



26 JUN, 2025

"Punching" above weight tips Silver gong

Town & Country Journal, Warwick

Page 1 of 2

"Punching" above weight tips Silver gong

Selina Venier

Take a bow Stanthorpe for being awarded a significant Silver placing in the the Queensland Top Tourism Town Awards, credited as "a team effort".

"Southern Downs Regional Council made the submission and we worked closely with them and our marketing partner to submit a professional entry," said Chris Nolan, President of Granite Belt Wine and Tourism Inc. "We also had to have public voting support so our visitors and locals also contributed - as I said, truly a team effort."

Asked a question that we likely knew the answer to, Chris told us the award can be attributed to "a great diversity of tourism offerings in the region and the town".

"A lot of people visit us for our wineries but also a lot are now visiting us for the Girraween National Park and other attractions like the Cheese Factory, the Christmas Farm and so on. We have a really well developed tourism industry and a great community which is really great to see and experience."

Southern Downs Regional Mayor Melissa Hamilton said the accolade "shows that Stanthorpe is not only a beautiful destination but also a leader in regional tourism".

Perhaps not so obvious an answer was the response to, "How to improve from here?"

"That's a great question," Chris said.

"As an industry, we have to continue to build skills focussed on attracting and maintaining visitor numbers. Tourism is a big contributor to the local economy and even businesses who wouldn't recognise themselves as being in tourism are an essential part of our whole offering."

"Visitors buy fuel, visit the supermarkets and pubs and clubs and buy from the local butcher and bakeries and coffee shops – we are all in this together and we need to recognise all of our roles in attracting and retaining visitors to this beautiful region."

Chris further said Stanthorpe's "key pillars" of success are "strong relationships amongst businesses, with the Council and with other community organisations".

"For Queensland's tourism industry and the voting public to recognise Stanthorpe in this way is very significant, and I think that it is a credit to everyone that was involved. We are well-and-truly punching above our weight."

The certificate will be proudly on display in the Visitor Information Centre and is a great symbol of our achievement together with the Council. The positive media that has also been generated as a result is a real shot in the arm for the town and wider region and is a significant benefit.



26 JUN, 2025

"Punching" above weight tips Silver gong

Town & Country Journal, Warwick



Southern Downs Mayor, Melissa Hamilton (mickle) accepted the award at the official ceremony, which is displayed at the Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre.