

Ingenious Ideas Dept.

Little Elephant Spreads Life's Lessons Around The Globe

(NAPSA)—Sally Hunter's story is one of determination and persistence. She created a lovable elephant character, Humphrey, when she was a single mom struggling to make ends meet. Now the books, greeting cards, plush animals and room décor based on her characters are helping to bring life's lessons to children around the globe.



Sally Hunter

Sally's circumstances drove her to establish herself as a children's writer and illustrator. The dream, she hoped, would help them "get out of the pit we were in."

Humphrey was inspired by her son. When he was three, Sally recalls "a soft, gentle little boy," while her daughter, at the age of five, was the model for Humphrey's sister, Lottie, "very sweet and kind." The youngest member of the family is Baby Jack, "my sweet, sunny one year old."

Through her work, Sally says she wishes to represent what every parent feels, the natural protection towards their child and provide a place where they can grow in innocence with nature, color and imagination. She says she hopes with her books and cards an essence of this comes through.

Childlike Innocence

"*Humphrey's Corner* is a nostalgic, simple world, which may be a little too idealistic, but it is a reminder in fast-paced everyday life of the importance of childlike innocence and wonder, and maybe what life's all about," said Hunter. "Through Humphrey's experiences, young children relate and learn in a safe, wonderfully nurturing environment along with



An adorable elephant, Humphrey (and his family), featured in books, greeting cards, plush animals and room décor have begun to inspire children around the globe.

their pal, Humphrey, and his little toy rabbit friend, Mop, whose ear has been 'loved off'."

An Overnight Success

Hunter's main concern was the family income but after a visit to a greeting card company, who loved the idea and offered to buy the rights, she knew Humphrey was "not for sale." She called a second company, insisting to meet with the art director the next day. She had the meeting and left with an order for the first *Humphrey's Corner* greeting cards. After the sale of two million cards in England, making it an instant hit, Sally wrote her first *Humphrey's Corner* book, which became a huge success with preschoolers. The rest is marketing history.

Since then, the *Humphrey's Corner* line has been signed up by top children's companies around the world and the response has been overwhelming. *Humphrey's*

Corner and *Humphrey's Bedtime* are published by Henry Holt in the U.S. and are also available in stores in England, Australia and Japan.

Hunter has written three more books set for distribution and is writing a sixth. To add to the success of the books there has been the introduction of Gund's plush toys, C.R. Gibson's baby accessories, Michel and Co.'s children's room décor and Wonderful Wishes range of greeting cards. FAO Schwarz' FAO Baby Catalogue features the little elephant on the front and has posted information about *Humphrey's Corner* at www.fao.com/children.

Celebrating Imagination

Publisher's Weekly described the book as "Gently celebrating toddlers' independence and imagination, as well as a mother's comforting presence, Hunter's art and words shape a story that is, indeed, just right."