

Hotel SA

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN HOTELS ASSOCIATION (SA BRANCH) APR/MAY 2020

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From the President

DAVID BASHEER – AHA|SA PRESIDENT

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Australian Hotels Association (SA)

Striving for the Best Outcome to the COVID-19 Crisis

When I originally penned this column in early March, the following issues were front of mind for the AHA.

- The twice annual excise rises was a headline item. It was (and remains) time for all of Industry to get on the same page and fight the Federal Government to halt 71 tax rises in 35 years. Paying \$2.26 per litre excise on beer in tax is simply beyond acceptable. It makes us the fourth highest taxed nation on earth for beer – 17 times more than Germany.
- I also raised concerns about the effect of the devastating bushfires and a concern in Asia called coronavirus, which, combined with the bushfires was having a negative effect on our accommodation venues. That downturn demanded South Australia finally fall into line with major overseas regions and properly regulate Airbnb.
- Other issues of industry concern and interest were also raised. The AHA|SA has not lost sight of these issues and there will be an appropriate time to act on members' behalf.

But our lives right now are consumed with the COVID-19. It affected our industry first - and has hit us the hardest.

It has taken a heavy toll on our members, our amazing staff who have suddenly found themselves in Centrelink queues for the first time in their lives, and our sponsors who have seen their supply chain destroyed and had to deal with their own circumstances.

This is a national and global upheaval that suddenly our members – from large city operators though to the mum and dad country pubs - find themselves in the middle of.

Hotels have always been the custodians of people's good times. People's happy memories. People's social circle. This will continue when the time allows.

The AHA has lobbied extensively on behalf of our membership. With so many competing calls for government assistance, we have ensured the AHA voice continues to be heard loudest.

Important meetings have been held on multiple occasions with the Premier Steven Marshall, along with the Attorney General Vickie Chapman and Treasurer Rob Lucas.

The Leader of the Opposition Peter Malinauskas and Shadow Treasurer Stephen Mullighan have been widely engaged to ensure there is a bi-partisan approach to our needs.

Several meetings have also taken place with key Government officials and agencies ranging from the SA Health Chief Medical Officer Dr Nicola Spurrier, SAPOL, the local Government Association and the Small Business Commissioner

There has been a high degree of collaboration with our national office and all state branches as we share experiences and opportunities.

For example:

The ability to use our nationwide strength with the Federal Treasurer and the Australian Bankers Association when many of our members were excluded from the original bank guarantees has meant many of our members have the best possible chance to survive this crisis.

Our negotiations with the Fair Work Commission to change the HIGA in an extremely short time frame saved members' both wage expense and jobs.

At a State and Federal level, we were able to negotiate agreeable payment terms with many sponsors, including Foxtel, Sky Channel and One Music.

FUTURE ACTIONS

Now the focus is two-fold. Firstly, to extract the maximum benefit from the State government's \$300m industry rescue package. This is required for survival during this current difficult period but also for critical financial assistance during the recovery mode.

Secondly, what does a partial reopening look like? Enormous work has gone into this to give government the confidence that we have the model for our venues to be safe. Being able to successfully demonstrate this point means that we can

accelerate what we all desperately need; normal trading to return.

What has become obvious though this crisis is the strength of the AHAISA office.

Our team has done a remarkable job fielding an unprecedented level of calls and emails from virtually every member. They have done this calmly, patiently and provided the most accurate, up-to-date information available in what has been a rapidly moving environment.

In the period around the closure of our venues, it was the IR team that bore the brunt. Owen Webb has illustrated why he is considered a leader in his field. Gary Coppola and Didier Vollerin provided invaluable support, along with Katherine Taylor who spearheads our accommodation division.

The ability to use our nationwide strength with the Federal Treasurer and the Australian Bankers Association when many of our members were excluded from the original bank guarantees.

Anna Moeller has supported Ian Horne brilliantly in crafting a document to government that sets out our members' immediate and long-term requirements from the \$300m industry package.

Others in our office have all stepped up - often working in areas outside their normal environments to support where possible.

As always, in a time of crisis we look for leadership, and Ian Horne has been simply outstanding. Co-ordinating our entire response, he has lobbied, advised and worked with a range of government

personnel in a dynamic and highly challenging environment. Alongside that, Ian has had to ensure our office response to members has been elevated.

All of our membership is very grateful for the combined efforts and we say thank you on a job well done.

It is our membership that has copped it hardest. Hard-working individuals and families that have had their efforts and plans scuttled.

This whole episode is hurting us all now but for some it will leave lifelong scars. I urge you to reach out to organisations such as BeyondBlue (1800 512 348) for help if the emotional and mental stress is getting too great.

Looking forward, as we have done throughout every challenge placed before us over our time together ... we will prevail. We shall remain. We will rebuild.

RICK LOVELL RETIREMENT

I don't want to let this opportunity go by without acknowledging Rick Lovell. Rick will retire from AHAISA duties at the upcoming election.

He has served on the AHAISA Council for almost 40 years. In that time, we have had one secretary/ treasurer, providing us with stability and incredible depth of knowledge.

Rick is a Life Member for good reason. His wise counsel has been exemplary and he has transformed our financial position so that we are now in a very solid position.

His stewardship has meant we have always had funds available to fight major campaigns, including the wine-in-supermarket battle and Xenophon threat.

Even though we have been forced to spend aggressively recently, he has ensured AHAISA coffers remain well-resourced for the next challenge, which seems to materialise quicker and quicker.

And Rick's final legacy is the solid state of the AHAISA finances which allows us to approach times of uncertainty with confidence. On behalf of all Members, I wish Rick and Cynthia best wishes for next chapter of their lives.



David Basheer, AHAISA President



From the General Manager

IAN HORNE – AHA|SA GENERAL MANAGER

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Australian Hotels Association (SA)

Forward Focus

At the time of writing there is great speculation as to the likelihood of some level of relaxation of the industry shut down. To some extent, this optimism is driven by the fantastic results in South Australia in terms of low levels of new infections, highly successful 'tracking' of those infected, a lower death rate than experienced in most other parts of the world and the harsh economic impact that the shutdown has wrought!

Furthermore, the bold posturing of major national sporting codes setting dates for a return to playing indicates some sense of things returning to normal. Only time will tell if their optimism is rewarded!

To balance that optimism is the more harsh assessment of many health experts and medicos, and the consensus amongst them that if a return happens too soon it could trigger a deadly second wave of infections as now seen in Singapore. Many in the health profession continue to warn that we may still be months away from significant loosening up.

However, it will happen! Clearly no one knows what or when it will happen but we can make some 'best guess' predictions based on the expert advice as well as



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examples of other countries that are further along the curve and already loosening up.

It is fair to say that based on the political and medical commentary returning to 'normal' will more likely be a gradual easing of restrictions. It is argued this is because allowing people to mix freely would cause infection numbers to spike dramatically and undo all the good work that has been achieved particularly through social distancing.

Peter Collignon, a Professor of Microbiology at ANU is quoted as saying:

"Social distancing could not be switched off like a light switch but would need to be more like a light switch with a dimmer!!"

Many experts identify the hospitality industry as particularly problematic. The very nature of hotels, bars, pubs, clubs, restaurants, cafes etc is their social nature, that is you go to a hospitality venue to engage with others to share the fellowship and general camaraderie of being together. Hotels in particular are so often a first choice for celebration and commiseration.

And that is our challenge. As Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt has said many

"...the AHA both in SA and nationally have been **developing a set of protocols to make such a transition easier...**"

times, the re-opening of business will be 'targeted and gradual'.

Further indications from the Prime Minister suggest that it will be mid-May before any loosening of restrictions would be considered.

That said, it is not unreasonable to consider that hotels and hospitality will have a capacity to open in at least a limited form sooner rather than later and in anticipation, the AHA both in SA and nationally have been developing a set of protocols to make such a transition easier for health experts and governments to support.

Maintaining public space and the work environment with enhanced hygiene practices will be an absolute expectation. Staff training in understanding what COVID-19 hospitality hygiene practices mean will be essential as will the provision of appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for staff and patrons.

Of course the most important one will be the ability to maintain social distancing.

The AHA protocols are much more extensive but this give you a taste of what we can expect. The effort we put in now will go a long way to ensuring when we open, we stay open!!

I wish every member well and encourage you to use every level of financial support offered by the Federal and State Governments. I also encourage you to approach your local government for "hardship relief" and importantly use the AHA|SA as your key resource to ensure that when re-opening comes you have the best chance to succeed and prosper.

Ian Horne
AHA|SA General Manager

Corporate Partners

2020 AHAISA CORPORATE PARTNERS FUNCTION

The AHAISA hosted the annual new year celebration for major corporate partners at the Robin Hood Hotel on Tuesday 3 March 2020. Diamond, Platinum, Gold and Silver partners were joined by the AHAISA Council, group hoteliers and staff. The informal network recognises the ongoing and generous support

these companies provide to the association and the SA hotel industry. New Silver partners, including Agile Group, Bunnings Group and Lima One Protection Group, were presented with commemorative plaques by AHAISA President, David Basheer.



AHA|SA Staff Spotlight

BRONTE McARTHUR, MANAGER – FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

WHEN DID YOU JOIN THE AHA|SA?

January 2011. I also spent six years at the AHA|SA from 2000 to 2006.

WHAT ARE YOUR KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE AHA|SA?

I do all of the financial reporting for both AHA|SA and Gaming Care, along with all financial returns such as BAS/GST, payroll tax, FBT, WorkCover and superannuation.

WHAT IS YOUR PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE?

I was previously employed in financial roles in shipping, local government, hotel and horticulture.

HOW DO YOU OCCUPY YOUR TIME OUTSIDE OF WORK?

My wife and I are carers for a disabled child and this occupies a fair bit of my time as I work a lot with him.

WHERE IS YOUR FAVOURITE HOLIDAY DESTINATION?

Over the past four years or so I have thoroughly enjoyed visiting outback SA in places like Arkaroola, Leigh Creek, Marree, William Creek and Lake Eyre. You can definitely feel the serenity!

IF YOU COULD ASK ANY THREE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD AROUND FOR DINNER, WHO WOULD YOU ASK AND WHY?

Dr Charlie Teo – a very talented Neurosurgeon who has done some wonderful work with people.

Barrack Obama – I think he would be a very interesting person.

Danny Bhoj – Scottish comedian – I love his humour.



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The Strathmore

CITY ICON LAUNCHES INTO STRATOSPHERE

WORDS: TIM BOYLEN PHOTOS: SERPENTINE STUDIO





In the midst of the COVID-19 lockdown, The Strathmore Hotel has emerged as a stunning success story, blending the original heritage of colonial Adelaide with contemporary pub design.

At a deeper level, it has become a beacon of hope during a time of unprecedented adversity – and a poignant reminder to the community and political leaders that pubs are family affairs, with personal livelihoods on the line.

Nothing has been left untouched during The Strathmore’s multi-year, multi-million-dollar renovation.

One of the first features you see upon entering is the soaring western wall; a design statement that oozes history.

This is no ordinary wall. The Strathmore is one of Adelaide’s oldest pubs and the bricks were probably laid by SA’s first settlers. (The Strathmore is located about a kilometre from the spot where these entrepreneurial souls first pitched their tents on the banks of the River Torrens.)

The wall runs two-storeys high, rising 7.5 metres through a recently opened void in the first floor.

**COCA-COLA AMATIL CONGRATULATES
DAVID BASHEER
ON THE REOPENING OF THE STRATHMORE HOTEL**



Yet the crowning glory is upstairs, where the previously enclosed balcony has been transformed into an open-air Verandah Bar and Dining. Patrons are treated to treetop views over North Terrace; through maple leaves to the historic Railway Station and Parliament House. Thanks to a retractable overhead roof, floor-to-ceiling glass and windows that swing open, you can hear the tram bells in summer and spring, yet close up the space and still enjoy the views in winter and autumn.

“One of the catalysts for the renovation was the decline in upstairs trade,” said owner David Basheer.

“The ground floor had been growing rapidly with the traditional market but the balcony restaurant, which was popular through the 1990s, was in decline,” said David.

To retain the pub ambience, four key goals were “set in stone”.

“The ground level needed to be an evolution so that it was more on trend - but the first floor needed to be a revolution, a completely new business model,” he said.

“The second core goal was to bring the pub to the street, upstairs and down, so that we got the benefit of passing traffic.

“Number three was to give us a connection between upstairs and down. Before the development there was zero interaction between the two. It was almost two separate businesses.

“Finally, and most importantly, the redevelopment had to be true to the fact that The Strathmore is a pub, a pub, a pub.

“Our competitors in the local area are multinationals and government or semi-government enterprises.

“We are a pub and we need to stay authentic.”

To reinforce the concept of an authentic South Australian pub located in the heart of the city, a new sign at the front of the premises displays a digital readout of the number of days it has been family owned. At the time of writing, that number was 17,488 continuous days.

A PUB, A PUB, A PUB

Taking an aerial view of that section of North Terrace, The Strathmore is the lowest building in a high-rise precinct. The potential was not lost on the husband-and-wife team of David and Trina.

“We did consider developing upwards,” said David.

“Football coming to Adelaide Oval was the catalyst for the development. We sat back for three years to see how it would play out.

“The hotel is not a designated historic site so we could have built up, we could have opted for a high-rise mix of residential and hospitality, even retail and commercial.

“Trina, myself, my brother Rick and sister Sonia, looked at this option for about 12 months and spoke to several potential partners. But at the end of the day, we’re publicans and we chose to develop the site as a pub.

“We’re a family business and we want that authenticity to come through. We’re a family pub that just happens to be in an international area of Adelaide – and frankly, it’s a great point of difference. We are going to be us – The Strathmore - and behave like us – a pub.”



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FOOTPATH

Thanks to the glass 'wall' on three sides, pedestrians can see into the verandah area from any approach.

That's the first clue that The Strathmore has changed substantially; the second sign will be the revitalised footpath dining and drinking area. When COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, the final touch will be to remove the 'old-school' street furniture and replace it with modern, flexible seating, to give it more of an open café-style feel.

However, true to the "it's a pub, a pub, a pub" ethos, the beautiful Tasmanian Oak timber underpinning the first-floor verandah has been kept to retain history and character.

"We modernised our street presence because it was critical that it reflected what was happening inside the venue," said David.

And there's a lot happening inside!

Entering the ground floor area, patrons walk through a short deck area that has casual furniture and indoor plants. This section acts as a transitional drinking space which leads into the ground floor dining area (Café One Two Nine) and the 'outdoors' Garden Bar and deck at the rear, with its eye-catching Madagascar Ponytail Tree. To the left, the ground floor bar has tripled in size and reaches almost to the street.

To the right is that magnificent exposed brick wall mentioned earlier. The brick is a feature that is carried throughout the entire hotel, often interspersed with bluestone. The décor is eclectic; sometimes vaguely rustic but always contemporary. This is also true of the upstairs furnishings, although on the upper floor the presentation is more refined. It is yet another link that brings together the two levels.

"The bar on the ground floor has been extended to be much closer to North Terrace. This area is aimed at existing clientele that have been very loyal during the renovations," said David.

"It will retain its Stonegrill flavour, but we have also added the open kitchen with its statement white pizza oven." (Stonegrill is where granite stones, mined in Mintaro, are heated to 400° and placed in front of diners to enjoy their meat of choice.)

A light well and several sky lights have been installed to draw natural light into the centre of the ground floor.

UPSTAIRS

The upstairs space is much larger than before. Facing North Terrace from the top of the new staircase, a modernised hotel

dining sits to the left (west), while the Verandah Bar area sits to the right. These areas are separated by the upstairs bar, which has been relocated to be the hero of the area in the middle of the space.

Both areas push much deeper into the hotel than before because a significant amount of extra space has been recovered by adding the long-shuttered accommodation rooms to the open plan. A range of other features add to the flexibility of the balcony area, including:

- a small boardroom-cum-lounge leading off the Verandah Bar, which has been named Verandah Private, and is equipped with the latest business presentation technology.
- glass partitions to zone sections for functions
- furniture on wheels that can be divided to create informal barriers

"We are blessed by the location and the challenge for the first floor is to become known as a destination venue in the CBD," said David.

"The first floor is premium - but it is premium with a small 'p', not a capital 'P'. We're still an authentic Australian pub in the heart of the city and we'll always be true to our roots as a family-owned operation."

MENU

While downstairs offers traditional pub meals, upstairs provides a sophisticated, hotel restaurant experience.

Simon Bryant, formerly of the Hilton Hotel and The Cook and The Chef TV program, acted as a consultant in the development of the menu. This has gone through multiple incarnations, especially as COVID-19 has pushed out the opening season.

"Simon helped us to think outside the box," said David.

"Our food offering will have a strong SA theme in the restaurant, with a theme of 'What grows together, goes together'.

"The menu will showcase South Australia's regions. Simon has opened the door to boutique SA suppliers and his own network. His knowledge is amazing.

"He has also helped mentor the team through the process and we are very excited by the result.

"Our executive Chef, Matthew Sherriff, did his apprenticeship with the Basheer Group and then went away to develop his skills. It's a wonderful sense of symmetry to have him back and working with Simon to create something new for South Australia."



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The upstairs area has its own purpose-built open kitchen with new equipment throughout.

“There is a great deal of flexibility on the first floor; patrons can have a seated restaurant experience, or a snack meal in the bar.

“Everyone asks about the future of our Stonegrill and I’m pleased to say the downstairs area retains a Stonegrill focus. It’s also available upstairs but it is ancillary to the main menu items.”

Pre-pandemic, those items included venison tartare, Goolwa pipi pappardelle and pepper berry and coffee crusted Paroo kangaroo fillet and a unique take on an old North Terrace icon - the famed Pie Floater. The menu may change depending on when SA hotels are allowed to reopen.

EMPLOYMENT

While existing ground floor staff remain in place, the freshly minted upstairs kitchen is made up of staff that have been handpicked from the Basheer’s other hotels, as well as the appointment of new staff. Once fully operational post-coronavirus, 21 new jobs will have been created.

MAIN ENTRANCE AND STAIRCASE

The accommodation closed in 1999 but the accompanying foyer and staircase were retained at that time, which ultimately acted as a barrier for people entering from North Terrace.

The hotel now has a much more open feel. A new staircase has been handcrafted and pushes deeper - without the old ‘dog leg’ - into the pub, and a lift has been installed.

At the top of the stairs is a floor to ceiling mural (see inset image).

CHALLENGES

Redeveloping a city hotel on a major thoroughfare was never going to be easy. As one tradie remarked, it was a “rip-the-guts-out renovation” and the hotel’s age – dating back to 1855 – further complicated matters.

“I’ve done a number of renovations,” said David, who is President of the AHA|SA, “but this was by far the most challenging.

“It is a very old building, it is city based and access was a major problem. We had to undertake traffic management almost every day.

“The layers of complexity that were involved in the renovation were also new to us.

“While the ground floor had seen many renovations, the first floor was quite untouched and we encountered a range of structural issues.

“For example, we discovered structural beams that no one knew existed. This caused costly overruns. We were thankful that Studio Nine assisted with design changes to mitigate the cost.”

Surveying the hotel as the furniture was put in place in early May, David said the Basheer family “went in with our eyes open that it was not going to be simple and it wasn’t, but we have an outcome that we are very proud of.

“Group General Manager, Rebecca Barnes, spearheaded the design, spending countless hours as the project manager.

“Our Hotel Manager, Tim Riemann, his management team and staff did a great job, often under duress. They went above and





beyond the call of duty. I am so appreciative and proud of their efforts. Rebecca, Tim and Assistant Manager Zoe, were the creative force behind the interiors. While David had no say in the selection process, he insists he retained “the power of veto”!

He also said he was thankful that the builder, Schiavello, “worked in such a way that we could trade continuously”.

“And the support we have received from our bankers Westpac has been outstanding. They gave us great confidence with the project. We have been Westpac customers since 1929 and the Kalangadoo days, and they have been on this journey with us.”

The gaming lounge on the ground level was the first area to reopen. It was modernised, the furniture updated and a circular TV screen from AHA|SA sponsor, Big Screen, installed as an eye-catching feature.

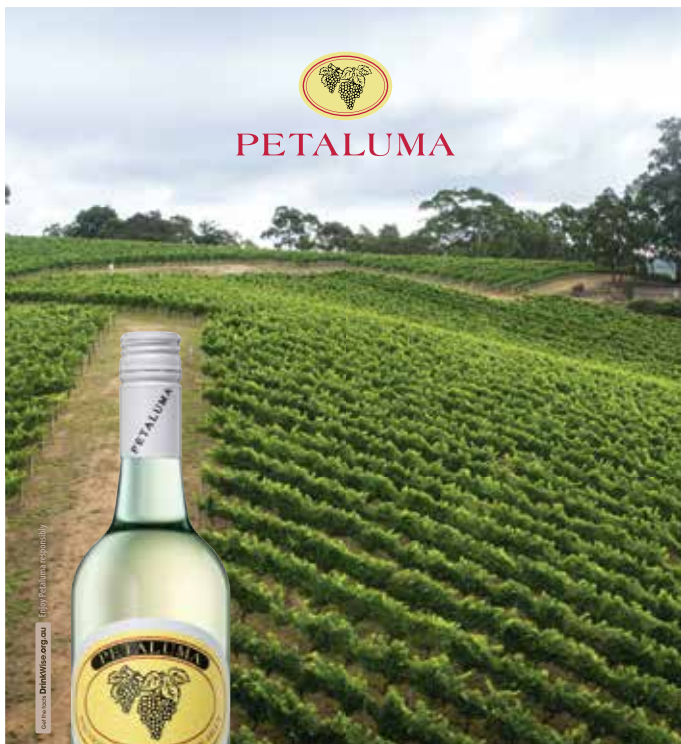
Standing by the boarded-up front entrance and musing about the date hotel lockdowns might be lifted, David said the hotel has been designed to be a city hub, seven days a week, 365 days of the year, not just on peak event days at Adelaide Oval.

“I think it is a vote of confidence in South Australia, that a family will invest \$8 million in an area where developments worth tens and hundreds of millions are taking place.

“This is a long-term investment.”

RICH HISTORY

South Australia was proclaimed in 1836 and the first pub opened in 1845. Ten years later, the Terminus Hotel opened its doors and was renamed The Strathmore Hotel in 1944. It is a site rich in history.



NEW LOOK

The staff at Accolade Wines would like to send our congratulations to **David Basheer** and his team for their ongoing excellence in the South Australian hotel industry and a heartfelt thanks for their continued support and partnership.

Petaluma White Label wines are crafted with the same Petaluma philosophy as the highly regarded Yellow Label range.

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“Soon after settlers began arriving on the mainland in 1836, they moved from Holdfast Bay (Glenelg) to the proposed site of Adelaide. They camped near the River Torrens, not far from the current northeast corner of North Terrace and West Terrace,” says Jude Elton in the History Trust of South Australia’s SA History Hub. Clearly it was a short walk to The Terminus/ Strathmore for those hard-working, non-convict colonists.

The choice of the name Strathmore came from the P&O liner, RMS Strathmore, which in turn was named after the Scottish Earl, the Earl of Strathmore.

The Basheer family bought the hotel in 1974. As the newspaper of the day reported: “One of the major architects of the big deal was 79-year-old grandmother Mrs L. Basheer!”

“Director and secretary of the group, Mr A. D. (Fred) Basheer, said today: ‘We’ve always been guided by her decisions. She’s our guiding light.’

“And Mrs Basheer, with 16 grandchildren, said: ‘We bought The Strathmore to give strength to the future of my children and their children.’”

David recalled: “My grandmother was walking with my dad and uncle Max in early 1972 and as they passed The Strathmore, she said ‘I think we should buy this hotel. Real estate next to a railway station is always a sound investment’. They explained to her that things in the city aren’t quite that simple and you can’t just make decisions like that. About two or three weeks later, we owned the hotel. They were just country people who had a crack in the city.”

In those days, the western end of the balcony was a breakfast room for house guests. These included many country people and

conductors from The Overland, who finished their shift at what was once Adelaide’s main railway station and simply walked across North Terrace to their lodgings. The height of buildings on North Terrace was still so low that people on the balcony could see the scoreboard at Adelaide Oval.

RUPERT MURDOCH AND PREMIERS PULLING BEERS

Next door to The Strathmore Hotel are the buildings that once housed The News and Sunday Mail, the start of Rupert Murdoch’s media empire.

Journalists in those times were not shy of a drink, so much so that a direct telephone line was installed between the pub and the newsroom. Compositors drank in the front bar, journalists in the saloon bar and the sales staff, drank in the lounge bar.

“The quietest day of the year was News Corp’s annual general meeting,” said David. “When Rupert Murdoch was in town, there wasn’t a single employee in the pub. The next time he’s in town I should probably shout him a beer. I’m sure we owe him a few!”

Each Christmas, journalists held their Wood Duck Awards at The Strathmore, to celebrate the greatest media clangers of the year. The State Premiers would always attend, as would the Leader of the Opposition. Both would roll up their sleeves and pull beers behind the bar, much to the delight of the media throng.

The Strathmore is also famous for putting on free beer (supplied by the three main brewers) for guests after the AHA|SA President’s Christmas Lunch. Now that David is the President, as his father was in earlier times, that tradition looks set to continue for a long time to come.

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Scott's Spot: Staying Strong During the Fight of Our Lives

Let's not sugar-coat our current circumstances – it's bloody tough owning a pub in 2020.

Yet having said that, I'm in the fortunate position to speak with dozens of publicans each week and the overwhelming theme that shines through is your individual and collective resilience. It is remarkable – and quite frankly, it is humbling.

As I write this in early May, members are being incredibly innovative in generating new flows of revenue and keeping up their profile in the community. For example, next week is Mother's Day and many are putting together gift hampers and special meal packages to sell through their bottle shops.

What I see is a true fighting spirit. Yet what I sense is the frustration. Like many businesses, there is great uncertainty and a common desire for a roadmap and dates to work toward.

Another thing that has impressed me has been the respect that members have shown to AHAJSA staff when they have called us, often under extreme duress. In the early days when governments were forced to make decisions on the run, there was a lot of confusion. We didn't always have the answers.

Members had nobody to blame for COVID-19 and it would be understandable for their frustration to come pouring out as anger when they rang us for advice.

But this wasn't – and still isn't - the case.

It's testament to the nature of people who are attracted to hospitality. Terms I can think of are "people's people", "optimists" and "resilient".

My advice is to gather as much information as you can and apply for every grant or assistance package you can. If I haven't spoken to you yet, I promise that I will soon. In the meantime, here are two stories from happier times when pubs were filled with people and I could talk to you all face to face. Let's hope we return to those times soon.



It seems a long time ago but the year started with regional meetings at Ian's **Western in Port Augusta** and the **Bridgeway Hotel**. A massive thanks to both venues.

We had in excess of 60 attendees in Port Augusta and I'd like to extend a thank you to our members and corporate partners for this impressive turnout.

The metro meeting at the Bridgeway was also a huge success with more than 110 members and corporate partners and approximately 70 hoteliers attending the meeting. We trialed, for the first time, an afternoon meeting with our partners enjoying the renovated sports bar/beer garden. Based on this fabulous turnout, we will retain the 2pm timeslot and cocktail food style function moving forward for the metropolitan meetings.

After the meeting in Port Augusta, I had the pleasure to travel up through the beautiful Finders Ranges and spend a night at the **Marree Hotel**. I had a wonderful evening hosted by Joe along with Jess and Kayleigh. We had a great night chatting and drinking with a Victorian couple travelling around Australia for 12 months. I finished off with a visit to the MCG the next morning. Here are a few snaps.



Joe, Jess and Kayleigh, Marree Hotel.



Marree Hotel locals.



Marree Hotel.



Maryanne, Angela and Michelle, the Bellum Hotel.

Thank you to those who are sharing their good news stories with me. One I would like to share in this article is another positive story that was sent from the **Bellum Hotel**. A reflection of the women that work in this industry with an abundance of resilience and can-do attitude. This hotel is owned by the Brian Morris Hotel Group. Thanks to Director Michelle Morris for the content.

In August 2016, the owner had to take over the hotel because the customer base was dwindling and business was going under. Inheriting debt, a venue requiring extensive maintenance and a hotel with no customers presented a challenge.

Since August 2016, the hotel has been managed by three women – Maryanne Aikenhead (Hotel Manager), Angela Wheaton (Accountant) and Michelle. Maryanne is on-site, and Angela and Michelle work remotely from Adelaide.

Maryanne has the responsibility for the day-to-day running of the hotel. Michelle has the overall responsibility for legal requirements, including WHS, food safety, liquor and gaming licensing, HR and

marketing. Angela is responsible for all financial aspects, including the payment of invoices and staff wages, POS and accounting for the gaming machines.

Angela and Michelle travel to the hotel every three months to work on site. It is a unique set up that works well because they are a dynamic team; strong and enthusiastic women who enjoy their work and have fun together. The locals are always happy to see them, and they really enjoy their company.

It has been a real challenge bringing the hotel back onto the Limestone Coast map, and encouraging the locals to return to the pub. When they first took over there were very few to no customers, and the days were long and very quiet. Three years later, the locals have returned and they are slowly re-building the pub's relationship with the people in Mount Gambier.

Over the last year they have worked hard to provide new events to their patrons. They have implemented and will continue to implement multiple events involving partnerships with the local community, including festival participation, kids disco, old timers cabaret lunch, quiz night and participating in SALA. Fundraising efforts have been rewarding, resulting in the money they raised going to a program that pays for underprivileged children in the community to participate in extra-curricular sport.

Finally, congratulations to the **Earl of Aberdeen** who won the membership prize draw. They will receive \$3,000 worth of goods from our corporate partners.

Until next time, cheers.



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AFTER COVID-19: LESSONS FROM THE GFC

When the lockdowns are lifted, few hotels expect that the economy will quickly “snap back to normal”. It makes good business sense to be using this time to prepare strategies for ‘life after COVID-19’ and how you will maximise revenue and profit margins as you start trading again.



What to Do in an Economic Downturn

BY SHERYL E. KIMES PH.D. OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY HOTEL

“What should we do?” is a common question that business owners and managers ask in the face of a downturn, such as the coronavirus-induced downturn that is rapidly developing.

History provides a great guide and an excellent research piece was written during the global financial crisis by Sheryl E. Kimes Ph.D. of Cornell University Hotel. Entitled Revenue Management in an Economic Downturn, it provides a wealth of advice, as follows:

WHAT SHOULD HOTELS DO?

Given revenue managers’ concern about pricing-related issues, let’s examine how hotels can manage rates during an economic downturn. Even before the current recession, this topic provoked a variety of articles and books. I have synthesised the findings of these studies with the goal of developing a concrete set of guidelines that can help hotel managers navigate through a price war.

AN EYE ON THE COMPETITION

One key approach is to maintain your price positioning relative to your competitive set. A series of studies recommend that you keep your ADR near or above the average of your competitive set. These studies have found that hotels with an ADR substantially lower than that of their competitive set, have a comparatively inferior RevPAR performance. This relationship has been shown to hold true across all hotel market levels. For example, in the luxury market, hotels that have an ADR that is higher than their competitive set have the same or slightly lower occupancies, but have a 8-to-14-percent higher RevPAR than their competitive set.

Conversely, hotels that have a lower ADR than their competitive set have about the same or slightly higher occupancy levels, but report RevPARs that are 3-to-9-percent lower than their competitive set. With the idea of an average rate in mind, one approach in a down market is to avoid offering across-the-board price cuts, but to instead focus rate adjustments on particular market segments and distribution channels. Faced with a price war, you should assess three factors: (1) your current and potential guests, (2) your hotel and your competitors, and (3) your distribution channels.

YOUR CUSTOMERS

Customer issues that need to be assessed are the price sensitivity of certain market segments and the possibility of attracting different consumer segments if new rates are offered. In that context, targeted rate reductions should be protected by rate fences to aim at specific, price-sensitive market segments, but to prevent customers who are willing to pay more from availing themselves of reduced rates. In addition, the hotel

should identify other potential market segments which might be attracted by a specific rate category and determine whether it is a market segment that fits in with the hotel image.

YOUR HOTEL AND YOUR COMPETITION

Discounts are affected by the hotel’s cost structure, capabilities, and strategic positioning. Hotels with a lower cost structure than their competition can more profitably offer discounts since they may be able to withstand the reduced margins. In addition, the type of hotel matters when one is setting rates. Luxury or upscale properties should exercise great care with rate manipulations because of the potential for damage to the hotel’s long-term image. Conversely, budget or economy hotels may not be as affected by a price war because they may benefit from customers trading down from more upscale hotels. In that case, the economy hotels’ reduced prices could reinforce their image of offering better value.

The same analysis should be conducted for your competition so as to gauge their potential response to a price war and to determine their strengths and vulnerabilities.

YOUR DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS

In addition, the hotel’s distribution channels should be assessed to determine which ones are most effective at delivering business. Hoteliers should determine whether the volume sold would increase if the commission percentage were increased. Actual room rates can be obscured by using opaque distribution channels and those that offer packages in which rooms are bundled with other services such as airfare and rental car.

SOME POSSIBLE APPROACHES

Because many hotels find themselves in a price war, I want to examine ways to compete on price without suffering long-term damage. While direct rate manipulation is almost unavoidable, you also can employ non-price competitive approaches.

NON-PRICE METHODS

The following are six non-price competitive methods: (1) reveal your strategic intentions, (2) compete on the basis of quality, (3) create strategic partnerships, (4) take advantage of your loyalty program, (5) develop additional revenue sources, and (6) develop additional market segments. Each will be discussed in more detail below.

REVEAL YOUR STRATEGIC INTENTIONS

Let your competitors know what you’re planning on doing and operate from a position of strength. If you have lower operating costs or if you have deeper reserves that will allow you to withstand a prolonged price war, let them know it.

COMPETE ON QUALITY

If you are operating in the luxury or upscale segment, you may want to emphasise the quality that your hotel delivers and perhaps even add features that add additional value to your offerings (such as personalised stationery, free airport pickup or fresh flowers).

Another tactic may be to highlight the performance risks associated with lower-priced hotels. For example, you could mention the lower service levels and reduced amenities that are provided by your less expensive competitors and contrast that to the superior service offering of your hotel.

CREATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Another approach is to create strategic relationships with particular distribution channels. If you give certain distribution channels a higher commission (whether travel agents or third-party intermediaries), they may be willing to deflect a higher proportion of their business to you. Your costs would go up, but you would not need to cut rates.

FOCUS YOUR LOYALTY PROGRAM

Reduced demand can also provide hotels with the capacity needed to reward members of their loyalty programs. The number of points needed to redeem a free night's stay can be reduced for a limited time or availability of more desirable rewards can be increased. Doing this has the following two benefits. First, it brings people into the hotel and opens the likelihood that they will spend money in other outlets. Second, it keeps loyal guests connected with the hotel.

DEVELOP ADDITIONAL REVENUE SOURCES

Full-service hotels have a variety of facilities that can be used to generate much-needed revenue. While some of these facilities (most notably, food and beverage) have lower profit margins than rooms, they can still provide additional cash which can help sustain the hotel during low demand periods. Creative promotions and discounts may bring more local customers into the restaurants and recreation facilities.

DEVELOP ADDITIONAL MARKET SEGMENTS

An economic downturn is a good time to carefully examine your marketing plan and determine whether there are other small or price-sensitive market segments which can be developed for your hotel. While this can bring in additional revenue and customers for your hotel, care must be taken to ensure that the new market segments fit in well with your brand image.

PRICE-BASED METHODS

If you must enter a price war, at least do it strategically. The key is not to initiate across-the-board rate cuts but instead to either camouflage your discounted rates or target those rates at selected market segments or through certain distribution channels. There are several approaches you can take.

BUNDLE SERVICES

If you can create a package that bundles a multiple-night stay (e.g. stay two nights, get another one free) or bundle the room with other services at the hotel (e.g. spa treatment, WiFi), it will help disguise your room rates. Restaurants and cruise lines have successfully used this approach for years. Restaurants offer fixed price meals or "value meals" in which several courses are offered for one price. Cruise lines have also used bundling effectively when they package the cruise with airfare and a hotel stay before or after the cruise. Bundling makes it difficult for customers to determine the prices of the individual components.

The key to developing an effective bundle is to determine what

customers want and then deliver it in a profitable manner. Most full-service hotels' facilities are not fully used (e.g. a spa, a golf course, restaurants). By including some of the facilities with availability capacity with the room rate, the hotel does not incur a great deal of incremental cost, is able to more fully use other parts of the hotel, and has the potential to increase business in these other outlets in the future if guests decide to come back.

UNBUNDLE ROOMS

Another approach is to base your rate on only your core room product and charge additional amounts for any other services that guests might wish to use. Low-cost airlines have used this approach successfully, and many hotels use this approach for some or all of their services. By unbundling, you can offer modest base rates and allow guests to choose which additional services they would like. Although care must be taken when using this approach because of the potential for diminished customer satisfaction, unbundling is a good option for hotels that appeal to some market segments.

OFFER TARGETED RATE CUTS

Discounted rates should be offered to selected market segments. Building effective rate fences that limit the discounts to specific customer segments is key to an effective discounting strategy. By setting appropriate "rules" to qualify for a particular rate, you can encourage purchases by some market segments, while you prevent other, less price-sensitive customers from taking advantage of the lower rate (and also protect the hotel against potential cannibalisation).

The four types of rate fences are room related, transaction related, consumption related, and guest related. To be able to develop good rate fences, a hotel must know its customers well and understand what types of rate fences will be effective in attracting particular market segments. In addition, fairness and rate-parity issues must be considered.

PRICING CONCERNS

Pricing issues came to the fore in this 2009 survey of nearly 300 revenue managers from around the world. The findings reflect the pressure on rates and market share from the current economic downturn. Many hotels are reducing rates in an attempt to retain market share and attract additional customers. The results of this study are different than those of a similar study that I conducted just a year earlier, which showed that HR issues were considered to be the most important concern facing revenue managers.

While the pressure to reduce rates is understandable, hotels should exercise caution in manipulating rates because of the potential negative long-term effects on profitability and the hotel's image. This report has outlined several methods, some involving prices and some not, which hotel revenue managers can use to successfully survive the economic downturn. Summarising this issue, IHG's Jos Weejes said, "It's an amazing time to be observers. True leaders will survive. To optimise revenues in a downturn and make the decisions that have to be made, that is where the leaders will stand out."

The goal of revenue management is still the same, to maximise revenue. In the current environment, the drop in demand has made RM into a challenging proposition. Revenue managers should concentrate on the fundamentals and remember that RM is about selling the right room at the right price at the right time.

(Source: Kimes, S. E. (2009). Hotel revenue management in an economic downturn: Results from an international study [Electronic article]. Cornell Hospitality Report, 9(12), 6-17.)

What Does Regular and Systematic Mean for Casuals?

A recent decision from a Full Bench of the Fair Work Commission ('FWC') has provided further clarity around defining regular and systematic employment for casual employees for the purposes of their eligibility to access the unfair dismissal provision of the *Fair Work Act 2009* ('Fair Work Act'). In this article we examine the Full Bench decision of *Angele Chandler v Bed Bath N' Table Pty Ltd [2020] FWCFB 306* in which the Full Bench upheld Ms Angele Chandler's appeal of an earlier decision of the FWC.

BACKGROUND

Ms Angele Chandler ('Ms Chandler') was employed by Bed Bath N' Table Pty Ltd ("Bed Bath n' Table") in their Essendon store as a casual sales assistant. Her first shift at work was on the 25 June 2018 and her last shift was on 28 February 2019 (a period of 8 months and 3 days). She was dismissed from her employment on 1 March 2019¹. Three days after her dismissal Ms Chandler lodged an unfair dismissal application with the FWC.

Bed Bath n' Table objected to Ms Chandler's application on jurisdictional grounds arguing that Ms Chandler was not protected from unfair dismissal because she had not served the required minimum employment period under the Fair Work Act². The matter was determined by a hearing before Deputy President Mansini of the FWC.

MINIMUM EMPLOYMENT PERIOD

To understand the basis of the jurisdictional argument in this matter, it's firstly important to understand that for an employee to be protected from unfair dismissal, the employee must have completed at least the minimum employment period under the Fair Work Act. Section 383 of the Fair Work Act defines the minimum employment period as follows:

"The minimum employment period is:

(a) if the employer is not a small business employer – 6 months ending at the earlier of the following times:

- (i) the time when the person is given notice of the dismissal.*
- (ii) immediately before the dismissal; or*

(b) if the employer is a small business employer – one year ending at that time."

In relation to casual employees under section 384(2)(a) of the Fair Work Act, a period of service as a casual employee does not count towards the employee's period of employment unless the employment as a casual was on a **regular and systematic basis** and during the period of service as a casual employee, the employee had a **reasonable expectation of continuing employment** by the employer on a regular and systematic basis³. Bed Bath n' Table was not a small business employer for the purposes of the Fair Work Act and therefore the minimum employment period was 6 months⁴.

ORIGINAL DECISION

In determining whether Ms Chandler had served a minimum employment period, Deputy President Mansini had to take into consideration evidence provided by both parties. Bed Bath n' Table put forward evidence including Ms Chandler's fortnightly pay history, her contract of employment, position description,

Ms Chandler's signed acknowledgement of the employee handbook, and other evidence referring to the circumstances leading up to the employee's dismissal⁵. Bed Bath n' Table also submitted evidence of the days and hours worked by Ms Chandler during her period of employment⁶. Ms Chandler put forward evidence including handwritten notes of discrepancies in the work records provided by Bed Bath n' Table, as well as copies of rosters for portion of her period of employment and a summary of her wage history⁷. There were also two witnesses that gave evidence for Ms Chandler⁸. There was no dispute between the parties about the length of Ms Chandler's employment and that she was engaged as a casual employee.

Deputy President Mansini in determining her decision in the jurisdictional argument, looked at the question of whether Ms Chandler's employment was regular and systematic and whether she had a reasonable expectation of ongoing employment. The Deputy President found that Ms Chandler's employment was not regular and systematic, stating that, *"Whilst Ms Chandler worked at least 3 days each week, Annexure A shows the number of days worked each week, the days of the week worked and the duration of the shift on each occasion varied significantly such that no pattern is able to be identified."*⁹

The Deputy President also found that the wage information *"... does not assist in identifying regularity or a system of engagements..."*¹⁰.

Having found that Ms Chandler's employment was not regular and systematic the Deputy President concluded that, *"...there is no need to make a conclusion about any expectation of ongoing employment that Ms Chandler may have reasonably held during the period of her service as a casual employee."*¹¹

The Deputy President dismissed Ms Chandler's unfair dismissal application, finding that Ms Chandler was not protected from unfair dismissal because she had not served the minimum employment period.

APPEAL

Ms Chandler appealed Deputy President Mansini's decision. The appeal was heard before a Full Bench of the FWC. Ms Chandler submitted to the Full Bench that the Deputy President erred in reaching the conclusion that she was not a person protected from unfair dismissal. Ms Chandler's submissions included the fact that:

- She worked shifts according to a monthly roster in which she was required to provide indications of her availability for the month
- The roster was planned in advance for each month and hence employment was regular and systematic
- The rostering system was such that she had an expectation of ongoing employment
- The Deputy President didn't take into account her ongoing contract of employment with Bed Bath n' Table
- The records she provided demonstrated that she worked 3-4 shifts each week for 32 weeks without a break.¹²



Ms Chandler submitted that “...the grant of permission to appeal would be in the public interest because the decision affected the rights of over 1700 casual employees engaged by Bed Bath n’ Table and the decision was contrary to many previous decisions of the Commission concerning the circumstances in which casual employees could be characterised as working on a regular and systematic basis.”¹³

Bed Bath n’ Table submissions included the fact that:

- Ms Chandler had not demonstrated that it would be in the public interest to grant permission to appeal
- The Deputy President considered Ms Chandler’s evidence before making her decision
- Ms Chandler had not demonstrated any significant error of fact
- In finding that Ms Chandler’s employment was not regular or systematic, there was no need for the Deputy President to conclude whether Ms Chandler had an expectation of ongoing employment.¹⁴

The Full Bench determined that there was appealable error in Deputy President Mansini’s decision and therefore determined that the appeal should be upheld and the original decision quashed.

The Full Bench determined that one of the areas of appealable error was on account of the fact that the Deputy President had applied the incorrect approach to the application of section 384(2)(a) of the Fair Work Act to the facts of the case. The Bench stated that:

“... the Deputy President proceeded on the basis that it was necessary to identify a consistent pattern of engagement in the number of days worked each week, the days of the week worked and the duration of each shift in order to be able to conclude that the employment was regular and systematic. We do not consider this to be the correct approach.”¹⁵

The Bench determined that the degree of regularity in the pattern of hours worked by Ms Chandler was only one of a number of considerations that the Deputy President should have made in her analysis of the facts.¹⁶

The Bench in their decision then sought to re-determine the question of “...whether Ms Chandler is a person protected from unfair dismissal based on the evidence that was before the Deputy President.”¹⁷

The Bench determined that based on the evidence, Ms Chandler’s employment was in fact regular and systematic and there was a reasonable expectation of continuing employment.

Their finding that Ms Chandler was regular and systematic was on the basis of the data provided in relation to her hours of work. Ms Chandler had worked every week and in each of those 30 weeks she worked for at least 3 to 4 shifts per week.¹⁸

The Bench also found that Ms Chandler had a reasonable expectation of work because she worked pursuant to an ongoing contract of employment, she appeared on a regular monthly roster that was posted in advance, and she worked a number of shifts each week on a regular basis.¹⁹

KEY TAKE OUTS

One of the important take outs for employers from this decision is that even though a casual employee’s hours and days of work may vary each week, a casual can still be determined as “regular and systematic” by virtue of the fact that they are simply engaged to work each week.

For employer’s that are not small businesses under the Fair Work Act, they need to give significant consideration to the performance of an employee (including casuals) within the minimum employment period (first 6 months of employment). The termination of employment of a regular and systematic casual employee outside the first 6 months of employment needs to be carefully considered as the employee will have the potential of being able to access the unfair dismissal provisions under the Fair Work Act.

¹[2019] FWC 6448 at [3], ²See sections 382, 383 & 384 of the Fair Work Act, ³See s 384(2)(a) of Fair Work Act 2009, ⁴[2019] FWC 6448 at [10], ⁵Ibid at [15]-[16], ⁶Ibid at [13], ⁷Ibid at [13]-[15], ⁸Ibid at [17], ⁹Ibid at [19], ¹⁰Ibid at [20], ¹¹Ibid at [22], ¹²[2020] FWCFB 306 at [8], ¹³Ibid at [9], ¹⁴Ibid at [10], ¹⁵Ibid at [11], ¹⁶Ibid at [14], ¹⁷Ibid at [17], ¹⁸Ibid at [18], ¹⁹Ibid at [20]

Mary-Lou Corcoran

AURORA OZONE HOTEL, KANGAROO ISLAND



WHAT IS THE TITLE OF YOUR POSITION?

General Manager – Aurora Ozone Hotel.

WHAT HOTEL/S DO YOU MANAGE?

I have been at the Aurora Ozone Hotel on Kangaroo Island for two years and, prior to that, I was managing the Aurora Alice Springs Hotel for two years.

HOW DID YOU ENTER THE HOTEL INDUSTRY AND WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR CAREER PATH? At the age of 18 I entered the fast paced world of casinos - I had spent 15 years in the casino industry travelling Australia and beyond (Alice Springs, Darwin, Adelaide, Singapore and Jakarta – cruise ships, Vanuatu, Townsville, Perth, Melbourne, New Zealand – Auckland Casino, Sydney). This was at a stage when casinos were opening across all of the states, and I advanced in to management roles very early in my career. In 2001, I moved back to SA and based myself in beautiful Victor Harbor. During this time I had three years in small business, raised my young family (three children) and was then elected Mayor of the City of Victor Harbor on a four-year term. On completion of this term, I was encouraged to move to Adelaide and work as a Chief of Staff for the then Premier, Mike Rann. After 3.5 years I returned to Victor Harbor and commenced work at McCracken Country Club as Assistant Manager, working with 1834 Hotels. I missed the high energy environment of hospitality and, after being involved in government for so many years, I found it to be very rewarding in ensuring guests were catered for. I was then offered the role in Alice Springs as General Manager of Aurora Alice Springs, followed by the role in Kangaroo Island for the same company, Aurora Ozone Hotel.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FAMILY CONNECTIONS IN THE HOTEL TRADE? All of my family drink in hotels, if that is a connection! We have always had a strong tie to the hotel industry – my father being the former Premier of SA was instrumental in ridding the state of the 6pm swill with Don Dunstan. Some of my father's family also worked in hotels – my uncle Gerald had the Tantanoola Hotel in the 50's, John Corcoran had the Aberdeen Hotel in the 60's, followed by the Tantanoola Hotel in the early 70's. My godparents, Phil and Joan Ryan, had the Sussex Hotel in Walkerville for 20-odd years and my uncle Mike had the Geraldton Hotel in WA for the same amount of time.

WHAT DOES YOUR POSITION ENTAIL? Everything – accommodation / gaming / food and beverage / cellars / accounting / promotions / marketing / events and conferencing / staff management / recruitment / training and development / reporting / forecasting / guest service.

WHAT ASPECT OF THIS POSITION IS YOUR FAVOURITE?

The location and product is amazing and definitely the people I meet from interstate and overseas.

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE PART OF THIS ROLE?

Nothing to note.

APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY STAFF DO YOU MANAGE?

High season is up to 70 staff, low season is approximately 55 staff, 15 of those are on salary/full time, five are part time and the remainder are casual employees.

WHO HAVE YOUR MENTORS BEEN OVER THE YEARS?

My father and mother, and Andrew Bullock from 1834 Hotels.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE LOOKING TO WORK THEIR WAY UP THE HOTEL BUSINESS LADDER?

Excellent career options with opportunities to advance in many different departments within the industry. There are so many opportunities to travel and work in a career that can be so rewarding when it comes to ensuring people are enjoying their valuable holiday time and leisure.

WHAT DOES YOUR FUTURE LOOK LIKE? WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS?

I would like to think that my future looks bright. I have a big job ahead of me in the next couple of years in assisting with the rebuild of the Kangaroo Island tourism market and of the Island itself after the recent devastating fires. We have now also been challenged with the coronavirus, an unprecedented situation experienced by hotels and all businesses across the country and the world. There is uncertainty in the near future regarding when we will be able to trade again, however, I believe the biggest challenge will be re-establishing the workforce, skill levels and motivation of the staff to re-engage with the hotel and the community. As long as I am kept busy and challenged in my role, my future, along with my team's future, is promising.

WHAT MAKES YOUR HOSPITALITY OFFERING DIFFERENT FROM OTHER VENUES?

Everyday we get to share the most amazing location with so many different people from around Australia and the world, and then they venture out of the hotel and get to experience the natural beauty and iconic structure of Kangaroo Island. One of the most important offerings we have is "Island Time" - nice and relaxed.

DO YOU HAVE RENOVATION PLANS FOR THE HOTEL/S IN YOUR GROUP?

Yes, we always have something we are renovating or updating, however many of our plans for 2020 have been placed on hold due to the uncertainty of the current market after the bushfires and the coronavirus. Over 75% of our international tours have been cancelled and we are just working on rebuilding the market by targeting the conference market with Adelaide Convention Bureau.

Hotels Respond to Lockdowns with Ingenuity



Feathers Hotel



Commercial Hotel Strathalbyn



Maylands Hotel

South Australian hotels have responded ingeniously to the shutdown in a bid to retain links with customers and add new revenue streams.

Many have leveraged their ability to maintain their drive-through bottle shops, while others have opened “hole in the wall” outlets to serve patrons.

Here are some of the ways pubs and bars are keeping customers happy in SA and around Australia:

- Amazing takeaway food –everything from schnitzels and fish and chips to classic French casseroles.
- Fast food, bakery products and “pizza in four minutes” for people using the drive-through.
- Opening an exterior window to sell coffee, snacks and lunches.
- Moving signage to prominent positions and updating the messages. For example, chalk boards moved from inside to outside walls so it can be seen by passing traffic and new messages on A-frame and balcony signs.
- Recognising that people in lockdown are seeking variety, uploading menu changes and specials to their website each day.
- For the health conscious, tap ‘n’ go food means no cash changes hands, which helps reduce the spread of germs.
- Further to this, prepaid meals so that all that is required is picking up the meal itself.
- Providing accommodation to suit the specific needs of health workers who are worried about taking infections into their homes. This includes best practice sanitation and around the clock room service to cater for shift-workers.
- Selling products such as steak for customers to cook at home.
- Free coffee and meals for health workers; makes a loss, but shows the true “heart and soul” of the hotel community.
- Offering growlers of beer.
- Selling hampers and groceries.
- Selling bags of coffee from unused stock.
- Selling hand sanitiser.
- Selling frozen meals.
- Combining takeaway meals and drinks into a special package.
- Pre-order online for the pickup of meals.
- Drinks delivered to your door. One bar has taken this a step further, with freshly shaken cocktails, home delivered within an hour.
- Selling kegs of beer and espresso martinis to nearby residents to “help through the home isolation”.
- Online mixology and cooking classes.
- The launch of a virtual bar, with news, quizzes, music and community. This has been successful in the UK.
- Adding UberEATS for food delivery. While some operators have been unhappy with the margins in the past, it allows them to keep trading – and UberEATS is a very popular platform. Alternative platforms are Bopple, Your Local and Deliveroo.

SEND YOUR STORY TO THE AHA|SA

The AHA|SA would like to hear from members that are continuing to trade – to capture the resilience, innovation, positivity and community spirit of the industry!

It’s also an opportunity to show the community that many SA hotels are still open for business and still need the community’s support – and thank those that are already doing so.

Please send a short video and/or an image of you or your staff with a short message:

- Name of venue and name of person – very important!
- How has your business adapted? How have you been trading?
- How are you feeling at this time?
- How have you, your staff, your customers shown their support?
- A message of thanks to the community for their support during this time.
- A simple thank you message or photo is good too! Give the community a thumbs up for their support!

Please email this information to Lucy or Katherine at the AHA|SA:

Lucy Randall lrandall@ahasa.asn.au
Katherine Taylor ktaylor@ahasa.asn.au



The Naracoorte Caveman - Jack Jennings

Ravo's Bush Telegraph ventured down to the south-east of South Australia and called in on an old mate, Jack Jennings, my host of the Bushman's Arms Hotel at Naracoorte. Of course, this was the original name of the pub when it first opened in 1861, but for some reason was changed after only one year to the Commercial Hotel. The name, having been changed back now, does seem appropriate though, as many pubs in Australia have been, and are, called the Commercial. Only one other, I understand in Queensland, is called the Bushman's Arms. I guess it stands to reason that a lot of locals still call it the Commercial.



Jack Jennings' hotel story goes back to around 1984, when he managed the Caledonian Hotel (Cally) on the corner of O'Connell Street, North Adelaide for 15 years.

It was in 1984, when he attended a Sip'n Save conference in Auckland, New Zealand, that he met up with Peter Brien (Alberton Hotel) and struck up a long-term friendship and ultimately partnership in hotel ownership. They have both been staunch and loyal one-eyed barrackers of the Port Magpies and Port Power, to the extent that Peter would say the Cally Hotel was not in fact in North Adelaide, but in Port Adelaide East! You've got to love them, don't you - the Port barrackers! Jack was also the North Adelaide AHA/SA Councillor, representing hoteliers in that jurisdiction for a few years. He has always been fully supported by his partner in life, Rhonda Brown. The Bush Telegraph understands Jack asked her to marry him some 39 years ago, when she said no, and Jack has been so busy since that he hasn't got back to asking her again! Careful Jack, it's a leap year.

After leaving the Cally, Jack was asked to run his current pub in Naracoorte for a short three-month period, which turned into a three-year stint. In 2004, the owners sold the lease to Jack and Peter and the pair took up the opportunity to purchase the freehold in 2014. This equates to a 16-year involvement to date and ongoing for the pair as lessees and owners.

The Bushman's Arms has been wholly renovated in this time. Jack said the gaming was placed in the old dining room, but this reduced the dining capacity to only 30 people, so they chose to tastefully renovate the old, adjacent stables to house the gaming with a bar. This returned the old dining room area to cater for larger numbers of customers. The renovated, self-contained accommodation is also a great asset and enables shearing groups who annually come over from New Zealand for work to stay, along with golfing parties and Naracoorte Racing Club patrons, when the local races and cup events take place. I must say, the uniquely-renovated front bar is a classic and one of the best, old-style atmosphere bars in the whole south-east area - great to see!

Jack remains, similar to many publicans in country towns, a local ambassador for visitors: highlighting the World Heritage tourist caves, other tourist features like the MiniJumbuk woollen goods and regular, local and major sporting events. Jack assures me he is a local golf club regular, but a long-suffering battling golfer at that, currently attempting to improve his driving off the tee box. Great game, golf. To anyone venturing down to the Limestone Coast in the south-east, drop in and have a beer with the Naracoorte Caveman at the Bushman's Arms - a terrific bloke.

CONGRATULATIONS JENNY HURLEY, AM

Jenny Hurley has been involved in numerous charitable, community and hospital fundraising events for many years, and it was truly appropriate that she was honoured on Australia Day as a recipient of a member of the Order of Australia (AM) award in recognition of her contribution to the community. To acknowledge this fantastic achievement, a gathering of family and friends took place at the very impressively-renovated Marion Hotel. Congratulatory speeches were made to a beaming Jenny who responded in front of her growing family contingent and proud husband, Peter. Peter, of course, received a similar award - an AO some years ago now. It is pretty unique, I think, that a husband and wife have both now been recognised for outstanding contributions to the Australian community. Well done Jenny Hurley!

KANGAROO ISLAND VISIT

I recently attended the Kangaroo Island Racing Cup and spent a few days on the Island with family and friends. The fire cost to the community has been well-documented in many ways and will truly take years to recover. Well done to all hotel people who have been raising money to assist those impacted. I was saddened to see the destruction firsthand, but was pleased to visit the Parndana Hotel and enjoy a beer in Blockers Bar with a few of the locals. The community, I am sure, will bounce back in time with everyone's support.



Our Purpose - To provide the hotel industry the capacity to respond to community concerns related to the harm associated with gambling by contributing to early intervention and support for problem gamblers and their families.

Our Goal - A compliant and proactive hotel industry that works with regulators, gambling help services, and players to limit the harm caused by gambling.

Gaming Care is the hotels responsible gambling early intervention agency, and is an initiative of the AHA|SA. Gaming Care's role to assist venues to minimise the harm caused by problematic gambling behaviour in all South Australian hotels with gaming machines by working directly with venue staff, Gambling Help Services, other relevant organisations and stakeholders.

SOME OF OUR DUTIES INCLUDE:

- ✓ Assisting hotel staff in the early identification and support of patrons and staff who may be experiencing difficulty with their gaming behaviour.
- ✓ Developing and promoting initiatives, programs and policies designed to facilitate the early identification of problematic gambling behaviour.
- ✓ Assisting hotel staff in providing responsible gambling service, on or with the capacity to influence the service, by training in responsible service of gambling. This helps reduce harm through the creation of a responsible gambling culture within the venue.

Gaming Care has developed a Responsible Gambling Document for venues which details the ways in which staff training and measures for intervention with problem gamblers are implemented, and the roles of staff in the implementation of the code.

For any assistance or support please contact your local Gaming Care Officer, or our office for information on how Gaming Care can assist your venue.

Gaming CARE | The Hotels Responsible Gambling Early Intervention Agency

T: 08 8100 2499 **F:** 08 8232 4979

E: INFO@GAMINGCARE.ORG.AU

4TH FLOOR AHA|SA HOUSE
60 HINDMARSH SQUARE, ADELAIDE SA 5000

A Foothold Amidst COVID-19 Uncertainty

The hotel industry is facing its greatest challenge in living memory, due to the effects of coronavirus (COVID-19). With the resultant widespread shutdown of hospitality establishments, many venue operators have been left counting the costs and wondering what the future holds.

While some businesses have already pivoted their operating model to offer takeaway or online ordering as a temporary solution, the key driver behind this model is more likely to revolve around keeping your people in jobs as opposed to a profit centre for the business. Whilst it is likely to help generate some revenue in an otherwise bleak operating landscape, it is unlikely to provide enough cash to tie you over for any great length of time.

Fortunately, we are in many ways lucky to live in Australia, where we have a government willing and able to step in and lend a hand through these most trying of times. There are several options available to venue operators that you should consider jumping on as soon as possible, to help you get back on both feet once the worst of the virus impacts has passed by.

To help, we've set up a **Perks COVID-19 Resource Hub**, which is being updated throughout the day. You don't need to be a client of ours or pay to access – the information has been made readily available to support the communities around us. You can visit the Hub at www.perks.com.au/covid19

GET ON THE FRONT FOOT WITH YOUR LANDLORD

One of the first points of call for publicans struggling as a result of COVID-19 should be to open up a dialogue with your landlord about rent relief for the period of the shutdown.

In March, the Prime Minister announced a moratorium on evictions for six months for commercial and residential tenants. In making the announcement, he also

noted that both tenants and landlords should sit down and work together to come up with an arrangement to get through this period.

Ultimately, your interests and those of your landlord are intertwined, and negotiating a deal for the interim may assist you in getting back on your feet sooner, while also ensuring that your landlord is not faced with an empty venue and a longer term loss of income once the worst of the virus has passed.

Ideally, you will want to push for a rent holiday so that you are not faced with a backlog of bills once things return to normal. A rent holiday basically excuses the tenant from paying rent for a specified period, with no increase in payment or late fees incurred. However, in some cases, rent deferment may be the next viable option – this is where the unpaid rent amassed over the agreed period is split up into the remaining term payments for a higher rent bill after the grace period.

For those operating a bottle shop that is still generating revenue, you may encounter some pushback from your landlord. In these circumstances, it is worth noting that in valuations, a hotel valuer applies a benchmark 3% to 5% against the bottle shop turnover to calculate the applicable rent for that section of the hotel. Therefore, a hotel with a bottle shop turnover of say \$140,000 per month should be looking at paying \$4,200 (3%) in rent per month for that section of the hotel that is continuing to operate.

For those hotels that are also operating a takeaway food operation the base percentage once again is 3%. If the hotel therefore has a takeaway food offering with a monthly turnover of say \$50,000 then the rent on this would equate to \$1,500 per month for this section of the hotel.

So combined, if you operated both the bottle shop and takeaway food in this

example you would look to negotiate rent of \$5,700 per month during the Hotel shut down. Ultimately, it will come down to what you can reasonably negotiate with your landlord.

“You don't need to be a client of ours or pay to access our COVID-19 Hub - the information has been made readily available to support our communities...”

We are still awaiting the Federal and State Governments to announce further guidance on a landlord-tenant stimulus package, but they have already advised that there will be state tax concessions and the ability for landlords to defer bank debt repayments for loans up to \$10m for a period of 6 months. Landlords should therefore have the flexibility to share the pain with their tenants during these tough times.

GET ON THE FRONT FOOT WITH YOUR BANK

With the backing of the Federal Government, Australia's banks have also come to the table to aid small and medium-sized businesses feeling the pinch from COVID-19 by offering eligible applicants access to an unsecured three-year loan of up to \$250,000.

The loans operate like a line of credit facility, with money available on an as needed basis and repayments are interest-free for the first six months, interest-only in the following six months, with principal



Pat Hodby

Pat Hodby and Tom Paine are Directors at Perks, South Australia's leading privately-owned accounting and private wealth firm. They are the driving force behind the Perks Hospitality specialisation team and have both provided key advisory and operational support to a number of owner-operators in the sector, ranging from the structuring of their business, to back-of-house bookkeeping, to the streamlining and digitization of their support systems. Pat is also an active industry advocate for publicans and the hospitality industry and owns a successful pub in the Adelaide Hills.



Tom Paine

Charity Golf Day Scores \$2.7 Million for SA Kids in Need

and interest payments over the final two years of the loan.

For those businesses with outstanding loans, the majority of lenders are allowing eligible business to either convert principal and interest (P&I) facilities to interest-only for up to six months or defer P&I repayments on your business, asset finance or equipment loans for up to six months.

Many hospitality venues that would have been considered strong operators prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, are likely to fall within the eligibility criteria for financial assistance. You should speak with your banks or Broker as a matter of priority to understand what is on offer and work through the details.

At the time of writing this article, hospitality industry-specific measures by the banks are as yet to be put in place, but we have reason to believe these may be coming down the pipeline.

UTILISE OTHER GOVERNMENT SUPPORT MEASURES

Among the raft of stimulus measures introduced by the Federal Government to alleviate the COVID-19 impacts are the Job Keeper payments, which are designed to support businesses to maintain employment of their staff.

For hotels that have seen their turnover reduced by more than 30% relative to a comparable period (of at least one month) in 2019, you may be eligible for a \$1500 per-fortnight payment for each eligible employee. Full details and eligibility criteria are available on the Australian Taxation Office website: <https://www.ato.gov.au/general/gen/JobKeeper-payment/>

No doubt, there are still many challenges ahead for South Australia's hotel industry and the impacts of the virus will be felt for some time yet. However, as we work through this unprecedented situation, publicans should be buoyed by the fact they aren't alone. If there is one thing we know about our industry - we're all in this together and we certainly won't go down without a fight.

The Liquor Industry Golf Club holds an annual golf day in February each year to support children's charities here in South Australia.

This year it was held on Monday 3 February at Grange Golf Club across both East and West courses. There were 72 teams who participated and enjoyed an exceptional round of Ambrose golf. The day raised in excess of \$70,000 again for children's charities.

The funds kept in trust at BankSA from 2019's event, were distributed to assist their vital services from providing money for running costs at children's camps for Canteen, United for Kids via Advertiser Foundation for Childhood Cancer SA upgrades to their holiday home Bradley's Place, or even Life Education SA programs such as drug, alcohol and cyber-safety providing learning devices to educate children to ensure their choices in life are the right ones.

Other recipients this year were Variety SA, Starlight Foundation, Autism SA, Blind Sporting Council-EyePlaySport and Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

The charity day is a key event on the hospitality golf calendar. It is attended by many hospitality industry businesses, providers and a gang of hoteliers who also volunteer their help on the day.

We would like to acknowledge the many sponsors – from BankSA and Grange Golf Club to Holco Food Services, West End, Coopers, Coca-Cola, CUB, Asahi and many other allied liquor industry providers.

Rob Gillies, Chair of the LIGC Charity Day committee, knows that the day certainly has a lot of planning behind it, but more so the outcome for the children who receive many vital services to enhance their quality of life.

"We work hard as a volunteer committee with one main aim and that is that we want to help every child to have the opportunity to receive the best services, especially if these children are disadvantaged by both physical and emotional adversity," Rob said.

Another great day is planned for 2021 when we return to Grange Golf Club on Monday 8 February.

Ainsworth Launches New A-Star Cabinet!

Ainsworth Game Technology has released the impressive new A-STAR cabinet with the all new Pan Chang brand which includes two exciting titles. The A-STAR flaunts an elegant design that has been meticulously crafted into a dual screen format including dynamic LED lighting, and a state-of-the-art LCD touchscreen button deck.

Ainsworth has a line-up of a range of core and standalone progressive titles as well as link progressives. Pan Chang, a Chinese traditional decorative knot, is also the Buddhist conception of continuity and the original of all things, 'Endless Fortune' and 'Long & Happy Life' are two exhilarating titles bound to keep players on the edge of their seats with the Pan Chang 'Lantern Feature'.

If you haven't had the chance to check out the all new A-STAR give your local Sales Representative a call!



Vale John Schneebeichler

The AHAISA is deeply saddened by the news of the passing of friend and fellow John Schneebeichler. John was with Macmont Gaming for many years, and was a well respected and endeared figure of the SA hotel industry who will be greatly missed. Our deepest condolences to his family.

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HOTEL INDUSTRY SUPPORTER

Clelands Lawyers

Vintek

HOTEL	LOCATION	DATE GRANTED	NEW LICENSEE
Thevenard Hotel	Thevenard	28.01.20	Jeff Denton Nominees Pty Ltd
Georgetown Hotel	Georgetown	05.02.20	Woolshed Flat Pty Ltd
Marryatville Hotel	Marryatville	25.02.20	Marryatville Hotel (SA) Pty Ltd

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- Koolunga Hotel
- Stockwell Hotel
- Thevenard Hotel
- Victory Hotel



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AUSTRALIAN LIQUOR MARKETERS PTY. LTD.

We are thinking of our SA hospitality family through these challenging times and look forward to when our thriving industry is back connecting our communities.

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We're Here for You

Our industry faces an unprecedented challenge in COVID-19. We've developed a central Resource Hub to help our communities navigate the sea of information and find the critical resources that can help them to weather this storm. The Hub is for everyone - it's free and you don't need to sign up for anything to access it.

perks.com.au/covid19
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