

Poowong premiere a dunny deal

RESIDENTS of the tiny South Gippsland town of Poowong (above) lifted the lid on the world premiere of *Kenny*, an Australian film about a porta-loo delivery man.

But *Kenny* is no ordinary toilet plumber.

Kenny, played by actor Shane

Jacobson (right), is passionate about his work, plumbing the depths of family life, fatherhood and sewage with humour and unflinching dignity.

Why Poowong? Well, promoters knew a film with so much septic humour needed to premiere in a

town where the audience could have a laugh. A town called Poowong was just too good to ignore.

Locals rose to the occasion on Sunday night, and put on a meal at the footy club, rolled out the red carpet and got dressed in their finest.

● **Full story, Page 33**



Kenny rolls into Poowong as it celebrates Dunny business

Long the butt of jokes, a new film has Poowong flushed with delight **Zoe Skewes** reports

When it comes to poo gags, Poowong locals have heard them all. But on Sunday night, the tiny South Gippsland town had the last laugh when locals traded their trackies for tuxedos and walked the red carpet for the world premiere of the movie, *Kenny*.

World premiere? Poowong? It sounds like a bit of a joke and judging by the raucous laughter coming from the Poowong Hall about 8pm on Sunday, it certainly was.

Kenny is an Australian film about a dedicated toilet plumber who delivers porta-loos for an aptly-named company, Splashdown.

A film with such septic subject matter is, not surprisingly, full of toilet humour, which is why the film's promoters thought a town named Poowong was the perfect place for the premiere.

And locals were more than happy to have a laugh at their own expense, especially if it gave the town with a population of just over 300 the opportunity to host such a high-profile, Hollywood-style event.

Poowong teacher Di Bellham

summed it up best as she strode the red carpet, saying that if the town 'had to put itself on the map somehow, it may as well be with a dunny brush'.

It's the type of happy-go-lucky attitude that typifies Poowong, which has been buzzing about the sold-out screening for weeks.

The question on everyone's lips was, of course, what to wear?

The ladies wanted to know if neat/casual was appropriate or was an Oscar-style ball gown needed to do the red carpet justice?

And the blokes were just as confused. Should they dust off their three-piece suit or should they go with the plumber vibe and wear Kenny-sympathetic work overalls?

Tony Lorback decided to combine the two options and wore white overalls over a shirt and bow tie.

'It's all about getting into the spirit of it,' he says.

South Gippsland Shire councillor Bob Newton was another who dressed up (minus the overalls) and, when asked the classic red carpet question of who he was dressed by, Cr Newton was quick to respond with the very un-Hollywood answer of 'his wife'.

Poowong Community Consultative Committee member Heather Gregg spent 16 hours at the hall on Sunday setting up and then packing up and says the premiere was the biggest thing to hit the town since its 125th anniversary in 1999.

'It's not every day you walk down the street of a rural town and come across a red carpet,' she says. 'At least, not in Poowong.'

There were only 220 seats

available, which meant the \$12 tickets were in demand. Just as sought-after was a pre-screening meal at the footy club, which could cater only for about 120.

Heather says the benefits of hosting the premiere are enormous.

'I think it will really raise the profile of the town,' she says. 'It's certainly put a fairly unique spotlight on a small, rural community.'

'We are rapt we had this opportunity and we certainly weren't worried it happened because of the name of our town.'

'If the town was going to be offended about its name, it would have happened 132 years ago when it was settled.'

'We weren't then, and we're not now. Poowong people can have a laugh as much as the next person.'

The man of the moment, Kenny (actor Shane Jacobson), says he felt 'as fruity as a drunk seagull' to be at the premiere of his own movie and was blown away by Poowong's enthusiasm.

'I feel like I'm at an outback Hollywood,' he says.

'I saw all the fuss and thought the prime minister must have been on his way to town and then I realised the red carpet was for me.'

Kenny was last spotted signing autographs in the Poowong Hall. But judging by Poowong's response to his film, it won't be the last place he's seen.

● *Kenny* will be in cinemas from August 17. For more details, visit www.kennythemovie.com



Dressed up: Tony Lorback with his son Matt in their best toilet attire.



Toilet humour: Kenny, played by actor Shane Jacobson, at the world movie premiere at Poowong