



## Ozzie Oscar

**FRESH** from the 2014 Academy Awards and the win of a clutch of Oscars by our talented Aussie actors, comes this behind the scenes news from the Peninsula Beverly Hills about the Oscars weekend.



The luxury hotel was fully booked with celebs and industry VIPs and there were reservations for more than 30 Oscar nominees—including those for Best Actor, Best Actress and Best Picture (no names, no pack drill.)

Then in preparation for the onslaught of A-listers filling its 194 guest rooms, suites and villas, the Peninsula took extra steps to make sure that the service and accommodation surpassed its guests' wildest expectations.

This meant staff was increased by up to 20% to handle all kinds of VIP requests from dog walking to last-minute couture alterations.

Staff study film credits and photos to familiarise themselves with celeb guests and VIPs get personally monogrammed pillowcases—even dog towels are monogrammed for VIPs' pets on the hotel's US\$10,000 computerised monogramming machine.

Customised chocolate with the logo from their film greets the celeb when they step into their suites, while winners return to find a bottle of champagne and a special dessert.

Chief concierge James Little has worked every Oscars Weekend since the Peninsula Beverly Hills opened in 1991 and coordinated the arrival of more than 72 limos.

He keeps a supply of extra cufflinks on hand for guests and has arranged last-minute purchases of everything from skin-coloured thongs and panty hose to bow ties and cummerbunds.

He has loaned his own tie to nominees several times.

Needless to say his tie has never won. *Jill*

## New Sheraton opens



**FOUR** Points by Sheraton Brisbane, owned by Felicity Hotel Pty Ltd and the first globally branded, new-build property, opened on Tuesday.

"We are delighted to introduce Four Points to Brisbane, one of Australia's most energetic and economically vibrant cities," said Sean Hunt, regional vice president Pacific, Starwood Hotels & Resorts.

"It's always a good sign for Brisbane's economy when major international brands set up shop and serve as a drawcard for interstate and international tourists," said Lord Mayor Graham Quirk.

Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games Jann Stuckey said, "The addition of the first internationally branded hotel in the Brisbane CBD in over ten years shows a renewed confidence in not only our industry, but the Brisbane hotel and accommodation market.

"The Newman Government is working hard to maximise visitor numbers to the State and achieve our goal of doubling annual overnight visitor expenditure from \$15 billion in 2010 to \$30 billion by 2020.

"This new venture will contribute to boosting visitation and help to get Queensland back on track."

**Pictured** from left are Four Points by Sheraton Brisbane general manager Brad Mercer, Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games Jann Stuckey, Lord Mayor Graham Quirk, Felicity Hotel Pty Ltd owner Paul Chong and Starwood Hotels & Resorts regional vice president Pacific Sean Hunt.

## QT launches in ACT

**CANBERRA'S** New Acton is to get a new hotel in early April, the QT Canberra.

The building was formerly the Lakeside Hotel with a history steeped in Canberra political life.

It has seen Prime Ministers made and ousted to iconic acceptance speeches and back-room meetings.

The hotel will launch with a redesigned exterior and interior by designer Nic Graham and embrace new technology, and cutting edge design.

The hotel will have 200 guest suites, as well as a concept restaurant created by QT Hotels creative food director, Robert Marchetti.

It will also offer a number of exclusive retreats with secret rooms, private hideaways and secluded spaces, perfect to hold private meetings.

## Vale Trevor Haworth

**TREVOR** Haworth, Master Mariner and founder of Captain Cook Cruises, passed away on 01 Mar, aged 82.

A well known figure in the travel and cruise industry, his life was one of pioneering vision, great courage, adventure and achievement in building the iconic business Captain Cook Cruises, and helping to shape the tourism industry in Australia.



Described as a man of high moral principles and true Christian ethics, Trevor was a committed supporter of many charitable works including Rotary.

He is survived by his wife Geraldine, three loving children Jackie Charlton, Anthony and Allison Haworth West and seven grandchildren.

Born in Blackburn Lancashire on 08 Jun 1931, he will be sadly missed and fondly remembered.

The funeral will be at St Mary's Church on 06 Mar at 10am.

## Today's BEN issue

**BEN** has three pages of editorial plus full pages from:

- Tangalooma Island Resort [CLICK HERE](#)
- Platinum Networking [CLICK HERE](#)

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## SITE'S Gray area

IN response to the 'SITE – Upswing in Incentives' article (BEN 03 Mar), which quoted

research from Site International Foundation saying incentive travel would increase, Incentive Association general secretary Peter Gray said while anecdotal evidence suggested that the article's points were true in ANZ, the research was conducted in the USA.

He said there were "significant" differences in definitions between what constituted an incentive reward there and in ANZ.

"Indeed, if the categories of incentive rewards that are not recognised as such here - business gifts and premiums - are removed from the value of the US market this reduces it by 40%-50%.

"This has been a perennial problem when quoting SITE or

IRF data and is one of the reasons that the Incentive Association is conducting its own research through the ACRS at Monash.

"While business gifts and premiums may mostly refer to merchandise or 'lifestyle' rewards this is not exclusively so."

He said there was a greater preponderance

of these but travel was used both as a business gift and, more often, a premium.

"Clients, at least those my company deals with, have always expected to know their ROI and ROO - a well constructed incentive programme should always show these - and there are types of incentive programmes which limit liability while enhancing both ROI and ROO and any incentive practitioners worth their salt should be aware of these."



## Record Meetings

MEETINGS Africa 2014 ended on a high note with a record attendance.

The event was held last week at Johannesburg's Sandton Convention Centre.

With the theme 'Advancing Africa Together', figures showed 169 international qualified hosted buyer delegates attended, up 15% from 2013 as well as 31 African Association hosted buyer delegates and 238 local corporate buyer delegates, up 140% on last year.

The figures also showed 839 visitor delegates attended, up 16% on last year, 262 exhibitors, up 11% on last year and 162 journalists, up 19% on last year.

In total, 3,295 people passed through the gates, up 15% on last year.



While South African Tourism was delighted that Meetings Africa was growing, the focus had always been on quality rather than quantity, ceo Thulani Nzima said.

"There is no doubt that Meetings Africa 2014 delivered a quality business platform for both buyers and exhibitors."



A \$2,722 per person dinner on the helipad atop the Burj Al Arab is to be the grand finale of the Dubai Food Festival on 13 Mar.

With seating limited to 12 guests, the once in a lifetime dinner 212m above ground, starts with a warm Arabian welcome and exclusive reception on the lower helipad deck.

During the gastronomic seven-course degustation menu created by Burj Al Arab's executive chef, Maxime Luvara, guests will be treated to 360 degree panoramic views of downtown Dubai, Dubai Marina, Palm Jumeirah, and the World Islands.

The high table dinner is designed to raise money for the United Nations World Food Programme to provide food to more than 120,000 children for a day.

"In addition to raising funds in a unique way, the High Table dinner also raises awareness of the great work being undertaken by the United Nations World Food Programme," said Laila Mohammed Suhail, ceo at Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment.

Burj Al Arab general manager Heinrich Morio said the programme was a great cause.

# THE ULURU MEETING PLACE

## WINNER 3 AUSTRALIAN TOURISM AWARDS

Uluru Meeting Place and Ayers Rock Resort received top honours at this year's Australian Tourism Awards. The Uluru Meeting Place was named best Business Tourism facility in Australia, the Indigenous Tourism program was awarded Silver and five star Sails in the Desert was awarded Bronze for Luxury Accommodation, making it in the top three luxury hotels in Australia.

Come and meet the team at AIME 2014 stand number 1932

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61 2 8296 8067  
[conferences@voyages.com.au](mailto:conferences@voyages.com.au)



## Sunshine crosses ditch



**WHEN** the Queensland on Tour trade show was held in Auckland recently, tourism operators from the Sunshine Coast, in partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland, flew the region's flag during a whirlwind trade mission

Travel Expo, attended by more than 15,000 Kiwi consumers, provided a platform for Sunshine Coast tour operators to promote their products directly to the NZ market.

More than 75 retail and wholesale travel agents, conference organisers, product managers and other key industry contacts provided updates as well

as taking part in the Flight Centre Travel Expo.

CEO of Sunshine Coast Destination Limited (SCDL) Simon Ambrose said the trade mission was an excellent opportunity to capitalise on Air New Zealand's three year direct flight commitment between Auckland and Sunshine Coast Airport .

"These trade and expo events were staged to highlight how easy it is for New Zealand holidaymakers and groups to fly to the Sunshine Coast."

"There are plentiful connections between a variety of NZ airports and Brisbane, and the Sunshine Coast is just 90 minutes drive up the road, but from 27 June through to 26 October 2014, direct Air New Zealand flights between Auckland and Sunshine Coast Airport make it even easier for Kiwis to fly across the ditch for some Sunny Coast sophistication and sun."

**Pictured** from left are representatives of operators who participated in the trade mission; Oceans Mooloolaba's Lucy Davis, Rumba Beach Resort's Emma Buckingham and Sun Air Bus Service's Kelly Cattanach.

### Ross Preferred VP

**PREFERRED** Hotel Group has appointed Anthony Ross as executive vice president for Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa (APMEA).

Ross has more than 25 years of international hospitality experience, most recently serving as vice president of operations for Marco Polo Hotels, as well as area general manager for Swire Hotels' operations in Beijing.

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

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### PWV hosts TNZ

**LAST** week the team at Positively Wellington Venues (PWV) showcased two iconic venues, the Michael Fowler Centre and the St James Theatre, to the business events team at Tourism New Zealand (TNZ).

PWV's ceo Glenys Coughlan said with TNZ making a "significant" investment in growing the business events market at \$34 million over four years, it was important that the team was familiar with Wellington's business event offering.

"We have committed to working with TNZ to achieve some ambitious growth targets so it is vitally important that we're all on the same team if we are to achieve the growth we've targeted."

The famil was organised by Positively Wellington Tourism's (PWT) business unit, Business Events Wellington.

PWT ceo David Perks said the capital was compact, accessible and home to a range of venues and operators who knew how to deliver memorable experiences.

"Add to that the extensive choice of quality, well-located accommodation; from globally branded business hotels to boutique properties – and you can see why Wellington is the perfect place to do business."

### DCC \$78 package

**THE** Darwin Convention Centre has a great value conference day package of \$78 per person for new bookings made between 01 Mar and 31 May.

This includes room hire, morning and afternoon teas, working lunch with soft drink package and complimentary WiFi.

The package is subject to availability and a weekend and public holidays surcharge.

For more information email [sales@darwinconvention.com.au](mailto:sales@darwinconvention.com.au).

### Win ACTE rego

**THE** popular ACTE Networking Receptions are offering the first two **BEN** readers in each city two free registrations, valued at \$39 each, when they reply to [akelly@acte.org](mailto:akelly@acte.org).

The first Networking Reception is being held in Sydney on 06 Mar at 6pm at Dolton House Hyde Park, in Brisbane on 13 Mar at Elixir Rooftop Sanctuary, in Melbourne on 19 Mar at the Sofitel Melbourne and in Auckland 08 Apr at the Pullman Auckland.

Everyone in the corporate travel and meetings/events community is welcome, with free registration for all ACTE members, media and a limited number of corporate travel buyers.

## Client Relationship Manager/ Team Leader

**Travel Daily** is Australia's leading travel trade publisher, with a portfolio of publications also including **Business Events News**, **Cruise Weekly**, **TD Cruise Update** and **Pharmacy Daily**.

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