
RECORD-BREAKING ACHIEVEMENTS:

Thousands gather in Casterton to celebrate the Australian kelpie!

Reaching a record-breaking \$4million going under the hammer at Island Park across the 28-year period. Auction regular and renowned trainer Paul Macphail took home the triple crown, selling the \$4 million dog, top-priced pup and top-priced dog.

Selling a million dollars of dogs in four auctions, the Casterton Kelpie Association President said it was mind-blowing to think that after 254 years, the auction finally hit \$3 million in sales but just three years later saw another million dollars in return.

“It’s a re testament to the increasing realisation of the value of the working dog, particularly our beloved Australian Kelpie, and to the recognition our Australian Premier Working Dog Auction has provided for the Kelpie Breed,” Stephens Said.

Lot 11, Beloka Jock II secured 15,000 and the \$ 4 million record, whilst a stand-out female that ticked all the boxes had bidders running up with figures in person and online through AuctionsPlus, Beloka Laila received the highest-priced dog at \$20,000.

Confident and strong on stock, Beloka Bootz showed plenty of push and bark throughout the auction demonstrations netting a \$9,000 final call at island park, joining sibling Jock on farm with Australian Boxing champion Mitch Leek for his father John and their Semimetal Stud.

The 28th Casterton Kelpie Muster kicked off on Thursday night with the official opening of the Rotary Club of Casterton’s Kelpie Art Show and the 2024 Acquisitive Art Prize. The event was judged by Hamilton Gallery Director, Joshua White, a proud Kelpie owner himself.

Gayle Newcombe’s piece, "Away to Me," captivated White and was awarded the top prize for its quintessential representation of Casterton’s famous working dog. "a great representation of a Kelpie at work," remarked White.

Sandford artist Collin Tenney was honoured with the Gorman Real Estate Portraiture Prize for his self-portrait, described as evoking elements of Cezanne, Matisse, and Van Gogh. Casterton artist Rita McInerney also had a notable weekend, receiving high commendations for her entries in the portraiture and Australiana sections. Additionally, she was awarded the Glad Laslett Patrons Award for her watercolour painting "Autumn Leaves" at the Clarice Beckett Art Show on Friday night.

The annual Artists of the Valley and Gorman’s Gallery event paid special tribute to Casterton-born artist Clarice Beckett. Julie Kent of Sandford was commended for her attention to Beckett’s palette with her piece "Sign of the Waves," which won the Artist’s Rendition of Clarice Beckett’s Style award.

The major Clarice Beckett Art Prize was presented to regular exhibitor Meagan Lonsdale for her work "Beck and Call," which interpreted a Kelpie at work, aligning perfectly with the weekend's theme.

Saturday’s muster, the 28th Eukanuba Australian Kelpie Muster, drew thousands of visitors from across Australia and abroad. It celebrated and showcased the remarkable talents of the Australian Kelpie.

The much-anticipated Kelpie Triathlon was led, as always, by the Kelpie Dash and Georgie Price and Winx led the charge to take the first trophy of the day, raced 50 meters down Henty Street in a time of 4.95 seconds, narrowly edging out second-placed 'Jet' by 0.02 seconds.

Followed by Kathleen Smith and Walker – all the way from Western Australia – in the high jump, reaching 2.67 metres. Reaching new heights, Niamh Haines broke a record in The Geelong College Junior Competitor High Jump with a 2.21-meter final hurdle with Rouge, securing first place in the Junior Competitor category overall.

At the end of the day, a speedy corgi may have stolen the limelight with a mischievous dash up the Hill Climb. Still, the ribbons and cash prize went to Annette Ditchburn, with Chivas finishing three seconds ahead of last year in 22.56 seconds, narrowly beating 'Molly' in second place by 0.1 seconds.

Damon Peacock stood three points clear of local competitors in the Stockman's Challenge. Peacock excelled in the horse, dog, and final overall selections and displayed remarkable endurance and strength in this challenging event.

Casterton Kelpie Association President Karen Stephens was amazed at the national response to the event. "Our town – our volunteers, our traders, and our sponsors – just up the ante every year, and the response from across Australia keeps growing,"

she said. Stephens noted the impressive participation from far-off places like North Queensland, Western Australia, and Tasmania.

Stephens congratulated the art prize and event winners and thanked the volunteers who were essential to the event's success. "I don't think there's a single, active organisation in town that doesn't play some role in the weekend," she said.

The Casterton Kelpie Muster continues to grow in popularity and impact, proving itself to be a significant event for the community and visitors alike.

Stephens emphasised the event's economic impact: "The Muster puts around \$1.7 million into our community over the weekend. We know that people now have Casterton on their bucket list as a place to visit, which is really exciting for us."

As the event concluded, the Casterton Kelpie Association looked forward to building on this year's success. "We are already planning next year's event and aim to make it even bigger and better. The support and passion from everyone involved drive us to continue celebrating the incredible Australian Kelpie," said Stephens.

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Photos [here](#), captions:

Auction: Jack Matthews, Annika Homan and partner, Beloka Primary, Paul MacPhail with buyer Mitch Leek and Casterton Kelpie Association President Karen Stephens.

Auction Demo: Melville Forest's Tom Austin with pup Elfinvale Robin demonstrating in the yards before Sunday's auction.

Artshow: Casterton Kelpie Association President Karen Stephens, Hamilton Gallery Director Josh White, artist Collin Tenney and Peter Gorman.

High Jump: Kathleen Smith with Walker.

Hill Climb: Corgi makes it to the top of Blueberry Hill.

Junior Competitor: Niamh Haines congratulates Rouge on a speedy dash time.

Dash: Dashing down Henty Street is Elle Mae.

Stockman's Challenge: Rebecca Francis man-overs through the Stockman's Challenge course.

Should you require further information, please contact the Casterton Kelpie Association at 0435 770 626 or email: secretary@castertonkelpieassociation.com.au