



---

**Nick Dametto**

Member For Hinchinbrook

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

12 October 2022

### **Happy Gathering - Maraka Festival**

Hinchinbrook MP, Nick Dametto has welcomed the highly anticipated return of the Maraka Festival in 2022.

Maraka provides a week of festivities that coincides with the sugarcane harvest and brings together schools, businesses and community groups within the region.

This year's festival continues with tradition and has attracted five Maraka Queen entrants aiming to be crowned the 2022 Festival Queen. The 2022 entrants are Courtney Aitken, Chiara Cosentino, Emma Castles, Jess Maslin and Kaiti-Rae Beatts.

Mr Dametto said the yearly festival was a highlight of the annual Hinchinbrook events calendar.

"Maraka has been running since 1959, and since its first inception has been an event the whole shire has looked forward to.

"You can always tell when the Maraka is approaching, everyone gets into the spirit, it's great to hear that our local schools and sporting organisations are preparing their floats and costumes for the street parade. This is without a doubt one of the best parts of the festival, you never know what our talented and creative entrants will come up with to outdo last year," Mr Dametto said.

"There's something for everyone during the week of festivities, a Pet Parade, Mardi Gras, Afternoon Tea, and Cocktail Night, but the crowning of the Maraka Queen and Princess is always a crowd favorite.

"I would like to wish the Maraka Queen and Princess entrants the best of luck as they go through this year's pageant events, it's going to be a difficult decision for the judges. I hope you all enjoy the experience and remember to have a little bit of fun."

Maraka President Kieran Volpe said the Maraka Festival had been running for 62 years and was a good time for everyone in the community to catch up, with Maraka being an Aboriginal word for 'happy gathering'.

"The festival kicks off this weekend with the Cocktail Night on Saturday, and the sold-out Afternoon Tea on Sunday," Mr Volpe said.

"We are also teaming up with 3RAR to bring a Freedom of Entry parade to town this year. Following that, we will have our festival procession, Mardi Gras, local entertainment, kids rides, fireworks, and of course, the crowning of the 2022 Maraka Princess and Queen.

"There will be plenty of food, supplied by a variety of local non-for-profit organisations, as well as ample supply of refreshments at the Maraka Bar."

Mr Dametto said he looked forward to congratulating the Maraka Queen and Princess entrants and catching up with the community at the Cocktail Night this Saturday.



---

**Nick Dametto**

Member For Hinchinbrook

“Organising Maraka takes a countless amount of volunteer hours, there’s a lot of entertainment and activities planned that doesn’t just happen. Thank you to the President, the committee and everyone who has worked tirelessly to put together what will no doubt be a successful event,” he said.

“I encourage those in Townsville, Cardwell and nearby surrounding areas to visit Ingham for the weekend to check out what all the hype is about.”

—ENDS—

**Photo:** State Member for Hinchinbrook and KAP Deputy Leader, Nick Dametto.

**Media Enquiries:** Sam Shaw 0421 467 731.