

CLUBS & COMMUNITY AWARDS

Clubs & Community Awards (C&C 2019)

Arts & Culture

'Outlandish 2018' Outlander Fan Gathering



VLYNXKrQ

Entrant details

Position Name | Events & Entertainment Manager

Entry details

Club Name | Glen Innes & District Services Club

1. Provide an outline of your program/project that addresses each of the aspects noted to the right:

In April 2017, Julie Clement, Entertainment & Events Manager at Glen Innes & District Services Club and a huge fan of the television series Outlander, was a guest of the Aussie Outlander Fan Club lunch held at the Australian Standing Stones Monument in Glen Innes. This unique site, the only Standing Stones array in the Southern Hemisphere also reflects the setting for the television series 'Outlander' which has taken the world by storm.

Inspired by the enthusiastic response of the Fan Club members to the Standing Stones site, Julie suggested to Glen Innes Services Club Management that an event based on the series would be a successful addition to the Club's entertainment line-up. Thus began an eighteen month project to bring the story to life in Glen Innes by taking the fans back to 1743 AD. Julie pulled together a committed team of Volunteers as well as Club staff, and the Services Club Production Contractor, Pinknoize Audio leading up to the Event, which was planned for October 2018. The date was chosen because there is a gap at this time of year in the Glen Innes district's event calendar. Julie and the team could see that they could mimic much of the Outlander series as the beautiful Standing Stones offered a readymade movie set. New visitors, history and tourism for the town was the main focus as this was a very high detailed event. Fans are hungry for the best experience possible. Outlander is so addictive and Julie wanted to make sure everyone was totally stoned! Standing Stoned that is :) Many of the scenes from the Outlander series were recreated including an exact replica of the Great Hall fire place in the Services Club Auditorium. All the fans felt they were entering the famous Castle Leoch from series 1 of Outlander. It was truly a fabulous sight with 50 x 1 metre high exquisite silver candelabra and stone walls.

Glen Innes Services Club is committed to supporting the whole community and the local economy. Tourism provides around 40% of the economic activity in the region.

Summer and autumn are the peak tourism seasons in the Glen Innes region, with a clear decline in visitations during winter and early spring. Our major events are held in February (Glen Innes Agricultural Show), March (Minerama Fossicking, Gem and Jewellery Show) and May (The Australian Celtic Festival). In 2017 a new event, Chill in Glen was added in July to address the winter tourism gap. The Glen Innes accommodation providers report greater room vacancies outside the traditional summer and autumn peaks.

2. Provide an insight into why this program/project was supported by the club/individual.

Glen Innes Services Club identified a need to create opportunities for tourism operators, accommodation providers and

local businesses during the spring. Here we were with a perfect platform to hold such an event with our own circle of stones and a fan base that would kill to dance around the Standing Stones. Mainly it was the passion of events manager Julie Clement who needed to turn this dream into reality. Outlandish 2018 Outlander Fan Gathering became a two day event celebrating the television series and appealing to all Outlander fans. It brought Australian and International visitors to the Glen Innes Highlands, many of whom spent additional time touring the New England High Country. Well known MC and actor Darren Coggan welcomed all the fans as they took the journey back to 1743. The weekend started at Dawn with The Lantern Dance, a feature of the first episode in the series. This was a spine-tingling ceremony, taking place just as dawn broke. It was followed by the ethereal tones of a Lone Piper, appearing from out of the early morning mist. As the sun rose higher, soprano Ella Roberts walked into the Stone Circle, singing The Skye Boat Song, which is the theme music from the series. It was truly magical.

Local Services Groups catered for breakfast, with themed dishes including porridge which was a favourite in the Outlander series. The visitors were blown away with how much the event looked and felt like the Scottish Highlands from Outlander. On the first morning a blanket of fog settled across Glen Innes just to top it off!

During the day, there were activities that ranged from a display of traditional martial arts of the period, presented by Brisbane-based re-enactment group An-T'Arm Mhontrois, to games and Series-based trivia competitions, and the Red Coats "arresting" people and taking them to jail, all in jest.

Later in the day, Fans were guests at an exact re-enactment (and legal) wedding based on the Outlander wedding scene. The selection of the happy couple was made from entrants in a Wedding competition which was held earlier in 2018.

The evening event on Day 1 was a Feast, intended to be held only at Glen Innes Services Club, transformed for the evening into Castle Leoch, the major series location. The success of the project eventually saw two overflow venues transformed into series locations Lallybroch (Highlands Restaurant, New England Motor Lodge) and the Palace of Versailles (Hereford Steakhouse, Rest Point Motor Inn).

On Day 2, Fans were treated to a Question and Answer session with special guest David Berry, Lord John Grey in Series 3 of Outlander. Fans were then able to pose for photos with David, and to have their posters signed by him.

3. Provide a brief summary of the support that your club/individual provided to this program/project.

The Event Delivery was provided by Glen Innes Services Club staff, and the Volunteer Working Group, who contributed a total of 384 man hours to the event.

Glen Innes Services Club provided all the logistical support leading up to the event, including the Outlander Fan Gathering office which was run by Julie Clement. All ticket sales and accounting re the event were part of this office.

Glen Innes Services Club underwrote the cost of all of the following items

- Professional stage hire, prop design and manufacture.
- Professional sound and lighting production.
- A licenced Wedding Celebrant.
- All printing, website development and Facebook campaigns
- Local print media campaigns

Television and print media campaigns were funded through a grant from Destination NSW. This grant also funded a comprehensive Visitor Survey conducted over the two days of the Event.

The Australian Standing Stones Management Board allowed the Event to be staged at the Australian Standing Stones site at no cost.

Glen Innes Severn Council gave support as in-kind provision of infrastructure at the Standing Stones site, man proof fencing and road closure requirements and the cost of Safe Security Services for the 5 nights of set up and event delivery.

Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Association Inc. sponsored part of the cost of the main stage hire.

Other support was received as follows

- Local Services Groups provided on site catering for the event - Rotary, Red Cross, Quota, Lions and Lioness
- 18th Century Push Cart Markets - Friday in the Town Square
- Winery from the Hunter Valley and Super Strawberry vouchers in welcome packs

A small number of stallholders were selected for their ability to reflect the theme of the event, and were present on site.

The Event team also ran a merchandise stall with Outlander licenced or themed items for sale.

Many local retail and food outlets in town dressed their staff in costume for the weekend, supporting the idea that Glen Innes was transported back in time to the Highlands of Scotland at the time of Culloden (1743 AD).

4. Provide a summary of the outcomes this program/project achieved and how the club's/individual's contribution helped in this success. Where possible, please quantify your response.

It was the intention of Glen Innes Services Club to generate a visitor stream outside of the expected demographic. We achieved this with attendees from all states of Australia, from New Zealand, the USA, Germany, Scotland and even Afghanistan.

Marketing for Glen Innes tourism is usually targeted at the south-east Queensland area because this is seen as "the furthest that people will travel". Our Visitor Survey demonstrated that this is not necessarily true with a well-planned and focussed event. 27% of attendees were indeed from south-east Queensland, but 30% came from the Sydney area. 106 Tickets were purchased on line in the first hour of going on sale in July 2017 indicating a great response to the event. The final number of attendees was 576, which was very pleasing as there were only 600 tickets available.

Most of the motels were booked out very quickly indicating it was a popular accommodation option for our target market. Most visitors booked accommodation for three nights.

The event was staged over two days, with key evening activities at three venues. Attendees took advantage of dining and touring opportunities after registration on the Friday of the weekend. Cafes and restaurants who re-badged themselves for the weekend with names associated with the Outlander series reported very high levels of trade. One hotel with a restaurant reported their best trading figures ever, as did a local homewares shop and our local Opportunity Shop.

One pleasing side effect was the forward bookings for the Australian Celtic Festival to be held in May 2019. These bookings are directly related to the Outlandish 2018 Fan Gathering, from people who have not previously attended the Festival. We are also aware of repeat visitors to the district which was our aim all along.

Our survey revealed a huge spend over the weekend with 40% spending between 0 - \$500, 30% spending \$500 - \$999 and 27% spending over \$1000 each. The Club's Outlander event brought over \$270,000 to Glen Innes.

5. Provide a summary of how the community responded to the project. Please provide examples to support your answer.

In our Visitor Survey, 57% of respondents wished for the event to be held every second year. The Outlander fans travel the world attending Outlander events and told us they did not want to miss an Outlandish event. As a consequence early planning is underway for 'Outlandish 2020' to be held in October that year.

The enthusiastic response of attendees in 2018 indicates that there is strong potential for a huge event in 2020. The producers of the Outlander series have just announced there will a 5th and 6th series so it is feasible that more gatherings would be successful as the fans will forever want to dance around the Standing Stones. We are on a winner!

6. Add your credits here:

Paid Staff

Event Manager – Julie Clement; Events and Entertainment Manager Glen Innes Services Club; Event Manager Australian Celtic Music Awards (ACMA); Australian Celtic Festival (ACF) Committee.

Production Manager – Garry Kiefer; Proprietor Pinknoize Audio; Production Manager ACMA; Contract Production Manager ACF – 22 years

Wedding Competition - Mel Lindsay; Licenced Marriage Celebrant

Props Designer and Builder – Rolf Seiber

Costume Designer - Ciane Guilfoyle

Volunteer Event Delivery Team

Administration – Barbara McLennan; Administration ACMA; Editor Celtic News; Formerly ACF Entertainment Coordinator including stage planning and management.

Stage Manager - Judi Toms – Proprietor Glen Innes Highland Tours;
Chairman Australian Standing Stones Management Board (ASSMB)

Site Manager - Lara Gresham – Chairman ACF Committee 2015 to 2018; responsible for site management and safety rules
Assistant Administrator and Visitor Information Centre Liaison - Mary Hollingworth – ACF Administrator (Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre) 8 years

Backstage Manager - Raelene Watson – Secretary ASSMB; Chairman ACF Committee 2014

Merchandise Manager - Ian McLennan

Haggis Ceremony Presenter - Cameron MacLachlan – ACF Committee

Outlandish Audience Liaison and Site Supervisor - James Gresham

Lantern Girls - Cherri Burbidge, Samantha Dwyer, Jemma James, Sari James, Sue Gallenti & Sharon Gallenti

Red Coats - Lindsay Gresham, Nigel Brown & James Gresham

Sponsors

Destination NSW gave a grant of \$20,000 for marketing and research, broken down to \$10,000 for TV, \$7000 for print media and \$3000 for the Visitor survey.

Glen Innes Severn Council gave support of \$10,000 to engage the guest star David Berry and included in-kind provision of infrastructure at the Standing Stones site, man proof fencing and road closure requirements and the cost of Safe Security Services for the 5 nights of set up and event.

Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Association Inc. Sponsorship of \$1000 for part cost of the main stage hire.

You are encouraged to credit all members of the team that contributed to this entry.

Please be sure to spell names correctly and get titles correct.

You may also use this space to credit any contributing organisations. Email addresses are not required but may be used to arrange delivery of award certificates.

Upload your clubs logo here (min 1MB)



We have read the Terms & Conditions of the awards and agree | ✓

We declare that the information presented in this entry, is to the best of our knowledge, accurate and true in every respect | ✓

We confirm that the nomination/submission has been approved by the Club President or Secretary Manager | ✓

Name of President/Secretary Manager | Russell Meehan and Pat Lonergan

Title | 'Outlandish 2018' Outlander Fan Gathering

Date | 2019-05-09

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Club's Castle Leo... 3.7 MiB



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