

# Media Release

7 February 2007

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Granite Arch

## Granite Belt seizes high ground in Queensland's wine tourism race

The newly-merged Granite Belt Wine & Tourism Inc (GBWT)<sup>i</sup> marked this week's historic handover of the visitor information centre<sup>ii</sup> by announcing its new team of talent tasked with driving visitor growth and satisfaction.

The line-up is headed by Michele Cozzi whose successful international marketing career has been capped off with a string of successes in regional South East Queensland, including marketing two Polocrosse World Cups. Mrs Cozzi will officially join the GBWT when she has fulfilled her commitment to the forthcoming Ridley Polocrosse World Cup.

Following almost two years of consultation and planning, today Stanthorpe Shire Council handed over management of the Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre (VIC) to the GBWT. This marks a watershed for self-determination and a plan for success in both the Queensland and interstate markets.

The handover coincides with the following appointments by the GBWT (more below):

- **Michele Cozzi** – Marketing/Promotions Officer
- **Roseanne Fritz** – Visitor Information Centre Supervisor
- **Pam Smith** – Visitor Information Centre Assistant Supervisor

GBWT President Mrs Bobbi Cragg said, "We have worked long and hard to establish a united association. Our goal is for the Granite Belt to be nationally recognised as Queensland's premier wine tourism destination, with a unique identity and a vibrant, sustainable wine tourism business sector."

**Historic:** Mrs Cragg said the successful establishment of one body to represent and promote both the wine and tourism industries marked a turning point in the Granite Belt's success. She said the merger was only achieved with the support of the GBWT board and with the wonderful support of council. In particular she recognised the role of Mayor Glen Rogers, Terry Brennan (CEO), Tony Minuti (Manager Corporate Services) and Joanne Collyer (Economic Development Manager).

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Commenting on the new team, Mrs Cragg said, “While the new staff will each make a separate and significant contribution, there is no doubt that attracting a professional of Michele Cozzi’s calibre is a great coup for the organisation. We believe this will boost confidence for our membership drive, knowing that their future is in such experienced and capable hands,” Mrs Cragg said.

Aside from an impressive track record, Michele Cozzi’s two great assets for a new organisation such as the GBWT are her ten years’ product knowledge of the area, plus her proven success in marketing from the ground up. One look at her resume will demonstrate that much of her marketing success has been in start-up or “resource-poor” situations, which is certainly something every new organisation faces.

- **Michele Cozzi** settled on the Granite Belt in 1996 after a successful international marketing career. For almost ten years Cozzi Marketing & PR has established a pre-eminent reputation in the region for its marketing and promotional campaigns, including the forthcoming Ridley Polocrosse World Cup. Michele begins her **full-time role as Marketing/Promotions Officer on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007.**
- **Roseanne Fritz**, moved to Stanthorpe 12 months ago after a successful eight year career at the Jondaryan Woolshed. Her strengths are in administration/organisation, customer service and communication. She loves working with the public and the volunteers. Roseanne joined the centre as a volunteer in July 2006 then became a casual employee late in 2006 and is now full-time in the capacity as **Visitor Information Centre Supervisor, effective 1 February 2007.**
- **Pam Smith** having contributed seven years as a volunteer in the Visitor Information Centre has a wealth of knowledge about the Granite Belt from the visitor perspective. Pam is Stanthorpe born and bred and has particular strengths in customer service. She is employed part-time as **Visitor Information Centre Assistant Supervisor effective 1 February 2007.**

Mrs Cragg confirmed that both Roseanne Fritz and Pam Smith were now operating the Visitor Information Centre at Leslie Parade on Quart Pot Creek, Stanthorpe.

She added, “It is the first time that this region has had a dedicated marketing person serving its interests, and we believe this marks the start of a very positive phase in our development.

“We do have to wait a little while for Michele Cozzi while she keeps her contractual obligations with the World Cup, but that’s the sort of loyalty and professionalism she will deliver us. Members should be encouraged to know that we will be tapping into her expertise on a consulting basis prior to that,” Mrs Cragg added

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<sup>i</sup> The Granite Belt Wine & Tourism Inc was formed in July 2006; following the formal merger of the Granite Belt Wine Association with the Granite Belt Tourist Association.

<sup>ii</sup> The Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre (VIC) was formerly run by the Southern Downs Tourist Association (SDTA). The SDTA handed over responsibility for the Centre to the GBWT on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2007.