



## Tell tales

BACK on the Great Ocean Road, because there are so many stories to tell about



this 243 km stretch of road that twists and winds between the Victorian cities of Torquay and Warrnambool, one of which is that the road was built by 3,000 returned soldiers between 1919 and 1932 and was created to give work to these men who slept in tents through violent storms, building the road by hand, using picks, shovels, wheel barrows and explosives.

It is considered a masterpiece of human achievement, and has been called "Victoria's largest war memorial."

On another Great Ocean Road note, how thrilled were the AIME famil group to find our Grayline Coach was fitted with free WIFI.

If buses can manage it, what's stopping hotels?!

Jill

## Sydney Conf Centre sold

THE Sydney Conference and Training Centre (SCTC) has been bought by a Chinese property group, the *AFR* has reported.



The facility, with 15 conference rooms, was sold as a going concern, with the incoming owner receiving a "strong book" of future bookings, Colliers International said.

The purchasers were reluctant to give out their name as yet, but settlement was scheduled for mid-May, Colliers transaction services national director Gus Moors told *BEN*.

The purchasers planned to continue to operate the Conference centre, with the same personnel and catering group, and had indicated an intention to undertake some refurbishment works in the short term, he said.

Neither the purchasers not the vendors, a partnership including John Simmonds, wished to discuss the price, but the *AFR* reported it was believed to be about \$12m.

## MCB 'healthy pipeline'

MELBOURNE Convention Bureau (MCB) has an "incredibly healthy" pipeline and is not seeing business shift away from Melbourne to Sydney with the projected completion of the ICC Sydney, ceo Karen Bolinger told *BEN* at AIME.

The MCB could not be complacent about this and had "some things in mind" that it would be looking at in its five year strategic plan, she said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to view a video.

## Fiji Beach Resort adds meeting space



FIJI Beach Resort and Spa Managed by Hilton has rebranded as Hilton Fiji Beach Resort and Spa, with a new multipurpose function room due to come online in the third quarter of this year.

Construction had already started late last year on the space, the hotel said, which would have capacity for 100 to 150 guests.

The hotel said the new space would allow it to cater for larger conferences and events, from about 20 to 150 people.

The room came as a response to a rise in demand for meeting space in Fiji, the hotel said.

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# business events news

4th March 2015



## crumbs!

**SYDNEYSIDERS**, keen to meet some baby crocs in the CBD and check out just what the Northern Territory would have to offer your delegates?

Then 'Do the NT' and stop off at the two day pop-up hosted by Tourism NT in Martin Place.

Chief Minister Adam Giles said 'Do the NT' was all about convincing people to stop putting off their visit to the territory, which research had suggested almost half of Australians had on their one-day bucket list.

The event features a waterhole, camels, baby crocodiles and NT tastes, including a kangaroo burger, crocodile salad and barramundi with chips, as well as a range of tour, travel and accommodation packages - and today's the last day to iNTo it.

## Mantra acquires two

**MANTRA** Group has said it has acquired the Hotel Collins in Hobart and the Hotel Charles in Launceston (**BEN** 02 Mar).

The company would operate the hotels under a lease agreement, it said.

## MPFC offer

**MELBOURNE** Park Function Centre (MPFC) has a special day delegate package priced at \$95 per person which includes three piece stage and venue hire.

It is valid between 01 Mar and 31 Dec for events on or before 30 Jun 16.

To enquire, email [sales@mopt.vic.gov.au](mailto:sales@mopt.vic.gov.au).

## Dig deeper in SQ

**SINGAPORE** is no longer a drop in or stopover destination for Australians, Singapore Tourism Board's (STB) regional director Oceania John Gregory Conceicao told **BEN** at AIME.

Replacing Kenneth Lim, Conceicao said Australia was Singapore's fourth largest source market and had seen an 8% increase in this market from stays of two days to 3.2 days.

"If you dig deeper you will find a strangely unique and wonderfully diverse Singapore."

Such experiences include local farms in northwestern Kranji where you can take a cooking class, while on Pulau Ubin, an island off the northeast coast, old Singapore, with its traditional Malay Houses, can be explored by bike.

Find out more from STB's 'Singapore - Little Black Book' by [CLICKING HERE](#).

## BESydney gets \$6m

**BUSINESS** Events Sydney (BESydney) will receive an extra \$6m in funding over the next four years to make Sydney the top destination for major events in Australia.

The organisation said the commitment from the NSW government came as part of its announcement to provide an extra \$123.35m to attract major events to the state (**BEN** 16 Feb).

Ceo Lyn Lewis-Smith said the organisation had its sights "firmly" on securing business for the International Convention Centre Sydney.

Last year, business events delivered by the organisation contributed more than \$224m in economic impact to the NSW economy, BESydney said.

## Unexpected Gold



**GOLD** Coast Tourism's newly released business events guide has a new design, looking more like an expensive coffee table book than its spiral bound cousin.

Director of business events Anna Case said even the front image, featuring an event in a pine forest, was like the Gold Coast itself, "nothing like you'd expect."

## Capri by Fraser Brisbane set to open

**CAPRI** by Fraser Brisbane is set to have a soft open in March, taking bookings from 23 Mar.

It is the fourth Frasers Hospitality property in Australia (**BEN** 21 Jul 14).

## Riverina gets \$171k as food and wine dest

**THE** Riverina Regional Tourism Organisation will receive \$171,500 from the NSW Regional Visitor Economy Fund to promote the area as a food and wine destination, Minister for Regional Tourism John Barilaro has said.

This would see the food and wine products and packages on offer increased, as well as a targeted marketing campaign to increase awareness of the destination, Barilaro said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

## TTF: improve transport planning

**THE** Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF) has said the NSW government should do more to integrate tourism and transport planning.

An affordable and navigable public transport network would "contribute significantly" to the overall experience for visitors to Sydney and the state, the organisation said.



## How to take your event to the next level with a set piece

**LOOKING** to create a real 'wow moment' at your next event? Incorporating a unique set piece can make a real difference.

A set piece is a backdrop added to a stage for a production or event. It can vary from a simple branded backdrop right through to sophisticated projection mapping. The only limit is your imagination.

Set pieces help make conferences and events truly memorable. People are unlikely to remember one conference from the next if they all feature the same plain black drapes and two screens. However, they will remember a conference if it looks and feels genuinely different from those they have attended before.

A set piece can also help with a quick room turn around depending on the venue. For example, a band can be pre-set behind a set piece. Set pieces

allow for a visual transformation sure to impress event delegates and make for easier and more impactful transitions between event elements.

Speak to your event staging and AV provider for advice on how to maximise set pieces for your event.

*Ritchie Harland is the designated partner at Hamilton Island with AVPartners, which creates integrated event experiences*



*through combining state of the art audiovisual technology, unrivalled expertise and a highly tailored approach. For more visit [www.avpartners.com](http://www.avpartners.com).*

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

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