

Braveheart-ed Ned Kelly: historic films, heritage tourism and destination image

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Abstract

There has been a great deal of interest in how feature films may create attractive destination images. Research has primarily focussed on films which promote scenery and to a lesser extent nostalgic rural cultures. In contrast, there has been little attention paid to historic films. The 2003 release of Ned Kelly provoked a great deal of media interest in how that film might promote tourism to north-eastern Victoria. This article examines Ned Kelly in terms of issues of authenticity, destination image and the development of heritage tourism.

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A Robin-Hood-like figure ... good-looking, brave, a fine horseman and bushman and a crack shot, devoted to his mothers and sisters, a man who treated all women with courtesy, who stole from the rich to give to the poor, who dressed himself in his enemies' uniforms to outwit them ... Such was Ned Kelly the myth (Jones, 1995, p. 338).

Edward 'Ned' Kelly is the logical culmination of the Anglophone outlaw hero tradition. His legend harks back, implicitly and explicitly, to the English and Irish highwaymen. The political nature of the Kelly outbreak links the bushranger strongly with Anglo-Celtic traditions of protest and struggle, and probably sees the last use of the medieval outlawry legislation. Kelly's activities and his folklorisation resonate closely with those of American badmen ... like [Jesse] James and Billy the Kid in particular. Ned Kelly's image has been taken up by the mass media and the other central aspect of twentieth century life, tourism, as an appropriate icon of

romance and adventure in the pioneering past (Seal, 1996, p. 147).

In *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* a modern-day policeman arrests Launcelot for walking around in medieval getup and carrying a sword. That cop has the right idea about history on film (Rosenstone, 1995, p. 241).

1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been increasing interest in how films may shape destination images and resultant tourist expectations, behaviour and numbers. Initially, researchers were content to list film as one of a number of media which may have such influence (see for examples Ashworth & Voogd, 1994, p. 49; Urry, 1990, p. 3). In turn, there have been a number of studies specifically focussing on how film and television affect tourism (Beeton, 2001; Busby & Klug, 2001; Croy & Walker, 2003; Kim & Richardson, 2003; Riley et al., 1998; Sargent, 1998; Tooke & Baker, 1996; Winter, 2002). Generally, the focus of this literature has been on fictional films and television which create destination

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images of either highly attractive scenery or quirky, nostalgic and idyllic rural societies.

The purpose of this article is to extend this discussion by considering how historic films may create attractive destination images and accordingly draw tourists to destinations. Examples of historic films having an impact on tourists include: visitation to Rome, particularly the Coliseum, arising from *Gladiator*; the destination image of the Wild West generated by western films; battlefield tourism stimulated by Civil War epics such as *Gettysberg*, *Gods and Generals* and *Cold Mountain*; and visits to castles and historic landscapes encouraged by medieval epics such as *Braveheart* and *A Knight's Tale*.

However, analysis of the impacts of historic films on destination image and tourism has been limited. Sargent coined the term *The Darcy Effect* to describe the increase in visitation to historic homes featured in BBC historical dramas, such as *Pride and Prejudice* (1998, pp. 181–182). In contrast, *Winter (2002)* noted the tensions between the image created by *Tomb Raider* and the heritage values of one of its main locations in the temple of Angkor Wat. *Croy and Walker (2003)* reported on the success of *Braveheart* in promoting Stirling in Scotland, as well as listing a number of other historic films which have raised tourist numbers.

This limited literature suggests that tourism generated by historic films raises two issues which do not necessarily arise from other types of films. The first is that historic films may generate a specific type of tourism—heritage tourism—based on visiting historic sites. It is important to understand that in these cases, tourists are responding to a destination image based on the heritage and historical associations of a place rather than its scenic attributes. Indeed historic films may stimulate visitations to places that have little current visual relationship to what was viewed in the film. Second, historic films present already known and established stories, and tourists' knowledge and expectations may be influenced by other sources, such as history books. Generally, a filmmaker may invent what they want in terms of characters and stories. However, historic films are constrained by the existing historic knowledge of the audience. As such, there may be issues of authenticity, both for the film and tourism operators in the associated destination.

This article considers these issues by focussing on the case of a recent historic film, *Ned Kelly (2003)*. It tells the story of the famous Australian bushranger (outlaw), arguably Australia's greatest cultural icon and 'the closest thing Australia has to a national hero' (*Seal, 1996, p. 145*). This film is of significance because it tells an already well-known (and filmed) story and was predicted to increase tourism to related destinations (*Fawcett, 2003; Morley, 2003; Shrimpton, 2003; Tourism Victoria, 2003*). It is also an appropriate subject, in that despite *Ned Kelly* being an established tourism

attraction, there has been no previous tourism academic study undertaken (though a forthcoming work by *Beeton* considers rural destination images in Australia in the context of *Ned Kelly* films).

In analysing the role of *Ned Kelly* in contributing to the development of a destination image based on history, this article is divided into four sections. The first discusses some of the literature on how historic films may affect interpretations and images of history. The second examines issues of authenticity. The recent film presents a particular version of the *Kelly* story. How does that relate to other versions and the experiences actually on offer for tourists? The third section considers how international tourists might be attracted by the film. It is argued that the story of *Ned Kelly* has a universal appeal with themes of persecution and rebellion understandable to international visitors. The fourth section considers how the film was used to attract domestic tourists, particularly in relation to existing attractions and marketing strategies.

2. Differing perspectives on historic films

Much of the literature on film and tourism has a narrow focus with the role of films in creating attractive images of destinations which result in sales of holidays to those destinations. This approach is particularly limited by a concentration on the initial decision-to-visit stage. There is a need to extend such analyses further, such as the matching of the tourists' actual experiences of the destination with the image and expectations created by the film. This raises issues not only of basic satisfaction, but also of presentation, heritage interpretation and authenticity. For tourism researchers interested in historic film, there is value in taking a multi-disciplinary approach in considering how writers, historians, geographers and sociologists regard historic films and their impact on viewers. What follows is not intended as a fully survey of this literature, but rather as a sample of perspectives.

The novelist and film screenwriter *George MacDonald Fraser* in his popular Hollywood history of the world (1988) argued that Hollywood has surprisingly been generally accurate in its representations of history. Most importantly, he argued that film was a powerful medium for shaping tourists' views of history:

For better or for worse, nothing has been more influential in shaping our images of the past than the commercial cinema. For example: take a walk through the huge excavation of ruined ancient Rome, and consider that a tourist of two centuries ago could envisage the reality of the city of the Caesars only dimly, by reference to written accounts and a few imaginative paintings. But today all the world knows what it looked like (*Fraser, 1988, p. 12*).

In his seminal work on history and film, the historian Rosenstone argued that, ‘historical films trouble and disturb professional historians’ (1995, p. 45). In particular, he discussed two major areas of concern. The first was that a film is generally limited by only being able to give one perspective on an historical story—that is, what is projected on the screen. In contrast, books—which historians are much more comfortable with—are able to include multiple perspectives or interpretations (Rosenstone, 1995, p. 22). The second concern was the rewriting of history through invented, exaggerated or deleted characters and incidents. Because film is visual, he argued that film-makers tend to focus primarily in getting the authentic look of history right, and ‘as long as you get the look right, you may freely invent characters and incidents and do whatever you want to the past to make it more interesting’ (Rosenstone, 1995, p. 60). This concern with invention was repeated by the heritage researcher Lowenthal (1998, pp. 164–166). However, despite these concerns, Rosenstone argued that well-made historical films can be effective ‘new ways of visioning the past’, increasing the viewers’ understanding and appreciation of history (1995, pp. 72 and 241).

The medievalist Haydock provocatively argued that many historic films were pastiches mixing historical background with current references and were generally tailored to the American market. He argued that since *Braveheart* (1995) there has been a ‘surge of big-budget, historical epics’, which ‘all share an abiding concern with the construction of national identity in the face of colonialism or imperialism’ and in which ‘remote complicated historical processes become distant but clear approximations of American democratic freedom’ (Haydock, 2002, pp. 9–10). Similarly, Turner (1994) argued that Australian films (and heritage in general) were often packaged to demonstrate resonances for the larger American market. The folklorist Seal commented that there were over 30 films dealing with Robin Hood. These had created ‘a tamed and domesticated image’ of the outlaw, making him ‘a familiar figure of adventure, [and] romance ... some distance from armed defiance of the forces of law and order’ (1996, pp. 30–31).

Western films have attracted a great deal of discussion. Calder argued that ‘the relationship between the fact and fiction of the West has been incestuous. Mutations are frequent. Real men become immortal heroes of fiction and movie stars become, for their public, genuine Westerners’ (1974, p. 12). However, she argued, even though we recognise the inventions of the film-makers, ‘no amount of elucidation of the facts will destroy the myth’ (Calder, 1974, p. 12). Pilkington and Graham emphasised a strong relationship between Westerns and ancient epics, which in part explained the broad appeal of Westerns (1979, p. 1). Hutton (1992) found that film was a major factor in public acceptance

of reinterpretations of General Custer. Up to the 1940s he was presented as a heroic figure, but films of the 1950s and 1960s created a new image of him as arrogant and reckless.

This selection from the literature emphasises concerns with how and why the film-maker tells historical stories and whether or not what they show is true. The parallel can be drawn with the operators of heritage attractions. Like historical film-makers, they are trying to both inform and entertain. To achieve this they aim for interpretation which is both effectively presented and authentic. Like the film-maker, the heritage attraction operator has to juggle the expectations and prior knowledge of the audience, the need to provide an interesting experience and the imperative of remaining faithful to a historic story.

3. Issues of authenticity

Authenticity is generally regarded as the highest importance for tourists interested in heritage (Moscardo & Pearce, 1986; Timothy & Boyd, 2003). As historic films create interest in history amongst viewers, how they present history has implications for authenticity and ultimately the satisfaction of tourists. Authenticity in film is not just a question of portraying facts accurately or not, it also includes the filmmakers’ interpretation of why certain episodes occurred, their relative importance and the motivations of characters. Such interpretations mean that the presentation of history is never absolute, whether it is in a book, at a historical tourist attraction or a historic film (Frost forthcoming; Lowenthal, 1998, pp. 112 and 164–166; Timothy & Boyd, 2003, p. 237). In creating an attractive destination image, historic films have the potential to strongly imprint a particular historical interpretation upon the minds of potential visitors. In turn, this may create tensions, if that interpretation differs markedly from those provided by the existing attraction and tour operators. Alternatively, historic films may also promote ideas of multiple, even contested, interpretations.

The promotion of Ned Kelly was marked by a conflicting approach to authenticity. On the one hand, its director emphasised that, ‘it was not a historical document’, but had to include changes to the historic story, in order to be successful as a commercial feature film (Jordan, 2003). Particular attention was paid to explaining to viewers why the character of a young English woman was invented in order to provide romantic interest:

Jordan is unapologetic about spicing the film up with a fictionalised romance. “Key events are being portrayed as accurately as possible” ... but, in the interests of making a compelling movie, “We’ve

taken liberties with certain elements of the story” (Boland, 2003, pp. 38–39).

On the other hand, its makers were concerned that the film was seen as primarily historically accurate. Publicly they emphasised that their film was an educational history lesson, particularly suitable for teenaged school-children (Jordan, 2003; O’Donoghue, 2003). Perhaps more importantly, though not explicitly stated, the film-makers knew that details of the story of Ned Kelly were widely known amongst their potential audience. Accordingly, while they were confident that they could add a love interest without alienating their audience, they were also convinced that they had to follow the basic historical chronology of the Kelly story (see Table 1). In this, the experience of two other recent films make interesting comparisons. The Lord of the Rings trilogy closely followed the books and while there were some changes, its makers were greatly mindful of not alienating its fans. In contrast, American Outlaws, made little effort to follow the real story of Jesse James, adding martial-arts fighting and even culminating in a completely fictional happy ending. In this case, the film-makers gambled that the details of the James story were insufficiently known or cared about by the audience.

By remaining generally faithful to the key historic facts, Ned Kelly is unlikely to generate any confusion amongst viewers who are stimulated to visit destinations related to the bushranger. However, authenticity is not just an issue of provable facts or getting the look of a particular time period right. It is also a question of the interpretation of historical events. Ned Kelly presents the bushranger as a heroic, even saintly, figure (Ryan, 2003). Again, it is unlikely that anyone who visits Kelly attractions as a result of the film is going to have that view challenged.

As noted by Rosenstone, film is limited in it is usually only able to present one perspective (1995, p. 22) and this is certainly the case with Ned Kelly as a film. However, as an event, the release of the film stimulated a great deal of attention in how the Ned Kelly story may be interpreted and contested. As listed in Table 2, six

events or exhibitions were held to coincide with the release of the film. These focussed on a wide range of media, including paintings, songs, books, film, television, stage plays and even a house built in the shape of an armoured Ned Kelly. As a whole, these displays emphasised the multiplicity of interpretations of the Kelly story and so, indirectly, the film did propagate the notion of contested interpretations. It is also likely, that combined with the film, they stimulated interest in Ned Kelly, which might take the form of visits to destinations associated with Ned Kelly.

The story of Ned Kelly is highly place-specific. Publicity arising from the release of Ned Kelly promoted visiting authentic sites. Tourism Victoria disseminated material encouraging tourists to follow a ‘Ned Kelly Trail’ through north-eastern Victoria (Morley, 2003; Shrimpton, 2003; Tourism Victoria, 2003). School-children were encouraged to visit Glenrowan and, ‘stand in the place where a historic siege took place and see things basically as they were back then—view the exact spots where things happened’ (O’Donoghue, 2003).

For some small towns associated with Ned Kelly, such as Glenrowan and Beechworth, he is a major (if not the main) element in their destination image and tourist industry. In recent years, there has been a focus on establishing the authenticity of Ned Kelly sites. Historian Ian Jones has fixed the site of the Stringybark Creek massacre, not where a farmer had erected a signpost in order to minimise access to his land, but several hundred metres away (1995, p. 364). In Beechworth, the restoration of the police camp provided the opportunity to shift ‘Kelly’s cell’ from the false (but accessible) location under the town hall to the correct, but previously inaccessible, police lock-up. In Glenrowan, authorities have established interpretative displays at the site of the siege, which was previously unmarked and unvisited because it was on the opposite side of the railway to the main road and shopping strip. A recent guidebook provides details, directions and photographs of 84 specific Ned Kelly sites throughout Victoria (Kelson & McQuilton, 2001).

Table 1
Ned Kelly Timeline

December 1854	Born at Beveridge, north of Melbourne
1871–1874	In prison for receiving a stolen horse
15 April 1878	Constable Fitzpatrick claims that he is wounded by Ned after incident at the Kelly house. Ned’s mother is jailed over the incident and Ned, brother Dan and friends Joe Byrne and Steve Hart go into hiding
25 October 1878	Stringybark Creek Massacre. In a gun battle with a police party sent to search for him, Ned kills three policemen
10 December 1878	Kelly Gang rob the bank at Euroa
8–10 February 1879	Posing as police, the Kelly Gang take over the NSW town of Jerilderie, robbing the bank and leaving the Jerilderie Letter outlining their grievances
26–28 June 1880	Kelly Gang take over town of Glenrowan. Their plan is to wreck a special police train and shoot any survivors. They wear armour for protection. The plan goes wrong, Dan, Joe and Steve are killed and Ned captured
11 November 1880	Ned hanged for the murder of the police at Stringybark Creek

Source: Holland & Williamson, 2003, pp. 6–7; Jones, 1995.

Table 2
Events and exhibitions associated with the release of *Ned Kelly*

Event or exhibition	Organiser	Location
<i>Kelly Culture: reconstructing Ned Kelly</i> exhibition	State Library of Victoria	Central Melbourne
<i>The Legend of Ned Kelly</i> exhibition	Private operator	Central Melbourne
Exhibition of Ned Kelly paintings by modern artists	National Trust	Central Melbourne
Sidney Nolan retrospective, featuring his Ned Kelly series	National Gallery of Victoria	Central Melbourne
<i>Iron helmets, smoking guns</i> , retrospective of Australian bushranger films	Australian Centre for the Moving Image	Central Melbourne
<i>Ned Kelly Weekend</i>	Community group	Beechworth

Sources: Hawker, 2003; Hawley, 2003; Holland & Williamson, 2003; Webb, 2003.

One suggestion arising from publicity for the film is that tourists will be drawn to places where Ned Kelly was filmed, but which have no real connection with the bushranger's story. In particular, it was suggested that the sleepy gold town of Clunes, which was used for a number of town shots, might experience a boost in tourism (Tourism Victoria, 2003). Historic films are often shot in locations some distance from where the action was meant to be set: the western *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* was filmed in Spain; the Civil War drama *Cold Mountain* in Romania and for *The Last Samurai*, New Zealand substituted for Japan. However, the destination image created applies to where the film was set, not where it was filmed. Historic films do not create destination images based on the scenery shown on the screen. The attractive image they create is based on history and that can only be experienced by tourists visiting locations actually connected to that history. It is worth noting that *The Story of the Kelly Gang* was filmed at East Ivanhoe on Melbourne's suburban fringe in 1906. However, despite the popularity of that film and the Kelly story, its status as probably the world's first feature film and the connection of the location with the Heidelberg School of landscape painters, there is no resultant flow of tourists.

4. International tourists and ned kelly

Ned Kelly, as an Australian story, clearly has appeal to Australian tourists. However, does it also have appeal to international visitors? One perspective is that this glorification of an outlaw (like convicts and the sheep-stealer of *Waltzing Matilda*) is both embarrassing on the international stage and of little interest to tourists from overseas. For example, in 1956 there were plans to stage the play *Ned Kelly* as part of the cultural program of the Melbourne Olympics. Concerned that this presented an inappropriate image, the authorities banned its performance (Holland & Williamson, 2003, p. 18). Nearly half a century later, the American travel writer Bill Bryson was highly critical of Australia's love of Ned Kelly and ridiculed the attraction Ned Kelly's Last Stand as 'so

bad it was worth more than we paid' (Bryson, 2000, p. 173).

Despite such concerns, there were expectations that the film *Ned Kelly* would attract international tourists. As the film's makers had hoped for a success similar to *Braveheart*, so too had government and the tourism industry anticipated a similar reaction from tourists. Lois Appleby, the Chief Executive of Tourism Victoria, argued that there was, 'a very exciting opportunity to capitalise on the potential international publicity of "Ned Kelly" and part of its promotional strategy was to host overseas journalists on familiarisation tours (Tourism Victoria, 2003). Qantas featured Ned Kelly as the cover story in its in-flight magazine, noting that, 'the film looks set to propagate the Ned Kelly legend worldwide' (Boland, 2003, p. 36). In addition, after being banned in 1956, Ned Kelly was one of the stars of the 2000 Sydney Olympics opening ceremony.

Ned Kelly's international appeal, comes not from being a uniquely Australian story, but from being a universal story. The historian Hobsbawm coined the term 'social bandit' for outlaws who explicitly or implicitly represent the oppressed. Hobsbawm argued that social bandits occurred wherever rural societies were under pressure to change or produce an excessive surplus for an elite. Citing examples from the Americas, Asia and Europe, Hobsbawm also included Ned Kelly as a social bandit (Hobsbawm, 2001). The folklorist Seal saw outlaws as a cultural tradition in Britain, the USA, Australia and elsewhere and argued that outlaws were aware of this tradition and tried to follow its conventions (Seal, 1996, p. 145). He particularly linked Kelly to Robin Hood, Billy the Kid and Jesse James (Seal, 1996, p. 147). It is also important to understand that Kelly was contemporary with the great American outlaws; Kelly was executed in 1880, Billy the Kid was gunned down in 1881 and Jesse James in 1882.

In the lead up to the release of the film, Ned Kelly was compared to Robin Hood (Fawcett, 2003, p. 21; see also Jones, 1995, p. 338) and Jesse James (Goodman, 2003; Ryan, 2003). Director Gregor Jordan emphasised that this was far more an Irish story than an Australian one (Jordan, 2003) and revealed that the script portrayed

Table 3
Comparison of characteristics of films *Braveheart* and *Ned Kelly*

<i>Braveheart</i>	<i>Ned Kelly</i>
Victim of English Imperialism	Victim of English Imperialism
Symbol of Scottish resistance	Symbol of Irish resistance
Young, charismatic, handsome hero	Young, charismatic, handsome hero
Initially tries to avoid conflict	Initially tries to avoid conflict
Goaded by persecution of family—murder of wife	Goaded by persecution of family—jailing of mother
Loyal band of followers	Loyal gang
Uses trickery to confuse enemies	Uses disguises to confuse enemies
Betrayed by friend Robert the Bruce (invented for the film)	Avoids betrayal by friend Aaron Sherritt
Executed	Executed (but not shown on screen)

Ned's life, 'as similar to the story of Christ—persecuted through life, martyred in death' (quoted in Boland, 2003, p. 36).

The universal appeal of the outlaw's story may be seen by comparing Ned Kelly with *Braveheart*. The latter film told the little-known story of the Scottish patriot William Wallace and was highly successful internationally. Certainly, the two films present their heroes in similar ways, as is shown in Table 3. The characteristics in Table 3 may also be compared with Seal's 10 consistent elements in the outlaw tradition, being, 'friend of the poor, oppressed, forced into outlawry, brave, generous, courteous, does not indulge in unjustified violence, trickster [of his opponents], betrayed, lives on after death' (1996, p. 11). *Braveheart* has been used as an example of a historic story repackaged to fit American tastes regarding freedom fighting (Haydock, 2002, p. 9).

However, while the recent Australian film may have been conceived as a *Braveheart*-ed Ned Kelly, it did not have the international success of the Scottish film. After a reasonable showing in Australia, it did poorly in Britain and worse in the USA. In just over a year since its release Ned Kelly took just \$US 6.4 million (which equals an audience of perhaps one million), of which 85% was from Australian cinemas (Boxofficemojo, 2004). As such, any direct impact of the film is likely to be much more on the domestic rather than the international tourism market.

5. Ned kelly and domestic tourism

The release of Ned Kelly sparked claims that there would be a resultant increase in tourism. Not only was it predicted that tourists would visit small-town destinations with established tourism operations built around the bushranger, such as Glenrowan and Beechworth; it was also claimed they would visit towns with little Kelly-related development, such as Benalla, Greta, Avenel and Mansfield and towns which were used as locations in the film, but had no connection to Kelly, such as Ballarat

and Clunes (Morley, 2003; Shrimpton, 2003; Tourism Victoria, 2003). While these predictions were not quantified, they indicated the belief that the film would have a significant impact on tourism. Tourism Victoria (2003) hoped that there would be 'a Ned-led tourism revival' in Victoria's north-east and could 'do what the Lord of the Rings films have done for New Zealand—draw thousands more tourists' (Shrimpton, 2003).

Whether or not these predictions have come true is difficult to tell. As Busby and Klug (2001) and Riley et al. (1998) warned, there is a tendency to be vague in estimating (and over-estimating) the impact of films on tourism. In this context two factors limit any attempt to quantify visitor numbers. First, sites associated with Ned Kelly are broad, scattered and informal. For example the towns of Beechworth and Glenrowan contain multiple sites and tourists may visit many of these without paying admission or passing through a gateway where numbers could be counted. As such the sort of data collected for specific attractions by Riley et al. (1998) and Tooke and Baker (1996) are not available for analysis. Second, visitor numbers for any region as collected by the Bureau of Tourism Research are imperfect, they exclude visitors under 15, allocate tourists to the place they stayed overnight rather than where they visited and utilise regions which are too broad to be exclusively identified with Ned Kelly.

Bearing these limitations in mind, it is my contention that while Ned Kelly did have an impact on destination image and tourism, the impact was not in the form predicted. In particular, three mitigating factors need to be considered.

The first is that tourism marketing efforts were not fully co-ordinated. For example, an article in the travel section of the Melbourne Age on the weekend of the film's release reported on a Tourism Victoria publicity campaign which promoted that 'visitors to Victoria can follow a Ned Kelly trail' (Shrimpton, 2003). However, this article gave no details of how the trail could be accessed. On the day the story was published I enquired at the Beechworth Visitor Information Centre for details of the trail. The staff were unaware of the trail and of

the newspaper article and suggested that details might only be available in Melbourne, 270 Km away. Another curious example was the prediction that Sovereign Hill would gain increased visitation arising from its use as a location in the film (*Tourism Victoria*, 2003). However, Sovereign Hill was not used as a location and portrays a different time period to that shown in the film.

The second factor is that events and exhibitions linked to the release of Ned Kelly were focussed in Melbourne, rather than in those rural areas linked to Kelly. As shown in *Table 2*, there were six events, of which five occurred in Melbourne. Furthermore, the five Melbourne events were on a large scale, whereas the Beechworth weekend was a small festival. Clearly the organisers of these Melbourne events were concerned about their commercial viability. Their strategy was bringing Ned Kelly to the main centre of population, rather than bringing tourists to regional areas. This is a similar situation to the 150th Anniversaries of the Gold Rushes in California (1998) and Victoria (2001). In these instances there was a tendency to place the major exhibitions in San Francisco and Melbourne rather than the Goldfields (Frost, 2001).

A third factor is the structure of existing tourism operations. Kelly related tourism already exists in Glenrowan and Beechworth. It is likely that publicity about the film reinforced that existing tourism flow and provided a marginal increase. However, the tourism promotion associated with the release of the film encouraged tourists to visit towns and sites which had little previous Kelly-related development. These included Greta, Mansfield, Stringbark Creek, Beveridge and Avenel (Morley, 2003; Shrimpton, 2003; *Tourism Victoria*, 2003). Such destinations are limited in two ways. First, they are not geared for large numbers of tourists, having little infrastructure or interpretation. Stringybark Creek, for example, is only accessible along an unmade road. Second, there is often not sufficient to see at these places, it is likely that tourists would only stay a few minutes. It is significant that when a Ned Kelly Trail brochure was finally released, a number of these undeveloped locations were excluded (*Legends Wine and High Country*, 2003).

6. Conclusion

In considering the role of historic films in the development of destination image, five patterns emerge. First, the interest generated is story-based rather than visually-based. While there may be attractive scenery, this is not the prime motivator for the audience to become tourists. Rather, their desire is to visit and experience places associated with the historic story they have viewed. Heritage and historic associations become the destination image. It is even possible that a bland or

unattractive destination may attract tourists because of what happened there in the past.

Second, historic films are constrained by the need to follow historic conventions, particularly accurate portrayals of clothing, buildings, customs and artefacts. If a film is set in the 19th century, it has to look like that period. In some cases they may follow well-known stories, Ned Kelly is an excellent example, and this limits opportunities for invention. In a parallel to heritage and tourism, authenticity becomes a powerful part of the destination image.

Third, historic films have the potential to carry the appeal of a story and a destination well beyond local markets. It is commonly suggested that Hollywood repackages stories to make them understandable and appealing to a broad, primarily American, market (Haydock, 2002; Turner, 1994). As such, elements of historic stories such as heroism, battling against overwhelming odds, fighting against oppression, belief in freedom and tragic self-sacrifice are emphasised. Braveheart successfully took a little-known Scottish figure and turned it into a story of universal appeal. Ned Kelly similarly showed an Australian character in terms understandable to an international audience. While Ned Kelly was ultimately not successful overseas, there was initially a widespread expectation amongst government and the tourism industry that it had the potential to attract international tourists. Ultimately, Ned Kelly provides a valuable warning that film production may not necessarily lead to increased tourism.

Fourth, historic films may reinforce other sources of information about the past and this in turn may further develop the destination image. Ned Kelly encouraged a range of exhibitions and events related to the bushranger and these excited interest in a range of perspectives and ideas which went well beyond those explored in the film. Combined they created a destination image which highlighted the ambivalence, mystery and tragedy of the story.

Finally, the case of Ned Kelly illustrates that the influence of historic film on tourism may be evolutionary rather than revolutionary. Ned Kelly is a cultural heritage phenomenon in Australia because his story has been told and debated and disputed for 120 years. His story has been the subject of historical books, novels, plays, ballet, songs, film, television and art. It is this body of work which has over time created and sustained interest and has developed tourism to sites associated with him. The recent film builds on this. It did not create a new destination image, rather it contributed to an existing one.

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