



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Tourism operators have the wood on each other**

Hidden Valley Cabins and the Hervey's Range Heritage Tea Rooms share some common ground – and their joint success is about to be featured on national television. WIN's Your Business Success program is about to feature the innovative operators as leaders in the sustainable tourism market.

Operators Allan and Michelle Sharpe (Tea Rooms), and Ross McLennan and Chelsea Cox (Hidden Valley) share more than a common interest in sustainability – they also share the laconic Aussie sense of humour. They've spent the last few months trying to get one up on each other – the object of their attention is a now iconic lump of wood.

Situated at either end of a Great Tropical Drive sub loop – each business has been encouraging travellers to return the "lump of wood" to the other. What started as a light hearted ribbing has taken on a life of its own. Willing intrepid travellers now get an engraved plaque, and a free coffee, as a testament to their efforts.

Hidden Valley Cabins and Tours Marketing Manager Ross McLennan said the running gag is a way to encourage visitation between the two operators.

"The Great Tropical Drive is all about connecting operators and encouraging cooperation within the region. Success in the tourism industry all comes down to working with each other – and being prepared to do a favour every now and then."

"We had a couple of visitors who were keen to take the back road to Hervey's Range – and we asked if they'd be willing to take a lump of wood we had lying around with them when they left. They were more than happy to do so."

Heritage Tea Rooms owner Allan Sharpe was taken by surprise when a previously unsighted lump of wood landed on his doorstep.

"When these tourists came in to return my lump of wood I was a bit taken aback," he said.

“I figured I owed Ross one – so when the opportunity came up I sent the wood back to him. It’s become a bit of a running gag – and now we’ve got engraving tools and plaques to recognise the efforts of our impromptu couriers.”

The two local businesses will feature on the Nine Network’s Your Business Success Program on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September – the feature is part of a Tourism Queensland promotion featuring successful tourism enterprises.

**ENDS**

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