

MEDIA RELEASE



THOROUGHbred RACING SA

21 January, 2011

Murray Bridge Beach Party flooded with goodwill

January 26 wouldn't be Australia Day without a hit of beach cricket, but following the recent floods that have devastated Queensland, it's also a time to get behind our own.

That's why the people of Murray Bridge – sobered by unpleasant memories from 1956 - are rounding up 2000-plus party-goers for a good time in support of a good cause at the 2011 Australia Day Beach Party Races – with part proceeds going towards Queensland's flood relief effort.

Murray Bridge Racing Club's John Buhagiar said the event would give locals and racing enthusiasts a taste of Aussie beach culture while making a difference to flood victims.

"Australians express patriotism in a fairly laid back way – by lending a hand or sharing a cold drink," Mr Buhagiar said.

"There seemed like no better time or place than this year's Beach Party to combine the excitement of thoroughbred racing with Aussie surf culture, while helping the thousands of Queenslanders who are really struggling right now.

"We encourage everyone to come along for a day at the beach – trackside – and make this Australia Day count."

The Club is calling for donations upon entry to go towards the flood appeal, with part proceeds from gate takings to be donated to the cause. Pride models will also be mingling amongst the crowds with donation tins throughout the day, while funds raised from a sausage sizzle will likewise benefit the cause.

To coincide with the day's theme, caterers will be serving up prawns on the barbie and the best steak sandwiches in town, while guests will have the opportunity to take off their shoes and grab an ice cold margarita at the "Daiquiri Beach Bar". Two beachwear parades thanks to Pride Models and JR's clothing are also included in the line-up.

For racing fans, the \$20,500 Hallett Ski Boats Australia Day Cup will be the highlight of the eight-race program, and parents need not worry - an Oceania Jumping Castle for the kids along with arcade games will ensure they have just as much fun.

In 1956, the Murray River flooded the city of Murray Bridge, which remains today one of the worst natural disasters in South Australia's history. Murray Bridge Racing Club Chairman Reg Nolan was there in 1956 and holidaying on the Gold Coast when the floods hit on January 10.

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“I wasn’t very old during the ’56 floods but remember my school going under and dairy farmers along the flats having to move away to places like the South East because their land was destroyed,” Mr Nolan said.

“Luckily we had warning but the people of Queensland didn’t – many have nothing left.

“The Beach Party is a great opportunity to support them – we are all Australians and we owe it them to offer our help, especially on Australia Day.”

Across the State, the thoroughbred racing industry is getting behind the flood appeal. The South Australian Jockey Club will be waiving admission fees at Allan Scott Park, Morphettville Racecourse on Saturday, 29 January - asking racegoers to dig deep and make a donation to the cause upon entry. Earnings from a prize raffle at the event will also be donated.

Flood appeal fundraising efforts across the industry aim to reach a combined goal of \$75,000.

Gate entry to the Beach Party is free for children under 16 and \$12 for adults. Gates open at 11am.

For further information or to book online visit www.racingmurraybridge.com

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