

14 May 2008

Contact: Michele Cozzi 07 4681 0411 or 0417 620571 marketing@granitebeltwinecountry.com.au

Volunteers Cut the Birthday Cake

There are more than five million volunteers in Australia and for thirty at least, there is cause for celebration this week on the Granite Belt.

National Volunteer Week is held from the 12-18 May 2008. As part of this, the Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre (VIC) was today the stage for a big "thumbs up" to volunteers who contribute to the blossoming Granite Belt Wine & Tourism Inc.

Twenty eight volunteers give their free time each week to provide visitors with advice at the centre. They also help keep the VIC stocked with brochures, display materials and merchandise, creating a welcoming and bustling atmosphere. The questions they may be asked range from facts on local history through to "what's the weather like today in Gunnedah?"

The centre operates 363 days a year and last year the volunteers helped serve almost 30,000 people who walked through the doors of 28 Leslie Parade. Volunteers generally age from 40s to 70s and their current combined service to the VIC is in excess of 130 years.

In a sign of the GBWT's appreciation for their volunteers, they were given the honour of cutting the cake at today's thank you afternoon tea.

The cake was in fact a birthday cake to mark the first birthday of Granite Belt Wine Country, the brand which promotes the region. The brand was launched on 16 May 2007 by then Minister Margaret Keech and is widely used in marketing by the association and a growing number of its members.

VIC supervisor Roseanne Fritz said it would be impossible to run the centre without the help of an army of dedicated volunteers. "It is really rewarding to see that in the recent member survey, so many members singled out the services provided by the VIC as a benefit they greatly value."

Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre is open daily from 9am-5pm, except Christmas Day and Good Friday. New volunteers are always welcome and for information should contact Roseanne Fritz or Pam Smith on 4681 2057.

To learn more about Queensland's premier wine region visit 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.
5. **Food production figures** - source Darling Downs & South West Queensland Centres of Enterprise and AEC Group 2007.

Granite Belt Wine & Tourism Inc ABN 34072882028 PO Box 749, Stanthorpe Queensland 4380 Australia
Facsimile +61 7 4681 1200 www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au
The Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre 28 Leslie Parade, Stanthorpe Queensland 4380 Australia
Telephone +61 7 4681 2057 Email info@granitebeltwinecountry.com.au