

**15<sup>th</sup> August 2009**

**Tourism Victoria**

**Media Launch – ‘Lead a Double Life – Daylesford’ Advertising Campaign**

**Speaking Notes – Kim Whitehouse**

As the operator of the recently reopened and revived Hepburn Bathhouse & Spa, Belgravia Health & Leisure is excited to be involved in Tourism Victoria’s Lead a Double Life campaign.

Spa & Wellness Tourism has been growing and developing strongly within Australia for the past 15 years. In the last 6 years spa annual visitation has grown by 108% with 4.1 million spa visits in 2008. These visits have generated revenue in excess of \$570 million dollars<sup>1</sup>. The industry has grown from niche to mainstream, offering the consumer a wide range of ever diversifying treatments and spa experiences. As society becomes increasingly time poor, the individual’s needs to ‘escape’ has fuelled the spa boom.

Spa & Wellness tourism within Australia is a growing segment for both the domestic and international markets due to Australia’s clean and healthy national image. The Daylesford – Hepburn region is uniquely positioned to capitalise on spa and wellness tourism due to the naturally occurring pristine mineral waters of the region.

Nature’s champagne as the mineral water is locally known provides tourists with the perfect opportunity of living a double life; for a day, a weekend or more. Tourists to the region can indulge in the region’s fabulous array of food, wine and chocolate before detoxifying and relaxing the mind and body by ‘taking the waters’, the ultimate detox from a highly toxic life.

The state and local government has invested significantly in restoring the historical Hepburn Bathhouse located within the Mineral Springs Reserve to its former glory. By reviving the Bathhouse the government has revived the local villages and surrounding communities by re-establishing one of the region’s most popular tourist icons.

The historic villages that provide a gateway to the Daylesford region are set to benefit from increased visitation as tourists enter the region via the Macedon Ranges, Ballart and Bendigo. Spa and wellness tourism will contribute valuable economic stimulation for all businesses willing to actively participate and capitalise on this brilliant opportunity.

The re-opening of the Bathhouse has contributed economically to the local community by provided local employment for more than 45 local staff members. Numerous accommodation partners and retailers have reported increases in bed nights, revenue and overall interest in the area and we are proud of the part that we have had to play in the promotion of the region since our reopening. Our marketing has been focused on increasing the consumer’s general

awareness not only of the Bathhouse but of the region as we recognise the importance of expanding the consumer's spa and wellness experience by ensuring that they explore during their escape.

As proud custodians of the Hepburn Bathhouse & Spa and the historic Pavilion Cafe we have welcomed over 40,000 visitors to our facility with an average of 3,500 visitors per month since opening in September 2008. Packaging with local accommodation providers we aim to increase the region's average stay which ensures that our guests savour the delights that the region has to offer before returning home relaxed and revived but eager to visit again.

<sup>1</sup> Garrow. J. Intelligent Spas, Global Spa Benchmark Report Australian Statistics, 2009.  
[http://www.intelligentspas.com/MediaReleases/Press\\_Release\\_Global\\_Spa\\_Benchmark\\_Report.asp](http://www.intelligentspas.com/MediaReleases/Press_Release_Global_Spa_Benchmark_Report.asp)