



South Coast camping expo

GREY nomads, campers and holidaymakers will descend on Batemans Bay this weekend for the annual South Coast Caravan, Camping, Holiday Expo.

The expo will feature the latest equipment, newest models and specifications of caravans, as well as camping equipment, motorhomes, campervans, camper trailers, tents, accessories, holiday parks and destination displays, just in time for summer.

Held over three days from today until Sunday at Mackay Park, the expo is marketed as "the perfect place to bring the entire family".

Caravan and Camping

Industry Association NSW CEO Lyndel Gray said the event would feature more than 110 exhibitors and the NRMA's "Blue Zone" entertainment area.

"There is no better place to take a look at the latest caravan and camping products, best destinations and to get yourself ready for the summer holidays," she said.

"There are some amazing products on the market and the expo gives you an opportunity to see the full range and compare your options.

"Take a tour of a new pop-top range featuring a full ensuite, or you can get a closer look at the latest flat-panel, fully automatic satellite television system,

check out some of the best portable barbecues and even get a preview of some of our best NSW destinations."

Ms Gray said the South Coast expo would offer a great day out for all the family with plenty to keep the kids entertained as well.

"We know people love coming along to our expos and we make sure our events cater for all the family with jumping castles and a face painter on site and a great range of food - there is something for everyone," she said.

Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$6 concession and children 16 and under are free with an accompanying adult.



- **Thousands of camping enthusiasts and holidaymakers are expected to enjoy this weekend's expo in Batemans Bay.**



Large spaces needed for vans

FRIENDS of Bromley Road spokesperson Bev Harbinson said the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia's 28th anniversary rally held in the region earlier this year had a huge impact on Robinvale's tourism industry.

She said the spin-off from the rally and the town's RV friendly status had helped to attract more campervans and motorhomes to the region, with 20 vans stopping in the town most days.

She said the proposed plan would reduce the number of large car parking spaces suited to campervans and motorhomes.

"Robinvale needs all the help it can get," she said. "We don't want to be turning people away."



Roll on

A LITHGOW couple who have recently discovered the joys of caravanning are urging Lithgow Council to consider setting up another centrally located caravan park in Lithgow with modern facilities to boost the tourism potential. There are popular facilities at Lake Lyell, campervans are now encouraged at Lake Wallace, and there is a privately run park at Bowenfels. So, do we need another? Let's hear from our hordes of seasoned caravanners.



Councillor moves for freedom camping trial to manage illegal 'vanpackers'

MEGAN KINNIMENT

megan.kinniment@byronnews.com.au

BYRON Shire Council is set to discuss a 12-month trial of designated "freedom camping" sites in an attempt to manage the effects of illegal street camping by "vanpackers".

A freedom camping notice of motion has been put forward by Cr Paul Spooner and would offer "an alternative between camping in residential streets and more formalised, expensive camping options".

"At the moment we have a zero-tolerance approach to vanpackers where our compliance team go in and issue fines, but this doesn't stop illegal camping in residential streets," he said.

"The majority of those

financed are international travellers who do not pay their fines. If they don't pay, it's not an effective deterrent."

If the idea is passed at the next meeting, the council will ask for expressions of interest from established camping providers or new partners such as landowners who may be able to offer primitive camping facilities to RV campers.

Although he has worded the motion as "freedom camping", the camping sites would not necessarily be free, Cr Spooner said.

"Those facilities do cost, so there would need to be some charge involved, but with a trial we could see what the market is willing to pay," he said.

"They need access to wa-

ter and toilets, but these freedom campers are after a cheap travel experience."

Cr Spooner's notice of motion follows a report prepared for the council in late August examining examples such as Dunedin in New Zealand, which offers limited free camping sites.

"This is about managing the effect of street camping without taking a big stick approach," he said.



HAVE YOUR SAY

northernstar.com.au



Reducing the impact of their park

TUNCURRY Beach Holiday Park has been ranked amongst the top camping and caravan businesses in Australia for their environmental management initiatives.

The silver Gumnut Award was awarded by the Caravan and Camping Industry Association (CCIA) to the Tuncurry park which has 24 cabins and 180 short-term caravan and camping sites. One of 23 owned by North Coast Holiday Parks, the park forms part of the NSW Crown Holiday Parks Trust, whose focus on environmentally sustained practices is complemented by the park's managers Kevin and Lee Walsh and their team.

"All of our parks are committed to providing the best possible experience for guests and part of that includes environmentally and socially responsible management," said Steve Edmonds, the CEO of the Trust, congratulating the team.

Citing recycling waste material whenever possible, managing water resources and not wasting energy, Kevin and Lee

Walsh said they have always been committed to effective green initiatives at Tuncurry Beach.

"We try to reduce the negative impact that our park operations might have on the environment," Lee said.

"We want the natural attributes, biodiversity and cultural assets of the park and surrounding public lands to be protected and enhanced for the community and future generations."

The CCIA's Gumnut Eco program recognises businesses across Australia for their commitment to sustainability and environmental practice across holiday parks, manufactured home villages, manufacturers, retailers and suppliers who operate caravan and camping related businesses. The program recognises a host of achievements from site design and presentation to air and noise pollution standards and environmental stewardship.



ENVIRONMENTAL KUDOS: Park Managers Lee and Kevin Walsh with Renee Maconachie and Susan Boden proudly display their silver Gumnut Award.