

**REPORT OF THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY 3RD FEBRUARY 2015 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM**

- 1. PRESENT:** Mayor Leigh Byron, Cr Steve O'Halloran, Connie Mallet (Tourism Coordinator), Ken Spinks, Simone Carmichael, Peter Lawler, Jo Gorman, Linda Nelson, Wayne Whitby

Note: Cr Steve O'Halloran chaired the meeting in the absence of Cr Ken Barnes (Chair)

- 2. APOLOGIES:** Cr. Ken Barnes (Chair), Elizabeth White (Director of Corporate & Community Development), Cr Jeff Mannix, Aaron Drenovski (GM), Myrtle Matarazzo, Dinitee Haskard, Sue O'Halloran

- 3. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING:**

There was no business arising from last meeting's minutes.

Moved: Cr Steve O'Halloran

Seconded: Peter Lawler

- 4. SUMMARY OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES TO DATE**

The Tourism Coordinator, Connie Mallet presented a summary of activities that have taken since the last meeting.

Balranald Discovery Centre

- Opening took place on 19th December, 2014 and was a great success.
- An Audit of the Discovery Centre was conducted on the 16th January 2015. The findings were compiled into an Audit Action Plan that is currently being implemented. The Tourism Coordinator went through this list and gave a description and status update on the Audit Action Plan
- The Facebook Page for the Discovery Centre was launched on January the 10th – Currently has 621 Likes and 37,000 reach over 5 paid posts @ \$50 per post

Advertising

- A full page Advertisement with the theme "Discover Balranald...unearth one treasure after another" was placed in the Guardian's "Tourist News"
- A Gold Plan advertising package was taken up with Caravanning Australia which includes a full page Ad in the Caravanning Australia, full page editorial, full page Ad in their Digital Magazine and editorial on caravanningoz.com.au

Events

- The Anne Frank Exhibition which was held from the 4th December 2014 to the 31st January 2015 was very successful in attracting visitors from outside the Shire. A report is currently being compiled that will outline

details of visitation to the Exhibition. This will form part of the Tourism Monthly report.

Tourism Partnerships & Alliances

- As part of our strategy to work collaboratively with other regional LGA's, contact has been made with Swan Hill Rural City Council and a meeting will be set up to discuss strategies and opportunities.
- We are also connecting and conversing with the regional RTO's in gaining more support with our regional marketing activities

Visitor Information Centre Statistics

- **Visitor statistics are currently being compiled for the total month of January** and this will be submitted at the February Council meeting.
- However, between the 19th December 2014 (opening) to 12th January there was an increase of 195% of walk-ins to the Centre comparing to the same time the previous year.
- There was also an increase of 142% in income comparing to the same time the previous year.
- As part of the current Tourism Audit, some interesting statistics have been collected (and will be part of the audit findings) which include the following:

- Most common visitors are from within NSW.
- Most common destination in the Shire is Mungo
- 90% of visitors are passing through to Sydney or Adelaide.
- Most popular Attractions/Activity in the Shire in order:
 1. Mungo
 2. Yanga
 3. Fishing-Camping
 4. Family visits
 5. Birds
 6. Frogs & Frog Trail
 7. Junction of the Murray/Murrumbidgee Rivers
- Most popular Merchandise: Frog Souvenirs, Frog Ornaments, Local Produce (anything made or grown within a 100K radius is local), Tea-Towels, Locally made Souvenirs, Magnets, Car Stickers..
- Average Vehicles per week using RV facilities 4-5 at this time, however the RV Camping at rear of Vic is starting to be talked about so expect this will grow very quickly soon as weather is better for camping.
- Balranald is still 90% of the time a stopping off point for a Toilet Break etc., Toilets are the main attraction, although have noticed the Playground is used in the evening by Local Families

5. UPDATE ON FIRST DRAFT OF THE TOURISM & MARKETING STRATEGY PLAN

The Tourism Coordinator provided an overview of the progress being made to the development of the **Tourism & Marketing Strategy Plan** and went through the Plan's Content Structure and showed what has been completed so far. The first completed draft of the Plan will be presented to the Director of Corporate & Community Development on Friday 13th February. Below is the Plan Structure.

<p>SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1 Background & Context.1.2 Objectives of the Plan1.3 Critical Success Factors1.4 Alignment with other Council Plans <p>SECTION 2: INDUSTRY SITUATION ANALYSIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1 Industry Statistics & Trends<ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1.1 National2.1.2 State2.1.3 Regional2.1.4 Outback NSW2.1.5 The Murray2.2 Industry Directions2.3 RECOMMENDATIONS <p>SECTION 3: BALRANALD SHIRE – SWOT ANALYSIS</p> <p>SECTION 4: BALRANALD SHIRE – MARKET ASSESSMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">4.1 Destination Footprint4.2 Visitor Profile4.3 Destinations4.4 Attractions, Experiences, Events4.5 Facilities & Services4.6 Experiences/Themes & Attractions Matrix4.7 Market Readiness Assessment4.8 RECOMMENDATIONS <p>SECTION 5: TARGET SEGMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">5.1 Demographic Segments5.2 Activity & Experience-based Segments5.3 Geographical Segments5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS <p>SECTION 6: MARKETING & TOURISM MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">6.1 Tourism Structure6.2 Marketing Elements6.3 Communication Tools6.4 Visitor Information Services <p>SECTION 7: PRODUCT & MARKET DEVELOPMENT MATRIX</p> <p>SECTION 8: STRATEGIES & ACTION PLAN</p> <p>SECTION 9: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN</p>
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6. DISCUSSION POINTS

During the presentation of the **Discovery Centre Audit Plan** & the impending **Tourism & Marketing Strategy Plan** a number of items were raised and requested/suggested that these be considered and included in the respective Plans:

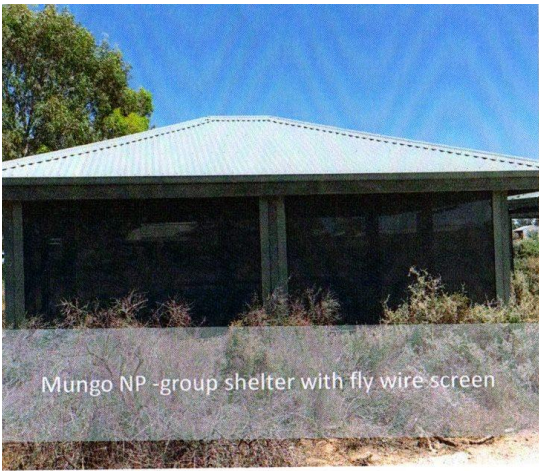
- More signage to advertise the RV parking at the rear of the Discovery Centre
- Opening hours of the Visitor Information Centre – suggested 9am – 5pm
- Frog theme, sculptures & merchandise are very popular with visitors and tourists and should be developed further as a strategy
- The Five Rivers and marketing strategies
- Redbank Weir: Investigate access to the Weir in cooperation with the landowner. One suggestion was a key at Homebush Pub.
- Kyalite Regional Park (Further discussions to be held between Tourism Coordinator and National Parks)
- Murray River and to tap into the visitors who visit the Murray River towns.

7. NEW BUSINESS

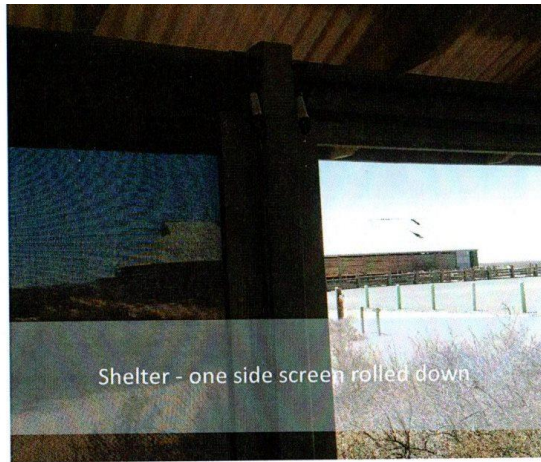
- Wayne advised that trees down the main street need trimming.
 - It was recommended that we investigate sourcing volunteers for various community projects/activities. A suggestion was made that we approach the school about a student volunteer program
 - A request was made to follow-up the **Leo Connellan** sign that is to be erected at the Discovery Centre
 - Jo Gorman advised the committee of the new shelters with fly screens that have been installed at Mungo NP. There's also a new Shearer's Quarters BBQ shelter, new toilets, new ramp and new interpretation signs. ***(Please see pictures on the page below.)***
 - **Simone Carmichael from Yanga National Park** mentioned that all the feedback that they have been receiving about the new Discovery Centre has been very positive.
Cr Steve O'Halloran moved that this comment be formally acknowledged & minuted and it was seconded by Ken Spinks.
8. **CLOSURE:** Cr Steve O'Halloran thanked everyone for attending and thanked Connie Mallet for her presentation and update of the progress of the Tourism & Marketing Strategy Plan.

The meeting closed at 6.15pm

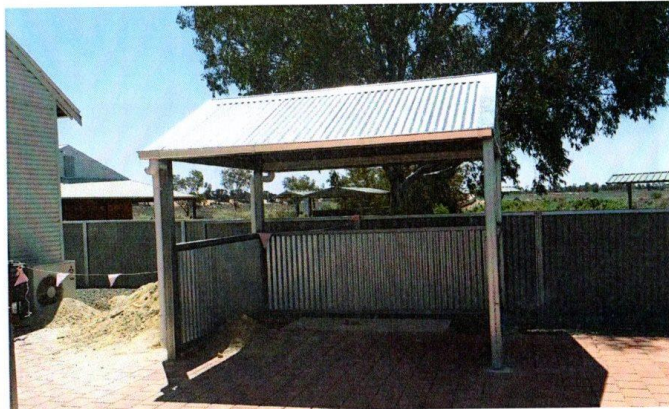
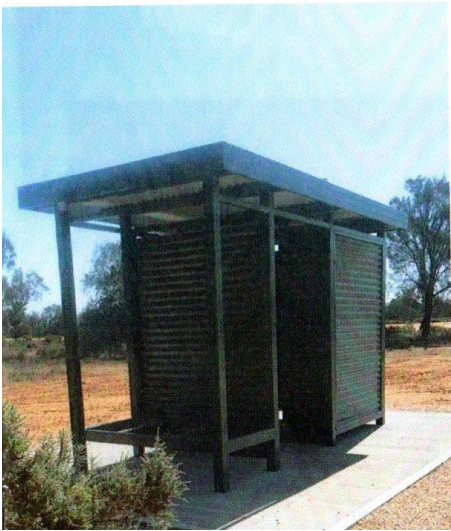
9. **NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday 3rd March 2015



Mungo NP -group shelter with fly wire screen



Shelter - one side screen rolled down



Mungo NP Shearer's Quarters bbq shelter



Mungo NP Woolshed - new ramp

Mungo NP Woolshed – new interpretation

