

AKUBRA

NEWS



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THE MOBILE: Part of Akubra's new marketing material.
MORE IMAGES ON PAGE THREE.



AKUBRA MODERNISES ITS MARKETING BUT MAINTAINS THAT GOOD OLD AUSSIE TRADITION

Akubra is going back to the future, modernising its marketing material but maintaining the good old fashioned traditions that make Akubra hats an Aussie icon.

The company has been working with its marketing agency, Coocoo Sydney, for some time with a brief to freshen up the range of point of sale material that goes to the company's retail network.

The process involved a lot of market research to determine the most effective

way forward and Akubra's managing director, Stephen Keir, said the results were outstanding.

"We felt that the impact of posters and signs being used by retailers was diminishing," Mr Keir said.

"The new range is far more compact as well as eye catching in an effort to give retailers maximum impact while not interfering with retail space.

"We are thrilled with the artwork depicting Australians from all walks of life wearing Akubras."

Included in the new range are ceiling

mobiles, display boxes, shelf tent cards and shelf wobblers.

The shelf tent cards and wobblers provide a short note emphasising the history of the company, family ownership and, of course, being Australian made.

Akubra agents will be able to supply retailers with the new range at their next visit.

Orders can also be placed for this range with the next hat order.

"We hope that these items enhance the Akubra presence in your store," Mr Keir said.

A DARN GOOD MENDING JOB

Retired school principal Wes Nowland could not bear to part with his Akubra Bushman when the crown started to come away from the remainder of the hat.



So Wes took a needle and kangaroo hide thread from his son's "sewing kit" and stitched it back together.

It needs to be pointed out that his son was, at that time, a helicopter pilot mustering cattle in the Northern Territory and always carried a bag with a range of necessities in case of an emergency.

Wes and his wife Nerida, who live in retirement at beautiful Caves Beach on the southern fringe of Newcastle (NSW), were both principals at schools throughout the state.

"I was at a lot of small country schools and an Akubra was a necessity," Wes said.

"I can't remember exactly when I bought my Bushman but it was a lot of years ago and I never go outside without it."

"I couldn't bear to part with it so I had no alternative but to stitch it back together."

"I think I did a pretty d job."

Although 80, Wes is still active, swimming most mornings and playing golf twice a week at nearby Belmont Golf Club.

And the Bushman is on his head for every round, all year round.

"It shades me on the hot days and keeps my head warm in the cooler months," Wes said.

A STITCH IN TIME: Wes Nowland and his well worn and well mended Akubra.

SUZANNE'S AKUBRA CHRISTMAS DISPLAY A WINNER

Suzanne Christie, the Marketing and Development Manager for The Hat Store at Robina, on Queensland's Gold Coast, had definite ideas about the window display she wanted to put together for last Christmas.

She ran the idea past the store's owner, Marion O'Grady, and it was embraced with enthusiasm.

So Suzanne set to work, researching ideas before coming up with what you must agree is a truly Australian theme.

"We wanted to get away from the European vision and make it truly representative of an Australian Christmas," Suzanne said.

"So we came up with the theme 'Akubra - An Aussie Christmas' with the hay bale, the gum leaves, the kangaroo with the Merry Christmas sash and of course, a range of Akubras.

"What could be more Australian?"

"We received many, many positive comments from customers and I believe the display contributed to an increase in sales of Akubra hats leading up to Christmas.

"Many sales were from women buying hats as gifts for husbands or boyfriends.

"I think some people facing the dilemma of what to buy for Christmas saw the display and decided that an Akubra would be a good idea."

Suzanne said the national marketing campaign mounted by Akubra had also been a contributing factor to the increased sales.

"I am not a big TV watcher but several times I had the TV on I saw the advertisement and thought it was great," Suzanne said.

"The imagery was outstanding."

Some retailers are noticing a trend among young people, male and female, towards Akubra dress hats.

Robert Carroll from Sydney's Strand Hatters recently drew attention to the trend among the young living in inner Sydney.

Suzanne has noticed it in her area.

"A new, younger generation, the Gen Y demographic if you like, is buying city style hats," she said.

"A lot of musicians and entertainers are wearing them and setting a trend.

"It's an interesting move although our biggest seller is still the Cattleman."

AUSSIE CHRISTMAS: The window display that attracted so much attention



MORE OF OUR NEW MARKETING MATERIAL

Apart from the new mobile on the front page there is also other new marketing material as shown below.

All can be ordered from your Akubra agent or with your next hat order.



DISPLAY BOXES



WOBBLER



SHELF TENT CARD

THE BULLET PERFORMERS FOR 2014

Retailers. The chart to the right shows the ten top selling styles for Akubra for 2014.

We hope that this information is useful and perhaps an opportunity to extend your range with proven performers.

Cattleman continues to remain the best-selling style and justifies the inclusion of Graphite Grey to the stock range offered for this product.

Rough Rider is also continuing to grow as a popular style and is now offered by us in three colours from stock service, Light Sand, Loden and Black.

The real star performer from 2013 is Riverina, which climbed from number seven in terms of popularity in 2013 to number four last year.

Each month orders are increasing with the most popular colours of Sand and Loden offered from stock service.

While Coolabah remains popular at a domestic level, international demand for this style pushed it to the top three of all Akubra Hats sold.

If you are interested to know what are the best performing styles in your state please contact your Akubra agent.

TOP 10 hat styles 2014



Cattleman	28%	Snowy River	7%
Rough Rider	15%	Territory	6%
Coolabah	13%	The Arena	5%
Riverina	10%	Bronco	4%
Coober Pedy	8%	Tablelands	4%

WELL, IT WAS A SECRET FOR A WHILE

The Secret is now well and truly out!

By now you would have seen the extensive promotion and commencement of Channel 10's new family entertainment show "I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here".

It is already a hit as 10 Australian celebrities battle the African jungle with

little more than their wits, strength and willpower to survive in competition.

When we started putting this edition of Akubra News together the only secret that we could have told you was that all the celebrities had been fitted out with Akubras.

Essential for their survival in the harsh climate of Africa, Akubras' were

used for the UK version of the same show (filmed in Australia) and proved essential in protecting the contestants from our outback environment.

Time, of course, has caught up and the show is well under way.

If you haven't seen the show then check it out, with celebrities wearing our Snowy River in Santone Fawn.

VALE TOM EDWARDS AND BILL MARTIN

Two men who were not only vitally important to Akubra but great friends of the Keir family, Tom Edwards and Bill Martin, passed away recently.

Tom Edwards, who had a long and distinguished career with Akubra which included a seat on the board, died in Melbourne in early December aged 75 after a lengthy illness.

Tom held the Akubra agency for Victoria and Tasmania for 25 years as well as being the company's former national sales manager before retiring.

He was a close personal friend of the late Stephen Keir III and held in such high esteem that when he resigned from the board he was not replaced.

"Stephen told Tom he had always hoped that one day he would be well enough to

return to the board," Tom's wife, Lorna, said. "Unfortunately it was not to be."

"They were a great pair and enjoyed each other's company and loved adventure.

"I can remember them chartering a plane to fly to the Birdsville races one year and on another occasion to the Warwick Rodeo.

"Tom took his role as national sales manager very seriously and would travel the length of the country to talk to agents to offer advice or sort out problems."

William Sydney "Bill" Martin was initially employed by the NSW Chamber of Manufacturers as an industrial relations consultant before going out on his own offering the same services.

Bill had represented Akubra Hats for more than thirty years during negotiations with the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia and specialised in the Felt

Hatting Award.

He was honest and trustworthy and well respected by both the unions and the courts, was always fair and always fought for what he thought was right.

Bill will be remembered for his famous quote "I have never lost an unfair dismissal case that went to court" and that was because he would only defend those cases that he felt were just.

Bill worked closely with the management team at Akubra and had a strong affection for Akubra and a good sense of humour.

This was never more evident than at his funeral where an Akubra Hat was displayed atop his casket as well as a range of Akubra Hats placed around the numerous bunches of flowers at his wake.

Our condolences to Lorna Edwards and Robyn Martin and to their extended families.



A CELEBRATION: The late Bill Martin (second from left) with Akubra's Managing Director Stephen Keir, Company Secretary Roy Wilkinson, recently retired Director, Terry Hunt and The Honourable Tim Fisher at the Centenary Celebrations of the Akubra Trade Mark.



FAMILY AFFAIR: The late Tom Edwards with his wife Lorna (left) and Lorna's sister Nola. All three worked together for Sydney, Noble and Edwards as our Victorian agent.



LAB TESTING: Pea gives this Akubra a perfect score.

AKUBRA IS LAB TESTING ITS HATS

Akubra recently went to the lab to test a hat and got the paws up from Pea, the Gundrift Labrador puppy.

The hat is owned Mark Brownbill, who breeds these pups at Kempsey's Australian Pet Boarding.

"Pea was the baby of the litter, hence the name," Mark said.

"She loved snuggling down into that hat, it really was a super successful lab test."

Pea has since grown considerably since the picture was taken and she has gone to a home in Sydney.

But there are more pups on the way and more lab tests to be done.

TERRY HUNT RETIRES AFTER 30 YEARS AS A DIRECTOR

Terry Hunt ended 30 years as a director of Akubra when he resigned from the board of directors last month.

It also ended a 54 year association with the company.

Terry, who holds an Order of Australia for his services to the community of Kempsey (NSW), was Akubra's long time company secretary before being invited to join the board.

In the early 1970's he, along with the late Stephen Keir III, selected Kempsey as the site for the new factory when Akubra made the decision to relocate from Sydney.

"I am 80 years old and I think I have earned the right to a bit of a rest," Terry said.

"It has been a long and happy association with Akubra and while many important things happened during my time on the board the most important, I think, was the expansion of our overseas markets.

"Australia is still our number one market and I hope the man on the land has a long and fruitful life and keeps buying Akubra hats.

"However the expansion of those overseas markets was a crucial step forward.

"We are now selling in 18 or 19 countries and China is our biggest overseas market."



FAREWELL: Terry Hunt has retired from the board of Akubra.

While Terry says he has earned a rest he has no plans to put his feet up.

It was not for nothing that he earned the OAM.

He is still president of the Kempsey RSL Sub Branch, president of the RSL Club, chairman of Kempsey Advisory Training Enterprises, parish treasurer and a member of Legacy, an organisation of which he has previously been both president and vice president.

However he has resigned, in the last six months, from the Kempsey Gaol Committee and from the local Rural Fire Service of which he was president.

"I am in good health, fortunately and while I have cut back some of my commitments I still plan to remain active in the community," Terry said.

THE VOICE AND FACE THAT GREETED HAS RETIRED

The first voice that people usually heard when they rang Akubra's head office or the first face they saw when they walked in the door belonged to Jenny Newham.

We use the word "belonged" because Jenny retired on Friday, February 13 after almost 23 years in the front office.

And the first thing Jenny said she was doing after walking out the door was to buy a black Friday lottery ticket.

HEADED FOR THE BEACH:
Jenny Newham has retired after almost 23 years.



Jenny joined Akubra in 1992, two years after her partner, Mike Newham, died.

"Mike and the late Steve Keir, our previous managing director, were good friends and the Keir family were fantastic in the way they helped me," Jenny said.

"That's what this company is like to work for.

"We are all one big happy family and I am going to miss all the girls in the front office and all the boys and girls in the factory."

Jenny plans to walk her two border collies on the beach at Trial Bay with Shelley Crotty, who retired from Akubra's front office in the latter part of last year.

"I want to read, spend more time with my step grand children in Sydney and save my garden which is becoming over grown," Jenny said.

"Further down the track I might do some more travelling overseas."

