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Hot and dry greeting for Meredith 2006: image gallery

By [Jarrod Watt](#)

The 16th Meredith Music Festival kicks off amid high fire danger and oppressive summer heat; thousands gather for psychedelic grooves, hip-hop and heavy rock and roll amidst the gum trees on the Nolan family farm.

Rare are the music festivals where the recycling message is carried by a pregnant woman dancing the can-can dressed in hot pants and halter top with a tool belt adorned by empty beercans. But this is the kind of unique spirit that has drawn 10,000 people annually to the usually sleepy dairy farming town of Meredith, to gather and camp at a farm which is transformed into the 'Supernatural Ampitheatre' for two and a half days' worth of pumping live music, featuring Australia's best sharing the single stage with some of the hottest new acts in the world.

This year the limited entry Friday night program had attracted a 200 car queue by 11am, two hours before the opening of the gates, with the queue growing several kilometres long as carloads of revellers arrived from Melbourne, Warrnambool, Ballarat and interstate to begin festivities. A dedicated policy of hiring locals and in ensuring the surrounding community benefits from the festival combined with 16 years of goodwill from the festival patrons has helped create a casual and caring atmosphere amidst the high volume chaos onstage.

Up to 5,000 campers were expected through the gates to erect their tent city for the weekend, with the local Meredith community again the dominant presence amongst the catering contingent, with their Community Tucker Tent expected to bring in thousands of dollars for local community projects through the sale of snags, steak sangers and burgers to the hungry masses. Over the past decade this tent has helped to pay for play equipment for the local school, programs for the kindergarten, lights for the town's tennis courts and much more.

This year also marked a decade since the life-changing injury of Chris Nolan, whose family owns the property and who was one of the original organisers who got a handful of bands to play on the back of a truck 16 years ago. The festival's fundraising has also helped Chris and his family campaign for and receive the medical

supervision and treatment he needs.

The afternoon opened with Melbourne-based psychedelic rockers The Sand Pebbles, with special guests Clare Moore on drums, Dave Graney on sharp suit and cowbell, and Melbourne musician Sean Simmons barefoot and cross-legged playing a rone box on a small podium, providing a retro 60s vibe to the opening of a weekend predicted to bring extremely high temperatures exceeding the high 30s.

They were followed by dynamic Melbourne hip-hop crew Diafrix, accompanied by a live band and brass section who brought the crowd down from the hill to shake their collective booties despite the heat climbing into the 30s. After ther hip-hop came the hard rock, with Adelaide's Wolf and Cub bringing their guitar/bass/two drummer onslaught on to the enthusiastic roars of the crowd.

>>Loud, nude and raucous in the country: Meredith 2005

>>Meredith 2005 photo gallery



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