

Go west for the best Australian pies

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Village Hot Bake Bakery Cafe, Dubbo, was outright winner of the 14th Great Aussie Meat Pie Competition after receiving 10 medals — no small feat when you consider that there were about 1400 pies entered.

The cafe, established in 1918 by Oswald (Aussie) Stevenson, is owned and managed now by his grandsons Bill, Robert and John Stevenson, all master bakers and pastry cooks.

Since the early days of delivering bakery products by horse and cart to Dubbo residents, including the Army camp where the Western Plains Zoo is now, the Stevensons have passed down three generations of baking tradition and secret recipes.

Both the brothers' grandfathers were bakers, as was their father, and to this day their grandfathers still have a finger in the pies' success.

“They both had bakeries in Dubbo and were quite competitive. We still use some of their recipes dating back to 1918 but they have been given a modern edge,” says Robert, who looks after the administration and

production side of the company.

Baked fresh each day using traditional methods free of commercial pre-mixes, more than 250 varieties of pies, pastries, breads and cakes are baked seven days a week.

“It's the combination of quality ingredients and flavours that make our pies a winner. Everything has to work together. We have a good flaky pastry and use top-quality meat,” says Robert.

To be crowned “outright winner” of the Great Aussie Meat Pie competition a bakery must enter a beefsteak pie. Seven bakeries were awarded a gold medal in the beefsteak pie division and the over-all winner was the Stevenson clan. It's the fourth time Village Hot Bake Bakery Cafe has entered the competition. Each year, says Robert, he and his brothers have picked up tips and comments from the judges and have worked to improve their product: “My favourite would have to be the chicken and mushroom pie.”

However, the judges obviously favoured many others. The bakery also received gold medals for the tasty vegetable mornay pie and the gourmet apricot chicken pie, which



Winners: Robert, Bill and John Stevenson, of the Village Hot Bake Bakery Cafe, Dubbo, show off their awards in their bakery.

outlet Village Hot Bake Bakery Cafe in Dubbo. If you are thinking it's “pie time” they were here in the city, you're right. These award-winning pies will hit the food scenes of Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra early next year.

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The Stevensons' pies are available throughout the NSW central west and from their renowned 120-seat retail