



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Magnetic attraction begins locally**

The 2007 Australian Tourism Awards proved North Queensland operators are capable of battling the big boys when Bungalow Bay Koala Village claimed one of the national awards.

The family-owned and operated Magnetic Island backpacker accommodation and koala village won the 2007 Australian Tourism Award for Best Backpacker Accommodation after winning back-to-back Queensland Tourism Awards and North Queensland Tourism Awards.

Husband and wife and Bungalow Bay Koala Village managers Brett and Janelle Flemming handle the village onsite, while Brett's father Bob (Richard Power Award winner 2007) handles the family's other business, Billabong Sanctuary, over on the mainland.

Mr Flemming (Jr) said the journey from nominating their business, to claiming the North Queensland award, to winning at the Queensland ceremony, then taking home the big one at the national tourism night-of-nights was not only an amazing feeling but also a business promotion that could not be bought.

"It's a chance to receive some recognition from the local tourism industry and being in the state and national awards is something we can use to raise awareness of Townsville and Magnetic Island as an emerging destination.

"Winning awards is satisfying for everyone involved. It's great for the staff to receive recognition, great for our PR and marketing, and greatly satisfying recognition for all the work you put in as a business owner."

Townsville Enterprise Destination Marketing and Development General Manager Brent Randall said the Flemings' accomplishments last year were a proud moment for North Queensland tourism.

"Bungalow Bay Koala Village and Backpacker Accommodation is an outstanding establishment. Not only have the Flemings adapted eco-sensibilities in their development, they have looked at what tourists really want in their holiday.

“The fact that Brett and Janelle won two national-level tourism awards says a lot about their work ethic, business approach and understanding of their clients.

“Their unique service is a fabulous experience, and the tourism awards are an amazing opportunity to market your business and network with industry-associated businesses you may not have access to normally.”

As the competition heats up, the nominees grow nervous and the judges deliberate over the submissions, but there can only be one winner in each category. Will the Fleming family top the awards again this year?

Tickets for the Townsville Airport 2008 North Queensland Tourism Awards Aviators Ball are still available. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [northqueenslandtourismawards.com.au](http://northqueenslandtourismawards.com.au)

**ENDS**

**For more information contact Rachel Licciardello on 0423 300 948, or Nathan Campbell on (07) 4726 2753 or 0434 182 765**