

NATIONAL HAT DAY INCREASES AWARENESS AND FUNDS FOR MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH

MENTAL health is one of the biggest issues the Australian healthcare system will face over the next decade.

Through research, education and awareness, Australian Rotary Health aims to reduce the burden of mental illness on individuals, families and communities.

National Hat Day gave Australians, from all walks of life, the opportunity to show their support for people living with a mental health problem.

“For some time now we have been looking for a worthwhile charity to support in a large way,” explained Stephen Keir IV, Akubra Hats Managing Director, of Akubra’s involvement.

“When Australian Rotary Health approached us with the issues surrounding mental health, particularly in the bush, we knew this was in Akubra heartland and that perhaps we could make a difference.”

The under-funded health problem is so big that the World Health Organisation is predicting that over the next 20 years, depression alone will become the most common cause of ill health worldwide.



Stephen Keir IV presents Terry Davies, Corporate Manager of Australian Rotary Health, with an Akubra Cattleman.

In an effort to address this issue, over the past ten years Australian Rotary Health has directed the bulk of its funding towards mental health research.

“Australians have come a long way in understanding the importance of good mental health but we still have a long way to

go,” said Noel Trevaskis, Chairman of Australian Rotary Health.

“To this end, Australian Rotary Health launched a new event aimed at increasing public awareness and support for mental health research.

“Hat Day provides a wonderful platform for

people to learn more about mental health and make 2011 a year of action for mental health research.

“But we still need help to spread the word about the need for increased funds in this area of health.”

To make a donation go to: www.hatday.com.au

AKUBRA HELPS LAUNCH QANTAS FLIGHTS TO DALLAS

The USA is undoubtedly the most important market for Sydney's tourism industry.

Over 308,000 Americans arrived in Sydney last year and to now have a Qantas service flying to and from Dallas will make it easier for even more to travel to "Down Under".

"Qantas has provided passengers flying from Sydney with another option when travelling to North America," said Rod Gilmour, Sydney Airport General Manager - Corporate Affairs.

"It gives Australians a very convenient option when travelling to Texas and the USA's south-west.

"Texas is one of the fastest growing economic regions in the USA."



L to R: Alan Joyce (Qantas CEO), Andrew McEvoy (Tourism Australia MD) and Rod Gilmour (Sydney Airport GM Corporate Affairs) wearing Akubra Hats at the launch. Pic courtesy of Qantas.

50 YEARS ON AND HE'S STILL GOING STRONG

AKUBRA Hats, the Keir family and Terry Hunt have enjoyed more than 50 years together and the relationship is not about change.

"I'll continue to serve the Keirs for as long as they want me," Terry told The Macleay Argus.

Terry, a chartered accountant, was on a working holiday in England in the 1960s when he received a letter detailing a job offer back in Sydney.

"I received a letter asking me if I wanted to take over as company accountant," Terry explained to Luke Horton at The Macleay Argus.

From February 6, 1961 right up until now Terry has been proud to be associated with Australia's icon hat manufacturer.

During the seventies major change took place for Akubra Hats - relocating to Kempsey where the first hat rolled off the production line on October 14, 1974.

Terry was one of 20 employees to make the move north to Kempsey.



Terry Hunt has been a loyal servant of Akubra Hats for over 50 years. Pic courtesy of The Macleay Argus.

"When we first moved to Kempsey we sold our Akubra hats at one store in the US and one in New Zealand," he said.

"Now we export to 18 countries."

Terry retired as company

secretary in 1999 but has remained with Akubra Hats on the board of directors since.

"I might have made some bad decisions in my life, but one of the best was my decision to join Akubra."

TOP 10 SELLERS



1. Cattleman
2. Rough Rider
3. Snowy River
4. Territory
5. Coober Pedy
6. Coolabah
7. The Arena
8. Bronco
9. Tablelands
10. Traveller

FASHION COLLABORATION AS BEC & BRIDGE MEETS AKUBRA HATS

Tradition took on a violet haze in Akubra Hats' first major fashion collaboration with an Australian label at the Bec and Bridge collection show at Rosemount Australian Fashion Week in Sydney last month.

"Collaborating with Akubra seemed like such a natural fit when we came up with the idea of a 1970's-style fedora for summer," explained designers Becky Cooper and Bridget Yorston.

The result is the Bianca Adventurer, a timeless

fedora updated in five custom-coloured felts and lined in dahlia-printed silk.

"It has been exciting to work with an iconic Australian brand and given us a new appreciation for hand craftsmanship," said Becky and Bridget.

The Bianca Adventurer comes in a choice of Blush, Lilac, Khaki, Magenta and Dove Grey – shades of modern neutrals – that set this project apart from Akubra's previous fashion associations.

"Akubra has provided

product for fashion designers in the past but this range revolves around the development of new colours and some new in-house capabilities," said Roy Wilkinson – Akubra Hats Company Secretary.

"The Bianca Adventurer is the perfect hat for the contemporary Australian woman: it's a soft felt in great colours with a decent brim for the harsh Australian

conditions," said Strand Hatters milliner Robert Carroll.

"We were inspired by Bianca Jagger and Lauren Hutton in the late 1970's," said Becky and Bridget.

"They epitomise sensuality, success and a nonchalant sex-appeal that is key to our brand.

"The Bianca Adventurer adds an edge to our more feminine silhouettes."

Royal Randwick Carnival Ambassador – Jodi Gordon



Jodi Gordon at Randwick Racecourse on Derby Day.

Pic courtesy of Tito Media.

AKUBRA and Australia's leading Milliner, Nerida Winter, combined to produce a stunning hat for the 2011 Royal Randwick Car-

nival Ambassador – Jodi Gordon.

On Derby Day Ms Gordon looked stunning in her custom made Akubra.



Pic courtesy Bec & Bridge.

APRIL NATIONAL SALES CONFERENCE UPDATES RELEVANT RETAIL TRENDS

The 15th National Sales Conference was held in Kempsey in April this year. All Akubra agents from around Australia attended along with representatives of the Akubra Board of Directors and the Akubra management team.

The conference provided an opportunity for agents to provide the company with an update on trends in their territories as well as any other issues that may be relevant to their retail customers.

Correspondingly management had an opportunity to display some new product designs, update agents on current marketing initiatives as well as inform them about any changes that may be relevant to both them and Akubra customers.

The conference also provided management with the opportunity to discuss the success of the Akubra belt range and future plans for this product.

The common theme across the territories was that hat sales were strong



and this is confirmed with the factory being incredibly busy at present, which is unprecedented.

“Manufacturing is at capacity which is a little unusual for this time of year” commented Managing Director Stephen Keir. “I kept promising our new production manager, Ron Palin, that he would have a chance to settle into his

new role after Christmas but instead he hasn’t had a chance to come up for air.”

Strong domestic sales have been complimented with rising export demand along with growth in corporate interest for Akubra Hats.

“Given we are now at capacity I ask all retailers out there to be patient if their deliveries are running a

little behind. We pride ourselves on delivering on time so our staff are working very hard to make sure we don’t let our customers down,” added Stephen.

The company hopes to have a new range of hat samples ready soon for distribution to Akubra agents, in time for the peak selling period later this year.

TABLELANDS IS A STRONG PERFORMER

The June Newsletter featured Akubra Hat is the Tablelands.

Introduced to the Akubra product range in 2007 the style has gone from strength to strength and is now number nine in the Akubra Top 10.

The Tablelands continues to be a strong performer with features of a pinched crown and broad dipping brim, laced band and eyelet vents. The Tablelands is offered in

three colours – Brown Olive, Sorrel Tan and Sand.

The first two – Brown Olive and Sorrel Tan – are offered as stock service.

The introduction of the Brown Olive is a hit with customers with this hat listed at number 14 of all styles and colours offered by Akubra.



AKUBRA – ON TOP DOWN UNDER