



## Nice one Stamford!

GIVING the Australian Society of Travel Writers a reminder



of what constitutes good hospitality, was the occasion on Wednesday night of the annual Trivia and dinner at the Stamford Sydney Airport Hotel.

They couldn't have done enough. Staff were alerted to our arrival and were waiting in the garage to ensure our cars were taken care of and mingled with the guests prior to dinner.

There was lots of friendly banter about our chances of winning, while the service and food served in the ballroom was exceptional - Jill.

## Be rewarded



ULURU Meeting Place is currently undergoing a comprehensive redevelopment that effectively will see the Centre rebuilt and doubled in size.

Due to reopen in August, if you book your next conference or event in this brand new facility with \$25,000 - \$64,999 in room revenue, you will be rewarded with a two night package at the newly refurbished Sails in the Desert Hotel or a two night all-inclusive stay at the award winning Longitude 131°, all meals and selected premium alcohol, plus many extras included.

A \$65,000 - \$124,999 booking gets return flights for two with Virgin, all meals and a host of extras, while a booking in excess of \$125,000 includes four return flights from your nearest capital city two nights at a Longitude 131° and just about the whole nine yards of extras.

Valid for new bookings to 31 July.

Info available by emailing: [conferences@voyages.com.au](mailto:conferences@voyages.com.au).

## G20 - pleasure and pain

THE decision to award the G20 Summit to Brisbane in 2014 by the Australian Government has the NSW Government fuming and has reignited the conflict over a second Sydney airport, according to a Sydney Morning Herald report.

At contention is the federal government's admission that Sydney airport does not have the capacity to park up to 40 jumbo jets, an issue that has been dismissed by the chairman of the Sydney Airport Corporation, Max Moore-Wilton.

He told the Herald that the airport had been coping with the same volume of traffic since 2000, handling the Olympics and APEC IN 2007, both smaller in size and calibre to the G20.

Hangar spaces, it has been pointed out, is now filled by Qantas's A-380 Airbuses.

The Transport Minister Anthony Albanese is reported to have warned the NSW government of the need to improve a second airport or the city will start missing such opportunities.

Fanning the flames further with the Sydney Exhibition & Convention Centre out of contention, PM, Julia Gillard said that Brisbane's convention centre was "in fantastic nick" and the much bigger Brisbane airport is well positioned to deal "with the pressure that comes with so many world leaders all arriving in quite a compressed window of time."

MEANWHILE the peak body of the Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EAAA) congratulated Brisbane on its selection to host this important meeting of world leaders.

EAAA general manager Joyce DiMascio said the impact of Darling Harbour's closure for three years from the end of 2013 and the G20 Summit decision is a worrying foretaste of the future if suitable alternate venues are not found soon."



"We are delighted to see Brisbane having the opportunity to showcase to the world the quality of its new and expanded facilities and expertise in hosting international events," said DiMascio.

"At the same time, we are concerned that several months after the announcement of the \$1 billion redevelopment of the Sydney International Convention Exhibition and Entertainment precinct, we still have no solution for the major events that will be displaced during the construction period."

DiMascio said that it was evident from the Federal Government's decision to take the G20 to Brisbane that the quality of the venue, together with attributes of the host city, had a significant bearing on conference, exhibition and event business.

EAAA president Matthew Pearce, one of the largest organisers of events at Darling Harbour, said time was now a critical factor in the search for interim event facilities.

"While Sydney will have a sparkling new facility after 2016 it is clear from the G20 decision that a city without a convention, exhibition and entertainment facility is at great disadvantage both nationally and on the global stage," Pearce said.

"We will be enduring significant pain; our sincere hope is that we come out of the period of unprecedented disruption with facilities that provide enough capacity to grow over the next 20 to 30 years."

"At present we still have no certainty about interim venues for major events which has implications not only for our industry but the wider visitor economy."

## Dear BEN...

IN response to the 'AV1 cries foul on venue costs' (BEN 6 July) Ben Alcott of Damn Good Productions was quick to concur with Keith Wootton's comments and to express his option on the subject.

"We run into these venue charges 'all the time' and it really does amount to anti competitive behaviour.

"It ranges from venues telling clients that they aren't allowed to bring an external supplier in at all, charging for a technician on duty (usually \$1000 a day or so), through to the relatively new practice of charging an "external supplier fee" (sometimes up to \$2500) if you choose to not use the in-house supplier.

"These practices basically amount to exclusive dealing and/or third line forcing, both of which are prohibited by the Competition and Consumer Act.

"Our clients are mainly large corporates who we have had long relationships with, and they feel comfortable taking us around the country to manage their events and presentations. However, with the massive venue charges we cop (which we obviously have to pass on), the clients are feeling more and more that it's not worth using external suppliers, and they feel badgered into using venue suppliers.

"We obviously fight strongly against it every single time, and if we all don't make a stand then a lot of AV/production companies will be severely affected.

"It's got to the point where we actively recommend against using certain venues. It's a shame, because a number of venues lose business! Whereas those who are happy to work with clients and their long time suppliers benefit. "We all just need to learn how to play well together!"

Do you agree or disagree with Keith Wootton and Ben Alcott?

Let us know what you think - [jill@businessesnews.com.au](mailto:jill@businessesnews.com.au).



crumbs!

CUTE rules, ok?

That is if American Airlines has anything to do with it.

The carrier has one of the world's cutest ambassadors, a fluffy, furry celebrity called Boo.

The pooch's post as Official Pet Liaison is their newest executive.

"As a pet-friendly airline we want our guests - those on two legs and those on four, to have a comfortable and enjoyable experience as possible on Virgin America," said Virgin America spokesperson, Abby Lunardini.



Rock while you roll

"GET out that kitchen and rattle those pots and pans," because Athena Cruises 'has a themed rock'n'roll, four-night, round-trip cruise from Perth on 2 April, 2013.

One of a record 12 short Australian Classic International Cruises, of five nights or less on offer next summer.

The special round-trip cruise featuring daily gigs by the ship's band and also Brisbane-based classic rock band, The Deadliners, comprising four "50-something", toe-tapping journalists-cum-musos who will play in the liner's lounges and around the pool, with tunes from Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, The Stray Cats, Jimmy Barnes, Jimmy Buffett, Crowded House and Peter Frampton amongst others.

The perfect venue for a rockin' reward or conference, the Athena is based in Perth and Adelaide every summer.

This traditional, mid-sized ocean liner offers attentive, old-fashioned service, fine cuisine, first-rate entertainment and value-for-money fares in an intimate and relaxed atmosphere.

See - classincruises.com.

Melbourne's Big Bang

THE recent, ground-breaking Higgs boson discovery (the so-called God particle and the key to the universe because it imbues other particles with mass) announced in Melbourne at the 36th International Conference on High Energy Physics (ICHEP), has shed positive light on the city's flourishing business events industry.

The recent ICHEP conference (4-11 July) brought more than 800 delegates to the city over an eight-day period and is expected to generate an estimated \$8 million in economic impact for the state, is the largest scientific gathering in the high energy community and was won after an intensive bidding process, facilitated by MCVB, dating back to 2005.

CEO of the Melbourne

Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB), Karen Bolinger said MCVB partnered with the University of Melbourne to bid for the 2012 conference, with Professor Geoffrey Taylor, past Head of the School of Physics at the University of Melbourne as the representative local host.

"After a number of years of hard work in preparing Melbourne's bid to bring the event to Victoria, Melbourne was announced as the successful bid, fending off strong competition from Manchester, at the Philadelphia conference in 2008," she said.

"It is evident by the worldwide attention given to the Higgs boson breakthrough the significant impact these major events can have on a host city - history will always point to Melbourne as the city where this ground-breaking announcement took place."

Aldina forges ahead

A few years ago it might have been Aldina who? Now, it's Aldina, where next?

That next is Aldina Apartment Hotel Bondi Beach, where the foundations of the hotel have just been completed.

Set to open in 2013, it is arguably in one of Sydney's best addresses, nestled on Bondi's bustling Hall Street and just 400 metres from iconic Bondi Beach.

The property forms a major component of a progressive development - Bondi Boheme which also includes residential apartments and a retail precinct.

The apartment hotel will have 111 apartment rooms, 46 studios, 56 one bedroom apartments, eight two bedroom apartments and one three bedroom apartment.

In addition, all apartments have balconies, while facilities include an outdoor pool and spa, gym and yoga room.

Oh la la, so Spicers



SPICERS Clovelly Estate, set in the Hinterland of the Sunshine Coast, has added their newly renovated French Cottage to its accommodation inventory.

A stand alone cottage, it contains three double bedrooms, two bathrooms, open-plan living, kitchen and dining, a study and two verandas front and back with views across the Hinterland.

Mid-week conference rates for the cottage start from \$269 per room for single share (three persons) and from \$338 per room twin share (six persons).

Bookings include a Parisian style breakfast each morning.

The addition of The French Cottage takes Spicers Clovelly Estate accommodation to 26, while a newly opened private deck area from the library area makes an ideal base for groups to gather and dine.

Book at - spicersgroup.com.au.

WIN AN ESCAPE TO EMIRATES WOLGAN VALLEY RESORT & SPA



During the months of June and July, Business Events News is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing two-night stay at the exclusive Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa in the Blue Mountains.

The prize includes a two-night stay for two people in a Heritage Suite with breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Non-alcoholic beverages with all meals and selected regional wines and beer with lunch and dinner are also included, as are two outdoor activities each day.

Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is located on a 4000-acre nature reserve adjacent to the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and only 190kms from Sydney. The resort offers 40 stand-alone luxury suites, each with its own private verandah & swimming pool.

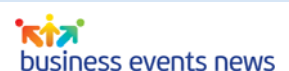
To enter simply email your answers to each question by 27th July 2012

Q.12: What is the name of the restored historic homestead, available for private events at Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa?

Hint: wolganvalley.com

Email your answers to: wolgan@businesseventsnews.com.au

Click here for terms & conditions





**CONTACT US:**

**Publisher**

Bruce Piper

**Editor**

Jill Varley

**Contributors**

Bruce Piper, Chantel Long

**Advertising:**

advertising@  
businesseventsnews.com.au

**P:** 1300 799 220

**F:** 1300 799 221

**PO Box 1010**

**Epping, NSW, 1710**

**Business Events News**

is part of the Travel Daily group of publications which also include: Travel Daily, Cruise Weekly & Pharmacy Daily.

**Sri Lanka Marriott**

**SRI** Lanka, is to have Marriott International's first hotel on the Indian Ocean Island.

The 200-room, 11-storey Weligama Bay Marriott Resort & Spa, due to open in 2014, is part of an agreement with Weligama Hotel Properties, a fully owned subsidiary of East West Properties PLC and will operate under Marriott's flagship, Marriott Hotels & Resorts brand.

Weligama, 144km from Colombo is a popular tourist destination renowned for its sandy beaches and famous stilt-fishermen perched on a cross bar of a single pole planted into the sea bed.

Simon Cooper, president and md Marriott, Asia Pacific said, "Sri Lanka is a destination that has great potential and opportunity and we hope to capitalise on that and establish a strong presence in the country."

**Five star all the way**



**COLLEAGUES** who flew into Sydney and Melbourne this week, from Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group's properties in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Hong Kong, The Excelsior Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Las Vegas, Manila, Singapore and Tokyo, hosted a lunch as elegant and stylish as their 5-star properties, at The Pier restaurant, Rose Bay.

Cynthia Boyett, director of business development at the new Mandarin Oriental Las Vegas said the hotel's 392 guest rooms and suites, have a calm non-gaming environment, coupled with views that look over the energy and



action of the famed Strip. Recently the Mandarin welcomed a Macquarie Bank conference who took a block of 280 rooms. "Because of our size, when groups stay here they feel as though they have bought the whole hotel," she said.

**GETTING TO KNOW: Cowra, New South Wales**

**STAY**, Save and Create in rural Cowra is the current tagline for this small town, located five hours from Sydney and offering meeting and incentive groups more adventure than found in a big city.

The Cowra Visitor Information Centre shows a Hologram program of the 1940 Prisoner of War breakout, where more than 1000 Japanese prisoners launched a mass 'suicide attack' on their guards, the Australian soldiers of the 22nd Garrison. The hologram enthralled American travel writer, Bill Bryson, who wrote about his experience in his book 'Down Under'.

Cowra hosts some significant events in the region including the famed Sakura Matsuri Cherry Blossom Festival and the Cowra AMSAG Rally, both held in September, while one of Australia's largest wine shows is held here with its public tasting being held this year on 28 July.

It's a region that provides the perfect location for an incentive - a day that might start with an early morning flight in a hot air balloon, or a small plane flight over Wyangala State Park. It's also a great location for team building activities such as fresh water fishing, native wildlife spotting, walking treks, star gazing, paint ball, canoeing and kayaking.

Cowra is home to some of Australia's finest wineries which offer group wine tastings and fresh oven baked pizzas, or there's group cooking class at one of the region's most awarded restaurants.

Added to this is shopping, art, culture and museums, and a rich history including the Cowra Heritage Walk, Military and Migrant Camps and the Iandra Castle, in the small village of Greenethorpe.

Accommodation is in keeping with a small town and ranges from motels, self contained properties, B&B's and farm stays, caravan parks and hotels.

For meetings and conferences Cowra offers a selection of auditoria, function rooms and venues including the Japanese Gardens, a multifunctional log cabin, house boats and cellar doors. Many venues feature catering and audio visual facilities with offerings for groups of 10 to up to 500 delegates.

Custom made itineraries can be created to suit individual or group needs from half day quick stop tours or up to seven day itineraries that also take in surrounding towns. Escorted group tours are run most days from the Cowra Visitor's Centre and include the 'Breakout Hologram', Aboriginal paintings on bridge pylons, the Peace Bell, Cowra Regional Art Gallery, Europa Migrant Memorial Site and History, Scenic Lookout, POW Breakout Site and the Japanese Cemetery.

BEN took most of the day to take in the town's rich history through a self guided tour. The hologram's explanation of what happened in Cowra all of those years ago was made more real to each person at each stop along the way. The helpful Information Centre staff gave additional details about the 1940 breakout which allowed even the locals to find significance and understanding in places they have previously taken for granted.

