



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**AUGUST 26, 2010**

## **CHARACTERS & PERSONALITIES OF THE YARRA VALLEY & DANDENONG RANGES**

Located only an hour's drive from Melbourne, Yarra Valley and the Dandenong Ranges is a place of beauty where stylish restaurants, quality produce and boutique accommodation are in harmony with village life, open gardens and Australian wildlife in its natural habitat.

But it is without doubt the local characters who live and work in the region – that truly make the Yarra Valley and Dandenongs the world class tourist region that it is today.

Each of the characters listed below are extremely passionate about the Yarra Valley and Dandenong region and are great media fodder – each with their own unique, quirky and original story. All of them have lived in the Valley and the Dandenongs and run their own specialized businesses.

### ***BRENDON JANSSEN: LOCKTON FARM***

**Lockton Farm** was opened just two years ago and offers gourmet sausages that are gluten free and fructose free. Brendon loves that he helps provide more people that have allergies with gourmet food options. Brendon has been involved in local farmers markets for the past three years and is excited about the position the Yarra Valley is in.

*“The Valley is just full of opportunity. We’ve got some of the best food and wine in the world and the people selling and producing it are so passionate about what they do.”*

***For interview opportunities please contact Brendon Janssen on (03) 9727 3200***

### ***MARTIN CHENEY: AUSTRALIAN HARVEST***

Martin has lived in the Yarra Valley for 10 years and absolutely loves it. The gourmet fine foods of **Australian Harvest** are diverse in range and high in quality. Martin a keen traveller, has an eye for quality in tourism and finds that the Yarra Valley is one of Victoria’s key tourist destinations that offer the most to visitors.

*“We’ve got all this beautiful countryside while at the same time sitting right on the doorstep to the city - it’s the best of both worlds.”*

***For interview opportunities please contact Martin on (03 9739 0203)***

### **LEANNE POOLEY: UNFORGETTABLE PRODUCTS**

Although **Unforgettable Products** has been open for only three years, Leanne has now been a Yarra Valley resident for a full decade. She absolutely loves living in the country and is very grateful that she is where she is.

*“The products are among the best in the industry, and the people who produce and sell them are so passionate about what they do. We’ve taken what we can from the Valley, but we always like to give back.”*

**For interview opportunities please contact Leanne on (03) 9844 2325 or 0412 909 125**

### **ROSS McAULIFFE: RICCI’S BIKKIES**

Having begun as a hobby of sorts for Ross and his wife, Ricci’s Bikkies has grown ever increasingly to now supply products to over 1,000 stores nationwide. Ross believes that the smaller producers in the region are beginning to increase more and more in popularity thanks to the local business community.

*“It’s becoming stronger all the time and helps us show that people aren’t just numbers, but customers who quite often become friends.”*

**For interview opportunities please contact Ross on: (03) 5962 1294 or 0425 726 529**

### **MARK JOHNSTON – CREAM AT SASSAFRAS**

Mark and his wife Leenah have been in the Yarra Valley for just one year, and Cream at Sassafra is as young as their time there. Having developed a love for the diversity of activities and people in the region, Mark has been impressed with the amount of innovation and creativity shown by local business owners.

*“With such a wide variety of activities, wines, food and scenery I rate it as one of the best tourism locations in Victoria.”*

**For interview opportunities please contact Mark on (03) 9755 2338 or 0488 111 106**

**For more information please visit: [www.yrrml.com.au](http://www.yrrml.com.au)**

#### **INFORMATION RELEASED BY:**

Leanne Tyrrell

PR Consultant

Tyrrell Publicity & Promotions

PH: 03 9629 7000

#### **FOR FURTHER COMMENT:**

Mark Challis

CEO

Yarra Ranges Regional Marketing Ltd

PH: 0408 888 462