

Paperific Expo 2015

2015 Show
**August
28-30**

One of Australia's favourite papercraft events celebrates its 15th birthday this year. Naomi Swan, director of the Paperific Expo has seen many changes to the event since it first opened its doors



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Paperific started 15 years ago as a result of a gap in the papercraft industry. Stacey Apeitos was the original founder of the expo. She ran her own business called Studio Astarte, where she manufactured her own polymer unmounted stamps (UMS). In the mid 90s UMS were not mainstream in the papercraft industry. Stacey saw a gap in the market and decided to start her own expo to showcase a variety of papercrafts. It was originally called Melbourne Paper Arts and the first expo was held in 2000. In 2005, the name was changed to Paperific.

Stacey ran Paperific for nine

years, then sold it on to Naomi, in 2009 when she became ill with cancer. She sadly passed away just after the expo's 10th birthday.

Over the last six years, Naomi has made many changes to the expo including the venue, which is now Melbourne Showgrounds. As well as this, the logo has changed. Naomi kept the original logo until after the 10th birthday expo but decided it needed freshening up. The original logo came about from one of Stacey's friends putting together a bunch of her art stamps to make the Paperific Lady. Naomi's new design was inspired by family stickers seen

on cars and the girl in the logo is called Stacey in honour of the original Paperific founder.

Many of the exhibitors describe the atmosphere at Paperific as electric. There is always a great buzz at the event and some of the exhibitors have been part of the expo for over ten years, including Art Stamps Australia, Catchy Crafts, Cardmaking.net, Eclectic Images and Skat Katz. And Lesley Bieniak of Little Bits craft shop in Melbourne has only missed one expo in 15 years!

Every expo, there are exhibitors running free 'make and take' projects on their stands. No other expo offers

as many free 'make and take' projects and there are also several paid-for workshops and mini classes.

The Prize Patrol is one of Naomi's favourite parts of the expo. This started in 2010 at the 10th birthday. Naomi hands out random prize bags to lucky expo attendees. A 'make and take' stand name is called out and anyone sitting at that table receives a prize bag filled with craft goodies. Some prize bags are also handed out to unsuspecting customers, such as the lady braving the expo with a toddler and a baby! The Prize Patrol bags have become something of a collector's item!



Naomi loves to encourage children into crafting too. Between running the expos, Naomi is a pediatric intensive care nurse so she loves to get children involved in creativity. In 2012, Naomi launched a colouring competition for the children. Every child wins a prize for participating and in 2013, it was made more interactive with a crafty treasure hunt, which of course ends with a prize bag, making the expo fun for all the family.

As with Paperific crafting itself has been through lots of changes over the last fifteen years, with many attendees of the expo commenting that

there was no such thing as scrapbooking in the early years. This became trendy in the mid 2000s, so the expo moved with this trend and now both cardmaking and scrapbooking are well represented at the event. Die-cutting is the next big trend, with die-cutting machines such as the Cuttlebug and Big Shot cutters being the must-have items, so there will be no shortage of exhibitors selling these machines at this year's show. And with evolving trends such as mixed-media art, stenciling and punching coming around this year, it's clear that the Paperific Expo is ahead of the game in terms of popular

Above: Naomi Swan
Right: Stacey Apeitos
Far left: Naomi's redesigned logo and Stacey's original Paperific Lady logo

techniques and products and will be the place to be to explore what's new in the papercrafting world this year.

! Paperific will celebrate its 15th birthday expo on August 28th, 29th and 30th at Melbourne Showgrounds. To find out more, visit www.paperific.com.au

