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On the move again

By ANTHEA CANNON

RAVENSTHORPE'S future is shifting thanks to two primal forces – Galaxy and Tectonic.

Only 10 months after the shock closure of BHP's nickel mine, new ground was broken for a lithium mine on Friday and next year there will polymetallic (copper-lead-zinc-gold-silver) riches added to the bounty.

In the nick of time on Thursday, Galaxy Resources received its final green light and began construction yesterday, fuelling jobs for 70-100 people, with the permanent force being hired in March.

"With mining approval and full funding in place we look forward to having the Mt Cattlin mine up and running by quarter three 2010," managing director Iggy Tan said.

"This will allow us to capture the near term opportunity of the growing lithium market and deliver returns to shareholders."

In the address to the Ravensthorpe Regional Chamber of Commerce Mining Our Business seminar recently, general manager of Australia operations Terry Stark told the group they were aiming for a 100 per cent residential work force.

Just the thing needed to boost the area's disastrous housing market. Galaxy has also picked up BHP's slack by hiring their old exploration office as a temporary office.

In his address Tectonic Resources managing director Steve Norregaard also had great news with exploration and resource drilling for the Kundip gold-copper lodes deposits to be finished by the end of the year. They are aiming for a minimum mine life of 10 years and will employ 120 workers for the mill construction and 50 employees each for the ongoing open pit and underground mines. Unfortunately for outgoing Shire president Brenda Tillbrook the turn around came just as she lost the top spot to Ian Goldfinch four votes to three.