



Whittlesea Tourism News

February 2004
Issue 2

Newsletter of the Tourism Development Committee

Committee's Message

Welcome to the first issue of Whittlesea Tourism News for 2004!

The Tourism Development Committee in conjunction with NMIT Tourism students have worked hard developing marketing materials to promote the City's many assets. Committee members worked with and mentored students in developing these marketing materials which will assist in promoting the region.

Some initiatives for 2004 include:

- Establish a sub-committee to build and further develop, host and maintain the website

- Finalise a logo
- Improve the tourism photo library
- Review and further develop tourist maps and itineraries
- Co-ordinating a networking function
- Develop signage
- Further develop the tourism registrar
- Attract new Committee members

It's going to be a challenging year ahead and the Committee looks forward to working towards putting the City on the map.

Happy reading!

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Something to Really Croak About

Victoria's first Graham Marsh-designed golf course set to open in Yan Yean.

Australia's most exciting and distinctively named new golf facility, the Growling Frog Golf Course, is set to take a great leap forward with it's opening in April 2004.

"As one of Victoria's major growth corridors, we are proud to make this first rate golf course and facilities an accessible and affordable reality for the local community as well as golfers from Melbourne and beyond," says City of Whittlesea Mayor Frank Merlino.

The Growling Frog boasts an 18 hole championship standard public access course, world-class facilities, clubhouse architecture, world-first construction technology, a unique setting and more. The golf course will cover 150 acres with the remaining 150 acres being preserved in its natural state with features like River



Red Gums, water features and kangaroos. The natural landscape will be preserved for generations to come to enjoy.

Facilities at the Growling Frog Golf Course include a licensed restaurant, café with indoor and outdoor eating areas, spike bar and large pro shop. A vineyard, lake and heritage-protected stone walls add further appeal. The Growling Frog has recently been recognised with two prestigious awards; Winner of the Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria City Pride Environmental Awards 2004 in the category of 'Outstanding Beautification and/or Heritage Preservation', and Joint Winner of the 2003 Claude Crockford Environmental Award at the 2003 Australian Golf Course Superintendents Awards.

Given the course's accessibility, location and quality design it is expected that it will attract people from across Melbourne and regional Victoria as well as a number of interstate and international tourists.

For further information visit www.GrowlingFrogGolfCourse.com.au or email info@growlingfroggolcourse.com.au.



PROFILE

Don't stand still...it could be dangerous

Many small business operators today find themselves caught in the trap of spending all their time working IN their business rather than ON their business. Marketing, answering phones, taking bookings, maintenance, repairs and administration are all tasks that keep the business going. But what about growing the business?

John Verga, Manager of the Alpine Toboggan Park spent most of his time working in the business until he attended the "Starting up in Tourism" workshop conducted by the Victorian Tourism Operators Association. John had seen it advertised many times over the years and couldn't find the time to leave the business to attend the workshop. By the time he attended the workshop, he had been operating the park for over ten years and was far from "starting up in tourism"... so he thought.

"I walked away inspired, impressed and educated". John says "vision has been the key driving force ... part of our mission statement was to create a quality park, using quality attractions complimented by quality facilities to allow patrons to experience quality family time."

Since attending the workshop, John has become a member of the Victorian Operators Association (VTOA). The advice available and opportunities for networking is invaluable. The park has gained Accreditation through Better Business Accreditation from Leisure Net Accreditation. Accreditation provides recognition for a quality product and service. It provides customers with the confidence that they will experience a quality attraction. Accreditation is also an effective marketing tool.

A tourism business is difficult to operate and grow in today's competitive environment. Many businesses are seasonal and compete for the family's discretionary income. To survive, they must draw on every resource that is available.

John offers the following tips for operators looking to do some work on their business:

Plan ... Too often as small business operators, we get caught up in the day to day running of the business and we feel that we have time for little else. But it is amazing how once you take the first step you tend to make the time.

... a good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow

Set goals ... create a business plan and set yourself realistic goals. At the beginning of every month create a "Things to do list" and use that as a working guide.

... it's amazing how much you get done when it's in a plan

Learn ... make time to travel to other operators premises and observe and see what they have to offer and how they are doing things.

... it's amazing how much you learn from your competition so keep them close

STOP PRESS

Open Tourism Networking Function to be held on 20 April from 6-8pm at Plenty Ranges Arts & Convention Centre (Melway Ref: 183 A10).
Call Eunice Lim on 9217 2278 or email eunice.lim@whittlesea.vic.gov.au for further information.



Helpful Hints

Thinking about starting a B&B?

The Business of Bed and Breakfast

A one day course for prospective B&B operators, run through Ripley Park and the Council of Adult Education. Content covers basic requirements for running a B&B, issues to consider before making any decisions, rules, regulations, food safety, marketing, management and financial issues. For further information, contact the Council of Adult Education on (03) 9652 0611.

Melbourne University Bed & Breakfast and Rural Accommodation Course

This is a five day program for both prospective and existing operators which aims to develop the technical and managerial skills required to be a successful B&B operator. The course operates throughout the year at a range of venues. Telephone (03) 5557 8212 for more information.

Privacy Legislation

Have you considered how privacy legislation may affect you? The Pri-

vacancy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 regulates how private sector organizations can collect, use, keep, secure and disclose personal information. It gives individuals the right to know what information an organization has about them, and a right to correct that information if it is wrong. Consumers can make a complaint if they think their information is not being handled properly. Employment records used solely for employment purposes are exempt.

For more information, visit www.privacy.gov.au/business/small.

Promote your Business through www.visitvictoria.com.au

Victoria's official state tourism website www.visitvictoria.com received more than 1.85 million visitors during the year 2003, and displayed over 18 million pages to consumers around the world (Source: Red Sheriff January 2004).

Tourism businesses can get involved by taking out a comprehensive listing on the site which includes up to nine photographs, link to your existing website, email tracking, and inclusion on a dynamic map. You can even set up a personalised web address that directs your cus-

tomers to your [visitvictoria.com](http://www.visitvictoria.com) listing (e.g.: www.visitvictoria.com/jackshotel).

All this is free for tourism businesses accredited through a program endorsed by the Australian Tourism Accreditation Association (ATAA). For those who are yet to gain accreditation the cost is \$180 per year.

For information about being a part of [visitvictoria.com](http://www.visitvictoria.com), please contact the [visitvictoria.com](http://www.visitvictoria.com) Support Desk on 1300 306 366 or onlinecomments@tourism.vic.gov.au



SNAPSHOT

Travelling parties to the City of Whittlesea are:

- Family groups (parents & children) - 38%
- Adult couples - 26%
- Friends and relatives travelling together - 19%

68% of visitors are day trippers; 14% are overnight visitors and the remainder are residents of the City of Whittlesea.

Interstate visitors represent around 5% of all visitors; 8% are overseas visitors (mostly from England).

(Source: *Essential Economics Pty Ltd & Scenic Spectrums Pty Ltd 2002*)

What's On in Business

Australian Tax Office BizStart Seminars

The Australian Tax Office runs free seminars in locations throughout the city and suburbs for business operators. The seminars aim to give small business operators a basic understanding of small business tax issues and obligations. They cover topics including Income Tax, Business Structure, Business Expenses, Record Keeping, GST & BAS and Employing People. These seminars also pro-

vide an opportunity for participants to ask specific questions. For more information telephone 1300 661 104 or email vicbizstart@ato.gov.au.

Business Access Small Business Events Calendar

www.businessaccess.vic.gov.au

The Business Access Small Business Events Calendar lists a wide range of events available to intending and existing small business operators.

This comprehensive listing includes free events, in a range of locations run by different government and non-government organizations. Have a look - you might find a seminar covering just what you want to know. Some of the events listed include ATO seminars, web presence workshops, pre-business workshops, "How to Access finance", "Getting Ideas to work", Occupational Health and Safety and networking opportunities.

Have you Browsed?

G'day G'day Magazine

"The people, places and events of regional, rural, remote and Outback Australia".

This glossy magazine covers rural issues such as water, drought, personalities, rural living, education, employment, new industries/products and investment opportunities. Each edition has a special focus - past issues have covered Women and the Outback, Water Revolution, Outback Investment. Regular columns feature Art, Country Music and book reviews.

Available in newsagents, or telephone (07) 33492999.

The Business of Bed and Breakfast

Mary Maddock and Sharron Dickman, Penguin Books

This book contains practical information and operating advice, checklists and guidelines for those thinking about setting up a Bed & Breakfast, rural accommodation or self-contained cottages. Tips include making decisions about location and premises, marketing and promotion strategies, financial planning, legal requirements, future trends and how to maintain a balance between the business and your personal life.

Tourism Victoria Corporate Site

www.tourismvictoria.com.au

The Industry Information section of Tourism Victoria's site contains some interesting resources for Business Development. Covers such topics as Funding Opportunities, Packaging your Product, Wholesaling and Sources of information and assistance.

Please submit suggestions & story ideas to the Newsletter Subcommittee

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For information on how to get involved in the Tourism Development Committee (held every 2nd Thursday of the month) or to receive future copies of this newsletter, contact Faye Aforozis
Ph: 9217 2360

Festivals & Events

MARCH

City of Whittlesea Community Festival

Where: City of Whittlesea, Barry Road, Thomastown (Melway Ref 8 C5)
When: Sunday 21
12 noon - 9:30pm
Admission: Free
Contact: Brooke Wilson on 9217 2333 or email: brooke.wilson@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

APRIL

Senior Citizens' Multicultural Expo

Where: Plenty Ranges Arts & Convention Centre, Ferres Boulevard, South Morang (Melway Ref 183 A10)
When: 10am - 4pm
Admission: Free
Contact: Kris Pavlidis on 9217 2332 or email: kris.pavlidis@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

MAY

City of Whittlesea Heritage Festival

Where: Various locations
When: Various times
Admission: Free and ticketed events
Contact Renee Steain on 9217 2377 or email: renee.steain@whittlesea.vic.gov.au, for the program of events

Business Training & Development

MAY

Business for Business Networking

Where: TBA
When: Monday 10 May, 6pm to 8pm
Admission: Free
Contact: Faye Aforozis on 9217 2360 or email faye.aforozis@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

JUNE

Small Business Forum

Where: Plenty Ranges Arts & Convention Centre
When: June 8, 9am to 4pm
Admission: Free
Contact: Faye Aforozis on 9217 2360 or email faye.aforozis@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

BizStart Seminar - Tax

Where: Plenty Ranges Arts & Convention Centre
When: June 22, 9am to 4pm
Admission: Free
Contact: Faye Aforozis on 9217 2360 or email faye.aforozis@whittlesea.vic.gov.au