

Bush Telegraph

2018 Show Photos Available Online

Show photographer Michael Parry kindly volunteered his services at this year's show to take photos for us. He has now published them all on his website:

<https://freshphotoimage.instaproofs.com/gallery/#events/1627191>

Take a look as there is quite a comprehensive collection including the awards presentation ceremony. If you like any you can also purchase them for a small fee direct from the website.

Congratulations Ben Harman



Ben won the Santa Gertrudis Award - His stud is Phoenix Santa Gertrudis stud. He won it for 2017 season most points gained in his first year of showing his stud.

The Royal Agricultural Society of Tasmania would like to thank all our members, friends, sponsors and volunteers for their efforts throughout 2018.

We'd like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year.

We look forward to seeing you all in 2019.

The Royal Agricultural Society of Tasmania

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Bush Telegraph

December 2018

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Land sale transforms finances

The RAST has conducted a highly successful sale by auction of its land on the corner of the Brooker Highway and Howard Rd. The land is occupied by a Bunnings Warehouse and was leased by the Society to Bunnings.

The auction, conducted at the Crown Casino in Melbourne this month, realised over \$14 million for the Society.

CEO Scott Gadd, who attended the auction along with the Society's President, Peter Spotswood, said the auction was "hotly contested" by several parties, and eventually sold to an institutional investor. "The 4ha parcel of land sold for \$5 million more than we had expected," said Scott.

"In the past the Society has been an asset rich but cash poor organisation, and this highly successful land sale puts us in a completely new situation. We can plan for the future with confidence."

Story continued on page 2...

Message from the CEO

Another challenging year is now behind us, but the future has never looked as bright. The recent Board decision to unlock the capital from Bunnings has now paid off with a much better than expected result. Realising over \$14,000,000 vindicates our entire strategy to date with the Master Plan and the development of lots 1 & 2.

The RAST has never been in such a good position as we will soon have all debts paid down and a significant amount of money in reserve. The Board are currently considering the best investment strategy for the proceeds, but they are determined to ensure that we take a strategic and informed approach to guarantee the best possible outcomes for the Society moving forward.

This is the culmination of over 8 years' work and commitment from many people. There has been plenty of criticism, debate and doubts over that time. However, it is now impossible to not accept that the strategic direction and implementation set all those years ago was the right one and that the results have been stunning.

Lot 2 will soon go to development application stage and we've already initiated a broader discussion about what stage 3 could look like. We are on track to complete the refurbishment of the administration building in 2019 and we now have the means to look to invest in more income generating opportunities and build on our recently achieved strong financial performance.

I'd like to thank all of you who have supported and encouraged me on this journey and I now honestly feel that, as difficult as it was, the past 8 years has been well worth it. It is definitely a Merry Christmas for the RAST and we should all be very proud of what we have achieved. I'm wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas and New Year and look forward to engaging with you all for the next chapter.



Scott Gadd
Chief Executive Officer



Office open hours over the Christmas period

December 24 th – Open until 11am	December 29 th – Closed
December 25 th – Closed	December 30 th – Closed
December 26 th – Closed	December 31 st – Open
December 27 th – Open all day	January 1 st – Closed
December 28 th – Open all day	January 2 nd onwards – Open as normal

DRAFT

The Royal Agricultural Society of Tasmania MEETING CALENDAR 2019

Month	RAST Board	RAST Council	AGM	Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards (not finalised)	Royal Hobart Wine Show (not finalised)	Finance & Audit Committee
January	Wednesday 16 January 3.30 p.m. Meeting					Wednesday 16 January 2.00 p.m.
February	Board Planning Meeting to be advised Wednesday 20 February 3.30p.m. Meeting	Council Planning Day to be advised		Tuesday 5 February 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 12 February	Wednesday 20 February 2.00 p.m.
March	Wednesday 20 March 3.30 p.m. Meeting	Thursday 14 March 4.30 p.m.		Tuesday 5 March 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 12 March 4.00 p.m.	
April	Wednesday 17 April 3.30 p.m. Meeting	Thursday 11 April 4.30 p.m.		Tuesday 2 April 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 9 April 4.00 p.m.	Wednesday 17 April 2.00 p.m.
May	Wednesday 15 May 3.30 p.m. Meeting	Thursday 9 May 4.30 p.m.		Tuesday 7 May 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 14 May 4.00 p.m.	Wednesday 15 May 2.00 p.m.
June	Wednesday 19 June 3.30 p.m. Meeting	Thursday 13 June 4.30 p.m.	Wednesday 19 June 5.30 p.m.	Tuesday 4 June 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 11 June 4.00 p.m.	Wednesday 19 June 2.00 p.m.

Vineyard of the Year Field Day (TBC)
Annual General Meeting (TBC)

Thursday 17 May 2019
Wednesday 19 June 2019 from 5.30pm

The Royal Agricultural Society of Tasmania MEETING CALENDAR 2019

Month	RAST Board	RAST Council	AGM	Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards	Royal Hobart Wine Show	Finance & Audit Committee
July	Wednesday 17 July 3.30 p.m. Meeting	Thursday 11 July 4.30 p.m.		Tuesday 2 July 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 9 July 4.00 p.m.	Wednesday 17 July 2.00 p.m.
August	Wednesday 21 August 3.30 p.m. Meeting	Thursday 8 August 4.30 p.m. * Risk Man Brief		Tuesday 6 August (Review) 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 13 August 4.00 p.m.	Wednesday 21 August 2.00pm Meeting
September	Wednesday 18 September 3.30 p.m. Meeting	Thursday 12 September 4.30 p.m.		Tuesday 3 September 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 10 September 4.00 p.m.	Wednesday 18 September 2.00 p.m.
October						
November	Wednesday 20 November 3.30 p.m. Meeting	Thursday 14 November 4.30 p.m.		Tuesday 5 November 4.00pm	Tuesday 12 November 4.00 p.m.	Wednesday 20 November 2.00 p.m.
December	Wednesday 18 December 3.30 p.m. Meeting			Tuesday 3 December 4.00 p.m.	Tuesday 10 December 4.00pm	Wednesday 18 December 2.00 p.m.

Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards (TBC)
Royal Hobart Show
Royal Hobart Wine Show (TBC)
Volunteers BBQ
Council Christmas Dinner

Judging 22 July – 25 July 2019 – Awards Dinner, Saturday 17 August 2019 (TBC)
23 – 26 October 2019
Judging 12 Aug – 17 Aug 2019; Trade & Public Tasting 16 Aug 2019; Awards Dinner 17 Aug 2019 (TBC)
28 November 2019
Moved to AGM

Dear Member,

The RAST is about to embark on some major initiatives designed to take us into a sustainable future. As a valued member of the Society we'd like to take you on the journey with us.

Recently, on December 12 in Melbourne, the RAST-owned land on which stands the Bunnings hardware store, was offered for sale by auction. Interest was high. I am pleased to advise that a premium price was achieved and that the settlement is now proceeding.

There have been some media reports recently about this auction sale of the Bunnings land lease. But these reports have not been entirely accurate and so this correspondence outlines a fuller picture of where we're at, and where the Board wants to take the Society as it approach its 200th anniversary.

The Board undertook a strategic review of the business in February this year (2018). This recognised that ageing Showground infrastructure is a great impediment to the Society's sustainability. This old infrastructure requires us to spend significant amounts to repair and maintain the site to achieve compliance with a multitude of local and state authorities.

Secondly, the Review identified the need to ensure that our iconic event, the Royal Hobart Show, remains relevant and attractive in the competitive environment that is the 21st century.

The Review also identified that we have many positive opportunities before us to expand upon the good work undertaken over the past 200 years.

We commenced on this journey some eight years ago when we developed a new Master Plan for the Showground and embarked on the Bunnings project. The second stage of that Master Plan is now close to fruition and involves another retail development on Howard Rd, next door to Bunnings.

In many ways these projects were the easy parts to achieve. Stage three is a more difficult challenge as it relates to upgrading the rest of the site, especially in regards to the Show, with limited resources. Continued 'band-aiding' of old infrastructure is not good business because most of these assets are beyond their useful life.

The Society is not in a position to realise any future redevelopment from its own resources and will therefore need to be innovative and identify potential funding partners as we move forward. A number of concepts are in the mix but nothing has been decided at this stage in regards to stage three. The Board has decided to work methodically through the opportunities and consult widely before making any firm decisions.

While the original Bunnings deal was predicated on a lease of Society land, the Board has now decided that the immediate benefits of realising the capital tied up in the Bunnings lease now outweighs the longer term benefits of keeping this parcel of land in Society ownership. This decision has not been made lightly and is based upon a great deal of financial modelling and expert advice.

By realising this capital we are moving to ensure that we have the ability to invest into the site in a way that maintains our control of it - especially if we decide to partner with other entities should they be from the government, not for profit or commercial sectors or a combination of all three.

Advice received suggested that we could achieve a premium from the sale of the Bunnings lease in the order of 4 -5 times the original value of the land. The result has validated our approach to date and delivers the Society an excellent return on our investment. It should set us up for the future and will dramatically change our ongoing liquidity issues.

The Board, in consultation with our stakeholders, will now set about developing a strategy for utilisation of the funds from the Bunnings site sale over the short, medium and longer terms.

The Board is also committed to a review of Society governance, staffing, financial management and membership. A special members' meeting may be held early 2019 to further consult and progress these matters.

The Board recognises the importance of our membership and wants all members to be a part of this exciting new journey for the RAST. We shall keep you updated of developments.

Yours sincerely,



(President)



Story continued from front page...

The Board of the Society has determined that the proceeds from the sale will be strategically invested into the future of the Society to secure its sustainability in the decades ahead.

The Society purchased the 17ha Showground site in 1905. It has always been larger than required for Society activities such as the Royal Hobart Show and earlier this year, a Board workshop identified that the Society should generate greater income from its large and under-utilised Showground site.

The Society is a not-for-profit organisation and it has identified a mix of developmental opportunities to propel the RAST into new directions without compromising the delivery of Society events such as the Show, the Wine Show and the Food Awards.

Showground development updates

- The State Government arena upgrade grant has been acquitted. Work including new a sprinkler system is now completed. Only remaining issue is a weed spray that we hope to complete prior to Christmas.
- Tasmanian Community Fund Grant for the administration building is well underway. We're hopeful the roof will be completed early in the New Year when we will start to install new windows before commencing the internal work which will include new kitchens and some minor upgrades.
- The State Government commitment of \$1.5M for a new pavilion on the Brooker Highway was allocated in the previous State budget. We will shortly commence the design phase with a view to finalising approvals and building between the 2019 & 2020 shows.
- The lot 2 development (Spotlight & Anaconda) is expected to commence in the first half of 2019. We will shortly be seeking expressions of interest from those seeking to salvage any items from that area.
- 100kw of solar will be installed on each of the Market and Brooker Pavilions in early January 2019. Some additional strengthening of both roofs will occur in February 2019.



Generating our own power...

By the first half of next year the Showground will be generating its own power.

Installation is expected to begin any day now on the Showground's own solar power scheme. Interest from others is high and the Society was recently asked to brief the state government on our self-sufficiency power program and the energy co-operative we've helped to establish.

200kw panel arrays will be installed on the roofs of two of our larger buildings, and the modelling shows they will produce more than enough energy for the Showground's needs, with excess capacity to be sold into an agricultural co-operative, Sustainable Tasmania, which has been established by Gravitas Energy and the RAST.

The cost of power is becoming prohibitive for businesses here in Tasmania, as it is elsewhere in the county. So we're a foundation partner of Sustainable Tasmania. The co-op will allow agribusinesses which join it to trade between each other in renewable energy. It's all about like-minded businesses achieving mutually beneficial outcomes and keeping a lid on their power costs.

Any agribusiness interested in joining the coop should contact, Roman Voloshin on 0402 318 973.

Motorhome Park

After a very successful summer in 2017-18 the Motorhome Park is in readiness once again, following the Royal Hobart Show which always renders the Motorhome Park inoperative.

Forward bookings are very strong, especially about the time of the Wooden Boat Festival.

Last season, bookings showed a trend towards younger families holidaying in Tasmania in their caravan or campervan. Previously, most bookings were by the grey nomad brigade.

Queenslanders made up a big part of our market last season with many admitting frankly they were getting away from the sultry heat of the north.



Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards



Established 1996 the Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards are the oldest and most respected food awards program in Australia.

Entries this year came from all over the nation and Tasmanian food producers were highly competitive. Lauriston Grove Olive Oil, based at South Arm, took out Best Tasmanian Exhibit and Best in Show. Internationally accredited olive oil judge Shane Cummings described it as exceptional.

Entries covered just about everything we consume, and the Food Awards are an exciting time in the Society's office, as the entries roll in, from Mascarpone and fig gelato to pork and apple pies.

This year, everything from salmon to kimchi was entered, including Pepperberry infused light soy sauce from Hobart; duck and pork salami from NSW; blackcurrant and salty and apple pies. This year, everything from salmon to kimchi was entered, including Pepperberry infused light soy sauce from Hobart; duck and pork salami from NSW; blackcurrant and salty licorice chocolate from Launceston, and Umami Clam Preserve from Yamba, NSW.

Many of today's experimental or exotic products become tomorrow's must-have larder favourites and the Fine Food Awards are a way of testing new foods against the judging panels' palates.

2018 saw new judging teams appointed, including internationally accredited judges in olive oil and teas and tisanes.

Internationally accredited Tea and Tisane judge Michael Kinahan, was last year senior judge at the World Tea Brewing Championships in Shanghai, and head judge at another tea event in Beijing. Michael began his career in London, overseeing accounts at some of London's finest 5-star hotels and Michelin star restaurants. He is now based in Sydney.

Shane Cummins, another internationally accredited judge, this time in olive oil has been Head Judge of the Australian National Olive competition since 2016. He is also Convenor of the "Tastebook" program, a sensory professional development and training initiative in appreciating, describing, and understanding how to improve the quality of extra virgin olive oil and table olives. Shane is based in Sydney.

Overall, there were 18 categories in the Awards comprising 469 classes. Categories range from pre-prepared and pre-cooked meals, to meringues and dips. Classes within each category are extensive and include, for instance, seven classes for milk and eight for yoghurt.





Royal Hobart Wine Show

Tasmanian wines performed well in this year's Royal Hobart Wine Show. Pressing Matters won most successful Tasmanian Exhibitor; Bream Creek Pinot Noir won Best Tasmanian Wine, and Bay of Fires won Best Pinot Wine of Provenance.

A judging panel of wine experts from around Australia and from Japan assessed some 1,600 different wines. Japanese judge Yoshiko Takahashi proved to be a very popular new addition to the judging panel, and the decision to bring forward the Wine Show so as not to clash with the National Wine Show in November proved no stumbling block to entries – or their quality - in this year's Wine show.

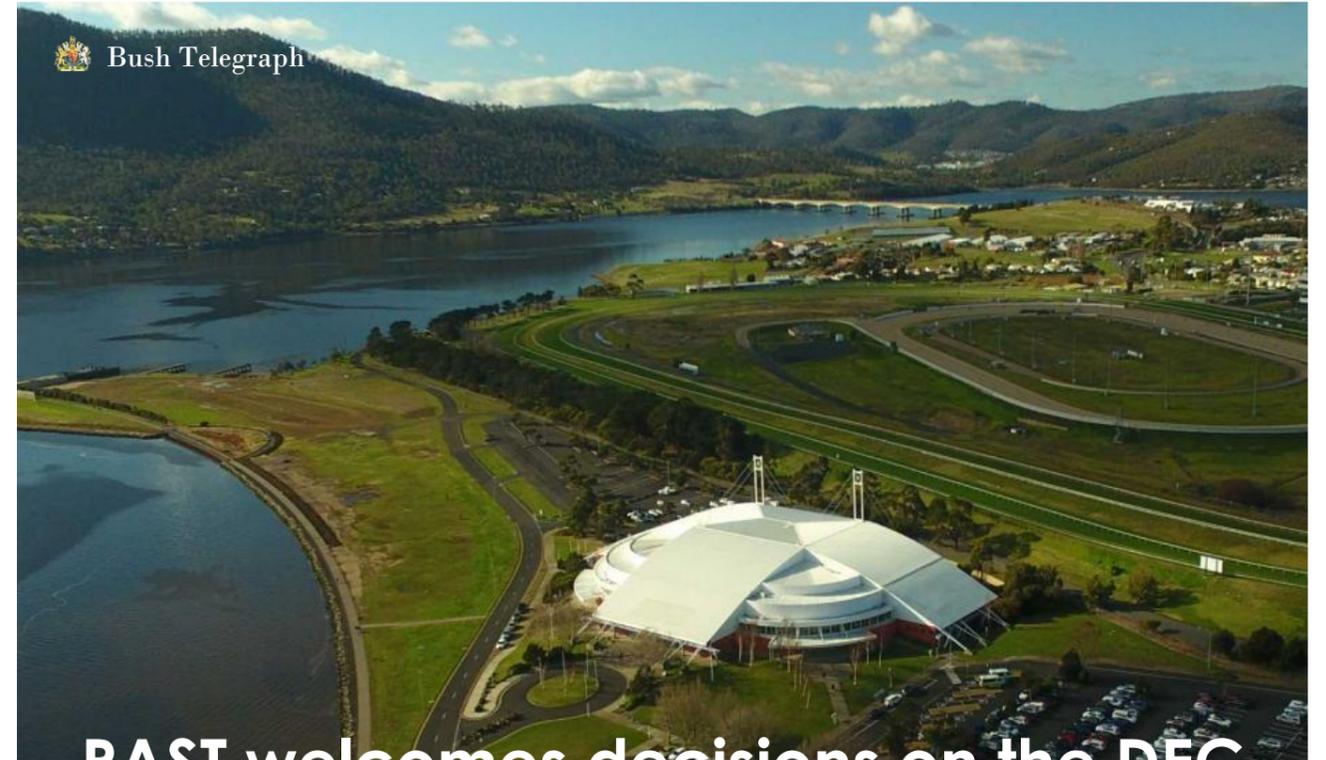
Chief Judge, Sue Bell, said the experience of the judging panel this year was very positive. She said since the boom in vineyard plantings in the 1990s a strong era of quality vineyard production is now emerging.

The Head of the Wine Show committee, James Godfrey, said this year's August wine show proved very successful. He said that scheduling the wine show soon after the Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards provided a focus for Tasmania's food and wine reputation.

Four days of judging involved more than 500 white wine entries, with 2017 Chardonnays representing the single largest category of white wine entered. More than 920 reds were entered with the highest proportion coming from the 2016 Shiraz vintage.

A total of 128 Pinot Noirs competed for the Gravitas Energy sponsored prize of a trip for two to Paris. Two new categories this year were Rose and Pinot Noir of Provenance.

The judging panel comprised experts from Tasmania, South Australia, NSW, Victoria, and Western Australia. There were three Tasmanian judges and three of four Associate judges were also Tasmanian.



RAST welcomes decisions on the DEC

The Society has publicly welcomed the recent decision of Glenorchy City Council to reject an out-of-the-blue offer to buy the Derwent Entertainment Centre.

The Council rejection of the offer opens the way for the GCC to fully explore the best outcome for the DEC, which is an important community asset.

The Glenorchy precinct is host to a number of major Tasmanian entertainment and sporting centres. The Society wants to see a more visionary and integrated approach to development of both the DEC and the Showground as well as possibly the Derwent River foreshore. In the meantime, the Society is progressing with its own plans.

The Council decision on the DEC responds positively to the concerns of the wider community in regards to disposing of a public asset following a private and unsolicited bid.

"If we all get it right, the northern suburbs can be transformed, with enhanced community facilities, new infrastructure, and the provision of both jobs and an increased pace of economic activity in the Glenorchy area," Society CEO Scott Gadd told media. "The Society congratulates the Council on its decision."

Volunteers' Thankyou

The Society can't operate effectively without its many volunteers – people from all walks of life who give their time and experience generously to help mount the Society's many activities.

So recently we held our annual end of year volunteers' BBQ at the Showground to say thank you. About 70 volunteers attended this convivial occasion.

Royal Hobart Show 2018

The relevance of an agricultural show can always be measured by entry numbers in its competitions, and this year certainly proved the relevance of the Royal Hobart Show.

Pleasingly, entries in Show activities were very strong. For instance:

- Beef cattle had 251 entries compared to 127 last year. In fact, records going back to 2009 show there hasn't been a better level of entries over that time.
- Art on Show received 242 entries which is the second highest entry field on record.
- Youth Art attracted 402 entries this year, up 109 on last year.
- The Kennels section received 681 entries, 149 more than last year.
- Home Crafts entries totalled 509, up 147 on last year
- Poultry Pigeons and Caged Birds rebounded this year with 541 entries, up 185 on last year when a virus meant pigeons could not be entered.
- Woodchopping – a great Tasmanian sport - this year received 599 entries, 27 more than last year.

This year the RAST trialed a three day show – starting on the public holiday Thursday (Oct: 25) and culminating on the Saturday.

The weather was generally kind but the Saturday saw a forecast for bad weather. This affected crowd attendances on the day although the bad weather failed to materialise. Crowd numbers were very strong on Show Thursday and Friday.

This year, given the complexity of running the Show, two Show managers were appointed to assist CEO Scott Gadd. Simone Hayers and Dwayne Schubert are two young people with successful rural backgrounds who ably took on multiple tasks to ensure the smooth running of the Show, even though Dwayne was on red alert for the birth of his first child.



**ROYAL
HOBART**
Fine Wine & Dine
DINNER

Food & Wine

Better positioning of the two events...

This year the Royal Hobart Wine Show transitioned from its usual November date to August and was held just a few weeks after the Society's Fine Food Awards. Both performed well in their own right, but there were also great synergies between the two events.

The two programs became virtually back-to-back events culminating with a combined awards evening that represented a joint celebration of Australian fine food and fine wines.

The *Fine Dine and Wine: Gold Medal Experience* on August 18 was a great success with more than 200 people attending a wonderful food and wine experience together with the announcement of major winners in the Royal Hobart Food Awards and the Royal Hobart Wine Show.

The new August date for the Wine Show also allowed participants the chance to compete in the National Wine Show in Canberra in November. Previously, the Royal Hobart Wine Show occurred close to the National Wine Show but by moving the Show to August winners were able to also enter the National Wine Show in the same year.

The new arrangement worked so well that the Society decided to make it permanent.



Community Friday

A new concept for the Show this year was Community Friday – reflecting the fact that the Show is a community event – largely organised by community volunteers, and showcasing the achievements of the community in everything from farming to needle work and art.

On Community Friday discount access to the Show was offered to groups such as disability organisations, child care organisations, aged care facilities, and even Scouts and Guides groups.

Eligible organisations received a \$10 flat entry fee on Friday, and where carers were required – such as disability groups – their entry was free. A special drop-off and pick-up zone was established just outside the main entrance gates for people with mobility issues.

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SHOW



Something new every day!

While the three day show enjoyed a program of entertainment and events that were common to all three days, each day also featured activities which were exclusive to that day.

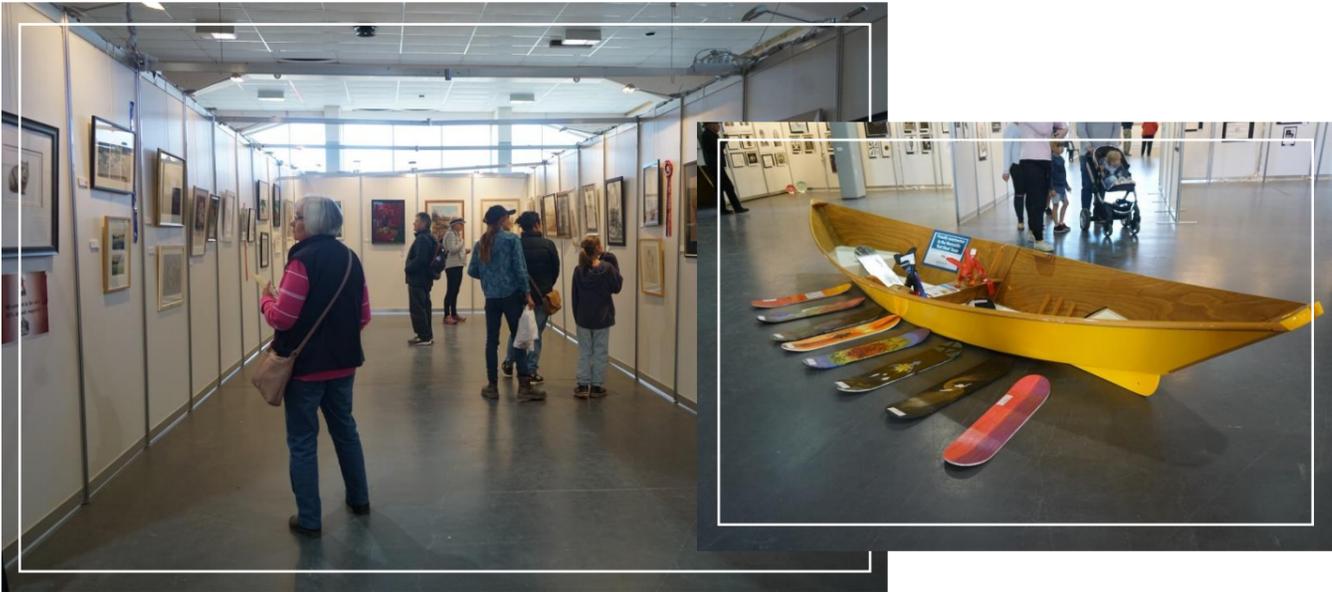
Across the three days of the Show there was something for everyone to see, experience, and do:

- On exhibition was a woollen wedding dress which so captivated the public imagination in the USA that it won a major American award.
- The Eljay Freestyle Entertainment show: proved to be an action packed motorcycle and bicycle trials stunt show, delivered with a comical twist.
- A big year for the Kennels section with Japanese judge Mr Yuji Yatake flying in for the event.
- Australia's only Wirehaired Slovakian Pointer was on show. It's from a recently recognized gundog breed developed in Slovakia. A beautiful animal.
- Racing pigs from Queensland proved an enormous hit.
- Kids' painting activities were a hit once again.
- Borys Zagrocki's BMX trials show wowed audiences, while sword swallower Samora Squid was also popular in the Art Pavilion.
- The Pandara Kelpies provided a very entertaining and educational insight into working dogs, attracting high praise from many showgoers.
- Showgoers were invited to judge the weight of Satin, the biggest Holstein bull in Tasmania. Satin came from the Green Glory Stud at Broadmarsh.

Then there was the,

- Strongman competition
- Cattle fancy dress parade,
- Whip-cracking championships
- Miniature horses and miniature goats
- The Australian Defence Force exhibition hit the bull's eye with young Tasmanians
- The Virtual Farm and the virtual reality paddock-to-plate experience were both strongly supported by showgoers.
- Friday Night at the Show saw the ever popular Bulls and Barrels Rodeo and the Friday Night Fireworks, followed by live music through until midnight with the Billy Warner trio.
- Also worth mentioning is that some new food stalls this year that did very well, especially the indigenous food offering.





Artery Art on Show

Hobart Show week always commences with the announcement of winners in the Artery Art on Show – probably the biggest annual community art exhibition in Tasmania.

Professional and recreational artists contribute to the exhibition which carries \$10,000 in prizes and is now more than 30 years old.

This year some 240 entries were received which is the second highest entry field on record. When combined with the associated youth art and youth photography exhibitions, total entries in these events topped 600.

Accomplished miniaturist artist Joan Humble OAM was the guest at the announcement of winners. Overall winner was Jen Duhig for her work, *Dessaix Days*. Overall runner-up was Felicia Lowe for *Journey Series – Way Out West*.

There are five sections in the competition: Work in Oil and/or Acrylic; Work in Water Media; Drawing and other media; Miniatures; and Photography.

Awards include: - Overall Winner; Emerging Artist (aged 16 to 25); Margaret Gunn Perpetual Trophy; RAST award for an entry that best depicts an agricultural theme; the People's Choice award – decided by votes from the viewing public; and the Portrait Prize.

Winners in the Youth Art and Student Photography Competition - there were 402 entries compared to 293 last year – were also announced during the Show.



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SHOW PHOTOS



Barry Ellims receiving his life membership from Her Excellency The Honourable Prof. Kate Warner AC

RAST Life Membership to Barry Ellims

The Vice Regal luncheon saw a Life Membership bestowed on Barry Ellims who retired at the 2018 Society AGM as Councillor, Board Director, Company Secretary and Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee.

His involvement stretches back to 1974 when he first became involved through breeding and showing dogs, particularly Norwegian Elkhounds. His recent decision to retire was driven by a desire to make way for new blood to enable the Society to position itself for the challenges ahead.

Outstanding Family Achievement

Another award announced during Show Thursday was the Outstanding Family Achievement. The Bowden family has been exhibiting at the Royal Hobart Show for three generations commencing with RV 'Major' Bowden followed by Richard and now Scott. They have exhibited Merino and Corriedale sheep and in recent times fleece.

Richard began his involvement around 1967/68 as a young Hutchins school lad alongside David Skinner. That amounts to a 70 odd year involvement which is a remarkable milestone.

The family has dominated the fleece section in the past decade by winning more fleece awards than any other exhibitor with fleeces now consistently in the 8-10 kilo range.



The Bowden family receiving their Outstanding Achievement Award from Her Excellency The Honourable Prof Kate Warner AC.

Legend of the Show

A highlight of the Royal Hobart Show each year is the announcement at a Vice-Regal luncheon of the annual Living Legend of the Show. This year's recipient was David Skinner, whose first connections with the Show stretch back to 1946 when, as a Hutchins student, he was a Junior Steward at the Show.

David went on to join the Society's Council, and then went on to become the President. In fact, he served in this capacity twice. He remains on the Council today and is also a member of the RAST Board responsible for the running of the Society.

He continues to be chairman of the Commercial Cattle Section and it's worth noting in this day and age that David's work with the Society is entirely on a voluntary basis.



David Skinner receiving his 2018 Living Legend Award from Her Excellency The Honourable Prof Kate Warner AC.

