



SHEPPARTON VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE INTRODUCES MEET THE MAKER...

The Shepparton Visitor Information Centre is a vital resource to assist in booking, promoting and on selling the region to visitors. By working closely with operators and producers we hope to not only establish strong relationships, but be able to help your business benefit by selling the attributes to the over 40,000 people who inquire with us annually.

Meet the Maker is a unique concept we hope will revolutionise how the VIC sells to the public. The first Meet the Maker will take place at the VIC Open Day on **Saturday 28 February 2009** with 'makers' invited to attend the day and promote their products for one hour, giving the VIC staff an insight in to your unique selling methods and a better understanding of the products, processes of production and passion involved in the products.

This will also give 'makers' and opportunity to 'taste test' and sell their products to the new public who attend the VIC Open Day, opening up the doors to a potential new customer base! Makers who elect to participate will also be promoted through an extensive media campaign including live mentions on 3SRFM and pre promotion through media releases and mail outs.

HOW IT WORKS

If you business is interested in participating in 'Meet the Maker' on Saturday 28 February 2009 as a part of the VIC Open Day simply elect one hour between 10.00am and 4.00pm to attend the VIC Open Day and showcase your product.

You can register your interest with Rebecca Stait on 5831 4400 or email rebecca.stait@shepparton.vic.gov.au



Tourism Talk

ISSUE 8
SPRING 2008



Local Attractions Make RACV 101 List

(Article from Greater Shepparton City Council website)

Three local attractions in the City of Greater Shepparton have been included among Victoria's top tourism experiences, as voted by RACV members in the Victoria 101 campaign.

The online campaign, which was run in association with Tourism Victoria, asked people to vote for tourism experiences they would recommend to visitors from around the state, interstate or overseas. Adventour's Canoe Safari on the Goulburn River was ranked 32, Longleat Winery in Murchison 47, and SPC Ardmona KidsTown Adventure Playground finished a respectable 61 on the list.

Greater Shepparton City Council's Tourism Manager Amanda McCulloch said it's fantastic that three attractions within the Greater Shepparton region made the top 101 campaign.

"This was a huge campaign for activities and attractions right across Victoria, so to make it in to the 101 list is a huge achievement," Ms McCulloch said.

"Congratulation to SPC Ardmona KidsTown, Longleat Winery and River Country Adventours for providing holiday experiences which have obviously made a big impact on visitors to Greater Shepparton. Hopefully this will encourage not only tourists but locals to get out and experience some of the regions best kept secrets."

The Great Ocean Road was voted the number one tourist attraction on the Victoria 101 list with the Port of Echuca ranked highest for the Murray region, placing eighteenth.

"Victorians voted 'Driving the Great Ocean Road' as their favourite tourism experience but the Murray region attracted a large proportion of the votes" said RACV Tourism and Travel General Manager Neil James.

The RACV received 588 nominations with more than 22,000 votes and about 8760 comments during the past few month.

For the full list visit www.101victoria.com.au

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Emerald Bank Woolshed, Windmill Café and Seven Creeks Chocolate Shop

Fleur and Jim Whelan, are the owners and operators of Emerald Bank Woolshed, Windmill Café and Seven Creeks Chocolate Shop and are also some of the newest TGS members.

They have operated the Emerald Bank Woolshed for over four years, in October last year they took over the Windmill Café and more recently (in October this year) added the Seven Creeks Chocolate Shop to the business.

The Emerald Bank Woolshed is a function venue which overlooks an ornamental lake and gardens at the rear of the Emerald Bank complex. The venue seats up to 200 guests. The primary part of this business is weddings of which Fleur and Jim do in excess of thirty each year. They also do corporate dinners, lunches and conferences and other private functions such as engagements, birthday parties. The Windmill Café is open Tuesday to Sunday and specialises in morning and afternoon teas and lights lunches. All the baked goods and lunches are home-made, with the most popular menu item being



Devonshire tea. There is also a lovely courtyard overlooking the lake and gardens of Riverside Gardens. Their latest venture, The Seven Creeks Chocolate Shop, is located with the Windmill Café and has been operating just over five weeks. Having spent the last 12 months researching (and enjoying all things chocolate), Fleur and Jim are now in paradise as they are both chocoholics!! There is an extensive range of truffles and pralines which can be bought individually from the beautiful new chocolate counter and there is also a range of gorgeous boxed chocolates and a range of chocolate products sold under the Seven Creeks Chocolate Shop brand. There are also a lot of little novelties just for kids. So there is something to tempt just about everyone.

Fleur and Jim have lived in Shepparton for just over four years, they made the move here from Melbourne to take over the Woolshed. Jim is originally from Limerick in Ireland and has been in Australia for 14 years, while Fleur is originally from Shepparton and attended secondary school here. Having family and friends here made the move much easier and their support has helped Fleur and Jim expand their business to what it is today.

The transition to becoming tourism business owners and operators was fairly smooth for Fleur and Jim as the both come from extensive backgrounds in the hospitality industry. Jim is a qualified chef and spent many years working as a head chef in some of Melbourne's top catering establishments including the Hilton, the Members Pavilion at the MCG and the Melbourne Town Hall. While Fleur, after studying hospitality management, spent many years in event management and worked at Melbourne Park for a number of years. More recently she completed a Graduate Diploma in Marketing which was followed by a stint with the Victorian State Government.

Fleur and Jim believe the satisfaction they get from running their own business is enormous, they get back what they put in and the ability to make their own decisions is also great. They also enjoy utilizing their skills and being good at what they do, with the goal to translating into happy customers who keep coming back. They also think it is important to support other local businesses as much as possible when sourcing produce and other goods & services.

The annual Christmas Fair will be held at Emerald Bank on Sunday 7 December 2008; it starts at 5.00pm and is located on the Riverside Gardens lawns directly behind the Windmill Café and Chocolate Shop. It will feature a community concert, plenty of rides for the kids, face painting a sausage sizzle and Santa arriving on the vintage Emerald Bank Fire truck. Both the Windmill Café and Chocolate shop will be open for the evening.



President's Report

I am constantly being reminded about how fortunate we are to live and work in such a dynamic city.

Last week we were all invited to hear how Mark Francis and the Greater Shepparton City Council Events Department are pro-actively working with a consulting firm who place sporting events in rural town around Australia.

They have identified Greater Shepparton as a fantastic region to host large sporting events [as if we didn't know that already] - even looking at transferring the Junior Davis Cup tournament from Homebush, Sydney to Shepparton!

The amount of money that these events generate in rural communities like ours is phenomenal—this can recession-proof our city! Even in the harshest economic climate and the longest drought, there will always be sport and parents will always find the money to keep their kids involved in sport. I, like you, want to see as big a slice of that sporting pie as possible. Many of these sporting events are now looking for a hosting fee to cover their administration costs, these fees can range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 depending on the size of the event.

What's this going to cost me—I hear you ask...Absolutely nothing! All we need to do as operators and business owners is take bookings through the Visitor Information Centre and pay the 10 per cent commission, as we would normally do in the ordinary sense of operating our business. How easy is this!

Don't forget the golden rule—90 per cent of something is a whole lot better than 100 per cent of nothing.

Living by the golden rule means that all of us will thrive rather than just survive.

Thank you all for supporting Mark Francis, Amanda McCulloch and the Greater Shepparton City Council Events and Tourism Departments in their efforts to bring major events to Greater Shepparton.

TOURISM GREATER SHEPPARTON
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS—DECEMBER 2008 (found at www.greatershepparton.com.au/events.asp)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 2. A Swinging Christmas | 13. Passion to Plate Tour |
| 3. Come and Try Day—Handcycles | 13. Carols by Barrels |
| 4. The Four Seasons | 14. Scott People's Memorial Cycle Race |
| 5-7. Dookie Emporium Goes Deco | 14. Italian Plate Day |
| 6. Passion to Plate Tour | 20. Passion to Plate Tour |
| 7. Christmas Fair at Emerald Bank | 21. Carols by Candlelight |
| 9. A Fairy Merry Christmas | 31. New Years Eve Carnival |
| 12-14. Dookie Emporium Goes Deco | 31. Zodiac Masquerade Ball |

PASSION TO PLATE

HALF DAY GUIDED TOURS

Three producers of fine local products have joined forces to create Shepparton's newest farm gate trail, **Passion to Plate**.

Broken River Vineyards, Woodland Estate Lavender and Spirit of the Valley are the creators of **Passion to Plate** which has been designed to showcase the three businesses and their locally made products to visitors and interested locals.

The half day tour runs on Saturdays and includes a guided bus tour around Shepparton's historic and retail precincts, then a visit to Spirit of the Valley orchard—home of the famous chocolate apple, Broken River Vineyards where Fred and Ruth O'Keefe share their award winning wines for tastings and Woodlands Estate Lavender learn all about what lavender is good for and a taste of the famous herb.

"The three of us understood that the area needed something like this to help visitors understand a little more about our region and what it has to offer," Cheryl Hammer of Woodlands Estate Lavender said.

"We have had a great response from locals who are keen to learn what is in their backyard as well as visitors who enjoy the tour being organised for them.

"What we would love is for accommodation providers and other interested tourism promoters to support the tour by telling their guests about it. We think this is what people want so helping to promote it would be a great thing for the region," Cheryl said.

Passion to Plate will run every Saturday until 20 December and will be available in the New Year. Bookings can be made and pre paid on (03) 5829 1019 or (03) 5829 2353 during business hours or contact the Visitor Information Centre on 1800 808 839.

The tour costs \$20 per adult and includes morning tea. It leaves from the Visitor Information Centre in Shepparton.



"Tourism Talk" newsletter is produced by the Greater Shepparton Visitor Information Centre on behalf of: Tourism Greater Shepparton

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DONATE YOUR OLD COTTON TOWELS, SHEETS AND CLOTHING

...and provide employment for people with a disability

The GV Centre Disability Service's rag cutting business provides various grades of rags suitable for cleaning and floor polishing, mechanics and trades and high quality cloth specifically for car detailing, while providing valuable employment and training options for people with a disability.

The various stages of productions provides for varying abilities of employees from grading of cloth/clothing, removing buttons and zips, cutting, weighing, packing and delivery of the end product. Employment within this business provides for skill acquisition, the opportunity to earn a wage and the opportunity to earn a wage and the opportunity to participate in life in the local community.

The GV Centre needs your assistance to continue to grow this program by way of purchasing the rags for your cleaning requirements. You can contact the centre today for prices. Alternately, you can assist by donating old cotton towels, sheets and clothing. These can be delivered to the GV Centre or if you have large lots you can contact the GV Centre on 5821 2466 to collect them from the Shepparton, Kialla or Mooroopna areas.



GV Disability Centre,
12 Bowenhall Street, Shepparton
Ph: 5821 2466

HANDCYCLES FOR HIRE

Handcycles are ideal for—

Fun, fitness, rehabilitation, inclusive communities

Cycles will be available for hire at Aquamoves from 8 December and for use in RPM classes by appointment.

The purchase of handcycles was a joint initiative between Aquamoves, Community Interlink, GV Centre Disability Services and Shepparton Access with funds from the Department of Human Services.

To hire, call Aquamoves on 5831 8188



TGS WEBSITE UPDATES

The trial period for the TGS website, is now over, and all TGS members have had a good chance to judge what has and hasn't worked, what they do and don't like with the website and what immediate changes need to be made. Kaye Bernardi, Cheryl Hammer and Rebecca Stait all recently completed training which will now enable them to make updates and changes to the TGS website as required. The updates have already started to take place with new members having their details added, past minutes being uploaded and board member details being changed to suit the current board.

As mentioned previously, updates to members details will be done quarterly and this will be starting soon. Before the end of the year you will receive a new form to fill in any new details and make any changes you feel necessary to your listing. Please take some time to have a look at the website on www.tourismgreatershepparton.com.au and think about what changes you would like to make to your listing.