

Winnipeg group snaps up hotels

By *BILL POWER BUSINESS REPORTER*

Published February 28, 2013



Centennial Group owner Ralph Medjuck said his company will remain active in Halifax development.

A Winnipeg group has scooped up three anchor hotels from the Ralph Medjuck business empire in Nova Scotia for \$87.5 million.

The Prince George Hotel and Cambridge Suites Hotel, both in Halifax, and Cambridge Suites Hotel in Sydney are included in the deal that gives Temple Hotels Inc. a total of 549 guest rooms in the province.

Centennial Hotels Ltd., Medjuck's Centennial Group of Companies Ltd. affiliate, built and operated all three hotels.

"It was a profitable deal and the timing was right," Medjuck said in an interview Thursday.

The deal was to close before the end of the business day today.

Medjuck, 80, said the sale had nothing to do with any sort of succession process related to his age. He said he and his company will remain active in the Halifax regional development scene.

"The only thing to read into this is we just made a lot of money."

The significantly older Lord Nelson Hotel & Suites, opposite the Halifax Public Gardens and also owned by Medjuck, was not included in the deal.

“It is a bit of a different situation with the Lord Nelson,” he said. “It is tied up with some other adjacent properties we own. There have been some interested buyers, but we have not been ready.”

Centennial Hotels also continues to own and operate Cambridge Suites Hotel in Toronto.

Temple Hotels said that after the deal closes, the purchase will add up to about \$159,380 per room.

Temple chief executive officer Arni Thorsteinson said from Winnipeg the hotel chain will have hotels coast-to-coast after the deal closes.

“We are very excited and proud to inherit these three finest hotels in Nova Scotia.”

There will be no layoffs associated with the purchase, except in a few cases involving senior staff who prefer to retire, Thorsteinson said.

“All who wish to remain on the job have been offered employment.”

He said Atlific Hotels of Montreal will manage the Nova Scotia hotels. Atlific manages about 50 different properties elsewhere in Canada for various owners.

Holiday Inn Winnipeg-South is the major hotel in that city that Temple owns.

Thorsteinson is president and principal of Shelter Canadian Properties Ltd. in Winnipeg, a major developer with significant holdings across the country.

Source: <http://thechronicleherald.ca/business/812577-winnipeg-group-snaps-up-hotels>