

THE BEST OF QUEENSLAND

MORE than 400,000 people from city and country will come together from August 9 to 18 to celebrate and experience the best of Queensland.

Just 1.6km from the Brisbane CBD, the Ekka features more than 10,000 animals, 23,000 competition entries, a smorgasbord of award-winning food and wine, and hours of free family entertainment.

This year the RNA welcomes new president David Thomas to the helm of the show and one of his first projects to oversee has been the historic \$2.9 billion 15-year RNA Showgrounds regeneration project.

He said the success of last year's show demonstrated how the state's largest annual event can operate seamlessly throughout the regeneration project.


"The 2012 Ekka will feature some of the nation's biggest competitions, including Australia's largest annual thoroughbred competition and the world's most comprehensive stud beef competition of its kind.

"The show continually expands and evolves – from the 1876 show that featured 1700 entries and two alpacas to more than 20,000 entries and an entire alpaca fleece competition in 2011. A quintessential Queensland experience, the Ekka forms a rich part of the state's social and cultural heritage."

Visitors to Ekka 2012 will be some of the first to walk through the newly transformed Royal International Convention Centre, previously known as the Industrial Pavilion, with the ground floor back in use for the show.

The Ekka's largest competition, the Royal Queensland Dog Show, will be housed in this exhibition space, together with the Agricultural Hall and horticulture exhibits.

It will also be home to a new attraction for green thumbs – the Garden Platform – which will feature daily gardening tips, activities and cooking demonstrations.

"It is wonderful to see the enthusiasm and hard work the 2011 competitors displayed, and we're excited about what lies ahead for this year's Ekka," Mr Thomas said. – Picture: RNA. 

We're excited about what lies ahead for this year's Ekka.

**RNA president
David Thomas**

Top 10 competitions in 2011

Canine: 2489 entries
Horses in action: 2108 entries
Poultry: 2056 entries
Stud beef cattle: 1584 entries
Woodchop and sawing: 1428 entries
Photography: 1169 entries
Painting and drawing: 990 entries
Education on show: 939 entries
Stud horses: 916 entries
Creative art and craft: 907 entries

1876: THE FIRST EXHIBITION

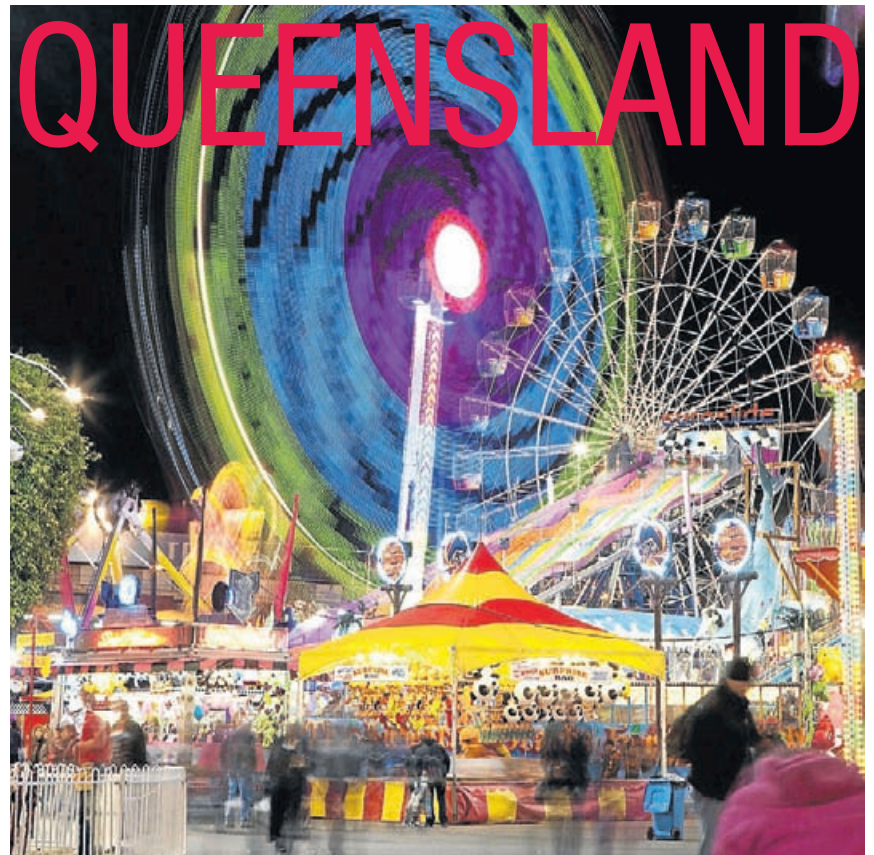
The Intercolonial Exhibition of 1876 was held at Bowen Park with an estimated 15,000 to 17,000 people attending out of Brisbane's population at the time of just 20,600. A total of 5000 people charged the turnstiles – chaos ensued until mounted troopers were called to drive back the crowd. Visitors to the first show were treated to more than 1000 exhibits. Entry to the grounds in the morning was a half-crown or visitors could wait until after the official opening when the cost of a ticket fell to a shilling. Only three breeds of cattle were displayed – Durham, Hereford and Devon.

1877: FIRST EKKA RIDE

Introduction of the first ride in Sideshow Alley – a merry-go-round. The total value of prizes and medals was £500 to £600.

1879: INTRODUCTION OF QUEENSLAND'S NEWEST TECHNOLOGIES

Ekka patrons were amazed by telephones,



A rich history

microphones, electric lights and even an electric thief detector. The Ekka's first oyster stall was introduced.

1891: DISTRICT EXHIBITS

The first district exhibits contest was held – nine regions competed for a prize pool of £175.

1894: FIRST FIREWORKS

The first fireworks display in the main arena, beginning another show tradition.

1919: FIRST EKKA CANCELLED BECAUSE OF SPANISH FLU PANDEMIC

1920: EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES, VISITS THE EKKA

1924: SHOW TRADITIONS
Queensland Country Women's Association makes its first appearance at the Ekka. The first night-time ring program was held after the introduction of electric lighting.

1942: WORLD WAR II

The show was cancelled because of World War II as the grounds were used as a staging depot.

1950s: EKKA FOOD TRADITIONS

The now symbolic Ekka fairy floss, butter board sandwiches, strawberry sundaes and Dagwood dogs were introduced.

1954: QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND PRINCE PHILLIP VISIT THE EKKA

1964: ANIMAL NURSERY AT THE EKKA FIRST INTRODUCED

2000: SIDESHOW ALLEY AND WOODCHOP
Inner-city bypass constructed. Sideshow Alley and the woodchop arena redeveloped.

2010: ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL EKKA'S IN HISTORY HELD

2011: GRAMMY AWARD WINNERS

Grammy Award winners O close the Ekka's concert series in front of a capacity crowd. The Ekka attracts more than 400,000 people through the gate for the second year.

Brisbane **Ekka**
Deal 2012

ROYAL
ON THE PARK
Brisbane
★★★★☆
Where service comes first

- * Overnight accommodation in a Deluxe City View room (king or double)
- * \$50 credit for use in the Walnut Restaurant or Lounge bar
- * FREE Car parking
- * FREE late checkout to 12 noon
- * FREE for kids staying in existing bedding
- * FREE upgrade to Deluxe Park View room for weekend bookings (Fri, Sat, Sun)
- * \$100 upgrade to Spa Suite and \$150 upgrade to Executive Room (In addition to Deluxe room rate)

2 Days
1 Night
from \$229*

*Subject to terms, conditions and availability at time of booking. Package max of 2 adults and 2 children (under 12 years) using existing bedding. Valid 10 August - 18 August 2012 inclusive

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