

Greece lightning

THE 21st Estia Greek Festival held on Hobart's waterfront last weekend saw about 30,000 people flock to the two-day event.

Organisers say moving the street festival to the Princes Wharf Shed No.1 for the second year in a row has proven to be highly successful.

Estia spokesperson Jude Vienna-Hallam said the weekend's celebrations were the result of more than about seven months' work, with 200 volunteers from the Greek community lending their support to the event.

"Without the support of the sponsors and the amount of time and effort from all the volunteers for the event, this would not be able to occur each year," she said.

"Everyone contributes across three generations of the Tasmanian Greek community, and it's always so wonderful to share a bit of our culture with Tasmania."

Mrs Vienna-Hallam said food was always the most important part of the festival — and one of the most important parts of Greek culture.

"We love our food, so does the general community," she said.

"The octopus is always popular."

One of Sunday's highlights was a cook-off between John Xintavelonis and Hobart alderman Marti Zucco and My Kitchen Rules Tasmanian contestants Thalia Papadakis and Bianca Johnston.

Thalia and Bianca, who are both part-time university students, also took a break from cooking for some Greek dancing and plate smashing.

Greek Community of Tasmania president John Fiotakis was delighted with this year's festival.

"The reason we've gone down to the PW1 is because the facilities at North Hobart were not big enough for the crowd we were getting, and obviously this is right in the centre of the city," he said.

"In the shed we don't have to worry about the weather



RYTHM OF A NATION: Traditional Greek dancers, above, perform at last weekend's Estia Greek Festival.

HOT: Cooking up a storm are, from left, John Xintavelonis, Thalia Papadakis, Bianca Johnston and Marti Zucco.

Pictures: MATT THOMPSON

either as it's mostly under cover — that was a big factor in our decision to move. If it rains it really doesn't make that much difference."

Now a permanent and much-anticipated part of the Tasmanian calendar, the annual festival sees the waterfront transformed into a Greek village.

Held alongside the Salamanca Market last Saturday, the event drew on crowds eager for some fine food, music and a good time.

"We had our traditional events and cuisine," Mr Fiotakis said.

"There was dancing and smashing of plates, as well as

cooking displays and cook-offs.

"My Kitchen Rules contestants Thalias Papadakis and Bianca Johnston meeting with people was fun too."

The traditional sweet and savoury foods are the biggest attraction of the festival, and after busy preparation from the many volunteers of the Greek community, the culinary treats were in abundance last weekend.

Classics such as souvlaki, yiros, fish and chips, Greek sweets, seafood were extremely popular, and the Village Kitchen featured all sorts of traditional Greek foods.

Work began on Estia more than six months before the



event was staged.

Cooking of the sweets started in early March, and cooks worked five or six days a week to get it all ready.

Sourcing products takes time too. Octopus can be hard to get and the festivals needed 1000 kilograms ready to tenderise and barbecue.

Popular local band Dionysis performed alongside

Greek dancing displays.

Master of ceremonies was Tasmania's favourite Greek son, John Xintavelonis, who entertained the masses over the two days.

And the celebration of all things Greek isn't finished yet.

"Our taverna night is our traditional event held in Federal St, North Hobart, and that will be on April 26 from

7pm at the Hellenic Hall," Mr Fiotakis said of another key event of the festival.

"It will feature live traditional entertainment, food, dancing and plate smashing."

Rounding off the cultural event will be a soccer "grudge match" at the Olympia FC home ground Warrior Park from 5pm on April 12.

"Originally it was just for a trophy and more of a social thing for a bit of fun, and now it's for championship points against our traditional rivals the Hobart Zebras," Mr Fiotakis said.

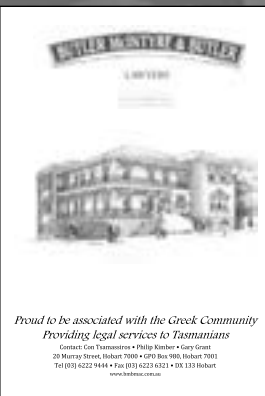
"It will start off with the women's game, and then the senior men will battle for the trophy and points. It's a big rivalry and draws a large crowd with a great atmosphere."

ESTIA GREEK FESTIVAL

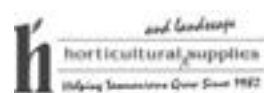
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Email: admin@greekcommunitytas.com.au

Commonwealth Bank is proud to support the 2014 Estia Greek Festival.

Call **Mark Howard**
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Greece is the word

THE 21st Estia Greek Festival to be held in Hobart next weekend is shaping up to be the biggest and best in the event's history.

The biggest drawcard of the celebration, the March 22-23 street festival, will be held for the second year in a row at the Princes Wharf Shed No.1 following last year's successful move from North Hobart.

"Last year we actually had about 35,000 people across the two days come through," Greek Community of Tasmania president John Fiotakis said.

"The reason we've gone down to the PW1 is because the facilities at North Hobart were not big enough for the crowd we were getting, and obviously this is right in the centre of the city.

"In the shed we don't have to worry about the weather either as it's mostly undercover — that was a big factor in our decision to move. If it rains it really doesn't make that much difference."

Now a permanent and much-anticipated part of the Tasmanian calendar, the festival will see the waterfront transformed into a Greek village.

Held alongside the Salamanca Market on Saturday and the final Spiegel tent events on both Saturday and Sunday nights, the event will draw on crowds eager for fine food, music and a good time.

"We'll have our traditional events and cuisine," Mr Fiotakis said.

"There will be dancing and smashing of plates, as well as cooking displays and cook-offs. We will have local Greek girl and My Kitchen Rules contestants Thalias Papadakis and Bianca Johnston there too to meet with people."

The traditional sweet and savoury foods are the biggest attraction of the festival, and after months of preparation from the many volunteers of the Greek community, the culinary treats will be in abundance next weekend.



EXOTIC TASTES: Emmanuel Giamios, left, and John Paradisis are ready to cook up a storm of fish and chips at the Estia Greek festival. Picture: ROGER LOVELL

"We will be having our classics like souvlaki, yiros, fish and chips, Greek sweets, seafood and the Village Kitchen, which features all sorts of traditional Greek foods," Mr Fiotakis said.

"We started prep for Estia six months ago. Cooking of the sweets started last week and they're basically working five or six days a week to get it all ready. Sourcing products takes time too. Octopus can be hard to get and we've got over 1000

kilos ready to tenderise and barbecue."

Popular local band Dionysis will perform alongside Greek dancing displays.

Master of ceremonies will be Tasmania's favourite Greek son, John Xintavelonis, who will entertain the masses over the two days.

He and Hobart City Council alderman Marti Zucco will officially launch the festival on Wednesday at

Princes Wharf No.1 at 1.15pm.

There will be many other events besides the street festival taking place across many weeks.

University of Tasmania PhD candidate Evan Pitt will give a lecture on March 27 at the university's Centenary Theatre at 6pm.

His area of research is focused on successors of Alexander the Great and the ensuing conflict between Cassander and Polyperchon.

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"It will feature live traditional entertainment, food, dancing and plate smashing."

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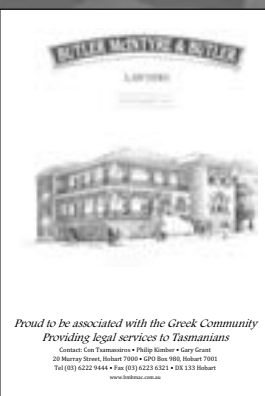
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Sat, March 22 & Sun, March 23, 2014
Princes Wharf 1

