



## \$450,000 Partnership to Boost Threatened Species Conservation Across the Illawarra Escarpment

A major new partnership between GM<sup>3</sup> Dendrobium Mine, the Symbio Conservation Foundation, and Symbio Wildlife Park will deliver a three-year \$450,000 investment in large-scale conservation projects across the Illawarra Escarpment and Plateau, strengthening efforts to protect threatened wildlife species throughout Mount Kembla.

The new investment will support the Mount Kembla Integrated Threatened Species & Habitat Recovery Program. Led by the Symbio Conservation Foundation, the program brings together researchers, government agencies, local schools, Traditional Owners and community organisations.

It includes a suite of science-based conservation activities aimed at better understanding and protecting biodiversity in the Illawarra, with a significant portion of this work to be undertaken on GM<sup>3</sup>-owned land. Projects will focus on improving habitat for threatened species, building long-term monitoring capacity, strengthening research partnerships and actively involving the local community in conservation efforts.

This investment builds on an existing collaboration between Symbio and GM<sup>3</sup>, with funding provided through GM<sup>3</sup>'s Dendrobium Mine Community Grants Program. Simon Thomas, General Manager of Dendrobium Mine, said the partnership reflects GM<sup>3</sup>'s commitment to supporting local initiatives that deliver value to the Illawarra and its communities.

"Our existing partnership with Symbio has

already produced strong conservation outcomes and meaningful community initiatives, so expanding that work was a natural next step."

"Importantly, much of this work is occurring on GM<sup>3</sup> land that has already been mined beneath, demonstrating that mining and conservation can and do co-exist. Alongside this, the investment will expand educational programs, youth engagement and opportunities for Indigenous participation."

Symbio Wildlife Park's Kevin Fallon said the partnership highlights the important role collaboration plays in protecting wildlife and habitat.

"This partnership demonstrates the level at which local industry and conservation organisations can work together to achieve meaningful environmental outcomes at scale," Mr Fallon said.

"Over the past few years, our collaboration with GM<sup>3</sup> has already delivered important conservation outcomes for species like Greater Gliders and Koalas, providing the first large-scale abundance mapping for the region while also helping inspire the next generation through innovative education initiatives."

"This new three-year partnership allows us to expand that work significantly, building long-term scientific datasets, restoring habitat, and developing practical conservation solutions that will benefit wildlife across the Illawarra Escarpment and Plateau."



## Dendrobium Backs Mt Kembla Lowries in Comeback Season

GM<sup>3</sup> Dendrobium Mine is proud to be the major sponsor of the Mt Kembla Lowries 2026 team.

Founded over a century ago by local miners, the Lowries have always been at the heart of Mt Kembla's community.

After a 2 year absence from the Illawarra Rugby League second-grade competition, the Lowries are back and ready to build on their rich history.

In addition to the sponsorship, the Dendrobium Mine Community Enhancement Program has also supported the club with the purchase of fridges, BBQs, Line marking machines and marquees for community use and to help the club fundraise.

**Did you know?** The Lowries Club name is rooted in local mining history. A 'lowry' was a small coal wagon that ran along tram tracks, carrying coal from the mines.



## Save the date 96 Candles Ceremony 31 July 2026

The annual 96 Candles ceremony will be held at Windy Gully Cemetery in Mount Kembla on Friday, 31 July, 2026, the evening of the 124th anniversary of the mine disaster. More details to come.



We're pleased to announce that in Term 3, Dendrobium Mine will partner with Mt Kembla Public School to support a whole-of-school learn-to-swim program. This includes a 10-week program at McKeon's Swim School, along with transport to and from the pool. More information will be shared with school parents soon.



Workmen's Committee 1902

## Windy Gully Workman's Club

Shared by local resident, Phil Grant

In the late 1800s, there were no close hotels for the miners of Mount Kembla to quench their thirsts after a hard day's work.

Figtree Hotel meant a long journey in those days and numerous attempts to open one in Mount Kembla was put forward. Opposition came from the No Alcohol Ban by the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. However in 1896 a gambling license was granted and the Workman's Club was built. This was the second gambling license issued outside of Sydney.

A committee was formed to run it and alcohol was sold. Under much pressure from the Temperance Movement, the club closed in 1905.



The buildings were then rented out to mine workers. Unfortunately fire destroyed most of the buildings with some ruins still there today.

Part of the ruins today. Photo: Phil Grant



## Dendrobium Mine Wins Regional First Aid Competition

Twelve Mines Rescue teams from across the Newcastle, Hunter and Illawarra regions came together on Friday, 27 March to compete in the 2026 Northern Region First Aid Competition, including our own Dendrobium Mine Mines Rescue Team.

Teams were put through a series of high-pressure emergency scenarios, designed to test and refine their life-saving skills in realistic conditions. After a demanding day of competition, the Dendrobium team was awarded overall winner.

Dendrobium Captain Rob Monkley was proud of his team's performance, and grateful for the opportunity to compete:

"We're incredibly proud of this win, but even more grateful for the experience. Every year, the scenarios really test our ability to respond to a range of real-world situations. This year especially, managing mass casualty situations pushed us to think clearly, work as a team, and stay calm under pressure."

"The value of these competitions can't be overstated. They build confidence, sharpen our skills, and prepare us for moments where what we do truly matters."



## Dendrobium Mine Donates Life-Saving Equipment to Mount Kembla Community

GM³ Dendrobium Mine has proudly installed two emergency response stations at Mount Kembla, one located at Ryan Park next to the tennis courts, and one on the amenities block at Mt Kembla Oval. Each station is fitted out with an automated external defibrillator (AED) and a first aid kit, providing life-saving support in the event of an emergency.

These donations are in addition to the AED previously donated by the mine at Kembla Heights Bowling Club. The equipment is for community use. If you notice the stations needs restocking, please contact the GM³ community line on 1800 102 210.

## Dendrobium Mine Operations Update

This year marks 23 years since Dendrobium Mine commenced operations. Over that time, the operation has remained an important part of the Illawarra's mining and steelmaking story, with more than 600 employees and contractors involved in safely mining and supplying high-quality metallurgical coal to steelmakers in Australia and overseas.

Dendrobium Mine has recently completed the longwall relocation from Longwall 22 to Longwall 21A. We would like to thank local residents and the broader community for their patience, understanding, and support during this important transition period.

Longwall 21A commenced in February 2026 and is expected to operate through to September 2026. As always, our focus remains on safe, efficient, and responsible mining within the approved Dendrobium development consent area.

In parallel, roadway development continues in Area 3C, supporting the underground infrastructure required for ongoing mining activities. This work is an important part of the mine plan and ensures continued safe access within the approved consent area.

We remain committed to working respectfully with our local community, operating responsibly, and continuing to support local employment and economic contribution across the Illawarra region.



**SIMON THOMAS**  
GENERAL MANAGER  
DENDROBIUM MINE



## GM<sup>3</sup> Major Sponsor of Ride Wollongong 2026

GM<sup>3</sup> Dendrobium Mine has partnered with Destination Wollongong as the major sponsor of the 2026 Ride Wollongong Festival of Cycling.

Ride Wollongong will once again bring a vibrant, festive atmosphere to region, recapturing the magic of the 2022 UCI Road World Championships.

Running from Saturday 29 August to Sunday 13 September 2026, the 16-day festival will host a diverse program of

events designed to welcome riders of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. From community rides to elite-level cycling experiences, Ride Wollongong celebrates movement, inclusion and the power of coming together as a community.

Our partnership reflects GM<sup>3</sup>'s strong ties to the local community and our pride in supporting events that promote connection, wellbeing and accessibility. We look forward to

seeing our community come together for what promises to be a fantastic festival.

To see what's on, visit:  
<https://ridewollongong.com.au/>

**RIDE**  
WOLLONGONG  
Festival of Cycling

**GM<sup>3</sup>**

## Winter Safety: Getting Your Home Fire-Ready

As temperatures drop around Mount Kembla, many households begin using indoor fireplaces and heaters. A few simple checks now can help keep your home safe and warm throughout winter.

- ✔ Before lighting your first fire, it's a good idea to have your chimney or flue cleaned to prevent soot build-up and reduce fire risk. Always use dry, well-seasoned wood, and keep flammable items like furniture, curtains, and firewood at a safe distance from the hearth.
- ✔ If you store firewood at home, stack it neatly away from the house and check for any hidden wildlife, such as insects or snakes, before bringing it indoors. Never leave a fire unattended, and make sure it is fully extinguished before going to bed.
- ✔ Check that your smoke alarms are working and have fresh batteries, they are your first line of defence in an emergency.



### Autumn Wildlife Watch: Echidnas & Microbats

As the weather cools, some Mount Kembla's most fascinating local wildlife becomes a little more noticeable, if you know what to look (and listen) for.

You might spot the occasional short-beaked echidna moving slowly through bushland or even crossing local roads. Autumn is breeding season, which means echidnas are on the move more than usual. Sometimes several males will follow a single female in what's known as an "echidna train." While they may look shy and spiky, echidnas play an important role in the environment by turning over soil and controlling ants and termites.

At the same time, as dusk settles, keep an eye out for tiny silhouettes darting through the sky. These are likely microbats, such as the eastern bent-wing bat. Unlike bats in colder parts of the world, our local species don't

fully hibernate but instead enter short periods of rest to conserve energy. During autumn, they are often more active in the early evening as they feed on insects. A single microbat can eat thousands in one night, making them a natural pest controller for our area.

While these animals are a great sign of a healthy local ecosystem, it's important to give them space. If you're driving near bushland, take extra care, especially in the evenings when wildlife is more active. And if you come across an injured animal, it's best to contact a licensed wildlife carer rather than trying to handle it yourself.

Keeping an eye out for these unique locals is a great way to stay connected to the environment, and a reminder that even as the seasons change, there's still plenty of life moving quietly around us.

Our **Dendrobium Community Consultative Committee** meets bi-monthly, with the last meeting held in April 2026. Meeting minutes can be found on our website: [www.gm3.au/dendrobium-mine](http://www.gm3.au/dendrobium-mine)

### Community Call Line

Residents who have questions or concerns about our activities are encouraged to contact us through our Community Call Line:

**1800 102 210 | [community@gm3.au](mailto:community@gm3.au)**



### Volunteer with the Mt Kembla Pathway Group

The Mount Kembla Pathway Group get together every Wednesday morning to maintain, regenerate, weed, and plant at the Memorial Pathway.

It is a lovely day spent together socialising while working in this beautiful setting in Mount Kembla. Locals are invited to come along and join the group either regularly or occasionally. All are welcome.

### Community Grant Applications Now

Are you part of a community organisation with a project idea? Applications for our Community Grants Program are now open. Scan the QR code to access our new online application portal.

Not sure if your idea fits the criteria? We'd still love to hear from you. Get in touch at: [community@gm3.au](mailto:community@gm3.au)

