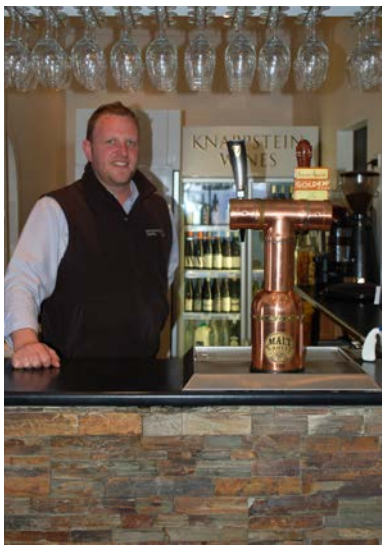
2023

SEVENHILL HOTEL

Paul & Kate
Celebrating 10 years

2013

The new family behind the Sevenhill Hotel, (left) Kate Shadiac and Paul Longbottom with their children Molly (9 months) and Oscar (3).



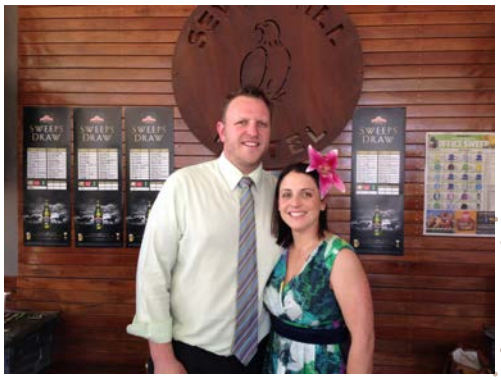
New managers of the Sevenhill Hotel Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac with their children Oscar and Molly.

ESCAPE TO THE COUNTRY

10 years ago, married couple Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac were searching for their new venture. Moving to the country was on their bucket list so when the historic Sevenhill Hotel came up for sale they knew this was going to be the next chapter in their lives. Paul and Kate both had experience in hotels but running their own business was the new challenge. They packed up their city life and, with two young children, moved to the Clare Valley in August 2013.

Their first day as publicans was Wednesday August 28. An early initiative by the new publicans was to increase their engagement with the community, by reverting to 7-day trading and abolishing Monday-Tuesday closures.

These interactions with both locals and tourists turned the spotlight on them with an acknowledgement appearing in the local paper. “Recognising that a pub cannot take its customers for granted, Paul said he will continue to maintain a strong focus on excellent food and customer service”.
(Northern Argus Newspaper 25/9/13)



A significant part of community involvement comes with supporting fundraising events. In this first year, the Hotel hosted the Sevenhill Country Women’s Association (CWA) Melbourne Cup luncheon. This function raised over $4000. Money raised went towards a new Richardson Park Playspace at Sevenhill. This was recognised in the AHA|SA Hotel Care Magazine 2013.

DELVING INTO HISTORY

Current publicans of Sevenhill Hotel, Kate Shadlac and Paul Longbottom.

2014

With the new year came new endeavours. Kate commenced her project on the history of the Hotel. She and Paul had discovered, only a month after they took over the running of the Hotel, that the pub had hit a milestone of 150 years in operation on July 16, 2013. Sadly, the Hotel was closed that day and no celebrations were had. This set publican Kate on a mission to investigate the history of the Hotel and start planning the 151st Birthday for July 16, 2014.

Kate approached Clare & Mt Horrocks historical groups seeking information and to her surprise found limited archived history. So, her hunt began – sifting through online digitised newspaper articles and calling on locals in the community for help. The finished product is more than 40 pages of newspaper articles – chronologically sequenced, remembering previous publicans and the years they had the Hotel.

The Sevenhill Hotel is a stone building, a standout in the small town of Sevenhill, which has a population of only several hundred people. It is located 7km south of Clare, which is the main town in the Clare Valley wine region, and approximately 130km north from Adelaide. The town of Sevenhill was named in honour of the Seven Hills of Rome, Italy. The Sevenhill Hotel opened in 1863 as the 'Black Eagle Hotel'. It was opened by Anton Kranewitter, the brother of Father Kranewitter from Sevenhill Monastery. In 1918 the hotel changed its name from 'Black Eagle' to 'Sevenhill'. To discover more history, check out the link on the website: https://www.sevenhillhotel.com.au/about/#history

For the 151st Birthday celebration, 60 people packed the venue for this iconic event including special guests Ron and Louise Wilkins. The Wilkins are the longest serving publicans, running the establishment from 1972 to 2000. Photographs and newspaper articles tracing the Hotel's history were on display at the birthday dinner. Head chef BJ worked his magic in the kitchen to prepare a five-course meal for the guests. *(Northern Argus, July 30 2014)* https://www.sevenhillhotel.com.au/the-sevenhill-hotel-turns-151/

LIVE MUSIC AND CHARITY DINNER

The second year of trading saw the introduction of regular live music on Sundays – called Sevenhill Summer Sunday Sessions. Utilising the outdoor beer garden made this regular event popular over the summer season.

A Little Heroes Foundation Charity Dinner was hosted at the Hotel with the Sevenhill Cricket Club on Saturday November 15, 2014. A three-course meal was created by Head chef BJ. Guest speakers included former Port Adelaide legend, Tim Ginever and former Australian and SA Cricketer, Wayne Phillips. *(Northern Argus October 29, 2014)*

2015

No.1 SA PUB

Sevenhill Hotel's head chef Brendan Leslie with Kate Shadiac and Paul Longbottom toasting their recent achievement.

Sevenhill Hotel received 'Top Nod' in 2015 being named the number one SA pub 'serving food that is too good to be called pub grub' by the SA Traveller Website (South Australian Tourism Commission). This was noted in the local paper where it was said that 'both Paul and Kate believe this helps to reinforce the Clare Valley's growing reputation as a destination for food and wine lovers alike and hope this helps shine a greater spotlight on the region. Understanding their position in the community, the hotel has raised and donated over $500 to the CWA Emergency Aid Fund in support of the Pinery bushfire victims after pledging a dollar from every meal sold over a recent weekend. The Sevenhill Hotel team strives to continue to provide an excellent hotel and dining experience.'

(Northern Argus December 16, 2015)

Kate Shadiac (left) and Paul Longbottom (right) of Sevenhill Hotel with Ali Paulett of Paulett Wines.

2016

Kate and Paul Longbottom at the SA Australian Hotel Awards where the Sevenhill Hotel won a Community Service and Support Award.

Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac of the Sevenhill Hotel have been generous supporters of the Richardson Park Playspace. They're pictured here with their children Oscar and Molly.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

'COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SUPPORT' AWARD

The Australian Hotels Association SA (AHA) held their annual 'Awards for Excellence'. In 2016, Paul and Kate were awarded a certificate of merit for 'Community Service and Support'. As a small, family owned and run hotel, they were thrilled to win the award ahead of all country SA Hotels and to be recognised for their achievement and support of their local community. 'From day one we set out as one of our goals to be a part of the local community and contribute where we can', Mr Longbottom said. 'We feel we are contributing to the community by making ourselves a part of it, with Kate being a part of the CWA, running the Auburn playgroup, and me playing football and cricket, helping with Auskick and Milo Cricket as well as donating monetary, goods and services to better the Clare Valley community'.
(Plains Producer August 3, 2016)

MONEYS TO FINISH PLAYSPACE

The Richardson Park Playspace was in its final phase in 2016 with Sevenhill Hotel adding $1500, the last amount needed to complete the project with the soft-fall materials and installation of the flying fox. The Playspace will take children and adults back to simple, nature places; there is no plastic equipment and it's all about allowing users to enjoy the outdoors and to explore. *(Northern Argus May 4, 2016)*

2017

AHA SA AWARD

BEST FOR FOOD

In their fifth year of trading, QANTAS included the Hotel in their list for 10 of the Best for Food *(Traveller Insider Magazine)*. 'Brendan Leslie, the chef at this 154-year-old pub, is a locavore devotee, serving up the likes of sous-vide Clare Valley gold rump steak and Clare Rise Bakery Bread.'
(*QANTAS Link Magazine September/October 2017)*

'BEST COUNTRY BISTRO/CASUAL DINING' AWARD

'A strong focus on house prepared seasonal food, employing staff passionate about quality hospitality and lots of hard work has paid off for Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac and their Sevenhill Hotel last week. They brought home top prize for best country bistro/casual dining from the AHA SA Awards for Excellence. It was a testament to four years of hard work and vision for the little pub with loads of character that has grown from strength to strength since the dynamic duo stepped through the doors to take over the reins four years ago. Judges at the Awards for Excellence said 'the Sevenhill Hotel offers a wonderful menu with a blend of local specialties, from the finest aged fillet to the more casual bar snack. Children are very well catered for too. The local fare and Clare Valley wines deliver an impressive offering to the local and tourist trade. Its extensive cellar would make any wine lover happy and is a great point of interest'. *(Plains Producer August 2, 2017)*

Winners of the SA awards go up against the National Awards. Paul and Kate attended the Gold Coast in September to compete against other country hotels. They were proud to be shortlisted as best in the country but unfortunately did not walk away with the National title.

GOURMET FESTIVAL

The Clare Valley Gourmet Festival is held annually to celebrate great food and wine. 2017 saw Sevenhill Hotel's first involvement by introducing the 'Lightbulb Winemakers Collaborative' showcasing 5 local wineries that do not operate cellar doors. This enabled them to participate in the Festival by providing wine tasting in the beer garden, delicious food and live music entertainment.

2018

BACK TO BACK WIN

BACK-TO-BACK 'BEST BISTRO'

Publicans, Paul and Kate, were encouraged by the AHA SA organisers to attend the award ceremony again the following year. After winning the award in 2017, the Sevenhill Hotel only learned it was nominated again in 2018, at the ceremony. The Sevenhill Hotel once more proved to be cream of the crop, taking out the title of Best Country Bistro. Paul and Kate were rapt to win the award two years in a row. 'Being consistent shows we are on the right path to stay at the forefront of the hospitality market', they said. 'With our unique cellar dining, and seasonal menus, our good food, good service and friendly atmosphere, it makes a great experience to remember'. *(Plains Producer August 1, 2018)*. Paul and Kate attended the National Hotel Awards in the Gold Coast representing SA.

PARMA FOR A FARMER

Parma for a Farmer was another contribution the Sevenhill Hotel made to the community. Along with other Clare Valley Hotels, $1 from each parmigiana sold was donated to the Buy a Bale Campaign supporting farmers battling drought around the country.

(Northern Argus Wed 15, 2018)

HAT TRICK

2019

HAT TRICK WITH HOTEL INDUSTRY AWARD

'The Sevenhill Hotel is ecstatic after bringing home yet another Hotel Industry Award, making it three consecutive years the popular Clare Valley Hotel has basked in glory. Held at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre, the recent AHA Awards saw owners Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac not only win a Community Service and Support Award but also take out the category of Best Bistro Casual Dining – Country. 'Over the three years we have won, we have had three different chefs, so it's definitely a testament to our staff, management and leadership. We are not here to hunt awards, but to take one year at a time and focus on what we do well, which is taking care of our customers and making sure they leave happy'. Next month Paul and Kate will head to the Gold Coast with their children for the National AHA Awards.' *(Plains Producer August 14, 2019).*

https://www.sevenhillhotel.com.au/awards-winner-again-2019/

Tim Adams (right) and Pam Goldsack (third from right) with their crew last year.

SA VARIETY BASH

Paul and Kate attended their first SA Variety Bash this year, raising money for the children's charity. Dressing as characters from the children's show 'Shaun the Sheep' they drove around SA starting from Mawson Lakes. The route took them through Clare, various other places and finished at Murray Bridge. This was reported in the Plains Producer May 1, 2019.

The VarietySA Moto Run (another annual Variety event) stopped off at Sevenhill Hotel for lunch. 80 participants and officials attended. *(Plains Producer October 23, 2019).*

2019

BEST SCHNITZELS

BEST CHICKEN SCHNITZELS

QANTAS voted Sevenhill Hotel as Best Chicken Schnitzels. 'This 156-year-old pub in the Clare Valley is regularly lauded for its exemplary pub fare and, according to co-owner Paul Longbottom, it's rare that a table doesn't have a schnitzel in the mix of orders. There are three to choose from (chicken, beef or pork) and all are completely prepared on site – cut, bashed, marinated and crumbed by hand.' *(QANTAS Link Travel Insider Magazine March/April 2019)*

KIDS IN ADELAIDE - FAMILY FRIENDLY

Kids in Adelaide promoted Sevenhill Hotel's family friendly business. 'There is a lot to love about the Clare Valley and we recently uncovered some genuinely unbelievable places for families, like the multi award winning Sevenhill Hotel. Kids are not just welcome here, they are catered for with great passion, food and activities. When you get young energetic publicans like Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac, who have kids of their own, you often strike gold, like you will right here.'

REFURBISHMENT

2019 saw the refurbishment of the Hotel with Restaurant upgrades which include an acoustic wall and acoustic lighting, curtains that are drawn in the evening to provide a warm atmosphere. Fresh paint and wall panelling brighten the restaurant. A local artist (Kate's sister, Holly Geyer) was engaged to create three unique artworks to compliment the deer theme throughout the venue.

EFFECTS OF GLOBAL PANDEMIC

2020

COVID closures started with a 10-week lockdown early in the year. November again saw a 3-day mandatory lockdown of the whole state and therefore the Hotel. Except for these times, the business continued to operate 7 days a week. The first lengthy lockdown taught the owners resilience and flexibility. They were determined to stay viable and work out how to quickly pivot the business model to ensure full time employees and some casual employees received income. A new online ordering system offering takeaway food, beer and wine was instigated.

Kate and her father utilised this closure time to build an outdoor deck over the lawn area. This created a new eating and entertaining space. Another new addition was the purchase of a courtesy bus. The Hotel has a continuous improvement strategy for the responsible service of alcohol offering free transportation to ensure patrons get home safely.

Being a key dining destination for tourists travelling to the internationally renowned Clare Valley wine region, the impact of border restrictions and closures was substantial. Traditionally the Hotel would have the pleasure of serving guests from overseas, interstate, all corners of South Australia as well as the local community. Booking cancellations during COVID occurred rapidly even with regular customers not wanting to dine out due to lack of confidence. Losing bookings for events like Wedding Receptions and meetings in the Boardroom saw huge reductions in potential income. The introduction of an online ordering system became an invaluable asset to the business ensuring continual operation of contactless food and beverage sales during tough trading periods.

'Post COVID saw increased challenges in staffing, particularly rurally, 'Where are all the workers?'. Businesses in the Clare Valley region are desperately trying to find workers to cope with the influx of visitors and increased trade. Sevenhill Hotel owner, Paul Longbottom, said while there is a shortage of workers in many industries, it's now a critical issue in the hospitality industry. Paul said people also need to be able to converse with patrons, which is becoming an issue in this day and age of electronic devices.' *(Plains Producer October 21, 2020)*

SEVEN YEARS AT SEVENHILL

2020

SEVEN YEARS AT SEVENHILL

A positive milestone of 2020 was publicans celebrating 'Seven years at Sevenhill'. 'Seven years ago Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac took a leap of faith with their two young children, moving to the Clare Valley to take on their first business, the iconic Sevenhill Hotel. The couple admit it has been a rollercoaster ride, learning the ropes as new business owners and building their brand with the consistent quality it is well-known for. However, Paul and Kate said they have not looked back, grateful for the friends they have made not only locally, but far and wide with the pub providing a welcome pit-stop for tourists to the Clare Valley. It has been a fast-paced ride over the past seven years for Paul and Kate, but they said they are looking forward to what the future will bring, growing the business and building on the Sevenhill Hotel's first-class reputation.' *(Plains Producer September 9, 2020)*

Kate and Paul summarised their seven years: 'The best part of our time has definitely been the community we have here and the relationships we have made through the pub, involvement in sporting clubs, CWA, Watervale Primary School and Variety Bash SA to name a few. We have been tested over the years by the challenges of business. The ups and downs of the seasons, droughts and a tough economic climate are challenges we all face. We are proud that we have been able to see these out and remain open and viable.'

BASH BINGO

Paul and Kate continued their support of Variety SA attending the Variety Bash. Fundraising at the Watervale Oval with a Bingo night.
(Plains Producer November 4, 2020)

2021

SA TOURISM AWARD

SA TOURISM AWARD

Recognition from yet another source with the Sevenhill Hotel being a finalist in the SA Tourism Awards. This also gained them 'Quality Tourism Accredited Business' as well as 'Sustainable Tourism Business'. *(Plains Producer September 29, 2021)*

NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Over the 8 years in business, Paul and Kate have built up their team as well as a following of customers who year on year will return. They achieved this by creating business development strategies. Being the first business they have owned, they acknowledge that there has been a lot of trial and error along the way. To help grow the business, procedures were implemented for staff to follow, effectively enabling consistency with the daily routines. Their core focus areas for business development are People, Profit & Promotion.

Time and energy were invested with Foodie Coaches which is a hospitality business consultancy company. Valuable information was gained, and strategies developed to better grow the business through marketing and staff management with improved policies and procedures put in place. Kate and Paul's passion to see this Hotel remain as a dining destination of choice for tourists and locals alike has continued to grow, as has their engagement with the community and the pleasure they get in promoting their wonderful wine region.

Clare Valley was voted '2021 Top Tourist Town' https://www.clarevalley.com.au/news/clare-top-tourism-town/

2020 BEST COUNTRY DINING AWARD x 5

HAVE A BEER WITH LONGY

'Longy is the definition of a local. For eight and a half years, Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac have been the friendly faces that greet you as you walk through the doors at the Sevenhill Hotel. 'Longy' is one of the old-fashioned local publicans that will stop and have a beer with you at the bar or deliver your meals right to your table. Sevenhill Hotel has kept the doors open throughout the pandemic and have found inventive ways to keep their service available to you.' *(Plains Producer February 9, 2022)*

Paul 'Longy' Longbottom is one of the friendly faces at the Sevenhill Hotel.

BEST COUNTRY DINING AWARD 5 TIMES

'Sevenhill Hotel took home another annual title for the SA Industry Awards for Excellence. The 2022 annual gala dinner event was held at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre on Tuesday 18th October. The Sevenhill Hotel has won this prestigious award 5 years now. This is a credit to the owners, married couple, Paul Longbottom and Kate Shadiac who will celebrate 9 years of ownership later this year. They spent the night at the event with their staff.' Kate and Paul were in Tasmania waiting for the results from the National Hotel Awards. *(Plains Producer February 9, 2022)*

2023

10 YEARS AS PUBLICANS

August 28, 2023, marks a remarkable 10 years as the 46th publicans of the historic 160-year-old Hotel. Paul and Kate are grateful to be a part of this hotel's history.

MURAL

A colourful mural by local artist (Kate's sister, Holly Geyer) was painted on the car park side wall of the Hotel promoting the Clare Valley. The intention is for patrons to take photos standing by the mural, perhaps under the red wine pouring, and tag Sevenhill Hotel. The publicans continue their aspiration to keep the Clare Valley on the map as a top tourist destination.

THANKYOU TO ALL OUR STAFF, LOYAL CUSTOMERS AND TOURIST VISITORS THAT HAVE HELPED SHAPE THE BUSINESS TO WHAT IT IS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING THIS JOURNEY OF THE HISTORIC SEVENHILL HOTEL. PAUL & KATE 2023

5TH VARIETY SA BASH

'This year also marked 5 years of Paul and Kate fundraising for Variety SA, attending their 5th Variety Bash with a new theme of Nemo. The Bash team went with a theme that was familiar to children, as in every town they visited children would line the streets to see the Bashers arrive. Adding to the theme are more than 150 hand knitted and crochet Nemos, provided by volunteers all around SA, which will be given out along the Bash route. 'We are all like-minded people, all trying to raise money for the kids of SA.' *(Plains Producer 9 August 2023).*