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 *...will take you there!*

**Welcome**

**Welcome to the fortnightly Edition of the AVIC E News**

**Issue 121 - 16 September, 2008**

**Winter is over and Spring has arrived for most of us. We hope that all Centres will have increased visitation during this period of better weather and School Holidays and that your town and region enjoys the spoils of NSW Domestic Tourism.**

***We hope you enjoy your AVIC Newsletter!***

***From Lyn, Lesley, John, Gordon & Maryanne***

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**AVIC/Industry News**

### **Latest Trends**

At the recent Tourism Futures Conference, which is held annually to provide a forum to discuss the key issues shaping the Australian Tourism Industry, delegates were asked to complete a survey (conducted by Roy Morgan Research). Some of the results are presented below for your information.

### **Top Five Challenges**

The 2008 Tourism Futures Survey has revealed that the top five challenges facing the Australian Tourism Industry are:

### **Next Year**

- Increased mortgage costs/reduced disposable income
- Australia's exchange rate
- The price of oil/fuel and the effect on airfares
- Training and staffing issues (including skills shortage)
- The price of oil/fuel and the effect on drive tourism

### Next Ten Years

- Climate change/global warming
- The price of oil/fuel and the effect on airfares
- Need for product development and infrastructure in regional areas
- Training and staffing issues (including skills shortage)
- Increased mortgage costs/reduced disposable income

### Top Five Competitive Advantages

The survey results indicated that the Australian Tourism Industry's top five competitive advantages are:

### Next Year

- Stable and safe country
- Australia's culture and friendly people
- Clean/green environment/ natural/ pristine beauty of Australia
- Unique experience offered in Australia
- Australia's status as a highly desirable destination

### Next Ten Years

- Stable and safe country
- Clean/ green environment/ natural/ pristine beauty of Australia
- Unique experience offered in Australia
- Diversity of product/experience
- Australia's culture and friendly people

Source: *Tourism Futures website*

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**Your AVIC Brand**

### AVIC Logo

There are many ways the AVIC Logo can be promoted, especially in-house. Letterhead, as part of your signature for emails, staff name badges, business cards, 'With Compliments' slips and, of course, prominent usage on your website. These are just some of the ways you can promote the Brand.

Young Visitor Information Centre use the logo very effectively on their 'With Compliments' slips (see below).



Signage within the boundaries of your town/city is another avenue of promotion. Not only does this signage direct the visitor to your AVIC but, in turn, promotes the AVIC Brand.



Muswellbrook AVIC take advantage of the statue promoting "Blue Healer Country" to position a directional sign to their Centre.

Some time ago Aurora posted the AVIC Style Guide CD to all AVICs. If you have mislaid the CD or it 'grew legs and walked', it is available to all AVICs. Please email [lesley@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:lesley@auroraresearch.com.au) if you would like a copy posted to you.

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[Volunteers](#)

### **Congratulations to Murrurundi AVIC**

Murrurundi Visitor Information Centre received recognition and an award for their "Contribution to Tourism" at the Upper Hunter Region Tourism Awards held in Newcastle recently. The Centre, run by volunteers and supervised by Scone AVIC, was nominated by Upper Hunter Country Tourism.

General Manager, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Mr Daryl Dutton said, "These volunteers have a passion for their community and the area. They promote the local product, accommodation and attractions with great enthusiasm, seven days per week, for the benefit of the area". Mr Dutton went on to say, "That the Murrurundi Visitor Information Centre is run solely by volunteers demonstrates the value and difference volunteers can make to business operators and the community alike. This award recognises the effort this team of volunteers has put in since the Centre opened and will, no doubt, earn them a very high level of respect from their peers and hopefully, encourage other community members to join this winning team. The Upper Hunter Shire Council congratulates them on this fine achievement".



L-R: J Nolan, D.Roche, C. Farrow, R. Tate, M. Hopkins  
(absent - D. Whitby and S. Yates)

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**OH&S**

### **First Aid Kits**

#### **Can we include analgesics (pain killers) in the First Aid Kit?**

These drugs have been shown to be the major source of abuse and pilfering of First Aid Kits. Accordingly, analgesics should be included in First Aid Kits only after consultation with employees and when an appropriate management plan is in place.

Employees should be responsible for carrying and dispensing their own prescribed or over-the-counter medications. The protocol recommended for the supply of simple analgesics by a workplace First Aid provider is:

1. No more than one pack of analgesics to be held in any First Aid Kit.
2. Analgesics must remain in the original packaging containing the standard dosage and the required warning and caution statements.
3. The caution and warning statement on the pack should be communicated to the employee.
4. Supply only on direct request by an employee.
5. Supply limited to the recommended dose (generally up to two tablets four hourly).
6. Supply must be recorded in the First Aid Register.

*Source: WorkCover NSW*

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**AVIC Connect**

### **Effective Complaints Handling**

Successful businesses work very hard to keep their customers satisfied. Although prevention is better than cure, it is almost inevitable that at some stage you will receive a customer complaint. Don't presume a customer complaint is a negative experience because, if handled well, it can be valuable.

#### **Benefits to your business:**

An effective customer complaints handling system is essential to your business. Your business can benefit in several ways:

- Improved product quality and service delivery
- Fewer mistakes and less time spent fixing them
- Better understanding of the customers' needs
- More customers through word of mouth advertising from satisfied clients
- Improved business reputation
- A healthier bottom line

### **How to do it**

- Have a policy of welcoming customer complaints
- Set up a system to handle complaints effectively
- Train your staff to handle complaints well
- Deal with the complaint immediately
- Ensure the process for making complaints is easy for your customers
- Make sure all staff are familiar with the process for customers to make a complaint
- Regularly review your complaints records

This topic will be continued in our next issue.

*Source: Dept. Consumer Affairs*

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### **Selling Your Region**

Whether we like it or not, we are required more and more to sell our region/destination. We need to increase the length of stay and dollars that tourism brings into the area - so we need to develop our selling skills.

Aurora is currently presenting "Closing the Sale" as part of its Tourism Training Workshops being delivered in the regions and, from recent feedback received, it seems that AVIC staff are hesitant and/or not confident, with their selling skills. So, in the coming editions of the AVIC News, we will be including a continuing "Selling" feature.

#### **Part One - Personal Selling**

Face to face selling is one of the best ways of promoting any product. Because it is so personalised, the sales presentation can be adapted to suit the audience and people are far more persuasive than paper promotions. Selling means actually taking an order or booking so sales activities are relatively easy to monitor.

In the past, only businesses such as attractions and hotels undertook sales activities. Destinations engaged in little activity, or restricted their direct sales efforts to exhibitions. Now, some destinations are beginning to find that by increasing the family activity for staff and actually visiting operators, staff and operators alike are more aware of what each offer is. AVIC staff are therefore far more confident in "selling" the attractions and accommodation of the area to visitors that may very well directly influence the visitor to spend more time in their destination.

The good news is that almost anyone can develop sales skills and, by ensuring that the right questions are asked of visitors as they come through the door, AVIC staff will be far more confident in providing the information which answers the visitors needs. It is important to remember that AVIC staff are the face of the region and that this is the

most important area to make a positive impression of your region.

We've heard it all before! You only get one chance at making a good first impression. Be confident in your tourism assets and sell your region at every opportunity.

*Part Two - Next Issue - "Developing Sales Skills"*

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**What's On / Events**

### **19 - 21 September - Murwillumbah "Speed on Tweed"**

This nostalgic car competition recreates the magical Grand Prix of the 1940's with veteran and vintage cars competing in a timed sprint on a 1.4km Hot Mix circuit through the streets of Murwillumbah. Free street entertainment on Friday and Saturday evenings. For further information, phone (02) 6672 1796.

### **3 - 4 October - Deniliquin "Deni Ute Muster"**

The Ute Capital of the World will defend its title again with the annual "Play on the Plains Festival" and World Record Ute Muster 10th Birthday Celebration. For further information, log onto <http://www.deniutemuster.com.au/>

### **4 - 6 October - Gilgandra "Cooee Festival"**

The diverse Cooee Festival Program includes a large street parade incorporating Light Horsemen, WWI Living History Group, the Re-enactment Marchers, an Army band, floats and displays. The NSW Cooee Calling Championships, rodeo in the main street, market day, large country music talent quest, speedway, live bands and novelty events all form part of the festivities. For further information, phone Gilgandra AVIC on Tel: (02) 6817 8700.

### **4 - 5 October - Scone "Scone Garden Ramble"**

Experience the showcasing of seven of the most unique and interesting gardens in Scone. Tickets are available from Scone AVIC. Directional maps are available on purchase of tickets and lunch, morning and afternoon tea will be available both days. For further information, phone Scone AVIC on (02)6545 1526.

### **11 - 12 October - Broken Hill "Red Desert Live! 2008"**

Red Desert Live will incorporate, not only live music performances, but also feature a food expo and film festival, bringing together a wide range of cultural interests to create one festival celebration of Broken Hill's diverse arts and culture. Two stages, non-stop music and an outback experience you'll remember for the rest of your life. For further information, log onto <http://www.redesertlive.com/>

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**AVIC Network Profiles**

### **AVIC Network Profile**

This Issue we profile Mike Kennelly for Denman AVIC

**1. My current position is:** Co-ordinator of the Denman and District Development Association which involves the day to day running of the above, which includes the Denman Visitor Information Centre, Community Technology Centre, Denman Cottage Industries (Craft Cottage) and production of the Denman News, a free weekly newspaper for the district.

**2. The best thing about my position is:** The diversity of my position and the meeting of visitors that come to Denman, with a big help from a great lot of volunteers. Since we moved into our new premises last October, visitor numbers have increased significantly because of our prominent location. The building, which we share with the Library, was constructed by Muswellbrook Shire Council and is a big improvement on our previous location.

**3. I have been working here since:** June 2006.

**4. My previous position was:** A self employed retailer in Muswellbrook. We moved to Denman last year and its the best move we have ever made.

**5. My favourite sport / leisure activity is:** Cycling, when I have the time and sometimes I try my hand at golf, which I am not very good at!

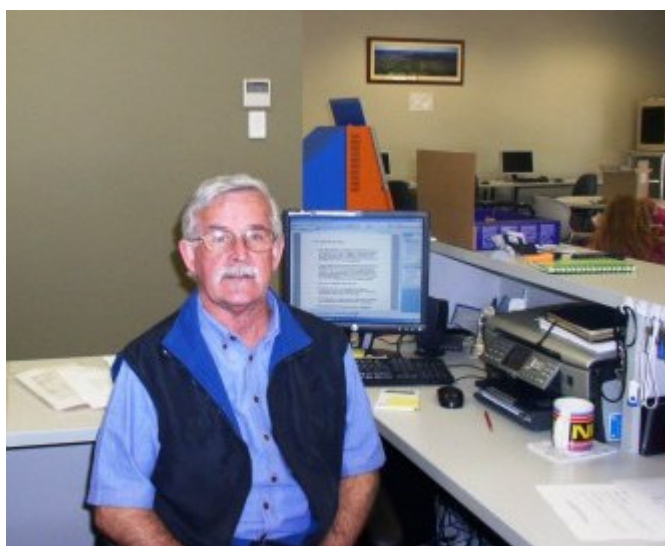
**6. My favourite holiday destination is:** Whatever seems like a good place to go!

**7. People tell me I'm good at:** Nothing much!

**8. My favourite colour is:** Red

**9. My favourite singer/music is:** Mark Knofler

**10. If I could live my life over again,** I would not do anything different!



*Mike, thanks for participating in this segment of our Newsletter.*

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**Our Backyard - from Raquel Bloom - Sydney Hills AVIC**

The 139th Annual Highland Gathering will be held Sunday, 2nd November. Join the fun with a family day of all things Scottish, proudly supported by Sydney Hills Tourism / Baulkham Shire and the Combined Scottish Societies of NSW.

The Hills will come alive with the sound of bagpipes and twirling of kilts. Features of the day will include the 2008 Trans Tasman Heavy Events Challenge, 2008 NSW State Highland Dancing Championships and Australian Pipe Band & South Pacific Pipe Band Championships.

A great day of Tartan, Bagpipes and entertainment for the whole family!

- \* See the lasses in the 2008 NSW State Highland Dancing Championships
- \* Hear Australia's best at the 2008 Australian Pipe Band & South Pacific Pipe Band Championships
- \* Watch the big men undertake feats of strength like Throwing the Hammer, Tossing the Caber and Weight Over the Bar

There is something to keep the family busy all day including: The Haggis Hurl, Feats of Strength, Scottish Country Dancing, Dog Displays, Tug-o-War, Marching Bands, Mini Golf, Children's Races, Scottish Stalls, Clan Tents and food and drinks.

The day concludes with the Massed Pipe Bands marching and performing around the Showground with powerful music to make the hairs on your neck stand on end. An event not to be missed.

Log onto [www.sydneyhills.com.au/events/scots](http://www.sydneyhills.com.au/events/scots)

**Our Backyard - from Mark Lees - Tumut AVIC****Batlow Apple Blossom Festival - 18 - 19 October**

Celebrate the arrival of Spring in Australia's most renowned apple growing region. Food, market stalls, music, art and games combine to bring the apple town of Batlow to life during the annual Apple Blossom Festival in October.

The blooming of the hundreds of acres of apple trees surrounding the township of Batlow has come to symbolise the natural beauty of springtime in the Tumut region. Each year, hundreds of visitors from across the State come here to witness the spectacle. Punctuated by beautiful panoramic vistas of orchard and grazing country and roadside stalls selling local produce, Batlow is a small township lying midway

between Tumut and Tumbarumba.

The Apple Blossom Festival is a program full of events and activities throughout the month of October, culminating in a weekend extravaganza on 18 and 19 October. The event features musical performances, art competitions, exhibitions, a Gala Day with market stalls and a street day with a real carnival atmosphere.

Fire lights up the Festival night sky on the Gala Day evening, as the talented youth of Batlow present a Fire Twirling Spectacular. This takes place, along with the annual festival Bush Dance, a family friendly event served with great food and good company.

Information on accommodation and regional attractions can be obtained at the Tumut Region Visitor Information Centre by calling (02) 69477025.



Visitors are greeted with locally grown apples from the Festival's "Pink Ladies", sisters Carly and Rachel Adams.

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**Deadline**

#### **Deadline**

Please email [lesley@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:lesley@auroraresearch.com.au) with any articles you wish to be included in the upcoming AVIC News, prior to 26 September, 2008.

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

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