

## Project team powers mine development



The Canyon Coal project team is the engine that drives the company's growth. The committed team develops the company's projects into productive assets, relishing the opportunity to grow. From left: Revash Singh, Liza Janse van Vuuren, Nthabiseng Mueti, Melissa Pillay, Arjen Nell, Dawid Venter, Clifford Hallat and Gerhard Cronje.

"As soon as I joined 'projects', they said, 'Let's go and build a mine'," says Gerhard Cronje with his warm smile. "The benefit of working for the project team is that you get thrown into the deep end and gain a lot of exposure."

Gerhard enjoys working on the project team because he is involved in every aspect of project development, from resource drilling to logistics. Before joining Canyon Coal, he worked as an environmental consultant, so he now appreciates the opportunity to do work of a different nature.

"When I became a member of the project team, infill drilling was under way at Khanye Colliery. It was fascinating to see how the reserve was delineated. From that point, we developed the mine project to the stage where we opened the box cut. This was a big milestone in the life of the company and I felt a personal sense of achievement."

At Khanye, Gerhard worked closely with team member Melissa Pillay, who diligently managed the project's environmental compliance. Melissa reminded the team of the specifications for carrying out the work every step of the way, ensuring that the company met the conditions for development.

"Watching over the activities on site and making sure that all conditions were met was very rewarding," says Melissa.

Another interesting facet of Melissa's compliance work on Khanye is stakeholder relations. Melissa represents Khanye at monthly meetings with the stakeholder where she shares Canyon's monitoring results of potential issues like pollution. "We've had several meetings and all is going smoothly," she says.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF GREAT TEAMWORK

Revash Singh, the geologist on the project team, managed the most recent drilling programme at Khanye and is responsible for delineating the geology of all the company's projects. "Every project has its own obstacles," says Revash, "but the good interaction between the team members means that we tackle and overcome them together."

The Canyon project team has not only developed the major Khanye Colliery, but has also built the project pipeline, which includes the Ukufisa, De Wittekrans and Witfontein mines.

Project manager Dawid Venter is proud of having been involved in the development of the Witfontein mine project from the start. "Applying for the prospecting right, drilling the mine and developing the mining works programme – that is my biggest accomplishment," he says. "I would like to see the development of the mine through to the point where it is complete and running smoothly." The team plans to start building the Witfontein mine at the end of 2019.

Dawid joined the company as an environmental officer five years ago and initially worked on applications for prospecting rights. When Canyon obtained the prospecting rights, he progressed to managing drilling programmes. In the course of his work, he has discovered that he particularly likes mine planning and design, so he has taken up mining engineering studies and is half-way to completing his degree.

**"THE GOOD INTERACTION BETWEEN THE TEAM MEMBERS MEANS THAT WE TACKLE AND OVERCOME THEM TOGETHER."**

REVASH SINGH

### THE REWARDS OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The youngest team member, Nthabiseng Mueti, has honed her skills in drafting social labour plans and interacting with local communities and municipalities. "I feel like I am becoming a bit of an expert when it comes to dealing with the communities," she says enthusiastically. "I have learnt a lot about how to conduct myself with stakeholders and I am now able to communicate well too."


Nthabiseng adds that she has grown to the point where she fully appreciates the views of other parties.

Working on the project team has also helped Liza Janse van Vuuren find her niche. "I enjoy the enviro-legal aspects of the projects," she says. "Every team member is passionate about a particular area of the work."

"We all have projects spanning the entire life cycle of a mine – from due diligence to closure. Every time a new project comes up, it's a matter of assigning it to the person with the capacity to take it on. Each new project presents a new challenge and we learn from each other."

Liza's first mine development project, Phalanndwa extension, is nearing production. She led its development after gaining experience in licensing, drilling and environmental compliance. "We have progressed from environmental officers to project managers on some of the largest projects in the country," she says passionately.

The project team recently welcomed Arjen Nell to its ranks. Arjen has a passion for the environment and protecting it. "The exposure and work experience that I am gaining is very broad," he says. "I definitely cannot ask for more."

The dedicated team's work is overseen by group project manager Clifford Hallatt who reveals: "The team invests a lot of work in the various stages of projects, sometimes for as long as five years. And then they finally receive a piece of paper: for example, the mining rights for the Phalanndwa extension. That is extremely rewarding." 

# Canyon operates full blast at Khanye mine

The determined Canyon Coal team has brought yet another project in the company's ambitious pipeline to fruition: the Khanye mine has commissioned its permanent processing plant and is ramping up to nameplate capacity of 240 000 tons a month.

The commissioning of the plant is a remarkable achievement for Canyon Coal. The company has established a fully-fledged mine within a year, bringing local economic development to Bronkhorstspuit.

"It is a big achievement to open a mine within one year – to complete all the planning and pull all the parts of a project of this nature together," says Khanye's general manager Guy Thompson, a seasoned mining professional.

"The success is owing to the company's culture of getting down and doing the work, and doing it in a cost-efficient and effective way."

The commissioning of the processing plant follows a period of about six months of open-cast mining and processing through the interim plant on site. The team produced 20 000 tons per month of saleable coal from June 2018, making the Khanye project work for the company during the construction phase. The coal was stockpiled and transported to the Forfar rail siding before being exported through the Richards Bay Coal Terminal.

The commissioning of the plant in January this year, which essentially involved running tests on the processing plants, inspired confidence that the mine will reach full production in two to three months.

## PROCESSING COAL TO SERVE THE MARKET

On site, excavators and ADTs extract coal from the mine's southern and two northern open-cast pits. The processing plant is capable of blending material from the three coal seams at the mine with the goal of producing the best yield and quality of coal.



KHANYE GM GUY THOMPSON AT THE PROCESSING PLANT

The Khanye processing plant is the first large coal dense medium (Larcodem) plant in the company. It has different screen configurations which allow material of varying size to be processed, from large and small nuts through to peas.

"The plant provides us with the flexibility to serve the market's needs," says Thompson. "It washes the coal to different qualities as clients have different requirements. To this end, the mine has an on-site laboratory which samples coal every two hours, with plant settings being adjusted accordingly."

The Khanye mine is operating full blast, employing 334 people on site, including 15 community contractor companies and a number of plant operators and assistants from the local area. The number of people working on site is expected to increase to 379 in future. Canyon Coal is building on this success as it continues its bold drive to develop new mines.

**"THE SUCCESS IS OWING TO THE COMPANY'S CULTURE OF GETTING DOWN AND DOING THE WORK, AND DOING IT IN A COST-EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE WAY."**

GUY THOMPSON

## CHAIRMAN'S VIEW



VUSLAT BAYOGLU EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF CANYON COAL

**2018 was a good year for Canyon Coal. The company opened Khanye mine and made a great many achievements. What were the highlights?**

Besides opening Khanye, which was the most important achievement for Canyon, we also started mining at Ukufisa mine near Springs. We obtained the mining right for Phalandwa extension, which extends the life of the Phalandwa Colliery. Another milestone achievement is our acquisition of Kangra Coal, which came with a 1.94% shareholding in the Richards Bay Coal Terminal (RBCT). Becoming one of thirteen shareholders in RBCT indicates that we are moving in the right direction to become a major coal company.

**What makes Canyon Coal so successful?**

We make decisions and don't move the goalposts. I also have a good team that is dedicated and knows what they are doing. South Africa has good infrastructure and human capital.

**The company is pressing on with its impressive drive to develop new mines. What are you reaching for this year?**

In 2019, we will develop Palmietkuilen (Ukufisa phase 2) and De Wittekrans, which will entrench our mid-tier producer status. By the end of the year Canyon Coal will reach production of 16 million tons per year.

We are also concentrating on getting our Springfield Project up and running by 2020 that will make us a major coal mining company – that is to say, a large exporter of coal.

**So you are growing the business into a large coal exporter. What are the obstacles to achieving this?**

The most important thing is to have a stable economy. We need to empower people with jobs and opportunities and support young entrepreneurs for the health of the economy and society.

Our new social licensing department has been addressing recruitment opportunities, local preferential procurement and the implementation of our social and labour plans. If we do these things right, there will be fewer obstacles in terms of mining.

**It appears that the company has a particular focus on the development of SMEs. Is this issue close to your heart?**

We started the social licensing department because there is scope to help local communities prosper by supporting SMEs and individuals. We are increasing programmes to train communities to not only supply general services to mines but to be involved in mining by supplying equipment and technical services.

**Looking ahead at 2019, the Canyon team is set for hard work. What are the rewards of building a coal company?**

It's about leaving a legacy. Being successful means you build the business and add value to people's lives. Canyon wants to go beyond the requirements of the Mining Charter pertaining to social projects – this would indicate that we are truly successful.



## Molwane Trading makes a great start in business

When he was in high school, Dumisani Mazibuko (25) often dreamt of becoming a successful businessman. His father was a long-distance truck driver, and the young man from Bronkhorstspuit envisioned owning heavy vehicles himself as a route to building wealth and realising his dreams.

His ambition grew as he attended financial literacy classes with his Prestige College high school teacher, with whom he discussed the principles of wealth covered in his reading materials. "I read a book about Donald Trump and it made a big impression on me," says Dumisani. "It led me to dream that I would buy my own vehicles one day."

The bright-eyed matriculant chose to study a B.Com degree at the University of Pretoria. During his studies, he was deeply influenced by his entrepreneurship lecturer, Dr Botha, who thoroughly prepared

his students for doing business. "Dr Botha helped to shape me," reflects Dumisani, "as he demanded that we work out every detail of our business plans, clearly showing how we were going to make our ideas work."

Dumisani's studies led him beyond the pages of books as he started working on buying trucks and securing transport contracts. "I have never been afraid of taking risks," says the young man, who has an open, friendly face. "The risk lies in not taking action."

In 2016, when Canyon Coal first moved into Bronkhorstspuit to build the Khanye mine, Dumisani had decided to pursue his dream with new determination. He discussed his intentions to do business with the mine with Canyon's head of procurement and submitted a business profile with his business partner, Berry Masingi (28), who has experience in mining operations.

"We initially wanted to transport some of the mine's coal. But after considering all the opportunities, we decided to start by supplying small machinery to the mine," says Dumisani.

With its detailed business plan and accredited operators, Dumisani's company, Molwane Trading, secured a contract to supply and operate a tractor loader backhoe (TLB) at Khanye. But the company was new and could not secure banking finance of the equipment. "So we borrowed the machine knowing that we would generate more income with our own!" says Dumisani, with a good-humoured smile.

"Getting to this point was not easy. We explored a number of avenues to obtain the machine, travelling across Mpumalanga

### SOCIAL LICENSING UNIT LOOKS AFTER COMMUNITY'S INTERESTS

Canyon Coal is boosting its capacity to make a meaningful difference in South African society. It recently established a social licensing department, which will strengthen the company's drive to support enterprise development, local procurement and employment in the communities where it operates, while ensuring Canyon complies with the requirements of the new Mining Charter.

The new department is led by Xolile Mankayi. In the area of employment, Canyon Coal offers learnerships and internships to suitably qualified community members. It also employs operational staff from local communities with the help of the national Department of Labour. Xolile says Canyon takes the approach of engaging with local community groups and raising awareness in their constituencies about opportunities.

In the area of procurement, the company endeavours to contract local services such as laundry and catering, and to help small enterprises obtain capital goods and machinery to run their own mining services businesses.

Canyon aims to set the industry standard in the empowerment of local communities. The social licensing department is currently drafting a preferential procurement policy to support this objective. The policy and an internal supplier database will be the internal mechanisms that help Canyon empower host communities.

As part of its contribution to local economic development, Canyon will work with local government to strengthen community platforms which engage with mining companies. "We need to ensure that communication between business and the community takes place on a well-structured platform," says Xolile.

Xolile says Canyon Coal's social licensing department is passionate about people, skills development, empowerment and transformation. It is set to support the company's human resources and procurement departments in building a legacy wherever the company operates.

and following up every lead. We reached a dead end time and again, until an operator in Delmas finally provided us with the right solution."

At this stage, Berry dreamt of mines and machinery every night, while Dumisani practised visualisation techniques and tried to rest at night. "I knew I would need all my strength the next day, when I would wake up and find myself in the same predicament as the day before."

Fortunately, the pair's perseverance paid off and Molwane Trading moved its first machine onto the Khanye site in March 2018. "When the machine finally arrived on site, I was elated," says Dumisani. "It felt like a victory." Barry adds proudly that he is on site monitoring his operators every day, as their goal is to deliver quality service and build a solid reputation.

Molwane Trading has established a good track record in their first months of operating at Khanye. The company has secured finance for the acquisition of a Bobcat skid-steer loader after impressing the bank with immaculate management accounts, a VAT number and neat paperwork. The yellow machine was employed on site in October last year and works efficiently.

Observing how the skid steer skilfully removes excess coal from under the interim coal plant's conveyor belt, Guy Thompson, general manager of Khanye, comments that Molwane Trading has made a great start in business. "Molwane's service is excellent. They are always on site, checking that their operators are doing a good job. They show true commitment and are very keen to learn."

Dumisani reveals that it is no longer money that drives him. His biggest objective is to build his company's brand and seize opportunities to learn. "It takes a lot of time and effort to build a business," he says.

Dumisani and Berry are not afraid to pursue their dreams. Revealing that they want to open a plant business in future, Dumisani says passionately: "The world is ours for the taking. We need to go out and get what we desire." 🏹

**"I HAVE NEVER BEEN AFRAID OF TAKING RISKS," SAYS THE YOUNG MAN, WHO HAS AN OPEN, FRIENDLY FACE. "THE RISK LIES IN NOT TAKING ACTION."**

DUMISANI MAZIBUKO

# Singani sets the benchmark for mine rehabilitation

The Singani Colliery is preparing to blast. Holes are drilled in the open pit while a large ADT truck busily loads and hauls deep red soil from the adjacent area, opening up the section for mining. Canyon Coal is systematically mining the remaining coal at the colliery and rehabilitating mining areas as it moves along the coal seams.



PROJECT MANAGER **LIZA JANSE VAN VUUREN** AND ACTING GENERAL MANAGER OF SINGANI **VANESSA THANI**

Not far from the day's designated blasting area, grass, shrubs and trees have sprung up on land that has been significantly rehabilitated by the Singani operational team. Much of the healthy vegetation will be replaced with indigenous plants during the full rehabilitation phase in 2019, but the lush greenery is a sign that the mine's rehabilitation programme is producing fertile ground.

Singani Colliery is Canyon Coal's first mine that will complete full rehabilitation and apply for a mine closure certificate. Judging by the condition of the site during the final production phase, it will become a benchmark for the rehabilitation of the company's other coal operations – the colliery has succeeded in maintaining an excellent balance between production and rehabilitation activities throughout the life of the mine.

**“WE ARE ALL AWARE THAT WE ARE NOT ONLY MINING FOR TODAY, BUT ALSO FOR THE FUTURE – FROM THE STAFF AT THE GATE TO THE GENERAL MANAGER.”**

VANESSA THANI

“Since mining started in August 2014, the team has produced between 110 000 and 130 000 tons of ore per month and undertaken concurrent rehabilitation of the mining areas,” says Vanessa Thani, acting general manager of the mine. “Production has now slowed down to 80 000 tons per month and the results of the ongoing rehabilitation on site are visible.”

Canyon Coal project manager Liza Janse van Vuuren says that the company will launch the full rehabilitation phase when production concludes in February 2019.

“By July-August, all the pit areas which have been methodically backfilled with the overburden that was removed to expose the coal will be covered with rich topsoil. And by October-November these areas are expected to be filled with seeds and new grass plants,” she says.

## PRESERVING THE SOIL FOR THE FUTURE

Singani Colliery has followed the prescribed, environmentally sound way of mining and rehabilitating the site. The team has stockpiled the overburden (material) in the sequence that it was removed, preparing to backfill these mining areas again with the hard-, soft- and topsoil after taking out all the coal in the pit.

“It is very important to put the soil back as close as possible to where we found it. Once this is done, we need to level the rehabilitated area so that it blends in with the surrounding landscape,” says Liza. “We consider factors like the natural contours of the surrounding landscape and the direction of water flows in doing so.”

## CANYON PROMOTES TRANSPARENT AND ETHICAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Canyon Coal has secured the services of Whistle Blowers, an independent information gathering company, to ensure the company continues to do business in an ethical way. The company's subscription to Whistle Blowers enables employees and third parties to anonymously report any irregularities that may occur within the business. Canyon Coal chairman Vuslat Bayoglu says that the company wants to demonstrate to its stakeholders that it conducts business in a transparent way. “We are growing at a healthy pace and we need to use the available tools to make sure we do business in an ethical way,” he adds.

**WHISTLE BLOWERS**



Canyon Coal has promoted the initiative on the company website and trained its management team in the use of the hotline. Third parties who want to anonymously blow the whistle on wrongful acts within the company can contact Whistle Blowers on Toll Free Number 0800 340 340, email [information@whistleblowing.co.za](mailto:information@whistleblowing.co.za) or SMS 33490

Vanessa says the surveyor is always present during mining activities on site to monitor the volume of coal that is being mined and ensure that the colliery is putting back the right volumes of overburden (material) into the mining pit.

“We have to mine all the available coal, but we also need to ensure that we leave sustainable landscapes behind. My team and I are following in the footsteps of the previous general manager, Kgotso Mongalo, who looked after the ecosystem. He maintained a steady pace of backfilling, ensured that there was never any stagnant water on site and serviced vehicles timeously to prevent any oil leaks.”

Liza notes that the company has carried out regular environmental audits at Singani to examine the stability of the site. Rehabilitated areas are scrutinised for cracks and erosion, while plants growing in the areas are considered a sign of successful rehabilitation.

“When we start the next phase of rehabilitation next year, we aim to replace invasive plant species with pioneer species, ultimately transforming the mined out area into one big, consistent piece of vegetation,” says Liza.

“Our objective is to ensure that the topsoil can sustain plant life, enabling the land to be useful after mining. It is also important for the company to know what we are leaving behind on the site because we remain liable for the area after mine closure.”

Vanessa says that Singani Colliery is proof that it is possible to mine and rehabilitate a mining area properly. “Doing the roll-over (backfilling) on a daily basis and having a good team that understands that the soil must go back to where it's found goes a long way.”

“We are all aware that we are not only mining for today, but also for the future – from the staff at the gate to the general manager.”