
STRICTLY EMBARGOED until Sunday, 23 November 2008

STARS COME OUT AT SA TOURISM AWARDS

Hindmarsh Island's Narnu Farm has been inducted into the State's prestigious Tourism Hall of Fame at the **2008 South Australian Tourism Awards**.

The rural holiday experience received the accolade of being named South Australia's best Standard Accommodation for the third year in a row at the Adelaide Convention Centre last night.

Jacob's Creek Visitor Centre was a standout performer at the event, sweeping up three awards in its categories of Major Tourist Attractions, Tourism Wineries and Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services.

Former owners of Wilpena Pound Resort, Lynette and Keith Rasheed, were also honoured for their role in tourism, receiving the award for an Outstanding Contribution by an Individual.

The Rasheeds ran the iconic Flinders Ranges property for more than 20 years, pioneering the beginnings of tourism and fostering economic interest in the Flinders Ranges and Outback.

More than 550 people from the tourism industry attended the black tie event, where 27 awards were presented to businesses and individuals judged to be the most outstanding in each category (full list attached).

A further 60 entrants who achieved a high standard in their category were recognised with a gold, silver or bronze medal.

Tourism Minister Jane Lomax-Smith says 107 entries were received this year, highlighting the value of tourism in the State and raising the benchmark for excellence in the industry.

"The standard of entries was extremely high again this year, which underlines the commitment our operators have towards this important industry," Minister Lomax-Smith says.

"Tourism is big business in South Australia, and the awards recognise the contribution our tourism achievers make to strengthening the economy and creating employment.

"A successful tourism industry contributes greatly to increasing visitors to South Australia, which is one of the key aims of the State's Strategic Plan."

The awards are judged in accordance with a strict set of rules and criteria, and major category winners will represent the State at the **Australian Tourism Awards** in February 2009, to be held in Melbourne.

2008 South Australian Tourism Awards

Category 1 – Major Tourist Attractions

Jacob's Creek Visitor Centre Ph: (08) 8521 3000

Category 2 – Tourist Attractions

Cleland Wildlife Park Ph: (08) 8339 2444

Category 3 – Major Festivals & Events

2008 Clipsal 500 Adelaide Ph: (08) 8212 8500

Category 4 – Festivals & Events

Loxton Christmas Lights Festival Ph: (08) 8584 6255

Category 5 – Ecotourism

Sinclair's Gully Ph: (08) 8390 1995

Category 6 – Heritage & Cultural Tourism

Old Timers Mine Ph: (08) 8672 5555

Category 7 – Indigenous Tourism

Bookabee Tours Australia Ph: (08) 8235 9954

Category 8 – Specialised Tourism Services

Cellar Door Pass Ph: 1300 661 771

Category 9 – Visitor Information & Services

Goolwa Visitor Information Centre Ph: 1300 466 592

Category 10 – Meetings & Business Tourism

Adelaide Convention Centre Ph: (08) 8212 4099

Category 11 – Major Tour &/or Transport Operators

Adventure Tours Australia Group Ph: (08) 8132 8280

Category 12 - Tour &/or Transport Operators

Rich & Lingering Ph: 1300 707 000

Category 13 – Adventure Tourism

Surf & Sun Ph: 1800 786 386

Category 14 – Tourism Marketing

Caravan & Camping Self-Drive Holidays Ph: (08) 8260 4488

Category 15 – Tourism Education & Training

School of Management – UniSA Ph: 8302 0524

Category 16 – Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services

Jacob's Restaurant at Jacob's Creek Visitor Centre Ph: (08) 8521 3000

Category 17 – Tourism Wineries

Jacob's Creek Visitor Centre Ph: (08) 8521 3000

Category 18 – Tourist & Caravan Parks

BIG4 Renmark Riverfront Holiday Park Ph: (08) 8586 6315

Category 19 – Backpacker Accommodation

Lakeside Manor YHA Ph: (08) 8768 1995

Category 20 – Hosted Accommodation

Bellevue Bed and Breakfast Ph: (08) 8323 7929

Category 21 – Unique Accommodation

Unforgettable Houseboats Ph: (08) 8569 2559

Category 22 – Standard Accommodation

Narnu Farm Ph: (08) 8555 2002

Category 23 – Deluxe Accommodation

The Stationmaster's Residence Ph: (08) 8261 6270

Category 24 – Luxury Accommodation

The Louise Ph: (08) 8562 2722

Category 25 – New Tourism Development

Port Lincoln Hotel Ph: (08) 8621 2000

Category 26 – Qantas Award for Excellence in Sustainable Tourism

Sinclair's Gully Ph: (08) 8390 1995

Category 27 – Outstanding Contribution by an Individual

Lynette and Keith Rasheed

Lynette and Keith Rasheed pioneered the beginnings of tourism in the Flinders Ranges and Outback South Australia. Their business, Wilpena Pound Resort, has been pivotal in attracting visitors from around the world. Keith was instrumental in the concept, development and operation of the inaugural Great Australian Outback Cattle Drive in 2002, and was stock route manager in 2005. Other initiatives which he and Lynette helped drive include the Outback Touring Loop, Tastes of the Outback, and the annual black tie sell-out event, Wilpena Under the Stars. Lynette and Keith have been involved with the Flinders Ranges & Outback SA Tourism board, with Lynette holding Chair for a number of years. By contributing above and beyond their call of duty, the Rasheeds helped create an environment for economic development. From their investment, leadership and pride in their brand, today more than 18 different pastoral owners are active in outback tourism. Not only have Lynette and Keith run the most iconic property in the Flinders Ranges for more than 20 years, their phenomenal passion for the region makes them invaluable ambassadors for the State.

For images of winners, contact Bianca Borrett on telephone 0401 998 247.