

Case study



Forsayth by Night

Things have gotten spooky in Forsayth with the introduction of a new tourism opportunity.

What

Forsayth is a former mining town situated in the Gulf Savannah Region of North Queensland.

Tourism plays an important role in the town's economy. Forsayth attracts tourists travelling on the Savannah Way and is one of the destinations for the Savannahlander Train which travels between Cairns and Forsayth with passengers staying overnight in town.

To complement existing tourism opportunities, Simon and Gaye Terry of Cobbold Gorge Tours launched a new tourism experience - *Forsayth By Night*.

The tour incorporates storytelling and technology to bring to life the history of Forsayth including the gold rush and the impact of the rail line development on the town. The tour incorporates a number of historical recounts as well as a local ghost story, which leaves visitors wondering where fiction and fact separate.

Forsayth By Night utilises lantern technology to assist with the storytelling as it is effective for night tours and adds to the atmosphere of mystery and intrigue.

This new experience has engaged both locals and tourists.



Local Storyteller and guide conducting a tour for guests. Image courtesy: Forsayth by Night tours

When

The tour operates annually from April to October.

Where

Forsayth, Queensland.

Key stats

- Eight artists
- 30 audience members
- Three volunteers

Investment

\$18,495 – Regional Arts Development Fund

The *Regional Arts Development Fund* is a partnership between the Queensland Government and the [Etheridge Shire Council](#) to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland.

Find out more

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Outcomes

- The introduction of this social history tour has created an opportunity for local artists to be employed within the local area and gain experience in the cultural tourism industry.
- The tour also provides a new tourism opportunity for visitors travelling through the region to stay overnight in the town, giving Forsayth its own reason for travelers to visit.
- Positive feedback from the 2016 tours has resulted in *Forsayth By Night* becoming a permanent addition to tourism offerings in the Etheridge shire in 2017.

Just what we need. Facebook comment

While you're here, join Laurie's sunset tour of Forsayth which leaves from the pub and discover some of the highlights of this gem of a town at the end of the 300+km Savannahlander rail line from Cairns. The interaction between the modern technology and our friendly tour guide as we walked around the town was delightful. TripAdvisor comment

- There has been interest from local schools regarding the tour. With the local historical focus, the tour complements aspects of the Australian Curriculum. St Margaret Mary's College, Townsville, was the first school to experience the tour in July 2017.



Forsayth By Night, Forsayth Queensland. Image courtesy: Forsayth by Night Tours

Learning

The community engagement and ownership of the project worked well. Simon & Gaye Terry.

Utilising local historical knowledge and community engagement was an essential part of the development of the tour. Forsayth residents believe the tour has been beneficial to the community with all respondents to a survey agreeing the *activity has made a positive contribution to the community*.

Research regarding tourism in the Etheridge Shire has identified self-driving seniors and visitors from the Savannahlander Train as the most common tourists to the area. In developing and marketing the tour, consideration was given to these groups as well as how to build new audiences.

Tip for others

Give yourself lots of time to complete the project. Everything takes longer than you think. Train numerous staff in the roles you require so you have backup in case staff are unavailable. Gaye Terry