



Rear Window

From back page

maintains his Antipodean **Warren Buffett** routine, proclaiming himself not the kind of businessman motivated solely by the lure of a dollar.

Others don't know when to stop. Others are motivated by something "deep and dark inside their soul", or the score of their personal net worth. Not Carnegie, who mused on *The Australian Financial Review's* How I Made It podcast this month that everyone just wanted to pay off their mortgage, have a decent holiday, care for their parents into old age and give their kids enough that they can do

everything but not so much they can do nothing. "Beyond that, what do you need it for?"

The podcast revived Carnegie's favourite self-description, apparently first coined by **John Singleton**, that he had the good fortune to be born with both a silver spoon in his mouth and a chip on his shoulder. The chip may inspire him to do things such as funding the Australian Council of Social Service to model how to shield the poor from tax increases, or to engage in all sorts of other charitable endeavours. But the silver spoon, we'd suggest, has other priorities.

Gina Rinehart gets a mid-air boot licking

We're still digesting the little window into **Gina Rinehart's** needs and wants last week, which saw Australia's richest person host lavish parties in Bali and her Roy Hill mine.

Rinehart corralled an impressive list of people on and off planes to observe national mining and agriculture days, which we'd be remiss not to mention

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were ticketed events.

At Roy Hill, Rinehart sat side-by-side with Opposition Leader **Peter Dutton** for a neon banquet, along with a few hundred VIPs who sipped on Bollinger rose, Leeuwin chardy and peach bellinis.

Around 250 workers also attended, but were restricted to four mid-strength beers because of on-site regulations, proving that the norms of upstairs-downstairs even exist at the mines.

In Bali, we're told Rinehart lamented that the mining sector and its billionaire barons don't get the appropriate thanks from government in this country. To make her point, Rinehart raised how **Donald Trump** once lavished praise on **Anthony Pratt's** investments in the United States.

That great meeting of the minds led to Trump labelling Pratt a "red-haired weirdo" after the relationship was swept up in a federal criminal investigation which became public. But sure, Rinehart wants more government licking Blundstones.

One man heard Rinehart like a dog whistle. Former federal resources minister **Keith Pitt** attended all the events, which meant catching four Qantas charter planes in 48 hours, from Perth, to Bali, to Port Hedland, to Roy Hill, and back to Perth.

Pitt assures us that he paid his own way during the trip but claimed the flights to and from Perth on parliamentary expenses, as the sitting member for the Queensland seat of Hinkler.

We hear Pitt was among a group who took over the plane's intercom to give some "speeches" to the rest of those on board. There wasn't just one in-flight interlude, either. Among others, Pitt took over the Qantas PA system three times! Call him Keith the Pilbara wedding singer.

During one of those speeches, the former minister used the mic to tell the

plane all about the fantastic contribution of the mining industry to Australia, whacking the funding of the Environmental Defenders Office.

Then, Keith personally thanked Gina for all she had done for the country.

Asked about the mile-high tongue bath, Pitt said that Rinehart was "a remarkable Australian businesswoman" who makes "significant investments in our nation, employs thousands of Australians, and pays taxes and royalties that help governments deliver the services that every Australian needs and deserves".

You have to give him his due. Rinehart wasn't even on the flight, presumably flying in her G600 Gulfstream. And yet, here's Keith, doing Rinehart PR, in the air and on the ground.

If this all seems a bit gauche – Australia's richest person seeking thanks as MPs and businessmen filed on to planes to be treated to slavish pro-mining speeches – well, that's because it is.

The entire exercise – the planes, the parties – was apparently a callback to Rinehart and father **Lang Hancock's** "Wake Up Australia" movement in 1979.

That featured a young Rinehart flying around in a Boeing 747 with business figures and journalists on a 48-hour tour for Hancock's 70th birthday and to raise publicity for his pro-mining screed. In three months, Rinehart will bring up her own 70th birthday. Decades have passed, but the method and message about an underappreciated mining industry unloved by government remains eternal.



For the purposes of taxation, Mark Carnegie isn't a Kiwi (yet).
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