



## Going for gold

**BEAUTIFUL** one day, perfect the next – the Gold Coast where **BEN** is on a pco famil, is living up to its memorable tag line with glorious days of brilliant sunshine.



So far we have spent a day involved in creative site inspections with each property pulling out the stops to make their hotel a more memorable experience and consequently succeeding.

At Crowne Plaza Surfers Paradise they created a dine around in various hotel locations and a competition to keep the group on their toes about aspects of the Gold Coast - all ending up with a rewarding lunch in Crowne's revolving restaurant with its spectacular 360 degree views.

At the Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre they were able to showcase the exhibition hall's versatility, during the Jeep National Rodeo Finals, which transformed them into horse corrals and a huge arena.

Much yee haring was heard as riders were bucked and thrown in an effort to stay upright.

From there it was just a stroll across the Gold Coast Highway to our accommodation at the Sofitel Gold Coast Broadbeach, ably escorted by two traffic-stopping lifesavers.

Sophisticated cocktails were served a la Francais at the Sofitel from an 'igloo' in a themed winter wonderland function room, complete with falling snow.

Off then to Warner Bros. Movie World via a series of vintage cars and hot rod cars.

**BEN** was transported in a 1966 Ford Galaxy and all were greeted by a galaxy of Warner characters, including the Green Hornet, Wonder Woman, the Joker and the Jester, with dinner taken in The Hall of Justice and a ride mid meal to save the world!

## Trotter's lifetime recognition

**ALAN** Trotter, ceo of Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) for 20 years is to receive a Life Membership and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the PCO Association for his significant contribution to the MICE sector.

Sarah Siebert, chair of the New Zealand PCO group and Professional Conference Organisers Association Councillor will make the presentation in Auckland next month.

Trotter, who will be stepping down as ceo of CINZ at the end of the year, is the inaugurator of the MEETINGS business event tradeshow, being held this month in Auckland, 26-27 June and recognised as one of the best business events tradeshows in Australasia.

During his tenure he has seen CINZ membership grown from 20 to 320, and established a sales and marketing office in Sydney, which is responsible for the marketing of New Zealand in the Australian market.



It's no small achievement that through these efforts Australia currently contributes 60% of all international arrivals into New Zealand, and is therefore, a critical "engine room" market.

In addition, Trotter is responsible for introducing the Conference Assistance Programme (CAP) into New Zealand, which CINZ ran for five years with great success, before handing it over to Tourism New Zealand.

A passionate advocate for the Business Events Sector, it was his vision to facilitate the union between PCO's in New Zealand and Australia with an alliance between the CINZ PCO group and the Professional Conference Organisers Association.

## Holiday Inn to open in Warwick Farm

**INTERCONTINENTAL** Hotels Group (IHG) will open the newly branded 146 room Holiday Inn Warwick Farm on 10 September, following a multi-million dollar refurbishment of the guest rooms and restaurant.

Formally the Sunnybrook Hotel, a franchise agreement signed by IHG and Oscars Hotels will see the South West Sydney hotel offer all day dining, a gym, meeting and events facilities, heated outdoor swimming pool and onsite parking.

The meeting and events centre along with the gym, pool and adjoining Oscars Tavern will be refurbished by early 2014 following the completion of the guest rooms and hotel restaurant.

This will be the 22nd Holiday Inn opened Australia.

## GCCB changes its name to GCBE

**WHILE** nothing official has been announced, the Gold Coast Convention Bureau without any fanfare has changed its name to Gold Coast Business Events.

While on the Gold Coast **BEN** spoke to Business Events director Anna Case who revealed the reason for the change.

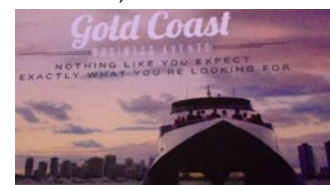
"We have been reviewing who we are and what we are going to do with regard to our markets.

"So far we have just revealed the new brand imagery and some new tag lines to our team, more of which will be rolled in the coming months.

"The thing is everyone thinks they know the Gold Coast but it is constantly changing and the biggest thing is the infrastructure coming up for the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

"Yes the Games go for two weeks but what is really important is pre and post Games and the standing that comes with it.

"A lot more destinations are taking us seriously – we have grown up and we can run events just like anyone else, even though we are a second tier city and our new name is synonymous of who we are now," Case said.



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### ONE for the film buffs.

Did you know that in Austria you can follow in the footsteps of the Third Man?

The classic movie is based on a screenplay British novelist Graham Greene and showcases Vienna during the years after WWII.

A time when the city was recovering from the horrors of the war, and separated into four zones, each governed by one of the victorious allies.

On this tour visitors will see some of the original locations, hear about the making of the movie, and even experience a bit of a chill down the spine.

You literally follow in Harry Lime's footsteps through Vienna's underground sewer where some of the film's most memorable scenes take place.

What's more you can view more original film locations and visit a private Third Man Museum.

Follow this with a ride on Vienna's Giant Ferris Wheel, another creepy film location which looks much more enchanting when the sun settles in the distance over the Inner City, with imposing St. Stephen's Cathedral scraping the sky.

### Book it Blu

**STAY** at least two consecutive nights between 17 June and 30 December at Radisson Blu Hotel Sydney and enjoy some Hot Deals such as up to 20% off best available rates.

In addition, you can earn 1,000 Club Carlson bonus Gold Points when you book your stay on their website.

What's more you'll enjoy free internet access throughout your stay.

For further information on these special deals or to learn more about the property visit the website at - [www.radissonblu.com/sydney](http://www.radissonblu.com/sydney).

## A Crowne-ing three days

**GREAT** memories and informative fun was the winning combination for a group of pco's who took part in a sales famil hosted at three Crowne Plaza NSW properties.

The three-part program themed by Blueberry Events, began with a "Mad Hatter" event at Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach and was followed by a "Hollywood VIP" theme at Crowne Plaza Terrigal, concluding with an indulgent food and wine experience at Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley.

The Brisbane, Melbourne and Hobart-based invitees also took part in a champagne picnic on the famous Bondi to Coogee walk and enjoyed dinner in Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach's Presidential Suite, where they showed off their Mad Hatter Tea Party creations.

The following morning after a relaxing yoga session by the hotel pool, they were transferred to Crowne Plaza Terrigal, on the Central Coast.

Split into three teams for an Amazing Race-style scavenger hunt around Terrigal, they then had a luxurious wash and blow dry at local hair salon Vive, in preparation for an evening of Hollywood festivities.

These started with a cocktail-making session after which they were entertained at the Hollywood awards-themed dinner in the hotel's Lord Ashley restaurant.

Next day after healthy vegetable and protein shots and rejuvenating head and shoulder massages they transferred to Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley, arriving in time for lunch at the hotel's North Terrace overlooking the 18-hole golf course.

Off on a scavenger hunt around the Crowne Plaza's grounds to experience the hotel from a different perspective, the afternoon was rounded off creating wine labels, which were judged by the hotel's Crowne Meetings team.

The evening started with pre-dinner drinks by the fire in the hotel's Vista Lounge, followed by dinner in the Gallery Room where they dined on the new winter menu at Redsalt.

The evening ended in relaxed



comfy bean bags, eating dessert and watching blockbuster comedy movies in the hotel's Semillon Ballroom.

Participants (**above**) from left are: Katina Franzidis, Taylored Images; Ellisa Mariani, Liberty Events; Lisa Roberts, Ultimate Conferences; Jenny Quinn; Laura McDougall, MCI Australia; Shaun Vassallo; Hamish Hill, ASN Events; Leesa McDermott, Conference Design, Phillip Beeson and Ben Serhan.

## Melbourne's \$10m medical win

**TWO** major medical conferences – the 8th Asia Pacific Heart Rhythm Society Scientific Session for 2015 and the Congress on Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) for 2017, have been secured by Melbourne.

The wins announced by Victorian Minister for Tourism and Major Events Louise Asher, will see around 1700 delegates converge on the city for the Asia Pacific Heart Rhythm Society Scientific Session, while 900 are expected to attend the Congress on SLE.

Both events will be held over four days at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) and will generate approximately \$10.5 million for the state economy.

"These recent successful bids add to some of the world's largest and most prestigious medical conferences Melbourne has won in the last few years, including the International AIDS Conference and the World Congress of Cardiology, both of which will be held in 2014," Asher said.

Since December 2010, the Melbourne Convention

Bureau (MCB) has secured 56 international association meetings for the MCEC estimated to attract more than 77,000 delegates and forecast to generate around \$370 million worth of economic impact for the state of Victoria.

MCB chief executive officer Karen Bolinger said that working collaboratively with the organisation's partners was the key to success.

"Our proven bidding strategy, working with local hosts such as the Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA) in the case of the Lupus bid, has seen Melbourne secure a further two medical events that will create a number of flow on business opportunities for the city, including an estimated 7,800 room nights for our accommodation providers," Bolinger said.

MCEC chief executive Peter King said, "These are key wins for Melbourne and Victoria, bringing almost 3,000 delegates to the venue over their duration and contributing a significant amount to the state's economy."



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## Reed launches 'Africa Travel Week'

**GLOBAL** leader Reed Travel Exhibitions (RTE) is to launch 'Africa Travel Week' at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) from 28 April to 3 May 2014.

Comprising three co-located shows – WTM Africa, IBTM Africa and ILTM Africa – it will include Africa's inbound and outbound markets for general leisure travel, luxury tourism, and the MICE/ business travel sector under RTE's established portfolios of WTM (World Travel Market), ILTM (International Luxury Travel Market) and IBTM (Incentives, Business Travel & Meetings).

The decision to create IBTM Africa follows the successful launch of ILTM Africa earlier this year.

See - [www.africatravelweek.com](http://www.africatravelweek.com).

## Sydney Showground on track



**WITH** a new pavilion & upgrades due for completion in February next year, significant progress has been reported by the Royal Agricultural Society following on from last month's announcement of a new Exhibition & Event facility at Sydney Showground.

Now, after a detailed procurement process and a contractor selected, it is anticipated that contractual documentation will be finalised and executed in the coming week with works on site to commence in late August immediately following AIMEX.

Peter Thorpe, Sydney Showground gm confirmed, 'Not only are we pleased with the progress of our expansion project but we have also committed significant financial resources

to the upgrade of our existing facilities.

"It is crucial we offer certainty to our clients and a competitive choice for them.

Thorpe went on to say they are also thrilled at the securing of a number of high profile events including Sydney Home Show, Mind Body & Spirit Festival and Australia's premier IT conference and exhibition, CeBIT.

Commercial manager at Sydney Olympic Park Authority, Nick Hubble stated, 'We are delighted at the proactive approach taken by Sydney Showground in delivering new and updated facilities to our growing precinct and look forward to welcoming both clients and visitors alike to enjoy what Sydney Olympic Park has to offer'.



## Getting to Know: Berkeley River Lodge

by: Jill Varley

The wind was a little too blowy to land by the beach when we flew to Berkeley River Lodge, so the Kimberley Air Tours floatplane we'd taken from Kununurra circled the resort and swept onto the Berkeley River, to a more sheltered spot.

The Berkeley River runs into the Timor Sea and from the main lodge the magic of this remote part of Australia is set before you.

The Lodge, which consists of 20-luxury freestanding villas spread out along a 65-metre-high dune, have king-sized beds and open-air en-suites and bath tubs.

Cruise up the broad beamed Berkeley River, 30kms from where the river meets the sea and it's virtually untouched since early explorer Charles P. Conigrave visited the area in 1912.

The river, walled by an enormous sandstone escarpment, looks like the ruins of some ancient civilisation. "We have the flexibility to manipulate activities to suit any small group," explained the Berkeley's Michael Skinner, "We can combine a river cruise with a climb up Mt Casuarina (a nearby flat-topped mountain)."

Half the group fish, while the other climb and vice versa. "They can have a picnic on the top or have the resort's helicopter transfer them either way," he explained. Accessible only by air, on a four or eight seater seaplane, however, an airfield is to be built at the end of this season in time for the next. Guests will then be able to fly direct from Darwin on a 19 seater aircraft. Days can be spent exploring the endless beach in the resort's safari buggy or set off by foot to find sizeable shell middens and stone tools left by departing Indigenous people, cruise the Berkeley River, take a bushwalk or fish and then have the chef sashimi your catch for lunch.

You can enjoy sundowners in the bush, canapés and champagne by the beach, a campfire barbecue in a clearing over the Timor Sea or a star-lit dinner on the deck of the Lodge and if the time of the year is right, watch Flatback turtles digging in the sand to lay their eggs and be astounded at the privilege of witnessing nature in all its wonder.

