

GAS WATCH 68.

AGL ENERGY!

“Does this company have an environmental and social conscience, or is it just Sydney Gas all over again?”

Broke Village Store was the site for a show of community strength and unity, in opposition to the real dangers which the activities of **AGL ENERGY** pose to the local environment, and to the village and residents of Broke.

In an information and fundraiser night on 24th April, starring our own Maureen O'Brien on vocals, keyboard and guitar; with rich raffles; a kids colouring competition; with great camaraderie: the community – mums, dads, kids, residents, landowners, business people – emphatically showed that it fears the well known dangers of coal seam methane gas drilling right next to, and under, our village.

Many questions were asked on the night:

- “Why does **AGL ENERGY** persist in endangering the Broke Village when it has between 17,000 and 24,000 square kilometres of lease area in which it can explore, away from villages and highly populated rural areas?”
- “Why does it persist in exploring in an area where it can only access less than 30% of the surface area?”
- “Why does it persist in exploring in an area which it can't readily access externally because of the constraints of mining leases, world heritage listed national park, and Commonwealth military land?”
- “Why does it want to extract methane gas from coal seams which are under the village of Broke, threatening the village with contamination and loss of groundwater water and, worse, explosion of methane gas and the killing of vegetation and sterilization of the soil?”
- “Why won't it agree to conducting a full Environmental Assessment, as is now required for current exploration activities which invade coal seams and extract methane gas?”
- “Why won't it agree to abandon our area, which is only one tenth of one percent of its exploration area?”
- “Why hasn't the State Government legislated to properly protect rural villagers and landholders from the known dangers of coal seam methane gas extraction?”

Why? Why? Why? There is no logical answer to any of these questions. Certainly **AGL ENERGY** either can't or won't address these questions. Is there an environmental and social conscience hidden somewhere within this company, or is it just Sydney Gas all over again?

Many thanks to Kim Hann for organizing the event; to Maureen O'Brien for providing such fantastic music; to Helen Sharrock for judging the colouring competition; to Steve Malone, Robbie Merrick, Mike Hewitt, Stewart Davies and Paul O'Toole for running the events on the night and cooking the perfect BBQ; to Michelina and the Broke Village Store for hosting us, and to all the sponsors who generously donated prizes.

And thanks to all who turned out in support of the future of our village.

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