



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

***For immediate release***

**July 16, 2019**

## **PARADING FOR THE LIVING REEF**

Sea creatures and colourful corals are about to come to life through the Rotary Street Parade in Airlie Beach.

Renowned for being one of the Great Barrier Reef Festival's signature events, the theme of this year's parade is 'The Living Reef – A World Down Under'.

Organiser Merewyn Wright said the reasoning behind the theme was two-fold.

"It's partly to promote the newly rebranded festival by highlighting the reef and underwater aspects and partly as a nod to the Living Reef on Daydream Island, which has also been recently rejuvenated," she said.

"It's about paying tribute to the world under the sea on the reef and the fact that in a global sense the Great Barrier Reef is in the great land down under and is one of the natural wonders of the world."

Daydream Island Marine Biologist, Johnny Gaskell, said for him the theme ticked all these boxes.

"Through education and unique experiences, the Living Reef aims to inspire guests to want to protect our oceans and its amazing inhabitants," he said.

"We are thrilled that the Great Barrier Reef Festival has chosen to theme its popular Rotary Street Parade in a way that helps spread these messages further."

Festival chairwoman, Margie Murphy, said the theme would no doubt ignite imagination and inspire creativity in entrants' floats.

"The parade is always reef-themed but having that sub theme helps people focus on ideas they may not have thought of and different angles for inspiration," she said.

"It's great marketing for businesses and a chance for everyone to align with the Whitsundays' largest community festival and celebrate collectively."

Prizes are awarded for the best business and not-for-profit entries as well as the best entry on the theme, and most unusual and wacky float.

Ms Wright, who is also Governor Elect of Rotary District 9550, encompassing North Queensland, parts of the Northern Territory and Timor Leste, said Rotary was proud to sponsor this event.

“Rotary clubs do a lot of things that nobody really sees, so for a group that is such an important part of the community this is a great way to visibly give something back,” she said.

Tourism Whitsundays CEO, Tash Wheeler, said the Rotary Street Parade was one of the most vibrant aspects of a key destination event.

“As a visual spectacle it’s a real showcase of what the Whitsundays has to offer, and an event that embodies and celebrates community pride,” she said.

The 2019 Great Barrier Reef Festival from August 1-4 is proudly supported by platinum partner Cruise Whitsundays.

The Rotary Street Parade takes place on the Airlie Beach main street at 4pm on Saturday, August 3.

It is preceded by the Fraser Ford Revvin’ the Reef, Miss Pin-Up Parade and Wilmar Sugar Wearable Art Awards and followed by the Airlie Magic Mile running race.

Registration for all events is via [www.greatbarrierreeffestival.com.au](http://www.greatbarrierreeffestival.com.au) with registration for the Street Parade closing on July 29.

For more information visit [www.greatbarrierreeffestival.com.au](http://www.greatbarrierreeffestival.com.au) and follow the festival on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

*Images below are available in high resolution on request.*



*190716\_Celebrating the Great Barrier Reef - Andrew Pattinson Vampp Photography*



*190716\_Crowds line the streets at a former Reef Festival - Photo Andrew Pattinson Vampp Photography*



190716\_The festival through which a community celebrates the reef - Andrew Pattinson Vampp Photography



190716\_Bringing the Reef to the shore - Photo Andrew Pattinson Vampp Photography

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**About Tourism Whitsundays:** *Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing and business events.*

**FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES, CONTACT:**

Liza Muller

Publicity and Content Manager

Tourism Whitsundays

Ph: +61 7 4948 5917 or +61 417 765736

Email: [liza.muller@tourismwhitsundays.com.au](mailto:liza.muller@tourismwhitsundays.com.au)

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