



A bird's eye view of the Royal International Convention Centre on the RNA Showgrounds site.

World-class regeneration under way

AFTER seven years of planning, construction on the world-class \$2.9 billion 15-year RNA Showgrounds Regeneration Project began in April last year. It is the most significant urban renewal in Brisbane since the suburb of South Bank was given a facelift.

The first stage of the project involves the transformation of the industrial pavilion or showbag pavilion, into the new \$59 million Royal International Convention Centre (RICC).

The centre's ground floor will be back in use for this year's Ekka and will officially open for events in March 2013. As part of the project, several buildings were removed after Ekka 2011. These include the Brisbane Markets Agricultural Hall and the Douglas Wadley Dog Pavilion, which will result in location changes for some competitions for Ekka 2012.

This year, the Royal Queensland Dog Show will be located on the ground floor of the RICC.

Showbags will return to Sideshow Alley; however, this year the pavilion will be located on the opposite side of the precinct.

The Fine Arts Competition will remain on the ground floor of the Commonwealth Bank Auditorium. Competitions are the heart of the Ekka and will continue to be a major part of

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the show throughout the 15-year regeneration.

The RNA says it is committed to ensuring competitions remain as popular as ever and provide 10 days of quality judging and outstanding contests. The success of last year's Ekka demonstrated how an annual event of such a large scale could operate throughout the regeneration project, with construction disruptions at a minimum.

The regeneration of the RNA Showgrounds is important, as it will keep the legacy of the 22-hectare site alive, while transforming the grounds into a lifestyle and cultural hub for the community to access all year round.

Quick Ekka facts

- The debut of the iconic strawberry sundae was in 1950.
- 40,000 oysters were eaten in 2011.
- 800 volunteers helped over 10 days in 2011.
- 370 chickens have hatched since 2009.
- It cost just £4500 to hold the Ekka in the early days.
- More than 30,000 Ekka-goers visited the iconic fashion parades in 2011.
- The first Royal Queensland Show was held August 22-26, 1876.
- There are more than 23,000 competition entries.
- Last year 32,134 people downloaded the first ever iPhone app.
- The Ekka is Queensland's largest marketplace, with more than 400,000 patrons and retailers.
- In 2011 the Ekka attracted more than 400,000 people through the gates.
- There are 20,000 seats in the main arena.
- 10,600 Queensland Country Women's Association scones were sold at Ekka in 2011.
- 23,770 Coon Cheese toasties were sold in 2011.
- About 10,000 animals appear at the Ekka.
- The first Ekka attendance was 17,000 people, out of the total Brisbane population of about 20,600.
- 233 lambs have been born at Ekka since 2009.
- The average August temperature in Brisbane is 23deg C.
- There are 335 showbag varieties.
- About two swimming pools worth of recyclable sawdust and sand are used for animal bedding at the showgrounds.
- The 2012 total prize pool in horse competitions is \$129,254.
- The RNA Showgrounds covers 22 hectares.



create unusual and original designs using the incredible shapes and colours in both saltwater and freshwater pearls. For this reason the design team of in-house gold and silversmiths generate designs which appeal to women from all walks of life. Pearls for Girls makes original, affordable and versatile jewellery lines to meet the demands of fashion needs for the modern woman. These ideas bring new concepts, but also employ traditional pearl design in emphasising simplicity at the heart of the beauty of pearls. To complement the pearl range, Pearls for Girls also carries a colourful display of semi-precious stone and silver jewellery, as well as American Indian turquoise and silver jewellery. Corinne and David now have two retail locations, in Bay Village, Hastings Street, Noosa, and in their new shop in the main street of Eumundi. You can also find Pearls for Girls at events nationwide, including the Sydney Royal Easter Show, Beef Week and the Brisbane Ekka.

Top bands head to Ekka

THE Ekka is not just about the animals, and food and exhibitors – there are also some major music concerts



to look forward to. Over two huge nights, showgoers can enjoy world-class performances from two major global music acts – The Ten Tenors, and rock band Eskimo Joe (pictured). Bbusily writing a new album, the boys of Eskimo Joe are excited to take a break, turn up the volume and bring their rock to Ekka 2012. The multi award-winning band consistently delivers fantastic, internationally renowned live shows, and this one will be no different. With many accolades attached to their five albums, the show will be full of hits. And don't miss The Ten Tenors, who will join the show-stopping line-up of Ekka entertainment. From unassuming beginnings in the mid-1990s to a platinum record-selling and international touring act today, the history of The Ten Tenors has been anything but standard. With an unparalleled palette of repertoire, The Ten Tenors have taken their passion for quality music and powerful singing to venues all around the world. Their high-octane vocal power and warrior-like approach to live concert touring put them in a class of their own.

- The Ten Tenors will perform at 6pm, Sunday, August 12. Doors open at 5.45pm. Eskimo Joe will perform at 8.30pm, Saturday, August 18. Doors open at 7pm.

Pearls for Girls

NOOSA Heads-based business Pearls for Girls has been working hard to bring fresh ideas to their customers all over Australia. As well as making beautiful South Sea and Broome pearl jewellery designs, the owners, Corinne and David, have strived to



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