



2012 CountryLink Parkes Elvis Festival

Media Release

Record Crowds Expected When CountryLink Parkes Elvis Festival Turns 20 in 2012!

It's been 34 years since Elvis left the building, yet an expected 15,000+ Elvis fans will gather in the Central NSW town of Parkes, doubling the population, to celebrate Elvis Presley's birthday in January. Record crowds are expected for the 20th anniversary of the CountryLink Parkes Elvis Festival from 11-15 January 2012 with the theme 'Follow that Dream' proving popular.

A 5-day program of events will feature favourites including look-a-like contests, Tribute to Elvis Competition, the Elvis Street Parade, displays of Elvis memorabilia (including Greg Page's: The Kings Castle), and more than 150 unique Elvis-style events.

Elvis fans and festival lovers converge on Parkes from all over Australia, with the Festival having become Australia's pilgrimage to all things King, and transforming Parkes to the 'Elvis Capital of Australia'.

To celebrate the Festival's 20th anniversary organisers have an exciting line up including a few international guess. Elvis' official photographer, Ed Bonja will visit the Festival and host an exhibition of his works and celebrated American Elvis Tribute Artist, Dean Z has been booked to please audiences in the Festival's Premier Feature stage shows. Fans won't need the CSIRO Parkes Radio Telescope to see this big American Star at the CountryLink Parkes Elvis Festival in January 2012. Additional to the Keno Feature Concert Series supported by ClubsNSW, Dean Z will be making appearances throughout the CountryLink Parkes Elvis Festival at the Elvis Gospel Service, Street Parade and Renewal of Vows Ceremony.

The town centre is set to become Elvis Boulevard with local businesses and staff all decked out in Rock 'n' Roll Elvis & Priscilla, buskers lining the street and free concerts and markets in Cooke Park. The Elvis Gospel Church Service has become a much-loved feature of the Festival program. This special interdenominational service pays tribute to Elvis' first love - gospel music. The Service sees standing room only as thousands of revellers join with parishioners to make the spiritual journey to the Big W undercover car park for this moving service, and prompting other churches to investigate similar ways to foster such spiritual understanding within their communities.

Loved up couples can renew their vows with an Elvis Celebrant at 'Back to the Altar with Elvis', and the TransTank Miss Priscilla Dinner will see the crowning of the lassy and luscious 2012 Miss Priscilla. Elvis fans who like a round of bowls, can take off their blue suede shoes for a game of casual barefoot Elvis Lawn Bowls, while Culture Buffs can enjoy Elvis Art Exhibition, Film Screenings, The Kings Castle Collection (the largest collection of Elvis Memorabilia in the Southern Hemisphere) and an exhibition of photographs by Elvis' Official photographer from 1970-1977, Ed Bonja.

According to Parkes Elvis Festival Manager Maria Chetcuti, "The CountryLink Elvis Express train will set the Festival in motion, departing from Platform #1 at Sydney Central Railway Station on Friday 13th January en route to Parkes. Festival visitors will be rocking all the way onboard the Elvis Express, with an Elvis Tribute Artist electrifying carriages, prizes for best-dressed passengers and a grand Elvis-style platform welcome in Parkes, including a welcome by Mayor Elvis".

"Parkes, a town which has been best known for its starring role in the movie 'The Dish', is increasingly becoming known for its penchant to party with Elvis. During this unique event, the town has a Graceland style make-over, with ELVII of all shapes and forms swarming the streets and many sightings of Priscilla's and Lisa-Marie's in the crowd. The Festival provides a huge boost to our economy and in fact the whole region in an otherwise quiet time of year" said Miss. Chetcuti.

Media contacts, image requests & media accreditation packs:

Parkes Elvis Festival Manager, Maria Chetcuti on (02) 6862 6000 or 0427 358 471

Parkes Shire Tourism Manager, Katrina Dwyer on (02) 6862 6000 or 0427 462 428

Next Festival: 11th - 15th January 2012



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2012 CountryLink Parkes Elvis Festival Key Program Highlights

Wednesday 11th January 2012

- Elvis wall unveiling to Australian music icon, Kamahl (Kamahl in attendance)
- Parkes Harness Racing Elvis Carnival of Cups
- Official Opening of the Elvis Art Exhibition

Thursday 12th January 2012

- Elvis Poet's Breakfast
- Bingo with Elvis
- Miss Priscilla dinner

Friday 13th January 2012

- Arrival of the Elvis Express Train from Sydney
- Elvis Market Stalls open
- Cooke Park Main Stage opens
- Free Outdoor Evening Concert

Saturday 14th January 2012

- Elvis Festival Street Parade & Elvis in the Park
- Elvis Lawn Bowls
- Cooke Park Main Stage continues
- Free Outdoor Evening Concert

Sunday 15th January 2012

- Elvis Gospel Church Service
- Elvis in the Park
- Cooke Park Main Stage continues

Images Available (including but not limited to):



Elvis with Parkes' other icon, The Dish



Elvis with Showgirls in Street Parade



Couple renew their wedding vows with Elvis



Elvis arrives in style aboard CountryLink's Elvis Express train

For Festival information, visit www.parkeselvisfestival.com.au or phone (02) 6862 6000.

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