



Destination
North Coast NSW

News & Views - No 24

Introducing Michael Thurston – General Manager DNC

Firstly, I would like to thank the North Coast tourism community members that I have met since being awarded the role and during my first week, for the warm welcome that has been extended to me. It is with great enthusiasm that I take on the GM role with Destination North Coast.

Representing tourism on the North Coast of NSW is an opportunity that I have desired ever since falling in love with this amazing region whilst at University. My passion for the destination has only grown as a resident and whilst formerly operating a tourism business on the North Coast.

I look forward to getting to know the operators and products across the length and breadth of our region and harnessing the unique energy that this destination possesses. The North Coast of NSW is a region like no other with a tremendous diversity of destinations, landscapes and people. We have an abundance of assets that drive visitation to our region and we have a collective responsibility to grow our industry in a sustainable and appropriate fashion.

I look forward to embarking on this journey with you.

Thanks,

Michael Thurston
General Manager
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North Coast Tourism Symposium and Regional Tourism Awards

Thank you again to all who attended the inaugural North Coast Tourism Symposium and for your very positive and enthusiastic feedback about this Event.

Many of you have asked to receive the presentations from the day and with the permission of our speakers and panellists, we have uploaded to [Drop Box](#) those we are able to share.

Congratulations again to the Winners and Finalists from the recent **North Coast Tourism Awards**.

Photographs of the Tourism Symposium, Award Ceremony and Gala Dinner can be [found here](#).

NSW Tourism Awards – 22nd November, 2018

With our Regional Awards behind us, it is time to turn our minds to celebrating tourism excellence at a State level. Submissions have now closed with finalists due to be announced on the 15th October and we wish all North Coast entrants well.

The Gala Event will be celebrated in Sydney on 22nd November, 2018.

There is still time to nominate for the **Outstanding Contribution by an Individual** Award. [Find out more](#) and consider nominating an outstanding member of your tourism networks or community who goes above and beyond to support tourism on the North Coast.

New TAFE Facility in Coffs Harbour

Cameron Arnold, Chair of Destination North Coast attended the opening of a new TAFE NSW facility to enhance training delivery and boost the State's skilled tourism and hospitality workforce in Coffs Harbour last week. The new SkillsPoint HQ will work closely with industry partners to ensure a steady supply of qualified workers with industry relevant skills meets the needs of our growing visitor economy.

Find out more about the new [TAFE SkillsPoints](#).

Diploma of Event Management Scholarship Recipients

As previously announced, Destination NSW has selected three deserving applicants from across the North Coast as recipients of the Scholarship to undertake a Diploma of Event Management via Meetings and Events Australia.

Today we profile Tanya, scholarship recipient from Opal Cove, Coffs Harbour.

What you love about where you work?

I love the diversity of my role, the ocean views to the Solitary Islands and the people I work with! The Resort is the largest on the Coffs Coast, we are able to hold small & large events which makes my role exciting! As the Sales & Marketing Manager, there is always new opportunities to collaborate with local businesses & the wider Tourism Industry!

What you love about living/working on the North Coast?

The North Coast region is AMAZING which is why I LOVE living & working here! Living on the Coffs Coast is like living in paradise. We are blessed with pristine beaches, lush rainforests, World Heritage National Parks & such a diverse choice of experiences to enjoy. Where else can a person drive to work in less than 7 minutes, live 1km from the beach, have great cafes, restaurants, sporting activities, arts & culture all at their fingertips? To top it off, our Airport has direct flights to Sydney, Melbourne & Brisbane – it is quicker for us to commute to Sydney CBD than it is for people who live in Western Sydney or the Central Coast!!

What you hope to gain from taking on this scholarship?

The Diploma will assist to strengthen the relationships between myself, the Coffs Coast, Destination NSW & Meetings Events Australia. I am hoping to shine the light on the Coffs Coast, as the best regional area for Conferences and Events in NSW. The subject that is most important to me include Developing & Implementing Marketing Strategies. I look forward to increasing my network of industry peers, through attending the MEA Workshops in Sydney and collaborating with the Scholarship recipients.

Tell us about a funny event/conferencing story or mishap.

I have a few stories that should not be published! Although, we did have Kirk from INXS stay at the Resort in late 2016. He was the guest speaker at a business networking event on the Coffs Coast. While he was waiting for his taxi, I greeted him in the foyer to check that he was comfortable with his room & confirmed we had taken care of his requirements. Kirk asked me "are you my driver?" to which I responded no, although I would happily drive him to the event should the taxi be delayed!

Anything else you'd like to share?

Absolutely! Opal Cove Resort has amazing Industry rates & I would love the tourism operators from the Destination North Coast region stay with us. Please email me at sales@opalcove.com & I will be sure to offer you the best rate & VIP treatment!

Thanks Tanya...your enthusiasm is infectious!



Australian Regional Tourism Conference - 23rd to 25th October, 2018

Australian Regional Tourism Convention (ARTC) is the most significant event in our industry's calendar and this year, the theme is 'pushing the boundaries'. From 23-25 October, the regional tourism community will come together to discuss, debate and celebrate innovation.

This year, the 2018 ART Convention is being held on the North Coast in the Tweed at Salt Village (Mantra and Peppers). [Register now and save](#) with the early-bird rate!

Stronger Communities Programme – Round 4 Funding OPEN

This grant programme supports the Australian Government's commitment to deliver social benefits to communities across the country. It exists to fund small capital projects that improve local community participation and contribute to vibrant and viable communities.

[Check here](#) if you think you have a suitable project and to see if your club or NFP or local governing body meets the eligibility criteria.

Ballina Byron Gateway Airport Expansion

Work has begun on the Ballina Airport that will extend the departure area, add a new cafe, bar and retail space and improve the design features. It will triple the size of the departure lounge and add more undercover parking.

Catering to over 500,000 passengers each year and growing, this expansion and upgrade of facilities, will ensure visitors and community alike can pass through the airport with more comfort.

Upcoming Events on the North Coast

To aid in your planning, keep in mind these upcoming events across the North Coast over the coming weeks.

[Regional Events Conference](#) - 30-31 August 2018, Port Macquarie

With Leigh Carmichael, the visionary creative director behind Dark Mofo, Hobart's fastest growing arts and music festival, has been announced as the keynote speaker for the NSW Regional Events Conference.

[Sample Food Festival](#) - 1 September, 2018, Bangalow

Farmers, producers, chefs and a whole range of creative individuals from all corners of the region, come together to share their wares, their passion and their knowledge.

[Brunswick Nature Sculpture Walk](#) - 28 Sept – 2 Oct, 2018, Brunswick Heads

The Brunswick Nature Sculpture Walk follows the foreshore of Brunswick Heads, where the river meets the sea. Nationally recognised artists focus their craft on themes such as nature, the endangered environment and sustainability with the aim of raising awareness of these themes and connecting the community and visitors to art and nature.

[Eat Street Yamba](#) - 30 September 2018, Yamba

An international food market held on the first day of daylight savings that lasts into the evening twilight. Visitors enjoy locally crafted beer and wine, delicious locally sourced produce and listen to music.

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