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### Stanthorpe in the Bag

In the week that Stanthorpe plays host to Queensland's original wine tourism event - the Apple & Grape Harvest Festival<sup>i</sup> - it received the good news that it will host the Queensland Information Centres Association (QICA) AGM & Conference in 2009.

Recently Stanthorpe submitted a bid to host the March 2009 event. This brings together dozens of staff from visitor information centres across the state. It therefore provides an outstanding promotional opportunity with colleagues in the tourism industry.

The good news that Stanthorpe will act as the centrepiece of next year's event was relayed from Rockhampton at the conclusion of this year's conference.

The submission involved a team effort led by Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre Supervisor Mrs Roseanne Fritz. Mrs Fritz took the Granite Belt Wine & Tourism (GBWT) submission for Stanthorpe to Rockhampton last week, and phoned through the good news.

GBWT President Mrs Bobbi Cragg said she was thrilled to receive the news. "This is another step for ward for the Granite Belt Wine Country. The board and members owe a debt of gratitude to Roseanne and others who went the extra mile in preparing the submission, mostly in their own time."

The submission received letters of support from the regional tourist association<sup>ii</sup> as well as from the Stanthorpe Shire Council. Mayor Glen Rogers commented "Tourism is an increasingly important part of our economic activity and this is another sign of my team's strong commitment to tourism. The GBWT is a progressive and professional body which has quickly established a leadership role in wine tourism within Queensland."

While delighted to come home with next year's conference, Mrs Fritz was disappointed that we were pipped at the post for the title of visitor centre for 2008 to Boonah. Still there is always 2009.

To learn more about Queensland's premier wine region see [www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au](http://www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au) or phone 1800 SO COOL and *Expect to be surprised!*

### ENDS

1. The history of the Queensland wine industry dates back to the 1860s - and like all good wines it has developed with age.
2. Of Queensland's current 1100 hectares planted to wine grapes, approximately half of these are on the Granite Belt. It is also the largest of the ten wine regions in the state and one of only two with official GI status.
3. 64% of Granite Belt plantings are of Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Merlot with an increasing number of plantings of alternative grape varieties proving popular.
4. The Granite Belt is home to approximately 50 wine cellar doors, the state's most awarded winemakers, plus the Queensland College of Wine Tourism - the first of its type in the world.

<sup>i</sup> Now in its 42 year.

<sup>ii</sup> Southern Downs & Granite Belt Regional Tourism