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PRESS RELEASE

Mining Industry Pays Tribute to Ruth Whittle, co-founder of Whittle Programming

Whittle Consulting has announced that Ruth Whittle, one of their founders and the widow of early mining optimisation pioneer, Jeff Whittle, has died. Ruth passed away peacefully on Friday 9 October, at the age of 97.

Ruth's unlikely involvement in the mining industry began after Jeff recognised the potential of the Lerchs-Grossmann algorithm. This algorithm described a way to maximise cash flow from open cut mines, working from a block model of ore distribution, mining costs and pit slope requirements.

After a leading mining company declined to commit funding to the development of the software, Ruth and Jeff decided to take on the project and financial risk themselves.

With Ruth's unwavering support, Jeff took time off his contracting work in 1983 to write the first commercially available implementation of the Lerchs-Grossmann algorithm.

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After recognising the potential of the software, Ruth and Jeff established the family business, Whittle Programming, in 1984.

For the next 16 years, Ruth and Jeff worked together in the business. Jeff developed a series of mining optimisation software packages. These were successfully marketed and sold by Ruth to mining companies and consultancies all around the world.

Since her retirement in 2000, Ruth maintained a keen interest in the continuing development of the second iteration of the family business, Whittle Consulting. In her later years, Ruth particularly enjoyed working on the compilation of the history of the Whittle software through the creation of the Whittle LiveBook.

Ruth was a loving and proud mother to her 6 children – Robin, Gerald, Paul, David, Judy and Matthew and her 12 grandchildren.

Ruth's life and legacy will be celebrated at a funeral in Melbourne later this month.

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