



2025 MARANOA BUSINESS AWARDS

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ROMA COMMERCE AND TOURISM



A celebration of business

Maranoa Deputy Mayor Cameron O'Neill knows a thing or two about the Maranoa Business Awards - he's emceed 10 of the 12 events celebrating the region's outstanding business community.

Joined at the microphone by Roma Commerce and Tourism's (RCAT) Katrina Marsh, Cr O'Neill said the evening was about coming together to reflect on the successes of the past 12 months and he looked forward to the awards each year.

"The energy and innovation you bring to your businesses is what makes the region strong and adaptable," Cr O'Neill told the crowd of about 200 people at the Explorers Inn on 11 October.

"I've only missed two - I was benched by Shane Webcke and last year my baby daughter Lil was only two days old."

RCAT president Peter Stanford said the event

celebrated not only individual achievements, but also business owners, entrepreneurs, employers and employees.

"Doing business is innately human - let me acknowledge the time and effort you have all put in," Mr Stanford said.

"This year reminds us once again that businesses never stand still.

"The employer of choice award this year has attracted a record number of entries and our Maranoa Workforce Strategy is now nearing completion.

"Membership (of RCAT) has grown from 111 to 135 over the past 12 months."

Mr Stanford said among RCAT's other achievements in the past 12 months were a dedicated tourism sub-committee and the launch of

the Roma Young Legends group.

"RCAT can't take credit for the success of our region, but we take great pride in it," he said

"You're the reason that the Maranoa remains a place of opportunity.

"You all should be very proud of what you have achieved."

Awards judge Leesa Watego AM, Managing Director of IM Social Impact Agency, said she knew the task of judging would be a challenging one.

"From the get-go, from the very first interview, I knew this was going to be one of the hardest jobs I've ever done," she said.

"The quality of businesses was fantastic. Maranoa should be proud of their vibrant and diverse business community that serves the region

and Queensland.

"I know how it feels when your work day is full, that entering a business award can feel like a burden you're adding to your already too long to-do list.

"But I hope that everyone who entered this year found value in taking the time to tell their story, to articulate their successes, as well as find ideas for how to continuously improve.

"It was an honour to join Natalie (Fogarty from Brandsuite) as a judge for this year's Maranoa Business Awards.

"We had a fantastic three days meeting and talking to everyone. We know that we could only pick one winner in each category, but really everyone was a winner."



Western Queensland Spirit took out the Santos Business of the Year at the Maranoa Business Awards.

Santos Business of the Year: Western Queensland Spirit

Founded in 2021, Western Queensland Spirit (WQS) is the first craft distillery in Outback Queensland.

Beginning in a machinery shed on a 55-acre property just west of Roma, it has grown into an internationally awarded spirits producer and visitor destination, welcoming over 20,000 guests in 2024-25.

Core business includes wholesale and retail of premium spirits, tourism and F&B experiences at the cellar door, and both on-site and off-site events.

Built on values of excellence, authenticity, mateship and sustainability, WQS is equally defined by its philosophy of growing community and giving back.

With a team of 15, the business continues to expand its national presence, achieve international recognition, and champion the Maranoa as a destination.

The distillery produces a premium range of 10 spirits, including five gins, vodka, rum and three liqueurs.

Each product is crafted with native and locally sourced botanicals, including regional citrus and ingredients grown on the property,

creating unique Outback flavours.

This has led to strong partnerships with local producers and suppliers.

Products are sold through our online store, through wholesalers such as Dan Murphy's Online, and direct-to-consumer at our cellar door.

The cellar door is both a tourism drawcard and community hub, attracting locals, the drive market, event attendees and tour groups.

Opened at Easter 2023, the facility features landscaped gardens, a veranda, pet-friendly lawns and inclusive spaces for all ages.

Visitors can enjoy tastings, cocktails, seasonal food, Queensland wines and craft beers.

Regular events such as Friday Night Sundowners, ticketed activities like paint-and-sip and Pilates, and seasonal celebrations including Valentine's and Mother's Day add to the region's vibrancy.

Weddings, corporate functions and touring shows are supported by in-house catering.

WQS also takes Maranoa hospitality across Outback Queensland, partnering with every major festival and tourism event in the region.



Western Spirit Queensland won the Tourism, Hospitality and Events award, sponsored by Wellpro.

Motel wins employer gong

Athena Studio Units is Roma's leading motel accommodation provider.

As a family-owned business, we always strive to offer exceptional service and an unforgettable stay with unmatched facilities.

We pride ourselves on being Roma's only accommodation provider with all fully self-contained units, two swimming pools, a spa, an inhouse gym and sauna.

Our modern units cater to all, including corporate travellers, tourists and families.

As an accommodation provider, we are also a major part of the Roma experience for many travellers, and for this reason we always make sure that our guests are provided a warm and welcoming stay.

We have been recognised broadly for this, with exceptionally high ratings on leading booking platforms such as Booking.com and Expedia.

By the conclusion of 2025, we are set to be Roma's only accommodation provider with more than 1000 reviews on Booking.com, showcasing the high volume of guests that we accommodate.

This has all been achieved while still maintaining a very high overall rating score of 9.1 and 9.2 on Booking.com and Expedia respectively, with particular categories of note being our staff, cleanliness and facilities which all received high scores for Roma at 9.5, 9.5 and 9.4 out of 10.



Athena Studio Units was named the Employer of Choice award, sponsored by TAFE. Steven Spina (TAFE), Aaron Goldie, Aimee Burey (TAFE)



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Subway wins retail section

Ruth D'Hennin purchased Subway Roma in March 2022.

At the time, the store had been closed for a month and had no staff.

It was the lowest-performing store in the network (300 out of 300).

Since then, through hard work, dedication, and a focus on service, fresh food, and community connection, we have transformed the business into one of the top 100 performing stores nationally.

Roma focuses on providing fresh, healthy, and customised food quickly and conveniently, including sandwiches, wraps, salads, drinks, and popular add-on items. We also provide catering for small and large groups, offering convenient and delicious options for events, meetings, and community gatherings.

I am most proud of building a busy, thriving business from such a challenging starting point.

Our loyal and growing customer base reflects the friendly service, clean environment, and consistent quality that we provide every day.

Being part of the local Roma community is incredibly important to me.

Over the past 12 months, we have supported the Triathlon and other local sporting groups, and we actively participate in community events to give back to those who support us.

Looking ahead, we are excited to move our store into a brand-new, larger, and more accessible venue in November, which will allow us to continue growing our business and improving the customer experience.

Through fresh products, exceptional service, and strong community involvement, Subway Roma has become a trusted and high-performing local business, and I am proud to contribute to both the franchise network and the Roma community.



Subway Roma won the Retail Wholesale and Distribution award, which was sponsored by COHO. Hayley Forbes (Coho Group), Ruth D'Hennin.



Manufacturing, Construction and Trade winners TDH Mechanical Maintenance. Travis Hansen and Emma Hansen, Robert Power (FKG Group).

Manufacturing Construction, Transport and Trade: TDH

TDH is a family owned and operated mechanic workshop.

We look after the vehicles of locals and also the fleet companies in town.

Our business has grown from a small business operating out of our home shed to a trusted workshop known for its quality and reliability.

We specialise in general vehicle servicing and logbook servicing, repairs and diagnostics, performance upgrades and accessory installations and some electrical work.

Our focus on business is simple, offering quality workmanship, honest advice and an experience for the customer that makes them feel looked after.

Profesional service award

Established in 2017, Quinn & Co Finance Broking is a regionally orientated finance broking business offering a comprehensive service.

Working with individuals and business customers, we tailor each and every finance transaction to the individual need. We recognise that every financial scenario is unique. In general terms we arrange finance for vehicles, residential, commercial and rural property, plant and equipment as well as any other personal need our clients may have. Reviews of current lending facilities are conducted for our clients, new and existing, to ensure their lending remains relevant and competitive.

The product and service offered is shaped around our business vision, we will deliver a confidential and consistent service for each and every client. Funding requests are dealt with in a timely and honest manner ensuring each loan is tailored to be uniquely yours.

We proudly work with businesses and individuals across Australia from our fixed regional office locations of Roma and Murgon.

Our team proudly lives, works and plays in our community ensuring an understanding of the local economy and the needs of our individuals and businesses. Confidentiality is the cornerstone of our business, and it is important for our clients to recognise the significance we place on this.



The Business and Professional award, sponsored by MPC Kinetic went to Quinn & Co Finance Broking. Blair Keetch (MPK), Natalie Quinn, Rachel Jolley, Kellie McNamara.

Beauty Health and Wellbeing: Tivoli Rose Skin + Beauty

Tivoli Rose Skin + Beauty is a boutique clinic dedicated to skin health, rejuvenation, and client confidence.

While we offer a uniquely wide range of beauty services, our focus is on advanced skin treatments that deliver lasting and visible results.

We are proud to be the only business in the Maranoa offering sophisticated skin treatments such as radiofrequency skin tightening, IPL skin rejuvenation, hair reduction, microneedling, cryotherapy and HydraFacial.

These treatments allow us to address ageing, pigmentation, scarring, and overall skin health.

Living and working in remote regions, we all know the challenges of sometimes accessing

high quality services - this is a point of great pride at Tivoli Rose in that we bring services and options not otherwise available in our region.

Alongside these innovations, we also provide traditional beauty treatments, ensuring clients can access both everyday care and high-level clinical results in one place - we believe in a holistic approach to beauty.

We exclusively stock O Cosmetics, an Australian-made cosmeceutical range that has been with us since day one.

This empowers our clients to continue their results at home. Our mission is simple: to support every client in achieving their best skin health and, in turn, their greatest confidence in self.



The Beauty Health and Wellbeing award, sponsored by Maranoa Today, went to Tivoli Rose Skin + Beauty. Daniel Pelcl, Moz Miller

Holly Thom from The New Royal Hotel Surat was recognised for her exceptional service with the Maree Bunt Individual Customer Service Award.

Individual Customer Service: Holly Thom



Emma Bunt and Holly Thom (The New Royal Surat)

Rotary's Jim Baker Award winner for 2025 was Dr Rosemary Geraghty, who has given 30 years of medical service to the Roma community,

Jim Baker Award winner



Rotary president Pleasure Thomson and Dr Rosemary Geraghty.

Maranoa businesses shine

By Isabella MacDonald

Almost 200 guests gathered at the Explorers Inn last Saturday for the 2025 Maranoa Business Awards, celebrating the region’s outstanding entrepreneurs, businesses, and community leaders.

The evening was filled with style, success, and recognition, as local talent was honoured across a range of categories.

From newly established businesses to long-standing local icons, the awards showcased the vibrant spirit of business in the Maranoa.



Travis and Emma Hansen and Michael Popp from Roma, representing TDH Mechanical Maintenance.



Kylie Ross, Ryan Ross, Rhys Galdal from Elite Diesel and Hydraulic Service, Elisabeth D’Hewin and Rayleen Donohue.



Peter Stanford, Mark Crompton, Moz Miller and her mum, Vicki Peel, from Tivoli Rose Skin and Beauty.



Kristian Beggs and Scott Bailey from GPRS, and Daniel Pelci from Maranoa Today.



Simon and Kira Glasby from Western Queensland Spirit.



Noelene Week and Scott McDonell from Roma Rotary.



Maxine Thomas from Origin and Alana William from ANZ Roma.



Gene and Kerri-Leigh Beck from Roma Taxation Services.



Kirsty and Mick Thiesfield representing Roma's police.



James and Georgia Bayliss from Mitchell, representing Hotel Richards.



Dietther Schuss with Wendy, both from Vital Health.



Wendy Spirling, James Balmain, Fiona Wheeler, Anne Griffiths, Steve Spina and Aimee Bury from TAFE Queensland.



Barry and Susan McCabe. Mr McCabe was a pharmacist in Roma for 40 years.



Tahlia and Bailey Bergman, Harrison Dart and Michael McLaughlin from Western Queensland Spirit.



Gemma Tapp and Carmen Stanford from Compass Wealth, Roma.



Billy Hicks and Bec Stewart from Roma Taxation Services.



Individual Customer Service finalists Pleasure Thomson (Accepting for Daniel Wales), Holly Thom, Sarah Meara, Paula Vanderwolf.

Finalists shine at awards

The Maranoa Business Awards were a night dedicated to celebrating the heart and soul of the community, according to Maranoa Regional Council Mayor Wendy Taylor.

"These awards celebrate the backbone of our community - our businesses," Cr Taylor said.

"Our businesses provide a space where people can connect and form relationships.

"Every business in this room tonight has a unique story...at the heart of all these successes are the people.

"It takes courage and dedication to keep going and tonight we celebrate every one of you.

"Tonight is an evening of connection, celebration and well-deserved recognition."



Retail Wholesale & Distribution finalists Gabby Barron (Gretel Lane), Ruth D'Hennin (Subway Roma), Tori Johnson (The Outback Op Shop Australia), Kathy Draper (Sunshine Mitre10).



Employer of Choice finalists Aaron Goldie (Athena Studio Units), Ruth D'Hennin (Subway Roma), Moz Miller (Tivoli Rose Skin + Beauty), Bailey Bergman (Western Queensland Spirit).



Business and Professional finalists Kerri-Leigh Beck (Roma Taxation Services), Natalie Quinn (Quinn & Co Finance Broking), Sharon Goodhew (Raine & Horne Rural Roma), Donough Shirley (Country University Centre Maranoa).



James & Georgia Bayliss (Hotel Richards), Karen Metzroth (Athena Studio Units), William Fellowes (Western Queensland Spirit).



Emerging business of the year finalists Emma Hansen (TDH Mechanical Maintenance), Tori Johnson (The Outback Op Shop Australia). Absent: Song Bird Creative.



Manufacturing Construction Transport and Trade finalists Robert Arnold (Wellpro Services), Travis Hansen (TDH Mechanical Maintenance) Rhys Galdal (Elite Diesel & Hydraulic Service)



Brianna Knayer (For Blondies Hair Collective), Pleasure Thompson (Relax and Breath Studios), Moz Miller (Tivoli Rose Skin + Beauty) Absent: Daniel Wales (The Man with a Beard)



Business Customer Service finalists Ruth D'Hennin (Subway Roma), Tom Kirby (Roma Veterinary Clinic), Holly Thom (The New Royal Hotel).



Innovation finalists Robert Arnold (Wellpro Services), Arron Goldie (Athen Studio Units), Rhys Galdal (Elite Diesel & Hydraulic Services).



Donna Nugent (Bakearoma), Diether Schuss (Vital Health), Wendy Pollard (Vital Health) celebrating 25 years or more of business.

Major business milestones and quiet achievers were also celebrated at the Maranoa Business Awards.

For service and dedication



Michelle Thompson from ROYAL on Ninety-Nine and Kathy Draper from Sunshine Mitre 10 were honoured with Judges Logal Legend awards.



Kerri-Leigh Beck (Roma Taxation Service), Hayley Forbes (Coho Group), Jane Hanly (CJ Advisory), Natalie Quinn (Quinn & Co Finance Broking) celebrating 10 years of business.



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to all the nominees, finalists
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