Buskers at Cooma set to rock the jailhouse for annual festival

Thursday 25 October 2018

The historic Cooma Correctional Centre and prison museum will for the first time become a ‘busking hot spot’ next month when the sixth annual Australian National Busking Championships are held in the Snowy Mountains town.

Hundreds of buskers from across Australia will perform outside the still-operating prison and other busking hot spots throughout Cooma for the two-day festival on 3–4 November.

Cooma Correctional Centre Manager of Security Scott Bramble said they were proud to take part in the important community event.

“The annual championship not only brings tourism dollars to the town of Cooma, it brings music to our streets,” Mr Bramble said.

“We’re proud to be part of the Cooma community and we’re looking forward to showcasing to guests the prison’s historic gatehouse and the neighbouring Corrective Services museum, which is a terrific place to visit.”

The museum showcases the history of Corrective Services NSW, with a range of displays and artefacts from convict days to the present. Minimum-security inmates are the tour guides.

Australian National Busking Championships President Allan Spencer said they were excited about using the 19th century prison as a busking location for the first time.

“Using a correctional centre — and the museum — as a backdrop for busking will be a first for Cooma and possibly for Australia,” Mr Spencer said.

“Buskers will be coming to compete from all around the country for a share of over $12,000 in cash prizes, as well as the glory of being crowned Busking Champion.

“There will be a huge variety of performances, with genres such as country, blues, rock, pop, jazz, folk, Indigenous, multicultural and classical music on display.

“There will also be other forms of street performance such as dance, juggling, magic, poetry, and even belly dancers, and a 20-piece bagpipe and drum band.”

Australian National Busking Championships
Various locations in Cooma, NSW
3-4 November 2018
Cooma Correctional Centre: 1 Vagg Street, Cooma
More: buskingcooma.com