

**A celebration for Tidy Towners:
the Keep Australia Beautiful
Australian Tidy Towns Awards
sponsored by HUNGRY JACK'S ®**

Litter & Waste Management: YULARA / AYERS ROCK RESORT, NT

AYERS ROCK RESORT is situated on the border of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park which is inscribed on the World Heritage listing for outstanding natural and cultural values. The resort caters for over 500 000 visitors per year in one of the most remote and fragile desert ecosystems on earth.

Due to the resort's remoteness, there is major focus on a broad range of recycling approaches within the business and general community. Various items including cardboard, bottles, cans, plastics, cooking oil, batteries, etc are collected, sorted and packaged and back loaded on trucks to Adelaide for recycling.

Thirteen separate recycling collection stations are positioned throughout the community as well as being located at the landfill site. Community response to recycling programs has been extensive with over 70% surveyed as utilising community recycling sites.

Numerous cigarette butt bins are in place throughout the resort as well as within the national park environs to reduce the incidence of unsightly butt litter within a pristine outback environment.

Yulara/Ayers Rock Resort Tidy Towns Committee: Mr Mark Lind, 08 89577398

Program or Category	Awarded to	Sponsored by
Australia's Tidiest Town	Collie, WA	Hungry Jack's
Highly commended	Singleton, NSW	Hungry Jack's
Community Action Award	Collie, WA	Department of Transport and Regional Services 'Growing Regions' conference
Spirit of Australia Award	Singleton, NSW	Best Western
Environmental Innovation Award	Redcliffe, QLD	Veolia Environmental Services / Collex
Litter and Waste Management Award	Yulara/Ayers Rock Resort, NT	Australian Food and Grocery Council, Packaging Stewardship Forum
Community-Local Government Partnership Award	Burnie, TAS	Bunnings Warehouse
Protection of the Environment Award	Benalla, VIC	

Young Legends Award Mount	Lucindale, SA	Coca-Cola Amatil
Dame Phyllis Frost Award for Outstanding Achievement	Ray Thomas, Benalla VIC	Lothian Books, publishers of the biography of the founder of Keep Australia Beautiful

Full details at www.kab.org.au

HUNGRY JACK'S Australian Tidy Towns 2006 Program Report

Community: *YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT NT* **Date judged:** *2 & 3 Feb 06*

Population: *approx 1 200*

Organising Group: *AYERS ROCK RESORT Sustainability Steering Committee (SSC)*

Contact Names: *Mark Lind General Manager Phone: 08 8957 7373*

COMMUNITY ACTION LOCAL GOVERNMENT/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The resort town of YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT, home to 1 200 residents, is situated on the border of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park which is inscribed on the World Heritage listing for outstanding natural and cultural values. The resort caters for over 500 000 visitors per year in one of the most remote and fragile desert ecosystems on earth.

The resort's Sustainability Steering Committee (SSC) takes on the role of the Tidy Towns committee and focuses on ecological and environmental awareness of a broad range of issues including recycling and resource recovery, waste reduction and minimising energy use. The resort has a long and proud tradition of being associated with and successful in the Territory Tidy Towns program since 1985.

The SSC guides and encourages the community to ensure that homes and private gardens are tidy and maintained. The SSC ensures that approaches to the resort, including signs and features, gardens and sporting areas are well tended within an arid environment.

A hotly contested annual garden competition is conducted with residents encouraged to avoid planting natives not endemic to the region, which could become 'garden escapees' with the potential to cause damage to the local environment.

At Yulara, AYERS ROCK RESORT has undertaken a range of initiatives to ensure local Aboriginal communities share in the socio-economic benefits derived from tourists who visit Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. As a result, the Mutitjulu Foundation was initiated which aims at improving health, advance education and relieve poverty within the Mutitjulu community.

Nyangatjatjara College, Australia's first traditional independent indigenous high school, works in partnership with YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT to enable effective work experience programs are initiated for mutual benefit and ultimately an indigenous employment path.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & INNOVATION

Environmental sustainability is a bottom line regarding management of AYERS ROCK RESORT. There are strict guidelines for residents to maintain a high standard of environmental excellence which is supported by a Sustainability Management Plan.

All new resort staff are encouraged to spend three paid hours each fortnight on environmentally focused community projects including revegetation of degraded bushland, dune protection, litter and weed control, recycling programs and community landscaping.

Numerous residents and the local Yulara Primary School work in partnership with the SSC to protect and enhance the environment in and around YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT.

The environmental impact of plastic bags has been addressed with the resort's supermarket replacing plastic bags with paper and calico bags, or providing biodegradable bags which carry a 10 cent levy. As a result, an 89% reduction in plastic bag use has been achieved in the past 12 months.

The resort Environment Department's Vision Statement is: '*A sustainable resort with a minimal ecological footprint.*' With accreditation under the National Ecotourism Program, extensive flora and fauna protection programs underway and the numerous environmental awards won, the resort is well on the way to meeting objectives of sustainability.

LITTER & WASTE MANAGEMENT

Due to the remoteness of YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT, there is major focus on a broad range of recycling approaches within the business and general community. Various items including cardboard, bottles, cans, plastics, cooking oil, batteries, etc are collected, sorted and packaged and back loaded on trucks to Adelaide for recycling. Recycling initiatives are supported by an environmental purchasing policy.

Numerous butt bins are in place throughout the resort as well as within the national park environs to reduce the incidence of litter within a pristine outback environment.

Thirteen separate recycling collection stations are positioned throughout the community and located at the landfill site. Community response to recycling programs has been extensive with over 70% surveyed as utilising community recycling sites. The resort's children's mascot Neville the Thorny Devil effectively promotes the benefits of maximising the use of recycling facilities in place and which continues to expand.

BAS Services, a commercial operator, manages the community's landfill site and has introduced an extensive point at source separation system of a broad range of items for resource recovery within a remote location. The facility, managed by Bob Smith and family, has won numerous Tidy Towns awards for their operations and practices.

SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park is one of only 23 places in the world with a World Heritage listing for both its cultural and environmental value. It was listed for being an outstanding example of traditional human land use, and directly associated with living traditions and beliefs of outstanding universal significance.

AYERS ROCK RESORT assists in protecting indigenous cultural heritage through tourism ventures that enable indigenous partners to introduce guests to their heritage.

Cultural importance is a primary consideration for the YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT. As a result, a Cultural Awareness Training program has been introduced to provide non-indigenous staff an insight and greater understanding of the precious local Anangu culture.

As a result of the devastating bushfires in 2004, the rebuilding of community facilities and extensive planting and revegetation of vast areas is a credit to the whole community. A range of sporting facilities are well maintained with residents encouraged to use to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The safari-style camp, Longitude 131 was also rebuilt as a result of the fires and has been successful in gaining various awards including one for the World's Top 100 Destinations, achieving 15th place in the world.

YOUNG LEGENDS/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Yulara Primary School is committed to developing community pride amongst its students. Extensive environmental improvement programs are conducted within the school including recycling, initiating litter reduction approaches together with ongoing beautification of the school's wonderfully presented facilities situated in a dry, arid environment. The school's murals are in particular a welcoming attraction for students, teachers and parents.

Environmental awareness programs continue to educate children to encourage them to become actively involved both at school and within the home environment.

A highly successful Nyangatjatjara Green Corps program took place over a 6 month period which saw ten participants involved in a range of projects related to environmental issues in and around Mutitjulu and Yulara. The group worked in partnership with National park staff to eradicate weeds, complete fencing projects, involved in feral animal control as well as community projects including sports ground development together with assisting the school to create a school garden.

The Green Corps program effectively enabled a group of indigenous youth to contribute and be active participants in preserving and restoring their local environment.

SUGGESTIONS

If not already in place, YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT's Tidy Towns achievement could be promoted on letterheads, envelopes, etc. Local businesses and tourism operators could also be encouraged to promote the award. Promoting the community's great achievement may assist in deriving positive marketing outcomes.

As YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT is now recognised as the Territory's Tidiest Town for 2005, there may be an opportunity to encourage further beautification initiatives around the town's commercial/industrial precinct, particularly in planting programs to assist with providing natural and visual barriers.

The resort's annual garden competition is a great way to encourage community participation in beautifying homes and gardens. To further recognise positive achievement, a 'Tidy Garden' sign could be produced and fixed to the winning garden each year.

The Green Team awards are also another method of recognising good environmental practices. If nominations are not always received, the 'eco-network' should be able to select a worthy winner to ensure this award continues to award environmental initiatives.

Commitment to the Greenfleet program from resort staff is to be commended. Perhaps ensuing planting programs resultant from the resort's positive contributions could be directed in and around YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT.

Congratulations to everyone involved in the YULARA/AYERS ROCK RESORT's Tidy Towns and associated community action programs.

Good luck with future initiatives and 'challenges' in helping to keep your part of Australia beautiful.

*Dick Olesinski
National Tidy Towns judge*