

Administrators' Message



South Gippsland was highlighted in national media again this last week as part of a recent episode of *Getaway*. This certainly should evoke pride in our local community as our region is getting some much-deserved public recognition.

Seeing our dramatic landscapes – from our rolling green hills to beautiful beaches – shown off to the rest of the country was wonderful. Being recognised as a 'bullseye for agriculture, food, booze, produce, accommodation and design' is something to be proud of and it is brilliant to see gems of our region getting the acknowledgment they deserve.

We would like to congratulate our local businesses Dirty Three Wines, Prom Country Cheese, Ross Farm in Meenyan and Loch Brewery and Distillery who were all featured on the show and did a wonderful job showcasing not only their businesses but also our region as a wonderful place to explore.

This kind of promotion is exactly what our businesses and tourism operators need after a difficult year with flow on effects from the bushfires and COVID-19 and we hope that it will bring more visitors to our region in the months to come. If you missed the episode you can still watch it on 9Now (www.9now.com.au) by searching for *Getaway* and looking for 'Ep 35 – Cook Islands, Victoria, Coffs Coast'. It's certainly worth a watch!

We hope this also serves as a reminder for everyone to continue to shop local and consider day trips and staycations during this time. South Gippsland is abundant with beautiful produce, places to explore and products to bring home and we owe it to one another to shop local and support our region whenever we can.

If you aren't sure what businesses are offering at the moment you can visit www.shopsouthgippsland.com.au which provides a list of hospitality, retail, service and entertainment businesses who are ready to serve you.

Speaking of supporting local businesses, our Visitor Economy Grants are now closed and applicants have now received their \$1,000 grants for assistance during this time. These grants were developed to assist tourism businesses which were severely limited during COVID-19 restrictions who experienced closures, impacted income levels, reduced trading hours and a drop in staff numbers.

We had 53 successful applicants that will be using the funds to cover essential business fees, services, materials, marketing and support them to be COVIDsafe. These grants were provided as part of our \$2M COVID-19 Community Support Package and we hope that these grants will provide a small amount of relief to these businesses who have been doing it tough.

Julie Eisenbise, Christian Zahra AM and Rick Brown – Administrators