



Region enjoys summer bonanza

By Richard Schmeiszl

SOUTH Gippsland's summer is proving the busiest in memory, as visitors pack coastal resorts and other attractions.

Businesses are reporting record customers, helped by pleasant weather.

They include hotels, motels and caravan parks, most of which are booked out until late this month.

That is from Venus Bay to Phillip Island and Grantville.

The proprietor of Wonthaggi's Coalfields Caravan Park, Margaret Hughes, summed up the frenetic pace.

She said: "It's incredible.

"Our phones are running off the hooks.

"I can't remember a better summer."

That report is replicated constantly.

Phillip Island's nightly penguin parade is attracting bumper crowds.

The same applies to its Nobbies, Koala Conservation Centre and Churchill Island.

Most of those visitors buy the group's Three-Parks Pass.

Hotels, of course, are among the biggest winners.

A San Remo Hotel spokesperson said "things are humming".

She added that the pressure was

"more acute than ever".

The Venus Bay general store owner said she was "far too busy" to speak to the media.

She added: "I've got trucks outside waiting to be unloaded.

"And there are 30 customers in the shop.

"I haven't even got time to give you my name.

"Just say that things are frantic, and that we love it."

Inverloch Holiday Park is booked out for another two weeks.

Its owner, Adrian Edwards, said: "This is proving a great summer.

"We're having a fabulous season, among the best ever.

"We're very busy. "And we couldn't be happier."

The Amaze 'In Things owner on Phillip Island, referred to a "major boom",

Sandy Bell explained: "This is on a par with anything in all the years we've been here.

"It's really good. The recession seems to be over."

Tourism boss

Phillip Island Tourism Association president, Neil Wolfenden, was equally enthusiastic.

Mr Wolfenden, who runs the An-

chor Belle Caravan Park at Cowes, said: "This season is as good as I can remember.

"People are back, after a couple of lesser years.

"It's all happening.

"And we're delighted."

Those sentiments also apply to Corinella and Coronet Bay, whose limited accommodation was booked out long ago.

Apart from resorts, visitors are also supporting supermarkets and other stores in larger towns.

Wonthaggi is a prime example.

Its streets and general commercial sector are bursting.

That includes restaurants, particularly fast-food giants McDonald's, KFC and Subway.

Bass Coast Shire CEO, Allan Bawden, strongly welcomes that trend.

He said it reflected a vibrant region, one of the fastest-growing nationally.

The other good news is that services such as hospitals and medical centres are coping well.

That also applies to police, whose numbers have been boosted greatly, until late January.

Summer in South Gippsland? Enjoy it.



Phillip Island's Jonathon Moore, left, and Nick and Perry Sanders prepare to launch at the Anderson Street boat ramp.



This trio enjoys holidays at Inverloch. From left, Xavier Pinnuck, Joel Richards and Zac Walsh.

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Grantville's Natalie Wren and Greg Hayes prepare for takeoff at Inverloch.



Inverloch Surf Lifesaving Club's Luke Foster, left, and club captain Nick Leman,