



Bolt from the blue

BACK to business after three delightful days on Fraser Island as a



guest of Kingfisher Bay Resort and on to the introduction of **BEN's** own app, which means all the industry news and goings on is now as close and convenient as your hand held device - download it now by **CLICKING HERE**.

MEANWHILE back at Fraser Island, the challenge of 4WD sand driving makes it a favourite destination not only for the 4WD fraternity but for launches and testing, as it's a terrain requiring a whole new set of driving skills.

No such problem for our group as we had the expertise of Peter Meyer as our guide.

A stills photographer of note, he has worked for the *BBC's* 'Walking With Dinosaurs' and with *National Geographic* as the official guide.

We were fortunate enough to be given one of Peter's much sort after images (**pictured**) and I came home with a piece of petrified lightning glass or fulgurite that Peter gave me.

It's the result of lightning hitting a beach high in silica or quartz, such as on Fraser.

When this happens, the temperature goes beyond 1,800 degrees Celsius and fuses the sand into hollow, glass-lined tubes with a sandy outside.

Now, that's something for the specimen case! *Jill*



Techspectation gap

A **NEW** survey by American Express meetings and events has found there is a gap between meeting planner and attendee expectations when it comes to virtual attendance.

The survey involved 336 meeting planners and 161 meeting and event attendees in the first half of the year, based mainly in North America.

More than half of the attendees surveyed were looking to attend meetings and events virtually, with 63% saying they would do so if the option were available.

However, 48% of planners surveyed did not agree that attendees would attend more meetings and events virtually if the option were available.

Just under half (45%) of attendees believed virtual attendance should be available for all meetings and events, while only 35% of planners agreed.

More than half (53%) of attendees disagreed that virtual attendance did not provide enough ROI, while 36% of planners disagreed.

When it came to event apps, the research found that 67% of planners found them to be important compared with 55% of attendees, with communication and scheduling among the most important features.

Sadface for the dedicated hashtag, however, with 46% of attendees felt it was not important, while 54% thought it was somewhat or very important.

Just under half, or 43%, of meeting planners felt social media capabilities were very important compared with 35% of attendees, and 50% of

planners felt posting and reading commentary or reviews about a meeting or event was important, compared with 39% of attendees.

Face to face meetings were still king, with 74% of attendees and 85% of planners feeling that in-person meetings offered greater value due to more opportunities for social interactions.

American Express meetings and events Asia Pacific director Danielle Puceta said the US was a mature market and its developing trends were often a strong indication of where the Australian market would be heading.

Australia was already seeing many of the key take-outs from the report, such as the rise of social media and apps as supporting tools for meeting and events, she said.

New partner for Travel industry show

EXHIBITIONS and Trade Fairs, the organiser of next year's Travel Industry Exhibition, has today confirmed that the show will take place at the Sydney Exhibition Centre @ Glebe Island.

Taking place 16-17 July 2015, the show will also be supported via an official partnership with the AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS), which is part of key industry body, the Australian Federation of Travel Agents.

Event director Pascal Ibrahim said the exhibition is an important contributor to the professional development of the industry, and the partnership with ATAS "ensures we provide sessions that will really benefit visitors and exhibitors".

Five pages today

BEN has three pages of editorial plus full pages from (**click**):

- NT Convention Bureau
- Christmas Venue Guide

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Wrecked on Fraser Island



THE indigenous people of Fraser Island called it K'gari, a name that translates to 'paradise', and for three days from 02 to 05 Oct, a group of executive PAs found out what that meant for themselves.

As guests of Mercure Kingfisher Bay Resort, they were immersed in Kingfisher's hospitality and its commitment to ecotourism and sustainability.

This included an interpretative lunch, where everything on the table, even the decorations, was edible, a creative bush tucker immersion, whale watching, massages and Segway rides on the beach, as well as a personalised 4WD tour to the ocean side of Fraser island with well-known guide and photographer Peter Myer.

The largest sand island in the world, Fraser stretches more than 123 km in length and 22 km at its widest point.

The tour included a thrilling ride through the island's forested hinterland and a scenic flight over the beach, lunch close to the ship wreck of *The Maheno*, a swim

Altus construction

CONSTRUCTION is set to begin at the end of the month on \$280m The Altus and the 266 room Parkroyal Melbourne hotel (**BEN** 09 Dec 13).

The hotel is set to launch in the second half of 2016.

in the crystal clear water of Lake McKenzie, a raft on tyre tubes down Eli Creek and a surprise, white linen picnic in the bush.

These are just some of the memorable activities that can be combined into an incentive, reward or corporate retreat.

Pictured above is the group on Fraser Island.

EEAA nabs Austrade ceo for conference

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australia (EEAA) has announced the line up of speakers for its 2014 conference including the ceo of Austrade, Bruce Gosper.

This follows on from a "break through" meeting between the organisations, which included the mapping out of practical next steps to benefit EEAA members looking to internationalise their businesses (**BEN** 19 Sep).

Other speakers include Hong Kong Trade Development Council Australia and New Zealand director Bonnie Shek.

The conference would deal with three themes; internationalising events, the security landscape around events and consumer engagement drivers, EEAA ceo Joyce DiMascio said.

The conference will be held from 19 to 20 Nov at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Tassie tourism threat

FORMER Wotif boss and environmentalist Graeme Wood is in a stoush with the Tasmanian government over plans to build a tourism venture in Triabunna on Tasmania's east coast.

According to *ABC's PM* and other news sources, rumours abound that the Government is going to acquire the land compulsorily, to gain access to a deep-water port on land that used to be the site of a woodchip mill.

When failed timber company Gunns sold the land to Wood in 2011, it was a sale that shocked the timber industry, which wanted to retain control of the site, *ABC* reported.

Wood's attack on the Government accused it of trying to kill off the tourism project by favouring the forest industry, the publication reported.

Wood recently announced plans for \$50m of investment, saying the project would create hundreds of jobs, a 40-room hotel, performance and conference centre, exhibition shed, café and restaurant, *ABC* said.

Talking with *ABC News*, Woods said he was taking a leap of faith by moving ahead with plans.

"I'm ignoring that threat in the hope that it will go away, if it doesn't, that will do two things. "It will scare off potential investors in droves, and it will be the end of this project."

Outrigger meetings

OUTRIGGER Laguna Phuket Beach Resort's new meeting space will be available to host business events from November.

The Similan Ballroom measured 716 sqm and would be able to host up to 350 people theatre style, Outrigger said.

Three meeting rooms would also be unveiled, and a dedicated events team would underpin Outrigger's commitment to the MICE sector, gm Tony Pedroni said.



SET your phasers to 'weird' with the return of one of the stranger events, the Festival of Fisher's Ghost, set to be held in Campbelltown from 30 Oct to 09 Nov, which celebrates the ghost of Fred Fisher.

The festival was a celebration of Macarthur's colonial history and sense of fun, and revolved around the story about the emancipated convict, Fisher, who disappeared from his farm in 1826 "mysteriously", and whose ghost was subsequently seen hovering above a creek bridge, pointing to a paddock down the stream from where his body was found, Destination Macarthur said.

It includes a giant street parade - **CLICK HERE** for more.



The Christmas Venue Guide

BUSINESS Events News has launched a Christmas Events guide - check out **page five** for the best end of year function venues out.

The Guide is booking out fast, so get in while you can to highlight your venue's unique features, like the ability to host a karaoke battle of 'We Three Kings - The Reggae Remix', to the business events industry and **BEN's** readers and social media channels, by emailing advertising@businessesnews.com.au.



business events news

8th October 2014

Gray's Say

Peter Gray, an independent Motivation Consultant, presents a regular *Business Events News* feature on current issues in the Conference and Incentive industries.



MAKING MARKETING COUNT

MARKETING has been simplistically defined as "selling goods which don't come back to customers who do". These days more and more companies seem to be running marketing campaigns to justify why what they're offering to customers is substantially less than it used to be. And some are using loyalty programs to disguise the fact. Airlines seem to be at the forefront of this practice.

En route to Tahiti recently I had the opportunity of comparing two rival international airlines, Qantas and Air New Zealand. Checking-in with Qantas for the first part of the flight to Auckland was efficiently handled, boarding passes issued, luggage sent on its way. Lounge access was equally methodical. The flight - a code share with Air Tahiti Nui - was pleasant enough, so what was missing? No welcoming smile, no eye contact, no 'have a good flight'. No sense of being valued.

The second part of my journey from Auckland to Papeete was entirely different. Air New Zealand made me (and my family) most welcome. Even though much of the check-in for Air New Zealand is now self-service, there are always staff on hand to welcome passengers, assist or explain when necessary. The cabin crew were equally friendly, joking

with my young daughter, making sure we had everything we needed for the flight.

If you're looking for reasons why Qantas is continually cutting costs and staff while Air New Zealand is becoming a more user-friendly airline, it's obvious. To Qantas we were just passengers, seat numbers on an aircraft; to Air New Zealand we were valued customers that they wanted to attract back.

It is rumoured that the Qantas/ Emirates tie-up has seen more customers migrate to Emirates than Qantas would have liked. Not surprisingly, I couldn't verify this information one way or another, but why would anyone who has once experienced the superior Emirates' service be content with a lesser standard? So many rival airlines are doing their best to enhance the travelling experience and yet all we get from Qantas is one excuse after another. The reliance on the Qantas Frequent Flyer program to maintain loyalty has its limitations. Positive change, from the top, is sadly lacking.

Peter Gray can be contacted at peter.gray@motivatingpeople.net.



Adelaide over the moon



ADELAIDE has won the bid to host the International Astronautical Congress in September 2017.

The result of a collaboration between the Adelaide Convention Bureau, the Space Industry Association of Australia and the state government, the conference was expected to see more than 3,000 delegates including 200 astronauts, the Bureau said.

The Congress was expected to pump \$18m into the state's visitor economy, with 22,000 bed nights provided for state hotels, it said.

Adelaide beat out competition from Germany, the USA and Ireland to secure what the Bureau said would be the largest congress ever to be hosted in the capital.

The win follows a four year process including an unsuccessful bid for this year's event, which was held in Toronto last month with an opening address from former Canadian Space Agency astronaut Chris Hadfield, the first Canadian to walk in space and a former commander of the International Space Station (ISS).

Hadfield is also notable for recording a music video of his rendition of Space Oddity aboard the ISS, which had more than 22m views on YouTube.

The Bureau said it and the state government prepared a strong AV submission presentation and forged strong relationships with the International Astronautical Federation and its members.

Picture credit: NASA/CXC/JPL-Caltech/STScI/NSF/NRAO/VLA.

WIN WITH O'REILLY'S

This week, **BEN** and O'Reilly's are giving away one night's accommodation in a Mountain View room with private balcony in the Rainforest Retreat, including morning and afternoon tea, complimentary wine tasting at Canungra Valley Vineyard and an early morning bird walk.



O'Reilly's can tailor a corporate Christmas function to your needs, from sunset drinks at a breath-taking cliff top lookout to Christmas-themed dinners or a BBQ by the bonfire in the rainforest. The location of O'Reilly's within the World Heritage Lamington National Park coupled with its legendary hospitality, means it creates events to remember. Ideal for groups of up to 200 guests, O'Reilly's offers flexible accommodation options including the Retreat and luxury Mountain Villas.

The most creative response to the question will win. Send your answers by COB 10th Oct to: comp@businessseventsnews.com.au

Tell us in 25 words or less how your team would celebrate your corporate Christmas party at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat.

Hint: www.oreillys.com.au/conferences-functions



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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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INVITATION

We are excited to bring the NT to your backyard and share the wide range of options for Business Events in the Territory.

DISCOVER why the NT should be the destination for your next event.

CONNECT with the local expert to professionally plan your event.

INSPIRE yourself with unique possibilities and connections the NT can provide you and your next business event.

VENUES

Monday 13 Oct, 12:00-2:00pm - BRISBANE:

Sofitel Brisbane - Odeon Room - 249 Turbot St | Brisbane QLD 4000

Tuesday 14 Oct, 7:30-9:30am - CANBERRA:

Sage Restaurant - Gorman House Arts Centre/ Batman St | Braddon ACT 2612

Tuesday 14 Oct, 5:30-7:30pm - SYDNEY:

The Slip Inn Sydney - Sand & Garden Bars - 111 Sussex St | Sydney NSW 2000

Wednesday 15 Oct, 5:30-7:30pm - MELBOURNE:

MCG - Premiership Dining Room - enter via Gate 6, use elevators 14 and 15 and go to level 2 | Brunton Ave | Richmond VIC 3002

Thursday 16 Oct, 12:30-2:30pm - ADELAIDE:

Chianti Classico - Gallo Nero Private Dining Room - 160 Hutt Street | Adelaide SA 5000

Friday 17 Oct, 12:00-2:00pm - PERTH:

The George - London Room - 216 St Georges Terrace | Perth WA 6000

KEY NT BUSINESS EVENT SUPPLIERS

Alice Springs Convention Centre

Darwin Convention Centre

Darwin Turf Club (BNE,SYD, MEL ONLY)

Fusion Exhibition and Hire Services

Great Southern Rail (BNE,SYD, MEL ONLY)

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Looking for a Christmas venue or staff celebration?
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Chifley Hotel Wollongong

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Sydney Cricket Ground

Sydney, NSW

Host an end-of-year celebration at the Sydney Cricket Ground and go in the draw to win a Corporate Suite Experience during the SCG's Summer of Cricket. Book NOW and you and your guests could wine and dine in the luxury of your own corporate suite at the Cricket. The SCG celebrates the opening of the following brand new event spaces: Noble Dining Room for up to 600 banquet-style, Skyline Terrace with views to the CBD and the Brewers Pavilion.

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www.scgevents.com.au