



# SHOWBIZ

THE OFFICIAL QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE RNA

2015  
SPRING  
EDITION

PG  
03

FASHION'S ELITE  
DESCEND ON THE SHOWGROUNDS

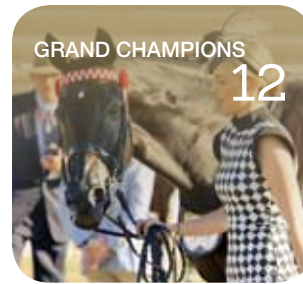
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EKKA'S INAUGURAL FUNDRAISER

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GRAND CHAMPIONS

# Contents



## Welcome

From left: His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland, Kaye de Jersey, Jane Thomas and RNA President David Thomas

For 138 years, The Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) has been bringing the country and city together to celebrate and champion agriculture and the critical role it plays in our everyday lives.

After 10 days of celebrating what makes Queensland great, the state's biggest event drew to a close on Sunday, August 16 at the Brisbane Showgrounds.

For the second year, Ekka visitors had the chance to experience all the fun of the fair over two full weekends.

There was so much on offer at this year's show including the world-class nightly program, EKKAnites. Not only did this include the traditional elements like the woodchop and sheepdogs, but also the X-Treme Action Show and the spectacular fireworks finale.

A highlight of Ekka is always the competitions. Since the very first exhibition, the Ekka has showcased animals, fine arts and produce from across Australia. We are proud to provide reward and recognition for those dedicated to producing the best of the best. As the show moves into the 21st century we remain committed to championing agriculture more than ever. We welcomed more than 21,000 entries across 13,000 classes in 48 competition sections in 2015.

Once again the state-of-the-art Royal International Convention Centre (Royal ICC) played home to the iconic fashion parades, Agricultural Hall and the critically-acclaimed Royal Queensland Steakhouse. New to the Royal ICC this year was the Education Precinct, Fine Arts, Pisciculture Competition and Royal Queensland Cat Show.

Since 1876, the RNA has been the proud custodian of this historic event and we are committed to building a wonderful legacy for future generations to enjoy.

A special thank you must go to our RNA members, Ekka exhibitors, competitors, judges and stewards, volunteers and visitors. I would also like to thank my fellow RNA Councillors and the RNA staff for making the 2015 Ekka such a wonderful event.

We look forward to seeing you at the show in 2016

David Thomas  
RNA President

# MBFF puts best foot forward

The who's who of the Australian fashion industry descended on the Brisbane Showgrounds in August for the tenth anniversary of Mercedes-Benz Fashion Festival (MBFF) Brisbane.

For the first time, the elite fashion event was held in the historic John Reid Pavilion. The new location allowed MBFF to accommodate more guests than ever before and create a spectacular new stage. The pavilion was completely transformed and was the perfect location for fashion's elite to celebrate MBFF's tenth anniversary in style.

Some of the country's top designers, including Aje, Alex Perry, Easton Pearson, Yeojin Bae, Paul Hunt and Nicola Finetti showcased their designs on the Brisbane catwalk.



Jennifer Hawkins walks the MBFF Brisbane runway



# Chef's Table celebrates spring

The Royal International Convention Centre's (Royal ICC) Chef's Table initiative continues this spring, with guests being treated to an exclusive culinary experience.

Hosted by the Royal ICC's Executive Chef Sean Cummings, the philosophy behind the 'in kitchen' dining experience is to give potential Royal ICC clients the chance to taste a selection of dishes, using the award-winning Royal Queensland Food and Wine Show produce and to get an insight of what goes on behind the scenes in the Royal ICC kitchen.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Royal ICC for more information – 07 3253 3900 or [sales@royalicc.com.au](mailto:sales@royalicc.com.au)



# 2016 Ekka tickets are the perfect gift

The countdown to Ekka 2016 has officially begun with tickets now on sale for next year's event. Every ticket sold before December 31, 2015 comes with a free merchandise pack worth \$23. This includes an Ekka cowbell, hat and poncho. There is also a one in five chance to win a \$40 ride card.

If you're looking for that perfect gift for someone who loves the Ekka go to [www.ekka.com.au](http://www.ekka.com.au) and get your tickets now.



Photos courtesy of Marty Kincaid



Sir Richard Branson

The Royal International Convention Centre (Royal ICC) played host to iconic entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson in September.

Mr Branson, the founder of Virgin group and one of the most successful businessmen of our time, was in Brisbane for the prestigious 'Titans of Real Estate' conference which was held at Brisbane's newest convention centre, the Royal ICC.

More than 650 guests had the chance to listen and talk with some of Australia's most successful real estate moguls including Glen Twiddle – the real estate marketer who brought Arnold Schwarzenegger to the Royal ICC in March and John McGrath - one of the most influential figures in the Australian property industry.

The highlight of the conference was the insightful talk by Sir Richard Branson, followed by a meet and greet for VIP guests.

## Brisbane Showgrounds welcomes residents

In a history making moment for the Brisbane Showgrounds, the very first residents have moved into their new homes at The Green on King Street. Dean Raihman (pictured) is one of more than 500 residents moving into The Green's 365 apartments across the five towers.

The lower part of King Street, including the connecting Brewers Lane, is now open to enable residents to access their apartments with ease.

Stunning Waterhousia Floribunda trees, standing about 7 metres tall, have been planted along this part of King Street, with works continuing along the remainder of the street as both the Rydges Hotel and The Yards apartments begin to take shape.





## *Be one of the first people to live at the iconic Brisbane Showgrounds!*

One and two bedroom apartments are now available for rent  
at The Green from \$400 per week.

Located just 1.5km to Brisbane's CBD on Brisbane's new King Street, you can now live within walking distance of the Brisbane Showgrounds events precinct; Constance Street restaurants, bars and live music venues; Valley Metro; Brunswick Street; Chinatown Mall; and James Street.

Choose from a variety of apartment layouts, each with:

- great views
- generous, light-filled indoor and outdoor living spaces
- stone benchtops and European appliances
- air conditioning and ceiling fans
- energy saving lighting
- high speed internet data points

You're also just a short walk to the Fortitude Valley Train Station, QUT Kelvin Grove Campus and Creative Industries, the Royal Brisbane Hospital and QIMR medical research hub.

Enjoy large open green spaces, keep your horse at the stables (if you have one) and enjoy life at Brisbane's most exciting new urban playground.

Rent an  
apartment at  
**the green**  
apartments brisbane

Email [rentals@thegreenapartments.com.au](mailto:rentals@thegreenapartments.com.au)  
or call 0413 258 954

All about Queensland's largest event – the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) – including competitions, entertainment, exhibitors, personalities and people.

Ekka 2015



After 10 days of celebrating the state's biggest event, the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) drew to a close on Sunday, 16 August at the iconic Brisbane Showgrounds.

• • • • •

This year we welcomed 21,000 competition entries, 10,000 animals, a smorgasbord of award-winning food and wine, tens of thousands of school children and hours of free family entertainment including the Australian first EkkaNITES and spectacular fireworks finale.

• • • • •

People from across the state came together to enjoy and experience the best of the best. The Ekka is the people's show, unique in the Australian landscape due to its rich generational connection with Queenslanders.





Since 1948,  
Syd has not  
missed  
an Ekka

## Ekka's Ag Hall has a new legend

Ekka stalwart Sydney 'Syd' Haag became the official 2015 Ekka Legend when he was crowned the title by RNA President David Thomas at a reception held during the show.

Syd, from Bundamba near Ipswich, has been heavily involved with the show for 67 years. Many know Syd from the Agricultural Hall where he is famous for the giant vegetables he grows and blue ribbon worthy district exhibit displays.

Syd was born into the Agricultural Show movement and followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, who started showing One Farm Exhibits (now known as the district exhibits) in 1921 at the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka).

At the age of 16, in 1948, Syd began his association with the Ekka and moved on to become an honorary agricultural judge at the age of 21.

Since 1948, Syd has not missed an Ekka and continues to compete in the District Exhibits and Giant Vegetable Competitions.

He and his wife Val have passed their love of agriculture on to their sons and daughters and in particular their grandson Thomas, who has already won prizes in the giant vegetable competitions.

RNA President David Thomas said Syd epitomised what an Ekka legend was all about.

"Syd has been involved with the show for 67 years and continues to dedicate much of his time to the Agricultural Hall," Mr Thomas said.

"Not only is he an advocate for the show and Queensland agriculture, but he's a mentor to many in the Youth District Exhibits and plays a key role in teaching the next generation about the Ag Hall."

RNA Councillor Gary Kieseker and Honorary Council Steward Robert Mahoney nominated Syd for the Ekka Legend Award for his tireless service to his committee, the RNA and the Queensland agricultural community.

Syd won't be hanging up his gardening tools anytime soon, he said he will continue to compete at the show as long as he is capable.



## EkkaNITES spectacular

Ekka's Australian first night show, EkkaNITES, lit up the Brisbane skyline each night of show with its X-Treme Action and spectacular fireworks finale.

The show not only featured the traditional elements like the woodchop and sheepdogs, but had a whole new design and more extreme sports – including the daring FMX Freestyle Kings and X-Treme Action Transformer monster trucks.

Australia's own country music legend James Blundell rocked the audience with some country classics including Way out West and the night ended in a bang with the spectacular fireworks finale which featured fireworx skylighter bazookas and coloured flames for the first time.

This spectacular nightly event was once again produced by entertainment extraordinaire Jack Ellison, who has worked on blockbuster films including James Bond Quantum of Solace and Mission Impossible 2.



## Ekka 2015



### First cuddles at the animal nursery

The RACQ Animal Nursery is a family favourite and one of the most popular Ekka attractions. Home to hundreds of cute and cuddly animals, the much loved Animal Nursery was the place where many mini Ekka visitors got to meet these furry creatures for the first time.



### Showbags a showstopper

With more than 300 showbags on offer, it's no surprise the Triple M Showbag Pavilion was an Ekka hotspot.

Bertie Beetle proved once again to be a crowd favourite with more than 130,000 Bertie Beetle showbags sold (the most popular showbag this year). 15,000 Cadbury Dairy Milk bags and 10,000 Freddo, Caramello and Minions showbags were sold, while the Jurassic Park and Frozen bags walked out the door with around 100,000 sold overall. The Wallabies, Triple M and Wonka bags all sold out.

### Samantha Jade

Pop star Samantha Jade visited the show for the first time, bringing a piece of stardom to The Entertainment and Fashion Stage in the Royal ICC. She sang a number of her pop hits including 'Shake That' and 'Up'. Ekka guests were even able to meet the popstar and get her autograph after her Ekka performance.



## Fashion parades taken to a new level

The new look Natural Fibres Fashion Parades, presented by Cotton Australia, were a hit with the Ekka audience. The iconic parades not only featured the latest in Australian fashion, but welcomed Majestic dancers who captivated the audience with their aerial tricks. The Brisbane fashion event has been a favourite on the Ekka program since the 1980s.



## Mater steals the show

Pigs really did fly at this year's Ekka, bringing bumper crowds to Stockman's Rest each day of show. Seven-year-old Mater Vandeleur, with the help of his grandfather Tom, captivated the audience with their impressive pig training tricks. The pigs not only raced each other around a track but flew through the air as they dived into a pool of water. Mater made international news when his special report for Channel Seven's Brisbane Nightly News captured audiences around Australia and the world.



## Agriculture inspires young Ekka-goers

This year the state-of-the-art Royal ICC played home to the new Ekka Education Precinct. The Education Precinct was filled to the brim with students eager to learn more about Australian agriculture. Visitors were able to watch shows on the Education Stage including the Big Bang Education show and could even get their hands dirty at the Dirtgirlworld activity centre. The Bubble Muffin Kids Cooking Club was also a popular choice with kids given the opportunity to produce their own edible gardens.

## Ekka 2015 Food Facts

- 185,000+** Dagwood Dogs
- 40,000+** Cheese toasties sold  
(1 tonne of butter, 2 tonnes of cheese)
- 176,000** Schooners of beer  
(up 5% on last year)
- 42,000+** Burgers/steak sandwiches  
(up 3.8% on last year)
- 37,000+** Cans of rum
- 7,000+** CWA scones
- 5,000+** Award winning steaks
- 3 tonne** Twisted chips
- 3,500** People have bought and tasted  
the world's hottest chilli
- 9,500** Mini hot dogs sold from Gotzinger
- 14,000** Sausages sold from the German Hut
- 6,000+** Longboard burgers
- 5,500+** Bagels
- 3,000** Bao Buns sold from Kwan Brothers
- 5,000** Waffles On A Stick
- 2,000** Punnets of chocolate dipped  
strawberries
- 15** Phat Bastard Burgers  
successfully eaten  
(weighing in at 1.8kg per burger)

\*numbers are estimates only



**152,000+**  
Strawberry  
Sundaes



**21,000+**  
Doughnuts  
eaten



**33,000+**  
Glasses  
of wine

# Royal Queensland Show 2015 Grand Champions

Category	Winner
<b>Thoroughbred</b>	
Supreme Champion Thoroughbred	Secret Circus, Anderson & Powell Families, Oakey QLD
Most Successful Exhibitor – Thoroughbred	Secret Circus, Anderson & Powell Families, Oakey QLD
<b>Stud Horses</b>	
Supreme Champion Australian Stockhorse	Valliview Rivoli Oak, P Lenihan & R Lenihan, Lanefield QLD
Supreme Champion Clydesdale	Oscarville Troy, Judy Peters, QLD
Supreme Champion Riding Pony	Silkwood Miss Prim, Mikayla Vankampen, Tallebudgera QLD
<b>Showjumping</b>	
Champion Rider –Showjumping	Made U Look ron easey, Ronald Easey, Quipolly NSW
<b>Farriers &amp; Blacksmiths</b>	
Most Successful Exhibitor – Open	Brad Hinze, Baerami NSW
<b>Horses in Action</b>	
Champion Hack of Queensland	WBH Entourage, Warren Coyle, VIC
Champion Gentleman Rider	Avoca Tropenglitzen ridden by Peter Ewing, Peter Ewing Ascot QLD
Champion Lady Rider	Kirrilee True Obsession ridden by Jasmin Hunt, Kim Taunton, Worongary QLD
Champion Show Hunter Galloway of Queensland	Alpine Park Blue Dimples, J Uppington & A Ogilvy & P Lenihan, Logan Reserve QLD
Champion Pony Hack of QLD – Over 12.2 hands	Headley Park Royal Show, GC Equestrian & Sarah Scotson, Guanaba QLD
Champion Medium or Heavy Horse Over 14 Hands	Carbery Estate Archie, Trevor Kohler, Pittsworth QLD



## Grand Champions

Category	Winner
<b>Woodchopping &amp; Sawing</b>	
<b>Champion Axeman of Show</b>	Laurence M O'Toole, Doncaster VIC
<b>Canine</b>	
<b>Champion of Show</b>	Articivory Watch Ur Back , Melissa Brown, Bonython ACT
<b>Feline</b>	
<b>Supreme All Breeds Feline of Show</b>	Miakoschka Jaromira, Marie Mahoney, Burpengary QLD
<b>Pisciculture</b>	
<b>Champion Fish of Show</b>	Steve Werner, Jimboomba QLD
<b>Grand Champion Exhibit of Show</b>	Planted Aquarium "Uluru Dreaming", Fishchick Aquatics, Annerley QLD
<b>Poultry</b>	
<b>Grand Champion Fowl of Show</b>	Bantam Pekin White Cockerel, Geoffrey Edards, Maryborough QLD
<b>Grand Champion Waterfowl of Show</b>	Indian Runner White Drake, Terry & Linda Taylor, Burua QLD
<b>Grand Champion Bantam of Show</b>	Bantam Pekin White Cockerel, Geoffrey Edards, Maryborough QLD



Category	Winner
<b>Dairy Cattle</b>	
<b>Supreme Champion Dairy Cow</b>	Arabella Farming Company, Holstein, Glenalbas Goldwyn Olivia –ET, Brookstead QLD
<b>Prime Beef</b>	
<b>Grand Champion Pen of Show</b>	Juandah Grazing, Charolais/Angus, Miles QLD
<b>Stud Beef</b>	
<b>Champion of Champions Breed Pairs - Bull - Cow or Heifer</b>	KL Smith, Red Angus, K5X JACKPOT J20, Allora QLD G & K Iseppi, Red Angus, GK RED BELLA 26 G42, Dalby QLD
<b>Champion of Champions Bull</b>	KL Smith, Red Angus, K5X JACKPOT J20, Allora QLD
<b>Champion of Champion - Cow or Heifer</b>	C & L Sowden, Limousin, Oakwood Fiddlez, Kingaroy QLD
<b>Interbreed Champion Small Breeds</b>	
<b>Bull</b>	Margo Hayes, Ausline, VITULUS JUST DO IT, Thorton QLD
<b>Cow or Heifer</b>	Margo Hayes, Ausline, VITULUS HIP HOP, Thorton QLD
<b>Led Steer</b>	
<b>Grand Champion Led Steer</b>	SN & DN Beaumont and MF & NJ Nicholls, Speckle Park X Charolais, Kyogle NSW
<b>Grand Champion Led Steer Carcass</b>	Sowden & Riley Families, Limousin, Kingaroy QLD
<b>Dairy Goats</b>	
<b>Supreme Champion Dairy Doe of Show</b>	Poldark Splendour, Lesley & Tom Mcdowell, Baan Baa NSW
<b>Angora Goats</b>	
<b>Grand Champion Angora Goat of Show</b>	DAUSON 436, Graham Dau, Pilton QLD
<b>Sheep</b>	
<b>Supreme Champion Ram of Show</b>	SCOTS ROGER, The Scots PGC College, Warwick QLD
<b>Supreme Champion Ewe of Show</b>	Nelly, Calvary Christian College, Loganholme QLD
<b>Supreme Champion Breeders of Show</b>	Dakabin State High School, Dakabin QLD

## Grand Champions

Category	Winner
<b>Quilts</b>	
<b>Best of Show</b>	Pam Hill, On The Wing, Manly QLD
<b>Fine Arts</b>	
<b>Grand Champion Cake Decorating Entry</b>	Pauline Herrmann, Traditional Wedding Cake, Ipswich QLD
<b>Grand Champion Exhibit of Show - Craft</b>	Louise Cumming, Embroidery, Wellers Hill QLD
<b>Champion Portrait of Show</b>	Gordon Hooper, Drawing, Windsor QLD
<b>Champion Sculpture of Show</b>	David Mackay Harrison, Zophia, Ballina NSW
<b>Champion Print of Show (photography)</b>	Cailin Gore, Times Be Tough, Warner QLD
<b>Agricultural Hall</b>	
<b>Best Collection of Exhibitors from the Districts</b>	Darling Downs District
<b>Champion Exhibitor – Home Grown Giant Vegetable</b>	Geoff Frohloff, Minden QLD
<b>Apiculture</b>	
<b>Champion Honey of Show</b>	Albert Payne, Esk QLD
<b>Horticulture</b>	
<b>Mabel Burnett Shield – Most Effective Display</b>	Bromeliad Society
<b>Colin Campbell Memorial – Most Educational Display</b>	Bromeliad Society



# RNA Inaugural Charity Fundraiser

~ 2015 ~



## Special Report

By Jane Thomas

On Thursday 6th August, the day before the Ekka's gates officially opened, the RNA held their 'Inaugural' Fundraiser. The reason for creating this event was to support those living in regional Queensland; and the project this year was aimed at helping families who are currently being affected by the drought. The function was so successful that plans are now in place for this to become an annual event.

The idea began when, on February 12, representatives from the RNA attended a reception at Government House, in support of drought affected Queenslanders. For this event, the Governor and his wife (His Excellency, the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC and Mrs Kaye de Jersey) had hosted for the weekend three families from as far away as Longreach, Winton and Charters Towers. As 'city' and 'country' guests mingled on the ground floor Drawing Room, the stories and experiences being told were a revelation to many of the city folk present. Being one of those 'born and bred' in the city, I was totally shocked and unprepared for the tales of hardship currently being experienced out west.

It was a wake-up call!

How lucky are we?

Yes, we have to pay for our water . . . but when we turn on the tap, water does actually come out. What's more, it's drinkable and clean!



Our child has a sore tooth, we go to the dentist. Oh dear! It took an extra 15 minutes due to bad traffic. Out west there is little traffic – just a 6 hour drive to the nearest township plus the money required for the petrol and other expenses needed to get there and back. I was informed that many drought affected families have not had an income for well over two years!

It is one thing hearing about these hardships on the television; it is quite another talking face to face with a person directly affected by such challenges. I was impressed by their stoic resilience and continued love of the land. I was inspired by their assurance that the rains will come – they always do – eventually. Yet I also felt depressed, useless and helpless over the fact that nothing can be done, except to wait for that rain. If I felt depressed, how do they feel faced with these conditions on a daily basis?



RNA Inaugural Charity  
Fundraiser Committee  
from left: Gina Fairfax,  
Margi Adnam,  
Margot Warby and  
Jane Thomas



## 2015 'Inaugural' Fundraiser



MC Pip Courtney,  
host of ABC's Landline

Within days of the Government House reception, discussions were being held amongst RNA Councillors, their wives and the administration. In line with the RNA's charter of helping and educating rural youth, it was decided that an event would be held aimed at raising money for the purchase of iPads for drought affected families whose children are being educated through the Longreach School of Distance Education. The school's principal embraced the idea enthusiastically. She explained that many of the children are helping hand water and feed the stock on their parents' properties. Being able to 'download' their requirements and then complete those studies, at a time convenient to their families, would be of enormous assistance during these trying times.

By April plans were well underway after having received a nod from the RNA Council who had agreed to provide financial backing for this yet to be tested venture. The venue could be no better than that of the 'Royal International Convention Centre', situated in the heart of the showgrounds. With the promise of a 'High Tea' prepared by the RNA's own specialised chefs and catering team, nothing seemed impossible for this 'Ladies Only' event.

A Committee was formed comprising Mrs Gina Fairfax, Mrs Margi Adnam, Mrs Margot Warby and me (Jane Thomas). Friends and other Councillor's wives were invited to become a Hostess and/or help by supplying a list of ladies names, along with contact email addresses. These particulars were then placed on a database to be used for our invitation purposes only. Communications between family and friends went into overdrive!!! Every guest was to receive their own personal invitation. Every lady invited had a direct connection with the RNA.



Karla James, Shannon Story and Helena Sant



Ellen Gett presents Jane Thomas with a donation  
from her primary school

Invitations were emailed out on May 22.  
The response was overwhelming!!!

The event sold out in less than three weeks!!!

Due to popular demand, the number of guests was increased to a maximum capacity of 550 and a waitlist was formed.

This was in spite of a computer 'spam' glitch, which resulted in many invitations going into the recipient's 'Junk Mail' folders - never to see the light of day. Fortunately, this problem has been identified and should not occur next year.

During the next two months a few key people worked hard - gathering together 14 Silent Auction items and 50 Raffle prizes, all to be purchased on the 'Big Day'. At the same time cash donations kept pouring in. At an early stage, there was even an amazing offer from one lady who wrote a cheque for the equivalent of 5 iPads as she was unable to attend but wished to contribute to our cause. Such happenings are incredible morale boosters!!! Feelings of goodwill, support and camaraderie were felt by everyone involved in the organising of this wonderful event.

The 'Big Day' finally arrived and from 1.45pm RICC's Main Hall started filling with 550 excited, enthusiastic and energetic ladies. Qld's 'Ekka Community' was a buzz of activity. Our 19 'Miss Show Girl' finalists had re-organised their busy programme in order to be able to attend. 'City' welcomed 'country', while age-old reunions and many new introductions and friendships started happening all around.

At 2.00pm everyone was asked to take a seat in front of the stage. The winner of the 'Lucky seat number' was identified and then everyone settled down to enjoy the colour and styles of the Fashion Parade which featured some of Brisbane's top Fashion Houses. The fabulous designs were interspersed with amazing acrobatic performances. It was 'Ekka Entertainment' at its best!!!

At the conclusion of the Fashion Parade, the serious business of WHY we had all gathered together was taken in hand by a person well-versed in life on the land.

Special Guest Master of Ceremonies, the highly acclaimed 'Landline' ABC Television presenter Ms Pip Courtney, presided over an impressive programme. Pip asked everyone to remain seated while she introduced our guest speakers.



Guest speaker Penny Button



Former Governor General of Australia Dame Quentin Bryce (left) and Janet Waller

## 2015 'Inaugural' Fundraiser

Firstly, 12 year old Ellen Gett and her mother were interviewed. This was done in conjunction with the showing of an edited version of the film Ellen produced as homework and which was subsequently aired on 'Landline' earlier this year. Ellen's video depicted the drought affected property, in central Qld, run by her grandfather and uncle. For those of you who wish to know more about this remarkable and emotionally revealing tale, it can be viewed on:  
<http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2015/s4181119.htm>

Following Ellen presenting me with a cheque covering funds raised by her school holding a 'Plain Clothes Day'; Pip introduced our final speaker, Mrs Penny Button. Penny owns and manages (along with her son and his wife), 'Crossmoor' Station, near Muttaborra. This property lies just north of Longreach – one of the outback towns hardest hit by the state's most widespread drought on record.

Penny's explanation about the current plight out west was factual and educating yet sensitive and inspiring. The imparting of her heart-felt, first-hand knowledge received a standing ovation from all present. It was a rousing moment and one which will not be forgotten by all those present.

At the conclusion of the speeches everyone happily resumed their 'meetings and greetings'. A traditional 'High Tea' of ribbon sandwiches, scones and tiny cakes was presented on an impressive array of fine china and vintage crockery provided by 'Fancy Tea'. This added a lovely old-world charm to the setting.



Raffle ticket sales soared along with bids on the Silent Auction. A framed canvas photograph of outback Qld was bought by Ellen's mother and has since been donated to the Royal Children's Hospital. No doubt this tranquil country scene is already providing some peaceful thoughts for those who gaze upon it.

The RNA wishes to thank most sincerely all those who contributed to the Raffle and Silent Auction. We hope this acknowledgement does not embarrass those who so quietly and willingly offered their support in this important part of the fundraising activities:

Adorne, West End  
Australia Zoo  
Author, Alice Greenup  
Brisbane Festival  
Chemist Warehouse (Redcliffe)  
Colours Etc  
Delahunty Pharmacies  
Dymocks Book Store  
Everingham & Watson, Homewares and Gifts  
Guide Dogs Qld  
Heather's Herbal Health Gifts  
Hughes & Rutledge Families, 'Weekend Escape'  
Ideology Handcrafts  
Ivory Tavern, Tweed Heads  
Kate Warby, Jewellery  
La Boite Theatre  
Pamela's Pantry, Caxton St  
Panda Pearls, Australia  
Peppermint Lane Design  
Peta Stilgoe, canvas photography  
Pia du Pradal, Fashion House  
Putia Pure Foods Kitchen, Banyo  
Qld Ballet  
RACQ  
Regatta Hotel  
Rickys River Bar & Restaurant, Noosa  
Suzette Dwyer Design  
Travel About  
Village Roadshow Theme Parks  
One Wybelenna

The generosity of the supporters listed above raised over \$20,500 towards our cause. This, combined with the RNA's financial support and other incoming donations, has resulted in the 'Inaugural' Fundraiser being able to supply all 55 iPads requested by the Longreach School of Distance Education. There are also some funds left over for our next project which will benefit the Charleville region.

The announcements of the Silent Auction winners and the drawing of the Raffle tickets were the final highlights in our three hour event. Winning ticket numbers were projected from the huge overhead screens and lucky recipients came forth to collect their prizes. Ladies started to depart and slowly the sound of animated conversation diminished as everyone returned to the outside world and their daily activities.

The following day the 2015 Ekka began in earnest and 10 days of excitement, enjoyment and entertainment unfolded for old and young alike. People came from far and near in order to celebrate this 130 year tradition. It is an event about which almost every Queenslanders has childhood memories including strawberry sundaes, sample bags, animals and fireworks.

In the words of Geoffrey Chaucer: "All good things must come to an end". However, these words should not bring sadness. For all those who wish to experience or re-live the fun, excitement and energy of an 'Ekka Experience', I will expand upon that quote:

"All good things must come to an end . . .

To make way for better things to happen because the BEST is yet to come."

I hope you have enjoyed reading about our event. We would like to thank all those who attended and financially supported us in making this fundraising such a success. We look forward to seeing you at next year's Ekka.

*Jane Thomas*



2015 'Inaugural' Fundraiser

1. Di Freshney (Brisbane) & Andrea Graham (Brisbane)
2. Jane Thomas, Ellen & Kathryn Gett
3. Angie Bettridge (Alpha) & Kirsty Sparrow (Alpha)
4. Margie Wallace (Sinnamon Park), Tessa English (St Lucia) & Marilynn Morphet (Westlake)
5. Veronica Bassingthwaite (Sunshine Coast) & Sally Dowling (Toowoomba)
6. Edwina Adnam (Brisbane), Bree Roberts (Brisbane), Libby Hufton (Harden, NSW) & Kristina Cowen (Brisbane)
7. Vicky Barrett (Cambodia) & Shelley Lewis (Mackay)
8. Janet Campbell (Mary Valley) & Louise Shields (Brisbane)
9. Anna Forrest (Bardon), Jodie Slaughter (Auchenflower) & Di Grieve (Clayfield)
10. Trish & Nathalie Ford (Brisbane)
11. Louise Staines (Southbrooke), Jayne McMicking (Toowoomba) & Louise Mylne (Brisbane)



A culinary highlight of the 2015 Ekka was the fine dining experience at the Royal Queensland Steakhouse, presented by JBS Australia. Not only were Australia's best steaks, wines and cheeses on offer, but some of the freshest local seafood... including this delicious calamari.

Executive Chef, Sean Cummings, has shared his recipe exclusively with Showbiz readers.

## Calamari

### Ingredients:

- 3 x large cleaned squid hoods
- 1 litre vegetable oil
- 40g plain flour
- 1 tsp ground white pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp Chinese 5 spice powder
- ½ tsp chilli powder
- Lemon wedges
- Sweet chilli sauce to dip

### Directions:

1. Use a sharp knife to cut through 1 side of each squid hood lengthways. Open out flat with inside surface facing up and score surface diagonally. Cut into 3.5cm squares and pat dry with paper towel.
2. Heat the oil in a large wok over medium heat until it reaches 180°C.
3. Combine the flour, salt, pepper, Chinese five-spice and chilli in a medium bowl. Add the squid and toss gently to coat.
4. Remove half of the squid from the flour mixture and shake off any excess. Add to the oil and cook, turning with a slotted metal spoon, for 2 minutes or until the squid just turns golden and curls. Use the slotted spoon to transfer the squid to a large plate lined with paper towel to drain. Reheat the oil in the wok to 190°C. Repeat with the remaining squid.
5. Serve immediately with the lemon wedges and sweet chilli sauce with a salad of your choice



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