Tourism boost for iconic Territory cattle station

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An historic Central Australian cattle station will use a new tourism infrastructure grant to diversify its business by offering privately guided salt lake tours and paper making workshops.

Curtin Springs Station has won a $45,680 grant from the NT Government as part of a $1.3 million pool of NT and Federal funding for tourism development and infrastructure. The station is contributing more than $37,000 to develop these two new products.

Chief Minister Adam Giles travelled to Curtin Springs to launch the new projects today.

“It's great to see the Severin family carrying on their long tradition as pastoral and tourism pioneers in Central Australia and I am thrilled we have been able to support them with this grant.

“These two projects are a great addition to the tourism opportunities on offer in this beautiful and unique part of the Territory and I am sure visitors will be very keen to make the experiences part of their next visit to the Red Centre.”

Curtin Springs is a million acre working cattle station located 100km east of the entrance to the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. Its owners have been instrumental in the early development of Uluru as a tourist destination.

Curtin Springs was the first wayside inn in the region and has been privately-owned by the Severin family since 1956. It has a store, licensed pub, accommodation and camp sites for the drive market which accounts for around 300,000 people annually.

“It is absolutely fantastic to see Peter, Ashley and Lyndee Severin taking such a leadership role in the development of new products. This is what we want to see more of,” Tourism Minister Matt Conlan said.

“The walks and paper making projects offer new and innovative tourism experiences en route to Uluru, whilst maintaining the viability of a working cattle station and boosting the Central Australian economy.”
Improving tourism infrastructure is among a range of measures the Government is implementing to build on the recent 7.6 per cent growth in visitors to the NT.

“Curtin Springs is the sort of place where people come to see the real Australia. We want more visitors to explore our spectacular landscapes, arid plant and wildlife and these two new products will help attract more tourists to the region,” Mr Conlan said.

“The walking market in Australia is a growing tourism sector but there have been limited new walks created in the past decade. Most of the existing walks are on public, national park or reserve land, so opening up private property for tourists to explore is an exciting development.”

The Curtin Springs walking tracks will be strategically located for visitors to experience the pristine salt lakes that form part of the Kalinga Paleodrainage system and the base of Mt Conner.

“Tours of the station and Mt Conner are already on offer in a 4WD vehicle, but the new guided walks will allow bushwalkers to appreciate the landscape right up close,” Lyndee Severin said.

“The paper production project is particularly interesting, as it uses handmade paper from native grasses believed to be unique in Australia. The production process will pay homage to the pastoral history of the station by utilising the Old Abattoir.

“We’ll be offering tours of the paper production process, selling the paper directly and potentially supplying art paper locally and nationally.”

Additional options will be developed for extended stays, such as art retreats and workshops for papermakers, which will be packaged with accommodation and meals. Papermakers from around the world travel to different locations to experience different methods, products and finishes.

This diversification of the Severin’s station has been possible by the Giles Government’s reforms to the Pastoral Land Act (NT), which came into effect on 1 January 2014.

“These changes allow some diversification on properties, including the creation of new tourism experiences, to improve the viability of pastoral land and enhance regional experiences,’ Mr Giles said.

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