

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

Tourism Greater Shepparton

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Visitor Information Centre Update.

Over the last few months the VIC went through the recruitment process searching for a new full time staff member. Jessica Davie was the successful applicant and has joined the team and fitted in extremely well. Jess hails from Wunghnu and has had previous VIC experience at the Numurkah VIC and the Ballarat VIC. Be sure to make her welcome when next speaking with her. The centre has also managed to ensure that Kasey Dearrictott has become a permanent part time staff member also. You can be sure the team are all working hard to increase the tourism profile of Greater Shepparton. The Visitor Information Centre has continued to be busy over the winter months. Accommodation bookings for some major conferences have kept the phones ringing hot – with quite a few record breaking days receiving in excess of 80 phone calls. The Half Ironman Triathlon on 10 December and several events in the first quarter of 2007 are continuing to keep the accommodation booking service busy!

New Region Names

Three of Victoria’s tourism regions have had a name change: Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges (formerly Yarra Valley, Dandenongs and the Ranges). Daylesford and the Macedon Ranges (formerly Macedon Ranges and Spa Country). Victoria’s High Country (formerly Legends, Wine and High Country). The Dandenong Ranges is now represented as one destination rather than being split into two, which created confusion with visitors about where “the Ranges” were in relation to “the Dandenongs”. The name change to Daylesford and the Macedon Ranges supports initiatives to promote Daylesford as a major regional destination, reinforces the Daylesford marketing campaign and provides a better geographic descriptor to visitors. The rationale for the name change to Victoria’s High Country was low consumer awareness of the Legends, Wine and High country name. Victoria’s High Country was chosen as the new name because it supports year round tourism.



New Information Board for Dookie.

To further improve the visitor services in Dookie, Greater Shepparton City Council recently installed a new Information Board in the CWA Gardens in Mary Street Dookie. This board will enhance Dookie’s profile and allow the promotion of local attractions and events, as well as providing a comprehensive street map of the township.

Pictured above is Angus (left) and Oliver Sutherland, just after installation.

Our first famil tour for this year finally got off the ground in September, with visits to some of our local Shepparton attractions and accommodation properties proving very worthwhile – a great opportunity for our volunteers and operators to update their local knowledge.

The centre’s interior has been looking very colourful with displays for our local wineries and KidsFest – selling tickets for which also kept us very busy!

And so the Visitor Information Centre “kicks on” – ably assisted by the wonderful band of willing volunteers. Drop in and say hello some time! Or call the centre on (03) 5831 4400.



Tourism Talk

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SPRING 2006



The Murray River. Wind Down Marketing Campaign.

A \$750,000 tourism marketing campaign for the Murray region was launched on Friday. The campaign has the theme *The Murray River. Wind Down* and aims to attract more visitors by promoting the region as the perfect destination to relax, unwind and enjoy the slow pace of the majestic river. Clever print advertisements, featuring a key to reinforce the ‘wind down’ theme, are running in weekend newspapers in Melbourne and regional Victoria, regional New South Wales, South Australia and the ACT. They will also feature in *Gourmet Traveller, delicious, Open Road* and *Royal Auto*.

The campaign promotes the region’s key attributes – food and wine, history and heritage, golf and water-based activities – and has the following components:

- a brand and visual identity – *The Murray River. Wind Down*
- print advertising with the themes of house boating, fishing, golf and food and wine
- a website promoting local tourism operators
- a new fold-out map for visitors
- online advertising and consumer email marketing
- search engine marketing on Google
- extensive public relations activities.

The campaign is running from now until November. A second burst of advertising is planned for early 2007. The public relations and online activities are ongoing.

The target market is ‘Murray Meanderers’ – Australians aged 30 and 64 who are medium to high spenders, enjoy activities that align with the region’s key strengths and are frequent travellers or take extended trips.

Useful Website.

A useful tool for all aspects of business is the Business Victoria Website www.business.vic.gov.au This site contains information regarding advertising an promotion, workplace rights, grants, ebusiness, licenses and regulations.

Welcome to the New Board!



TGS Vice President
Cheryl Hammer and President
Kaye Bernardi.

It is with great pleasure that we present the first newsletter since the election of Tourism Greater Shepparton’s new board. It is testament to the passion of our community that so many people want to be involved in promoting our area. We welcome four new members, as well as five of returning members. Congratulations to Kaye Bernardi for becoming only the third President of Tourism Greater Shepparton. We look forward to seeing the valuable contribution that our board makes to Greater Shepparton.

The campaign tested well in pre-launch research. It rated in the top 25 per cent of all Australian advertisements (print, television and radio) tested. Research participants were overwhelmingly positive about the region, the beauty of its natural surroundings and the varied activities and experiences on offer.

The campaign has been jointly funded by Tourism Victoria, Tourism New South Wales and the Federal Government through AusIndustry. Each provided \$250,000 over two years for the campaign. The campaign was officially launched in Mildura by the two State Tourism Ministers, John Pandazopoulos and Sandra Nori, and Federal representative John Forrest, the Member for Mallee.

Tourism Victoria—Corporate web site
www.tourismvictoria.com.au

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Dianella Revaluta— Dianella has blue / purple edible berries and the leaves have a silky fibre that was extracted and used for making baskets and cord.



Mentha diemenica – Native Mint

A strongly-suckering, spreading ground-cover to 15cm high with small pale mauve flowers in spring. The strongly-scented leaves were used to make a tea like drink to relieve stomach cramp, coughs and colds. Like many of the mint family it has the potential to become invasive.

VIC Doozie Questions:

Some of the strange enquiries received at the VIC (yes they are real!)

“Can you find me some accommodation—a detox centre or call the Police and get them to lock me up for the night?”

“Who can I get to do sky writing so I can propose to my partner?”

How can we contact the local homing pigeon society?

The “who’s who” of local tourism operators:

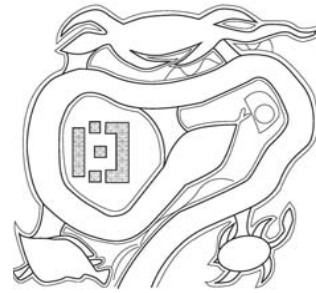
Billabong Garden Complex—Bush Tucker Walk

Billabong’s bush tucker walk showcases the local native plant species that were used as a source of food and for medicinal purposes by local Aboriginal tribes. Visitors can take a walk and gain an insight into the significant role that plants played in the survival of Aboriginal people. The Bush Tucker Walk was designed and constructed by a Koorie group of Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) students and incorporates four animals in the design, a snake, long-necked turtle, Murray cod and a goanna, all of which have traditional meaning to indigenous people. Visitors can access the walk free of charge at their leisure or organised group bush

tucker education sessions can be arranged in advance for a small fee. After exploring the Bush Tucker Walk, visitors can also browse the huge plant nursery where many of the plants on display within the bush tucker walk are for sale, and then take up the challenge in the hedge maze which is also free to access.

To obtain further details on Billabong’s Bush Tucker Walk please contact Kate on 5831 4965.

Bush Tucker Walk Design and layout.



MAGNIFICENTLY SHAPED REAL CHRISTMAS TREES

The GV Centre’s annual Christmas fundraiser is on again, and its time for you to choose a tree that is perfect to rekindle Christmas spirit and create special Christmas memories for your home and your business.

Date: Sunday 19 November
Time: 10.00am – 2.00pm
Location: Billabong Garden Complex.

If you miss our ‘Choose Your Tree’ day, Christmas Trees will be available for sale from the Billabong Garden Complex from 1 December right up until Christmas.

Prices: 6ft \$29.00 Over 6ft \$35.00

Delivery \$12.00 Stand \$22.00

For more details please contact Kate on 5831 4965.



All proceeds from Christmas Tree sales go to the GV Centre for Disability Services to assist in providing future opportunities for people with a disability.

If you are intending to work with travel agents, booking officers, tour wholesalers and inbound tour operators, you **must** be prepared to pay commission levels of between 10% and 35%. Your commission must be included in your ‘rack rate’ or ‘retail rate’. For example, if your product sells for \$110 the commission you would provide to an agent would be 10% (i.e. \$11). Commissions are a form of distribution, as the wholesaler or travel agent is selling your product on your behalf. When establishing your price it is important to understand that you will not pay commission on every booking, as many will come direct. As a general rule for businesses established in wholesale programs, approximately 60-70% of bookings come direct, 20% come via wholesalers and travel agents, and approximately 10% come via booking services. Thus on 60-70% of your bookings you pay no commission.

What is the difference between offering a discount from a direct booking or paying a commission to a booking agent? Easy—the commission you pay is tax deductible!

Remember you only pay a commission if you get a booking—would you prefer 90% of the customers money or none?

Calendar of Events:

October:

- 8—9 Jayco Herald Sun Tour
- 10 Hoodoo Gurus Live!
- 13—14 Shepparton Agricultural Show
- 13—14 Camp Quality esCarpade
- 14 Motorcycle buy, sell, swap
- 15t Shepparton Craft and Produce Market
- 20—22 Shepparton Home and Leisure Show
- 20 Col Elliot Live!
- 21 Bananas in Pyjamas
- 21—22 Relay for Life
- 22 Toolamba Community Market
- 27—29 Goulburn Valley Country Music Festival
- 27 Dookie Night Market

November

- 4 Dookie Agricultural Show
- 10t Greyhound Racing with the Stars
- 10 Tatura Primary School Fete
- 12 Kialla Carnival at the Vineyard
- 13 Tatura Shepparton Race Club Meet
- 18—19 Celebrate the Season Lavender Festival
- 19 Shepparton Craft and Produce Market

November—continued

- 24—26 Spring Car Nationals
- 25 Undera Park Speedway
- 26 Toolamba Community Market
- 26 Harness Racing
- 26 Shepparton Heritage Centre
- 29 Jimmy Barnes Live!

December

- 3 ING Cup Bushrangers V’s WA
- 3 Emerald Bank Christmas Fair
- 10 Shepparton Half Iron Man Triathlon
- 10 Shepparton Craft and Produce Market
- 10 Shepparton Heritage Centre
- 17 Italian Plate Day—Racing
- 18 Harness Racing
- 23 Harness Racing

For a full listing of events, browse the Council’s website at www.greatershepparton.com.au where you will find a comprehensive listing including further details on the above events. To have an event included in the calendar, please contact the Visitor Information Centre on 5831 4400 or Sharlene Putman on 5832 9849.

Kidsfest



Committee members Kelli Halden and Sharlene Putman. Photo courtesy Katie Madill—The Adviser

The petting zoo was a fantastic hit with adults and children alike! Photo courtesy Katie Madill—The Adviser.

KidsFest hit Greater Shepparton for the first time this September school holidays and was a resounding success! Five days of live shows, arts and crafts, train rides, jumping castle fun, motorbikes, face painting, crazy hair, mask making and live reptiles! The region has not seen such a wonderful festival run for the kids. At only \$35.00 for a family of four to attend, the event was a huge hit with locals and visitors alike to the region. The event, sure to become an annual event was a huge task to put together and complete. With Rikki Lee, the

Justice League Show and Madagascar Show, everything was possible due to the generosity of the sponsors and the volunteers who helped the event run smoothly.

A big thank you to Tourism Greater Shepparton, who through your membership contributed to the sponsorship of the event. This festival of course contributed to the tourism profile and economy of Greater Shepparton of which we all benefit.

Well done everybody!



The CFA get involved with KidsFest! Photo courtesy Katie Madill—The Adviser.



SPC Ardmona KidsTown enters Victorian Tourism Awards

SPC Ardmona KidsTown has entered this year's Victorian Tourism Awards! Vicky Mansell and Sharlene Putman spent many hours putting together "It was hard work considering we were still putting KidsFest together, but we got there in the end." Vicky stated.

Victoria's regions are well represented in the Melbourne Airport 2006 Victorian Tourism Awards, with two thirds of the entrants coming from outside Melbourne.

One hundred and one entrants are vying for top honours in this year's awards, a 12 per cent increase on 2005. All the campaign regions are represented and all entrants are listed on www.victoriantourismawards.com.au

The judging panel is busy this month with site visits to the entrants, with KidsTown being judged on Saturday 23 September (right in the midst of KidsFest!). The judges will then get together during October to decide which tourism business will be honoured at the gala awards ceremony on Monday 20 November at Crown.

Keep your fingers crossed!

The Echoes Country House

Sheila Carruthers, Dan Gibson and their son Patrick moved to Greater Shepparton from inner-city Melbourne in January 2000 when they purchased The Echoes, a former sheep and wheat farm 4 kilometres south of Kyabram. "We came to this area because we love the peace and tranquility of the area and the wide open spaces." Sheila's love of hospitality and tourism began when she was doing part time work in France and Spain while studying for a degree in French and Spanish. Before coming to The Echoes she completed a Grad. Dip. in Hospitality and Tourism Management. Dan was

a teacher and grew to love the wide open spaces in his first teaching posting to the Mallee. The Echoes is a fine example of a Federation homestead and is set amid 5 acres of garden. Some of the farm buildings are still on the property and are being carefully resurrected. Tours of the house and garden are conducted for group bookings and the garden is available for weddings. The Echoes is a great place to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Evening meals can be arranged for guests and, wherever possible, local produce is used. Sheila has just started making jams

and chutneys with fruit from the orchard – the quince paste is scrumptious with local cheese. "We believe that it is important for all the tourism businesses in Greater Shepparton to work together to promote the whole area.

Being part of the local tourism group is a great way to do this."

The Echoes:
245 Cooma Road.
Phone: (03) 5852 2379
www.theechoes.com.au



The magnificent Echoes Country House.

A note from the TGS President

Firstly, thank you to all members for affording me the opportunity of leading Tourism Greater Shepparton this year. This upcoming year promises to be one of growth for our members and the Board is continually working hard to promote Greater Shepparton for everyone's benefit.

As you all know, Tourism Greater Shepparton was one of the major sponsors of KidsFest 2006, which was a runaway success. We congratulate Vicky Mansell and Tony Tranter on their incredible effort to organise this year's event – can't wait to see what they come up with next year!

The most exciting development we will see this year is the production and launch of our tourism website. Only financial members of Tourism Greater Shepparton will be able to promote themselves on the site. They will also be able to link their own website and

email addresses.

The tab for the cost of design and production of the website is being picked up by the Greater Shepparton City Council through the generosity of our CEO, Bob Laing. This is a great example of the relationship that is continuing to prosper between Tourism Greater Shepparton and the Council.

As you may be aware, for the first time in its history, the President of Tourism Greater Shepparton has been elected to the committee of Shepparton Show Me. Another TGS Board member, Kylie Trevaskis from Wellsprings Day Spa, has also been elected as a Committee member. I think I can speak for both of us when I say that it has been a huge learning curve but we're both thoroughly enjoying the role and the challenge. Although Shepparton Show Me was initially developed to increase retail

spending, we believe that this sits hand in hand with tourism and are striving to forge closer relationships between the two. You will see Show Me promoting events this year such as Kidsfest, the Triathlon, the one day cricket match in December and Spring Car Nationals. Everyone who attends these events spends dollars in our town and in our businesses. This is why we MUST all work together because in the end, we all benefit.

I look forward to catching up with you all at our next members' social function. If anyone has any ideas or comments on how you think we can improve Tourism Greater Shepparton in the meantime, please feel free to phone or email me at any time.

Cheers, Kaye Bernardi Ph: 5829 2396

info@big4sheppartoneast.com.au

VIC -Volunteer Profile

Margaret Babidge

Another treasure of the Visitor Information Centre volunteer team is Margaret Babidge. Margaret has volunteered at the centre since 1992 and continues to be an integral member of the team. Margaret continues to volunteer as she is an avid

traveler herself, each year enjoying an international holiday and enjoys meeting people and ensuring that their visit to Greater Shepparton is a positive one. Margaret enjoys the team atmosphere, the familiarisation tours and the company of all of the center's volunteers, which ensures she continues to attend the centre. Margaret enjoys volunteering so much and making a positive contribution to the community that

she is also a volunteer with the Shepparton Historical Society, a member of Probus and U3A and is also an active member of the Shepparton Art Gallery. Margaret is highly regarded at the Visitor Information Centre and continues to promote the positive experience that is volunteering. Therefore we take this opportunity to thank Margaret for her contribution to the centre and for also recruiting new team members. Thanks Margaret!

Margaret was a member of our winning Volunteer team—CVTC Tourism Awards 2001!

