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Welcome

Welcome to the fortnightly Edition of the AVIC E News

Issue 111 - 29th April, 2008

To all AVIC Management, Staff and Volunteers who are Mothers and Grandmothers

Best wishes for Mother's Day

We hope you have a wonderful day on Sunday, 11th May

**Enjoy reading this Edition ... from the Team -
Lyn, Lesley, John, Gordon & Maryanne**

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AVIC/Industry News

Tourism Ambassadors for the Southern Highlands

An exciting new initiative was launched recently in the Southern Highlands by the NSW Minister for Tourism, Matt Brown, that will see all Wingecarribee Shire residents become tourism ambassadors via the Southern Highlands Ambassador Passport Program. Tourism to the Southern Highlands generates \$170 million in revenue from the 1.4million visitors that the Southern Highlands attract each year. Tourism is also the biggest employer for the region.

With approximately 46% of all domestic and international visitors to the Southern Highlands coming for the purpose of visiting friends and

relatives (VFR) and with domestic tourism currently in a state of decline in regional Australia, the Southern Highlands tourism industry and the Wingecarribee Shire Council have initiated a local community program that will specifically target the VFR market by encouraging their visitors to stay longer, see and do more, and spend more which, in turn, will benefit the Shire, the tourism industry, locals and visitors.

Tourism Southern Highlands Executive Manager, Steve Rosa said, "The cost of attracting new visitors to our region is a very expensive and timely exercise and this new Ambassador Program allows us to work smarter with our limited marketing budgets. We have a captured and returning audience and if we can get the locals to become more knowledgeable about what's in their own backyard and sample the products themselves, they will, in turn, become proud ambassadors for their region amongst visiting family and friends. The local tourism industry has packaged and presented locals with some fantastic deals. This new community program is very timely as local businesses are doing it tough."

The Ambassador Passport program is valid from 1st April, 2008 until 31st March, 2009. The offers will be continually updated with new or revised deals and made available on Tourism Southern Highlands and Wingecarribee Shire Council websites. All participating Ambassador Passport tourism businesses will carry posters highlighting their offers to locals and visiting friends and relatives. All local residents over the age of 18 will be eligible to take up the offers and will be able to redeem their offers by simply providing proof of residence.

The key message to locals from the Southern Highlands tourism industry is that **"You don't have to travel overseas on a Passport to have a great holiday experience! You can use your personal Southern Highlands Ambassador Passport to be rewarded for holidaying at home"**.

Further details of the program are available from the Mittagong Visitor Information Centre on Telephone: (02) 4871 2888.



Pictured above: Steve Rosa - Executive Manager Tourism Southern Highlands, Matt Brown, NSW Minister for Tourism and Mittagong Mayor, Gordon Lewis. The launch was conducted in the forecourt of Mittagong AVIC with various interactive displays - hence the horse "Jet" included in the photo.

Source: Tourism Southern Highlands

Congratulations to Steve and the team for a new and exciting initiative to capture the local residents who are an important link to the success of the Southern Highlands Tourism Industry.

Upcoming Industry Events

Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) Symposium 2008

29th April to 2nd May in Newcastle and the Hunter Valley.

<http://symposium08.atec.net.au>

Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE 08)

Saturday, 14th to Friday, 20th June - Perth Convention Exhibition Centre.

www.tradeevents.australia.com.

2008 CountryLink Inland NSW Tourism Awards

Saturday, 26 July - Parkes Leagues Club

www.inlandtourismawards.com.au

2008 NSW Tourism Awards

Thursday, 20th November - Star City Hotel and Casino.

www.tourism.nsw.gov.au/awards

Source: TNSW Insights

2008 NSW Tourism Awards



Entries are now open for the 2008 NSW Tourism Awards and the Industry is encouraged to be part of the State's premier tourism event. The NSW Tourism Awards is managed in partnership by Tourism NSW and the Tourism Industry Council NSW. Nominations for the 2008 NSW Tourism Awards close on 18th July and entries close on 2nd September, with the finalists to be announced in October.

The NSW Tourism Awards are public recognition for tourism businesses, operators and attractions by the Industry. They acknowledge business excellence in tourism and outstanding achievement and success at a State level and encourage the continual raising of standards across the Industry.

This year, the award ceremony will be held on Thursday, 20th November at Star City Hotel and Casino. 2008 will see the addition of a new award - the Qantas Award for Excellence in Sustainable Tourism.

Tourism NSW is seeking sponsors to make this year's event another success. Sponsorship gives organisations the opportunity to raise their profile and align themselves with the Industry. For information about sponsorship and awards, visit

www.corporate.tourism.nsw.gov.au/NSW_Tourism_Awards

Source: TNSW Insights

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Your AVIC Brand

Corowa AVIC



Corowa AVIC has the good fortune to be situated in the middle of the shopping precinct with a shop front that allows them to prominently display the AVIC Brand to all who pass by.

If you would like a CD with all the logos, please email lesley@auroraresearch.com.au and we will post it to you.

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Volunteers

Reasons to be Excited about the Work of Volunteers

It is democratic. The individual can take direct action to address a need or cause they feel strongly about. They don't have to wait for a law to be passed or a government agency to solve the problem. They can go out right now and do something about it.

It is often agreed that people find a sense of meaning, purpose and fulfilment from the work they do - whether paid or unpaid. Volunteering (if well organised) offers us the opportunity to get more out of life while at the same time make a positive contribution to the needs of others.

It is inclusive. Many people who feel marginalised by society have been given the opportunity to get involved and be accepted. They might be people who have made mistakes in the past and are seeking rehabilitation, or they might be people who have been made to feel different, unwelcome or seen as having little to contribute - seniors, people with disabilities, gay and lesbian volunteers, troubled young people and so on. Volunteering builds communities and encourages cooperative relationships between people who might not otherwise

interact.

When you are clear about your volunteer program's contribution to your workplace or to society, you will be better placed to sell the volunteering opportunities you have available. If, say, part of your philosophy is about being inclusive, you will be more focused on recruiting people from the margins of society. This will open up your recruitment activity to a wider audience and encourage you to look in places you would not perhaps have considered when seeking volunteers.

So tap into your own enthusiasm and passion for volunteerism and make your recruitment activity truly magnetic.

Source: Turn Your Organisation into a Volunteer Magnet

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OHS

Reducing Your Holiday Email Stress

Holidays can be a bitter sweet experience. It is great having time out of the office with friends and family but less pleasant having to return to face reams of emails.

There are ways you can reduce the email load. Office productivity expert, Donna Hanson, says you should start by customising your "out of office" message. Senders then know you are absent and who they can contact as an alternative.

Pre-warning your clients about the office closure or your absence also helps and this can be facilitated by a footnote on your outgoing emails.

For those with the capacity, need or desire to check work emails from home, it is best to set a daily or weekly designated time period for greater efficiency.

Before taking holidays, delete or tidy up emails and file under company or topic, making it easier to follow up. That may involve archiving older mail to a network drive, memory stick, external hard drive or virtual server.

Hanson also recommends regularly emptying the deleted items bin, using flags and reminders as prompts on items that need to be completed before you go on holidays and reviewing your email folder to ditch or archive irrelevant folders or create sub-folders for easier retrieval.

Source: My Business E-News

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AVIC Connect

AVIC Annual Reports

Many thanks to the 70 AVICs who have submitted their Annual Report.

Your Annual Report is part of your Accreditation requirement and was due on 31st March, 2008.

We would appreciate those Centres who have not done so to make it a priority to complete the form and email, fax or post it back to Aurora.

Your Backyard

We have received many emails from Centres wishing to participate in the "Your Backyard" segment of the Newsletter. We are still looking for more - please don't think it is too late to submit your piece. Now is the time to brag about your town or your Centre or anything that makes you pleased and proud to live where you live. Please email 2 or 3 paragraphs and a jpeg image to lesley@auroraresearch.com.au

National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week will be celebrated from 12th-18th May.

Have you organised anything to celebrate your volunteers? - perhaps a staff dinner or afternoon tea or small gifts to be given to your hardworking volunteer staff.

Take some photos and email them to lesley@auroraresearch.com.au and we will feature them in the next AVIC E News.

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What's On / Events

2nd - 4th May - Castle Hill - The Australian Frog and Reptile Show

Educational and exciting! A great opportunity for kids and adults to see and touch Australia's amazing reptiles and amphibians. Get advice on keeping reptiles as pets and watch the best in show competition. For further information, phone (02) 9817 8421.

2nd - 25th May - Scone - Scone & Upper Hunter Horse Festival

Three weeks of festivities which includes Scone Horse Festival Street Parade, The Scone Cup - the richest day in country racing in NSW, King of the Ranges in Murrurundi with Australia's Top Stockman - the best to compete in a Final with a Brumby Catch and Stock Saddle Buckjump. For details of all events log onto www.sconehorsefestival.com

3rd - 4th May - Tamworth - Relay For Life

A community fundraising event to raise money for The Cancer Council NSW. Teams of 10 - 15 people take turns to walk, run, skip or hop around their local oval. The event takes place overnight so there's plenty of time to have fun, celebrate or simply relax. There will be plenty of healthy food, music and entertainment to help you raise money and awareness for a disease that affects us all. Register your team online at www.relayforlife.com.au/nsw

10th May - Tamworth - Fusion/LifeFest

Tamworth's fun festival for all ages. Entertainment, games, food, hobby displays, sample bags, everything is free! This major annual event on Tamworth's Calendar now attracts around 5000 people with every church involved. Lifestest is about establishing a culture of giving and sharing,

joining in, having fun and making new friends. For further information, phone (02) 67659773.

24th - 25th May - Dubbo - National Student Rodeo Assoc.

Selection Trials

Come along to the Dubbo Showground to see all the thrills and spills as some of Australia's best student riders compete for a place to represent Australia in Springfield, USA. For further details log onto www.nsra.org.au

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AVIC Network Profiles

AVIC Network Staff Profiles

Dinitee Haskard from Broken Hill is our featured AVIC Network Staff Member in this issue.

Staff Profile

1. My current position is: Tourism Service Manager & Film Broken Hill Manager, **and that involves** A very diverse range of activities that address tourism and film. From overseeing the AVIC and its staff, the maintenance and upgrade of facilities, to the training of staff and ensuring familiarisations are undertaken, liaison with operators within Broken Hill and its regions, Secretary to the Advisory Board-tourism, to marketing and promotional activities on the wider scale to national and international agencies which includes advertising, overseeing and dealing with travel agents and journalists and their itineraries and familiarisations, to name just a few activities. On the film side, this involves marketing and promotions to highlight Broken Hill and its region as a filming opportunity. It also involves highly confidential 'reccies' with Producers and Directors, finding that quintessential "look", "style", "scene", or character, and ensuring that their every request is fulfilled to the best of the ability in this region.

2. The best thing about my position is: It is excitingly diverse, challenging and never dull, fulfilling in meeting many characters and personalities within this area and from Australia and beyond.

3. I have been working here: Since I was a mere chicken - around 30.

4. My previous position was: Does it really count? The local gas company and the Roads and Traffic Authority and lots of volunteer work with schools, sports groups and the elderly.

5. My favourite sport / leisure activity is: Walking my dogs, family history and lots of backyard parties with friends and relations and, as a new Gran of only a matter of days, I intend to spend lots of time with my new Grandson and spoil him big time.

6. My favourite holiday destination is: I don't have a favourite holiday destination as I enjoy experiencing new and different places.

7. People tell me I'm good at: Being a real and true friend.and, in work, it is thinking out of the square, going that extra mile and being fair and just, honest and having integrity.

8. My favourite colour is: Purple.

9. My favourite singer/music is: Tina Turner and Van Morrison and The Rolling Stones and I would love to meet Sean Connery.

10. If I could live my life over again: I would ensure a better work life balance. Work to Live!



Dinitee, thank you for participating in this feature of the AVIC E Newsletter and congratulations on becoming a new Gran.

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Special Feature - Our Backyard

Our Backyard

Why I live where I live! - From Edwina Marks, Jerilderie AVIC

Jerilderie is a small town in non-coastal Australia with a population of 1642 and faces many of the typical challenges facing our rural communities at this time - drought, centralisation of services and industries and employment drift to larger regional centres.

However, we sure know how to kick up our heels. The weekend of 22nd-23rd March, we celebrated our 150th Sesqui-Centenary and boy, was it an event. We had a host of activities planned over the Easter weekend including a Grand Parade, a Grand Ball that evening with 340 guests and sponsors, a plethora of "back to" sites including football club, schools and service organisations and family reunions culminating in a fantastic fireworks display on the Sunday evening!

Over 1000 visitors came to our town, many returning as prodigal sons and daughters, and many new visitors partaking in the activities spread over the weekend.



Pictured above: The Mayor, Terry Hogan AM, who, dressed in period costume, led the Grand Parade.

Thank you Edwina for sharing your passion for Jerilderie.

Our Backyard - From Richard Old, Great Lakes Tourism

Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest - Gateway to the Myall Coast / Great Lakes NSW

The seaside villages of Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest are connected by the Singing Bridge which crosses the Myall River near its mouth at Port Stephens and are the gateway to the magnificent Myall Coast.

The Myall Coast is a unique mix of lakes, rivers, beaches and forests found nowhere else on the east coast of Australia. Central to this region is the Myall Lakes National Park which is the most popular National Park in all of NSW attracting thousands of campers, explorers, bird watchers and holiday makers each year.

Tea Gardens enjoys a peaceful environment on the banks of the Myall River, with abundant bird life, dolphins and a relaxed lifestyle. Ferry cruises to Nelson Bay, dolphin and whale watching, kayaking and river cruises are popular activities for visitors.

On the last Saturday of October each year, Tea Gardens hosts the "Myall River Festival" along the waterfront; a popular and family-friendly day with entertainment, market stalls and fun activities - www.myallriverfestival.com.au

Hawks Nest is known for its beautiful beaches, prolific wildflowers and endangered urban koala population. With the Myall Lakes and National Park to the north, Myall River to the west, Port Stephens to the south and ocean to the east, Hawks Nest is a special environment particularly enjoyed by nature lovers and families.

In September, Hawks Nest hosts the "Walk on the Wild Side Festival". A number of events take place to celebrate the natural environment including free guided walks, cycling and golf days, art exhibitions and workshops and a community fair with kid's rides and market stalls. For further details on this Festival, visit www.walkonthewildside.net.au

Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest enjoys a mild climate, with shops and businesses open all year round. A huge variety of accommodation options are available, from basic camping to self contained homes, to five star boutique apartments. Sydney is only 2 hours drive and Newcastle less than an hour. Delightful trips to hinterland villages are waiting for you to discover.

For further information, go to www.teagardensonline.com.au or www.greatlakes.org.au



What a great backyard! Many of us who live far from the ocean would love a backyard like this.

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Deadline

Deadline

Please email lesley@auroraresearch.com.au with any articles you wish to be included in the upcoming AVIC News, prior to 13th May, 2008.

We appreciate your contributions and input into the AVIC Network Program.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this Newsletter,

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