



The Place To Be

Media release

From the Minister for the Commonwealth Games

Friday 26 August 2005

LATROBE VALLEY TO HOST GAMES CELEBRATIONS

The Latrobe Valley will come alive with sporting, cultural and community celebrations for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games.

Visiting Traralgon and Moe today, the Minister for the Commonwealth Games, Justin Madden, joined Latrobe City Mayor Cr Bruce Loughheed and Commonwealth Games gold medal winner Tim Forsyth to detail the city's role in the Games.

Mr Madden said in addition to the preliminary rounds of the basketball in Traralgon, Moe would be one of the regional host cities of the Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival – the biggest cultural festival Australia has ever seen.

“The Games are about more than sport. They are also about culture, the arts and local celebration,” Mr Madden said.

“The Games will be once-in-a-lifetime event for Victoria and we want regional centres like Traralgon and Moe to benefit.”

The Member for Morwell, Brendan Jenkins announced that Moe Racecourse would be Latrobe City's festival live site during the Games.

“The cultural festival will bring together artists and performers from across Australia and the Commonwealth for a celebration of music, dance, art and street theatre,” Mr Jenkins said.

“A large screen will be installed to broadcast all the Games action so the community can watch the Games together.

“The Moe festival will celebrate the vibrant cultural mix of the Latrobe Valley.

Latrobe City has ‘adopted’ Malta as their second team for the Games and is working with the local community to expand Maltese cultural themes.”

A large-scale community engagement project with local artists and community groups will be a highlight of the festival. The project will feature animation, puppetry, projection, performance and aerialists.

Mr Madden also outlined the Government's \$4.5 million Getting Involved program that will see all Victorian municipalities take part in more than 500 different events to celebrate the Games.

“All Victorians can celebrate and get involved in the Games within their local community,” Mr Madden said.

.../2

Media contact: Brent Hooley 9651 5799 or 0407 138 680 www.vic.gov.au

Latrobe City Mayor Cr Bruce Lougheed unveiled a range of exciting festivities planned for Latrobe leading up to and during the Games.

“Our Games activities include ‘Energy in Sport’, which aims to make sport accessible to everyone, a sporting hall of fame for our local heroes, and an all-ages fitness circuit installed in towns across the Latrobe Valley,” Cr Lougheed said.

“Sunday November 20 is Warming up for the Games Day and we are celebrating with ‘Together We Can’, a day of community participation and fun.”

Tim Forsyth encouraged supporters to join in the welcome celebrations for the Queen’s Baton when it comes to Traralgon on February 28.

“The baton is an iconic symbol of the Games and is visiting all 71 Commonwealth nations on its journey to the MCG. We will put on a party for the baton’s arrival in Traralgon so come along and be part of history,” Mr Forsyth said.

Mr Madden detailed other programs to ensure the Games would have meaning and long-term benefit to all Victorians.

“There are many ways to be involved in the Games,” Mr Madden said.

Curriculum materials have been developed for Victorian schools to use the Games as a platform for teaching and learning and schools are linking with each other across the Commonwealth to learn about their different cultures.

The Environment Program is working to minimise the impact of the Games on our natural resources. The Victorian Government is aiming to plant up to one million trees across the state to ‘soak up’ carbon emissions produced by the event.

“Volunteers can roll up their sleeves and come along to community tree planting days across the state,” said Mr Madden.

Local Commonwealth Games Tree Planting days are happening on September 14 at Lake Narracan, near Morwell, and October 1 in Maffra. Contact www.greeningaustralia.org.au/GA/VIC for details.