



Queensland Irish Association

Newsletter

August 2025

Dancing up a storm at State Championships



AIDA Queensland 52nd State Irish Dancing Championships from 8-10 August was given Silver Sponsorship by Queensland Irish Association. Congratulations to all the Queensland State Champions, above, and especially to 16 years Senior Boys Champion Patrick Kavanagh from QIA Dancers. Pictures: [AIDA Queensland](https://www.aida-queensland.com.au)

This edition is full of forthcoming events as well as great pictures of the Irish dancers, a reference to a fabulous Bloomsday as well as interesting features concerning Ernest Shackleton and the author Conal Creedon.

The board has recommended that the QIA be a leading sponsor of the Irish Film Festival Australia 2025 and the National Irish Dancing Championships 2025.

I really hope you contribute to the Queensland Irish Heritage Fund, particularly for Senior Members. (Queensland Irish Heritage Trust Fund

- BSB: 084-961 Account: 700646478)

I look forward to seeing you at the Members' drinks on Friday, 22 August at Coorparoo RSL, 45 Holdsworth Street, Coorparoo from 4pm to 6pm. There will be live entertainment.

And finally, now is the time to renew your membership. To do this, go to the Renew link at the bottom of the front page of our website, www.queenslandirish.com.

Kind regards,

Jeff Spender,
President,

Queensland Irish Association.





Queensland Irish Association

August Members' Gathering



Members and friends
are invited to join us on

Friday, 22nd August
from 4pm at

Coorparoo RSL,
45 Holdsworth Street, Coorparoo.

Food and drinks available to purchase

Live entertainment from 4.30pm

RSVP to Mavis Williams on 3849 8271



QIA Dancers having a well-deserved break during at the AIDA Queensland Mid Year Feis in July. Picture: facebook.com/QiaDancers

Support Irish culture in Queensland by donating to trust fund

The Queensland Irish Association is dedicated to keeping Irish heritage and culture alive in Queensland. One of the ways we do this is through our Queensland Irish Heritage Trust Fund, which supports local Irish music, dance and cultural projects.

The Trust Fund has been used recently to help promote and sustain Irish dancing and music in our community. To keep this work going, we rely entirely on donations from supporters like you.

All donations are tax deductible and help us continue to celebrate and share Irish culture for generations to come.

Donate now to: Queensland Irish Heritage Trust Fund - BSB: 084-961 Account: 700646478.

Or make a donation at <https://www.queenslandirish.com/donate/>.

The Trust Fund has deductible gift recipient status with the Australian Taxation Office. Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference.

Having a Function

We can add a whole lot more to your evening

Photo's (6inX8in) printed the same night and returned before the function finishes.
We will do PR photos of the event at no extra cost.
(subject to numbers)
Studio lights if requested will be set up before guests arrive.
There is no additional cost beyond the price of the photo's.
This is a great way to have a memory of the evening.

Good Times Network Photography
Phone 0401450977
www.goodtimesbrisbane.com

Calendar

22 August 2025

QIA Members Gathering, Coorparoo RSL, Coorparoo, 4pm.

29 September to 3 October 2025

Australian National Irish Dancing Championships

Royal International Convention Centre, RNA Showgrounds, Gregory Terrace, Bowen Hills.

3 to 5 October 2025

Australasia Gaelic Games Championships

Queensland Gaelic Football and Hurling Association, Willawong.

4 October 2025

CelticFest, Warwick, Queensland.

12 October 2025

Brisbane Celtic Festival, Auchenvflower.

22 November 2025

QIA AGM, details TBA.

6 December 2025

QIA Christmas Party, details TBA.

Contact us

We welcome content from Members and friends in this newsletter.

If you have news or an article you would like to see included, email the editor, our public relations officer Mary Allen, at mary@queenslandirish.com.au

You can also reach us through our website, www.queenslandirish.com.au, and on our social media pages.

Another great way to interact with QIA is by joining our Facebook [group](#), Queensland Irish Association Friends and Supporters.

Editor and designer: Mary Allen.

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Celtic Council of Australia (Queensland) Inc
ABN 83 434 304 383



proudly presents

2025

BRISBANE CELTIC FESTIVAL

Moorlands Park, Auchenflower, Brisbane

Sunday 12 October 2025 9.00am to 4pm



WHAT'S ON

Celtic Music and Dance from the Eight

Celtic Nations, Massed Pipe Bands

Kids Celtic Games

Tartan Clothes, Kilts: please wear yours

Prizes: Best Celtic Dressed Man, Woman,
Boy & Girl

Australian Scottish Community Qld Inc

- International Tartan Day



WHAT TO BRING

Hats, Umbrellas, Chairs/Blanket, Water
and Picnic Lunch if desired.

Light Refreshments available from food
vans on site. Variety of vendor tents.

HOW TO GET THERE

Train: Auchenflower Train Station

Bus: Coronation Drive, such as routes

444 or 445. Get off at a stop near

Land St or Wesley Hospital

CityCat Ferry: Get off at Regatta Hotel



**Standing Stones
Celtic Nations Monument**

Information contact

<https://www.ccaq.org.au/brisbane-celtic-festival-2025>

CCAQ President Mavis Williams CyC

email: mkw.pinklady.dua@hotmail.com

Phone: 07 3849 8271

Proudly sponsored by



Wednesday
1 October
CITY HALL
10am - 4pm

Explore 100 years of the Greater Brisbane City Council in One Big Day Out

Inspired by Brisbane's rich heritage and diverse community

BRISBANE

1925 100 2025

One City Together

Historic Photos & Displays

Kids' Activities

Guided Tours

Storytelling

Free Entry

All Ages



proudly supported by



BRISBANE CITY

B100DayOut




Greater Brisbane
1925 2025
CENTENARY

Dedicated to a better Brisbane

greaterbrisbanecentenary.com.au

QIA joining celebrations for Greater Brisbane 100

In 1925, Brisbane was transformed. Twenty local councils—cities, towns, shires, and partial shires—merged into a single Greater Brisbane under the City of Brisbane Act 1924. This bold move aimed to unify a rapidly growing region in pursuit of coordinated infrastructure, planning, and civic services. The act created a new council led by a Lord Mayor and 20 aldermen; the first council convened on 18 March 1925, and the full amalgamation took effect on 1 October that year, with William Jolly as the inaugural Lord Mayor.

To mark 100 years since this pivotal moment, the “Greater Brisbane Centenary: 1925 – 2025” initiative brings history to life — a heartfelt homage spearheaded by a coalition of more than 50 history and heritage groups, with support from Brisbane City

Council. Queensland Irish Association will be joining in the Greater Brisbane Centenary ‘Brisbane 100: One City Together’ celebrations on Wednesday, 1 October at Brisbane City Hall from 10am to 4pm.

At the 1915 state election, both the Liberal Premier, Digby Denham, and the Labor Leader of the Opposition and prominent Queensland Irish Association member, Thomas Ryan, supported the Greater Brisbane concept. Thomas Ryan became Premier of Queensland in 1915. His government laid the groundwork for municipal reform, advocating for better coordination among local councils.

As October approaches, the centenary celebrations gather pace. On 1 October, Brisbane 100 – One City Together will fill City Hall with activities, displays, and a community

focus on how far the city has come. If you are available to help us out at this event, we would love to hear from you, you can email mary@queenslandirish.com.au. We would need people to hand out flyers and chat to attendees. Bonus points if you'd like to dress up in Irish clothing!

On 11 October, the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, together with the Centenary Committee, Brisbane City Council, and the Museum of Brisbane, will present a full-day history conference with leading scholars and speakers. On 12 October, Marchant Park will host the unveiling of a plaque and information board to commemorate the former Kedron Shire Council.

Full details of all events are available at greaterbrisbanecentenary.com.au.

Ed Sheeran returning to Aus for Loop Tour

Global superstar Ed Sheeran is heading back to Australia and New Zealand next January, February and March with his all-new Loop Tour for a massive run of stadium shows.

Having already sold over 2.5 million tickets across Australia and New Zealand to date, Ed Sheeran's Loop Tour sees the beloved singer returning to our shores with a new live show that'll follow the release of his new album, *Play* – out Friday 12 September. Performing at stadiums in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch (his first show there in 11 years), before heading to Perth, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, Ed's new live show promises to be filled with surprises, new music, as well as his biggest hits.

Sheeran is an era-defining artist who has sold nearly 200 million records globally. Recently he was celebrated as a 12-time member of Spotify's Billions Club, while Apple Music revealed his 2017 hit 'Shape Of You' was their most-streamed song of the last decade. Moreover, Ed recently surpassed 100 million monthly listeners on Spotify, seeing him become the platform's 4th most-listened to artist in the world. Last on our shores in 2023 – when he played to a record-breaking 200,000 fans across two nights at Melbourne's iconic MCG – Sheeran's mammoth Mathematics Tour spanned countless shows across the globe, continuing his streak of breaking records and making history.

For full tour and ticket information visit frontiertouring.com/edsheeran.

Led by lead singles 'Azizam' (certified Gold and #1 at radio in AU), 'Sapphire' and 'Old Phone', *Play* marks the beginning of a fresh new chapter for Sheeran. The singer-songwriter's latest work is an explorative, technicolour pop album that captures the fun, chaos, and heart of an artist reinvigorated by life and travel. Promising all-new stage production



centred around the joyful, expansive sound of *Play*, the upcoming stadium shows will incorporate new visuals, intimate acoustic moments alongside his renowned loop pedal performances, and the full stadium singalongs only Ed Sheeran can deliver.

Inspired by musical cultures from around the globe – particularly Indian and Persian cultures and their surprising melodic connections to the Irish folk tradition he grew up with through shared scales, rhythms and melodies – *Play* encompasses an eclectic and borderless sound. On the album Sheeran has teamed up with producers and musicians from across the globe, showcasing his limitless musicianship.

With a new album, a renewed creative spirit and a catalogue of global

hits, Ed Sheeran's 2026 stadium tour is set to be one of the most anticipated live events of the year. Don't miss the return of one of the world's most loved live performers!

Ed Sheeran Queensland dates:

Fri 20 Feb 2026
Suncorp Stadium
Brisbane

Sat 21 Feb 2026
Suncorp Stadium
Brisbane

Sun 22 Feb 2026
Suncorp Stadium
Brisbane

Ticket are now on sale at: <https://www.frontiertouring.com/edsheeran>

Brisbane set to host the best in Irish dance



AIDA Championships. Picture: irishdancing.org.au

Brisbane will come alive with rhythm and tradition this spring as it hosts the 2025 Australian National Irish Dancing Championships from 29 September to 3 October. Organised by the Australian Irish Dancing Association (AIDA Inc), this premier event will see dancers from across the country step onto the stage at the Royal International Convention Centre in the Brisbane Showgrounds.

The Nationals are more than just a competition — they're the official qualifying event for the prestigious World Championships. Over four days, dancers will compete in solo and céili sections, showcasing intricate footwork, athletic jumps and the rich heritage of Irish dance.

Families, friends and supporters are set to fill the venue with energy and colour, cheering on dancers of all ages and levels. International adjudicators and musicians will add a truly global flavour, ensuring the standard remains world-class.

Entries closed on 1 August, and excitement is building among schools, teachers and performers preparing for the big stage. Brisbane locals and visitors alike can look forward to a spectacular display of skill, dedication and cultural pride.

For updates and event details, visit irishdancing.org.au.



We are proud to announce that the Australian Irish Dancing Championships is coming to Brisbane. Competitors and spectators alike will be immersed in a week-long festival of Ireland's dance, music and culture.

With over 1,200 dancers from all states of Australia, competing in solo and team events, renewing friendships, socialising and above all enjoying the spectacle of these Championships, we invite YOU to be part of what is truly a unique and memorable event.

Benefits of Partnership & Advertising

- Deep appreciation and engagement with the Irish dance community in Australia.
- Enhancement of corporate image through linking your company with a healthy and active lifestyle.
- Increased business potential.
- Direct access to an audience made up of your clients, current and potential.
- Opportunity to display products and offer sampling.
- Creation of brand awareness and acceptance.
- Promotion on the Association website and exposure at the Championships through signage and announcements.
- Enhanced company profile.
- Support of youth activity.



Australian
Irish Dancing
Association Inc.

For further information visit:
www.irishdancing.org.au/nationals

or contact
Clare McNeill-Armall: qld@aidainc.com
or sponsorship@aidainc.com



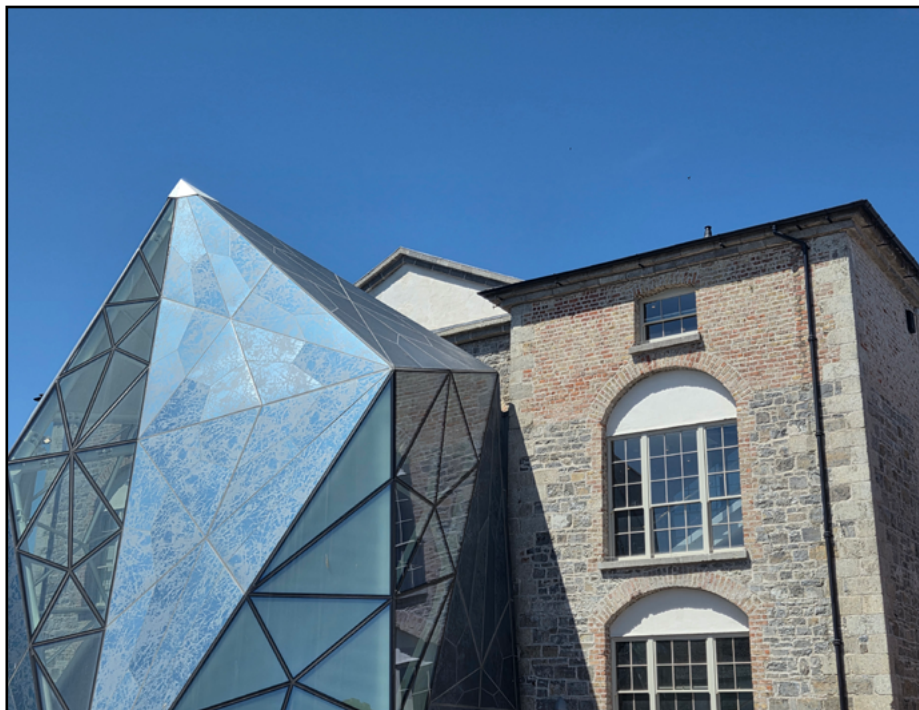
BÍ LINN ANOIS (Gaelic) JOIN WITH US NOW!

The story of Ireland's ultimate adventurer

A revamped and soon-to-be-re-opened museum in Athy's historic Town Hall embodies Ireland's adventurous spirit through the legendary Ernest Shackleton

His name is synonymous with adventure, exploration and endurance. Ernest Shackleton was one of the most renowned Antarctic explorers of all time, leading pioneering expeditions to the furthestmost corners of the planet, all the while embodying his family motto: "By endurance, we conquer". But did you know that Shackleton was born in Ireland, and a proud Irishman through and through? It's just one of the facets of his story that you can learn about when the Shackleton Experience re-opens in October, fresh from a huge renovation.

Set in Athy, County Kildare, just a few miles from the very place where Shackleton was born, this museum



Shackleton Experience. Picture: Courtesy Shackleton Experience/Ireland.com

is the only institution in the world dedicated to the life and work of the man himself. When the upgraded museum opens, it will showcase ev-

erything that made the Kildare man a groundbreaking force in the world of exploration.

You'll learn how he travelled from his birthplace, the village of Kilkea, to the outermost edges of the globe, and see some incredible artefacts from those very expeditions.

A world-class polar museum

"Athy is a beautiful heritage town steeped in history, with an incredibly passionate and supportive community," says Aline FitzGerald, General Manager of the Shackleton Experience. "The Shackleton Experience is destined to become one of the world's great polar museums, and the only one dedicated to the greatest explorer of them all, Sir Ernest J. Shackleton."

The attraction started life as a small community museum 25 years ago, and this epic renovation combines high-tech, immersive exhibits



Boat tour in Athy. Picture: Courtesy Athy Boat Tours/Ireland.com

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The story of Ireland's ultimate adventurer

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with rare relics that would take pride of place in any museum around the world. Set in the 300-year-old Town Hall in the heart of Athy, the sensitively restored building now features a striking glass shard extension that looks just like an iceberg, with a statue of Shackleton at the entrance.

Throughout the Shackleton Experience, you'll get great insight into the three Antarctic expeditions that he led, including the incredible story of *Endurance*, the ship that became trapped in the ice and later sank. Despite the great risk and danger, and against all odds, his leadership meant that all of the 27-man crew survived. However, the journey to survival was arduous, with the group forced to camp on the ice for 10 months before Shackleton and four others sailed 800 miles in a lifeboat, navigating treacherous waters in order to organise the rescue of the others. Their story of survival is one of the greatest of all time.

And in an absorbing, multi-media experience, you'll get a deep sense of what their escape from the ice-trapped ship was like, with crashing waves and wind effects bringing the story to life. You can also see biscuit and tobacco tins from that very ship, along with the actual sledge and harness Shackleton used on the Nimrod Expedition.

One of the most extraordinary displays is the actual cabin in which Shackleton died. He passed away of a heart attack during the Shackleton-Rowett Expedition to the South Pole in 1922, on the ship named *Quest*. You'll be able to see the cabin where he spent his final night. Then go to the reconstructed 1920s cinema to see archival footage and historic clips of his expeditions, to remember all of his accomplishments. There's also an exhibit showing what the polar regions are like today, and every year the Shackleton Autumn School



The Shackleton hut in Antarctica. Picture: Ireland.com/Shutterstock

features a series of workshops, talks and events that delve deeper into Shackleton's legacy.

But walk through the exhibits at any time, and you'll get an insight into what life must really have been like for Shackleton, setting sail for a

whole new world, right at the dawn of the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. Imagine sailing through the unknown territory of Antarctica, seeing icebergs looming on the horizon, watching penguins totter

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The story of Ireland's ultimate adventurer



South Pole Inn in Antarctic explorer Tom Crean's birthplace of Annascaul, Dingle.

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on the snow and looking out at the wonder of the Frozen Continent.

"It is in our nature to explore, to reach out into the unknown," said Shackleton, and that's just what he did, with his expeditions exemplifying the spirit of endurance.

Beyond the museum, the market town of Athy is a joy to uncover. Stroll the elegant grounds of the Georgian-era Burtown House, and dine in The Green Barn there, a contemporary restaurant serving fresh produce straight from the historic gardens. Then enjoy an Athy Boat Tour aboard a charming barge,

taking in local wildlife and historic landmarks along the way.

Ireland's adventurers

Shackleton's not the only celebrated Irish explorer. Over the years, the country has produced many an adventurous spirit, from Shackleton's fellow Antarctic explorer Tom Crean, to the pioneering travel legend Dervla Murphy. Further back in the 16th century, there was the pirate queen Grace O'Malley, a fearsome seafarer who defied gender norms and stereotypes to rule the ocean.

That spirit of adventure, endurance and exploration is still very much

alive in Ireland today. All around the country, there are courageous and innovative adventurers who set out to make the most of every inch of the island, climbing the soaring mountains, swimming its waters and performing incredible feats of strength and tenacity.

And it's easy to follow in their footsteps. You could take part in one of the Gael Force Great Swims, setting out into the gloriously clear waters of Killary Fjord in Connemara or the magical Lough Derg. If you want to go beneath the ground and explore the Fermanagh underworld,

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The story of Ireland's ultimate adventurer



Gaelforce Great River Swim, River Shannon, Lanesborough, Co. Longford.

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you can go “wild caving” in the Marble Arch Caves, donning expert gear and clambering through elaborate passages.

If running is more your thing, head to Donegal for the epic Seven Sisters Skyline Ireland, a 55km (or 30km) mountain running event, traversing seven peaks in the incredible Derryveagh Mountains. There are more trail running adventures in Wicklow, where the EcoTrail event sees participants running five different distances, from 10km to an astonishing 80km, over the mountains and through incredible scenery.

That's alongside the lower octane adventures that can be found all over the island, from beautiful walking trails and cycles to wild swimming.

Whether you want to get out of your comfort zone and have the adventure of a lifetime, or simply savour the beauty of the great outdoors, Ireland is an explorer's dream.



Words and pictures:
www.ireland.com

Statue of Irish polar explorer Tom Crean in Annascaul, Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry. Picture: Courtesy Dave Walsh

Heroes return: Féile na Laoch lights up the hills of Cork



Once every seven years, the quiet Gaeltacht village of Cúil Aodha transforms into a vibrant centre of Irish culture, as artists, musicians and storytellers gather for Féile na Laoch – the Festival of Heroes. Rooted in ancient tradition and inspired by the legacy of composer Seán Ó Riada, the 2025 festival brought fire, song, and soul to the hills of County Cork this July and August.

Once every seven years, the tiny Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking) village of Cúil Aodha in the Múscraí region of County Cork becomes the epicentre of Irish cultural expression. Féile na Laoch – the Festival of Heroes – is no ordinary event. Inspired by the artistic legacy of the renowned composer Seán Ó Riada, who made his home in this mountain community, the festival is a rare and deeply symbolic celebration of Irish culture, language and creativity.

Féile na Laoch honours outstanding contributors to Irish cultural life across seven artistic disciplines: Literature, Music, Dance, Art, Performance, Poetry and Song. Among the 2025 honourees was writer and broadcaster Cónal Creedon, who was named a Laoch Reacaire – a “hero of storytelling”.

Speaking to Queensland Irish Association Newsletter about Féile na Laoch 2025, Cónal Creedon said: “It’s a soulful engagement and a homecoming for me. My father’s people come from these hills. And so it has special personal significance that my six year old grandniece Edith Blake was here from London, such a wonderful opportunity to connect with her Irish heritage. Total immersion in Irish language, culture, the arts – the soul of Ireland is laid bare at Féile na Laoch.”

Creedon, an award-winning novelist, playwright and filmmaker, joined a distinguished group of fellow honourees that included Liam Ó Maonlaí (Hothouse Flowers), Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh (Altan), soprano Celine Byrne, sculptor John Behan, artist Maria Simonds-Gooding, fiddler Martin Hayes, actor Stephen Rae, and poet Annemarie Ní Churreáin.

The festival’s opening ceremony, An Aeríocht, is a dusk-to-dawn experience like no other. It begins with a Parade of Fire led by Peadar Ó Riada (son of Seán Ó Riada), setting out from Tigh Ó Riada about a mile from the main stage at Páirc na Laoch. Once the ceremonial flame is lit, the night unfolds in a continuous flow of music, dance, poetry, storytelling and performance until the first light of day.

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Heroes return: Féile na Laoch lights up the hills of Cork



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Describing An Aeríocht, Cónal Creedon said: “It’s such a personal honour to be appointed one of the Laoch 2025, connecting directly with the life-blood, pulse and soul of such a very special place. The parade of the Laochs was a very special experience – marching with the elements of fire and water, and arriving en masse, on foot, led by a piper created such a profound sense of passion and pageantry.”

Féile na Laoch has, over the years, paid tribute to many of Ireland’s most revered artists and cultural figures, including President Michael D. Higgins, visual artist Robert Ballagh, singer Seán Ó Sé, poet Nuala ní Dhomhnaill, actor Jeremy Irons, soprano Cara O’Sullivan, sculptor Imogen Stuart, poet Paul Muldoon, singer Christy Moore, and composer Phil Coulter.

Rooted in ancient traditions, the festival coincides with Lúnasa (Lughnasadh), the first of the Celtic harvest festivals named for the mythical hero Lugh. It is a time of gathering, gratitude, and celebration – and Féile na Laoch captures its essence in full force.

“It defies description - Féile na Laoch is lightning in a bottle. If you missed it this year you’ll have to wait seven years – until 2032 before you have the opportunity to witness it again. Go mbeirimid beo ar an am seo arís (May we live to see this time again).”



QIA's Bloomsday gathering at Gilhooley's



After QIA's Bloomsday in Brisbane event in Queen Street Mall, a lunch gathering was held at Gilhooley's Irish Bar and Restaurant. Thank you to all our Members who attended. Pictures: Alfred Photography Studio



QIA's Bloomsday gathering at Gilhooley's



COMMUNITY RAFFLE SUPPORT LOCAL. WIN BIG.

\$30,000 IN PRIZES TO BE WON!



1ST PRIZE: \$15,000 CASH
2ND PRIZE: \$3,000 CASH
3RD PRIZE: \$2,000 CASH
PRIZES 4-13: \$1,000 CASH



RAFFLE ENTRIES CLOSE FRIDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2025. DRAWN MONDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2025
T&C'S APPLY. CASH PRIZES PROVIDED BY BENDIGO BANK.

Conducted by:



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