

Matthew Thompson BBCN AGM Guest Speech

14th October 2025

My story is a little unconventional, and I hope I can either encourage others or give some parents a little peace of mind.

My name is Matt Thompson, and I own and operate a coin shop called Thompsons Coins in the Boronia Mall. I, like many other young people, had no idea what I wanted to pursue as a career throughout my high school education. I didn't excel in any particular field, although I did have a keen interest in performing music in my band. My parents sat me down on more than one occasion and explained that whilst they were glad that I had found an area of interest, to temper my expectations and realise that whilst becoming a rockstar was possible, it was highly unlikely, and that I should consider what alternatives may appeal to me.

Being a teenager with absolutely no idea what I was doing, but being informed that the one thing I had developed a keen interest in was actually impractical and unrealistic, understandably led me to double down. At the conclusion of year 12, I had enrolled in a music business course to further cement myself in the career path of a musician.

Whilst studying, I became acutely aware of the need for some form of financial stability, so I took up a job in a call centre for Simply Energy and patiently received a number of abusive phone calls from folks who were unhappy with their electricity and gas bills. Around this time, it was starting to become clear that a future in the music business may not actually be for me, and perhaps my parents were right about needing an alternative. Another element of my music business pursuits was the

unhealthy lifestyle that came along with late nights and significant amounts of partying.

Looking back now, I appreciate the endless amount of concern that my behaviour caused my parents.

Moving along, I found myself in a new role at Australia Post, where I patiently received a number of abusive phone calls from folks who were unhappy about their parcels going missing. It was here that I had a fateful meeting with my manager,



where I explained that I was prepared for any department at all. She ticked approximately 40 different boxes of available departments, and the first to accept me was the Philatelic Bureau. This is the stamp department, and what really kicked my career off.

From here I ended up moving to a large coin company where I began to really specialise in my knowledge on coins and banknotes and from there I moved to Sydney for 3 years and as a result of a conversation with a customer in the shop about finding it difficult to meet people my age in

Sydney I was invited to an after-work function which is where I met my now wife.

I then moved back to Melbourne, and after managing another coin shop and working in the bullion industry for a few years, I found myself on a weekend drive with my wife and daughter. We ended up at the Boronia Mall, and I explained how this was where I used to get my Santa photos done as a kid, and how my younger sister was put into the baby shows by Mum. So many memories were held in the mall and as we wandered around I pondered how many times I had seen articles or stories shared on the mall and how so many people would proclaim things such as “They should do something with that mall” and whilst standing there I realised that if you want to do something, you need to not only be open to help and guidance, but you also need to put yourself forward and into a position to make a positive impact.

I got in touch with Vic Di Luzio and struck up what would become a really positive friendship, which ultimately resulted in the purchase of his former jewellery shop. In the lead-up to formally opening the shop, I had a visit from John and Danny from the Boronia and The Basin Community Newspaper. They ended up spending what must have been about an hour in the store, and we chatted about the local community and how positive a specialised boutique store like mine could be for the community. In addition to the support from the Boronia and The Basin Community News, it's also really shocked me at how many members of the community have visited my shop and spoken so fondly of their memories of Vic (the jeweller) and shared stories of how he either mended a watch or made their wedding bands. Vic was closed for several years before I reopened the shop, and I have now witnessed firsthand how positive one person's contributions to a community can be.

Since opening, Greg has opened a stamp shop, Peter is opening a collectable shop, and Lincoln is opening a book shop, all as a direct result of my business, which is

wonderful to be part of. My objective with my shop is not just to be a functional business, but to be a positive presence in the community. Because I've now run this business for the past 18 months, I've learned a few key lessons.

1. The path that you walk in life may not always make sense to everyone around you, but if you have the love and support of your family, you can succeed in whatever passion you develop.

2. Being a member of the community is something that everyone can engage with. Organisations like the Boronia Basin Community News make it incredibly easy to get involved with a variety of events and activities.

3. If you find yourself complaining and saying “someone should do something about that,” take a moment and consider whether or not YOU can be that someone to have a positive impact on your community.

Matt Thompson: Owner / Operator, Thompsons Coins. 14th October 2025