

## **GROUP TOURS COORDINATOR REPORT 2024 AGM – Anne Dinham**

I speak to you now as the Coordinator of Group Tours – which does include school groups and local group visits...but mostly involves out of town coach touring groups.

The 2023/2024 year saw the return of such group touring after the lean covid years.

Unfortunately the local bus tour company, Yamba Tours, did NOT survive the covid business downturn, so we mainly have had tour groups booked under the umbrella booking agency, Expanding Horizons, supplemented by Leigh Doyle's East Coast Coaches, All Australian Journeys (which used to be Cross Country Tours) and Bruce Drysdale Coaches.

Tour guides, Graham East, Trish Bowes and myself offer a step on guide service around Yamba – where we travel on the tour bus for about an hour, pointing out places of interest, usually including a walk on Pilot Hill.

My thanks to Graham and Trish for sharing this commitment and responsibility.

Back at the museum, and sometimes also assisted by Gai Pritchett, Vicki Jermyn or others, we offer a guided tour of the museum itself – often needing to break the group into 2 to fit in our smaller spaces, such as The Breakwater Room. When the weather allows, we commence in the Yaegl Cultural Garden which we introduce as the 'first room' of the museum!

The highlight of a visit, is probably morning tea, in the function room – catered for by Brenda Salisbury and assisted in setting up and serving by Kerry Hulm, Jan Angelo, Meredith Bates, and others.

The set up with white table cloths and fresh garden flowers...not to mention Brenda's mini-friends or scones drew many a favourable comment!

The income generated by one or more of these activities (and not every group does all three) – with a combined cost of \$20/head has added to our coffers this financial year. Sometimes there are also additional sales of books, prints etc. An increase in price structure last year –

but not applied to existing bookings, kicked in mid year. Entry and a guided tour now costs \$7 per head and \$5 per head for the town tour. Morning tea has remained at \$8 per head.

In the last financial year – which of course does not include the most recent, July, tour we had 9 coach tours, bringing 250 visitors – plus tour staff to the museum and generating \$3,711 in income.

One such visit by Bruce Drydale's company involved 2 buses at the same time, a choreographed program involving all our guides, and 2 morning tea sittings!

We had one local group tour – of Caroon residents – which was small in number but complicated by a number of wheely walkers. We were delighted that it also included a past member – dear to many of us!

There were two school groups – St James and Gulmarrad – not so important for the income (of \$222) but giving exposure to 111 local students, and their teachers.

One of these school groups of course HAD to be on the same day as an adult coach tour – again requiring all hands on deck!

Thank you to all who have been involved – and please speak with me afterwards if this is an activity of the society that you might like to be involved in.

We would also love to see more local groups taking advantage of what we offer – perhaps for a guided tour of the museum, with morning tea. Please suggest this to other groups with which you are involved.

Thank you