



RNA

THE ROYAL NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND

The official quarterly newsletter of the RNA & Royal Queensland Show

SHOWBIZ

Winter 2007



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The Ekka-citement is Building

Visitors to this year's Show are in for a real treat when the gates open for Ekka 2007 on 9 August.

The excitement is building here at the Showgrounds and preparations are in full swing.

Our buildings are getting a fresh coat of paint and the first Ekka billboards and banners have gone up around the city with the theme for this year, That's Ekka.

There's a little piece of the Ekka in all of us and just about everyone you talk to from the country and the city has a special Ekka memory or story to tell.

That's Ekka highlights those wonderful traditions that make the Ekka a truly unique event for everyone; from the smell of cattle to the beautiful lights of the Ferris wheel.

Ekka competitors are gearing up for a great event. Entries are strong in all categories, particularly in Dairy Produce and Chainsawing.

If you like the ring competitions don't miss the best of the best on show daily in the Energex Community Arena. Thoroughbred Day on Show Tuesday sees the return of the World Cup Show Jumping competition, where we will welcome guest judge Sir Patrick Hogan, the man behind some of the great race horses of

our time. We're also honoured to have in our midst guest Boer Goat judge Mr Nico Botha from South Africa.

This edition of Showbiz gives you a glimpse of some of the new and thrilling features of this year's Show. I'm very excited about the Ekka Animal Boulevard, a wonderful showcase of just about every animal we have at the Show, in one central location. This will be particularly great for the kids, so head straight for Alexandria Street when you come through the gates.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our Ekka volunteers, stewards and judges, sponsors, RNA members, staff and Councillors, for working together so well to present Queensland's largest and most loved annual event.

On with the Show!

Dr Vivian Edwards OAM
RNA President



NEW to Ekka 07

Some things never change, and for many, the Ekka will always be synonymous with showbags, baby animals and a Dagwood Dog in the beautiful Queensland sun. However, Ekka 2007 will see the unveiling of a swag of new attractions and exhibits sure to keep visitors of all ages satisfied.

Exhibits

Years in the making, the Animal Boulevard is the brand new exhibit in Alexandria Street that will see the majority of the Show's animals housed in the one convenient location. Witness a real milking barn in action; cuddle a baby animal in the expanded nursery enclosure, and admire the tropical fish. The individual pavilions are interconnecting and packed with interactive displays, educational demonstrations, and expert stewards ready to answer all your curly questions.

As you exit the Animal Boulevard, be sure to continue on to the nearby Fun and Learning Pavilion, also brand new to Ekka this year. Fun and Learning will house an interactive National Science Week display, as well as other educational and novelty items.



Entertainment

Ekka has a reputation for nurturing young and upcoming entertainers on the way up – and this year is no exception. Fresh from 'Australia's Got Talent', 'Splat' is an energetic acrobatic/basketball show that's sure to be a huge hit.

And, like his namesake Richard Simmons, roving performer Richard Simms is a camp aerobic instructor that encourages audience participation. You have been warned...

Rides

Rides are a huge part of the Ekka experience, and the RNA is always on the look out for bigger and scarier new rides. For adults, Power Surge is an exciting new addition to Moove Alley, featuring high, spinning arms and a magnificent light show.

New to the Sunny Queen Smile Zone, the Skyview Wheel is a Ferris wheel for the 21st century, offering spectacular views of the city from its air conditioned carriages. The kids haven't been forgotten either, with two fun new rides: Samba Balloon Race and Crazy Rider.

Showbags

Showbags are a perennial Ekka favourite, and new ones are especially hot property. Happy Feet, Shrek 3 and Spiderman 3 will cater to the discerning young movie-goer; while the Elite Waterless Car Grooming showbag is perfect for the water conscious Dad.

Exhibitors

The Show's pavilions are never short of ways to spend a few dollars. New exhibitors include Pip Duck, a retailer of divine screenprinted rubber wellies ideal for traipsing around the Showgrounds; Suja Designs with their unique handbags and luggage; the Brisbane Lions Football Club and Tupperware. A delicious handmade cupcake from Cup Cakes will provide the fuel for your big day.



Dogs Life Magazine Feature

The Royal Queensland Show's prestigious dog competitions featured heavily in the May/June issue of Dogs Life magazine.

The article titled, 'Most Popular Dog Shows in Australia & New Zealand', was accompanied exclusively by photographs taken by Marc Grimwade at the 2006 Ekka, and detailed some of the Show's cutest and most popular canine events.



The RNA celebrates Primary Industries Week 2007

The RNA was once again a proud supporter and key sponsor of Primary Industries Week, held from 27 April – 5 May 2007.

Primary Industries Week was developed in 1996 to enhance public awareness and understanding of the value and importance of primary industries in Queensland. An initiative of the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI & F), the week of activities promotes the valuable contribution that Queensland's primary industries make to the State's prosperity and the quality of life for all its residents.

Achievement Awards Function

The DPI & F kicked off the week with the annual Achievement Awards function at Customs House, Brisbane, on 26 April, an event which serves to recognise and reward outstanding Queensland-based achievers in agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries. Awards were presented in the areas of innovation; sustainable primary production; service to primary industries and young achievement, which the RNA sponsored.

RNA President Dr Vivian Edwards presented the RNA Young Achiever of the Year Award to 21-year-old cotton grower Daniel Hayllor from Dalby. Daniel, who serves on the management committee of the Darling Cotton Growers, is an active member of the Cotton Week Committee and Dalby Wambo Rural Group.

Daniel has demonstrated innovation in his approach to water conservation and paddock management, with the goal of eventually building a network of young farmers within the cotton, and other, industries. "This will expose young farmers to various industry issues; provide a social network and encourage them to pass their thoughts and views to our industry leaders," he said.

Rural Discovery Day

Over 1,300 primary school students from all over Brisbane descended on the RNA Showgrounds' Main Arena for the Primary Industries Week Rural Discovery Day on 3 May.



RNA President Dr Vivian Edwards presents Daniel Hayllor with the RNA Primary Industries Young Achiever Award

Created to aid primary school-aged children in gaining a hands-on understanding of agriculture and how it relates to their every day life, Rural Discovery Day was free for all to attend.

Speakers from the RSPCA, Queensland Beekeepers Association, Dairy Farmers and the CSIRO, amongst others, held fun and informative sessions, providing listeners with a valuable insight into their respective industries.

RNA Education Officer – and former teacher – Kerry Ovenden also conducted sessions about the history of the Association and the Ekka, which were a hit with all ages.

The farmyard animal displays proved a popular highlight with students, enabling visitors to touch and hold goats, geese, pigs, and even newly hatched chickens under the watchful eye of their carers.



Students from St Matthews Catholic Primary School enjoy Rural Discovery Day at the RNA Showgrounds

Go Bush Young Man & Woman

An RNA initiative to showcase the job opportunities and merits of living and working in regional Queensland will be launched at this year's Ekka.

The first RNA Youth Rural Careers and Training Expo will be held at the RNA Showgrounds on 7 August and will give rural employers the chance to present the opportunities available today for young people considering their future career path.

RNA Chief Executive Jonathan Tunny said the growth and future success of our State's key rural industries lay firmly with the next generation.

"There is a common misconception that the only reason you 'go bush' is to be a jillaroo or jackaroo, but it's not all about working on the land.

"Regional townships are in need of agribusiness bankers, accountants, real estate agents, sales people, surveyors, stock agents, teachers, doctors, small business operators and more. There are tremendous opportunities for young people to really sink their teeth into a range of industries and become our future leaders," Mr Tunny said.

The Expo will allow organisations to present the employment options available to school

leavers and university students, including training and rural lifestyle pathways.

"The Ekka brings the city and country together to showcase our State's industry, innovations and initiatives, so it's a perfect time to hold this Expo for rural careers and training," Mr Tunny said.

The inaugural RNA Youth Rural Careers and Training Expo will be held at the RNA Showgrounds on Tuesday 7 August from 9am.



Win tickets to 'Miss Saigon'

Following a sell-out season in Melbourne, the critically acclaimed musical love story 'Miss Saigon' is set to play Brisbane's QPAC from 26 July.

An epic tale about the relationship between an American GI and a young Vietnamese woman set during the US occupation of Saigon, 'Miss Saigon' is one of the most successful musicals in the world.

To date it has been seen by over 33 million people in over 25 countries.

'Miss Saigon' is playing for a limited eight-week season. Tickets are now on sale from www.qtix.com.au or by phoning 136 246.

The RNA has two tickets to give away to one lucky RNA member. They are not valid for Friday and Saturday evening performances, and

are also subject to availability of date. Email your name, address and membership number to giveaways@ekka.com.au to before 16 July 2007.



Search for North Queensland Beauties

For the first time, The Coffee Club New Faces of the Ekka Competition is casting its net outside Brisbane to find the State's hottest new modelling talent.

Parade organiser Lindsay Bennett, The Coffee Club's John Lazarou, and Sandra Robbins from Vivien's Model Management will travel to Mackay and Cairns in early July for a whirlwind tour to find North Queensland's freshest faces.

"Queensland girls are some of the big names in New York at the moment and they don't just come from Brisbane," Lindsay Bennett said.

"We are really excited about potentially finding the next big thing in North Queensland and giving that person an opportunity previously unattainable to many people in regional areas."

Previous New Faces winners have gone on to model in Paris and interstate, with 2006 winner Carmen James appearing at Mercedes Benz Fashion Week and in several fashion spreads in The Brisbane News.

Judging will take place at Canelands Shopping Centre, Mackay, from 9.30am Saturday 7 July; and at Stockland Shopping Centre, Earlville, from 11am the following day. Brisbane residents will have their chance on Friday 13 July from 5.30pm when judging takes place on the Upper Stage in the Queen Street Mall.

The Coffee Club New Face of the Ekka will receive a 12-month contract with Vivien's Model Management, a photo shoot, makeover and modelling course, as well as other prizes.



Members Survey Thank You

A big thank you to RNA members who took the time to complete the Showbiz online survey last month. The results were largely very positive, with some wonderful suggestions as to how we can enrich the publication. Stay tuned until later this year when the new and improved newsletter will be unveiled.

'Ratatouille' comes to Ekka!

'Ratatouille' is the latest family film from Pixar Animation Studios ('Cars', 'Finding Nemo') and director Brad Bird ('The Incredibles'). It tells the story of a rat named Remy, who dreams of becoming a great chef despite his family's wishes and the obvious problem of being a rat in a decidedly rodent-phobic profession.

Visit the Brisbane Markets Agricultural Hall 'Kids in the Kitchen' cooking classes for your chance to win 'Ratatouille' movie passes, merchandise, and an exclusive film screening for you and your friends!

Ourbrisbane.com Shares Ekka Memories

Ourbrisbane.com has always been a proud supporter of the Ekka. This year is no exception, with the popular website giving die-hard Ekka devotees the opportunity to upload their personal Ekka photos - both old and new - onto the site.

And while you're there, make sure you enter the ourbrisbane.com Ekka competition for your chance to win family passes and showbags!

Ourbrisbane.com has everything you need to know about Brisbane, including in-depth information about festivals, events, dining, performing arts and much more.



Entries Department Update

The RNA Entries team has had one of its busiest Ekka lead-ups yet, with competition entries up in several sections by over 20%.

With 27,000 entries to catalogue the department has grown in the past months to accommodate five temporary staff members.

Corporate Services General Manager Brendan Christou said entries had markedly increased in several competition sections. "Chainsaw entries have increased by 76%, and Cookery entries are up 22%," he explained.

"Chainsawing is one of the liveliest and most popular competitions at the Show, so this increase will make for some outstanding competition," Brendan explained. "As for Cookery, an increased appreciation for the preparation and presentation of food within the community has seen greater interest in the section this year," he added, "and this is great for the Show."

People of all ages and backgrounds are getting involved in Show competitions, with students from St Aidan's Anglican Girls' school making cheese for the Dairy Produce competition as a class project, Brendan said.

Changes to the Entries department this year include the implementation of remote results in the areas of Wine, Canine and Beef; and a new automated approach to Beef weighing, in which the cattle are scanned and weighed on-site in one seamless process. After a positive response to downloadable schedules and entry forms on the website, the RNA is moving to implement more online entry processes for some sections. "This will have a huge impact on entry efficiency and accuracy," Brendan said.

Several competitions are still open for entries. Visit the Ekka website www.ekka.com.au for details.



Pearls of Wisdom

Brisbane may have shed its 'small town' reputation in the last decade, but according to long-time Ekka exhibitors Jim and Elaine McLaughlin, our Royal Show has retained a welcoming atmosphere unique to large Shows.

It's a feeling that has kept the McLaughlins coming back for more than forty years.

"The Ekka has always had a special feeling, which remains - perhaps not so strong now but always there - a family feeling," explained Elaine. "We hope that Brisbane never loses this."

The McLaughlins have been involved with the Ekka since 1962, when they used to

come and help friends with their showbag stands. They opened the now iconic Japanese Pearl Exhibition in 1964; an attraction that became an instant hit with Ekka visitors due to its kimono-clad attendants - at that time a novelty in Brisbane. "We also had the Lucky Pearl Dip," said Elaine. "Japanese pearl oysters were imported unopened, and it was a thrill to see the oysters opened and the pearl taken out."

The catch-your-own goldfish display was another popular exhibit that saw nearly 700,000 happy visitors leave the Ekka with an addition to their family between 1964 and 2000. "Children waited all year for the chance to catch a goldfish," Elaine said.

The goldfish and original pearl display have long gone, but the McLaughlins' presence at the Show is still strong. Under their company name Jimac Promotions, Jim and Elaine now sell assorted gifts and household lines from their stand in the Showbag Pavilion. Adults, who in the sixties and seventies plucked a pearl from its shell at the Show, are now bringing their kids to have a go.

A lot has changed since Jim and Elaine first began working at the Ekka, however the hard work and preparation required for ten hectic days in August is something the McLaughlins are reluctant to give up. "We keep coming back because once involved it is a way of life."

The John MacDonald Stand - a Part of History

With its iconic clock tower lit elegantly from beneath during the Show, the John MacDonald Stand is one of the RNA Showgrounds' most enduring landmarks.

The Stand was named in 1923, in honour of long-serving RNA Councillor and Chairman John MacDonald.

Mr MacDonald was elected Permanent Chairman of the RNA (then known as the QNA) on 8 February 1901 - a mere week after Australia's Federation. He held this position for a period of 19 years, witnessing the coming and going of seven Presidents.

During his tenure as Chairman, Mr MacDonald lobbied Brisbane City Council and the State Government tirelessly for greater funding for the grounds at Bowen Park. He saw the Association through dark financial times enabling the RNA to focus its efforts on its primary activities: supporting the State's agriculture and industry.

John MacDonald will be remembered for the vital role he played in the Association's history.



Congratulations Jacinta



RNA Accountant Jacinta Goad recently received her CPA (Certified Practising Accountant) qualification, winning the Hudson Award for the highest result achieved in Queensland in the Business Strategy and Leadership subject.

Jacinta has been completing the CPA course by correspondence for the past three years, all the while honing her skills as a key member of the RNA Finance team. With over 1,700 students completing the exam, Jacinta's achievement is truly remarkable.



The 2007 Show Team

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New RNA Websites

As part of its recent re-branding process, the RNA in May launched its new Corporate website, www.rna.org.au.

The website homepage features beautiful Ekka photographs from the past and present, capturing the spirit and longevity of the organisation.

The website is a one-stop resource for RNA history, annual reports, by-laws and latest news, and includes snapshots of all RNA Councillors and management.

The 2007 Ekka website www.ekka.com.au was launched in late June, and reflects the Show's vibrant new marketing campaign, 'That's Ekka'. The website, which receives millions of page views in the lead up to Ekka, contains up-to-date information about entertainment, exhibits and showbags.

Queensland Junior Farmers' Organisation 60th Anniversary

The Queensland Junior Farmers' Organisation is celebrating its 60th anniversary with a reunion at the Ekka on Sunday 12 August.

The casual get-together will be an opportunity for past members, junior farmers, advisors and state organisers to catch up and reminisce over photos and memorabilia.

The Junior Farmers' Organisation was formed in Gatton in 1947 to establish educational opportunities for rural boys and girls.

At its peak in the 1980s it had over 3,000 members and 220 clubs across the State. The RNA played a vital role in the club's history, as the venue for rural camps – a precursor to the organisation.

The reunion will take place at 2.30pm in the No. 1 Meeting Room, upstairs in the Showbag Pavilion.