



Sunny outlook

THE weather gods in Macau have been favouring us this week,



because despite fairly steamy conditions and typhoon warnings being listed prior to our arrival, we have escaped with just an afternoon downpour while inside the Palace of Dreams.

Macau is on target this year to reach 29 million visitors, 70% of which will come from mainland China and for the Australian business events market there is every good reason to visit this cross-cultural enclave of Portuguese/Chinese heritage.

Prime among them is Macau's capacity to host boutique incentives with infinite style and mega conferences of up to 10,000, in resorts like The Venetian Macao Resort Hotel.

For some it's the extraordinary casinos, while others love Macau's remarkable Portuguese preserved heritage buildings and rich history.

Now, there's another reason - 'The House of Dancing Water' - a mega show at the City of Dreams, Grand Hyatt Macau.

Like nothing you've ever seen, even the extraordinary Cirque du Soleil shows pale in the wake of this jaw-dropping, \$250 million production - best described as Waterworld on steroids.

It is an absolute must on any Macau program and from Hong Kong its only a jet boat ride away.

BEN will reveal more in a future edition - *Jill*.

Competitions galore

ARE you one of the many, nervously tapping your fingers on the desk waiting anxiously for **BEN** to arrive in your inbox three times a week, waiting to find out what the next question is for Baillie Lodges two night stay at the Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island?

Well don't fret because today's issue is here and the question is on **page 3** - and the earlier questions are on our website.

ACB comes out fighting

AFTER a challenging 2011/2012 financial year - the Adelaide Convention Bureau (ACB) is reporting positive results, highlighting a global trend that business tourism remains a vital component to a destination's annual economic bottom line.

The Government, they say has had massive investment into the Convention Centre, the Riverbank precinct and to a lesser degree, the Adelaide Oval, SAHMRI and Rundle Mall.

In addition, new hotels are about to be built in the city and upgrades are occurring to exiting properties.

It is all part of an ongoing strategy to develop and/or strengthen relationships with key industry partners, launch a four nation alliance with the express purpose of securing lucrative science-based events and maintain a healthy Conventions Adelaide Ambassador program.

Wurzinger relocates

MCI has announced the relocation of its director association relations Asia Pacific, Stephan Wurzinger from MCI's Singapore regional hub to Sydney, a move that will see Australia hosting significantly more Asia Pacific and international association conferences.

A 20 year veteran of the conference industry in Europe, Middle East, South Africa, Canada and Asia, Wurzinger actively coordinates 28 of the most prominent medical associations in the region, and with MCI's Shanghai based Business Intelligence Unit, he tracks more than 258 Asia Pacific based associations that hold conferences of more than 500 pax.

They are strategies, that confirm the ACB is punching above its weight in terms of available resources in this exigent economy vs results.

"In tough times both economically and from a resources perspective, the team has delivered an incredible result"

- said Damien Kitto, ceo Adelaide Convention Bureau.

"Despite reduced resources, the Adelaide Convention

Bureau still provides one of the highest returns on investment in Australia with \$85m resulting from an input of \$2m (42:1 ROI)."

The ACB's end of financial year results reveal:

- The number of bids submitted is up 23% on target;
- The number of events secured is up 29% on target;
- The number of international events won is 30% up on target;
- Events won will return \$85m in economic benefit;
- The bid split is 80% national vs 20% international;
- The biggest challenge with respect to securing events remains the ability to present an attractive and well funded bid to convention organisers.

Despite the number of events being secured by the Bureau, the economic benefit is down 15% on target; whilst events are being won, the delegate numbers are smaller - testament to the national and global economy.

"We have ended a challenging year with a positive result on so many levels" Kitto said.

"In addition to what has been won so far, there is around \$45m in economic benefit to be decided in the next three months from bids submitted in pre 30 June which will truly boost our calendar year result".



Nicholl joins the RAS

CHERIE Nicholl has been appointed by the Royal Agricultural Society NSW (RAS), to the newly-created position of general manager, business & commercial development, Sydney Royal Easter Show.

Nicholl will be responsible for the development and implementation of strategic plans to support the growth of the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

RAS chief executive Michael Kenny said, "With a strong and proven background in integrated marketing, business strategy, stakeholder engagement and strategic partnership development, Cherie will be a valuable asset to the team."

Prior to her appointment, Nicholl was the director of partnerships at Nationwide News Sydney.

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WHEN in Rome.....

Beware, take care, three French tourists - a man and two women we're given suspended prison sentences and fined in Sri Lanka, after they were caught taking photos in which they appeared to kiss a statue of the Buddha in a temple.

Sri Lanka, which is 70% Buddhist and extremely sensitive to any act deemed vulgar with regard to religion, could have seen them receive six months in prison with hard labor for the desecration or mistreatment of images of the Buddha.

Here, tourists are banned entry at shrines and temples if they are not dressed conservatively.

Staging for a win

STAGING Connections has been nominated as a finalist in the 2012 Australian Event Awards, under the categories of Best Education or Training Program & Academy of Wedding Planners Best Private Event.

Tony Chamberlain, md is proud of the team's passion, hard work and continued commitment to creating great events and says "It is extremely important that as a leader in the events industry, Staging Connections strive to invest in training & development of events professionals and new recruits."

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Pictured is Abbie Raes, Corporate Travel Management with Jules Lund

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Port Stephens MICE



TALK to the people at Salamander Shores in Port Stephens and they'll tell you a secret, that spending time by the water makes delegates relaxed and positive.

So to spread the news they have released a new waterfront MICE package which includes accommodation, breakfast, conference, lunch and morning & afternoon teas from \$169 a day, per delegate.

With spectacular views over the blue waters of Port Stephens, Salamander Shores has other affordable MICE packages from \$30 per delegate per day including venue hire, a ploughman's lunch and morning and afternoon teas.

Accommodation rates are from \$139 per delegate with a hot breakfast.

In addition, new three-course banquet dinners are priced from \$59pp.

There are golf packages too as are group-bonding adventures such as riding quad bikes or sliding down the biggest sand dunes in the southern hemisphere, beach boot camps, waterside yoga, brewery tours and cruises on the dolphin-rich harbour at Port Stephens.

The resort has 90 rooms with water or garden views and four function rooms catering from 12 to 150 delegates.

"We find delegates always enjoy and remember conferences overlooking the sea more than meetings at venues away from the water so we believe Salamander Shores offers an ideal combination of setting, price and accessibility close to Newcastle and Sydney to guarantee a successful event," said Salamander Shores Events and Weddings Coordinator, Katie Pain.

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Get your video game geek on

FOR an upcoming team building event, company incentive or even as a welcome distraction to a conference or meeting, consider a unique opportunity to allow your team or delegates to release their inner child by booking a visit to the Game Masters Exhibition.

Currently on display until Oct at The Australian Centre for the Moving Image, in Melbourne's Federation Square, the exhibition is a trip down animation and video game memory lane.

Guaranteed to have your team or attendees reminiscing about their childhoods and non-gamers in awe at how far the multi-billion dollar industry has come, the display features over 125 playable games from major game design studios such as Nintendo, Sega and Sony as well as features on smaller studios & independent designers from around the world.

Set out in three sections, visitors enter and are instantly greeted with the full size arcade game consoles we all grew up playing in the local milk bar or fish & chip shop such as *Pac-man*, *Defender* and *Space Invaders*.

Progressing through, a cabinet full of the home-based systems such as the Sega Mega System, Nintendo and Atari systems are on full display, complete with the variety of controller handsets, gloves and game-guns of the era.

The second section showcases games from a slightly more modern era, such as *Sonic the Hedgehog*, *Street Fighter*, and a number of *Super Mario Brothers* versions, and features a table with compact handheld consoles of the time such as the original Game Boy system.

Early incarnations of reality



based games such as *The Sims* are available halfway down the exhibition along with a number of mystery and puzzle games as you progress back towards the present day and a glimpse into the future of video gaming.

This is where your karaoke and music based games such as *Guitar Hero* & similar ventures involving drums feature, alongside games where you become the controller, as on-screen characters copy your movements, such as by dancing to music and following patterns.

The exhibition also offers limited opportunities to meet with famous game designers and hear their stories, including an upcoming conversation with Tetsuya Mizuguchi, the brains behind the wildly successful *Sega Rally Championship* franchise, being held on 20 Sep.

Organisers have recently released a special group offer for parties of 10 or more, including entry to all sections of the exhibit for \$10pp, valid for arrival after 3pm, making it perfect for an afternoon team building reward.

For corporate events of 100 people or more, the exhibit can be opened exclusively for your event from 6-8pm on Mon, Tue and Wed nights from \$70pp and includes a food and beverage package featuring hot and cold canapés, wines and soft drinks.

No details have yet been released on whether the exhibit will visit other parts of Australia.

For details on the event, visit www.acmi.net.au/gamemasters, or to enquire about packages and bookings, phone ACMI directly on (03) 8663 2420.





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The Hunter Valley invaded

A MINI 'invasion' has hit the Hunter Valley Wine Country (HVWC) with more than 800 association delegates visiting the area during this week and last.



It started with more than 400 members of Family Business Australia who spent four days attending their 2012 national conference; this week it's another four day conference with 400 delegates attending the Australian Institute of Professional Photography 2012 National Conference.

It's an invasion that is said to be worth more than \$1.2m to the local economy and flags a welcome return to a busy conference calendar for the Hunter Valley.

"The fiscal tightening in the corporate sector over the past 12-18 months has had an effect on the numbers of delegates conferencing in the Hunter Valley", said Ruth Appleby, business tourism marketing manager for Hunter Valley Convention Bureau.

"Whilst the corporate market will always be the most important for HVWC, we have been targeting the association sector more aggressively recently to build capacity from a sector that is less susceptible to the ill-winds of financial crises," she said

The corporate sector currently accounts for around 70% of conference business in HVWC and the association sector, which has more than doubled over the past two years accounts for around 20%.

Other association conferences going to the Hunter Valley this year include, The International Society of Hypertension which is holding a two day satellite conference in advance of its International Convention taking place in Sydney in September; the

Australian Wound Management Association (NSW) in November and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Association in the same month.

Together they are expected to bring an additional 580 delegates for a total of 1240 room nights worth an estimated \$500,000.

Luxury sell out!

LUXPERIENCE, the 'by invitation only' business exchange, which takes place at Sydney's Overseas Passenger Terminal from 10-12 September, has been pronounced a sell out.

Rosemarie Sama, ceo and co-founder of the inaugural high-end experiential travel trade event, said, "We have seen a phenomenal take up rate in the past few weeks leading to Luxperience.

"This is a testament that the industry has welcomed our project and has seen the need for an event such as Luxperience.

"We could not be happier with our journey so far," adding that new companies wishing to exhibit are being placed on a waitlist.

"We have also developed our own exclusive appointment matching and online diary system, the LuxPlanner."

With the ratio of buyers and suppliers at three to one, Sama went on to say, "We are, of course, still accepting buyer registrations but places are filling fast and we encourage any buyers interested to register today to avoid disappointment."

SCEC takes 14

AS it prepares to celebrate 25 years of successful event delivery in 2013, it seems only fitting that the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre should notch up its biggest year ever for industry awards, gathering 14 over the 2011/12 financial year, an achievement surpassing its previous high of 13.

Ton van Amerongen, the Centre's chief executive said the wins which crossed a wide range of key areas from technical to environmental were very gratifying as they recognised the professionalism and skill of the Centre's team.

"It is wonderful to see their efforts acknowledged both internationally and locally, particularly in our key services of venue management, food and beverage and creative technical production," he said.

"Each and every member of our team should take pride in their contribution to make us not only a world-class venue but a world-leading one," van Amerongen said.

IMEX America expands

IMEX America's inaugural event, which last year drew 3,700 attendees (including some 2,000 hosted buyers) and nearly 2,000 exhibitors, is to add a second hall at the Sands Expo & Convention Center, in Las Vegas, in order to accommodate new and expanded exhibitor booths.

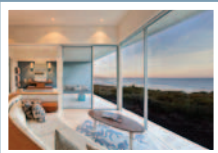
Latest figures reveal that 1 in 5 exhibitors from the first show had booked bigger booths for this year.

Also to date, 40 new booths have joined the show, and more are still expected.

IMEX group chairman Ray Bloom also hopes to see an increase in hosted buyers this year, to well over 2,000, which he attributes to IMEX America partners and intermediaries wanting to bring larger hosted groups because of the positive feedback from their clients after the 2011 event.

The hosted-buyer program provides flights from selected destinations; accommodation; transfers, trade show access and much more.

Win a luxury stay at Southern Ocean Lodge



During the months of August and September, *Business Events News* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing two-night stay at the exclusive Southern Ocean Lodge, Kangaroo Island courtesy of Baillie Lodges.

The prize includes two-nights accommodation for two people in a Flinders Suite with breakfast, lunch and dinner daily, open bar with premium wines and spirits, in-suite bar, signature experiences and return island airport transfers.

To be in the running simply answer the 17 questions and the final creative answer which will be featured in *BEN* on 21 September.

The person who answers ALL the questions and has the most creative response will win.

Email your answers to:

baillielodges@businesseventsnews.com.au

Q8: The Kelly Hill/Cape Bouguer Conservation Park and which other National Park adjoin the Southern Ocean Lodge site?

Hint: www.southernoceanlodge.com.au
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