

# SHOWBIZ

AUTUMN 2016

RYDGES

HOTEL  
*now open*



The official magazine of the RNA



AIME Melbourne



Hotel now open



Giant Pumpkins



Royal Queensland Food & Wine Show



Cheese Workshop

# Welcome

*A year ago construction started on the new Rydges Hotel – part of stage two of our Brisbane Showgrounds \$2.9 billion regeneration project. On February 8, the doors opened to reveal a stunning four and a half star hotel, restaurant and bar at our thriving Showgrounds precinct.*



The completion of the 208 room hotel marks another major milestone for the RNA and our redevelopment project. The addition of the hotel also means Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) visitors, Royal International Convention Centre (Royal ICC) guests and the general public now have convenient accommodation onsite.

The continued revitalisation of the showgrounds, including the state-of-the-art Royal ICC and new hotel, helps generate year-round vitality throughout our evolving precinct.

With just five months to go, the countdown to the 2016 Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) has officially begun, with 770 head of cattle entered into the Ekka Paddock to Palate Competition, which is returning for its 19th year.

Entries have also opened for one of the show's most popular and iconic competitions – the Giant Pumpkins. Last year's

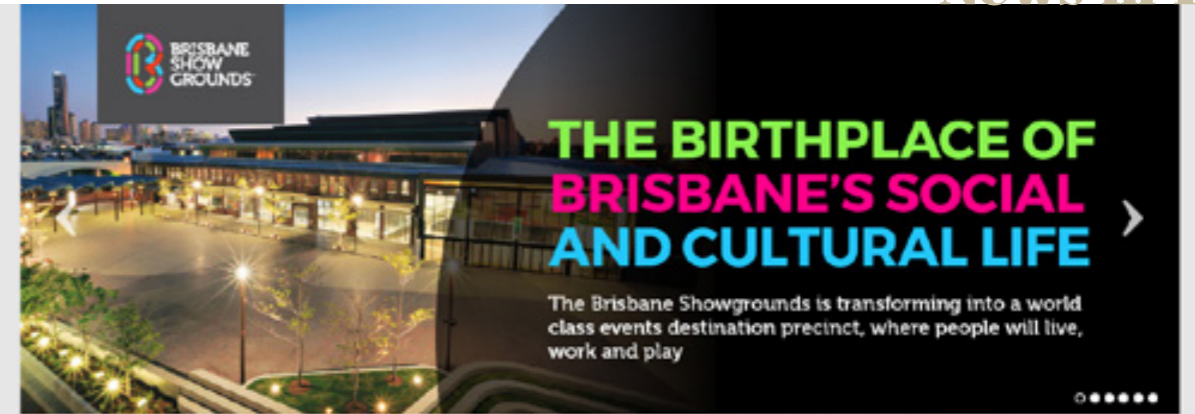
competition attracted a record entry weighing in at 261.5kgs – the heaviest ever recorded in Ekka history.

The hunt to unearth Australia's finest food and wine offerings is also underway, with a number of our prestigious Royal Queensland Food and Wine Show (RQFWS) competitions calling for entries throughout March. Entries are now open for the Cheese & Dairy Produce Show, Ice Cream, Gelato and Sorbet Competition and the Branded Beef and Lamb Competitions. The Royal Queensland Wine Show will open in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your continued support of the RNA and we look forward to another eventful year.

*David Thomas*

**David Thomas**  
RNA President



## One stop for [brisbaneshowgrounds.com.au](http://brisbaneshowgrounds.com.au)

The Brisbane Showgrounds has a new website landing page. It's the one stop shop for all things about the precinct – the Royal International Convention Centre, the new Rydges hotel, King Street and what's on around the showgrounds. The new site offers a more user friendly experience for our website visitors, whether they are booking an event or searching for an upcoming festival. This new landing page is also designed to be mobile and tablet friendly, ensuring information is easy to view from every device.

Have a look for yourself at [www.brisbaneshowgrounds.com.au](http://www.brisbaneshowgrounds.com.au)



Elisa Morales, Rydges, with Jessica O'Gorman, Royal ICC

## Royal ICC and Rydges hotel join forces at international expo

For the fifth year, the Royal International Convention Centre (Royal ICC) attended the Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME), held in Melbourne in February.

The Royal ICC team were joined by the new Rydges hotel to promote the convention centre and Brisbane

Showgrounds precinct, as well as encourage local and international clients to stay onsite at the four star hotel.

AIME is Australia's largest international business event and gives the Royal ICC direct access to existing suppliers and clients, while attracting new business.

## 2016 Annual General Meeting

The RNA Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on March 24 at the Royal International Convention Centre (Royal ICC).

The meeting will be open to RNA Councillors, members, stakeholders and members of the public. The AGM will review 2015 at the RNA and go over topics including the Brisbane Showgrounds Regeneration Project, The Royal ICC, the Royal Queensland Show, sustainability and financials.

# Q&A with new RNA councillors

## Don Chandler



**How did you get involved with the RNA?**

By invitation because of my families long association with rural Queensland and the Ekka. Show week was one of my Father's great loves and he never missed attending the show to catch up with his mates from throughout Queensland. The opening day and the cattle judging were not to be missed, even in his wheelchair.

**What is your favourite Ekka memory?**

Travelling to Brisbane every August, on my own, in the mid-70s for one week to stay with friends. We religiously attended the show on the Wednesday public holiday (People's Day). We had \$10 for pocket money!

*The RNA's \$2.9 billion Brisbane Showgrounds regeneration is a project of*

*enormous state and national significance. Tell us your thoughts about this historic legacy setting and what it will mean for future generations?*

This project has ensured the future and the tenure of the Ekka. The location of the precinct and the link to residential community and parklands will be a great feature of the city fringe. The addition of the Royal ICC and Rydges will create a hub of year round activity. The economic benefit to the RNA and the city of Brisbane will create a lasting legacy.

*Mr Chandler is a member of the Audit, Charities, Industry & Sponsorship, Pisciculture and Poultry, Pigeons, Birds & Eggs Committees.*

## Robin McLay

**How did you get involved with the RNA?**

I was asked to be a steward in the Horticulture Pavilion in 2011 and with a love for the Ekka and horticulture it seemed like a perfect fit.

**What is your favourite Ekka memory?**

The spiralling Grand Parade with all the magnificent animals.

*The RNA's \$2.9 billion Brisbane Showgrounds regeneration is a project of enormous state and national significance. Tell us your thoughts about this historic legacy setting and what it will mean for future generations?*

It is very comforting to know future generations will be able to enjoy the iconic Ekka as we all have. In this ever changing world the significance of the Ekka will become more important as the years go by. The regeneration of the Brisbane Showgrounds will be the key to holding onto our history while utilising an amazing urban space for all in the community to embrace. The Brisbane Showgrounds and the Ekka will always remind us of that strong link between city and country.

*Ms McLay is a member of the Horticulture Committee.*



## Rod Bower

**How did you get involved with the RNA?**

I was a member of a junior rural youth club at high school where I became interested in showing stud beef cattle. The late Barry Kerven, a friend of the family, invited me to assist in the horse measuring bay prior to acting as an honorary ring steward in the Main Arena with the horse section.

**What is your favourite Ekka memory?**

During my time involved with the Ekka my fondest memories are built around the fun of the show, catching up with people whom I have been fortunate to work directly with or meet through the Ekka and of course, the occasional Dagwood Dog.

*The RNA's \$2.9 billion Brisbane Showgrounds regeneration is a project of enormous state and national significance.*

*Tell us your thoughts about this historic legacy setting and what it will mean for future generations?*

The Brisbane Showground precinct is in a unique position of being one of the few remaining showgrounds with a traditional and historical tie to the early agricultural and industrial innovations of the past. The redevelopment is aimed at preserving this legacy for future generations of Ekka goes through the blend of modernisation and preservation of the key elements of the showgrounds, whilst retaining our city and country ties with education, food, fibre and agricultural excellence.

*Mr Bower is a member of the Horse and Arena, Joint Stock, Entertainment and Future Directions Committees.*



# New retailers call King Street home

*Restaurateurs Erica and George Gregan and David Wang and Janet Cao will be the first retailers to open along Brisbane's brand new King Street.*

The Gregans' will operate both a bar and all day dining bistro under the new Kingsgate commercial building along with the Wang's very popular, Fat Dumpling. Both will open in the coming months.

Following on from the very successful *The George Bar and Bistro* and coffee offering, *GG Espresso*, at 111 Eagle Street, in Brisbane's CBD, Erica says they have been looking for the right opportunity to open another venue.

"Brisbane has a passion for great coffee and food and the new venue will deliver this throughout the working week," she said.

"The menu has been designed by our Executive Chef, Paul Cvetko-Lueger, from

*"Brisbane has a passion for great coffee and food and the new venue will deliver this throughout the working week,"*

111 Eagle Street and he will oversee the new venue.

"Initially the café will be open for breakfast and lunch, with drinks and share plates enjoyed on Thursday and Friday nights."

Following on from the very popular Brunswick Street restaurant, *Fat Dumpling*, David Wang said he was very excited to be opening at King Street.

"Customers can look forward to experiencing our authentic signature dumplings and home-style dishes from our family recipes," he said.

"My wife Janet hand makes our dumplings and my daughter, architect Ting is designing the internal fit-out."

Offering so much more than just residential, King Street will become the beating heart of the Brisbane Showgrounds; the retail and dining hub, with residents, workers, retailers and entertainers combining to provide colour and activity to the streets.

*For more information visit [www.livekingstreet.com.au](http://www.livekingstreet.com.au)*

## Precinct

*“The hotel brings together the site’s heritage with a contemporary edge, representing the precinct perfectly.”*

# Room with a royal view

*In February the new Rydges hotel opened at the Brisbane Showgrounds, bringing four and a half star accommodation to the ever evolving precinct.*

The completion of the new Rydges hotel marked another major milestone for the \$2.9 billion Brisbane Showgrounds Regeneration Project, which moves into stage three in 2016.

The continued revitalisation of the showgrounds generates year-round vitality throughout the precinct and ensures the Ekka will always continue on the site where it all began in 1876.

The addition of the 208 room hotel also means Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) visitors, Royal International Convention Centre (Royal ICC) guests and the general public now have convenient accommodation onsite.

King Street, which links St Pauls Terrace and Gregory Terrace, is now open to traffic and will welcome retail outlets in the coming months, while becoming one of Brisbane’s most vibrant retail strips.

RNA Chief Executive Brendan Christou said the new hotel was an asset to the Brisbane Showgrounds precinct.

“We are thrilled to be able to offer our Brisbane Showgrounds guests the option of onsite accommodation at the four and a half star Rydges hotel,” he said.

“It’s a major milestone for the regeneration project and an example of the evolution of the precinct.

“The hotel brings together the site’s heritage with a contemporary edge, representing the precinct perfectly.”

The Rydges hotel boasts a modern design, while remaining true to the site’s heritage. Guests will notice the historical nods to the iconic Royal Queensland Show throughout the hotel, from historical Ekka images in the hotel rooms to strawberry sundae inspired cocktails at the Paddock Bar.

Offering 208 rooms, the Paddock Bar and Six Acres Restaurant, a gym and a swimming pool, the hotel is already welcoming guests from across the country.



***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 open green spaces and an evolving precinct at Brisbane’s most exciting new urban playground.

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



# The ultimate foodie corner

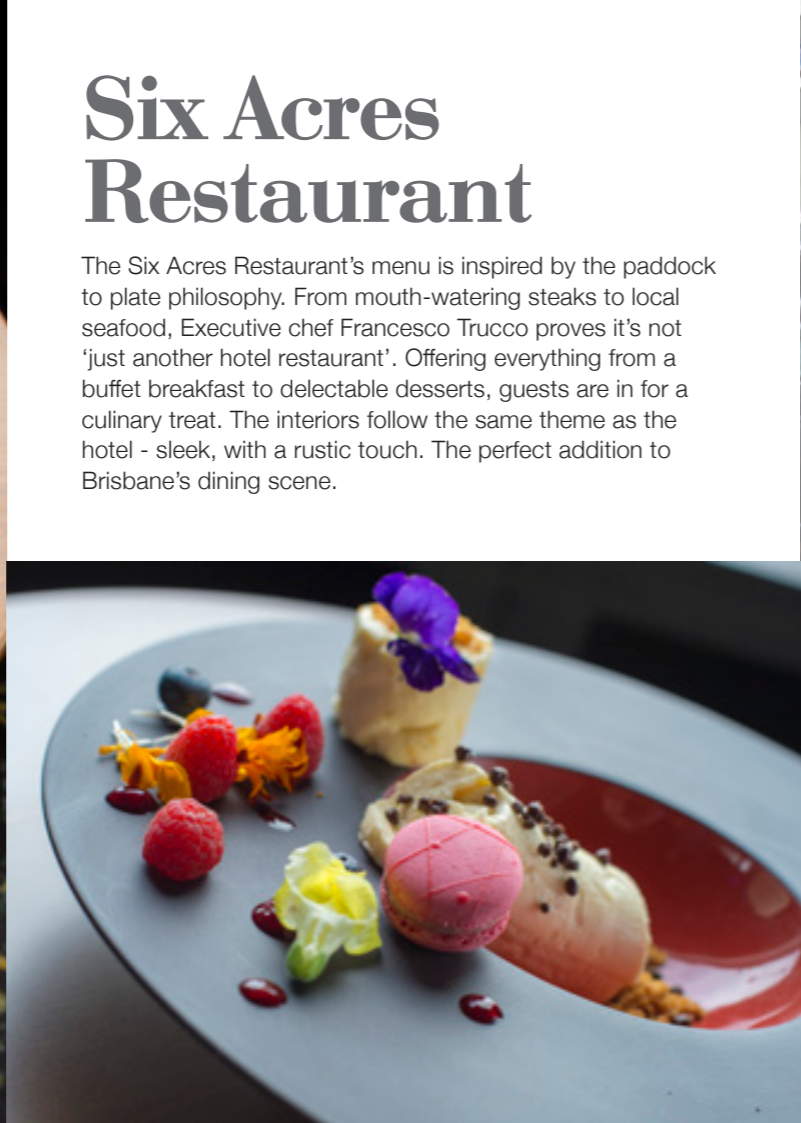


## Paddock Bar

The Paddock Bar is a more relaxed offering, making it the perfect place to wind down after a conference at the Royal ICC. Guests can sit under the shady fig tree or inside at the bar, which looks onto the iconic Main Arena. The relaxed Paddock Bar serves a selection of drinks ranging from the custom made Paddock Lager to the Strawberry Sundae Cocktail – inspired by the delicious Ekka Strawberry Sundaes. They also have a selection of bar snacks.

## Six Acres Restaurant

The Six Acres Restaurant's menu is inspired by the paddock to plate philosophy. From mouth-watering steaks to local seafood, Executive chef Francesco Trucco proves it's not 'just another hotel restaurant'. Offering everything from a buffet breakfast to delectable desserts, guests are in for a culinary treat. The interiors follow the same theme as the hotel - sleek, with a rustic touch. The perfect addition to Brisbane's dining scene.







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# Giant Pumpkins set to squash records

*The 2016 Ekka is calling for entries into the iconic Giant Pumpkin Competition, which judges the true heavyweights of the veggie patch.*



The scales will tip as these larger than life pumpkins vie for the top gong in extreme gardening, with entries now open.

The race is on to find out if Minden farmer, Geoff Frohloff, will take out the coveted blue ribbon for the third year in a row – his entry last year topped the scales at a record 261.5kg.

Entries are open to all green thumbs including farmers, school kids and amateur gardeners.

Horticulture dates back to the first show held in 1876 and the Ekka continues to champion and celebrate agriculture by showcasing and rewarding the best of the best.

The gigantic winners will be on display in the Agricultural Hall during the show from 5-14 August.

Since 2014, the competition has been held outside of the August Ekka dates to take advantage of premium pumpkin growing season and to give these giant pumpkins the best chance of living a larger than life existence.

If you think your pumpkin can pack on the pounds, put it to the test. Enter now at [www.ekka.com.au](http://www.ekka.com.au). Entries close on April 15 and the judging and the awards ceremony will be held on May 7, 2016 at the Pillow Talk Ipswich store.

Tatham Sexton and  
Annea Williams  
travelled from Townsville



## Teachers get a lesson in cheese making

*Teachers from across the state learnt the art of cheese making when they took part in the internationally awarded RNA Teachers' Cheese Making Workshops.*

For the seventh year in a row, the popular cheese making workshops allowed teachers to swap their chalk for cheese and learn from one of Australia's most respected cheese experts, Russell Smith.

The 2016 workshops attracted 55 participants from more than 25 schools across the state, with some travelling more than 1300km to attend.

The participating schools included Murgon State High School, Dalby State High School, William Ross State High School (Townsville), Kilcoy State High School, Bulimba State School and Villanova College.

From blue cheese to camembert, teachers will now take their new found skills back to the classroom where students will be taught how to make the finest fromage.

These cheesy creations will then be entered into the RNA's Student Made Cheese

*"We are committed to celebrating and promoting agriculture here at the RNA and we believe education is the key to this."*

Competition in the lead up to Ekka.

RNA Chief Executive Brendan Christou said the workshops have become an integral part of the RNA's dedication to agriculture and education.

"Over the past seven years, these award-winning workshops have led to thousands of students learning the science behind cheese making and the importance of the Australian dairy industry and dairy practices," he said.

"We are committed to celebrating and promoting agriculture here at the RNA and we believe education is the key to this."

# It's EKKA year round

It's Ekka year round at [www.ekka.com.au](http://www.ekka.com.au). Don't forget to follow #ekka on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for all things Ekka 2016.



# The search is on for Australia's finest dairy products



*The Royal Queensland Food and Wine Show (RQFWS) is calling for the nation's finest cheeses, dairy products, ice creams, gelato and sorbets.*

**W**hether it's a medal worthy aged cheddar or creamy camembert, the experienced RQFWS judges will award the crème de la crème.

This year, renowned international food judge and cheesemaker, Russell Smith, will return as Chief Judge of the Cheese & Dairy Produce Show and Ice Cream, Gelato & Sorbet Competition.

Mr Smith, who has more than 20 years' experience in the industry, will oversee an expert judging panel which will be made up of some of Australia's most respected and experienced food industry professionals.

Last year's judges tasted their way through more than 600 entries from across the nation, with Tarwin Blues produced by Berrys Creek Gourmet Cheese taking out the coveted Palatable Partners Champion Cheese of Show and Colin James Fine Food taking

out the Majors Group Grand Champion Ice Cream, Gelato or Sorbet of Show for their Chocolate Gelato.

The Cheese & Dairy Produce Show and Ice Cream, Gelato & Sorbet Competitions saw a 20 per cent increase in entry numbers in 2015, confirming them as some of the premier dairy competitions in the country.

The Dairy Produce Show stems back to the first ever Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) in 1876, making it one of the RNA's oldest competitions.

Entries close into the Cheese & Dairy Produce Show and Ice Cream, Gelato & Sorbet Competitions on 18 March.

*For more information or to enter your products go to [www.rqfws.com.au](http://www.rqfws.com.au)*

## GRAPE GRAZING

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## Palate

# The steaks are high in the hunt for the nation's best



*Australia's finest steak and lamb will be unearthed at the 2016 Royal Queensland Food & Wine Show (RQFWS), with entries now open into the prestigious Branded Beef and Lamb competitions.*

The best of the best in red meat will be put to the ultimate test as some of the state's top judges and food experts taste their way through the nation's finest.

The judging panel, overseen by Chief Judge Elaine Millar, will be made up of top chefs, butchers, food consultants and food journalists.

This includes Shaun Malone from Bucci restaurant, David Pugh from Restaurant Two, Glen Barratt from Wild Canary, Jake Nicolson from BlackBird Bar and Grill, John Kilroy from Cha Cha Char and Billy Gibney from Meat at Billy's.

For a country that produces some of the finest beef in the world, this competition brings out the true heavyweights in the industry.

Past Branded Beef Competition winners have been touted as the 'world's best' and the 2014 and 2015 winners, JBS Australia's Swift Premium Striploin and Australian Agricultural Company's Darling Downs Wagyu, were both served throughout the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) at the iconic Royal Queensland Steakhouse.

The prestigious Branded Beef and Branded Lamb competitions include a rigorous judging process with food scientists

perfectly cooking each piece of meat, before they are tasted by the experts.

With more than 2800 entries across the 2015 RQFWS competitions and a 20 per cent increase in the Branded Beef and Branded Lamb entry numbers last year, the RQFWS continues to grow.

The 2016 competitions include the Cheese & Dairy Produce Show, Ice Cream, Gelato and Sorbet Competition, Branded Beef Competition, Branded Lamb Competition, Royal Queensland Wine Show (RQWS), Sausage King and Ham, Bacon and Smallgoods Competition.

*Enter now at [www.rqfws.com.au](http://www.rqfws.com.au)*

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