



One busy week

TO say last week was a busy one, news wise, is something of an understatement, especially the release of plans to tear down and rebuild a large proportion of Darling Harbour and in particular the Convention Centre.

It certainly kept us here at **BEN** on our proverbial toes.

Everyone and every organisation with any claim or stake in the redevelopment wanted a piece of the news action.

From the State Government and managers of the project to those with a vested interest and opinion about its design, its operation and the effect it would have on Sydney, both good and bad.

This week, in the lead up to Christmas we are girding our loins, not so much for the final run of Christmas functions but for the announcement of the winning tender of the interim 25,000sq mtrs exhibition space to be built at Glebe Island and no doubt for a flurry of opinion about that and the plans to bring back trams to the CBD.

Of course if the world ends on Friday 21st as predicted by the Mayan calendar, it's game over!
 - Jill.



AIME gets interactive

A new feature at the 2013 Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (AIME) will be the Future Events Experience - a new concept that showcases the latest concepts and innovations for the MICE industry.

Aimed at providing an interactive experience for attendees eager to stay at the forefront of technological developments, the new concept is being introduced in partnership with Newtonstrand and Eventskills, and will contain live demonstrations of the latest pioneering technology, presentations about innovation to address industry trends and challenges.

Newtonstrand, one of the world's leading providers of technology and software solutions for the meetings and events industry, will also host Chance2Speak sessions as part of the experience.

These sessions will give exhibitors the opportunity to make 10-15 minute presentations about future industry trends and innovations and are expected to generate lively conversation about new ideas on the show floor.

Shuli Golovinski, ceo of Newtonstrand said, "We're continually looking for ways to make meetings more effective and Chance2Speak gives those at the forefront of the industry the opportunity to share their knowledge," he said.

"New technology is changing the presentation experience; one way PowerPoint presentations are becoming old-fashioned.

With the area on the floor designed by POWA Productions and 1E One Event, Garth Taylor, manager of 1E One Event Australia said, "The Future Events Experience will reveal new ways to present, using wireless connectivity to create a more interactive experience."

Reed Travel Exhibitions (RTE)



director for AIME, Sally de Swart, said new concept provides another good reason to attend AIME 2013.

"As the leading MICE industry event for the region, it is imperative that AIME is not only across the latest trends and emerging technology, but that we are providing a platform for our attendees and partners to share and learn about the latest innovations so they are enriched by their attendance at the show," she said.

To discuss opportunities to be involved in the Future Events Experience contact AIME's sales manager, Stephanie Rowen on 02 9422 2470 - or for general information about attending AIME 2013 visit www.aime.com.

ITB Berlin Convention

WITH the ITB Berlin Convention 2013 program now finalised, discussions are to centre on the latest tourism issues and topical themes and confirming their role as the global travel industry's leading think tank.

ITB's 20th edition of the event is being held from 6 to 8 March 2013, at which leading speakers representing tourism, industry and politics will discuss the main themes concerning the travel industry, both now and in the years ahead.

They include major trends in industry and society, as well as developments in the cruise market and in the hotel industry.

Admission to the ITB Berlin Convention is free for visitors to ITB Berlin.

A preliminary version of the program can be downloaded at itb-convention.com/program.

Creating Syd's magnet

A new campaign to position Sydney's lifestyle appeal, dominance in the finance, ICT and research sectors, world-class education offering and highly skilled multicultural workforce, will provide the magnet for global talent in the Harbour City's selling points.

Deputy Premier & Minister for Trade & Investment Andrew Stoner announced the Global Talent Hub initiative as part of the Government's response to the recommendations of high level Industry Taskforces in key priority sectors.

"As Australia's only global city, Sydney is the natural home for highly skilled, globally mobile individuals looking to match superior employment opportunities with our much envied lifestyle," Stoner said.

"We have a highly skilled, multicultural workforce with around 20% of the State's population speaking a language other than English at home and 92% of these people located in Sydney.

"We need to leverage these existing strengths, better link Sydney into global business networks, make it easier for local businesses and educators to attract internationally mobile skills, all to enhance Sydney's profile as a global talent hub."

Stoner said a new Global Talent Hub Advisory Body, chaired by Daniel Labbad, Group coo at Lend Lease, will be developed and run with the Committee for Sydney.

MEANWHILE Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore said the City of Sydney would invest a further \$1.5m to promote Sydney as a world-class conference city in order to attract tens of thousands of visitors with the potential to contribute millions to the local economy.

This contribution will see the City invest \$500,000 a year over the next three years in the independent, not-for-profit organisation, Business Events Sydney (BESydney).

Novotel's Cairns deal

NOVOTEL Palm Cove Resort, located in Tropical North Queensland, is offering one in every 10 delegates booked a free space at the next conference.

Available for new bookings only the deal is for a limit of five free delegates for groups confirmed for an event held before 30 April 2013.

For more information on the resort or details about booking your next event email conference@novotelpalmcove.com.au or call 07 4059 1234.



business events news

17th December 2012



GOING crackers.

From the Emirate that brought us the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, comes the unveiling of the Middle East's tallest Nutcracker at the Burj Al Arab, the World's most luxurious hotel.

Part of the luxury hotel's annual festive season's display and famous for creating one-of-a-kind celebrations in opulent surroundings, the figure stands 4.57m (15 feet) and is on display in the hotel's upper lobby.



Sunshine Coast golf

A new guide to golfing on the Sunshine Coast that is available both electronically and in hard copy format was launched yesterday during the start of the Australian PGA Championship at Palmer Coolum Resort.

Produced by Sunshine Coast Destination Ltd (SCDL) in collaboration with a niche group comprising the local golfing industry, the Guide in addition to being available electronically will have a 30,000 print run and will be distributed throughout Australia and New Zealand.

With more than 17 golf courses to choose from, SCDL ceo Steve Cooper said, "Golf is a key activity for visitors to the Sunshine Coast and accounts for 24% of the Queensland overnight domestic golf market."

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Byron's new conference facilities

A 246 seat amphitheatre style theatre complemented by two break-out rooms, foyers, a courtyard and covered verandah are the result of \$29,000 in NSW Government funding to upgrade the Byron Community Centre.



Located in the centre of Byron Bay within walking distance of accommodation, dining options and the beach, the Community Centre and Byron Centre are ideal for small to medium size conferences, business meetings and functions.

"The much loved Byron Community Centre has long been known for community events in Byron Shire and is now set to be known as one of the top venues for events on the North Coast of NSW" said Minister for the North Coast and Member for Ballina Don Page.

"This NSW government funding aims to enable the North Coast to enhance visitor experiences and boost conference tourism from interstate and overseas markets."

Byron Community Centre general manager and Byron Shire Councillor Paul Spooner said that the new conference facilities will be given a boost by launching a new conference package with the aim of enticing conferences, incentives and events to this unique venue.

Conference organisers can book individual conference spaces or the whole venue for sole use, while conference packages include all audio-visual equipment whiteboards and stationery.

The Centre is also able to facilitate accommodation, activities and on-site catering through the Community Table Café/Bar to suit different budgets and styles of events.

'We have hosted four international conferences at the Centre since 2003,' said Julie Burton, a professional conference

organiser from Southern Cross University.

"Delegates and invited speakers love that they can stay in the heart of Byron Bay in a wide choice of accommodation types and walk to the conference plenary and breakout sessions - and still have time to visit the beach or go shopping, all of which helps boost visitor expenditure."

Email Amanda to receive a conference brochure conferences@byroncentre.com.au.

Pictured above are: Simon Richardson, Byron Shire Mayor (centre), with business and community representatives at the launch of the Byron Bay conference facilities.

Send in your Christmas photos & win a weekend with Toga Hotels - Events with BENefits!



Business Events News is offering its first ever Christmas photo competition in partnership with Toga Hotels.

Our good friends at Toga Hotels are asking you to send in your office/event Christmas party photos over the next three weeks for your chance to win two night's accommodation for two adults in a Toga Hotel of

your choice across Australia & New Zealand.

Pictured above in no particular order the team at inPlace Recruitment in their festive finery.

Sandra Chiles, Ben Carnegie, Marlene Lane, Kristi Gomm, Kelly Wellmore, Dana Peric and Peter Jackson. Guess who is who!!!

To enter email us your favourite Christmas event/party photo (including names of the people pictured) to: xmas@businesseventsnews.com.au



Terms and conditions apply

Cook Island's new ceo

HALATOA Fua has been appointed as the chief executive officer of Cook Island Tourism at last week's Kia Orana Cook Islands forum.

Fua who has served the Corporation since 31 March 2010 as director of finance has, during the past three months, acted as ceo following the departure of former ceo Carmel Beattie.

Hue Airport to close

UPGRADING to Hue's Phu Bai International Airport will see it close for eight months for a renovation and upgrade project, from March to November 2013.

During this time two options are available for travellers, which includes flying to Da Nang and transferring overland to Hue (110km, two hours) or take the overnight train to Hue.



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MEL Planners Guide

AS part of
the Melbourne
Convention + Visitors
Bureau's digital
strategy, the Bureau
has launched the
2012-13 edition of
the Melbourne Planners' Guide,
for the first time as an interactive
e-book.



Revitalised to a format that
can be easily accessed on
smartphone, tablet or computer,
the online version of the Guide's
in-depth planning knowledge is
only a few clicks away.

With the same convenience of
the traditional website, it also
features video content and allows
planners to zoom in, print and
share selected pages via email or
social media sites.

The Planners' Guide 2012-13
e-book is available online now at
mcvb.com.au/plannersguide.

Training & event bar raised

A \$6 million, state-of-the-art
training and event venue is
to open in Sydney's CBD on 7
January next year.

Said to bring a new standard in
training venues to Sydney's CBD,
Cliftons, a leading provider of
training and event venues across
Asia Pacific, will unveil the venue
at their new 60 Margaret Street
headquarters.

The move, expected to set
a new industry standard, is
a culmination of 15 years'
experience building training
and event venues, and a wealth
of knowledge that comes from
building 500+ training rooms and
visiting a further 300 partner and
affiliate training venues across 31
countries.

The new venue will offer flexible
room configurations, innovative
technologies and patented
furniture specifically designed for
corporate learning environments.

"We designed the new Sydney
venue to exceed customer
expectations now and in the
future," said Andrew Cameron,
managing director, Cliftons.

"Our new headquarters
combine 15 years of venue

design and building experience
with the latest technological
developments, to deliver a new
generation of purpose-built
venues," he added.

For info visit - www.cliftons.com.

SAA goes to the Hilt

GARY Hilt has been appointed
South African Airways (SAA)
sales manager, WA, SA & NT,
an appointment that marks his
return to the airline after more
than four years, when he was
based in Sydney.

"We're delighted that Gary Hilt
is returning to SAA this month,"
said SAA's country head for
Australasia, Tim Clyde-Smith.

"Gary's previous experience at
SAA is a big benefit for us as he
knows our culture and strengths
as Africa's leading airline and is
familiar with our product and
service offering," Clyde-Smith said.

"In the West we have a very
large VFR and recreational
tourism business as well as a
highly successful and growing
business market, especially
within the mining and resources
industry," he said.



Getting to Know: Doha

by: Barry Matheson

IF you think the Middle East isn't the place to hold a conference, think again - you might be surprised at what the tiny emirate of Qatar has to offer. For starters, it's a safe country and its National Convention Centre at Education City in the capital, Doha has to be seen to be believed. To say that it's one of the most sophisticated convention centres in the world is an understatement, and its stunning architecture and cutting edge facilities are ideal for hosting international conventions. Venue for the recent World Climate Change conference, the \$720 million, one year old complex houses 10 performance venues, a 4,000 seat conference hall, a 2,500 seat theatre, 52 meeting rooms, several three-tiered auditoria and 40,000 square-metres of exhibition space spread out over nine halls.

And if you want the whole Arabian adventure experience for your pre or post conference tours, there are a number of exciting, tailor-made tours, such as off-road treks through sand dunes in 4x4 vehicles, visits to old pearling villages, camel markets and to internationally famous Arabian horse farms. In this oil and gas-rich nation, where money's no object, they don't do things by halves.

Last month, *BEN* flew to Doha as a guest of Qatar Airways and was taken aback at the rapid pace of development on a two-day tour of the city. Twenty years ago, Doha was a desert backwater, but today its been turned into a 'mini Dubai' with futuristic skyscrapers dotting the skyline and another 150 under construction. Excellent roads ring the city and with the average Qatari earning a minimum of US\$8,000 per month tax-free and paying only 25 cents a litre for petrol, latest model pricey cars are the norm on the roads, and with marble-lined shopping malls moments from the 5-star hotels and flash resorts, you can shop to your heart's content.

Don't miss a visit to the huge Souk Waqif market in the heart of Doha, where you can wander through the warren of alleyways lined with shops selling spices, garments, handicrafts, jewellery and perfumes. They're also dozens of restaurants serving delicious Arabian food at reasonable prices. But remember, you cannot buy alcohol at the restaurants, it's forbidden under Islamic law, but it can be purchased at international hotels.

A new mega airport costing US\$15 billion will be up and running in a year's time. It'll boast the world's longest runway and a one kilometre-long aircraft hanger that can house five giant A380's side-by-side. Qatar Airways is also expanding with 250 new jetliners on order and plans to add a further 150 destinations to its global network. For more information contact the Qatar National Convention Centre by email: Eventplanning@qatarconvention.com.

