



Blackheath Chamber of Commerce Community Recovery Meeting
Monday 13 January 2020
New Ivanhoe Hotel Blackheath

Welcome to Cr Don McGregor, Tracey Jamieson from Create NSW, Jo Davies from BANC and Ann Niddrie from the Blue Mountains Economic Enterprise as well as over 50 guests.

George Vergotis, President of the Chamber, spoke about a meeting at the Campbell Rhododendron Gardens with Federal minister Marise Payne and State member Susan Templeman to discuss the impacts of the recent bush fire disaster in the Blue Mountains area. The minister was very keen to hear how small and large business have been impacted by the loss of tourism in the region. Key stake holders (Fairmont Resort, Scenic World, Carrington Hotel, Victorian Albert Hotel Mount Victoria, Blackheath Chamber of Commerce and Katoomba Chamber of Commerce) spoke of the massive losses in trade which has resulted in staff layoffs. There was much discussion about recovery plans and positive media to inform tourists the region is safe and still intact. George expressed that small business needs financial help right now to protect the livelihoods of the business operators and their employees. He informed them that we were in real danger of losing our work force to other regions where they could secure gainful employment. The minister said they would be making an announcement in the coming days with relief packages for small business.

TENANCY RELIEF

Chamber produced a Tenancy Relief Letter.

FUNDING INFORMATION

There is a disaster recovery allowance available through Centrelink, it's for loss of income as a direct result of a disaster. It's essentially 13 weeks of income support equivalent to Newstart. It covers those that have been unable to get shifts, as well as small businesses owners who have been unable to draw an income as a direct result of a disaster.

QUICK RESPONSE ARTS FUNDING

Tracey Jamieson from Create NSW spoke about Create NSW Quick Response Arts Funding – the more people that apply the more they can argue for more funds. Other grants also available. They are happy for people to ring and discuss.

<https://www.create.nsw.gov.au/funding-and-support/arts-and-cultural-funding-program/>

TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS

Margaret Bouttell from Glenella Guesthouse spoke about a group of accommodation providers who are now marketing themselves as 'Top of the Blue Mountains' – could be a marketing strategy for everyone.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND 'BACK ON THE MAP' GRAPHICS

Photographers Carolyn and Neil Hide offered their photography and graphic design services. NB. The fabulous photos of the night were provided by Carolyn.

DISCOUNTED MID-WEEK ACCOMMODATION FOR HOLIDAYS AND WRITING /ARTIST RETREATS

Offer mid-week holidays as well as discounted accommodation to writers and storytellers who can come to write about the Top of the Mountains. Writing retreats and residencies could be marketed to groups like 'Writers for the Environment'.

MORE CULTURAL EVENTS INCLUDING FESTIVALS

The Choir Festival will bring in large crowds (will be run by Mick O'Neill and Christine Wheeler this year and will have a Dinner Show); could run a Film Festival. Blackheath Theatre Company attracts visitors too.

ORANGE 360 ... BLACKHEATH 365 365 events – one for each day of the year but whoever has an idea is also responsible for delivering it.

Portfolio Package was mentioned: <https://www.orange360.com.au/>

LIGHT SHOWS

Cindi Drennan from Illuminart: invite Sydney artists up to participate in creating light shows for the town.

THE GREAT TREASURE HUNT

A cross-generational interactive 3D app (like Pokemon GO) with clues at cultural locations and businesses. (Grant – marketing/advertising)

DEVELOP LONG DISTANCE WALKS & JUMP ON/JUMP OFF PACKAGES FOR THE KATOOMBA TO RICHMOND BUS

Peter from Mt Wilson suggested an iconic walk like the Larapinta Trail : Colo – Mt Lagoon – Bilpin – Mt Wilson – Mt Irvine – Wolgan – Capertee – Newnes

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION TRUST GRANT AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Eva and Bill Johnstone spoke about their property, its unique ecological features and the possibility for attracting students to learn there.

BLUE MOUNTAINS HISTORY TOURS

Paul Innes offered to donate half money from History Walking Tours to RFS (or other service) – tours of Blackheath, Mt Vic, Mt York

ALLVIEW ESCAPE (FORMERLY A LOOKOUT) AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC MID-WEEK

Melina keen to support businesses in town and has a venue available mid-week. Property has a look out and great venue for picnics. Events offering an opportunity to 'meet a local'.

<https://www.allviewescape.com.au/>

BAR & BISTRO MUSIC FUNDRAISER

Sigrid offered to bring musicians together for a fundraiser at the Bar & Bistro

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR RETAILERS

BOOK OF DISCOUNT VOUCHERS AND GIFT VOUCHERS THAT LOCALS CAN BUY AS GIFTS

SHOP AT THE TOP – BUY AND SUPPORT LOCAL – BMCC'S LOVE LOCAL SHOP LOCAL #ANEXTRA20IN2020

Think about buying greeting cards, office supplies etc all locally.

If every person spent in Blackheath and Mt Vic rather than elsewhere it could keep businesses afloat and locals employed.

WORK WITH CLIMBERS AND NEED TO MARKET WHICH TRACKS OPEN – CREATE GRAPHICS OF WHAT'S OPEN TO DISTRIBUTE AROUND TOWN IN HARD COPIES

Climbers love the Mountains and are involved in track care. They can help with marketing and social media to attract people here. Tracks aren't all closed.

CENTRAL RAILWAY SIGN RECOMMENDING PEOPLE NOT VISIT THE MOUNTAINS SHOULD BE REMOVED

SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING

David from the Chalet Guesthouse indicated a lot of business owners would benefit from Social Media training. Laurel Papworth was suggested to run training.

TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS DINNER CLUB

Invite visitors to become part of a large social group with rotating dinner clubs. Perhaps a Dinner Club program for a range of different interest groups.

INVITE TRAVEL WRITERS IN CONJUNCTION WITH DESTINATION NSW

Provide free accommodation for Tourism Reps and Travel Writers to visit Top of the Mountains and gather stories for marketing this area. Target known travel writers to get them up here on a famil. If for example, you had 6 journos... accommodation could be broken up with some staying at one place and others at another. Similarly they could be hosted for dinner separately at several different restaurants.

Also target Tourism NSW or Tourism Australia to host some international journalists through their Visiting Journalists Program... therefore getting overseas coverage.

CREATE AN 'EXPERIENCE BLACKHEATH PACKAGE' AND AN ONLINE COMPENDIUM OF WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO DO

Meet – Go – Do

Cultural – Heritage – Outdoor

REVIVE CAMP CREATIVE

A holiday program of arts and other activities.

AUSTRALIA – NEW ZEALAND MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Encourage New Zealanders to visit.

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR CLIENTS

Glenella sent a newsletter out to 3,500 on their mailing list explaining the story of the fires and their situation and immediately got bookings.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS SUBMITTED BY THE COMMUNITY

Creating a Red Light Corridor for Wildlife Recovery: We could get international exposure by replacing our street lights with wildlife friendly red lights and becoming a red-light bat-friendly wildlife haven to help support the species whose habitat have been damaged by fire. Phillips has developed the lighting.

Read more about what's happening internationally here:

<https://www.fastcompany.com/90179848/these-bat-friendly-lights-show-how-to-make-cities-safe-for-nature>

<https://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/animals/blogs/worlds-first-bat-friendly-town-turns-night-red>

Given so many people in Blackheath have dogs why not have an "Archibalds" type competition where people sketch, paint, charcoal, oil or water colour their dogs. It could be advertised around the region but displayed and focused in Blackheath, underlying Blackheath's unique dog friendly community. We could call it something doggy like the Fidos or even the Phydeaux. There would be a small entry fee which would cover any costs such as a venue and the remainder could go to a wildlife support group to help with the recovery.

A town in South Australia called Lobethal holds an annual lights festival over Christmas. Check it out here: <http://www.lightsoflobethal.com.au/>
We could call our Christmas Festival the "Lightheath Festival" or something like that. There could be an official lights tour around the village and businesses stay open late.

OFFERS OF SUPPORT

Offer to create a blog/website to profile businesses in the mountains - restaurants, accommodation, shops etc.

Stephanie Bendixsen

Television Presenter | Author | Broadcaster

<http://stephaniebendixsen.com>

Wild Ground is offering skills in storytelling, nature art making, children's + adults nature connection games etc. Contact Danielle: info@wildground.com.au

ACTIONS TAKEN ALREADY

- Sign at Central has been removed

- We've shared information about lookouts at Govetts Leap and Evans Lookout which are now open as well as the Fairfax Heritage Track

- TOP Accommodation providers have agreed to the following promotion for writer/filmmaker retreats:

Extra 10% discount on our midweek prices. Sunday through to Thursday.
Offer available to 31 March 2020

Includes:

Glenella

The George

Kubbaroonga

The Chalet

Mount Victoria Manor

From Margaret at Glenella:

In a matter of a week a well-known Aussie entertainer / radio personality has developed a Tour of Blackheath to help our recovery. His initiative after spending a night here last night and hearing the plight of the businesses.

Vince Day and I have hosted Jim Haynes in the past and he's keen to help out the whole village by using his broad network to come stay here and SHOP/EAT . Using a celebrity is the best way to attract visitors back to a disaster area. (see report by after the Black Friday fires in VIC).

We could duplicate this concept of a **Discovery - Recovery Tour** with other high profile people in Sydney - do any of you have contacts that would be willing to host / promote something in Blackheath?

Maybe Jenny Kee put on a painting workshop?

SEE FLYER ON NEXT PAGE



JIM HAYNES

BLACKHEATH DISCOVERY... RECOVERY ... 2020
THUR/FRI PROGRAM March 19/20 and April 2/3

Thursday

10.00	Meet at Day Fine Art Gallery 29 Govett's Leap Rd	
10.15	Presentation "The Art of Sydney Harbour" Jim	Day Fine Art Gallery
11.15	Presentation "The Magic of Restoration" Helen Day	Day Fine Art Gallery
12.00	Lunch (Pubs / Antique Centre / shops / Blackheath Shoes / restaurants)	
2.00	Check in at Guesthouse - Hosts - Margaret and Rowan at	Glenella
2.30	Glenella Lounge Talk "History of Glenella" Wayne Hanley	
3.00	Glenella Lounge Movie Trivia Visual Quiz Jim	
4.30	Afternoon tea and scones at Glenella	Blackheath General Store/Cafe
5.00	Rest, Walk, or Visit Lookout	
7.30	Dinner at Glenella	Little Piggy Catering
8.30	Concert 'Music Verse and Song' Glenella Cellar.	Jim Haynes/Gregory North Wendy and Neil Brawley

Friday

8.00 – 9 30 am	Continental Breakfast at Glenella	
10.00	Artist Talk & Gallery Visit	Blackheath Gallery
11.00 – whenever.	Brunch in the Valley	Megalong Tea Rooms

Margaret and Rowan at Glenella have come on board, along with other local businesses, entertainers, artists and galleries and the ALL INCLUSIVE cost for the accommodation, a two-course dinner, afternoon tea, concert, continental breakfast, talks, gallery visits and entertainment is:

Heritage ensuite room:

\$210 pp sharing (\$60 extra night)

\$260 pp single (\$100 extra night)

Basic room - shared bathroom:

\$180 pp sharing (\$40 extra night)

\$220 pp single (\$60 extra night)

There is a special rate for an extra

night if you wish to come up on

Wednesday to be ready for an early 10

AM start next day – this includes

continental breakfast.

Numbers are limited so call Glenella on 4787 8352

Or email : questhouse@glenella.com.au