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GALLANT SOLDIER HANDS MEDAL OVER TO CITY

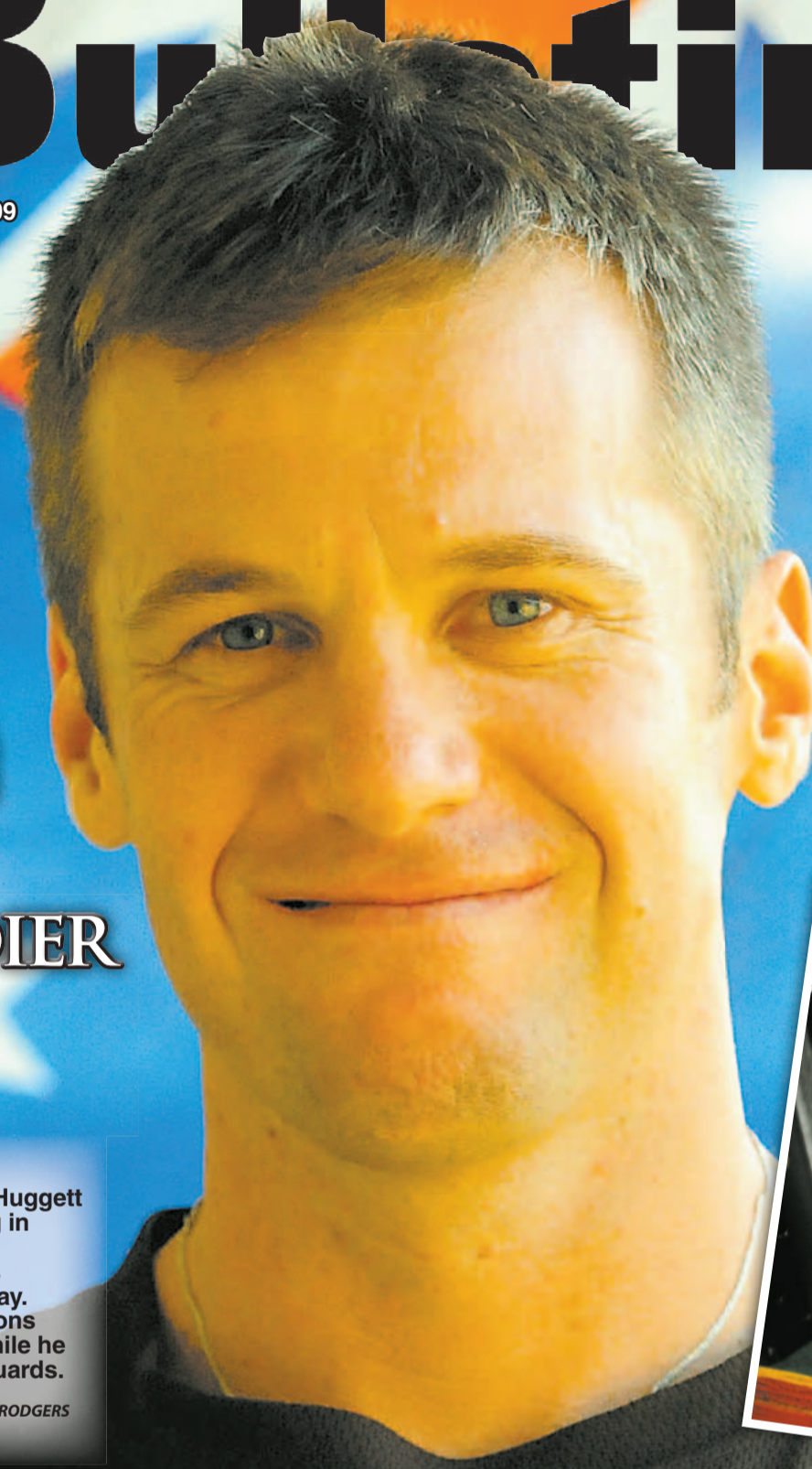
FORMER Townsville soldier Corporal Justin Huggett received the Medal for Gallantry after serving in Afghanistan.

Yesterday he handed the medal to his unit's museum for safe keeping and to put on display.

Cpl Huggett received the medal for his actions during deployment in Afghanistan in 2007 while he was on secondment to Britain's Grenadier Guards.

» RACHEL TOUNE reports / Page 7

Photo: TROY RODGERS



\$85m TOWER



Lancini unveils new 16-storey CBD project

THE Lancini Group has lodged plans with Townsville City Council to develop a 16-level corporate tower on the site of the former T&G building.

The proposed \$85 million development is to be Townsville's first five-star, green-rated tower and will be known as 420 on Flinders.

» FULL REPORT / Page 4



Townsville Fire down Lightning

» Sport



Bowen residents evacuated

» Page 11

LAST CHANCE TO WIN A CHRISTMAS HAM



Details Inside

Plans for 16-level five-star office space on T&G site

\$85m green tower

Premier will have final say

THE Lancini Group has lodged plans with Townsville City Council to develop a 16-level corporate tower on the site of the former T&G building.

The proposed \$85 million development is to be Townsville's first five-star green-rated tower and will be known as 420 on Flinders.

The Buchan Group-designed building (pictured) will front Flinders St West, Stanley St and Ogden St, providing more than 11,000 sq m of A-grade office space over 10 levels.

Floor areas will remain flexible to meet the needs of tenants.

The tower's design has been modified since earlier conceptual plans but it will still incorporate ground floor



retail space and more than 300 private parking spaces in basement and upper level floors.

Lancini Group general manager Chris Sherwood

said if and when the tower was given the green light by the council, construction would start in response to market demand.

"Townsville City Council and the business community have been very supportive of this development since it was first proposed," Mr Sherwood said.

"We have planned 420 on Flinders to be both architecturally and environmentally significant for Townsville and we feel that the latest enhancements will make it an even more substantial asset for the CBD.

"We continue to receive interest from both private and public sector tenants who want to operate within a high-quality office and retail environment close to the up-

graded Flinders Mall precinct.

"This is the kind of project that will create hundreds of jobs from contractors through to suppliers, giving the Townsville economy a significant boost.

"The lodgement of the development application is the next step in moving forward with this exciting development."

Lancini Group principal Laurence Lancini said they had been talking to several potential tenants but none had committed so far.

He said they were optimistic that business conditions would improve and wanted to be in a position to start work when tenants were ready to commit.

Mr Sherwood said the

Lancini Group and its joint venture partner Northern Management Group would retain ownership and management rights of the building.

The Lancini Group acquired a 50 per cent stake in the former T&G building site from Northern Management Group in 2006.

Knight Frank Townsville has been appointed as the leasing agent.

The Lancini Group is also a partner in a separate development, the \$200 million Flinders Plaza retail and entertainment project, also in the CBD.

Mr Lancini said the ventures would go ahead with that project when there was sufficient tenant support.

Editorial — page 74

NEW South Wales Premier Kristina Keneally says she'll consult Labor colleagues over the make-up of her frontbench, but insists she'll have the final say on who sits in cabinet.

Ms Keneally was officially sworn in as NSW's first female premier yesterday by Governor Marie Bashir, a day after she rolled Nathan Rees for the leadership.

As Prime Minister Kevin Rudd ordered her to "get on with the job" of governing the state, Ms Keneally said she was humbled by the trust her colleagues had placed in her.

She refused to be drawn on what changes she would make to the front bench, but previously stated Frank Sartor will return.

A spot in cabinet would also be offered to Mr Rees, who yesterday pledged his support to the woman who replaced him.

Ms Keneally said she would take a 'collaborative' approach to the cabinet make-up, but in the end she had the power to pick and choose who she wanted.

"These are the decisions that sit with the premier," she said, a day after Mr Rees claimed his successor would be a 'puppet' of Labor's Right faction powerbrokers Eddie Obeid and Joe Tripodi.

Ms Keneally would not answer questions on whether she would consult with Mr Tripodi or Mr Obeid over her frontbench positions.

Constable in gun mishap

A BOWEN police officer was injured when his gun accidentally fired in the station yesterday afternoon.

Fragments from the discharged bullet ricocheted and hit the senior constable in the face.

The officer was handling his police-issued firearm in the Bowen Police Station's weapons clearance drum when the gun went off about 2.30pm.

He was taken to Bowen Hospital with minor facial injuries.

Police will conduct an investigation.

It's child's play for PM as he launches ABC3

PRIME Minister Kevin Rudd showed his lighter side, high-fiving children and singing the *Play School* song, before flicking the switch yesterday on ABC3, Australia's first public children's TV channel.

Mr Rudd received rock star treatment as he walked down a catwalk at the ABC's studios in Sydney to launch the digital station.

He answered questions from children about his favourite school subjects and politics.

"I used to like drama," he said, but conceded he wasn't very good at it.

"It (*Play School*) was on when I was your age but that was a hundred years ago," he said.

Mr Rudd pressed the start button for the station on a giant remote alongside channel hosts Amberley Lobo and Kayne Tremills.

The Prime Minister said it was a great day in Australian public life and a great day for Australian children.

He reaffirmed his Government's commitment to public broadcasting and the importance of a children's channel.

"Every now and then in Australian life there are good days — and this is one such day. Encouraging a child's imagination to roam and run free is part and parcel of creating a creative Australian."

The Federal Government

has dedicated \$67 million for ABC3 for the next three years.

It starts with 40 per cent local content, but that will grow to 50 per cent next year.

Mr Rudd later joked about his Q&A session with the children.

"I think some of the kids have been prepped by Kerry O'Brien," he said, referring to the 7.30 Report presenter.

"When is the next federal election? ... that has Kerry's fingerprints all over it," he laughed.

ABC3 will broadcast from 6am until 9pm daily.

Advertisement-free programming will be aimed at school-age children, with drama, news and current affairs, game shows, animation and sport.

Programs will include a drama based on the award-winning picture book *My Place*; *CJ the DJ*, a cartoon about a teenager who loves music; dramas *Dance Academy* and *Dead Gorgeous*; the return of *Heartbreak High*; and documentaries such as *Be The Creature*.

Mr Rudd said his favourite ABC children's shows were *Mr Squiggle* and *Why Is It So?*

"I'll be watching and monitoring, as well as the Minister for Finance," he said.

ABC3 is available on Channel 23.



ROCK STAR RUDD ... Prime Minister Kevin Rudd at ABC studios yesterday

Woman mailed cocaine stash in chocolate box

A GOLD Coast woman who was mailed 1.5kg of cocaine in chocolate boxes from Costa Rica has been refused the chance to appeal her sentence.

In 2008, Simone Cianna Harris, of Palm Beach, pleaded guilty to attempting to present a marketable quantity of unlawfully purchased border control drugs.

She was sentenced to seven years' jail, with a non-parole period fixed at four years.

The court heard in March 2007 that Customs staff in Sydney intercepted an Australia Post registered mail item that had been sent from Costa Rica and was addressed to a false name in Jefferson Lane, Palm Beach, Queensland.

An investigation of the package revealed it contained four boxes of confectionery and within each box were 14 or 15 chocolates.

Also in each box was a package of cocaine. The court heard that Harris was receiving the package for a man whom she owed \$19,000.

Gestational diabetes link to softdrink intake

WOMEN who routinely drink softdrinks during pregnancy have been confirmed as having a higher risk of gestational diabetes.

A US research team studied a group of 13,475 women and, during 10 years of follow-up, 860 incident gestational diabetes were identified.

After adjustment for known risk factors including age, family history of diabetes and overall health, it was the women's intake of sugar-rich soft drinks that emerged as a significant contributor.

Dr Liwei Chen, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology at the New Orleans School of Public Health, said women with the condition have an increased risk of complications and illness during pregnancy and delivery, as well as type 2 diabetes after the birth. Their children also carry an increased risk for obesity, glucose intolerance and early onset diabetes.

More health news — page 71

THE FASHION GALLERY

In light of the recent collapse of a local bridal store, we would like to extend a special offer to all of the brides-to-be who were affected

1/2 price

ON A VERY LARGE RANGE OF *bridal gowns* IN STORE

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