



## Welcome!

Welcome to the April 2009 quarterly newsletter for accredited visitor information centres in Queensland! Thank you to QICA for the opportunity to attend the annual conference in February and speak briefly on behalf of the VIC Secretariat. It was fantastic to meet and mingle with the delegates face to face and for many queries to be answered directly on the day. It was evident that there is a high degree of passion and dedication throughout the network. Congratulations on a successful conference and for providing a valuable service to the visitors of your area and our State.

*Vanessa Whitelaw*

*Creative Economy Pty Ltd*

## TQ Activity Update

With the introduction of the fee structure to support the administration and management of the accreditation and audit processes TQ made a commitment to redirect its efforts to marketing and strategic leadership.

There are some exciting achievements to report and new initiatives underway:

- A VIC map, identifying all accredited VICs has been updated and uploaded on TQ's consumer website, [queenslandholidays.com.au](http://queenslandholidays.com.au)
- The Queensland VICs will be promoted in the national AAATourism 2009 Accommodation Guide, with a full page advertisement (VIC map), 3 banner advertisements and placement of the *i* sign logo alongside VIC centre details. The guide will be published in May.
- TQ has a commitment to extend QICA's industry leadership through funding support from TQ to produce the *i* on Q newsletter and to manage a newsletter satisfaction survey. The details of the survey will be featured in the next newsletter.
- TQ and the South East Queensland Country (SEQC) VICs have been working to improve networking across the VICs in the area, with conversation, famils, display materials and other activities.
- TQ is involved in legal proceedings against the misuse of the *i* sign to ensure protection of the symbol.

## VIC Database

TQ maintains the database of all accredited VICs, which includes the following information:

- Address
- Telephone number
- Email address
- Website
- Manager name and telephone contact details
- Contact name and telephone contact details
- Opening hours
- Date accredited

We have fielded enquiries from VICs in the network asking if they can access the database for sending out information. To date we have directed everyone to the Queensland Holidays website which includes individual listing of VICs with a telephone number, email, website address and opening hours. However this is cumbersome if contacting the whole network.

TQ is seeking your agreement to the dissemination of the VIC database to accredited VIC members. This will assist communication between VICs and working together. The database will not be made available outside of the accredited VIC network. The VICs will soon be contacted by email to confirm their agreement or otherwise.

## X Marks the Spot

Tourism Queensland would like to add your VIC location to the interactive maps on its consumer website, [queenslandholidays.com.au](http://queenslandholidays.com.au).

In order for us to complete this, Tourism Queensland will soon be in touch with all VICs to ask for your longitude and latitude coordinates. (Instructions on how to do this will be provided.)



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## 'i' Sign Goes International

A new TQ initiative underway is the development of on line advertisements promoting Queensland's accredited Visitor Information Centre network. The ads will appear on TQ's main consumer website, [queenslandholidays.com.au](http://queenslandholidays.com.au) as well as TQ's international consumer websites and other relevant non-TQ websites.

The purpose of the advertisements is to use the web to raise awareness of the *i* sign so visitors know to seek it out when they arrive in Queensland. Research has revealed that websites are used by the majority of international visitors for their trip planning.

## Even Famous People Use VICs!

On Friday 20 February 2009 a very unsuspecting volunteer was met at the counter of the Yeppoon Visitor Information Centre by Australian actor Steve Bisley, needing accommodation for the night.



Volunteer Trisha Clayton secured him a booking at a local accommodation house and whilst she just served him like any other customer the enormous smile on her face would indicate otherwise.

What more can we say ~ even famous people need our Visitor Information Centres! It certainly made Trisha's day a little more interesting. Wonder who might pop in next week?

## Streamlining the Audit Process

An online tool has been developed to streamline the VIC accreditation audit process for everyone involved. The tool will allow both the auditor and the VIC manager to log in and complete the audit process.

TQ is currently organising training for use of the tool. Information will be available in the June newsletter.

## Marketing Tools

A further initiative TQ is working on is the development of a tool kit to assist VICs in marketing their centre.

It's proposed the kit includes advertising templates, marketing tips and guidance on developing marketing plans. The VICs will soon be contacted by email to confirm their marketing requirements.

## QICA CONFERENCE NEWS

The 2009 Annual Queensland Information Centres Association (QICA) Conference was held in Stanthorpe in the last week of February. 54 delegates from all over Queensland attended and had a great time networking and receiving industry presentations on motivating volunteers, marketing, updates from Tourism Queensland, etc.

The conference again received great feedback, and mark your diaries as the 2010 conference will be held in Townsville in late February (look out for exact dates soon!).

On the last night of the conference the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) 2009 VIC of the Year Awards were handed out. Our

congratulations going to **Babinda, Wondai, Tyto Wetlands** and **Kingaroy-South Burnett** VICs, winners in their respective categories. Our thanks for all those that took the time and effort to enter this year's awards and to GBRMPA for their ongoing support.



Remember to start keeping a file with your information, documents,

images, etc for your submission for the 2010 awards.

Your new QICA executive was elected at the conference with a couple of new faces. Your executive for 2009/10 is:

- **President: Nicky Young**
- **Vice-President: Lyndell Richards**
- **Secretary: Ross Gambino**
- **Treasurer: Rae Domin**
- **Membership Coordinator: Cindy Bellini-Hogarth**
- **Meetings Coordinator: Roseanne Fritz**
- **Webmaster: Chantelle Fairweather**
- **IT Support: Michael Williams**
- **Conference Organiser: Narelle Burns**



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## TQ Appoints New Regional Zone Directors

In September 2008 the State Government announced a number of changes to Queensland's tourism network, including defining seven specific tourism zones across the state. TQ's regional Tourism Director positions have now been redeployed to the regions. TQ is pleased to introduce you to the seven new Zone Directors and the Director Destination Planning & Design as follows:

- **Brisbane & South East QLD Country** based in Brisbane: Sharon Raguse.
- **Gold Coast & Hinterland** based on the Gold Coast: Denise Deveney (was the Regional Director for Gold Coast/Outback).
- **Sunshine Coast & Fraser Coast** based on the Sunshine Coast: Lynne Banford (was the Regional Director for Central QLD/Bundaberg).
- **Central QLD & Southern Great Barrier Reef** based in Rockhampton: Trevor Cox.

- **Whitsundays, Islands of the Great Barrier Reef & Mackay** based in Airlie Beach: Racheal Klitscher.
- **Tropics & the Great Barrier Reef** based in Cairns: Jeff Gillies.
- **Outback, Gulf & Western Downs** based in Longreach: Matthew Bron.
- **Director Destination Planning & Design** based in Brisbane: David Morgans (currently the Director Product Development).

For further information visit: [www.tq.com.au](http://www.tq.com.au)

## QICA Years of Service Badges

Just a reminder that the National Volunteers Week runs from 11-17 May 2009. This is a great opportunity to recognise your long serving volunteers. QICA Years of Service Badges (available in 5, 10, 15 & 20 years) can be order through Rae Domin via [RDomin@hinchinbrook.qld.gov.au](mailto:RDomin@hinchinbrook.qld.gov.au).

## VIC POFILE – Wynnum Manly Tourism & Visitor Information Centre

Our Centre is located in Manly Harbour Village, a place where old world character and charm sits comfortably beside present day chic, right on the edge of picturesque Moreton Bay. The Centre is sponsored by the Manly Chamber of Commerce and is currently staffed by a Coordinator and eight Volunteers.

Some of the measures that the Centre has put into practice to make the office more environmentally friendly include: recycling paper, bottles, cans and water, using the 'power save button' on equipment, encouraging staff to communicate by email, using double-sided documents whenever possible, and using recycled paper to print fax receipts. Most of the office furniture is pre-loved or has been refurbished, since it is less expensive than buying new and is better for the environment. Operating a green business is not only good for the environment but good for the Centre's bottom line because conserving resources and cutting down on waste saves money! **The biggest challenge for the Centre is to become self funded and self supporting!**

All Volunteer Staff are provided with on-the-job, on-going training in all aspects of Customer Service, use of

telephone, fax, email and EFTPOS; ordering and replenishing stock; data entry; processing bookings; and assisting with record keeping and collection. Staff network and avail themselves of every opportunity to experience (familis) and obtain current and up-to-date information (Happy Hours with local businesses).



A computer for public internet use was installed in May 2008 and has proved extremely popular with both the local community and visitors. The Centre also offers printing, photocopying and fax services to customers, and maintains a "Community" Noticeboard.