



Thank you!

HOW many functions do we go to where there is a group playing or singing unobtrusively?

Last night at the Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia function, at the Sofitel Wentworth two women provided the background music and song.

I struck up a conversation with indigenous singer/songwriter, and multi-award winner, Kerriane Cox.

When I asked her to forgive us for ignoring them while they entertained, she said, "Thank you, I am happy to be playing my music.

"I am here to inspire people in all I do."

To visit Cox's website go to: kerriannecox.com.

In this edition come on a journey through Jordan, as Petra celebrates 200 years since its rediscovery (see Getting to know on [page three](#)).

Have a great weekend - Jill.

Burswood's appeal

FOR 14 years running, the staff at Burswood have demonstrated great community spirit, supporting Anglicare's WA Winter Appeal by assisting vulnerable families with emergency relief, warm blankets and food during the cold and wet Perth Winter.

Collecting items and donations since early June, they will be directly distributed to emergency relief operations.

"The fantastic support of Burswood Entertainment Complex and its staff over so many years is a testament to the Complex's ongoing contribution to the community.

"We are proud to partner with Burswood on so many levels," said Ian Craig, executive general manager of Fundraising & Social Enterprise at Anglicare WA.

AV1 cries foul on venue costs

AV1's md Keith Wootton has drawn the battle lines, together with a growing number of AV representatives who are standing tall against the unfair venue charges imposed on external AV companies and their clients.

Talking about AV1's stand on the issue, Keith Wootton said, "AV1 occupies a unique position in the industry as a Sydney based supplier, a roadshow production company and an inhouse supplier at the Museum of Contemporary Art, so we can understand all of the points of view in this debate.

"We look after a lot of roadshows around Australia, so we come across the "dreaded" TOD charges on a weekly basis.

"Sometimes the charges are warranted and sometimes not.

"In some instances, when the venues may grant you access to a space at midnight, it can pay to have an inhouse crew member on site for the set up to assist with rigging, patching and other items.

"If there are any last minute requirements, the inhouse supplier can get some last minute rentals.

"So in this scenario, it is worthwhile and worth paying for.

"Occasionally we will factor it into a quote but sometimes we will absorb it for the sake of the event, not the bottom line.

"I think that there is a perception out there that the TOD charge is a nasty penalty imposed by inhouse suppliers (including venue-owned AV departments) for not using their equipment or services.

"These companies have usually invested a lot to install infrastructure, so that they can capture the majority of the work going through the venue – and they do.

"In a recent discussion, we indicated that about 5% of the work was conducted by outside suppliers in one particular property – this is comparable to



AV1's set up at MCA.

So 95% of the work is being done by inhouse suppliers (from which a hotel, for instance, may be receiving anywhere between 15-35% commission on equipment and/or labour supplied – hence the hotel being keen to enforce the TOD charges when they lose out on their expected revenue).

"Given this 95% -5% ratio, I think that neither the suppliers, nor the venues, should impose penalties to outside suppliers but take the 5% on the chin and be there to assist and possibly get a couple of last minute rentals," he said.

BEN would like to know what you think?

Email us with your opinion at: info@businessesnews.com.au.

Sofitel's persuasion

SOFITEL Luxury Hotels has a new selection of rates for eligible industry partners, conference planners and travel consultants for bookings and stays until 31 December across Asia and the Pacific.

"Travellers can choose from amazing locations like Bora Bora and Beijing or exciting new offerings such as Sofitel So Bangkok, Sofitel Mumbai BKC and Sofitel Auckland Viaduct Harbour in NZ," said Stephane Laguette, vp of sales, pricing distribution and revenue management for Sofitel Asia Pacific.

Make a booking in Australia, New Zealand or Fiji and receive a complimentary breakfast for two. See www.sofitel.com.

Cruising buys Fantasea

FANTASEA Adventure Cruising's Whitsundays tourism operation has been sold to Cruise Whitsundays.

A completion date is set for the 17 July, when Cruise Whitsundays will take over Fantasea's rights to service Hamilton Island, the two Reefworld platforms on Hardy Reef, the vessel Charmer, and the land and marina holdings at Port of Airlie.

Speaking to **BEN** last night at the Whitsunday's Business Events function, Kevin Ross, Marine Tourism Holdings bdm said the change will be great for the company and the region.

"Cruise Whitsundays will allow greater access to the islands" with the takeover hoped to boost the operation's MICE market.

WIN a travel caddy!

This week, **Business Events News** is giving readers the chance to win a travel caddy

valued at \$99.95, courtesy of Rocky Mountaineer.

The leather travel caddy offers zippered pockets both inside and outside the bag, an iPad custom inner pocket, fold-over flap to store the caddy in seat back pockets as well as an outside mesh pocket to hold a water bottle or umbrella.

The Rocky Mountaineer will debut its new Coastal Passage route in August 2013.

This unique rail journey will seamlessly connect Seattle and Vancouver to the Canadian Rockies, making it the company's fifth rail route and the first time the award-winning rail service will depart from the US.

To win be the first to answer: comp@businessesnews.com.au.

How many rail routes will Rocky Mountaineer have including the new Coastal Passage?

Hint: rockymountaineer.com
prize subject to change based on availability





THERE'S no stopping Virgin tycoon Richard Branson as he continues to grow older both disgracefully and inspirationally.

On his second attempt he has entered the record books as the oldest person to kite surf the English Channel from Dymchurch, Kent, to Wimereux in France in three hours and 45 minutes.

He just failed to secure a second world record, set by his son Sam, a day earlier, for the fastest cross-Channel kite surf.

MEANWHILE, in Brazil, two airforce pilots haven't endeared themselves to the local constabulary, after making a low-altitude super-sonic fly pass that shattered every window of Brazil's Supreme Court.

The two French-made Mirage 2000 jets, flown by the airforce, have offered to pay for damages.

Eddie takes a hot shot



EDDIE McGuire, a Portsea Golf Club member, was on site to officially announce the multi-million dollar state of the art redevelopment of the Portsea clubhouse.

Boasting modern facilities and panoramic views of Port Phillip Bay, it is to be developed in partnership with the Accor group.

With construction already well underway, the 24-room clubhouse is set for completion in May 2013.

President of Portsea Golf Club, Paul Cannon said, "with a new clubhouse, member's lounge, world class facilities and 4.5 star accommodation rooms, the club will cater for local, interstate and international golfers."

Brisbane's strong profile

MORE than 1000 child Neurology experts from 70 different countries converged on the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, for a six day conference.

Covering many new areas of research, they reportedly achieved significant global outcomes and delivered a compelling scientific program.

Support from Brisbane in the form of travel bursaries for delegates from low income countries provided first hand access to global expertise.

Dr Kate Riney, co-chair of the Local Organising Committee and Consultant Paediatric Neurologist and Epileptologist at the University of Queensland and Mater Children's Hospital said it was a clear win for Brisbane, exceeding the Committee's expectations.

"We were extremely impressed with the world class facilities of the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, the whole experience was fantastic," Riney said.

"I couldn't really fault a single aspect - the communication, the organisation, the service and staff & the catering was exceptional."

Manager of International Convention Bidding for BCEC, Alison Gardiner said, "Australia and Brisbane have a strong profile in the field of child neurology so it made sense to shine a spotlight on the work being done here, particularly with the Queensland Children's Hospital coming on line soon."

Terrace Downs offer

RENOWNED for its top rated championship golf course, Terrace Downs, in the Canterbury high country, an hour's drive from Christchurch, in New Zealand, is offering businesses a 10% discount off the value of green fees for every \$5000 spent in conference facilities, staff functions, accommodation, food and beverages.

See terracedowns.co.nz.

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The DCC scores an ace

MORE than 4000 Bridge enthusiasts from Australia and New Zealand will arrive in Darwin for a two week, high stakes competition, with many of



Australia's leading players also participating.

The 2012 National Bridge Championships, organised by the Australian Bridge Federation and the Northern Territory Bridge Association, will be held at the Darwin Convention Centre from Saturday 07 July to 19 July.

The Centre's gm Malu Barrios said this is the first time a Bridge event had been played at the Centre and she understood that it could well be the first time that an Australian championship had been decided in a convention centre.

Sebel breathes anew

NEW life is being breathed into the 100-year old Sebel Pier One Sydney building.

Set over-water on Sydney Harbour, it is currently undergoing an extensive conference and event space renovation, a refurb that Sebel says will position it as one of Sydney's finest MICE venues.

With the unveiling mid-September, phase two of the hotel's refurbish program and the four ground floor conference rooms, to be known as HarbourWatch, are being stripped back to bare bones which will allow natural light to fill the space.

The new function space will make a stunning location for cocktail parties, product launches, conferences, events and gala lunches and dinners.



WIN AN ESCAPE TO EMIRATES WOLGAN VALLEY RESORT & SPA



During the months of June and July, *Business Events News* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing two-night stay at the exclusive Emirates **Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa** in the Blue Mountains.

The prize includes a two-night stay for two people in a Heritage Suite with breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Non-alcoholic beverages with all meals and selected regional wines and beer with lunch and dinner are also included, as are two outdoor activities each day.

Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is located on a 4000-acre nature reserve adjacent to the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and only 190kms from Sydney. The resort offers 40 stand-alone luxury suites, each with its own private verandah & swimming pool.

To enter simply email your answers to each question by 27th July 2012

Q.9: Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is owned and operated by which world class airline?

Hint: wolganvalley.com

Email your answers to: wolgan@businesseventsnews.com.au

[Click here for terms & conditions](#)





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Hayman is back

HAYMAN is seeing good forward MICE bookings for the resort following last year's forced five month closure to restore and repair the private island on the Great Barrier Reef after it sustained severe damage caused by Tropical Cyclones Anthony and Yasi earlier in the year.

Bridgett Griffiths, Association director of sales told **BEN** last night at the Whitsundays Business Events function that the domestic market is the strongest for the island with four confirmed MICE bookings for next year and the USA incentives market "strong for 2013," with five groups already booked and more in the pipeline.

"We are also already contracting for 2014", Griffiths said.

Groups can book a minimum of 10 rooms or up to 210.

Recent postings

DIV Grover has been appointed to the role of business development manager – MICE for the Metro Hospitality Group.



In this newly created role, Grover is responsible for building and maintaining the small meetings, incentives, conferences and events business for the Group's network of properties Australia-wide.

MEANWHILE, over in Fiji, the InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa has appointed Charlotte Steele as reservations manager.

She brings to the role a wealth of experience covering more than 22 years experience in the tourism industry.



Surya Bangkok special



OPENING on 15 August, the Riva Surya Bangkok, a 68 room boutique hotel located on the Chao Phraya River and managed by SilverNeedle Hospitality, has a special introductory rate.

Priced at Baht 2999 (US\$96) and valid from 15 August -30 September, it includes: one night accommodation in an urban room, with guaranteed upgrade to next room type, breakfast for two, Chao Phraya express river boat day passes for two adults, in-room wi-fi connectivity, a Thai fruit basket, welcome non-alcoholic cocktail & late check out to 5pm.

The Riva Surya is surrounded by some of the city's most treasured historical sites and within walking distance of the lively Khao San Road.

GETTING TO KNOW: Petra, Wadi Rum & Aqaba

IF any one person or event puts Jordan into perspective, it's T. E. Lawrence - 'Lawrence of Arabia' and his book 'The Seven Pillars of Wisdom.' It was Lawrence who led the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire (1916-18) - writing himself into the heart of adventurers and into the annals of history and folklore.

Even now, 50 years after the release of the film about his life, Lawrence's presence looms large alongside Jordan's significant historical, biblical and cultural character. A major misconception to dispel about Jordan is that it is not part of the political and cultural unrest that is being experienced in some parts of the Middle East.

Today, ruled by King Abdullah 11, son of the late King Hussein, Jordan is considered to be the 'safe haven of the Middle East', enjoying a remarkable measure of peace, stability and economic growth.

It's a land of incredibly welcoming people and sweeping historical landscapes, none more indelible than Petra, one of the new Seven Wonders of the World and Jordan's most valuable treasure.

Riddled with passageways and the vast mausoleums of a departed race, this Nabatean kingdom has been inhabited since prehistoric times. In this timeless landscape, delegates can ride to Little Petra on camels, wearing local attire, to where the illuminated facades and carved canyons provide a stunning backdrop for a dinner or product launch.

From here the journey to Aqaba takes in Wadi Rum, which lies on an ancient camel trading route. Here 4WD jeeps or camels follow in the footsteps of Lawrence, both the man and the film, where he lived and where scenes were shot.

Desert banquets can be enjoyed in Bedouin tents with entertainment by belly dancers, henna painters and folkloric dance troupes. Team building, trekking and mountain biking are some of the activities available.

Sixty kilometres from Wadi Rum is Aqaba, Jordan's only stretch of coastline. A thriving beach resort, it is home to vibrant coral reefs, majestic mountains, historic sites and resorts, including sizeable properties like the Radisson Blu Tala Bay Resort.

Set on the edge of the Red Sea, this sweeping 336 room resort has five pools and includes two outstanding meeting rooms, each spanning 100 square metres, in addition to substantial outdoor spaces that are almost as limitless as the Red Sea it faces and the adventures that await in this one off country.

Getting there: THAI Airlines connects to Royal Jordanian flights from Bangkok.

