

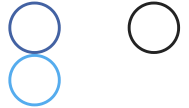


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NEW CHAPTER: Photographed in November 2020, the Mount Morgan mine could reopen in late 2021, bring prosperity back to the township.

MOUNT Morgan's business owners are trying to keep a lid on their excitement about the potential reopening of Mount Morgan mine because they've heard this story several times before - each time leading to crushing disappointment.

The town's older residents still tell stories about the glory days when the famous gold mine was still open and the township was thriving, with houses occupied and businesses booming on the back of bustling foot traffic.

Since the mine closed for the last time in 1990, Mount Morgan has languished, suffering from demoralising unemployment with many houses and businesses sitting empty.

Over the years, the town has periodically erupted in celebration after a saviour rode into town promising to reopen the mine and bring back those glory days - only to baulk and turn tail after the numbers were crunched and the unviable economic reality became apparent.

Last week it was revealed that the Heritage Minerals' \$60 million Mount Morgan project had recently completed a positive, definitive feasibility study and [was on the verge of becoming a committed project](#).

Mount Morgan resident of the past 19 years Melissa Chandler doesn't want to be a downer but hearing about Heritage Minerals' recently revealed plans to reopen the mine felt to her like the fairy tale *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*.

In her role as the Grand Hotel's manager, Ms Chandler had heard older patrons' stories about how good things used to be and was cautiously optimistic that the mine's reopening could be the real deal this time around.

"I think everyone in town is probably at the point that it's been talked about being opened for so long, some people will believe it when they see it," Ms Chandler said.

"But it would be an amazing thing for the town (if it did reopen), we all want it to happen, it would be great for the community.

"It would give locals jobs, it'll bring different people to the town, and it will boost business owners with money coming into town."

She said the whole community stood to gain from the town's vacant shops being filled by new businesses, and the vacant houses being tenanted once again.

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Just down the road at Mumma Kath's Kitchen, Tracy Ehlers said she had only just read the news this morning on social media about the proposed reopening of the mine.

Born in Mount Morgan, Ms Ehlers has run the business for the past year-and-a-half after returning to the town with her family.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic knocking people and businesses around this year, she had been lucky to be able to push through and stay open.

When asked about the mine's reopening, she was "absolutely optimistic".

"It's good for the small town. It's good for employment. It gets people back up here," Ms Ehlers said.

She didn't share the concerns of some residents about the dust being kicked up by the site.

"There wasn't a problem back then. I think it's only going to be beneficial if they're going to clean it up and get it reopened," she said.

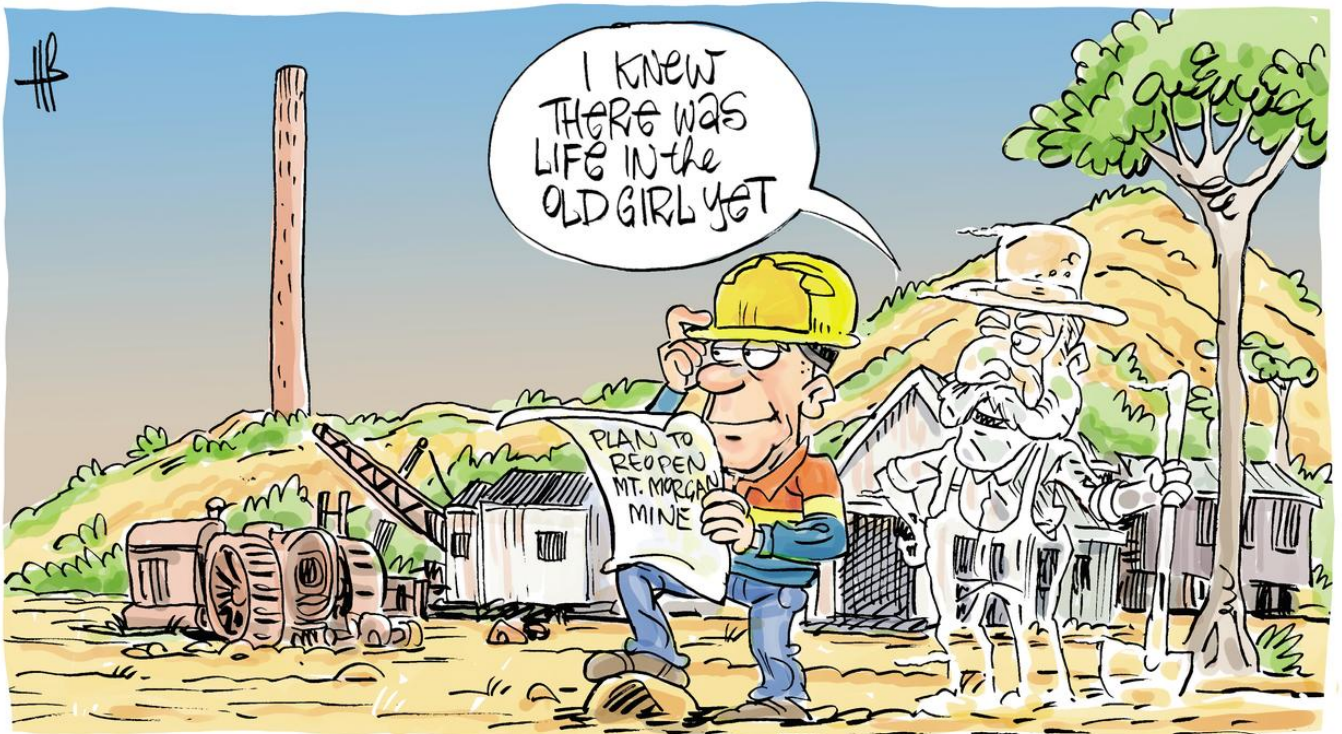
"It would be good to have something positive for the town."



Manager Melissa Chandler stands in the bar of Grand Hotel at Mount Morgan.



Kath Griffiths, Tracy Ehlers and Paula Murray from Mumma Kath's Kitchen cafe in Mt Morgan



Harry's view on the Mt Morgan mine reopening.