

# SHOWBIZ

THE OFFICIAL QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE RNA  
SPRING EDITION 2012

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04

## SHEAR DELIGHT

Rush steals the show

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## 2012 EKKA GRAND CHAMPIONS

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## INSIDE THE EKKA'S MOST POPULAR ATTRACTION



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## Welcome

The state's oldest, proudest and most loved community event, the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka), was a huge success in its 135th year with 400,000 visitors flowing through the gates to enjoy an experience unlike any other.

This year's Ekka attracted almost 1,500 new competitors who had entered for the first time. It's great to see the traditional elements of the show are not just attracting returning competitors—they are growing in popularity and appealing to new audiences.

For many, being an Ekka competitor is in their blood—a family tradition passed down through the generations. The Ekka attracts competitors and volunteers from third, fourth and fifth generations across a range of fields including quilting, woodchop, stud beef cattle, poultry and agriculture. Personally, it was a highlight to meet some of this year's new competitors and welcome back our long-time exhibitors, and I congratulate everyone on their efforts.

This year marked the second show held since construction began on the historic \$2.9 billion 15-year RNA Showgrounds Regeneration Project. The brand new exhibition space for canines and agriculture proved a success with their prime position attracting new visitors who hadn't previously seen these attractions in action.

There was also a brand new home for showbags this year—this \$3.5 million 5,500m<sup>2</sup> facility located on the opposite side of Sideshow Alley will cater for events outside of show plus house showbags during the annual Ekka. The facility was 40 per cent bigger than last year's pavilion and was successful in easing congestion. In addition, the RNA implemented a new undercover 1000m<sup>2</sup> queuing system to help minimise wait times and provide a more enjoyable experience.

Thank you to our wonderful RNA members, Ekka exhibitors, competitors, judges and stewards, volunteers and visitors to this year's show. Thank you also to my fellow RNA Councillors and staff for their enthusiasm and commitment to making Ekka 2012 a success. I look forward to another great show in 2013.

**David Thomas**  
RNA President

“  
For many, being an Ekka competitor is in their blood—a family tradition passed down through the generations.  
”

## Ekka Highlights

### Ekka attracts 400,000 for the third year

Since 2010 more than 1.2 million people have attended the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka). This year marked the third Ekka in a row which attracted 400,000 people through the gates to visit 10,000 animals and experience the unique once a year city/country get-together.

After kicking off with a visit from Australian of the Year and Oscar winner Geoffrey Rush, the 2012 Ekka closed with a performance by multi award-winning rockers Eskimo Joe and a cricket match involving Adam Gilchrist and Glenn McGrath.

RNA Chief Executive Brendan Christou said the association was thrilled with the response from the community who came out en masse to celebrate all that is great about their state.

“We had the perfect forecast for the full 10 days of show and we can't thank the public enough for their support,” he said.

“This really is the people's show, they came out in droves to support it and we're humbled to stage it on their behalf.”

Throughout the 10 days of show, the RNA was also honoured to host the Young Australian of the Year Marita Cheng, Brisbane born twins Jessica and Lisa Origliasso from The Veronicas plus world-class performers The Ten Tenors. Planning is already underway for the 136th Ekka as Queenslanders restart the countdown. Ekka 2013 will run from August 8–17.

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”





### New ticket bundles prove a hit

For the first time in Ekka history, visitors to this year's show were able to purchase one ticket which gave them entry, food and rides. This year's ticket pre-sales tripled when compared to 2011 which shows an outstanding response to the great value on offer. Ekka fans were given the opportunity to choose between five new bundles including one which saved 50 per cent off food and 30 per cent off entry.

### Oscar winner Rush steals the show

More familiar with walking the red carpet, Australian of the Year and Oscar winner Geoffrey Rush had to sidestep a cow pat or two when he got up close to some of the country's largest beef cattle at Ekka 2012. The 2012 Australian of the Year, together with the Young Australian of the Year Marita Cheng, celebrated all that is great about Queensland on the opening day of show. They had a beer and a yarn with cattlemen and women at the iconic Cattleman's Bar, met some of the nation's cutest creatures, enjoyed the spectacle of almost

2,000 beef cattle on display and shared tea and scones with the ladies from the Queensland Country Women's Association.

Academy Award-winning actor and producer Mr Rush was named the Australian of the Year for 2012 for his contribution to the arts. Born in Toowoomba, he spent his early childhood there before his family moved to Brisbane where he attended primary school, high school and the University of Queensland. Ms Cheng is originally from Cairns and is now studying at Melbourne University.

### Cricketing greats Gilchrist and McGrath don the whites

More than 80 years after Sir Donald Bradman made his test debut in Queensland's first Australia versus England International Test at the RNA Showgrounds, the ENERGEX Community Arena again hosted some legends of the game. Ekka 2012 was sent off in true Queensland style as five cricketing greats, including Adam Gilchrist, Australian Year of the Farmer Ambassador Glenn McGrath, Ian Healy, Andy Bichel and Jimmy Maher took to the field as part of The Suncorp Bank Cricketing Legends Challenge.

### Rocking crowds for Eskimo Joe

The Triple M Concert Series turned up the volume this year as crowds flowed in for rockers Eskimo Joe and international superstars The Ten Tenors. Currently locked away busily writing a new album, Eskimo Joe took a break to bring their rock to the final night of Ekka 2012 for a crowd of 1,100. The multi award-winning band finished the week in style after August 12 brought a world-class performance by The Ten Tenors. Their high-octane vocal power was heard by a capacity crowd of 700 in their second performance at the Ekka in two years.



### Pop-up Ekka

For the first time in the 135 year history of the show, King George Square erupted into a hive of activity as it hosted the very first pop-up Ekka. Providing the people of Brisbane with a sneak peek of what Queensland's largest event had in store, the unique event featured roving entertainment, the much-loved animal nursery and laughing clowns.

Australia's first and only free interactive fireworks app was in the spotlight as fans were given the unique opportunity to customise their own Ekka fireworks experience to display on a giant screen. The brand new Ekka Fireworks App allowed users to orchestrate

their very own fireworks extravaganza by choosing the fireworks' styles, colours, shapes and trajectory before lighting up the Brisbane skyline.

Last year's Ekka was the most interactive yet and featured social media elements including the nation's first free iPhone app for a Royal Show and up to the second updates from Twitter and Facebook. This year it was taken a step further, giving visitors the chance to control the Ekka fireworks and showcase their creations live.



news in brief

**A picture paints a thousand words**

As part of the RNA's ongoing commitment to embracing technology and improving communication with Ekka patrons, a photo contest was introduced to the 2012 show—Ekkagram. Showgoers were encouraged to submit their Ekka photos to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram for their chance to win a daily competition and have their photo featured on e-billboards around Brisbane. The competition attracted 2,168 entries which were hash tagged as #fun, #animals or #food—a great feat for its first year.

**Might and Power makes his mark on Thoroughbred Day**

There was a rare opportunity for racing enthusiasts at this year's Ekka with Might and Power's winning 1997 Melbourne Cup and 1997 Caulfield Cup on display at Thoroughbred Day. Might and Power was trained by Jack Denham and owned by Nick Moraitis AM. In its sixth year at the show, Thoroughbred Day showcased up and coming potential Group One winners worth millions of dollars in a unique, day-long event.



**Fast Facts**

- 112 lambs born in the Little Miracles Newborn Corner including 20 sets of twins and 1 set of triplets
- 100 chickens hatched
- 135,000 + people visited the RACQ Insurance Animal Nursery
- 100,000 + Ekka Strawberry Sundaes sold
- 180,000 + Dagwood dogs sold
- 2,240 outfit changes in the Commonwealth Bank Cotton and Wool Parades over 32 shows
- 44,000 + oysters sold at the Seafood and Wine Bar and the Royal Queensland Steakhouse
- 16,000 + prawns sold at the Seafood and Wine Bar
- 7,500 + glasses of wine sold at the Seafood and Wine Bar
- 350kg of Hot Smoked Salmon sold
- 1.5 tonnes of steak sold at the Royal Queensland Steakhouse
- 47,087 social media followers (including 41,512 on Facebook, 3,505 on Twitter and 2,070 on Instagram). This is more than double last year!
- 2,168 Ekkagram competition photo entries including 1,643 from Instagram, 365 from Facebook and 160 from Twitter



**Eric crowned Show Legend**

After more than 40 years of service to the Ekka, the RNA awarded Eric Bassingthwaite of Sunnybank as this year's Show Legend. Working as an Honorary Council Steward in the Prime Beef Competition since the 1960s, Mr Bassingthwaite has been responsible for the processing, showing, auctioning and delivery of cattle at the Ekka. RNA Councillor Philip Harpham said Eric was highly respected by the Beef Cattle Committee, Ekka staff, livestock agents, cattle buyers and exhibitors. The Show Legend is a celebrated award presented each year and recognises the resolute dedication and effort made by an individual to both the RNA and the Ekka.



spring

news in brief

**Country girls take the crown**

Jessica Robinson from Isis, representing Central Queensland, was crowned Miss Showgirl 2012 while Sophie Curtis, representing the Darling Downs sub-chamber, was awarded the title of Rural Ambassador.

**Good Samaritan captures Ekka hearts**

Showgoer Ty Harris simply helped an elderly man get an ice-cream but received a response like no other from passionate Ekka lovers.

Ty, 32, was walking past an Ekka Strawberry Sundae stand during the show as he spotted a 92-year old man on a mobility scooter sitting off to the side. He went to check the man was okay and found out that he was trying to decide how to buy his wife (aged 90) a sundae while in his scooter. After some encouragement, the man agreed to let Ty get the sundae for him. He went straight to the front of the line, explained the situation to the volunteer and without any issue he got a sundae. Ty posted his story on the Ekka Facebook page and has

since received more than 100,000 likes and 3,000 comments—an Ekka Facebook first. Ty finished by saying he later saw the man and his wife with their matching scooters, his arm on her leg, a smile on her face and his left indicator flashing.





# Best in Show

More than 23,000 entries were vying for prestigious blue ribbons during the 2012 Royal Queensland Show. Competitions came to a head with the announcements of the coveted Grand Champion winners, the ultimate accolade at the Royal Queensland Show.

The RNA congratulates the following 2012 Royal Queensland Show winners.

## Agricultural hall

### District Exhibits

#### Best Collection of Exhibits from the Districts

Darling Downs District Exhibit

#### People's Choice Award

Moreton District Exhibit

### Youth District Exhibits

#### Overall Winner of Youth District Exhibits

Woodenbong Central School

### Fruit and Vegetable

#### Best Fruit & Vegetable Industry Display

Apples (Horticulture Australia Ltd)

### Youth Fruit and Vegetables

#### Best Youth Fruit & Vegetable Exhibit

Girls Brigade

## Beef cattle

### Stud Beef

#### Champion of Champions Breed Pair

Red Angus

*Bull:* GK 26 Federer F23

G & K Iseppi, Dalby QLD

*Cow:* GK Red Ruby F4

G & K Iseppi, Dalby QLD

#### Interbreed Champion Small Breeds

*Bull:* Full Force (Ausline)

M Hayes, Thornton QLD

*Cow:* Tanview Fair Lady

(Australian Lowline)

K & T Falkenhagen, Boonah QLD

### Prime Beef

#### Grand Champion Pen of Queensland

Santa Gertrudis

Graham Bridle, Dalby QLD

#### RNA Paddock to Palate Winner

Angus x Shorthorn

NcNicholl Family, Dulacca QLD

### Led Steer

#### Grand Champion Led Steer

Champion Mediumweight Led Steer

(Charolais)

M & N Nicholls, Kyogle NSW

#### Grand Champion Led Steer Carcase

Champion Mediumweight Carcase

(Charolais X)

Postle Pastoral Company, Dalby QLD

## Boer goats

#### Supreme Standard Boer Goat of Show

Macgregors Spenser

Macgregors Boer Goat Stud,

Ryeford QLD

## Bush poetry

### Bobby Miller Memorial Trophy

A Funny Breed of Cattle (D Crane)

Barry Ellem, Murrumba Downs QLD

## Canine

### Champion of Show

Dalmatian

Gr Ch. Paceaway Atrosemount

FEL Matthews & G Vernon & R & D Besoff,

Abermain NSW

## Dairy cattle

### Supreme Champion Dairy Cow

Ardylbar Comerica Eleanor (Jersey)

AD & WJ Barron, Cambooya QLD

## Dairy goats

### Supreme Dairy Doe of Show

Saanen Doe—Glenapline Casablanca

E W & N R Dean, Bonville NSW

## Education on show

### Champion School of Show

St Aidan's Anglican Girls School

## Feline

### Feline of Show

Gold DGC Osiris (v) talk dirty to me—

Abyssinian

Bruce M Lyck, Capalaba QLD

## Fine arts

### Cookery

#### Grand Champion Entry—Cake Decorating

Heather Dent, The Gap QLD

### Creative Art and Craft

#### Grand Champion Exhibit of Show

Patchwork—Miniature Collection

Ruth Dawson, Kuraby QLD

## Painting and Drawing

### Champion Portrait of Show

"He's My Brother"—Lyn Green,

Tamborine QLD

### Sculpture

#### Champion Sculpture of Show

"Metadino V2"—Doug Kwok,

Brisbane QLD

## Photography

### Champion Print of Show

"Three Strawberries"—John Quixley,

Brighton QLD

## Fleece breeds

### Stud Angora and Mohair Fleece

#### Grand Champion Angora

Dauson 419—Graham Dau, Pilton QLD

#### Champion Fleece

Young Goat Fleece—Sue Paterson,

Cambooya QLD

## Alpacas

### Supreme Champion Huacaya of Show

Longueville Park—

Rosemary Eva & Elizabeth Coles,

Palmvale NSW

### Supreme Champion Suri of Show

Humminghills Oliver Twist—

Humminghills Alpacas,

Bilambil NSW

### Alpaca Fleece

#### Champion Huacaya Fleece

Jolimont Estevao—Double-H Alpacas

B & M Hassall, K & A Harrison,

Yalangur QLD

#### Champion Suri Fleece

Sunhaze William—

Ubonne P/L, Buderim QLD

### Stud Sheep

#### Supreme Champion Ram

Suffolk Ram—Woodenbong Central School

#### Champion Ewe

Suffolk Ewe—Woodenbong Central School

#### Most Successful School

Woodenbong Central School

## Wool

### Grand Champion Merino Fleece of Exhibition

Felicity, Charlie & Lochie Brumpton

& Jolly Jumbuck, Mitchell QLD

### Champion Fleece of Exhibition other than Merino

CM & JL Turner

## Fruit wine

### Amateur Fruit Wine

#### Champion School Fruit Winemaker

St Paul's School

#### Champion School Fruit Wine

Sandgate District State High School

### Commercial Fruit Wine

#### Champion Commercial Fruit Wine of Show

Mango—Shannonvale Tropical Fruit Winery,

Mossman QLD

## Horses

### Supreme Champion Australian Stockhorse of Queensland

Champion Mare—Cee Dee Bracelette—

T Bridges & K Miles, Manilla NSW

### Supreme Champion Clydesdale of Queensland

Champion Stallion—Tullymore William—

Samarah Park Clydesdales,

Swan Bay NSW

### Supreme Champion Riding Pony of Queensland

Champion Mare—Willowcraft Coco

Chanel—Fraser Family, Warwick QLD

### Champion Hack of Queensland

Gillespie—Midson and Langbecker

Families, Logan Reserve QLD

### Champion Gentleman Rider of Queensland

Ashley Cooper, Gatton QLD

### Champion Show Hunter Galloway of Queensland

Buckaroo Mr Chips—J Cooper,

Fernvale QLD

### Champion Pony Hack of Queensland 12.2 hands and over

Hollis Work of Art—J Crisp, Hall ACT

## Best Led Colourama Horse of Queensland

Kah-Mah Aberation—K Higham,

Burpengary QLD

## Champion Showjumping Rider of Queensland

Ron Easey, Quipolly NSW

## World Cup Qualifier

Yalambi's Landor—Evie Buller,

Darkan WA

## Champion Group A Jumping Horse of Queensland

Stardom—Billy Raymont, Cooran QLD

## Pisciculture

### Champion Fish of Show

Cat Fish—Peter Ford, Bald Hills QLD

## Poultry

### Grand Champion Fowl of Show

Bantam Old English Game—Blue Red

Cock—O & J Glover, Narangba QLD

### Grand Champion Waterfowl of Show

Muscovy—White Duck—Charlie M Green,

Chapel Hill QLD

### Grand Champion Pigeon of Show

Bruner Pouter AC—Young Cock—

D Dangerfield & L Hill, Kilcoy QLD

## Quilts across Queensland

### Best of Show

"Counterpoint"—Pam Hill, Manly QLD

## Sheep dog trials

### First place

Wolfes Snoopy Q4332—Gary Hurtz,

Stanthorpe QLD

## Woodchop and sawing

### Champion Axeman of Show

Shane Jordan, New Zealand

## Young judges

### Most Successful Competitor

Sarah Peters, Conondale QLD





# The Taste of Spring



Ekka food ambassador Dominique Rizzo shares two recipes she cooked on The Sunday Mail Royal Queensland Food and Wine Show Stage at Ekka 2012, while Master of Wine and Royal Queensland Wine Show judge Peter Scudamore-Smith recommends the top wines to try this season.

## Caramelised gingered onion and chorizo pastries, with goats cheese and rocket

Makes 10

Spring is all about picnics and picnics are all about having delicious dishes that can be easily eaten and distributed among the masses. These pastries have the richness of the sweet onions and chorizo with the creaminess and sharpness of the goats cheese. They are fantastic warm or eaten cold the next day. I have made these in muffin tins but you can use any type of baking vessel, even turn it into a large quiche and serve it with salad or steamed greens. They also make a great grown-up lunch box filler.

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 300g chorizo sausage, diced
- 2 red onions, sliced into thin wedges
- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- ½ cup ginger refresher
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 cloves
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup pouring or thickened cream
- Salt and pepper
- 2 cups of rocket, roughly chopped
- 150g goats cheese, cut or crumbled into pieces
- 1 quantity of short crust pastry

- Preheat the oven to 200°C and place a flat tray into the oven. If you have a pizza stone you can use that as well to help the base cook.
- Add the oil to a large fry pan and set it over a moderate heat, add in the chorizo and fry for 4–5 minutes until slightly golden and the chorizo starts to release some of its delicious red oil.
- Spoon out the chorizo reserving the oil in the pan and set the chorizo aside to cool.
- Return pan to the heat and add in the onions, cinnamon stick and cloves and sauté until the onion has softened.
- Add in the vinegar slowly as it tends to splatter.
- Pour in the ginger refresher and drop the heat to a simmer. Cook for 8 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Add in the chorizo and cook for a further 2 minutes. The mix will be reduced, glossy and smelling beautiful. Set the pan aside to cool slightly.
- Prepare the pastry in lightly greased moulds, muffin tin or spring form tin and place the pastry back into the fridge.
- In a bowl, combine the eggs with the cream and chopped rocket and season with salt and pepper.
- Using a jug or small ladle, fill the pastries about half way with the egg, cream and rocket mix, then spoon in some of the chorizo and onion mix and top with the goats cheese.
- Bake the pastries for 15 minutes for muffin size and 20 minutes for larger tins then drop the temperature down to 160°C and bake for a further 10–15 minutes until the goats cheese is golden and the pastry has browned.
- Allow the pastries to sit in the tin to cool for 10–15 minutes before removing and serving.

## Lemon and Olive Oil Cake

Serves 12

- 4 eggs
- 2 ½ cups sugar
- 1 ½ cups Bertolli Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 2 ¼ cups self-raising flour
- Zest of 4 lemons

### For the icing:

- 185g pure icing sugar, sifted
- 60g butter
- 1 tsp lemon rind
- 2 tsp lemon juice

- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- Grease and line a 24cm spring form tin.
- In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs and the sugar until creamy, add in the oil and continue to beat until pale and thickened.
- Add in the milk and lemon zest and then stir through the flour.
- Pour the mixture into the tin and bake for 40 minutes until a skewer comes out clean.
- For the icing, whip all the ingredients together until smooth.
- Allow the cake to cool before spreading over the icing. Serve alone or with cream.







## Australian vineyards: some of the oldest in the world

by Peter Scudamore-Smith

The recent release of Penfolds Ampoule of Cabernet Sauvignon Block 42 2004 for \$168,000 (twelve bottles only) put the spotlight on high end prices, but importantly on the wines made from old vineyard grapes.

In the Block 42 case, the oldest recorded cabernet sauvignon vineyard in the world (roll over Bordeaux) was planted in 1885.

Australian vineyards are some of the oldest. Where are the oldest chardonnay vines? In the Hunter Valley at Tyrrells HVD vineyard, curiously enough planted by Penfolds in 1908; sold to Tyrrells in 1982!

Oldest shiraz is in the Barossa Valley at Langmeil's Freedom vineyard—planted 1843. Oldest Hunter shiraz is Tyrrells 4 Acres—planted 1879.

What do old vines convey to a wine—usually amazing depth, flavour integrity and a cachet that few brands can match!

Are there problems with age: will they die! Only if neglected I reckon. Some vintages can produce weaker-flavoured wines; as Penfolds Block 42 is not made every year; some regularly goes into their famous Bin 707.

I have recently learnt that some of the oldest mourvedre and grenache vines around are also on our continent—in McLaren Vale.

Another ancient vine wine is Henschke Hill of Grace.

*Peter Scudamore-Smith is an Australian Master of Wine, Royal Queensland Wine Show judge and Italy—France Wine & Food Tour Leader.*

[www.uncorkedandcultivated.com.au](http://www.uncorkedandcultivated.com.au)

## Wines to try this season

### Bubbles:

- Budget: Berton Vineyard Pewter Moscato Frizzante 2012 Riverina NSW \$12
- Premium: Leura Park Estate Grande Cuvee Pinot Chardonnay 2010 Bellarine VIC \$30
- Splash Out: Champagne Veuve Clicquot La Grande Dame 2004 Reims \$245

### White:

- Budget: Trentham Murphys Lore Chardonnay 2011 Murray Valley NSW \$10
- Premium: Watershed Premium Wines Shades Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2011 \$17
- Splash Out: Tarrawarra Estate Reserve Chardonnay 2010 Yarra Valley VIC \$50

### Red:

- Budget: De Bortoli Sacred Hill Shiraz Dolcetto 2010 Riverina NSW \$8
- Premium: Pirathon by Kalleske 2011 Barossa Valley SA \$25
- Splash Out: Fox Creek Reserve Shiraz 2008 McLaren Vale SA \$70

## Joan Scott Retires



After more than 16 years as an RNA Councillor, Joan Scott announced her retirement last month. Joan was an active member since 1996 after becoming the first female Councillor. She worked tirelessly over the years having chaired the Fleece Breeds Committee and a member of the Appeals and Disciplinary; Entertainment; Catering and House; Education and the Future; Show Camp; Young Judges; Joint Stock; Meat Hall; and Animal Boulevard Committees. Joan has also previously served on the Bungil Shire Council and Rural Lands Protection Board and co-authored *In Champagne Country* and *Fight for a Just Cause*.

Ekka 2012 marked Joan's last show as an RNA Councillor and to farewell her role she wore the same jacket on her last day that she did on her very first.

### What are some of your favourite and earliest memories from the Ekka?

The fondest memory is of being sent to be the Consumer Judge for the Smallgoods Competition. I didn't know I could spit, as they do with winetastings, so swallowed all the samples. That evening, my husband Bruce took me to my favourite restaurant but all the fat was sitting in me and I just could not eat. That became one of my favourite jobs at the show and meant I got to know all the players in the Meat Hall.

My first six years were spent as a member of the Beef Committee and I was the "girl with a phone" down on the Main Arena. Nobody else seemed to have a mobile phone that first show but they did the following year. Prior to that there were young fellows employed to be "runners" to take messages and go for extra ribbons. They always seemed to get lost. That has changed for the better.

The Young Judges competitions have been a source of great pleasure for me. I have enjoyed watching young people graduate from being nervous first-timers to winning competitions and becoming stewards across the sections.

Show Camp is a part of the Ekka which I hope we can continue to accommodate with the redevelopment. Those children are a source of great delight and so keen. Some from my early days are now stewards.

I admire all the stewards who volunteer annually to make sure we have a show.

### What made you interested in running for the 1996 RNA Council Election?

I had been a steward for the Merinos section at the show and was approached by some woolgrower friends to run for Council.

### You were the RNA's first female Councillor. Did you feel like you broke the glass ceiling?

It was my third "glass ceiling" so I knew what to expect. I knew the only way to handle it was to be myself and not seem to be a women's libber. I was fortunate to have Allan Warby (immediate Past President), who was an old friend, to be my chief adviser.

It was quite funny to be treated as if I was different. The ladies had been barred from what was then the Front Room—now the Club Room. My first task in there was to rip down the nasty torn curtains. However it was purely a place for the men to take other men to have a drink, so I decided not to use the room and at the first meeting after the show in 1996 I moved to allow Councillors' wives to be allowed to use the room. We celebrated next show by having champagne cocktails in there!

Another change made because of my arrival was the installation of a shower in the Ladies' Room. For years everyone referred to it as "Joan's shower" and actually thought they had to ask my permission to use it. Before my time, the wives of Councillors had to use the showers upstairs near the old meeting rooms.

I have come to know so many people I would never have met if I had not agreed all those years ago to accept a nomination. How lucky I was.

### What do you see for the future of the RNA, the showgrounds and the Ekka? How critical is the RNA Showgrounds Regeneration Project to achieving this future?

The redevelopment of the grounds is such a necessity. Holding prime real estate in the CBD of a major city has been difficult. Previous Lord Mayor Jim Soorley made no secret of wanting us moved to Boondall. That made it crucial that we have a Master Plan for our grounds, and a good business plan to complement it.

People may have forgotten that we were nearly the site for the Stadium that is at Lang Park. Our proposition was very good and the infrastructure was in place for train and bus access but the Government of the day decided against us. It was extremely disappointing and we then had to start again—a tennis centre was our next proposal, but the redevelopment now underway is going to prove to be excellent.

### What words of advice do you have for future RNA Councillors?

I don't want to offer advice, just encouragement. Help at the show by stewarding and get to know the grounds and someone will take note and suggest you have a run for Council. I was very fortunate to have been able to nominate my successor in the Fleece Breeds section and I wish Will Roberts as happy and rewarding a time on the Council of the RNA as I have had.



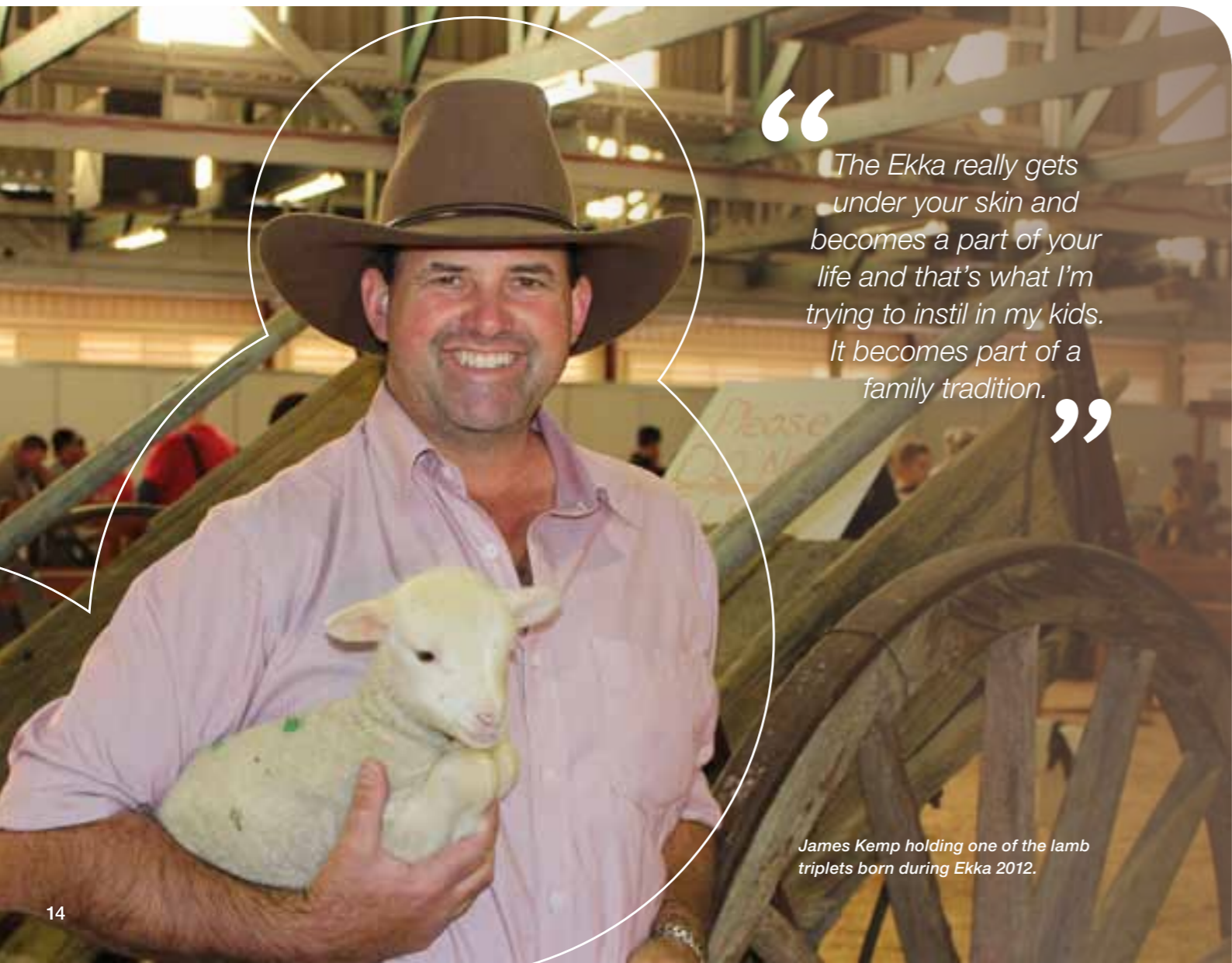
# James Kemp

James Kemp, or Farmer James as many know him, is man behind the Ekka's most popular attraction—the RACQ Insurance Animal Nursery. Each year more than 135,000 people make their way through the nursery to visit 450 baby animals including ducks, ducklings, chickens, turkeys, lambs, calves, goats, rams, chickens and

donkeys. James also coordinates the Little Miracles Newborn Corner—the birthplace of 345 lambs in the past four years.

Outside of the Ekka, James is the Managing Director of Carnival Land Amusements—an amusement ride company servicing South East

Queensland and northern New South Wales. With more than 20 years experience in the entertainment and hospitality industry, James combined his background, country values, experience, professionalism and commitment when he purchased Carnival Land Amusements in 2004.



“The Ekka really gets under your skin and becomes a part of your life and that's what I'm trying to instil in my kids. It becomes part of a family tradition.”

James Kemp holding one of the lamb triplets born during Ekka 2012.



**When and how did you first become involved with the RNA and the Ekka?**

About 16 years ago I became involved with a very small petting area which was just sheep. We were part of the sheep and wool expo which was an attachment to the wool parades and at first we were bringing around 22 lambs for people to pat and bottle-feed and that's where it started.

**Why do you think the animal nursery is the Ekka's most popular attraction?**

It appeals to all ages and all walks of life. You just have to be young at heart or love animals to appreciate the petting area.

**This year there were more than 450 baby animals in the nursery. Where do they all come from?**

We joke that we're the largest exhibitor at the show because between the animal nursery and the Little Miracles Newborn Corner we have about 650 animals on site during the show. The animals come from a huge range of my contacts from all over South East Queensland. Some come from Brisbane but others come from Texas, Inglewood, Yandina, Laidley and Rosewood.

**How far out from the show does the planning for the animal nursery and the Little Miracles Newborn Corner begin?**

It doesn't stop. We're planning next year's Ekka while this year's is still going on—what we can improve and what other exhibitors are thinking. We want to continue to stretch what we do, stay relevant and introduce new things.

With the Little Miracles Newborn Corner specifically, we start preparing the ewes for joining when we're 250 days out from the Ekka. At 150 days out we join 1,350 sheep and at 80 days

we perform the ultrasounds which tells us who's pregnant and whether its singles, twins or triplets. At that time we start hand feeding some of the ewes to get them used to humans and thinking of us as a food source.

**Why is it important to keep attractions like the nursery and birthing centre at the show?**

I think as the city grows bigger and we become more distanced from our country cousins things like this are very important. It gets people, especially kids, away from their computers and back to the basics where they can tangibly feed, smell and pat animals. It also sets us aside from theme parks and maintains people's expectations and traditions of an agricultural show.

**Are there any 'behind the scenes' secrets?**

One of my favourite times at the animal nursery is about an hour after the doors close because that's when the animals really come out to play. That's when the lambs start jumping around, goats start chasing each other and donkeys start rolling in the saw dust. They have a belt around and then cuddle up to sleep—mothers with babies, calves with chickens—it's a really lovely stage of the day.

**What do you enjoy most about the Ekka?**

It's the mateship you make, and not just with the people you're directly working with, but the people at the RNA, the stallholders and other exhibitors—we all come together to make this show happen. Everyone puts in their piece and the effort behind the scenes is just enormous. The Ekka really gets under your skin and becomes a part of your life and that's what I'm trying to instil in my kids. It becomes part of a family tradition.

**Outside of the Ekka, you own and operate a carnival ride company—how do the two compare?**

In both, we work with the public to provide a form of entertainment and amusement however there are definite variances. Where with Carnival Land we're providing amusement rides for fun and fundraising, at the Ekka we're providing information and entertainment.

**How did you initially become involved with animals and carnivals? Was it always on the cards? How did your upbringing in Stanthorpe shape what you're doing now?**

I was the fifth generation raised on our family's sheep and cattle farm out in Texas. From that when the wool industry got into a bit of trouble I was encouraged to go off and do something else in case things didn't turn around. That's when I found out that about 20 years ago one in 10 children hadn't patted a dog and I could see that there was a huge gap growing between city people and country people. That's when I thought I could utilise my experience in the bush.

**How is your family involved in the show?**

My father Toddy concentrates on the Little Miracles Newborn Corner—that's his baby and he takes it very seriously. He thrives on educating the public but he has also learnt a lot in the time he's been involved as well. Although he's a sheep farmer, his involvement in the newborn corner has provided him with an intense look at the birthing of sheep, which you just don't see so closely out on the farm.

My wife Sue assists during the show, as well as overseeing the carnival business. My kids, Ally (13) and Will (11), were able to be a part of it and help out in the nursery this year too. To them, this is normal—they think everyone has a petting zoo at home!



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