



## Good Lord!

**BILBO** Baggins and his ilk may be the lure for *Lord of the Rings* fans to Wellington's



Weta Cave mini-museum.

However when catching up with Andrea Werner, Australian based manager at Postively Wellington Convention Bureau on Monday, she disclosed that since Sir Peter Jackson (director of the trilogy) had taken over a sizeable chunk of Miramar's industrial space for his film-making, the city now has New Zealand's best internet coverage.

Should Jackson's Weta Workshop inspire creative thoughts of themed parties, check first because it's only available outside of filming - *Jill*.

## IHG tertiary connect



**THE** North Sydney campus of William Blue College of Hospitality Management now has an IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group) branded classroom, launched at an event attended by about 50 people.

Located adjacent to the college's award-winning training restaurant, the IHG classroom will also host seminars and industry events.

The affiliation is an extension of IHG's multiple partnerships with leading tertiary providers nationally.

Within IHG's InterContinental, Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn properties across Australia are hundreds of students either currently completing their studies or recently graduated from formal industry studies.

Many of IHG's current senior management are graduates from these tertiary partners.

## ACC's silver milestone

**IT'S** an occasion that marks not just a 25 year milestone birthday but reminds us that the Adelaide Convention Centre was Australia's first purpose-built convention centre.

During the years since 1987, 5.5 million delegates and guests have passed through its doors and in dollar value has been a major contributor to the local economy, hosting 1400 conferences and bringing more than \$1 billion into the State.

Initially, the vision of the then South Australian Premier John Bannon and Minister for Tourism Barbara Weise, the Centre has consistently hosted an average 2.5 major conferences every week as well as several smaller meetings and events.

It has also been a major employer with 3800 people of which more than 500 permanent and casual staff are currently employed there.

Adelaide Convention Centre chief executive Alec Gilbert said, "The Centre has continued to expand and innovate to attract some of the biggest and best conferences and events from around the world.

"In particular, technologically and environmentally, with the Centre being the first in Australia to launch many new initiatives, products and services to conference organisers and delegates", Gilbert added.

During those 25 years, the Centre has continued to expand starting from 2010sqm and by 2017 will expand to almost 23,000sqm of space.

With civil works in stage one now well underway and due for completion in mid-2014, the Centre's \$350 million expansion will create 4,300 square metres of multipurpose convention floor space.

Stage two will see the replacing of the existing Plenary Building

(home of the original Centre in 1987) with a multi-purpose, state-of-the-art facility, & plenary capacity of up to 3,500 seats.

It is scheduled for completion in June 2017.

Gilbert commented, "The success story of the Adelaide Convention Centre continues and we look forward to the next 25 years."



## Getting the Smarts

**SMART** City Networks, the US's largest provider of event technology in the convention industry, has been awarded the contract to provide client technology and telecommunication services at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona, for the next five years.

As the facility's new technology service partner, Smart City installed a brand new Cisco wired and wireless internet system and added 225 new access points within the facility's meeting rooms, ballrooms, and exhibit halls.

Mark Haley, president of Smart City Networks said, "As events and attendees are becoming increasingly more tech-savvy, we look forward to the opportunity to raise the profile of the Phoenix Convention Center as a leading high-tech facility."

Director of the Phoenix Convention Center, Debbie Cotton commented, "Using the latest technology, Smart City will also provide the facility with high-speed internet access using Ethernet protocols as well as offering turn key data networking services, including local area networks (LANs).

## Taken for a ride

**SOUNDS** like the ideal means of travel for the time poor business traveller -

Pullman Auckland's all-new 'in-car' check-in



personal chauffeur service.

Designed to make the transition between Auckland Airport and the hotel a smooth and luxurious experience, this VIP check-in service provides a seamless, simple and stress-free option to those that want to make the most of their time in Auckland.

It all starts at Auckland Airport with a personal chauffeur assisting with the luggage, before setting off in the comfort of a luxury European sedan.

The check-in process, including the room key encoding, is completed en-route to the hotel.

## Sebel's makeover



**THE** Sebel Suites Auckland, catering to the boutique meeting and function market and centrally located at Viaduct Harbour, adjacent to Auckland's central business and shopping district, has unveiled a sleek refurbishment of its conference space.

Specially designed, with soft board panels installed, which double as pin boards, the Watermark room features remote controlled blinds, while the existing floor-to-ceiling windows fill the room with an abundance of natural light.

The only conference venue at The Sebel, it can hold 50 people cocktail-style, 40 classroom-style and 28 boardroom-style and is ideal for board meetings, training seminars and intimate dinners.



AN inflatable bubble hotel that was first pumped-up in the outskirts of Paris, can now be found on the banks of the Baltic Sea in Estonia's Matsalu National Park, according to Sky News.

The hotel, built by French architect Pierre-Stephane Dumas, is sans neither toilets nor any other creature comforts found in hotels.

No matter, the owner, Ermil Miggur, says, "That's the concept, to bring a person into the middle of the untouched nature."

"It is actually a reserve.

"Even though it's private land, it is the reserve of Matsalu and a person can come here and be all by himself, with his thoughts or with someone special."

The price for open-air sleeping? 99 Euros a night.

### ISES' new Board

ISES (International Special Events Society) Sydney has welcomed several new members to its management committee under the leadership of returning president Paul Davison.

Installed in conjunction with the ISES Sydney AGM and held during their July networking event at The American Club last week, Davison said he was pleased to have a refreshed and renewed committee on board.

The ISES Sydney board members for 2012-2013 are: Paul Davison, Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre; Glen Lehman, Lehman and Associates; Rob Frank, Verve Creative Events; Felicity Zadro, Zadro Communications; Darryl Lovegrove, Lovegrove Entertainment, Georgia Blakeney, Exhibitions and Trade Fairs; Vivien Reed, Australia in Style; Lyn Leigh McPherson, Decorative Events; Scott Bellingham, Funktionalitey; Katherine Marson, Merivale and Ryan Morris, IML Worldwide.

### CONVENE Lithuania

PAUL Kennedy, MBE, has been appointed as the strategic advisor of LITEXPO in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, the first regional exhibition for meetings, events, and incentives of the Vilnius Convention Bureau.

It will take place 13-14 February 2013 and aims at accelerating the meetings industry business development in Lithuania and the whole Baltic Sea region.

Entitled CONVENE, it will be an annual two-day event, accommodating 120+ fully-hosted senior buyers from across Europe.

Up to 100 exhibitors, including convention bureaux, hotels, conference centres, special venues, DMCs, PCOs, specialist suppliers from Lithuania, and six other countries of the region (Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Finland, Sweden, and Russia) will showcase their meeting products and services.

This year Vilnius will expand by almost 300 additional brand new hotel rooms, including the 96-room Kempinski Hotel Cathedral Square Vilnius which will open in September with more than 600 sqm of state-of-the-art conference and meeting space.

International hotel chains such as Le Meridien, Relais & Chateaux, Radisson Blu, Best Western, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn and Novotel have venues in Vilnius.

Paul Kennedy said: "Like many industry professionals, I knew relatively little about this region.

"Those attending the tradeshow will be likewise impressed on the regional offer and Vilnius as gateway to the region will surprise and delight the international buyers attending the event."



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## Etihad's First Class hat-trick

FOR three consecutive years the Abu Dhabi-based airline, Etihad Airways has won all three First Class titles at the Skytrax World Airline Awards.



The categories are: Best First Class, Best First Class Seats and Best First Class Catering.

The First Class accolades follow the airline's previous successes in the Skytrax Best Business Class awards which confirm the airline's leading premium product position.

Etihad Airways' chief commercial officer, Peter Baumgartner, said: "To once again win every available Skytrax Award

in the First Class category is a fantastic achievement for Etihad Airways.

"The Skytrax awards are renowned across the world for reflecting the thoughts and views of millions of air travellers, and we are delighted that our premium service and product is considered the industry's very best."

**Pictured** are Etihad's Lee Shave, vice president guest experience and Calum Laming, head of guest experience.

## 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. 14:** Name at least 5 in room features of the Heritage Suites at Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa

Hint: [wolganvalley.com](http://wolganvalley.com)

Email your answers to: [wolgan@businessesnews.com.au](mailto:wolgan@businessesnews.com.au)

[Click here for terms & conditions](#)







## Young stars shine

**AN** enthusiastic group of 50 under-35s got last week's EEAA (Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia) Young Stars Program off to a stellar start at Sydney's Luna Park.

The kick-off event combined a thought leadership component on the topic of "Managing Your Personal Brand", followed by a workshop about the development of the program.

EEAA gm Joyce DiMascio said, "The ideas workshop was inspirational and demonstrated the power of gathering bright young people in one room focused on a subject of shared interest."

The next step in the development of the EEAA Young Stars Program will be the creation of a working group as well as an online community to flesh out ideas and set priorities.

## MyCEB appointment

**AS** part of Malaysia Convention & Exhibition



Bureau's (MyCEB) commitment to strengthen the business tourism industry, highlight its new branding direction and make Malaysia as Asia's business events hub, they have appointed Mohd Nordzat Yusop as senior manager, finance and administration.

Prior to this appointment Yusop served with government linked companies and publicly listed businesses for over 16 years.

## Hawaiian debuts in NZ



**WHEN** Hawaiian Airlines commences a new thrice weekly non-stop flight between Auckland and Honolulu next year, it will become the only US carrier to fly to the land of the long white cloud.

In announcing the move, Hawaiian said the new NZ route to debut on 14 Mar, will use a two-class 767-300ER aircraft with 18 business class and 240 economy class seats.

"New Zealanders are avid travellers and we believe the introduction of new nonstop flights with our winning brand of service will be welcomed in meeting pent-up demand for a Hawaii vacation," said HA ceo Mark Dunkerley.

The route will add more than 40,000 seats annually between Hawaii and NZ, with Tourism NZ ceo Kevin Bowler also welcoming the announcement as a "significant step in improving visitor arrivals from the USA."

"The United States is a vital market for New Zealand leisure and business travel, and is a key focus for our marketing efforts given the significant potential for growth that exists."

"The ability to connect through Hawaii will provide a critical link for converting those considering travel into actual bookings," Bowler said.

# Silky Oaks indulgent Suites

**MARKING** the completion of major refurbishments, the luxurious Far North Queensland Silky Oaks Lodge, a one hour drive north of Cairns, has launched two high-end "billabong suites".



Described as a unique and indulgent addition to the Lodge's deluxe treehouses and Riverhouses, these stand-alone suites feature custom designed furniture made from local sustainable timbers, open plan living areas, Bose sound system, complimentary mini bar, library and a large full-length private balcony complete with hammock and day bed overlooking the rapids of the rainforest's river.

Silky Oaks sits in a prime position on the Mossman River and nearby the Mossman Gorge where the spacious billabong suites offer serene views across the water to the oldest living rainforest on the planet.

Paul van Min, owner of Silky Oaks Lodge, expressed his delight in promoting the new suites.

"After extensive renovations, we are proud to present to our guests a 'new look' for Silky Oaks."

"The property has always been iconic, but we have added a new luxurious dimension with our billabong suites," he says.

Pricing for the suites is \$998 per night and \$878 for three or more nights.

Rates are based on single and double occupancy and are inclusive of full gourmet tropical breakfast, mini bar (stocked to suit), daily newspapers, use of

river canoes, mountain bikes, gym, tennis court and yoga classes or guided rainforest walks.

In addition to stunning design, Silky Oaks guests enjoy fine dining and exquisite Healing Waters Spa treatments all wrapped within an ancient, living rainforest.

## DCC lends support

**WITH** an increasing reputation as a leading venue for national and international conferences, the Darwin Convention Centre is also building recognition for its support for the growth of the region and local businesses.

Convention Centre manager Malu Barrios said that Darwin is the main driver of the continuing economic success of the Territory and that the Centre takes every opportunity to support local businesses.

Most recently the Centre hosted the launch of the NT Government's "Gearing Up Local Business for Major Projects Expo" which was attended by more than 350 business people from the Territory's SMEs.

This year the Centre has provided the venue for events such as the Travel Expo, Darwin Life and Home Expo & the NT Big Boys Toys.

## Qantas increases to ACT and Tassie

**QANTAS** is to increase its capacity from Adelaide to the national capital from 29 October by up to 1,076 seats per week.

The five extra services will be operated by QantasLink Q400 aircraft & will complement services already operated by Boeing 737 aircraft bringing the total number of flights to 37 per week.

Qantas Domestic ceo Lyell Strambi said, "The Qantas Group offers the most services to the Canberra market with more than 500 flights per week to and from Canberra."

Additionally, Qantas is boosting the capacity between Melbourne and Tasmania to 1700, including more seats to Hobart, Launceston and Devonport.

Strambi said the expansion would include a daily Q400 flight between Melbourne and Hobart alongside the current twice daily B737 services on the route, adding 1036 seats per week.

Launceston Q400 flights will increase from 17 to 28 per week, while two weekly Melbourne-Devonport services will be upgraded from a Q300 to a Q400.

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