

Innovations by Show Societies



May 2020

Each year the ASC offers a President's Innovation Award. The award is for innovation by a Show Society Member of the Agricultural Societies Council of NSW Ltd. Here is a summary of some of the nominations and winners whose innovations might inspire you.

Bungendore Show Society

Bungendore Show Society have three key innovations.

Make volunteering fun

They hold well managed and efficient meetings where everyone can participate. To prepare for the annual Show subcommittees are created, and everyone is encouraged to join and make decisions for an area/aspect of the Show. They are an inclusive Show Society.

Innovative new events that are inexpensive and engaging

Some examples of these new events include:

Dachshund Racing

In 2016, the Bungendore Show hosted the inaugural Werriwa Wiener Dash, the first Dachshund Race in the Capital Region. It was a great success with over 120 Dachshunds and their owners in attendance. People came from across Australia for the competition. The competition could be entered online, and two dollars from each entry was donated to a dog rescue organisation.

Due to demand, the event was expanded this year to include 16 heats throughout the day, then semi-finals, and the grand-final as the last race of the day. Entry is open to all Dachshunds. There was also a Para-Wiener Dash for those Dachshunds who are elderly or living with a disability.

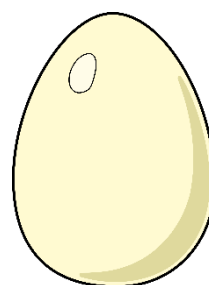


2017 also saw the return of the popular Dapper Dachshund costume event for those who like to dress up, and for those who don't like racing or dressing up, they joined in and set the Official World Record for the most number of Dachshunds in one place.

Novelty events

These include egg and spoon challenge, egg toss challenge, sack challenge and partner carrying challenge. In these events everyone gets a ribbon. The events are designed to be fun. They are a challenge not a race.

In the egg toss challenge at Bungendore's 2017 Show, eggs were thrown 30-35 metres before they broke. Another world record was claimed, and the winners were interviewed as they were presented with their ribbons. This was a real crowd pleaser.



Social media and a dynamic website

Leading up to the Show a press release was sent to every media outlet available – print, social, radio and television. The Show was featured in The Canberra Times, The Australian, The SMH and the Daily Telegraph. Young volunteers, who are savvy with social media, promoted the Dachshund event on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The event received a lot of engagement on social media. Radio interviews in the days leading up to the Show were shared. There was also coverage on prime-time evening news bulletins the night of the Show and ABC morning breakfast TV.

Bungendore Show Society spent time and invested in a website that could handle online entries, but the site is also easy for volunteers to update and maintain.

These innovations are easily replicated by other Shows. For several years Bungendore has taken their Dog High Jump to Kangaroo Valley Show and have been asked to help at other Shows in the region. This year they had representatives from other Show Societies come to see their innovations firsthand.

Nimmitabel Show

Nimmitabel Show Society created an annual event to raise funds for infrastructure.

In 2008 the Show Society discussed the future of their small country Show. They recognised the need to build infrastructure to house the growing stud cattle section. Better facilities would attract more exhibitors and attendees to the Show, however with the Show itself being the primary source of fundraising, these improvements to the facilities were needed before they could improve their gate takings.

An event was created called the *Nimmitabel Shed Bonfire and Concert*, incorporating a large bonfire and featuring a range of local musicians who donated their services. This has become an annual event, the first of which raised the money to build a Stud Cattle Shed, and an extension to the Sheep Shed to house a new shearing competition. The event attracted many people from great distances.





The event was devised with multiple goals. Not only did it raise funds for improvements to the Showground but it also encouraged involvement in the Show society (many young people involved in the bonfire and concert became stewards and volunteers on Show day), widely promoted the Show across the region, and gave the local community a sense of ownership and pride for the facilities at the showground. Since the advent of this event and the improved facilities it has helped provide, the success of Nimmitabel Show has gone from strength to strength. Every year attendance at the Show is rising.

Parkes Show

Parkes Show Society revitalised a major display at their Show.

Parkes is a three-day Show (Monday–Wednesday) which includes a major machinery and motor vehicle display supported by all the major dealers in Parkes. After consultation with the machinery dealers, the Show Committee set about promoting the Wednesday of the Show. *Farmer's Day Wednesday* arose focusing on the farmers who would use the large machinery. Each year there is a theme that underpins the lectures, workshops and demonstrations that form the basis of the day. *Farmer's Day Wednesday* has added a new dimension to the machinery area of Parkes Show, which appeals to both exhibitors and patrons. Now rather than having a lack lustre machinery area that was detracting from the overall show experience for patrons, it is a vibrant area attracting large crowds.

Singleton Show - Northern Agricultural Association (NAA)

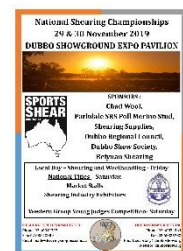
Singleton Show own their Showground and registered a lease with Optus to erect an Optus Tower on their Showground.

The initial lease is for 5 years with four options of 5 years and a flat 3% increase in the rent each year. The rent has allowed a much needed disabled toilet and shower block to be erected on the Showground. The Show committee were able to secure permission to add new lighting and speakers which are now attached to the new tower replacing the old worn out wooden pole.

Dubbo Show Society Inc

National Shearing Championships.

The Shearing sub-committee of the Dubbo Show Society saw an opportunity to hold an event that would put Dubbo on the map, promote the shearing and wool handling industry and raise much needed funds to support the Show Society. In November 2019, the Dubbo Show Society ran and hosted the National Shearing Championships. The Show Society did the catering and provided over 5,000 meals. The overall profit to the Show Society was \$30,000.



Wellington Show Society

Wellington Show have 2 key innovations.

Battery recycling

For many years Wellington Show Society has struggled to ensure adequate funds to conduct the Show. Sponsorships were difficult to maintain, and competition entries had declined. At the forefront of the innovation process to rebuild Wellington Show Society was the improvement of income throughout the year, and hence a battery drive was born. Local farmers drop off their batteries to a local rural supplier. These are placed on a pallet until full. Wellington Show Society advertises the drop off location for the batteries in the local paper. They are collected and taken for recycling. This battery drive has been running for 7 years and has had a \$10,500 return to the Show Society with minimum effort.



Increased gate numbers by marketing the Show directly to an audience

With the aim to attract more people through the gates, Wellington Show Society decided that all junior entries at the Show would be free. The Stewards in charge of children's art and craft sections of the Show sourced donations for arts and crafts supplies, including donations from members and friends for recycled items to support the craft entries. These supplies are then distributed to Child Cares, Preschools, Day Care Centres and Schools. It was hoped that this would increase the entries from children 8 years and under. The response was overwhelming. The number of people attending the Show to see the children's artwork continues to increase. A Junior Schedule is now produced each year and distributed to schools and centres before the commencement of the school year, to assist in planning activities that can be entered in the Show.

Woodstock Memorial Show

Woodstock Memorial Show make the most of a significant calendar day.

The Show coincides with Father's Day and in the past gate takings had dropped because of this clash. A new committee with the mindset to "turn all negatives into positives", decided to use this day to their advantage.

A Father's Day theme is now the main feature of the Show and all events are organised around this theme, including pavilion classes only for fathers. With the Show's focus on Father's Day the gate takings have more than doubled.



The Show Societies Facebook page is actively used to promote 'Father's Day', at the Show. On the spot surveys of the local community at the Show, identify strengths and weaknesses of the event, which helps to keep the event current and relevant. The increased gate takings have enabled overdue repairs.

Newcastle Agricultural, Horticultural and Industrial Association

Innovations within marketing.

The Marketing Strategy designed and implemented for the 2020 Show was heavily built around innovating the marketing processes for Agricultural Shows.

This campaign involved a strong combination of traditional media, social media and guerrilla marketing techniques focused on spreading the message of our Show amongst the greater Newcastle and Hunter Region. A broad range of mediums, medias, materials, and activations were engaged within a shoestring budget. The focus was on local collaboration and a low spend high value return that would share our Show's plans and invite the community to participate in our Agricultural Show.

This marketing campaign produced some never before experienced outcomes such as:

- Achieving most engaged Facebook page in the Hunter Region
- Increase in Show email database
- 1230% increase in weekly website visits.

Bathurst Agricultural, Horticultural and Pastoral Association

Creation of and consistent reinforcement of a message.

The Royal Bathurst Show went through some difficult times, suffering a halving of their gate attendance and membership, the loss of almost all sponsorship, and diminished community engagement. They needed to win back community acceptance and gain the confidence of their patrons, supporters and key influencers (like the Council and senior local business people). It was a big effort. The Association needed to be focused, positive and consistently reinforce what they do and why they existed. The innovation was the creation and consistent reinforcement of a message that allowed people to regain confidence in the Association and be proud to be a member again.

A long-term web, social media and radio marketing campaign using Community Service Advertising (no charge) and free or low-cost mediums was engaged to:

- Encourage membership and volunteering
- Reinforce why the Association exists – “to do positive things”, to promote, develop and educate the region not just run a Show
- Reinforce the community participative nature of the Association
- Drive awareness of the website and greater detail of the Associations' objectives
- Increase Facebook awareness.
- The campaign is centred on a very succinct and key message, “we do positive things”, and reinforces the Association's traditional role.

It was realised a few years ago that this could be achieved by creating a sponsorship relationship with Bathurst Broadcasters to run a year-round Community Service Advertising campaign to support the Association. A radio ad was produced and as a result membership and volunteering continues to increase. The greatest success of the campaign has been the establishment of the Supreme Partnership with Reliance Bank. This has helped revive the Association and the Royal Bathurst Show.

Camden Haven Show Society

The 2019 Rain Dance Fundraiser.

With the devastating drought and the impact on her community Taren Gleeson wanted a family, fun, friendly fundraiser that could get anyone and everyone young or old who entered through the gates at the 2019 Show involved. The Rain Dance was danced numerous times over the two-day show, over 100 people participated and over \$2,000 was raised for Rural Aid. This innovation has resulted in an increase in younger volunteers and members and engaged community groups who had not been involved in the Show previously. There was no cost to the Show Society but a huge benefit to farmers.



Kangaroo Valley A and H Association Inc.

The 2019 Show hosted the World's Largest Cheese Tasting.



To promote the dairy industry and provide a fun event at the 2019 Show it was decided to challenge the existing World Record for the greatest number of people tasting cheese at one time. The results were impressive, over 1,000 official participants with over 2000 show attendees watching. This initiative brought more than 500 extra people to the Show. The \$7,500 gate takings can be attributed to this event alone. There is Official recognition by Guinness World Records that this attempt is now a new World Record.

Mendooran PA&H Association

A joint Showgirl Event.

The Mendooran PA&H Association hosted a Showgirl Ball in November 2018. The entrants were from Mendooran, Baradine, and Binnaway Show Societies. This was a joint Showgirl event and was the first for the Showgirl movement and an innovation for the future of small show societies to participate in the Showgirl competition. Apart from being interviewed and engaging in different activities throughout the day, each Showgirl entrant gave a short speech about themselves to over 100 people attending the Ball. All the entrants enjoyed the day and evening, and we were thrilled that we could give our young ladies an opportunity to be rural ambassadors and represent their communities.

The benefit this innovation has generated has been for three rural communities, Mendooran, Binnaway & Baradine, their show societies, and 7 young rural representatives and their families.

There were more Showgirl entrants across the three towns. Each Show Society was responsible in planning a part of the competition with the result being a very successful Showgirl Competition

In a small rural community, having a Showgirl can be possible every year. Often young people move away for employment or to further their education. For Mendooran it has been 6 years since their last showgirl,

Baradine 8 years and Binnaway 32 years. This is extraordinary and such a great achievement for our show societies and a great way to bring three small rural communities together.

Ganmain Show Society Inc

An Inter School Young Auctioneer Competition.

Developed to give high school age students the opportunity to explore the art of Auctioneering. The Ganmain Show Society and the Head Teacher of Agriculture at the Riverina Anglican College (TRAC) developed the program allowing students to develop their skills.

An event was held at TRAC as a heat to provide a selection process to reduce the total number of entrants to compete at a semi-final on the morning of the Show. From the semi-final students were advanced to the main stage at the Show during the afternoon entertainment program.

The result was an outstanding success drawing a large percentage of the crowd at the Show to watch some very talented students sell individual sheep in a mock auction. It was a great way to engage the crowd and provide entertainment. Throughout the program students were mentored by livestock agents and given some coaching to enhance their skills. The mentors who had all been involved in the young auctioneer competition the Sydney Royal Easter Shows were very supportive to see this program continue.

The innovation has given Ganmain Show Society a whole new event to include in the program to entertain crowds at the annual Show as well as give a significant learning experience to students in a country area who are sometimes limited in school activities.



For any further information please contact the relevant Show Society.

