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What a scoop! 2017 Ekka legends have a story to tell

The couple responsible for helping hundreds of budding journalists at the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) for the last 26 years, were last night crowned the 2017 Ekka legends.

Keith and Wendy Encelmaier have been running the Ekka's Show Camp for more than a quarter of a century and were presented with the prestigious award at the Ekka's President's Reception.

RNA President David Thomas said the Ekka legend award was bestowed on those who had made a remarkable contribution to the show.

For 26 years Keith and Wendy have managed the Ekka Show Camp, a 10-day literary camp for gifted students across rural and urban Queensland.

Each year, students from years 6 to 12 apply for the opportunity to live-in at Ekka and work as journalists to produce around 40 stories each for 'The Ekka Courier', the official Ekka newspaper.

Now in its 89th year, Ekka Show Camp has been giving lucky participants the chance to live, breathe, eat and sleep Ekka.

Established in 1927 as the Pig Club Camp for Boys, the camp has continually evolved.

In his first year as Show Camp Manager, Keith introduced The Ekka Courier, to allow students to gain real life experience as a journalist, reporting on all aspects of the Show, from agriculture to entertainment.

Mr Enchelmaier said the honour has been in working with the 500 or so students who have come through the camp since 1992.

"It has been incredibly rewarding to work with the students and see them gain the confidence to interview people and find some remarkable stories," he said.

"We've seen some very talented journalists in the making come through Show Camp," he said.

Over the first few days of Show Camp, Keith takes the students for tours around the Ekka grounds. He selects a story for the students to cover, sets up an interview for them and helps them put the story together, so they have an understanding of what is required when they go out on their own.

"I give them a start, but it doesn't take long for them to take off on their own. They get the hang of it pretty quickly and are away," he said.

"I like to get the kids involved in various parts of the show. You'll see them carrying the breed signs in the Grand Parade on People's Day and in the Young Judges competition, so they can learn all about Fine Arts, Fleece Breeds, Dairy Goats and Cattle and Stud Beef.

"The more they know, the better they'll be able to write about it."

Today the students have iPads so they can take photos, record interviews for podcasts and record video footage; as well as computers and a printer to complete the production process.

In accepting the award, Keith praised his wife Wendy Enchelmaier, a writer herself, who has worked alongside him for around 15 years helping the students with their writing skills.

Ends

EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

The 2017 Ekka Media Kit is now available to download. It is the most comprehensive information guide to the show - to download please visit www.ekka.com.au/media-centre

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