

“If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance.”

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW



£7,600

The price of Simon Berry's most expensive wine, a magnum of 1990 Le Pin Bordeaux

LONDON'S BUSINESS DYNASTIES

Half a million businesses are set up each year and 60 per cent go bust within three years. But a handful of companies have survived in the same clan for centuries. **Julia Buckley** tracks down the capital's most long-lived family businesses

Angels

Started: 1840, by Morris Angel
Sector: Costumiers
Annual turnover: Undisclosed
www.angels.uk.com; www.fancydress.com
People: Tim Angel, fifth generation, chairman; Daniel and Emma Angel, sixth generation



SUITS US, SIR | The Angels and Morris, above right

ASSHE nonchalantly manhandles Will Young across the room, you can't help but wonder whether Emma Angel realises she's living the dream of British womanhood. But it's nothing new for her—she's done it to the likes of Ewan McGregor and Pierce Brosnan as well.

It's only a mannequin, but it's toggled up in the clothes worn by Mr Young in *Mrs Henderson Presents*.

And it's not just those—there are six miles of clothes rails snaking round the Angels warehouse in Hendon, North London, accumulated over the 165 years the business has been operating.

Morris Angel (pictured left) opened a second-hand clothing shop in Covent Garden and requests from his West End actor clients that he should rent out, rather than sell, the clothes, acted as a catalyst for the firm's development into costume hiring. By 1921 Angels was dressing every West End show from its Shaftesbury Avenue premises.

With 27 Oscars to boot, they're staples of the film industry as well, dressing the stars in their Hendon warehouses—Daniel Craig was popping in for a fitting the day *1917*—and they recently uncovered the cloak Alec Guinness wore as Obi-Wan Kenobi in *Star Wars*.

The Shaftesbury Avenue premises, meanwhile, plays host to Angels fancy dress shop, which has furnished parties from James Jagger's 21st to Elton John's White Tie and Tiaras ball.

Tim Angel: "Of course there's been rivalry—any family business will have had problems, and they often start in the third generation."
Emma Angel: "People think it's easy to come into the family firm, but it's very hard to make friends. You're always the boss's daughter."

Daniel Angel: "I've been working here since helping out in the school holidays."

Beales Hotels

Started: 1769, by John Beale
Sector: Hospitality
Annual turnover: Undisclosed
www.bealeshotels.co.uk
People: Andrew Beale, eighth generation

THE Beale dynasty hasn't always been hotel-based—it was started in 1769 when master baker John Beale opened at 75 Oxford Street. Moving to Wigmore Street and then Islington, the business grew to be the largest independent bakers in the capital.

In 1945 Edward Beale bought the West Lodge Park Hotel, just outside of Cockfosters. Two generations later his grandson Andrew is in charge of other hotels in Hatfield and Buckingham.

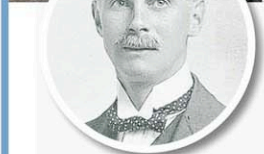
Andrew Beale: "There was a lot of expectation riding on me. I'm the eldest son, and eldest ones are always meant to be the serious ones. But it's not a burden—I love it. I have total security of employment until my retiring day."

"As a family business, there's less pressure to produce profits at the expense of everything else. We can concentrate on old-fashioned things like giving good service."

"If you put yourself at the head of everything and your family's reputation is at stake, you don't want to lose it. You'll be more motivated to give guests a positive experience than someone working for a corporation."



STAYING POWER | Beales Hotels



Berry Bros & Rudd

Started: 1698, by the Widow Bourne
Sector: Wine
Annual turnover: "Somewhere in the region of £100 million"
www.bbr.com
People: Simon Berry, eighth generation

The Goring Hotel

Started: 1910, by OR Goring
Sector: Hospitality
Annual turnover: Undisclosed
www.goringhotel.co.uk
People: Jeremy Goring, fourth generation

LONDON'S only family-owned five-star deluxe hotel is discretion personified, tucked away behind Buckingham Palace. Founded in 1910, it was the first hotel in the capital to have en-suite bathrooms and central heating in every room.

During the First World War, it was the headquarters of American officers stationed in London; and the restaurant has had the likes of Winston Churchill, various royals and Elizabeth Hurley pass through its doors.

Jeremy Goring: "We have the same disagreements as any board has on things but it's not a *Dallas*-type situation."