



Focus on tourism's best

Claire Heaney

SMALL and medium tourism operators have been recognised in state tourism awards announced last night.

Winners in the awards, organised by the Hotel Motel and Accommodation Association of Victoria, ranged from bed and breakfast operations to backpacker hostels and caravan parks. Regional and city operators were well represented in the finalists and the winners.

The winners were announced during a gala dinner at Atlantic South Wharf, at Melbourne's Southbank.

The seventh annual AAA Tourism Victorian Accommodation Industry Awards for Excellence recognised nearly 20 venues and industry personalities.

They were attended by leaders of

the industry and Victorian Tourism Minister John Pandazopoulos.

HMAA Victoria chairwoman Carol Douglas said service standards often were the key to the success of the tourism industry.

The Melbourne Metro YHA Hostel won an award for excellence in the backpacker accommodation category. The four-star accommodation in North Melbourne is regarded as a state-of-the-art hostel.

Boroka Downs, in the Grampians, won the luxury boutique accommodation category.

The hosted accommodation category was won by Monreale Estate, a bed and breakfast in Sassafra, in the Dandenong Ranges. The estate has already won a number of awards in recognition of its excellence.

Birches Serviced Apartments, in East Melbourne, received a com-

mendation in the serviced accommodation category.

The most improved caravan park category was won by the Colac Colac Caravan Park, in Corryong.

The Riviera Backpackers, in Lakes Entrance, won most improved backpacker accommodation category.

Warnambool Holiday Park Holiday Units took out the most improved self catering accommodation.

The award for the most improved bed and breakfast accommodation went to Mt Buffalo Chalet.

The Best Western Brooklands of Mornington won the most improved motel accommodation award.

The HMAAV is under the umbrella of the peak employer group the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry.