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Local, national and world news for Central Queensland, QLD | Tuesday 21 October, 2008

Gems found in and above the ground at Gemfest

August 15, 2008

IT'S like walking into a carnival.

As you walk through the gates at Allen King Memorial Park at Anakie for Gemfest Festival of Gems, the buzz in the air makes it hard to know where to look first.

The event opened yesterday to larger than normal crowds flocking to see what's on offer.

Event co-ordinator Josie Carew said the 120-plus traders were happy with yesterday's crowds.

The marquees are packed out watching the entertainment at lunchtime," she said.

Among the entertainment has been classical singer Le-Anne Cowell, who was popular, as well as the Memphis Moovers, who have been providing their rock 'n' roll music moving around in a little car, and Mr Wallace's Puppet Theatre, which has been entertaining the children.

There has been plenty on offer for the youngsters with a giant jumping castle, giant slide and face painting.

Ms Carew said the Jewels of the Outback display was spectacular this year.

She said there were some really unique sapphire carvings, such as a tiger.

"They are bigger than a 50c piece, but very intricate," she said.

Also on display is a golden yellow sapphire, close to 20 carats and worth almost \$120,000, from a private collection, as well as an amazing array of coloured sapphires and the rare alexandrite sapphires, which change colour in the sun.

"They're really spectacular," Ms Carew said.

Gemfest Festival of Gems runs every day from 9am to 5pm until Sunday, while there will also be the Saturday Night Spectacular in Rubyvale.

The free concert will be held at Rubyvale Flats from 6pm featuring The Harmonics, hoola-hooping fire show and the Memphis Moovers.

There will be a variety of food for sale, including Indian samosas, Potato Max, Hare Krishna vegetarian food and German delights.

A licensed bar will operate on the night.

At Gemfest, there is so much to do.

You can have a go at sieving for a sapphire; the chance to find your own precious stone.

You might prefer to sit and relax and enjoy the entertainment on offer or just take a leisurely stroll around the stalls.

Also check out the Stake-a-Claim competition where you choose a spot to stake your flag and hope you might be the lucky winner with sapphires, gems, holidays, vouchers and more up for grabs.

The event will be officially opened by member for Flynn Chris Trevor today at 2pm, while Buddies star Kris McQuade will be on hand to sign autographs afterwards.

Instead of the Art Union competition, organisers this year have a mega-prize draw with 34 prizes to give away.

Gate entry provides a Passport entry into the draw, while those who have had their Passport stamped by 12 participating businesses will have the chance to win the \$1000 bonus prize draw. Entry to Gemfest is \$10 for the four days and includes entry into the mega prize draw.

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The Central Queensland Region

Located in the heart of Queensland's Western Downs, is the 'Queensland Energy Corridor'. This resource rich region encompasses the eight local government areas of Bungil, Benedemere, Chinchilla, Dalby, Murilla, Roma, Taroom and Wambo.

[Central Queensland revealed](#) (large PDF)

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