



Our generous community

Toy drive co-founder Todd Sheldon, Mutual Bank CEO Mark Williams, Maitland Mayor Philip Penfold and The Mutual Bank's Product, Marketing and Sustainability Manager, Lauren Greenley.

The Mutual Bank's Head Office was transformed into Santa's workshop in December as our team helped sort more than 25,000 gifts for the annual Susan Roskell Toy and Gift Drive.

The drive is a community initiative established to provide gifts and toys to children, and their parents and carers, who have been impacted by the effects of domestic and family violence, homelessness, illness and injury.

Todd Sheldon from Bolwarra Heights organises the annual event which is now in its eighth year. It all started in 2016, when a request from Maitland's Reading Cinema to support struggling families during the festive season saw Todd, his wife Penny, and their son Lachlan, donating wrapped

gifts to a Wishing Tree and from this, the idea of an annual toy drive was born.

"It is heartening to see that with every year, the support from the community and small businesses has grown, which enables us to support the ever-increasing number of families that are seeking support and assistance," said Todd.

"We changed the name in 2022 to honour our mum and nanny who passed away during our 2021 campaign. Mum was a catalyst for starting this and will be forever loved and missed.

"To have an organisation the size of The Mutual Bank jump behind the Toy Drive is huge and it ensures we will be here for the community into the future."

The Mutual Bank's CEO Mark Williams said becoming a Platinum Sponsor of the well-established and respected appeal was an easy decision.

Along with a monetary donation, The Mutual Bank opened up its Green Hills Head Office for the sorting to occur.

Team members showed up over two days to help sort and wrap the gifts bound for local charities to give out.

"Each of our seven branches was a drop off point for gifts for the appeal and our Members and our local communities once again showed their incredible generosity in supporting such a worthy cause," said Mark.



CEO Message

Dear Members,

As we usher in 2024, I am pleased to report to you that our organisation is continuing to strive for excellence and helping our Members to thrive.

The 2023 year has seen some significant organisational change for The Mutual Bank and I thank you, our Members, along with The Mutual Bank Board and Executive Leaders and their teams for making me feel so welcome as the new Chief Executive Officer.

When I commenced my new role on 1 July 2023, I was looking forward to playing a

part in the next phase of evolution of this wonderful organisation. Working with the team in the last six months has exceeded my expectations for the future as I know our Members are always the number one priority.

Our Members can be assured that our committed Board, our exceptionally experienced leadership team and our dedicated team members are all pursuing excellence. The Mutual Bank values are Integrity, Respect and Care and I am so proud to work in an organisation where these values are displayed each and every day.

With the continuously changing nature of the financial services landscape, we know that The Mutual Bank must continue to adapt to this changing environment. We recognise an increasing need to invest in several areas within our organisation, including digital transformation – both internally and for Member-facing solutions.

Our team is also working within the ever-increasing regulatory environment.

As I work with our Executive Leadership Team to refine our Strategic Plan for The Mutual Bank, Members are always at the forefront.

Our team is constantly reviewing our day-to-day operations to ensure we are using best practice routines which drive efficiency.

As part of these reviews we have identified some changes needed to be made to some of our products and have advised those Members affected.

We have made some improvements to our digital operations internally and Members have hopefully been enjoying our refreshed Internet Banking experience.

We know that the cost-of-living pressures have weighed on people's real incomes in 2023. As we consider any changes in our interest rates we are constantly balancing the needs of both our deposit Members and our lending Members.

As a member-owned bank our profits go back into training for our staff, improved products and services for our Members and investing in our community through sponsorship. I am pleased to report our sponsorship of community events and organisations continues and you can learn more about some of them in this newsletter.

I wish you and your family a happy and memorable holiday period and my best wishes for a happy and prosperous 2024.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Williams
Chief Executive Officer

Backing local sporting talent



The Mutual Bank has partnered with local professional rugby league players Sheridan Gallagher and sisters Hannah and Jesse Southwell.

Chief Member Officer Matthew Dunnill said the partnership with the talented Newcastle Knights trio is about contributing to the momentum of raising the profile of women's sport.

The partnership includes a campaign featuring some of the homegrown talent that we support, from grassroots clubs to sports stars in various codes from netball to all codes of football.

"Women's rugby league is an emerging sport with increasing participation and profile," said Matthew.

"We want to encourage more of our community to get behind the team and other women's sports."

Keep an eye out on our social media channels for Hannah, Jesse and Sheridan, pictured at left, as they work towards the 2024 season where the Newcastle Knights will defend the National Rugby League Women's Premiership.

National award for our young leader Hannah



The Mutual Bank's People and Culture Business Partner Hannah Blaik pictured with The Mutual Bank CEO Mark Williams at the Customer Owned Banking Association Conference.

The Mutual Bank's People and Culture Business Partner has been recognised with a national award for emerging leaders.

Hannah Blaik was named the 2023 COBA Bridges Emerging Leader at the annual Customer Owned Banking Association (COBA) Convention on the Gold Coast on Monday 25 September 2023.

This prestigious national award recognises Hannah's exceptional commitment to customer-owned banking, and her own career development as an emerging leader.

The Mutual Bank's CEO Mark Williams praised Hannah's passion for her career as well as being the embodiment of the bank's values of Integrity, Respect and Care.

"Hannah has been with The Mutual Bank for five years and in that time has progressed her career from Member Service Officer, Marketing Officer, HR Officer, HR Specialist to her current role as People and Culture Business Partner," Mark said.

"During this time Hannah has completed a Bachelor of Social Science with a major in Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management and is currently completing her Masters in Business Administration.

"I am looking forward to seeing how Hannah will shape the future of mutual banking in years to come."

Demonstrating her commitment to Customer Owned Banking Hannah also:

- is an active member of the Hunter Young Professionals;
- regularly volunteers to represent The Mutual Bank at community sponsorship events;
- led a People and Culture initiative through creation of a partnership with the University of Newcastle to offer integrated learning opportunities for students;
- was a recent panellist at a University of Newcastle Opportunities in Banking and Finance event, sharing her passion for customer owned banking.

Hannah said she was truly humbled and honoured to receive the recognition.

"I look forward to running with this opportunity and driving to continue to add value to the teams I serve, The Mutual Bank, the community and the sector in which I am so passionate about."

As part of her prize, Hannah will have the chance to attend an industry-specific conference or professional development event.

New offensive against scammers



The Mutual Bank is proud to be a part of a new Scam-Safe Accord aimed at delivering a higher standard of protection for our Members and help put scammers out of business in Australia.

The Scam-Safe Accord, between Australia's customer-owned banks, (mutual banks, building societies, credit unions) and commercial banks is a comprehensive set of anti-scam measures across the entire industry.

At the heart of the Scam-Safe Accord is a \$100 million investment by the industry in a new confirmation of payee system to be rolled out across all Australian banks.

Confirmation of payee will help reduce scams by ensuring people can confirm they are transferring money to the person they intend to.

The Mutual Bank is a member of the Customer Owned Banking Association (COBA), the industry association for Australia's customer-owned banks whose vision is for more Australians to benefit from a resilient banking sector that is centred on people and communities.

How to protect yourself against scams

Scamwatch.gov.au has some red flags to look out for when identifying a scam including:

- Being offered an "amazing opportunity" to make or save money.
- Someone you haven't met, or have only talked to online, needs your help - and money.
- A message you receive contains links or attachments.
- Being pressured to act quickly.
- Being asked to pay in unusual or specific ways.
- Asking you to set up new accounts to pay them.

If scammers have been successful, they will try to get more money. Unfortunately, one in three victims of a scam have been scammed more than once. If you've lost money to a scam, be especially wary of new scams - including if someone offers to help you get your money back.

Stop - don't give money or personal information to anyone you don't know.

Scammers will offer to help you or ask you to verify who you are. They will pretend to be from organisations or people you know and trust. Use strong passwords, never share your personal details or banking information, and try to monitor your bank transactions, credit card, and online shopping accounts.

Think - ask yourself could the message or call be fake? Scammers often pressure victims through a sense of urgency. It is vital to slow down and think clearly. Only contact businesses or government agencies using contact information from their official website or through their secure apps. If you're not sure, say no, hang up, or delete.

Protect - act quickly if something feels wrong. Contact your bank immediately if you notice some unusual activity or if a scammer gets your money or information, and report to ReportCyber and Scamwatch.

Supporting our community through sponsorship

Helping our communities thrive

We are proud to partner with the community we serve, supporting a range of local organisations through sponsorship - from educational providers and sporting groups to cultural events and charitable foundations.

As a member-owned bank our profits go back into better banking products for our Members, training for staff to deliver best-practice service and assisting our community through our sponsorship program.

Our team loves getting out and about at the various events held around the Hunter.

This year The Mutual Bank sponsored the Beef Cattle at the Dungog Show and the Carols on the Hill at St Peter's Anglican Parish at East Maitland.

It was great to participate in the successful IF Maitland Indie Festival and Art Fest in October and our team attended the inaugural Hunter Innovation Festival hosted by Maitland City Council to create connections in the innovation industry in the Hunter Valley.

We continue to sponsor the Hunter Breast Cancer Foundation's (HBCF's) Wig and Headwear Library, a resource offering a selection of wigs, scarves, hats and turbans to provide comfort and confidence to people undergoing breast cancer treatment. Our teams also held Pink Ribbon Day morning teas to raise money for the HBCF.

We are looking forward to The Mutual Bank High School Teams Challenge as part of Surfest in March and Maitland Taste Festival in May.

You can learn more about our Sponsorship Policy, eligibility and how to apply on our website – themutual.com.au.

1. Dungog Show 2023
2. Hunter Innovation Festival
3. Maitland Business Chamber event
4. Supporting local sport



Protecting your accounts with multi-factor authentication



Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is a security measure which requires two or more proofs of identity to grant you access to your accounts when using online banking. It's the most effective way to protect your accounts against unauthorised access when using online banking. We have two options for our Members to consider:

SMS one-time password

An SMS one-time password (OTP) is a random six-digit number that is generated by the system when logging in to and performing certain transactions in Internet Banking or within The Mutual App. A one-time password will be sent to your pre-registered mobile phone via SMS to provide an extra level of authentication when logging on or carrying out certain tasks in online banking.

Security Tokens

Using a Security Token is another way to ensure your online banking experience is secure by providing a second level of authentication when using your Internet Banking access details. We encourage all Members who use online banking who are unable to access SMS to request and activate either a physical or virtual Security Token. Please note that virtual Security Tokens are not transferrable between devices. If you change your device, you will need to be issued a new virtual Security Token.

You can view the Terms and Conditions of Security Tokens on our website - themutual.com.au - under Important Documents.