

# Matthews family splits historic SA pub empire

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BUSINESS REPORTER

ONE of the state's biggest family-owned hotel groups has split its pubs portfolio as part of a succession plan designed to pave the way for a potential fourth generation of hoteliers.

As part of a deal struck between members of the Matthews family, siblings Lisa, Scott and Ward Matthews will retain ownership of seven hotels operated by the Matthews Hospitality group, including the Feathers, Maylands and Buckingham Arms hotels.

They will also retain the company name and brand.

Their uncle Guy and cousins Shaun, Brett and William will take over the Flagstaff and Mansfield Park hotels, with Guy, Brett and Shaun all stepping down as directors of Matthews Hospitality.

Ms Matthews, who has two sons aged in their 20s, said it was the right time to implement a succession plan.

"Matthews Hospitality has a proud family history, legacy and values, and our succession plan is designed to preserve and honour these qualities for future generations," she said.

"We love having family involved, but we certainly understand it's to the betterment of the business, and also the personal development of family members, to not come straight from school into the business.

"That's where innovation comes from – sending them out into the world, seeing what they're good at, what they love, what they're passionate about, and if they can bring it back to the business that's fantastic."

The Matthews family has operated hotels in SA for more than 70 years, since patriarch Seymour Matthews and wife



Lisa Matthews with son Tom Vasileff and brother Scott Matthews at the family's Maylands Hotel, Picture: MATT LOXTON

Doris started investing during World War II. The family is credited with offering the first counter meals in Australia, at the Largs Pier Hotel; the first drive-through bottle shop; and the first smorgasbord, at the Buckingham Arms.

Other pubs to be retained within the Matthews Hospitality group include the Eyre Hotel in Whyalla and the Mount Gambier, Park and South Eastern hotels in Mount Gambier. It also retains ownership of the Colhurst House B&B in Mount Gambier and the Witches Brew Liquor store in Salisbury.

As part of the new structure Andrew Kemp, who joined Matthews Hospitality in 2017, will take the reins as chief executive, overseeing more than 350 staff.

With all the group's venues reopening since the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, Mr Kemp believes the industry will play an important role reconnecting families and friends.

"Hotels play a pretty important role in terms of people's wellbeing and the social connections they provide. We don't see that changing," he said.

"What changes is perhaps

people's discretionary spend and how willing they are to eat out and be entertained, but I think the basics of what we provide are pretty important.

"The industry's definitely going to be impacted but hospitality will survive.

"It's just what it will look like on the other side that might change."

Meanwhile Brett Matthews, who led the award-winning renovation of The Stirling Hotel in 2008, has partnered with hoteliers Ed Peter and Martin Palmer on several projects in recent years.

This year the trio has added

Nairne's District Hotel and Naracoorte's Kincaig Hotel to their portfolio, with plans for major upgrades.

Brett Matthews said his focus remained on untapped opportunities in regional areas.

"Mount Barker for example, there's \$4 billion of housing going in there by 2030 – that's on steroids and we're looking at a greenfield site out there," he said.

Last week the trio confirmed their acquisition of The Lion Hotel, with ambitions to ramp up investment in SA's hospitality sector through their Duxton Pubs Group.

## CBA tackles 'hidden epidemic'

GERARD COCKBURN

COMMONWEALTH Bank will initiate a new assistance program to support people being affected by financial abuse, which is usually associated with domestic and family violence.

Australia's largest bank has launched its Next Chapter program, a support service designed to assist victims of financial abuse to become financially independent.

CBA's new service coincides with the release of its community attitudes report, which surveyed 10,000 Australians and revealed 26 per cent of respondents had experienced some form of financial abuse.

The survey, which was conducted in conjunction with YouGov, showed 12 per cent of Australians had known someone who had been impacted by financial abuse, and four in five respondents agreed it was a widespread problem.

It also revealed 79 per cent of people had no idea financial abuse support was available, and more than half of the responses believed major banks should be doing more to address the issue.

CBA chief executive Matt Comyn said financial abuse was a "hidden epidemic" that impacted one in four Australians.

"Financial abuse is one of the most powerful ways to keep someone trapped in a domestic and family violence situation, causing victims and survivors serious financial stress both during the situation and for some time after they leave," Mr Comyn said.

"We want to make it easier for victims and survivors to break free of the financial shackles of their abusers and to get the help they need to start the next chapter of their lives and achieve long-term financial independence."

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Our simpler time-of-use tariff enables small businesses to take advantage of cheap solar energy. For large businesses, the peak demand period has been more tightly defined.

We recommend you contact your retailer to determine which network tariff your business is currently on, and to confirm if a more suitable option is available. Combined with our COVID-19 relief packages, we're empowering South Australian business.



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