

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- 5-7.** Federation of Vintage, Veteran and Classic Vehicle Clubs Golden Oldies Tour
- 5.** Monkey Baa presents Milli Jack and The Dancing Cat by Stephen Michael King
- 13.** Australian National Piano Award Final
- 13.** Peppermill Car and Bike Show
- 14.** Goulburn Valley Motor Vehicle Drivers Club Inc. Shepparton Swap Meet
- 14.** Fruit Loop Ride
- 15-16.** Victorian Veteran Golfers Association Teams Championships
- 16.** Gaslight 25th Anniversary
- 17.** The Wiggles Live Australia presents The New Dorothy The Dinosaur Show
- 19-21.** Annual Mammoth Scale Fly In
- 20.** Word and Mouth presents GV Voice Grand Final
- 20.** Family Care Disability Support Services Rock Spectacular

If you would like to include an event on the calendar, please do not hesitate to contact the Visitor Information Centre on 5831 4400 or email visitor@shepparton.vic.gov.au

OCTOBER

- 1.** Opening the Doors on Family Violence
- 2.** The Kazoos in Concert
- 2-4.** Shepparton Kidsfest 2008
- 3.** Soroptimist International of Shepparton Inc supporting Make-A-Wish and Bone Marrow Donor Institute 'What a Woman Wants' Dinner performance
- 9.** Christine Dunstan Productions presents The Carpenters from Kempsey by Linda Nagle
- 11.** Police and Fireman's Ball
- 17.** Judy and Liza
- 23.** Riverlinks presents The Second Black Box for 2008
- 25.** Patchwork Sewjourn—Take Time to Smell the Roses
- 31.** Christine Harris and HIT Productions presents David Williamson's Travelling North
- 31-2 Nov.** Victorian Arabian Championships
- 31-4 Nov.** Power Industry Association Golf Tournament

For further information on these events and more please go to the Greater Shepparton website at www.greatershepparton.com.au/events

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

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Tourism Talk

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Omission puzzling—Local Tourism Body Riled by City's Absence from State Promotion. Article from Shepp News 22/8/08

Shepparton is the missing piece in Victoria's jigsaw tourism promotion and local operators are angry and frustrated by the strategy. Initial objections to being lumped into the Murray jigsaw piece, which stretches from Yarrowonga to Mildura have turned to anger with the release of Tourism Victoria's Draft Regional Action Plan for 2008-2011.

The Tourism Greater Shepparton board held an emergency meeting on Wednesday night in response to the draft plan and has voiced its disappointment in a written response to Tourism Victoria. The local tourism body has pointed out that Shepparton does not even rate a mention on the main website page for the Murray region and is all but absent from the long-term strategy.

"The Action Plan is designed to guide Tourism Victoria funding through to 2011, and Greater Shepparton is all but forgotten within the pages of this plan," Tourism Greater Shepparton president Kaye Bernardi said. "Priority projects outlined in the Action Plan clearly focus on Mildura, Wodonga and Yarrowonga, with Greater Shepparton receiving nothing." The plan details support for:

- High-quality accommodation linked with a conference facility for Mildura, Wodonga and Yarrowonga;
- Nature-based infrastructure and investment along the Murray River, including consideration of a river trail similar to the Great Ocean Walk model;
- Tourism infrastructure and investment to support the Port of Echuca as a heritage port and Swan Hill's Pioneer Settlement; and,
- Implementation of the Mildura Riverfront Master Plan to create a riverside tourism precinct that integrates the Mildura city centre with the Murray and marina.

The only mention of Shepparton is under marketing, where one of the aims is to leverage the positioning achieved through the Murray Wind Down campaign to support destinations such as Shepparton. But local tourism operators have told Tourism Victoria the Wind Down campaign has produced no benefit for Greater Shepparton tourism.

With no real connection to the Murray and little in the strategy to pin its hopes on, Tourism Greater Shepparton is demanding to know what share of the Murray campaign funding will be available to promote Shepparton. "There is plenty of money in the Murray campaign but Shepparton isn't getting any of it," Ms Bernardi said.

Tourism Greater Shepparton is also concerned that a greater focus will be placed on

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Tourism Greater Shepparton: 12 Month Action Plan

Tourism Greater Shepparton needs direction and an action plan for the next 12 months is paramount to a results based term for the newly elected board.

This seven point action plan was put to the recent AGM and has been adopted as a way forward for our tourism body.

Of course this plan can be, and should be, reviewed, regularly and any feedback or ideas from members will be welcome throughout the year.

The members section of the TGS website www.tourismgreater-shepparton.com.au is a great way to keep up with the board's progress.

ACTION PLAN

1. PARTICIPATE IN TARGETED EXPOS AND SHOWS

For example look into a stand at the Melbourne Show—many regions are taking a large collaborative stand to promote their area and their products. Members could run the stand and have a show bag to sell to add to the kitty to cover costs.

2. A DVD of the region to be distributed to accommodation places and the like for visitors' information eg. What to do, features, attractions, products. Also can be used a the VIC which is long overdue and at shows and expos.

3. **TOURISM WEEK**—this idea has been put forward as means to educating locals and other regional visitors about what we have to offer. It would give us more media clout and would be a project that would give us a ACTIVITY in the region. For example, members, and non members, could run open days, special event, offers to showcase their business as well as the area as a whole. Maybe consider having the week around KidsFest or Spring Car Nats—something which is already established.

4. **TOURISM AWARDS**—this would run leading up to Tourism Week and awards night held during tourism week. Would give businesses and attractions the confidence to put themselves up for an award—a morale booster locally as other awards can be very daunting.

5. **MEDIA/ADVERTISING**—TGS funds need to be better and more cleverly spent in the future and a media campaign incorporating TV, radio and print, as well as utilising TGS new website, is needed. Our close proximity to larger regional areas and Melbourne, in a time of high fuel prices, is an “opportunity” we are not capitalising on.

6. **SUPPORT MEMBERS**—TGS needs to be supporting member driven initiatives to bring people to the area—TGS should be more open and receptive to what members are doing off their own back to bring people here, support these initiatives and even become involved where necessary to help drive it.

7. **PHOTO LIBRARY**—A photo library to be used by TGS and its members for promotion and advertising purposes, most importantly for updating the website. This should be an ongoing project until we have all seasons covered and members should be encouraged to have photos done subsidised by TGS as a member benefit.

TOURISM GREATER SHEPPARTON WEB-

The highly anticipated new TGS website is now online. It is comprised of pages on Accommodation, Attractions and Dining, The Region, Upcoming Events and Information About TGS. There is also a members only login area where you can find the minutes from previous meetings as well as dates for the upcoming meetings. If you have not yet received the current login password, please contact Rebecca Stait on:

rebecca.stait@shepparton.vic.gov.au or (03) 5831 4400

All TGS members details have been added to the website. If you didn't fill in the website form which was sent to you a number of months ago your current details have been added, but at this stage are very basic (business name, phone number, address). The content of the website will be updated quarterly. You will be contacted when this time comes around and will have the opportunity to change your details and photograph.

GREATER SHEPPARTON

OFFICIAL VISITORS GUIDE

Production of the 2008 Official Visitors Guide is about to start. Annabel from Prominent will be in contact with everyone shortly to sell advertising space in this new guide.

Advertising in the Visitors Guide is the most effective form of advertising, as 100,000 copies will be produced and distributed throughout Victoria, Southern New South Wales and Eastern South Australia and will be in circulation for the next two years. It will also be featured on the Greater Shepparton City Council website in a downloadable format.

Members of Tourism Greater Shepparton will receive a five per cent discount on the cost, and a further five per cent will be discounted if you sign your contract before Friday 19 September.

Phone Annabel at Prominent Press on (03) 5831 2455.



Visitor Information Centre Volunteer Profile—Shirley Marvern



Just over two years ago the Visitor Information Centre Greater Shepparton region was established to expand their team. Shirley, a retired nurse and florist, had been looking for an interesting way to give back to the community and thought that volunteering at the VIC sounded like just the thing to do that.

Outside of the VIC Shirley has a fairly busy schedule which includes running her direct selling business Le Reve cosmetics. Shirley also has a passion for art and craft and has just recently taken up patchwork classes.

With such a busy lifestyle outside of the VIC, Shirley loves her laid back and stress free role as a volunteer. She enjoys meeting and helping the many types of people who come into the centre every week and as most of them are on holidays, they are all usually happy.

Shirley was originally from Numurkah, but settled with her husband and three children in Tatura and then Shepparton. Her children now have families of their own and have moved to Melbourne, Brisbane and even as far away as London, but Shirley and her husband, Vern, have been in the area for so long that they cant bear to leave. Having spent almost her whole life in this area has been a huge advantage for Shirley when it comes to volunteering at the VIC with a great knowledge of business locations and a large network of friends to call upon for information.

We take this opportunity to thank Shirley and look forward to working with her for a number of years to

VIC PASSES ACCREDITATION INSPECTION

The Visitor Information Centre undergoes a stringent process of application and re-application each year to maintain our Level 1 Visitor Information Centre accreditation status.

The accreditation program is conducted by a Better Business Tourism Accreditation (BBTA) with the involvement of Tourism Alliance (the peak industry body representing Visitor Information Centres in Victoria). The VIC was recently visited by an accreditation officer, who carried out checks on our procedures, policies and documentation to ensure that we are adhering to the requirements of a Level 1 VIC, which include the standard benchmarks which apply to all accredited tourism operators.

- Quality
- Reliability
- Professionalism
- Accuracy in Advertising
- Environmental Practices



This symbol represents an Accredited Tourism Business.

As well as Visitor Information Centre specific requirements, we must also provide:

- A friendly welcome
- Free information service
- A comprehensive range of local, regional and state wide brochures
- Maps and directional information
- Information and booking services for accommodation and tours
- Information on attractions, events, retail outlets and local services
- Information on road conditions and transport options
- Unbiased local knowledge on the area
- 24 hour access to information, emergency contact numbers and accommodation options
- Public toilets on site or nearby.



This symbol represents an Accredited Visitor Information Centre.

The Visitor Information Centre accreditation program is currently moving from three levels of accreditation to two, following a review last year of the accreditation guidelines. While this has little impact on our Level 1 centre, the requirements on a Level 2 centre will become far more demanding in the future. We are pleased to report that we passed our inspection, and apart from needed to document some further environmental practices we will easily maintain our Level 1 status when changes come into effect.

For more information about accreditation, and becoming an accredited operator—see www.tourismaccreditationvic.com.au or you can speak to Maree at the VIC. Other members of TGS who have attained accreditation include BIG4 Shepparton East Holiday Park and Shepparton Art Gallery.

President’s Annual Report—TOURISM FIRMLY ON THE AGENDA

Building the profile of tourism in the Greater Shepparton region is the primary motivation behind the current board of Tourism Greater Shepparton (TGS). Most recently its members have been working on launching its independent website, www.tourismgreatershepparton.com.au to attract visitors to the area and convince them to stay longer by enticing them with the natural attributes and many wonderful attractions it has to offer. The website is crucial and will be instrumental for TGS members to collectively promote themselves, and the region as a whole, in a tourism market which is more competitive than ever.

One of the major roles of the TGS board in the 12 months has been to educate locals about what is in their backyard and encourage them to explore them with visiting family and friends. The board believes that it is vital that local people are educated about what is available in this area for both tourists and for themselves to visit. We have to change the perception that there is nothing to do in this region. It is a fact we can give people a huge variety of farm gates, local produce outlets, art, day spas, family friendly venues, wineries and eateries that would rival many other regions. Not to mention the quality accommodation choices we have. We just need to get the message out louder and clearer to people will want to visit.

TGS is committed to working with the Shepparton Show Me panel, Chamber of Commerce and Greater Shepparton City Council to build a profile and a brand that will encourage growth in tourism. Members of TGS have been Show Me panel members, Chamber of Commerce President, Dawn Taylor is on the TGS board and Council Tourism Manager, Sharlene Putman is a tireless worker on TGS projects. This collaborative approach will benefit the region as tourism dollars do flow through all sectors of our community.

Some of the projects TGS has been involved in the past include KidsFest, the Trade Travel Coach group expos, numerous Shepparton Show Me promotions, Women on Farms Conference, SheppARTon Festival and GV Brain functions. These activities have already resulted in more people visiting our region and this year we look forward to continuing the positive relationships built and increasing the exposure the association has received.

The next 12 months will be crucial in cementing the work of TGS on a wider and broader scale—promoting itself more fiercely in markets such as Melbourne, Bendigo, Ballarat and into New South Wales. Thinking smarter and acting more collaboratively will set TGS up for a more prosperous 12

NEW VISITOR MAP

The new Greater Shepparton Visitor Map is now out! This is one of the most comprehensive maps of the area ever produced—covering places including Shepparton, Mooroopna, Tatura, Murchison and Dookie. The Visitor Map is being used in conjunction with the Official Visitor Guide as the main marketing tools for Greater Shepparton emphasising the attributes of the region—accommodation, dining, attractions and activities.

Copies have been distributed to all accredited Visitor Information Centres throughout Victoria and Southern New South Wales and is also available as a downloadable version on the Greater Shepparton City Council website.

If you have advertised in the Visitor Map and would like some copies to put on display, please call into the