



GOR road trip

IT'S not the newest resort on the Great Ocean Road, but having had a long history with the Cumberland Lorne Resort through my years with *The Quroum*, firstly through a FPC ad it ran in my first resort feature in 1990 and then in an ongoing relationship, I was delighted that, together with Mantra Lorne, it was on our overnight stay during our AIME 2015 famil.



My memory of the apartment hotel back then was of a distinctive salmon pink building sitting high above Lorne's main beach.

Now clothed in fashionable grey, what I hadn't realised is that it is one of the largest purpose-built conference centres in Victoria with an auditorium accommodating up to 350.

MEANWHILE while we are on the Great Ocean Road, the 12 Apostles, of which there were never 12, were in the past known locally as the Sow and Piglets.

Brett Hollis from Big Stick Adventures related that back in 1920, Victoria Tourism, in order to draw tourism to the area, christened them this more marketable name. *Jill*



Hopper new gm of NT Major Events Co

ANDREW Hopper has been appointed gm of the NT Major Events Company, replacing Paul Cattermole, who is retiring at the end of March.

Hopper was most recently senior consultant for MI Associates, NT Chief Minister Adam Giles' office said.

\$775k for NT infrastructure

NOMINATIONS are open for Northern Territory tourism infrastructure projects, including business events facilities, with a \$775,000 funding pool available.

The NT government said nominations for the Commonwealth Tourism Demand-Driven Infrastructure program are now open, with eligible projects including exhibition, convention and events facilities.

A funding pool of \$775,000 was available to support a small number of "high quality, large scale" projects that delivered "broad benefit" to the tourism sector and not just an individual business, the government said.

Chief Minister Adam Giles said operators needed to at least match funding sought from government.

Projects which developed attractions and infrastructure

encouraging visitors to extend their stay, or boosted jobs in regional areas, were of particular interest, he said.

Previously funded recipients include the Wauchope Hotel, which planned to promote itself as a conferences destination.

Nominations close 01 May with notification to successful applicants in August.

CLICK HERE to apply.

Sector could lobby for others

THE business events sector has the opportunity to lobby for other sectors impacting it and should "step up to the plate".

Responding to a question at AIME, Association of Australian Convention Bureaux executive director Andrew Hiebl said having been "pigeonholed" with tourism in the past, the business events industry was not primed at lobbying outside its own sector.

Hiebl said with the sector under a Trade and Investment Minister and lobbying to other portfolios, it should be mindful of sectors that impacted business events, such as science and universities.

If scientists and other industries the sector partnered with to attract events to Australia needed help, the sector should make that heard to government, he said.

The idea required more discussion but one example of a possible approach was the Scrap the Cap campaign, he said.

Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) chairman Matthew Hingerty said if sectors that gave the industry a lot of worth were doing well, or having issues, the industry wanted to be there; however it needed to take care it did not become 'lobbyists for hire'.

BECA would like to sit down with industries such as health and research to see how both could leverage opportunities such as an ageing population, he said.

BET's good vibrations

BUSINESS Events Tasmania's (BET) new Meetings Incentives Planner's Guide 2015-16 was hot off the press when *BEN* talked at AIME with ceo Stuart Nettlefold about the latest research conducted with PCOs and event planners, predominantly based in Victoria and NSW.

"In general 97% of respondents rated Tasmania as a favourable MICE destination and 91% [were] satisfied with the services provided by BET."

A key draw card was MONA, he said.

The level of knowledge of Launceston as a destination was low, he said, with event planners not aware of the region's ability to host conferences of up to 600 people.

Nettlefold said the state was looking to benefit from growth out of more than \$435m of infrastructure either recently completed, in progress or due to commence.

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news plus a full page from: *(click)*

• Club Med

Events ben Calendar

This week's *BEN* events calendar is brought to you by **Gold Coast Business Events**.



4 MAR

NT Muster; Ivy Ballroom, Sydney; enquiries email: trade.tourismnt@nt.gov.au

5 MAR

NT Muster; Park Hyatt Melbourne Ballroom; enquiries email: trade.tourismnt@nt.gov.au

8-11 MAR

The Emergence Creative Festival; Margaret River; details at: www.emergencecreative.com

16 MAR

Ni hao WA 2015; Aravina Estate, Yallingup; for more visit: www.tourism.wa.gov.au

18 MAR

Gold Coast Connect Sydney, InterContinental Sydney; for details: www.visitgoldcoast.com

24-26 MAY

MEA Conference 2015; Hamilton Island; for more visit www.meetingevents.com.au

9-11 JUN

ibtm america; Chicago, USA; visit: www.ibtmamerica.com

18-20 JUN

This Is Gold Coast Business Exchange 2015; for details: www.visitgoldcoast.com

6-9 SEP

Luxperience; Australian Technology Park, Sydney; see: www.luxperience.com.au

17-19 NOV

ibtm world; Barcelona, Spain; see: www.ibtmworld.com

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@businesseventsnews.com.au.



business events news

2nd March 2015



crumbs!

WHAT'S your best excuse for missing a conference or convention?

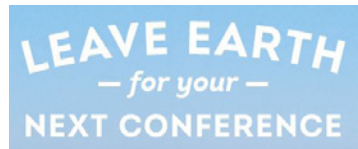
Can it top Italian rugby prop Martin Castrogiovanni's excuse to miss the Six Nations match against Scotland on Saturday of being bitten on the nose by a dog?

Apparently, the Italian rugby federation said the player had suffered a "slight domestic incident", which *Ansa* said was, in fact, being nipped on the nose by a friend's dog, *Reuters* reported.

The best excuses for missing work as listed by the *BBC* included one partying delegate's excuse for missing a symposium: she said she had gone to a similarly-named hotel her boss had often mixed up when mentioning details.

For a full list of sneaky excuses, [CLICK HERE](#).

P&O Conferences: 'starter's gun fired'



THE starter's gun has been fired when it comes to corporate event cruise specialists in Australia with P&O Cruises' announcement of a dedicated conference division (**BEN** 25 Feb), SeaDreams Events has said.

Manager Matt Halloran said there had been a shortage of such operators in the country and it was good to "finally" see a major cruise line recognise the value of the business events sector to onboard operations.

"The option of a cruise as a viable meeting, conference or event venue has kept a fairly low profile and has largely stayed under the radar for a number of years.

"This endorsement and recognition of the corporate market by P&O is a game changer."

BESydney partners with Opera Sydney

BUSINESS Events Sydney (BESydney) has partnered with Opera Australia in a bid to profile Sydney's talent, services and experiences.

Ceo Lyn Lewis-Smith said partnering with the company to showcase its productions ensured delegates were "truly captivated" by Sydney.

A BESydney spokesperson said the partnership, which started on 01 Feb, could include private performances and "special event opportunities".



Face to Face

David Bowen General manager Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach



Business Events News recently caught up with David Bowen, general manager of Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach, whose career has taken him to Phuket, Thailand, Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea and Kakadu in the NT.

What is the first thing you do when you get to work?

The first thing I do is walk around the hotel. I love to walk through the lobby and restaurant and speak to our guests and team members.

What analogy best describes being gm of a hotel and why?

I believe the best analogy is a conductor. It is the gm's job to bring together all parts of the 'orchestra' to deliver a beautiful song, or, a great guest experience.

Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach recently redesigned its beachfront area to create the Oceans Dining and Drinks venue – what has been the most interesting piece of feedback you've had so far?

The most interesting feedback I have received is the intimacy of the new design. Unlike other establishments where you can get lost in the crowd, Oceans Dining and Drinks offers a more intimate and personal experience.

What was the biggest headache when it came to the new venue?

The biggest headache was deciding when to schedule the work. Oceans Dining and Drinks is a very popular venue in Coogee and we had to ensure we were not upsetting any of our loyal patrons by closing the venue.

We were able to schedule the works outside of operating hours which kept everyone happy.

The venue is set to host the Australian Society of Travel

Writers in March – what's your best travel story?

On a recent trip to Thailand, we stayed at the Holiday Inn Phuket, a fantastic hotel with a very engaged team.

On our second day there, we got talking to the housekeeper and mentioned we were heading out to Phuket Zoo.

That evening when we came home the housekeeper had shaped all the towels into monkeys.

Every day for the rest of our stay a different towel animal appeared in our room - my children couldn't wait to get back to the hotel each day to see who would appear next.

If you could create any animal hybrid, what would it be and why?

Eagle + Lion = Griffin (A mythical Greek creature known for guarding treasure and priceless possessions). I would create a Griffin to watch over our guests and ensure they have 'money can't buy' experiences.

What's the weirdest hotel myth you've ever heard?

It's not a myth, but an actual call Australian consular staff received from a conference organiser in a particular city.

They advised they were organising a conference with a large group of Australians but had heard it was a dangerous city. They asked if the High Commission could arrange for a risk assessment and some armoured cars - they only wanted them for a week!

Mantra buys two in Tassie

MANTRA Group has bought two hotels in Tasmania.

The Hotel Collins in Hobart and the Hotel Charles in Launceston are set to rebrand to the Mantra Collins Hotel Hobart and Mantra Charles Hotel Launceston on 30 Apr, after Mantra secured the leaseholds from Lyndon Jago.

The hotels would be operated under a lease agreement with Sultan Holdings Pty Ltd and Joseph Chromy, it said.

The Hotel Charles has a conference room for up to 60 people while the Collins has a boardroom for small meetings.

Business Events News is Australia's newest online publication dedicated to the vibrant meetings, incentives, conferences and events sector.

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