



Namaste!

TODAY BEN is in India as a guest of DMS Australia, Air India and Cox & Kings, India, having spent last night at The Imperial hotel in New Delhi.



Now we fly to Ladakh high in the Himalayas to stay in a luxury camp - a sweet proposition for a small incentive, so there will be much to relate and report on in upcoming issues.

MEANWHILE hoteliers often have good stories to tell of the personalities they meet and the incidents that occur in their properties; that is, if you can prise it out of them.

JW Marriott Phuket director of sales and marketing Judy Holland, whom I met at the Marriott global sales mission, has a suitcase full of experiences, stories and observations, especially from working for many years in the Middle East. Most of these she is keeping for the day she retires and writes a book.

In Dubai, she reveals that cars bearing a number plate under 100 are related in some way to Dubai's ruling Maktoum family, with the number one used for His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

Over a period of time she has made a point of photographing all 100!

In a brief encounter in Saudi Arabia, Holland met Hillary Clinton.

"The thing is," she said, "we have a similar hair colour so it was not uncommon for me to be compared with her."

One day, when walking into a hotel, she was surprised when a group of men in white Arab dress solicitously parted to let her through to the reception desk.

It was only a short time later that the real Hillary Clinton who was attending a conference there, walked in.

"I couldn't believe my eyes. She's a hero of mine so I had to meet her. We even had a photo taken together."

Talk about doppelgangers! Jill

Business events visitors up

FIGURES from Tourism Research Australia (TRA) have shown the number of business events visitors in Australia in the year to March is up on last year, at 20.2m compared with 19.9m.

Domestic visitors overall were up on last year but international visitors for business events saw a drop from 831,000 to 816,000 according to the data which comes, in part, from the International Visitors Survey.

Domestic overnight visitors were the largest segment contributing to business events at 9.97m visitors in 2014 compared with 9.3m in 2013 and visitors attending a business meeting made up the largest segment of types of business event at 15.4m, while those attending a conference or convention came in second at 4.7m.

Overall, trip nights were up at 44.96m compared with 43.6m in 2013.

Business event visitors' spend was up overall at \$13b compared with \$12.5b in 2013, the data showed, comprised largely of domestic overnight visitors at \$9.4b, with international visitors spending \$2.3b.

This equates to a spend of about \$644 per visitor.

Spend for domestic visitors excluded expenditure on motor vehicles and for international visitors, it excluded pre-paid international airfares and package expenditure, TRA said.

Overall, those attending a business meeting had total expenditure \$9.9b with those attending a conference or convention spending \$3.8b.

This expenditure related to the whole of the trip, not just the part of the trip specific to the business event, TRA said.

Association of Australian Convention Bureaux executive director Andrew Hiebl said TRA data had limitations and that the economic impact of business events was understated as the questions used did not incorporate corporate spend.

The data was a good place to start, however, and gaps in the system were known and consistent, he said.

Eat, stay, love

MARRIOTT International, joined by 25 hotels from America to the Middle East and South Africa, hosted 'Breakfast Around the World' last week, during its global sales mission.

During the event, guests met hotel leaders including those from The Ritz-Carlton, JW Marriott and the Autograph Collection and Marriott's newest brand, Protea Hotels, was introduced.

Speaking with **BEN** after the Sydney tradeshow, Marriott International global sales South Asia regional director Avril

Three pages today

BEN has two pages of editorial plus a full page from (click):

- Club Med

Get on board w/MEA

MEETINGS & Events Australia (MEA) has launched a new initiative for professionals under 30 who work with a MEA member to attend its Board of Directors' meetings as an invited guest.

The program aimed to let young events employees put their views and ideas to the Board and gain experience, MEA said.

MEA ceo Linda Gaunt said this would provide insights into the younger demographic of the association in terms of membership requirements.



Northridge said Marriott had had a lot of requests for proposals from guests, with Peru, Dubai and Hawaii proving to be very popular destinations, as was Africa because of the new association there.

"We also celebrated the opening of our new hotel in Beijing, the Renaissance Beijing Wangfujing Hotel and on 01 Aug, the opening of the Courtyard by Marriott Bali Seminyak."

Following the events, Marriott Hotels and South Africa Airways gave away prizes, the most coveted of which was a trip for two to South Africa, courtesy of South African Airways and the new Protea Hotels alliance.

Pictured from left is Andrew Kelly ACTE Global, Northridge, Judy Holland, JW Marriott Phuket and Hardy Kilimann, Marriott International.

BATHURST 1000

CORPORATE PACKAGE



Private Charter Flight



First Class Track Facilities

Our exclusive 2-day Sydney flight charter package has it all. This is the high point of the Australian motorsport calendar so book today with **Autoring Tours** to avoid missing out.



A Lifetime of Memories



1300 139 450 www.autoringtours.com.au



business events news

4th August 2014



YOU may have raised an eyebrow at **BEN's** Face to Face question, 'Which convention would you most like to attend - Moon Laser Manufacturers 2014, Chocolate Fountaineers Taster Expo etc?'

Turns out, we weren't so far off when it came to the more out-there conventions.

There's the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency 100 Year Starship Study Symposium, which looked at every aspect of enabling interstellar travel within 100 years, including philosophical and religious considerations as well as communication to encourage long term research and journeys to the stars.

Then there's the delectable Dallas Chocolate Conference, described as "a room of wall-to-wall chocolate" - count us in.

Destination Asia MICE

DESTINATION Asia Indonesia has a new senior meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions manager in Alysia Gilligan.

Based in Bali, Gilligan would assist in all MICE areas, Destination Asia Indonesia said.

Gilligan has previously worked for Formula One managing hospitality and catering and for the Clean Energy Ministerial and G20 meeting in Abu Dhabi.

Gilligan said the Indonesian MICE market was rapidly expanding.

Gartner embraces fun

GARTNER, one of Business Events Australia's successful incentive bids, staged its annual event in Sydney in April with 1,600 employees, the executive team, and partners, attending.

Accommodated in three five-star hotels, the five day program included kick off in the auditorium at the Sydney Opera House and tours that ranged from learning to surf at Bondi Beach, a winery tour in the Hunter Valley and bushwalking in the Blue Mountains.

Gartner vice president of worldwide event production Libby Donovan said the company wanted to keep the incentive fresh and take the group somewhere different.

Adelaide lands GEDC

ADELAIDE Convention Bureau has said the city has won the bid to host the 2015 Global Engineering Deans Council (GEDC), with an estimated 250 delegates expected to attend.

The conference will be held from 30 Nov to 02 Dec at the InterContinental Adelaide.

The city won the event thanks to a partnership between the Bureau and the University of Adelaide, it said.

Bureau ceo Damien Kitto said the win was a perfect example of the "incalculable benefit" to hosting conventions in Adelaide, as the benefits reaped as a result of hosting the engineering experts in the city were enduring beyond the event's end.

Yaz 'popping' for biz events

A **RECENT** incentive has driven inquiries for Yas Island, which was set to "pop" in the next three to four years for business events, Yas Island Destination director Clive Dwyer said.

Dwyer, who many will know from his time at the Melbourne Conference and Exhibition Centre, spoke to **BEN** at the Abu Dhabi Roadshow this week about the appeal of this destination within a destination for the C&I market, including the opening of a 2.5m sqft mall which would significantly increase footfall.

Other attractions included venues with meeting and function spaces such as du Forum, an entertainment venue for up to 1,700 delegates.

Adding to this were a cluster of six, four and five star Yas Plaza Hotels which Dwyer said enabled Yas to put together whole-of-island bids for conferences of up to 2,500.

Abu Dhabi had made it into the top 100 of the ICCA World Rankings, meaning for conference organisers that were looking for something a little bit different or to rotate into the UAE, Yas was

Sanety takes Addison



IN A surprise move, David Addison, strategic account manager at MCI Australia, has gone Sane!

He joins two other industry movers and shakers, Michelle O'Donahoo and Sue-Ellen Nagi at Sane Event Group, as director of strategic development and corporate services.

Addison, who brings to the role 30 successful years and a wealth of international experience in strategic management and business development across the meetings, events, creative and tourism industries, was previously a founder and managing director of Avanti Events and Pharma Events.

O'Donahoo said together, the three directors (**pictured**) would make a formidable team.

We can't help but agree.



popping up, Dwyer said.

It recently held a Nu Skin China Incentive with 24,000 delegates, which Dwyer said had resulted in inquiries from Amway India and China, incentive groups out of Hong Kong and engineering and medical conferences.

"So I think in the next three to four years we are really going to pop for business events where we were traditionally working on leisure."

New Caledonia space

THE opening of the Sheraton New Caledonia Deva Resort and Spa has introduced a new meetings space to New Caledonia.

The hotel had almost 6,000 sqft of meetings space which could be divided into a ballroom and had indoor and outdoor pre-function areas, with a dedicated conference and events team, Starwood said.

The hotel itself had 180 guestrooms including 60 bungalows, Starwood said.

Vic business events

VICTORIAN Minister for Tourism and Major Events Louise Asher said the Regional Events Planners Guide (**BEN** 01 Aug) formed part of the government's Regional Business Events Program.

"The Government set an ambitious target for Business Events Victoria to negotiate with 200 event organisers to encourage their conference to be conducted in regional Victoria.

"This target was achieved in 2013-14 and over that period generated 28,500 delegate days and 15,000 delegate nights."

Delegate days were calculated by multiplying total number of delegates by the number of days or nights each stayed in the region, Asher said.

"The Regional Victoria Planner's Guide is Business Events Victoria's key piece of marketing collateral."

CONTACT US:

Publisher Editor Deputy editor
Bruce Piper Jill Varley Alex Walls

For advertising enquiries email Sean Harrigan & Katrina Ford at: 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.

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.

Club Med 
GROUPS & INCENTIVES

Book your 2015 event and save up to 40%



 **1 800 258 263**

www.clubmedgroups.com.au

Club Med 
Premium all-inclusive resorts