



**February 2006**

**Fifty days on..**

## **President Pam Hardgrave looks back on December and January**

Hello Members,

I trust that all members have had good rainfall. My husband Doug says that if it rains early you don't get much rain. Well I've proved him wrong "again". This morning it bucketed down. We had 225 points (55mls). It makes doing business much easier if you have pleasant surroundings.

As promised the Management Committee met with Mark Olsen, Michael Sommer and two of their destination managers at Tourism Qld. in January. They were all truly very approachable and very "switched on". We discussed many issues and Peter will give a detailed summary further in this newsletter. The key strategy that came from the meeting was building better relationships with far North Queensland. This objective will come to fruition in the next few months as I hope to visit far North Queensland with Tourism Queensland.

I am delighted by the response from members when I asked for them to contact me re their concerns. Some issues were straightened out immediately whereas some other issues are taking a little longer to be resolved. Please be assured that we are still prioritising members concerns.

It is fortunate that Peter Cook is our national chair as he is able to keep me informed on current and emerging concerns. He truly is a fountain of knowledge and he has a great relationship with Mark and Michael from Tourism Queensland.

Following the meeting with TQ, Peter and I discussed several options that have potential for both the national body and BBFQ to address the on line challenge. One option has been taken a further step by meeting with a potential partner and while we need to protect the confidence of our discussions in the short term, I am personally very happy with the progress.

To keep abreast of the changes in tourism and more importantly the needs of our guests, BBFQ is pursuing excellence in properties. I personally know only too well, the challenges of maintaining a four and a half star property. Farmstay operators contend with big areas to maintain, drought, fluctuating income due to the market etc. However, I know I would not have the consistent bookings if I was not prepared to continually change and maintain my property to a high level.

Noting that domestic travel is on a temporary decline, we need to attract the overseas market and it has been proven that they always check the star rating of a property. I am very keen to maintain the star ratings and I believe that those businesses that want to still be in business in a few years will need to maintain their standards.

I realise that not all BBFQ members run their business as their core business; however for those who do, they acknowledge that they must be competitive in the market and meet market demand.

Tourism Queensland will shortly conduct a survey on member's needs and I urge you all to take ten minutes and fill it out. I recently filled out a HMAA survey and was amazed at the technology out there that I was not aware of.

As always, if I can help members in any way please send me an email [sales@lillydale.com.au](mailto:sales@lillydale.com.au) or phone 5544 3131.

Regards  
Pam Hardgrave  
**President, BBFQ**  
**Lillydale Host Farm**

## **Key points from our planning meeting**

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### **Tourism Queensland overview from a niche marketing perspective**

- The B&B Farmstay experience is in demand and consumers have high expectations of quality which means that the sector needs to offer an image of excellence
- The internet is no longer an optional marketing tool but an essential part of the business, which will put pressure on the sector to ensure a standard is achieved
- Continuing the move into main stream tourism distribution will depend on better on line availability of product
- It is disappointing that there are only 95 BBF properties on the Aust Tourism Data Warehouse, this is a key tool in the area of online distribution
- TQ is committed to establishing unity in the BBF sector in the state and will support an initiative to bring the BBFQ and the FNQ body together
- Synergy Marketing is TQ's public relations and media agency. TQ will continue to work with BBFQ to provide the media, through Synergy, with quality marketable stories that meet both organisations objectives
- BBF needs to be marketed as an "experience"
- Perhaps it is time the BBFQ learned more about our members, customers and our role and what we offer in a changing environment
- Business travel is growing and the corporate market is now looking for diversity

### **Destination Management overview (South East and Tropical North Qld. Managers presented at the meeting)**

- Fragmentation of two BBF bodies doesn't help TQ overall destination management objectives
- In the Tropical North, visitor accommodation is running at approximately 80% intrastate (local domestic) and 20% international – similar to the rest of Queensland
- The BBF network has an opportunity to package their product across the state through a stronger partnership between the two BBF bodies

### **BBFQ Analysis**

- New website will give BBFQ a more modern look
- Flow of information to members needs to be continued and enhanced
- Opportunity for three monthly interface in regional areas needs to be pursued
- North Queensland relationship is important to offer a product across the whole state
- On line solutions, education and operator training needs to be addressed
- There appears to be two levels of membership; the full time professional and the smaller "cottage industry" member
- Both aspects need to be recognised in varying ways
- Guide distribution is much better and needs to be monitored

## **AGREED OUTCOMES**

- TQ and BBFQ will partner in conducting consumer research to test their needs including the value of a printed guide.**
- Operators across the sector will be surveyed to better understand the current product environment and role of BBFQ**
- A guide will be produced again in 2006 after reviewing outcomes from research**
- TQ will facilitate a meeting between stakeholders in Tropical North Qld.**
- A sector specific on line solution will be escalated to the BBFA to support a national agenda as a follow up to the recent Federal Govt. grant application**

## MEETING DATES

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- The Management Committee will meet again by teleconference in late March.
- A BBFQ general meeting will be held at Lake Weyba Cottages, Peregian Beach in early June
- An industry seminar will be run by the South Australian BBF organisation in Adelaide on 23 May. Full details will be sent to all operators nationally but if Qld. operators are looking for a mid year break, this will be an excellent opportunity to learn about our industry and to network.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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Ellen and Han at *Currimundi Lakeside Bed and Breakfast* (who acted very quickly to put their specials onto the BBFQ website)

Paul and Margaret Cortis at *Kilcoy Upper Sandy Creek Bed and Breakfast*

Neil and Janice Hearn of *Sea Landings B&B* at Tuan in the South Burnett Region

Janine and Peter Spink of *Laurel Bank House*, Toowoomba

## NEW WEBSITE

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Our new website is due for completion in early March 2006.

## Editorial on the Members Page

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Articles currently on the Members page of the website include

- A report on guide distribution at Brisbane Airport
- Federal Govt. grants to local Govt. to reduce red tape
- Business travel moving on line
- Domestic travel down in Australia
- Research report on Aussie travel and
- QTIC skills

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And click on the members page at the top. The user id is qbba and the password is member

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