

This month big congratulations must go to the award winning 'Stationmaster's Residence' who took home the award for 'Best Deluxe Accommodation' in South Australia at the recent State Tourism Awards. Christine and Chris Jones were absolutely ecstatic about their win this year and they are to be congratulated on presenting a product that leaves the consumer almost gob-smacked – they have thought of absolutely everything!



This year's State Tourism Awards were celebrated with a black tie event at the Adelaide Convention Centre with more than 550 people from the tourism industry attending. This year there were 107 entries and 27 awards presented to the best of the best raising the benchmark for excellence in the tourism industry.

Here in the region, we are looking at a change to the Clare Valley regional tourism awards for 2009. They will be based on a simplified version of the State awards. The aim is for regional submissions to be the foundation operators can build on, should they wish to go onto the State awards.

We will also shortly launch a new tourism award, which will recognize excellence in customer service with the nominator being accountable for their nomination. The award looks to recognize those individuals and businesses who exceed a customer's expectations. We have a sub-Committee currently working on this and we will keep you posted.

Last weekend I also had the privilege of being a guest presenter at the SA Great Regional Awards for the Mid North / Yorke Peninsula / Southern Flinders region which were held in Balaklava. It was a great evening, which celebrated and recognised a range of people, enterprises and initiatives that have made a significant contribution to the region. Operators within the Clare Valley Tourism Region who received awards were:



McPhee's Butchers won the Small Business Award (we all love that saltbush lamb!)

Wild Saffron took home two awards - the Mid North Special Business Award and a Commendation Award under the Small Business Award (lots of Christmas goodies - and more - in this beautiful gourmet food store!)



Hummocks Station at Snowtown received the Yorke Peninsula Special Business Award. (If you ever get the opportunity to take a flight around the Snowtown wind farm in Roger's 'Foxy Lady' – you absolutely must do it!)



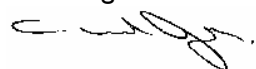
Balaklava Cup took out the Sport Award recognising their exceptional efforts in holding the Cup in 2007 in the midst of the Equine Influenza epidemic.

Balaklava Eisteddfod Society received the Community Group Award with their fantastic efforts for the 2007 event – record numbers led to an increase in volunteer numbers of 150 people – approximately 1/10th of the town's population – now that's what I call 'community support'!

We are also looking to produce a brochure in the new year which will highlight our fantastic artists and beautiful galleries within the entire Clare Valley tourism region. If you are interested in being involved in this brochure and haven't registered your interest please email Kate at marketing@clarevalley.com.au.

For more information on Clare Valley Tourism's activities or to find out how you can work with us and the South Australian Tourism Commission, either call 08 8842 1750 or email marketing@clarevalley.com.au.

Kind Regards



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Regional Tourism Manager