



Autumn 2011 EDITION

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

PAUL ALBONE

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of the Murrindindi Mitchell Bushfire Tourism Recovery Group (MMBTRG) Industry Newsletter. This quarterly update is designed to share tourism news on the rebuilding process with our industry colleagues and friends.

The MMBTRG has spent the past 15 months undertaking a number of projects to drive the tourism recovery process in the Murrindindi and Mitchell Shires in the wake of the 2009 bushfires.

State and Federal funding that was allocated to the group in January 2010 has been used to fund events in the region, create new tourism marketing collateral and spread the message that the region is ready to welcome visitors back to 'Watch Us Grow'.

The work of the MMBTRG is starting to wind down as the current marketing plan and allocation of funding is nearing completion, however the tourism recovery process will continue in the region with the allocation of new funds by the State Government for the Marysville and Triangle district.

Goulburn River Valley Tourism will also be proactively leading the way in industry development, tourism marketing and strategic tourism planning within the Murrindindi and Mitchell Shires as part of the new Goulburn River Valley tourism strategy.

Read through this edition of our Industry Newsletter to see what the MMBTRG has been able to achieve in recent times and what the much needed continuation of this tourism recovery process will involve.

Yarra Valley to High Country Touring Route

The MMBTRG has allocated \$10,000 of funding to support the creation of a new Yarra Valley to High Country Touring Route which will highlight the Murrindindi region's strengths of food, wine and local produce.

The funding will be dedicated to marketing the Murrindindi towns along the Touring Route and will provide a subsidy to local tourism businesses who wish to participate in the Touring Route marketing initiatives.

The Yarra Valley to High Country Touring Route is a new touring route being developed for tourists with a tagline of 'A Culinary Adventure'. The route, starting in Melbourne, takes travellers through the Yarra Valley, Marysville, Alexandra and Mansfield, deep into the High Country and finishes at the NSW border.

The touring route is being offered as an alternative route from Melbourne to Albury with a focus on sampling the many 'culinary delights' along the way.

A strategy has been created for the development of this touring route – with a focus on combining some of Victoria's best food and wine product with soft adventure, nature-based and cultural/heritage experiences in sub-alpine and alpine settings.

The strategy for the touring route not only outlines marketing of the touring corridor but also recommends industry development initiatives which will improve the supply and quality of visitor experiences at destinations along the route.

For further information on this new touring route visit: www.yarrawalleytohighcountry.com.au

Watch Us Grow website

The latest addition to the Watch Us Grow website is the new Murrindindi and Mitchell Trip Planner. This trip planner features interactive maps and business listings which provide potential visitors with the opportunity to plan their trip to the region.

The business listings on the Trip Planner form a list of tourism businesses that are open in the Murrindindi and Mitchell Shires two years after the bushfires destroyed many tourism businesses and attractions in the region.

Further details on the transition of the Watch Us Grow website to Goulburn River Valley Tourism will be outlined in the next edition of this MMBTRG Industry Newsletter.

Marysville and Triangle marketing and events package 2011 – 2014

\$1.7 million dollars of new government funding has been secured for the continuation of tourism recovery in the bushfire affected region over a four year period beginning in March 2011. This funding will be managed by Yarra Ranges Regional Marketing.

The tourism funding package will be used on event support, management and marketing, as well as both tactical and positioning tourism marketing, PR, web and image production. There will also be an allocation of funding for visitor services support.

Goulburn River Valley Holiday Planner

Goulburn River Valley Tourism is in the process of creating a regional Holiday Planner which will be published in mid-April and duplicated online on the new Goulburn River Valley website.

The Holiday Planner will feature suggested touring options in categories that support the regions strengths and will give visitors an opportunity to design their holiday around activities that appeal to them.

The MMBTRG has contributed funding to this project and is offering a subsidy to bushfire affected businesses to advertise in the Holiday Planner.

Subsidies are limited and the booking deadline is Friday March 11, 2011. If you have not yet booked your advertising and would like to take advantage of the subsidy contact Annabel Thomas at Prominent Group.

Phone: 03 5831 2455

Email: annabel@prominentgroup.com.au

Summer advertising campaigns

The MMBTRG recently partnered with Yarra Ranges Regional Marketing in their Spring/Summer online marketing campaign and with High Country in their summer print marketing campaign.

The MMBTRG offered a 50% subsidy for local fire-affected businesses to advertise in each of the campaigns, which resulted in great publicity for the participating businesses and a great promotion of the region as a holiday destination for summer.

The campaigns featured on Yahoo7, Total Travel, the Herald Sun, The Age and Royal Auto magazine, and highlighted the increased water level of Lake Eildon, the Goulburn River and its tributaries, as well as the broad range of summer activities and attractions in the region.

The Yarra Valley online campaign received more than 2,000,000 impressions, and the Murrindindi page had more than 300 page views, with the average viewing time 1-1.5 minutes. The campaign also included a Totaltravel newsletter promoting the Yarra

Valley & Murrindindi which was delivered to 456,287 Totaltravel members.

Reports from the region have been of a bumper summer holiday season. Lake Eildon was a key holiday destination for many seeking water sport, boating and fishing action. In particular there was a reported influx of families heading to the region to enjoy their summer holidays in inland Victoria.

Thank you

Thank you to Bronwyn Arandt from Murrindindi Shire who has assisted the MMBTRG over the past few months, in particular with the BIGFISH Competition, Official Visitor Guide and Maps, and regional advertising campaigns. Murrindindi Shire Council's Economic Development Unit has welcomed back Grant Edward who has returned to his role as Tourism Industry Officer and MMBTRG committee member.