

Innovations by Show Societies



July 2017

In 2016 and 2017 the ASC have offered a \$5,000 prize for innovation by a Show Society. 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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

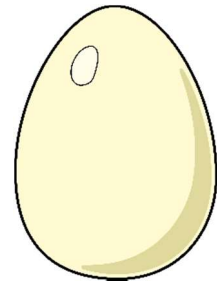
Due to demand, the event was expanded this year to include 16 heats throughout the day, then semi-finals, and the grand-final as the last race of the day. Entry is open to all Dachshunds. There was also a Para-Wiener Dash for those Dachshunds who are elderly or living with a disability.

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 a distance of 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.

3. 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 first hand.

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 also 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.

Wellington Show Society

Wellington Show have 2 key innovations.

1. 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.



2. Increased gate numbers by marketing the Show directly to a particular 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.

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.

For any further information please
contact the relevant Show Society.

