



Laverton's tough and built to last

LAVERTON is not the town it was in the days when WMC was mining Windarra and the bigger developments nearby – Glencore and Minara's Murrin Murrin, AngloGold Ashanti's Sunrise Dam and Placer Dome's Granny Smith – contribute little by way of population.

But the generosity of the miners with training opportunities, youth activities, educational and health programs and facilities are well recognised and appreciated.

Exploration and development plans by smaller industry players, including Crescent Gold, Niagara Mining, Lynas Corporation,

Gryphon and A1 Minerals are also keenly awaited, not only because of the rates income, but the benefit to hospitality and contractor businesses.

"The future of the town is quite assured," said former chief executive Murray Brown.

Tourism, also, promises to deliver more dollars to the town.

The shire council is hoping to set up a 'Great Beyond' outback explorers' hall of fame this year, to not only honour those who went before, but to complement other tourism attractions along the Outback Highway that links Laverton to

northern Queensland.

But town resident Sue Valentine believes no matter how long it takes to build a tourism industry, or whether miners come or go, Laverton will never die.

"Laverton and Leonora are very tough towns and so is Coolgardie," the Leonora-born Ms Valentine maintains.

"Laverton will always have that core of people who will always make it a town.

"It will always remain an area of significance for Aboriginal people and when the white man goes, there will always be Laverton."

During the past year the Laverton Shire successfully tendered for a Justice Department work camp at Mt Morgans.

Preliminary work has already begun and shire president Murray Thomas says camp residents may be able to help with projects such as landscaping for the hall of fame.

A new police complex, power station and water treatment plant this year, and commercial planning by the Wongatha Wonganarra community, are just some of the other signs of the optimism for the future of this town on the edge of the Outback.