



Work and play

BEN is at Club Med Bali this week with a group of 80 Australasian



PCOs, clients and media, attending a Club Med Groups & Incentives Event and for an introduction to their 'More for your Business' program that showcases the innovations expected throughout the Club Med portfolio in 2013-2014.

The groups who have come from all over Australia, New Zealand, China, Korea, Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia, arrived in waves throughout Monday, meeting up in the evening at a welcome black with white function.

This was followed by the sort of entertainment Club Med does so well and last night it was their G.O. "Broadway" event.

Today after a morning conference learning about the Club Med advantages – about which more will be written - we (Australia & NZ) were pitted against the various countries in beach team building exercises – won, dare I say it, by the Aussies.

We have been joined by Heidi Kunkel, chief executive officer, East and South Asia & Pacific and hosted by Club Med's Brendon King, groups & incentives manager and Joey Templin, business development manager.

If I have to say something about the Club Med operation, it is that it runs like a well-oiled machine and don't even get me started on the amazing food.

Prepare to be convinced about an operation you may not have given a lot of consideration to before - Jill.



Pictured above are: Joey Templin, Heidi Kunkel and Brendon King.

Timmins to head up AIME

JACQUI Timmins was today named as the new director for the Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (**BEN** breaking news) which will take place in Melbourne on 18 and 19 February next year.

Timmins (**pictured**) takes over from Sally de Swart who has run AIME for the last two years, herself taking over from Rosemarie Sama who had been with AIME for almost a decade.

Reed Travel Exhibitions, which organises the event, said that Timmins would also be in charge of the China Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition (CIBTM) which is on in Beijing during this coming September.

Timmins told **BEN** she was thrilled to be taking up the new role, adding "I have observed the growth and innovation of AIME and CIBTM over the past few years and I'm excited to be taking these events forward".

Timmins has had a stellar travel industry career, having held senior roles at Qantas Airways as well as within the Stella Travel Group (now JTG) and as general manager of the high profile Travelscene American Express agency network.

This saw her involved in scores of events, both on-and off-shore, such as large conferences for Travelscene as well as Qantas Platinum Club and Qantas Holidays Achievers events around the globe.

Dee joins Outrigger

GLOBAL marketing expert Sean Dee has joined the Outrigger executive team as executive vice president and chief marketing officer.

As the company's new global brand steward, Dee is responsible for developing and deploying the global marketing and brand strategies for Outrigger Enterprises Group, working closely with the company's Hawaii and Asia-Pacific regions to address market-specific sales and marketing needs, as well as ensuring integration, collaboration and consistency across the entire Outrigger portfolio.



Reinventing Great Keppel island

GETTING wrecked on Great Keppel Island may not be an option these days, however according to *The Australian* earlier this week, a planned ecotourism resort and a Greg Norman designed 18-hole golf course is on the cards as Tower Holdings looks to Asia, for a joint venture partner and hotel operator.

The \$600m redevelopment of Great Keppel comes after a seven-year battle with government authorities.

The reduced version of an earlier plan, the resort includes, in addition to the golf course a 250-room hotel, 750 villas, 600 apartments and a 250-berth marina.

Tower Holdings chief executive Terry Agnew says that with Norman at the helm of the golf course, which will be built on a cliff edge 60m over the ocean, it will be one of the most iconic resort courses in Australia.

"We want Great Keppel Island to become the crown jewel of the Great Barrier Reef," he said.



Victoria's Natural Conference Destination



Brisbane hotels transform

WITH the high Australian dollar causing grief in the mining industry, resulting in hefty cuts to mining staff, hotels in Brisbane, a beneficiary of the mining boom, are suffering a severe occupancy pinch.



Mercure Brisbane.

BEN was fortunate to be the first media outlet to experience the hotel last week, staying in an executive suite with spectacular views Brisbane River views.

The stylish and colourful carpeting, together with new soft and hard furnishings, showcase a new design standard throughout the hotel.

In close proximity to QPAC and the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, it's just a short walk to the centre of the city with its myriad restaurants and facilities.

MEANWHILE another Brisbane hotel, the Pullman Brisbane King George Square (formerly Sebel King George Square) has also completed a massive renovation, raising it to a five-star Pullman standard.

The Pullman features a distinctive lobby with a circular reception desk.

Also featured in the renovation is a new Pullman lounge and the largest hotel conference facilities in Brisbane with a capacity for up to 1000 delegates.



Despite this hotel renovation and upgrading continues unabated and this is especially evident in the Accor Group properties.

Many may well remember the former Ansett Hotel, The Gateway on Brisbane's North Quay.

Currently undergoing a multi-million dollar transformation, it will emerge mid-May as the 4-star

Crane, Sydney's newest event venue

OPENING this evening and leading a revitalisation of Sydney's Bayswater Road precinct is its newest resident, Crane Bar Restaurant.

It is also an eclectic yet stylish event venue for corporate and private functions for 15 to 350 guests.

Focusing on a mix of Japanese fusion cuisine and signature beverages from a host of unique and distinctively decorated rooms, executive chef Taichi Ito, formerly of Brisbane's Sake Bar & Restaurant, entertains guests at The Executive Chef's Table where event attendees sit up at the bar as he creates delectable morsels, while set menus make the decisions easy for corporate events.

All rooms are equipped with the latest audio-visual technology and offer a range of distinct event spaces, such as the tranquil setting of The Garden or The Hidden Fortress where guests can conduct private meetings.

Singapore's new River Safari

SINGAPORE has opened a new wildlife adventure, River Safari with more than 5,000 aquatic and land animals representing 300 species.

The 12 hectare River Safari, the latest addition to Wildlife Reserves Singapore's portfolio of parks, showcases animals from freshwater habitats inspired by eight of the world's iconic rivers including the Mississippi, Nile, Mekong, Yangtze and Amazon rivers.

The park will be home to over 150 plant and 5,000 animal specimens representing 300 animal species, including one of the world's largest collections of freshwater animals.

Currently in a soft opening phase, boat rides throughout the park will open later in the year.



ONYX into Indonesia

THAILAND-BASED ONYX Hospitality Group took the first step in an expansion into Indonesia with its appointment to operate the 435 room Pecatu Indah for the Amari brand.

Located on the southern peninsula of Bali, a well-known surfer's paradise with limestone cliffs and secluded beaches, it is part of the 400 hectare Pecatu Indah Resort, an integrated development with planned facilities including a shopping mall, 18 hole golf course and conference venues that can hold up to 12,000 people.



TRAVEL may broaden your mind but beware, it can also blow it!

BBC News reveals that the cities of Florence, Jerusalem and Paris all have psychiatric disorders associated with them, of particular danger to tourists.

Let's start with Paris which has an affliction known as the Paris Syndrome caused by rude waiters.

It's a syndrome that primarily affects the Japanese who rarely raise their voice in anger.

The resultant feelings they suffer are ones of persecution and derealisation.

Jerusalem is a city of significant importance to Christian, Jewish and Islamic pilgrims who often become overcome and consumed with religious fervor and emotion.

Israel's Dr. Yael Bar-El says that the city's psychiatric hospitals had treated over 500 in-patient cases in the preceding 12 years.

Then there's the Florence Syndrome, a psychosomatic disorder that causes rapid heartbeat, dizziness, fainting and confusion when an individual is exposed to art, particularly in a single place.

Renaissance art has long caused visitors to "swoon."

Fraser Perth opens

THE first five-star all-suite apartment hotel to be built in Perth in over a decade – the Fraser Suites Perth, officially opens its doors this month.

Overlooking the Swan River, the 19 storey property in East Perth is the third opening in Australia for the hospitality group and features 236 five-star residences.

Business travellers are well catered for with a range of configurable meeting rooms and a Frasers Hospitality meeting package which offers free wifi, and an assigned coordinator.

Special introductory rates start from \$245 per night for a studio residence and \$270 per night for a one-bedroom apartment, valid for bookings before 30 August.



World's biggest event in 2020

DUBAI has launched a concerted pitch to host the International World Expo in 2020 - a six month extravaganza which is targeting a massive 25 million visitors.

The huge business event takes place every five years, providing a platform for host countries to showcase not only their own offerings but those of the nations of the world.

The governing body of the World Expo is the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), and Dubai says its geographic positioning means a large proportion of potential visitors are located within an eight hour flight, making it the perfect location.

At Arabian Travel Market this week, spokesperson Howaida Rabeee (pictured above) said the potential to gather international visitors would make a Dubai event the first "real" international World Expo.

In 2010 the Shanghai World Expo attracted a huge 73 million visits, but the vast majority of those were from mainland China.

"Dubai's bid is unique whereby 70% of the visitors are expected to come from outside the UAE," Rabeee said.

It's proposed that the event would run from Oct 2020 to Apr



2021 and would also celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Arab Emirates.

It would take place on a new 438 hectare site located between Dubai and Abu Dhabi - and after the expo the location would be used by Dubai for a "new world class convention centre".

There are five cities in total vying for the 2020 event, while the next World Expo in 2015 will take place in Milan, Italy.

The BIE is expected to announce the 2020 host city this Nov.

MEANWHILE also at Arabian Travel Market, Dubai Tourism director-general His Highness Helal Saeed Almarri outlined major plans to boost visitation to a huge 20 million arrivals annually, with business events a key component of the growth.

"Today's conference delegate is tomorrow's holidaymaker," he told *BEN* in Dubai this week.

NT commits to business tourism

THE Northern Territory Budget 2013 has committed to spending \$1.7 million to attract more business events through an expanded ambassador program, research-driven bid development and trade-focused public relations and marketing.

According to peak national industry body Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF) the dedicated funding will benefit the Northern Territory, as delegates spend money across the visitor economy.

TTF acting chief executive officer Trent Zimmerman said this is great news for the entire territory economy.

"It is encouraging to see the Northern Territory government prioritising tourism as a key driver in building a stronger NT economy," he said.

"Business events generated an estimated \$52 million of direct expenditure in the Northern Territory in 2012-13, supporting more than 6500 direct tourism jobs in the NT.

"Business travellers spend an average of \$248 per night, which is more than other categories of overnight visitors, who spend \$135 on average.

"Further investment in and promotion of leisure-based activities and attractions will encourage delegates to spend time in the territory before or after a business event," he said adding that the NT has plenty to offer delegates outside a traditional event program including Kakadu National Park, Uluru Kata Tjuta, and Katherine Gorge.

Rainbird flies home



HERE'S some exciting news, Veronica Rainbird has re-joined Dubai's Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing (DTCM) Australia and New Zealand team to take up the newly created position of general manager, Trade Relations and Partnerships.

The position is in line with the recently announced 2020 Vision for Dubai Tourism, and has been introduced to increase the destination's market share within Australia and New Zealand.

Julie King DTCM Australia and New Zealand director expressing their delight in her return said, "We're delighted to welcome Veronica back to the team.

"Veronica was a key player in our successful launch into the Australia and New Zealand market in 2010 and will be instrumental in implementing our plans moving forward."

CONTACT US:

Publisher
Bruce Piper

Editor
Jill Varley

Contributors
Chantel Housler

Advertising:
advertising@businessesnews.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 and Pharmacy Daily.

Disclaimer: While every care has been taken in the preparation of *Business Events News* no liability can be accepted for errors or omissions. *BEN* takes no responsibility for the opinions of its contributors/columnists. Information is published in good faith to stimulate independent investigation of the matters canvassed.

The first point of call for Japan

YOKOHAMA, Japan's premier international convention city, has been branded "Japan's First Port of Call" by the Yokohama Convention & Visitors Bureau.

"Designated as the selling message for the city, the idea behind it comes from the city's history, when 154 years ago, Yokohama was the first port that opened up to the world, after 200 years of seclusion in Japan's history.

With its unique blend of Japanese and modern cultures, as well as the open nature which makes it easy to conduct business, Kana Nomoto from YCVB explains "Our city council currently adopts an



Open Yokohama brand, and it is important that the convention brand not only supplements it, but strengthens it.

"From being the first Japanese port to open up, to hosting first-time-in-

Asia congresses, and the first in innovation and research and development, our open, "can-do" approach has made this city Japan's first port of call.

"And, for any international meeting organiser who wants to bring their event to Yokohama, the YCVB is, of course, their first port of call as we are a full service bureau," he said.

YCVB and PACIFICO will be at Booth 420 at IMEX.