

'MORPETH WHISPERS'

February 2008

2008 Calendar of Events & 'What's New' In-store News.

Good Morning,

The End of an Era at Akubra Hats

An era in the history of Akubra is about to come to an end, with Stephen Keir Snr, managing director stepping down from that role on New Years Eve and his son Stephen Jnr taking over the next day. Stephen Snr has just turned 70 and will remain on as chairman of the board and be in and out of the office keeping an eye on the company he has dedicated a lifetime to. Akubra has been under the leadership of a Stephen Keir since the year 1905!

Three years earlier Stephen Keir No 1, a hatter, came to Australia from England and joined Benjamin Dunkerley who had founded the company. Stephen married Dunkerley's daughter Ada and soon after became general manager. Later when Dunkerley died, ownership of Akubra was transferred to his son-in-law. Stephen Keir No 1 retired in 1952, and Stephen No 2 took over. Stephen No 3 took over in 1980, and it is he who at 70 years of age has just retired. Stephen No 4, age 38, is now managing Akubra. Stephen No 5, age 11, has no idea what he wants to do when he comes of age... with ideas of a fireman or professional soccer player on his mind, but I don't think anyone would be surprised if he followed the family tradition!

During the past 100 years Akubra has witnessed many changes... hats were once sent out as parcels on passenger trains, now everything goes by road from their Kempsey factory in Northern NSW, and when Australia's wild rabbit population was brought under control by the Calici virus and the supply of skins dried up, Akubra had to look overseas to source the precious felt that creates one of Australia's Icons. Now Akubra hats are made from a blend of Australian skins and fur from rabbit farms in France & Belgium. In 2001 Akubra became one of only six Australian companies to be awarded a Centenary of Federation star along with BHP, Qantas, Fosters, Hills Hoists and Holden.

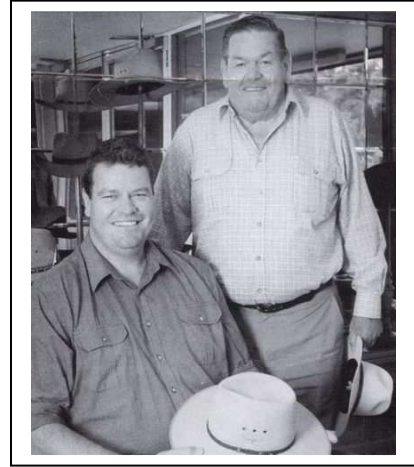
The new boss says it will be "steady as she goes"... keeping Akubra an internationally recognised brand name and an Australian icon. Greg Norman, Steve Irwin, Pam Burridge, Australian Olympians, Lee Kernaghan & John Laws all wear Akubra. The top 5 sellers of Akubra Hats are Cattleman, Snowy River, Coolabah, Pastoralist & Coober Pedy. Campbell's Store stocks these 5 hats, plus many more in a range of colours and sizes from 53 – 63. Akubra Hats last so long you'll probably only need two in a life time, but if your 'work Akubra' or 'going out Akubra' is getting a little worn around the edges, call in and treat yourself to a new Akubra for the New Year.

Spencer & Rutherford Heaven On Earth Autumn/Winter 2008 Collection

Early in February we will be receiving the latest offering from Spencer & Rutherford, famous for their Luggage and Designer Handbags. This collection sets out to capture the many moods of the beautiful place that is Southern Asia. It is land of contradictions, where the exquisite Taj Mahal is a heartbreakingly beautiful monument to eternal love. The impossible exuberance of a Bollywood movie extravaganza with vivid silk saris, contrasts with a monsoonal landscape. Heady scents of saffron, cinnamon and star anise beguile the senses with their intoxicating fragrance, whilst a minted laksa soothes the soul. The cacophony of a busy Mumbai market gives way to the perfect tranquillity of a lotus garden.

Whether your style is playful (cowhide in rich burgundy or black), restrained (cool jade green & aqua blues of the lotus garden), elegant (black, silver & creams collide) or adventurous (vivid red,

Campbell's Store Craft Centre
175 Swan Street, Morpeth NSW 2321
Phone 02 49343938 Thursday to Sunday
or 02 49331407 any time. Fax 02 49342107
Shop open 10am-5pm Thurs till Sunday
Website: www.morpethgallery.com
Email: info@morpethgallery.com



pink, orange & blue) there is a S&R collection for you. With this collection detailed beading has often been replaced by gold thread silks and detailed floral fabrics. Your new season S&R handbag or wallet will inspire you every day.

With Vases Like This, Who Needs Flowers?

These vases, jewellery boxes, photo frames, tea-light holders, sun catchers and hanging window panels are hand painted to look just like stained glass. Designs include Pink Roses, Purple Wisteria & Hummingbirds, Australian Lorikeets and Butterflies. You will find them upstairs in Campbell's Store in *Forget-Me-Not of Morpeth*.

The Miracle Vase

The Miracle Vase is perfect for catering, events, parties & weddings, funerals & the cemetery, hospitals, boats, patios, poolside terraces and offices. Made of flexible, unbreakable PVC, they fold flat for shipping and storage. When the miracle vase is filled with water, it takes and holds its shape. The vase can be cut to suit any size arrangement, but comes in two sizes – 5" high \$5 and 14" high \$9. Choose from pink, blue, green, mauve and clear. Very simple, yet very handy. Best of all, you can't tell it's not glass! Also upstairs at Campbell's Store.



Stained Glass Vase



Miracle Vase

Hank the Jam Man

Hank's Jam was founded by Hank Doudeswell, in 1993. An experienced chef, Hank started making his own Rich Orange Marmalade for breakfast customers in the inner city Sydney restaurant in which he was working. Other restaurants and cafes in the area also became customers as Hank by now was working full time from his home kitchen. New varieties of marmalades were created and then jams were added to the offerings. From the outset Hank's focus was on sourcing the highest quality fruit for his jams and if the quality fruit available was also organic then this was preferred.

Diary Date.
Sydney
Bear Fair
Sunday 13th
April 2008.
Morpeth
Bears will
be there.

One of Hank's loyal customers was Markus Hofer then owner of popular Balmoral Café, Awaba. Markus had seen first hand the popularity of Hank's Jam in his café and was interested to meet Hank the jam man. That meeting eventually led to Markus purchasing Hank's Jam. Hank continues to work in a factory kitchen making the quality jams, marmalades, chutneys and condiments for which he is famous. He continues to develop new taste combinations for his breakfast customers. The first thing you will notice about Hank's jams is the amount of fruit in the jar: whole strawberries, blackberries, chunks of apricot and peel in the marmalades. Combinations such as Pear & Vanilla, Fig, Almond & Ginger and Peach & Strawberry will have you eating yet another slice of toast with jam for breakfast. Hanks 285g jars are \$10.50 and a giant 600g jar \$19. You will find Hank's Jam in the Morpeth Jam Pantry, Campbell's Store.

My Brother Steve...& 'My Country', as told by Michael Dennis

"Dad and Steve are both alcoholics, shared the same character, and the same birth date, they were both born on the 15th June. Steve looked like dad, acted like dad, as is an alcoholic like dad. He was quite young when he left the pubs of Sydney, for the Central Coast, then travelled to pubs all over NSW & QLD in his combi, looking to tell a story to any friendly, unsuspecting audience. Charming, handsome, funny and contagious, Steve made lots of friends and acquaintances along the way. His infectious laugh, his centre stage stories, and love of Australia endeared him to many people...His unbelievable renditions of Frank Sinatra's 'My Way' brought standing ovations. People could tell you hundreds of stories about Steve, each one, tentative true, and most, tied to a heartstring. This tale has early beginnings, recent endings, and centres with a dream - Steve's dream... as told to me, some years ago.

Steve spent some time having rehabilitation in Sydney, where fellow sufferers and visitors were enthralled by his emotional, total word for word, performance of Dorothea Mackella's, originally titled 'Core of My heart', 'My Country' or 'I Love a Sunburnt Country' as most Australian's know... the poem. It is a nostalgic icon to Australian travellers,

here and all over the world. When he finished his recital, a woman congratulated him and asked his name. Steve replied, "My name is Steve Dounis", "What's your name" and the woman replied, "Dorothea Mackella". Emotionally he told her of his love for her poem, as a child, and that he believed all people in every school, home and workplace, should learn understand and feel, the powerful patriotic links of 'My Country'. Steve asked for the rights to the poem and Dorothea responded by giving him a card with the name of her solicitors who handled her affairs. It was later documented Steve was granted the rights for a 10% royalty payment to go to the estate of Dorothea Mackella.

What to do with it took time to think about... For years Steve tried to get the money to do something with his prize possession, each plea for finance unattainable, for a disability pensioner with a bad drinking habit. Then when it all seemed impossible, Steve won \$10,000 in the lottery. His health improved (a little) and he continued to work on his project, with mate and artist, Tom Hockey. Steve spent all the money, and finally received 5 boxes, each containing 1,000 beautifully finished glossy prints of the poem, surrounded by Tom Hockey's visions of 'I Love a Sunburnt Country'. Steve travelled in his combi, with his 5,000 copies, up and down the coast, until in May 2007, at age 65 he passed away from cancer, leaving behind the dream of endearing Australian's with Dorothea Mackella's poem, 'My Country.'

And so Steve's legacy was passed on to his brother Mike Dennis, one of the Hunter Valley's radio personalities. Mike dropped in a few hundred copies of the printed poem, 'My Country' for us to sell... to keep Steve's dream alive. They are A3 in size and \$5 each. They look terrific framed up, perhaps to place behind the bar, in the school class room or roll them and take them overseas with you on your travels.

Enamelled Glass by artist Erna Messenger.

Erna Messenger grew up as a child in Austria & Germany, but she has been an Australian citizen for many years and resides in the blue water wonderland of Port Stephens, Hunter Valley, NSW. The Australian landscape, its flora and fauna are the inspiration for the images created by Erna on glass with enamel colours as the medium. Most enamel work is created with paints, but Erna uses enamel powders. She has created tiny funnels and sieves to enable her to use the powders, carefully placing them between two sheets of glass.

This means your glassware is safe to use and the artwork protected. The glass is kiln fired and during the heating process glass and colours are fused together creating the artwork you see before you. Erna creates images of Flannel Flowers, Waratahs, Banksia, Christmas Bells and Sturt Desert Peas, which may be featured as individual flowers or altogether on each plate or bowl. Tiny bowls are \$15. Medium plates \$30, Large square or round platters are \$60 & \$125. Each one is an individual artwork, and you'll find them at Morpeth Gallery.

Flat Teddies are the perfect gift for newborns.

Made out of Australian sheepskin, they are soft. Little ones gain comfort from wriggling their fingers in and out of the wool. Being 5cm flat, babies can grip and hang onto their teddy. When they get tired they can sleep on teddy like a pillow, or cuddle up beside it. Flat teddy's often become 'security blankets' for toddlers, who have grown up with their companion. Flat teddy's eyes and nose are impossible to get out, making them safe. There's a 'please phone home' tag sewn securely into teddy's side, just in case the unthinkable happens! Flat Teddies can be hand washed for easy care. Flat Out Teddy's have been featured on Oprah and the children of celebrities Tom Cruise, Matt Damon, Hugh Jackman, Collette Dinnigan, Sarah Jessica Parker & Princess Mary... all own a flat teddy. Even Paris Hilton was spotted buying one late in 2007, perhaps for Nicole Ritchie's little one?



When you purchase your Flat Teddy, you'll now notice the swing tag says, "Helping Cambodian Kids". Money from the purchase of a flat teddy is going to CEDAC, a program for children & parents, to improve health conditions, primary school attendance and education. (Prue, a director of Flat Out Bears volunteered with them for a year in 2001.) A village based childcare centre is also sponsored, where pre-school children can play, learn and borrow books. 200 families benefit from the education program



and the childcare centre supports 80 children. Check out the little building, the donations built! Their motto is, "When you get, give. When you learn, teach." Flat Teddy's are \$50.

Ayala Bar 2008 Jewellery Collection

Starting off with a stand at the local craft market of Tel Aviv, it was not long until demand for Ayala Bar's jewellery grew. Thus, Ayala Bar the brand – was born. She is now one of Israel's most prominent jewellery designer's and exporters. With a background in costume design, a keen eye for detail and a passion for all varieties of materials, contrasts and colours, Ayala bar creates unique wearable art designed to accentuate a woman's femininity. She now has a 600 sqm studio near Tel Aviv with a team of over 60 artisans working on weaving, setting and assembling each design. It's a labour intensive process that requires a great degree of skill.



Ayala Bar Jewellery at Campbell's Store

Inspired by her everyday surroundings, Ayala's artistic adornments are reminiscent of a walk on the beach, shopping at the local fruit market or something as simple as a close up inspection of the fine veins of a leaf. A self confessed bead addict, she obsessively collects found objects from the desert, sea and city and all that lies in-between. Over the years, her collections have grown in artistic freedom and intricacy. Each piece allows you to stand out in a crowd! Precious and sophisticated, Ayala's earrings, necklaces and brooches are timeless works of art to be treasured by women all around the world. The new season range will be in store 1st week of March and includes pieces from both the Classic (all beaded) and Hip collections (fabric & beaded).



Fine Food News from Morpeth Gourmet Foods

The Sweet...

Cranberry & Pistachio White Chocolate Nougat Royale, is made in Sydney with the deliciously soft texture of a French style of Nougat. Once made it is delicately wrapped in transparent paper and placed in a clear gift box. This nougat is gluten free and tastes like a little mouthful of heaven! Each 12cm block is \$8.50. Treat yourself next visit to Morpeth Ginger Beer Factory.

Duck Creek Macadamias

From Bangalow in Northern NSW come these delicious macadamia nuts. Harvested from the properties around the area they are then rolled over and over again in premium dark, milk and white couverture chocolate. Each nut ends up so big that they come mixed in a 500 gram jar. They are pure decadence, a treat for your eyes and your mouth, irresistible, resistance is futile. The superlatives never end, when we speak of how satisfying it is to pop one of these macadamias into your mouth! The judges of the 2007 Sydney Royal Show Fine Food Awards agree, awarding these choc coated nuts a gold medal! You'll pay \$29 for your jar of Chocolate coated Australian grown macadamia nuts, but they are worth every cent. Other flavours in the range include Chilli coated and honey crunch coated – also delicious.



Easter is Early! And begins on 21st March. Australian Made couverture chocolate specialists, Kennedy & Wilson, have some very unique and highly delicious speciality chocolates, which you can purchase from Morpeth Jam Pantry. There's a fat round hen, mother hen with egg, a goldfish, nemo fish and koi carp. Choose from dark or milk chocolate. Price range \$10 - \$18. Milk Easter eggs luxuriously wrapped in two colour tissue paper with spotted ribbon are a great last minute gift. 300g eggs are \$35. If you'd rather something a little more traditional

you can't go past Darrell Lea's Easter Range available in Morpeth Ginger Beer Factory. Rocklea Road, Honeycomb, Turkish Delight & Liquorice Eggs are often favourites and there'll be plenty of Chick eggs to pop in a bowl on the kitchen table for everyone to share!



And Savoury...

Lucia's Passata

Lucia's, a legendry family who own a pizzeria and fruit stalls in Adelaide's Central Markets, have produced the most divine passata from the best cold climate Australian Roma tomatoes available. Passata, meaning *to pass* is an uncooked sauce made from summer's ripest tomatoes. As the label says, "the perfect beginning to any great sauce". Using old family methods, and new processing machinery, the Lucia's team crush the ripe tomatoes with fresh basil and a little salt to produce this simple base sauce. Use Passata as a base for any pasta sauce, in a stew, casserole or soup. Lucia's also make a pizza sauce and quick sauce. Grab a recipe card to go with your sauce on your next visit.



Tetsuya's Black Truffle Salsa for Butter

When this little 80g jar fell under my gaze I was transported back to the Medieval hillside town of Orvieto, in Umbria, Italy. When there last October truffles were in season and at the Zeppelin Restaurant where the head chef had made meals for the Pope and the entire UN, I consumed a simple \$14 euro pasta that came out laden with so much fresh truffle it would have cost more than \$100 in Australia. The nutty flavour of the truffle ensnares the senses like no other. Sydney chef Tetsuya recommends you add his truffle salsa to softened butter for a perfect truffle bread: a crusty Morpeth Sourdough loaf would be perfect. Instead I added one flat teaspoon of truffle salsa to a mushroom pasta for 6 adults and Belissimo!!! I may never have to travel back to Italy again. (Although I will at some stage do a Zeppelin cooking school and go hunting for fresh truffles in the Umbrian hills.) A teaspoon of Tetsuya's truffle salsa is also delicious stirred into scrambled eggs or risotto.



Tetsuya's range also includes a Vinaigrette for Oysters and a Salad Vinaigrette adaptable for green garden salads, steamed vegetables, & as a marinade meat or poultry. Don't forget we can also special order in for you 200g packets of Tetsuya Tasmanian soft smoked ocean trout. It's delivered frozen on the third Friday of every month and will keep in the freezer for 6 months and one week once thawed. The ocean trout is cold smoked with Tasmanian oak at 38 degrees to give a mild smoke flavour and leaving the fish almost raw in the Japanese style.

Murray River Salt

We've been stocking this pink rock salt, harvested from the Murray River for many years now. It's delicious, and gives hand cut chips, seafood, corn and tomatoes a fantastic flavour. It's also great for presentation, say as a bed for oysters in the shell, or in a little salt bowl on your table. After travelling through the middle of Italy, mum and I arrived at Lake Como keen to visit George Clooney's villa. (He wasn't home, having just injured his leg in a bike accident in the US). Our lake cruise proved very informative on all the latest celebrity gossip and who owned what luxurious lakeside villa. The next day we woke to torrential rain and a 13degree cold snap! Any outdoor activity was out, so we went shopping instead. At a little gastronomy shop in the heart of Como village, amongst the Parma ham and 'smelly' cheese, we found a selection of Salt from all over the world, and who should be representing Australia, but Murray River Salt. It really is world class! A 75g pack will set you back \$5, 150g pack \$9 – a fraction of the price it was in Como!

Jamie Oliver 'At Home' Cookware

Jamie says, "My rustic charcoal coloured stoneware is great for cooking and serving up lovely home made meals. You'll find it a pleasure to use and it looks fantastic too. I just love bringing my pots and dishes straight from the oven or kitchen to the table for everyone to help themselves." You'll find stew and soup pots, gratin dish, pie plate

with singing bird, pasta bowls, soufflé dish, ramekins, pasta bowls and a 16 piece setting for 4 all part of the range. Check it out in Morpeth Gourmet Food Section.

Your 'What's On at Morpeth 2008' Calendar of Events has been enclosed with this newsletter. Please pop it by your calendar to remind you of special times of the year to visit Morpeth. The first event of the year will see Campbell's Store exhibit at the first ever **Newcastle Craft & Quilt Show 29th February, 1st & 2nd March**, at the Newcastle Entertainment Centre. The Woodworking & Hobbies Expo is at the same location on the same weekend, and your entry ticket gains you admission to both fairs. **At the Craft & Quilt show we will have for sale the Miss Rose & Sister Violet range** of velvet flowers, beading by the metre, hand dyed & sequined lace, scented soaps & cinnamon sticks. Kylie will present a free workshop daily at 10.30am, where you can learn how to make beautiful lamps, jewellery, tassels... even a dog collar, from all the individual items you see on the stand. Finished products will also be available for sale for those who'd rather buy ready made.

The very next weekend, join Trevor and the Morpeth Gallery team back in Morpeth, as they host Festival of Two Palettes. Chat to all the artists who exhibit their works at Morpeth Gallery. Watch them paint or have a print signed. Make a purchase over \$50 in one transaction anywhere within Campbell's Store on the weekend, and pop your coupon in the barrel to go in the draw to win an original 9" x 6" original artwork! Sample fine food and wine in Morpeth Honey & Gourmet Foods to get your palate going, before you wander down Morpeth Main Street to sample more fine fare.

If staying overnight in Morpeth on this weekend you may want to try out Morpeth Sourdough's new restaurant. Dine upstairs above the bakery indoors or out on the verandah and watch the world go by. Their restaurant is open for dinner Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday night. The food focus is on fresh local Hunter produce.

Later in March join us for Morpeth Honey Festival & Cranky Handle Vintage Farm Machinery Rally on Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th March, to learn all about honey and taste honey products, then take in the spectacle of hundreds of steam engines all going put putt, and tractors on parade.