



Feeling fashionable?

FOR those in the industry Fashion Week is the hottest ticket on the annual event calendar.

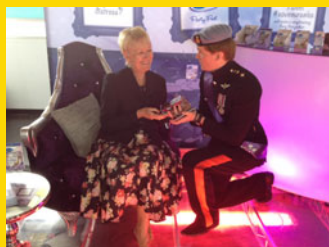
Held at Sydney's Overseas Passenger Terminal, this year one of the most popular surprise guests was none other than 'His Royal Highness Prince Harry.'

Okay, so he is a lookalike and Scholl's Party Feet Prince, here to give fashionistas the right Royal treatment.

Harry or real name Roddy Walker, is one of a number of British celebrity lookalikes, he flew from Britain for the event.

'Prince Harry' got down on one knee and proposed a pair of Happy Feet ballet slippers for your's truly.

Those who watched the spoof video of the Royal Wedding will recognise his fellow celebrity lookalikes - look him up online at princeharrylookalike.weebly.com.



Jill getting the ultimate proposal.

St Kilda launches Assoc

KNOWN for its famous icons such as Luna Park, Acland Street and the popular Fitzroy Street restaurant strip, St. Kilda has launched a Tourism Association.

With a skills-based board, led by chair Tracey Cooper, they will oversee the implementation of a number of new initiatives and marketing campaigns, providing development opportunities for local industry operators.

The association has also launched a website stkildamelbourne.com featuring tourist information including business and events listings.

Dubai really means business

DUBAI Tourism has seen stunning growth in business events in recent years, with MICE activity up 34% in the last 12 months, on top of an even bigger 35% increase the previous year.

Speaking with **BEN** at Arabian Travel Market in Dubai yesterday, Jerad Bachar, who is director of the Dubai Convention Bureau, said that was probably just the tip of the iceberg, with many incentives and other groups visiting Dubai not tracked by the official figures.

And the Middle Eastern city has plenty of capacity for huge events, with figures released this week showing it now boasts a massive 75,000 rooms and apartments.

He confirmed that Dubai has a huge vision for the events sector, including a serious bid for the 2020 World Expo.

If successful, Dubai will construct the world's biggest convention centre to house the year-long expo, adjacent to the massived Al Maktoum Airport which is being developed at Dubai World Central.

Bachar revealed some of the Convention Bureau's strategies, telling **BEN** that it has about 50 key prospects - meetings of around 1500-2000 delegates - in its sights at any one time.

"Dubai is ideal for meetings because it is so accessible," he said, with a large number of airlines operating direct flights from around the world and a large catchment within about five hours of flying time, meaning organisers can be guaranteed of good attendance.

As well as that the fast developing tourism infrastructure in the city means there's plenty of options for gala celebrations and other activities at Dubai's many amazing luxury properties.

Transport for large groups is also simple, with an extensive



road system and Dubai also now has a clean, fast and efficient rail public transport system connecting key locations.

There are also large numbers of fabulous incentive activities, with Dubai having seen significant development and expansion of its tourism product in recent years.

Darwin wins MEA 2013

THE bid to host Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) 2013 National Conference has been won by Darwin.

Malu Barrios, gm of the Darwin Convention Centre said the MEA win was a considerable achievement for Darwin which previously hosted the event in 1997.

Describing MEA as a truly memorable "first" for the Darwin Convention Centre and an exciting highlight in what will be the Centre's fifth year, Barrios said it would "not only bring an estimated 600 delegates to Darwin but will also provide the ideal opportunity to focus the attention of the industry on the scope and flexibility of Darwin as a unique business events destination."

The winning bid reflects a close relationship between the Centre and the NT Convention Bureau.

WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO HAWAII



During April and May, **Business Events News** is giving one lucky reader the chance a win an amazing holiday for two people to Hawaii, courtesy of **Hawaii Tourism, Hawaiian Airlines and The Kahala Hotel and Resort.**

The prize includes Hawaiian Airlines return airfares from Sydney to Honolulu, and five nights accommodation in an Ocean View Room at The Kahala Hotel and Resort.

Over 6 weeks, we will feature a different question in every **Business Events News** issue. There will be 15 questions in total, which will also be posted on our website. At the end of the month the subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this fantastic holiday to Hawaii.



Which picturesque geographical landmark can be seen from The Kahala's outdoor function spaces?

Hint! Visit www.kahalaresort.com

Email your answers to: hawaii@businessesnews.com.au

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crumbs!

IF those faraway places are calling to you but you don't have the cash to answer the call, Google Maps have a solution with a feature that allows you to travel the world remotely.

It's all down to their new search giant "built" 3D system which creates panoramas of world landmarks such as Rome's Trevi Fountain, Buckingham Palace; etc, by using public photos from its Picasa photo-sharing site.

To view, turn on Google Maps' WebGL feature.

THE use of Facebook and Twitter has almost negated the need to send a postcard.

It was nice to learn of a man who has just received a postcard from his parents sent in 1957.

The card predicted, "We'll probably be home before this gets there".

What a Darling

SYDNEY's newest five star boutique hotel, The Darling, has taken out 'Best New Hotel Construction and Design 2012' at the Asia-Pacific International Hotel Awards in Kuala Lumpur this week.

Echo Entertainment Group ceo, Larry Mullin expressed his delight in receiving the award and the recognition of its distinctive design.

Soaking up some WA sun



THE Perth Convention Bureau (PCB) had a busy April, hosting two famil groups, as part of a series of familiarisations taking place in the current financial year.

A group of eight meeting planners from the East Coast and New Zealand enjoyed a three night/four day program which began in Perth and continued to the South West for the Margaret River Food and Wine Festival.

Highlights included a five course long table lunch at Leeuwin Estate and the Vintage Festival at Palmer Wines.

Two nights were spent at The Regency Beach Resort in Dunsborough where they enjoyed a wine tour along with a fabulous

lunch at Vasse Felix.

The final evening was a barbecue cooked by Olsen's Catering at Regency Beach.

"I have just experienced an amazing famil," said Anne Gowlett, director - Insignia Management.

"The itinerary planning was excellent and really captured the unique features of Perth and the South West region.

"It was through my visit to Broome in 2011, that we were able to experience and then recommend a fabulous itinerary to our client Toyota Financial Services."

The second group who arrived from the East Coast, began with a welcome lunch at Caversham House in the Swan Valley and concluded with a seven course degustation dinner at Lamont's Bishop's House.

The group was co-hosted by Accor Hotels and the Perth Convention Bureau with different Accor properties showcased in Perth including The Novotel Vines Resort, Novotel Perth Langley, Mercure Hotel and Ibis Hotel.

In addition guests took part in the Beef and Beer Experience at The Old Brewery and breakfast at Frasers Kings Park.

Other activities included a Segway obstacle course, golf putting, quad trike, kayaking and a nature walk in Kings Park.

Amari in Middle East

IN a first step into the Middle East, the Thailand-based ONYX Hospitality Group has been appointed by Gulf Trading and Contracting Company (GTC) to operate a 120-room Amari Qatar hotel, in the capital, Doha.

The 13 storey property which is scheduled to open in September features 120 contemporary fully appointed rooms, including 78 superior rooms, 36 deluxe rooms, and six suites.

Each room is stylishly decorated and offers guests the ultimate comfort and luxury.

In-room amenities will include LCD flat screen television, a comfortable lounge area, Wi-Fi internet access along with a work desk fitted with an iPod docking station.

It will have a selection of dining options, each with its own unique offering based on Amari's concept of bringing people together and sharing.

For the ultimate relaxation, guests will be able to indulge in body treatments at Breeze Spa which, in addition to fun and easy treatments, will also feature a jacuzzi and a Vichy shower room.

A fully equipped fitness centre will also be available for those feeling more energetic.

Skyrail best enviro

SKYRAIL Rainforest Cableway in Cairns has been named as the most environmentally sustainable tourism business in the Pacific region.

The Queensland company is the first in the Pacific to obtain EarthCheck's Certified Platinum rating and the only cableway in the world to achieve this status.

Erratum MCVB

WE are aware that Karen Bolinger has headed up a number of well known MICE businesses with familiar acronyms, however we apologise for the slip up (BEN 30 Apr) when she was named as the ceo of the MCEC.

Bolinger is, in fact, the ceo of the MCVB.

Events

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Keystone's runway success

AMID a colourful crowd of fashionistas in nose bleed altitude high heels, cutting edge outfits and flashing cameras, all seeking a caffeine fix, a glass of bubbly or a hot crab

and coriander toastie, **BEN** managed to catch up with the Keystone Group's managing director, John Duncan and their group director Anthony Prior.

It's Monday and day one of Fashion Week and the Keystone Group are hosting the Keystone Canteen – a bespoke, pop-up



dining space and bar, as the catering partner for Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Australia 2012 (MBFWA).

"MBFWA is Australia's premier fashion event, and this collaboration will elevate Keystone's presence in the style world onto an international stage" said John Duncan.

Keystone is also providing the catering to The Mercedes-Benz Star Lounge, as well as managing all corporate hospitality on site, and providing catering to all the crew behind MBFWA.

Duncan said this latest partnership is part of Keystone's continued commitment to providing their signature dining and entertaining experiences outside of their separate stand-alone venues.

Keystone showcased this commitment earlier in the year by launching a highly successful partnership with Sydney Festival when it became the naming rights sponsor for Keystone Festival Bar at Hyde Park Barracks.

Not content to own and operate the likes of Bungalow 8, The Loft, Cargo Bar, Cargo Lounge, Gazebo Wine Garden, Kit & Kaboodle, Manly Wine, and The Sugar Mill & The Winery, Duncan revealed that they are presently engaged in an exciting growth trajectory, including the launch of a rooftop barbeque bar in Kings Cross, and an exciting revamp of King Street institution, the Newtown Hotel (launching October) plus many other exciting projects.

Stay at Novotel Northbeach



This week, **Business Events News** is giving readers the chance to win one night accommodation in an Ocean View Balcony Room and buffet breakfast for two people courtesy of the Novotel Northbeach Wollongong.

Novotel Northbeach Wollongong is a 4.5 star luxury hotel located on the beach and is within easy walking distance of the city centre, shopping malls, cinemas, restaurants, sporting grounds and tourist attractions of the beautiful Illawarra region.

To win the one night stay be the first to answer the question to:

comp@businesseventsnews.com.au

What is the name of the restaurant at Novotel Wollongong Northbeach?

Hint: novotelnorthbeach.com.au.

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Grays' Say

Peter Gray, managing partner of **Motivating People** presents a regular *Business Events News* feature on current issues in the MICE industry.



'INCENTIVE' is not a dirty word.

Incentives are a strategic and very effective marketing tool.

That they work when properly designed and implemented is not in doubt - ask the banks, airlines, hotel groups, automotive companies and many others.

That the mass media doesn't (or won't) understand what's involved in setting targets and rewarding those that achieve them is also not in doubt.

The mass media continues to berate recipients of what they term outlandish rewards and the companies that provide them even though many of the publications that do so offer significant travel rewards to their advertisers for meeting or exceeding advertising targets.

It's unlikely that the mass media will change its approach to incentives any time soon; after all seemingly bad or

outrageous news sells newspapers.

What does it matter if what they print is wrong?

I tend not to buy newspapers these days, not out of protest but because the content can usually be accessed on my iPod, iPhone or laptop.

Now News Group newspapers are levying a charge for such access but I

for one won't be paying.

I will pay for accurate reporting but not the rubbish that some of

these publications churn out - including their lack of understanding of the incentive industry!

To contact Peter Gray email peter.gray@motivatingpeople.net.



Torquay MICE move

THE newly rebranded Wyndham Resort Torquay on Victoria's Surf Coast is offering a range of team building options for conference organisers, following its take over by the Wyndham group in Nov.

Local operator Big Stick Adventures works closely with the resort to provide activities for corporate groups, while the resort itself offers an inspiring ocean front location and six purpose built meeting spaces.

The property is one of the biggest residential conference venues in regional Victoria and also boasts a ballroom with 180° sea views and capacity for 350 - more info 03 5261 1500.

Garza's Rendezvous

RENDEZVOUS Hotel Perth has appointed the latest addition to their team, with Clarissa Garza joining as a sales and marketing specialist.

Garza takes up the role of manager of sales – conferences and events, joins the team during the hotel's extensive refurbishment program, which is due for completion in late 2012.

Garza brings to her role extensive experience in the travel industry; most recently she held a senior management role at Corporate Travel Management and prior to this she worked as Sales & Product Manager for Nomads World Hotels.

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