

Kelpies take centre stage at Casterton

PHIL HOLMES

IN its 19th year, the Australian Kelpie Muster drew a record crowd at Casterton on the weekend.

Henty Street, Casterton's main road through town, was a hub of entertainment with stalls and activities on offer for people of all ages.

Thousands lined the streets to get their fix of action, highlighted by the star of the show, the kelpie.

Festival chairman Greg Hart was relieved the event went off without a hitch, as participation numbers rose across all formats.

"I believe we have had a record crowd, I've never seen the streets of Casterton so busy," he said.

"Obviously you can't do a head count, but you could see the difference; I believe there would have been double the crowd on Sunday for the auction.

"We are really happy with how the weekend went, and relieved."

Kicking off with the annual poets' breakfast, all roads led to Casterton for its marquee event of the year.

A display of floats and exhibitions led the

street parade before novelty events took place bringing much joy to onlookers.

Adelaide man Mark Joseph was at his fourth straight muster, sharing the experience with his wife and two children.

He said the uniqueness of the Casterton event ensured he was drawn back every year since 2012.

"My children have been looking forward to the long weekend for over six months; it's a wonderful event with something to offer for everyone," he told The Spectator.

"It's a bit of a drive for us, but we just love that there's always something exciting on the go.

"These dogs are amazing and again we'll be back in 2016."

The kelpie triathlon, kelpie dash and stockman's challenge were highlights, but the event creating the biggest buzz was the kelpie high jump with a big screen incorporated into showcase for the first time.

The record of 2.91 metres was not broken, but the crowd watched closely as every competing kelpie took to the challenge.

Mr Hart said the high jump had been a favourite with revellers since its inception.

"The high jump is the most anticipated event

without a doubt and with the instalment of a big screen this year, everyone has been able to view it," he said.

"That's always been a struggle in the past and we had to come up with an idea so that more people could get a look at the show.

"The record wasn't broken, but it's always a brilliant spectacle. Some of the kelpies have no fear."

There were 73 kelpies up for auction on Sunday with the highest priced dog coming in at \$11,000.

It was the second best price raised in the auction's history.

Talking to The Spectator in between cleaning and packing up this year's muster, Mr Hart said it was just two weeks until a meeting to debrief and start organising next year's muster, which will be the 20th year celebrating the Kelpie dog. "The committee will get together and we'll debrief in two weeks time," he said.

"Of course with that we start talking about improvements on the next year and then we'll have an annual general meeting in September.

"Being the 20th year of the Australian Kelpie Muster next year, I'm anticipating it will again be the best yet."



THE highly anticipated kelpie high jump was a major drawcard for crowds during Casterton's Australian Kelpie Muster at the weekend. Photo: LARA FITZPATRICK

Motel Accommodated Coach Tours 'Pick up and return to your home'

Request the itinerary for the many tour highlights

CAIRNS AND THE GULF COUNTRY

25 days 28th June \$9590

Highlights: Blackall, Longreach, Stockman's Hall of Fame, Charters Towers, Magnetic Island, Paronella Park, Australian Sugar Museum, Green Island, Cairns, Barrier Reef, Daintree River Cruise, Kuranda Train and Sky Rail, Breakfast with the Birds, Port Douglas, Undara Lava Tubes, Gullfander Train Ride, Gulf of Carpentaria Sunset Cruise, Mt Isa, Alice Springs, East MacDonnell Ranges, Coober Pedy, Roxby Downs, Murray Bridge.

CAIRNS, LONGREACH & BARRIER REEF

12 days 28th June \$5380

Highlights: Blackall, Longreach, Stockman's Hall of Fame, Charters Towers, Magnetic Island, Paronella Park, Australian Sugar Museum, Green Island, Cairns, Barrier Reef, Daintree River Cruise, Kuranda Train and Sky Rail, Breakfast with the Birds, Port Douglas.

CAIRNS, UNDARA, KARUMBA INC ALICE SPRINGS & COOBER PEDY

17 days 6th July \$7195

Highlights: Green Island, Cairns, Barrier Reef, Daintree River Cruise, Kuranda Train and Sky Rail, Breakfast with the Birds, Port Douglas, Undara Lava Tubes, Gullfander Train Ride, Gulf of Carpentaria Sunset Cruise, Mt Isa, Alice Springs, East MacDonnell Ranges, Coober Pedy, Roxby Downs, Murray Bridge.

NORTHWESTER & SOUTH WEST COAST

47 days 3rd August \$16,990

"See the itinerary for the many tour highlights".

DARWIN VIA CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

15 days 3rd August \$6645

Highlights: Central Australia, Coober Pedy, Ayers Rock, Kings Canyon, Alice Springs, West MacDonnell Ranges, Tennant Creek, Katherine Gorge Cruise, Kakadu, Yellow Waters Cruise, Darwin, Mindil Market, Litchfield National Park.

COOBER PEDY, AYERS ROCK, ALICE SPRINGS

9 days 3rd August \$4150

Highlights: Adelaide, Port Augusta, Central Australia, Coober Pedy, Umoona Opal Mine, Ayers Rock, Kings Canyon, Alice Springs, West MacDonnell Ranges, Standley Chasm, Alice Springs Reptile Centre, Alice Springs Desert Park, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Alice Springs School of the Air, Alice Springs Telegraph Station.

WEST COAST, KIMBERLEY & SOUTH WEST COAST

35 days 15th August \$13,340

"See the itinerary for the many tour highlights".

WEST COAST AND THE KIMBERLEY

23 days 15th August \$9675

Highlights: Darwin, Katherine, Kununurra, Ord River Cruise, El Questro Station, Zebedee Springs, Chamberlain Gorge Cruise, Wyndham, Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Boab Prison Tree, Broome, Willie Creek Pearl Farm, Cable Beach, Port Hedland, Tom Price, Exmouth, Coral Bay, Monkey Mia, Kalbarri, Perth.

DARWIN TO BROOME AND THE KIMBERLEY

12 days 15th August \$5950

Highlights: Darwin, Katherine, Kununurra, Ord River Cruise, El Questro Station, Zebedee Springs, Chamberlain Gorge Cruise, Wyndham, Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Boab Prison Tree, Broome, Willie Creek Pearl Farm, Cable Beach.

BROOME TO PERTH INCLUDING TOM PRICE & NINGALOO REEF

14 days 24th August \$6490

Highlights: Broome 3 nights, Cable Beach, Eighty Mile Beach, Port Hedland, Mt Tom Price Mine tour, Karjini National Park, Exmouth, Ningaloo Reef, Coral Bay, Shark Bay, Carnarvon, Monkey Mia Dolphins, Kalbarri Wildflowers, Perth 3 nights.

PERTH AND SOUTH WEST COAST

15 days 4th September \$5995

Highlights: Perth, Gloucester Tree, Margaret River Chocolate Factory, Cape Leeuwin & Lighthouse, Pemberton Timber Mill, Valley of the Giants, Albany, Whale Watching Cruise, Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Super Pit Tour, Great Australian Bight, Nullarbor, Port Augusta, Adelaide, Murray Bridge.

CANBERRA "FLORIADE"

6 days 27th September \$2190

Highlights: Albury, Canberra City, Cockington Green, Australian War Memorial, Government House, Parliament House, Old Parliament House, Embassy Drive, National Museum, Telstra Tower, High Court of Australia, Floriade Festival.

YARRA VALLEY, HEALESVILLE & MELBOURNE

6 days 5th October \$2085

Highlights: Seeing Eye Dog Centre, Healesville, Marysville - Bruno Torf's Gallery, Puffing Billy, Warburton, Buxton Trout Farm, Cuckoo Restaurant, Mt Dandenong Lookout, William Ricketts Sanctuary, Cloudehill Nursery, National Rhododendron Garden, MCG Tour, Eureka Tower, Parliament House, City Circle Tram, Yarra River Cruise.

TASMANIA

10 days 14th October \$4160 (Pens) \$4250 (Adult)

Highlights: Spirit of Tasmania, Launceston, Ross, Swansea Bark Mill, Hobart, Hobart Grand Chancellor accommodation, Wrest Point Casino, Huon Valley, Port Arthur, Cadbury Chocolate Factory, "The Wall", Queenstown, Gordon River Cruise, Stanley, Burnie, Devonport.

NEW ZEALAND DISCOVERY

19 days 27th October \$6235

Highlights: Kauri Museum, Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Dolphin/Hole in the Rock Cruise, Sky Tower, Longlands Farm & Restaurant, Hobbiton Movie Set Tour, Skyline Rotorua Gondola & Luge Ride, Agrodome, Thermal Mud Pools & Geysers, TePuia traditional Maori Hangi and Concert, Cruise on the Interislander Ferry, TranzAlpine Rail Journey, Lakes District Museum, Milford Sound Cruise & Lunch, Haggis Ceremony and Gift, Lamnack Castle, Glenfalloch Restaurant, City Sights tour of Auckland, Napier, Wellington, Christchurch & Dunedin.

Former Penshurst man honoured

REX MARTINICH

FORMER Penshurst man Dr William Terry O'Brien has been awarded a Member of the Order of Australia as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours.

Dr O'Brien, as the founder and executive director of O'Brien Maritime Consultants International (OMC), was awarded "for significant service to maritime engineering, to the development of innovative marine navigation equipment, and to education".

Dr O'Brien told The Spectator that he was "very pleased" to have received the AM, which followed on from the work that

earned him a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2010.

"It's a great honour not just for me but for the 40 to 50 software engineers who have worked on the equipment, as well as my son Peter who is chief executive of OMC," he said.

"It's a continuance of development from the 1990s, which has produced equipment that has been installed in ports around the world.

"It was recently installed at the Port of Geelong and it's nice to see a link back to the Western District, where I still have a property."

O'Brien Maritime Consultants International has developed



DR TERRY O'BRIEN

the Dynamic Under Keel Clearance (DUKC) e-Navigation Management system, the 'Optimiser' ship scheduling tool and 'iHeave' ship motion measurement instrument.

DUKC is used to determine the minimum safe under-keel clearance along the transit of a vessel from berth to deep

water at ports which have draft limitations.

The tool takes into consideration environmental conditions such as waves, tides, and currents as well as vessel characteristics and speed, and channel configurations.

DUKC allows ships to be loaded to a greater draft than is possible using fixed under keel clearance rules, thus increasing port productivity without the need for new port infrastructure or dredging, and without compromising safety standards.

Dr O'Brien also worked as an engineering lecturer at Swinburne University and the University of Melbourne.

Brendan's Australian Tours
Toll Free 1800 981 187 / Ararat
www.brendanstours.com.au