



Q U I N T E S S E N T I A L L Y

5 May 2010

Voyages Longitude 131° introduces programme of enriching weekends with inspiring Australians

- *Writing under the stars with Australian living treasure Thomas Keneally* to take place 9-11 July 2010 -



The ultimate outback destination, Voyages Longitude 131° in Australia's Northern Territory, is launching a series of special events that will allow guests to meet and share experiences with high profile Australians in the stunning desert surroundings of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. Reserve your place now to take part in the first fascinating weekend: *Writing under the stars with Australian living treasure Thomas Keneally* on 9-11 July 2010.

The intimate event is the ideal opportunity for guests to enjoy a relaxing weekend in beautiful surroundings and meet Australia's most prolific author, Thomas Keneally, whose work has been strongly influenced by the Australian outback. The programme includes a story-telling and writing session for guests to get their creative juices flowing; an introduction to Aboriginal art and 'dot painting'; a Table 131° dinner under the stars hosted by Thomas Keneally; luxurious tented accommodation at the eco-chic Longitude 131, and captivating tours that take guests up close to Uluru and its spectacular surrounds by helicopter and on foot.

Sydney-born Thomas Keneally has published more than 40 novels and was awarded the Order of Australia in 1983 for his services to Australian literature. Keneally has been short-listed for the prestigious Booker prize on four occasions, and won in 1982 with *Schindler's Ark*, which was later adapted into the multi-award-winning film *Schindler's List*, directed by Steven Spielberg. Also a two-time winner of the coveted Miles Franklin Literary Award celebrating Australian character and creativity, Keneally is shortlisted as a finalist for the 2010 award with his latest book, *The People's Train*.

Upon arrival at Ayers Rock Airport on 9 July, guests will be transported to Longitude 131° and enjoy a thrilling afternoon experiencing Uluru and the surrounding area by helicopter. The evening will be spent in the Dune House, relaxing with pre-dinner drinks and canapés, followed by a dinner of exciting modern Australian cuisine.

The next day, guests will rise early to experience the Uluru Sunrise Walk, followed by a three hour story-telling and writing session, where Thomas Keneally will demonstrate how to draw from personal experiences to write a short story and discuss how the outback and indigenous Australia inspired his own writing. After a sumptuous lunch, guests will meet an indigenous artist to hear about the history and importance of Aboriginal art within the Uluru area and learn the skill of 'dot painting'. At the end of the session, guests will have their own canvas to take away as a memento of the weekend.

An intimate evening will then be hosted by Thomas Keneally, who will share stories of his childhood growing up in a country town originally inhabited by the Dunghutti people and his unique experiences in the outback. Over a fabulous three course dinner under the stars at Table 131°, Keneally will award a special prize to the best short story from the morning session.

On the final day, guests can relax before departure, when they will receive a gift to remind them of their weekend at Longitude 131°.

Tapa Tibble, General Manager of Longitude 131°, commented: "We are delighted to be welcoming such an esteemed and inspirational personality as Thomas Keneally to Longitude 131°. With his fascinating background and strong connection with the Australian outback, our guests are in for a truly enriching weekend with a captivating host."

Writing under the stars with Australian living treasure Thomas Keneally is priced at **AU\$ 4,920*** for two people sharing a five star luxury tent. This includes all meals, selected alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, the story-telling and writing session, an exclusive tour programme, entrance tickets to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park and return Ayers Rock Airport transfers.

Voyages Hotels & Resorts is an Australian-owned company that operates Voyages Ayers Rock Resort, Voyages Longitude 131° and Ayers Rock Airport.

For bookings:

Telephone: 1300 134 044

Website: www.longitude131.com.au/writing-under-the-stars

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* Subject to availability, terms and conditions.

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