

Monday 23 October 2023

Granny Smith Festival delights Eastwood

Gorgeous spring weather and the promise of a full day of family fun and entertainment had large crowds flocking to Eastwood on Saturday 21 October for the 2023 Granny Smith Festival.

An estimated 80,000 people turned the town centre into Sydney's biggest fairground for the much-anticipated annual event, which celebrates the life of Maria Ann 'Granny' Smith, who cultivated the internationally famous green apple that bears her name.

Crowds lined the route of the Grand Parade that officially started the festival from early morning and were thrilled by a cavalcade of gleaming classic cars, dancers, brass bands, cultural and community groups, floats, and street performers.

Joining City of Ryde Mayor Cllr Sarkis Yedelian OAM, Councillors and senior Council staff on stage for the formal opening were special guests including state Epping MP and former NSW Premier the Hon Dominic Perrottet, and NSW Minister for Water, Housing, and Homelessness the Hon Rose Jackson, MLC.

"We once again showed that nobody can put on a party like we do and I'd like to congratulate all of the hard-working Council staff and volunteers for making the 2023 Granny Smith Festival so successful," said Cllr Yedelian.

"An event like this doesn't just happen – it takes months of planning and hard work. So, to the dedicated members of the Granny Smith Committee, chaired by the wonderful De'ann Hespe, I offer a heartfelt thanks.

"This festival is a wonderful reflection of City of Ryde's vibrant, diverse, multicultural community and it gave me great joy to see all of those happy, smiling faces."

Running from 9.00am-8.30pm, the festival provided a packed day of highlights.

They including a kids show and meet and greet with JJ from CoComelon, a dance competition at the brand new and instantly popular K-Town Madang stage, the return of the apple pie eating competition on the Plaza stage, a Youth Zone where people aged 12-24 enjoyed music and art, carnival fun and camel rides on the oval, and plenty of food and drink options.

It all culminated with a dazzling performance by 2023 *Australian Idol* co-host and Nova drive time radio star Ricki-Lee, who delighted fans with a set that included both her own hits and a selection of classic songs that had everyone singing along.

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