

# regional tourism forum

riverina murray



## EVENT PROGRAM

**Thursday 23 April 2026**

Tocumwal War Memorial Hall

50-54 Deniliquin Street Tocumwal NSW 2714

Hosted by:



Destination  
Riverina Murray NSW



Proudly supported by:



Destination  
NSW



# regional tourism forum

riverina murray



## event program



thursday 23 april 2026



9:00am - 4.30pm



tocumwal war memorial hall  
50-54 deniliquin street tocumwal

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Time	Session details
08:00 AM - 09:00 AM	<p><b>Registrations Open</b></p> <p> Tocumwal War Memorial Hall</p> <p>Time to check-in and get settled. Grab a coffee, take the opportunity to mingle, setting the tone for a day of learning, collaboration, and connection.</p>
09:00 AM - 09:10 AM	<p><b>Plenary</b></p> <p><b>Welcome to Country</b></p> <p> Tocumwal War Memorial Hall</p> <p>Official forum opening with a warm welcome to the region and country.</p> <div data-bbox="505 1606 612 1701"></div> <p><b>Darren Atkinson</b> Founder/Director Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Education (ACHE)</p>

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09:10 AM - 09:15 AM

Plenary

## MC Welcome

📍 Main Hall



**Dominic Mehling**  
Industry Relations Manager - ACT,  
NSW, NT & QLD  
Tourism Australia

09:15 AM - 09:25 AM

Plenary

## Opening Address

📍 Main Hall



**Mitchell Gunn**  
Associate Director - Regional  
Destination NSW

09:25 AM - 09:45 AM

Keynote

## Cultural Connection: Bullanginya Dreaming

📍 Main Hall

A local hero visitor experience and powerful example of what is possible when tourism operators and Aboriginal communities work together with respect, trust and shared purpose. Be inspired to integrate cultural connection into your tourism product.



**Darren Atkinson**  
Founder/Director  
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Education  
(ACHE)



**Tony Tranter**  
CEO  
Barooga Sports Club

09:50 AM - 10:20 AM

Panel

## Visitor Economy Data Deep-Dive

📍 Main Hall

Unpack the latest visitor economy insights for the cross-border Murray and Riverina NSW region. Walk away with the latest data on visitor numbers, emerging markets, and what it means for your marketing and product development.



**Elliott Taylor**  
Client Success Manager  
Localis

10:25 AM - 10:40 AM

Break

## Morning Tea

📍 Hall Foyer

Head to the foyer to enjoy a selection of refreshments and take a short break before moving to your allocated breakout venue.

10:40 AM - 10:50 AM

Logistics

## Delegate Transfer

Please make your way to your allocated breakout session:

10:50 AM - 11:20 AM

Breakout Group

## Product & Experience Development

📍 Main Hall

### About this session:

Strategies to elevate your visitor offering. Learn how to create more memorable and compelling visitor experiences to help your tourism product stand out.



**Karen Oliver**

Consultant

KO Tourism

Breakout Group

## Data-Informed Decision Making

📍 Tocumwal Brewing Co.

**About this session:** Explore how data can be used to anticipate visitor demand, plan for peak periods, and strengthen your business decisions.



**Vicky Lowry**

General Manager

Deni Play On The Plains Festival Ltd.

Deni Ute Muster



**Yvette Myhill**

General Manager

Destination Riverina Murray

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**Breakout Group**  
**Planning and Development Applications**

 **Tocumwal Hotel**

**About this session:** Understand when a development application is required, how to approach the process with confidence, and what to watch for along the way, leaving you better equipped to navigate approvals.



**Kate O'Neill**  
Principal  
Acre Town Planning



**David Hunter**  
Director  
Habitat Planning

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11:20 AM - 11:40 AM

Logistics  
**Return to Main Hall**

Please head back to the main hall for the next presentation.

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11:40 AM - 12:05 PM

Keynote  
**Brand & Storytelling**

 **Main Hall**

A modern perspective on how powerful storytelling is for driving business success, with simple yet important steps on how-to strengthen your brand presence and better tell your product's story.



**Emma Scott**  
Creative Director  
Regional PR & Co.



**Madeleine Masarik (Balkwell)**  
Manager, Influencer & Media  
Engagement  
Destination NSW

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12:10 PM - 12:35 PM

Panel  
**Emerging Tourism Sectors**

 **Main Hall**

The rise of outdoor and nature-based tourism, how operators can align with these growing markets, and practical ways to attract and engage audiences seeking these types of visitor experiences.



**Jenny Robb**  
Industry Development Manager  
- South Coast & Snowies  
Destination Southern NSW



**Shannon O'Brien**  
Managing Director  
Sydney Harbour Kayaks and  
Massive Murray Paddle

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12:35 PM - 12:45 PM

Logistics

### Movement to Lunch

📍 Tocumwal Hotel

Please make your way across the street to Tocumwal Hotel for your lunch service.  
A great opportunity to discuss your session insights with fellow delegates.

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12:45 PM - 01:40 PM

Break

### Lunch at Tocumwal Hotel

📍 Tocumwal Hotel

Enjoy a relaxed lunch at the newly renovated Tocumwal Hotel.  
Take this time to unwind and refuel ahead of the afternoon sessions.  
Please take a seat on the front deck and staff will bring your meal to you.  
Those with **dietary requirements** please go to the bistro meal counter to collect your meal.

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01:40 PM - 01:50 PM

Logistics

### Return to Main Hall

📍 Main Hall

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01:50 PM - 02:15 PM

Keynote

### Local Collaboration: The Canola Trail

📍 Main Hall

How tourism operators and councils can unlock shared opportunities and rewards. Be inspired to collaborate with your neighbours to unlock a stronger, more resilient local visitor economy.



**Craig Sinclair**  
Executive Manager - Economic &  
Community Development  
Temora Shire Council



**Emma Scott**  
Creative Director  
Regional PR & Co.

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02:15 PM - 02:30 PM

Logistics

## Delegate Transfer

📍 Various

Please make your way to your allocated breakout session:

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02:30 PM - 03:00 PM

Breakout Group

## Quick Fixes for your Tourism Business

📍 [Tocumwal Brewing Co.](#)

**About this session:** Simple, low-cost ways to lift your business and visitor appeal. Sometimes it's the small details that can make a big difference!



**Giovanna Lever**  
Managing Director  
Sparrowly Group

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Breakout Group

## Agritourism

📍 [Main Hall](#)

**About this session:** Inspirational stories of how working farms transform into a thriving visitor experience. Insights into the key decisions, lessons learned, and triumphs shaping this emerging sector.



**Sam Brewer**  
Director & Head Winemaker  
Yarran Wines



**Katrina Myers**  
Owner  
Barham Avocados and Lost & Found  
Retreat Barham



**Kate Shilling**  
Managing Director  
Straightforward Tourism Solutions

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**Breakout Group**

**Cross-Border Emergency Preparedness**

 **Tocumwal Hotel**

**About this session:** A conversation on navigating natural disasters and state emergencies within the tourism sector, and progressing as an industry to strengthen preparedness and improve the safety of both businesses and visitors.



**Marc Sleeman**  
CEO  
Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism



**Yvette Myhill**  
General Manager  
Destination Riverina Murray



**Kalina Koloff**  
NSW Cross Border Commissioner  
NSW Premier's Department



**Cameron Sutton**  
CEO  
Murray Regional Tourism



**Brett Davis**  
Cross Border Commissioner Victoria  
Office of Cross Border Commissioner  
Victoria

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02:45 PM - 03:00 PM

Logistics  
**Return to Main Hall**

 **Main Hall**

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03:00 PM - 03:15 PM

Refreshments  
**Afternoon Tea**

 **Main Hall**

A selection of sweet and savory treats to enjoy while the next session gets underway. Take this opportunity to graze without missing a moment of the discussion.

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03:20 PM - 04:00 PM

Debate  
**Agritourism: A sustainable diversification option or a risk to traditional agriculture?**

 **Main Hall**

Emerging as one of Australia's strongest growth sectors for the visitor economy, explore what agritourism could mean for the local region.



**Kate Shilling**  
Managing Director  
Straightforward Tourism Solutions



**Amber & Nick Heffernan**  
Owners  
The Silos Accommodation



**Sam Brewer**  
Director & Head Winemaker  
Yarran Wines



**Jenny Robb**  
Industry Development Manager  
- South Coast & Snowies  
Destination Southern NSW



**Dana Ronan**  
Founder  
Nourish Group Consulting



**Marc Sleeman**  
CEO  
Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism



**Robbie Sefton AM**  
Founder  
Seftons

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04:00 PM - 04:15 PM

Plenary

Closing Address

📍 Main Hall

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04:30 PM - 06:00 PM

Social

Networking Event

📍 Tocumwal Brewing Co.

Make your way to the evening networking event with industry peers, councils and partners. Includes complimentary canapes and 2 drinks per person.

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