



North Coast News & Views Issue 192

Destination North Coast Visits Kempsey Shire

Last week, DNC held their bi-monthly Board Meeting at Crescent Head. This included an update from Kempsey Shire Council on their strategies and activities and culminated in Industry Networking held in the new gazebo within the mini-golf course at [Crescent Head Country Club](#).

We also took the opportunity to meet the owners and do a site inspection at [Sea Sea Hotel](#), a new boutique offering that blends the laid-back spirit of 70's Australian surf culture with progressive philosophy. Sea Sea is open for bookings from November 2024.

We also explored parts of the 5 Headland Trail at Hat Head and Trial Bay Gaol and received an update from National Parks & Wildlife Service on the many projects they have in train to improve visitor access at their many Mid North Coast natural and built assets.



North Coast Tourism Symposium and Tourism Awards - 1 August 2024

With only 10 weeks to go until our annual North Coast Tourism Symposium and Tourism Awards Ceremony are upon us, planning is ramping up along with ticket sales.

This year's events are being held in Port Macquarie's stand-out venues; [Glasshouse](#) for our Symposium conference and [Sails by Rydges](#) for the Awards Ceremony. You do not want to miss the opportunity of professional development, learning, networking and the celebration of our industry's shining stars.

[Early bird/event combo tickets are currently ON SALE](#) so SAVE when you purchase both event tickets together.

And if you are looking for accommodation at the same time, Sails Resort have a special event offer of 20% off their best available rate when you quote **STAYNORTHCOAST2024** when making your direct booking.



Framework For Accessibility

Tourism operators are being encouraged to adopt a universal approach to how they cater to people living with disabilities under a new framework. The new ['Welcome' framework](#) was formally launched on the sidelines of the Australian Tourism Exchange and has been designed with social and economic benefits in mind.

Key advice put forward by the Welcome framework includes being more transparent around amenities available for travellers with disabilities on company websites, such as lifts, audio services for tours, lighting for sensory needs, and accessible parking spots. Tourism businesses are also being called upon to embrace visitor accessibility apps to assist travellers with hearing, visual or cognitive requirements, as well as consider fast-tracking check-in or booking queues for those who can't stand for a lengthy period.

Testament to the commercial opportunity tourism businesses can take advantage of is recent Tourism Research Australia data, which showed 21% of domestic tourism spend in the Jun 2023 quarter was outlaid by people with accessibility needs.

North Coast Convention And Exhibition Centre - Investor Briefing

Destination North Coast in partnership with Urbis will host an online investor briefing to showcase the extraordinary business opportunities that a North Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre would deliver.

During the briefing, we'll delve into the comprehensive findings of our feasibility study, presenting key insights including:

- The transformative potential of the proposed facility, positioning the North Coast as a premier destination for national conferences and events.
- Identifying the market gap and determining the optimal size of the facility to meet demand.
- Cost-benefit analysis for the four leading locations identified for the facility.
- Projections indicating how the facility is poised to infuse up to \$284 million into the region's economy, while fostering over 400 employment opportunities.

Hear from industry experts and executives that are already operating within the business events sector. To learn more about this exciting opportunity, make sure you attend this exciting event [by registering online today](#).

Date: Tuesday 4 June 2024

Time: 10.00-11.00am

Location: Online

Reforms To Later Trading Applications

The NSW Government is introducing reforms to support restaurants and bars that want to trade later in locations that are not close to homes. Under the proposed Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2024, councils and consent authorities will have to consider a set of 'Vibrancy Guidelines' when assessing certain applications to extend operating hours. Guidelines will be developed alongside the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner Michael Rodrigues following consultation with local councils, stakeholders and the wider community.

[Find more information here.](#)

New Tourism Emissions Reduction Program

Quality Tourism Australia has released a [Tourism Emissions Reduction Program](#) that provides businesses with an emissions estimate and tailored emissions reduction plan. As a business progresses through the five-stages in the program, they can share their emissions report and reduction plan through a unique link on their website or via convenient QR codes which can help to attract sustainable and environmentally conscious visitors.

VacayIt Wins UN World Summit Award

[Vacayit](#), the Australian travel startup, has received the prestigious [UN World Summit Awards](#) (WSA) for its innovative accessibility solution. The app, designed for travellers with disabilities, provides engaging and accessible audio guides. Vacayit was recognised as the Global Champion for the 'Culture & Heritage' category at the WSA ceremony held in Chile.

New Connect to Country Out Now

[Connect to Country](#), a digital publication presented by Tourism Australia and Discover Aboriginal Experiences, has released its latest issue. NSW businesses featured include Burrawa Aboriginal Climb Experience, Firescreek Botanical Winery Aboriginal Experiences, Bundyi Cultural Tours and Ngaran Ngaran Culture Awareness. [Discover Aboriginal Experiences](#) is one of eight marketing collectives in the [Signature Experiences of Australia Program](#), which is supported by Destination NSW.

Overseas Visitor Arrivals Rise

New Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows international visitor arrivals to NSW in March 2024 reached 90 per cent of March 2019 levels. The leading source countries were the United States (44,730 trips), New Zealand (33,340 trips), the United Kingdom (28,010 trips) and China (23,310 trips). There were a total of 761,050 short-term visitors to Australia in March 2024, an increase of 24.1 per cent on March 2023. [Find more information here.](#)

Around The Region

Coffs Harbour In The News

There's the muttonbirds and the supersized banana, but this NSW coastal destination is known for its friendly outdoor lifestyle - and a growing food and culture scene, says artist Sarah Lyttle [in this article in The Guardian](#).

Australian Traveller also recently outlined [13 game-changing things to do in Coffs Harbour](#).



New Lismore Visitor Information Hub

A brand-new [Visitor Information Hub](#) is now available at the Lismore Pop-up Library at 146 Molesworth Street conveniently located in the heart of the CBD. This touch-screen kiosk provides access to the Visit Lismore website, free maps and visitor information brochures.

New Hotel In Yamba In Vogue

With the help of local artists and creative friends, a former fashion designer and stylist restores a mid-century sailors' inn on the NSW coast inspired by Europe's ramshackle seaside cottages and Australian surf culture. [Read more in Vogue here](#).

100 Aussie Wonders

Lord Howe Island has been featured in the [Australian Traveller](#) 100 Aussie Wonders issue! There are also [7 unforgettable experiences to make the most of Lord Howe Island](#).

NRMA Parks and Resorts Adds Blue Dolphin Resort

[NRMA Parks and Resorts](#) has bolstered its portfolio with the addition of [Blue Dolphin Holiday Resort](#) in Yamba. Set on the banks of Clarence River, the holiday park has been a popular stop on Aussie roadtrip itineraries for decades. One of the biggest holiday resorts in NSW, Blue Dolphin offers a range of accommodation options, including waterfront and poolside vistas, cabins, and caravan and camping sites. It's also pet-friendly, and promises to keep the kids entertained with pools, a lazy river and kids' waterpark, a climbing wall, putt-putt golf, pump track and jumping pillow.

Launch of Coffs Coast Explorer App

Destination Coffs Coast is proud to launch its new [Coffs Coast Explorer App](#) at the [All One Under the Sun Festival](#) event being held this coming Sunday. The Coffs Coast Explorer App is an interactive pocket guide packed with trails, stories, and information create an immersive experience for visitors to the region. At the same time, the App will build a digital future for local tourism businesses to grow capability and product offerings. [The Clog Barn](#) is also set to become one off the Coffs Coast's Visitor Information Outlets.

NRL Comes to Coffs Again - Sharks vs Titans

National Rugby League returns to Coffs Harbour on 5 July! After a successful NRL event last year, the C.ex Coffs International Stadium will host another Telstra Premiership Game in 2024. With the Coffs Coast firmly on the radar of elite national sports teams and competitions of all types, local and visiting NRL fans are excited for the return of the Cronulla Sharks and Gold Coast Titans.

Industry Development And Other Opportunities

NSW Tourism Awards

Join the NSW Tourism Association for an exciting journey at the NSW Tourism Awards and celebrate excellence and innovation in the tourism industry. Whether you're a seasoned business or a new entrant, these awards offer a unique opportunity to showcase your achievements and elevate your profile in the tourism sector. To enhance your experience and chances of success [two stages of comprehensive webinars](#) designed exclusively for our entrants.

Stage 1: Introduction to the Awards. These sessions are perfect for those looking to gain a deeper understanding of the NSW Tourism Awards process and the significant benefits of participation.

11th June - 2pm - 3pm. [Register here](#)

19th June - 1pm - 2pm. [Register here](#)

Stage 2: Detailed Submission Guidance. Each session is dedicated to a specific section of the submission process, allowing you to dive deep into what judges are looking for and how to best represent your business.

Nominate for the [NSW Tourism Awards](#).

DNSW Business Events Showcase

Last week, Destination North Coast were pleased to represent the region and our Business Event stakeholders in Sydney at the inaugural Destination NSW Business Events Showcase where DNSW highlighted immersive visitor experiences throughout regional NSW to more than 100 event planners and buyers.

The showcase was an opportunity to bring to life Destination NSW's fresh approach to growing the business events sector in regional NSW. Event planners and buyers were given a taste of regional NSW experiences that ensure corporate events feel like a celebration, not just a convention. [Learn more here](#).





Accessible Festival and Events Training

[Accessible Arts](#) are running a number of workshops to support operators of all sizes to support those who identify as living with a disability or who are deaf to be able to access and enjoy the arts. Training is run on various topics throughout the year with [training specific to accessible festivals and events](#) being run on Thursday 20th June 2024.

Tourism Australia Industry Webinar

TA's next webinar will take place on 11am, Friday 21 June. [Register to attend.](#)

Harnessing Generative AI For Business

The Australian Export Tourism Council (ATEC) has partnered with generative AI expert Christian Watts from Magpie Travel to create a six-month *Harnessing GenAI for your business* program tailored specifically for visitor economy businesses. The program commences on 7 June 2024 and includes six modules, covering topics including content creation and marketing and chatbots. [Find more information here.](#)

Intensive Residential Agritourism Business Development Program

[Regionality](#) specialises in agritourism and farm innovation, food innovation and culinary tourism. They are now offering a **Agritourism Business Development Program** via a 5-day intensive residential to be held in the Northern Rivers region, 12-16 August 2024. This is a small group bespoke program designed to prepare farmers and rural landholders to develop and manage their own innovative business, connecting them with consumers and visitors. [Find out more here.](#)

Global Sustainable Tourism Summit

Ecotourism Australia's inaugural Global Sustainable Tourism Summit is kicking off in two weeks. More than 50 renowned sustainability leaders from Accor, Booking.com, WWF-Australia, Flight Centre, Virgin, GBRMPA and a wealth of sustainable and ecotourism operators will be speaking on the program. [Registrations close 24 May 2024.](#)

Funding And Other Opportunities

Funding through grant programs can provide significant benefits to businesses and destinations, helping to drive economic growth, create jobs, and improve the visitor experience. Before commencing a grant application, please visit our [Funding and Grants](#) page for information and tips to support your application and [a link to request a Letter of Support from Destination North Coast.](#)

[The Royal Australian Historical Society NSW Cultural Grant 2024](#)

The Cultural Grants program, administered by the Royal Australian Historical Society, assists historical research and publication of local, community and regional history projects. **Closes 2 July 2024.**

[Regional Event Fund Event Development Stream](#)

The Regional Event Fund identifies and supports events in regional NSW that have the potential to act as a 'cornerstone' or flagship tourism event for their area by attracting overnight visitation and delivering long term benefits to the region. **Ongoing**

North Coast Product Development

Vision Walks - Eco Tours Adds Packages

Byron's favourite eco-warrior tour operator at Vision Walks - Eco Tours has rolled out some new themed tour packages. Check out the [4 day Aussie Wildlife Adventure](#) and the [4 day Byron Food and Cultural Experience](#) with both itineraries geared towards international travellers.

[Volare Alstonville](#)

New café/restaurant in Alstonville. Serving breakfast, lunch (and in between) from Wednesday to Sunday and also dinner (Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights).

[Natalie Yates Solo Exhibition - Husk Farm Distillery](#)

This year's Ink Gin artist, Natalie Yates (right), is showcasing her exhibition 'Organic Forms in Nature' in the Husk Gallery until 2 June 2024. Open every day from 11am.

[Yulo Kopa - Ellenborough](#)

Nature and wellness retreat near beautiful Ellenborough Falls. A sanctuary devoted to nurturing holistic health and wellbeing.

[Mezza Eatery - Forster](#)

Middle Eastern cuisine for breakfast, lunch and dinner, in a Parisian-themed bistro.



North Coast Events

To aid your planning and to support local events, please note these upcoming events on the North Coast or find [all events on DNSW's website](#).

[Winter Banquet Dinner - The Farmer's Wife Distillery](#)

31 May 2024
Allworth

[Grafton Rowing Club Rowfest](#)

31 May - 2 June 2024
Grafton

[Hastings Farm Gate Tour](#)

8-10 June 2024
Port Macquarie region

[Bellingen Readers & Writers Festival](#)

7-9 June 2024.
Bellingen

[LisAmore!](#)

15-16 June 2024
Lismore

The logo for LisAmore! features the word 'Lis' in a green, cursive font, followed by 'Amore!' in a red, cursive font. A small red heart is positioned above the 'i' in 'Lis', and another small white heart is positioned above the 'A' in 'Amore!'.

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