to hospital with chest injuries yesterday evening after injuring himself on a property.

The man was working on the property at the time of the injury, shortly after 6pm.

The Sarina Ambulance crew responded and took the man to hospital.

Bike crash

A 57-year-old man was flown to Mackay Hospital yesterday evening after falling off his motorbike at a property near Moranbah.

The man suffered a fractured leg in the crash shortly after 6pm.

The Mackay-based CQ Rescue Helicopter and the Moranbah Ambulance crews attended.

Arts funding

WOORABINDA Aboriginal Shire Council will receive \$15,000 to support arts and cultural activities in the region.

The State Government funding under the Indigenous Regional Arts Development Fund (IRADF) supports the creation of indigenous art and the professional development of artists and cultural workers in regional and remote indigenous communities with a focus on keeping culture strong.

The \$15,000 is part of \$250,000 allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Queensland.

Spring fun

A SPRING Fun Fiesta is being held at Conaghan Park in Gracemere tomorrow from 2pm.

The free family event is sponsored by Gracemere Hidden Treasure and Gracemere Baptist Fellowship.

There will be a variety of games and face painting from 5pm.

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