



Ted Wright Benefit



WHEN the Sydney Regent opened 31 years ago it was considered one of the top ten hotels in the world and Ted Wright, its first gm gave it a style and a level of professionalism that stamped it his own.

Sadly, Ted had a stroke that required intensive medical care, so a benefit was held at The Four Seasons, Sydney last night - to recognise and celebrate this industry leader by his friends & colleagues, in his time of need.

Ted was not only the hotel's gm for many years, for eleven of those he was chairman of the Sydney Convention & Visitors Bureau and the key driving force behind the Sydney Olympic bid, roles that saw him gain an Order of Australia for his services to tourism.

Last night his popularity was evidenced by a packed ballroom of industry, political and business leaders, at which speakers such as Serge Dansereau (Bathers Pavilion, who worked under Ted for 16 years), Leo Scofield AM and Bruce Baird AM spoke.

It was emceed by another former gm, Stephen Lewis who proudly holds the No.1 employee ticket, Stephen started at the hotel just prior to Ted, as sales & marketing manager, while the evening was hosted by Daryl Somers.

Corporate sponsors and supporters bought tables and both a live and silent auction was held.

BEN was a guest of the Metro Hospitality Group and coo George Bedwani, himself another industry luminary.

The evening recreated the glory days of the Don Burrows Supper Club, a fixture at the hotel, with jazz luminaries from George Golla and vocalists Sandie White & Jacki Cooper - Jill.

MEETINGS attract new exhibitors

WHEN the doors open on MEETINGS, New Zealand's premier business tourism exhibition in June, there will be around 170 exhibitors from throughout New Zealand on show.

"We're thrilled to be welcoming a sizeable number of new exhibitors to MEETINGS this year," says MEETINGS' event manager Jeanette Stanton.

"This exhibition is about showcasing the diversity of New Zealand as a destination so it's always great to see new companies and regions coming on board."

Four Queenstown-based companies will be among those making their debut and include Glacier Southern Lakes Helicopters who fly guests around the South Island's iconic landscapes, while Pacific Jemm is the only luxury boat available for lake charter in Queenstown.

Art Adventures is a new and unique tourism business, which takes guests into the landscapes of Central Otago to sketch and paint, while Skippers Canyon Jet operates a unique lodge, which can cater for groups of varied sizes, up to 100.

3 million climb bridge

AFTER 14 years of operation, BridgeClimb Sydney celebrated their three millionth climber on Monday.

It is a feat that has seen climbers from over 137 countries, more than 4,000 engagements, and approximately 20 weddings on top of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Paul Cave, chairman and founder said, "Since BridgeClimb's inception, it's been essential that we continually deliver a unique experience to both our domestic and international customers.

"We now currently have four climbs on the Bridge, the most recent being the introduction of the Mandarin Climb."

Dunedin's multi-functional facility, The Edgar Centre, is another new exhibitor, which is regularly used for sporting events, trade shows, exhibitions, and gala dinner.

Other newbies are Auckland's Alexandra Park Function Centre, with eight function rooms across four floors, while another has capacities for up to 1000, KiwiRail Scenic Journeys and Hamilton Gardens, which include the Lakeside venue and function centre.

MEETINGS is being held at the SKYCITY Auckland Convention Centre on 26 and 27 June.

For further information on the New Zealand event, visit the website online at - www.meetings.co.nz.

Easier with iVvy

MAKING it easier for clients to sell and manage exhibition space, iVvy have designed a new events app and exhibition portal to make participation at an exhibition as easy as possible.

With its hot new features exhibitors can book and pay online for their booth, manage their online profile, and access important exhibitor information to help them prepare for a show.

Conference or exhibition managers can fully integrate exhibition data including contact lists for emailing, payment reports, and customise forms to collect specific content.

More info at - www.ivvy.com.



A touch of the Top End

A famil held in the Top End of the Northern Territory was staged for seven event planners from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne last week.

A 'Welcome' cocktail function was held in the heart of the Darwin CBD, within the ruins of the Heritage-listed Town Hall built in 1883.

Having survived the bombing of Darwin, it didn't survive Cyclone Tracy's wrath some 50 years later.

Now with the ruins stabilised it provides an iconic Darwin location for off-site functions for up to 300 and 150 for dinner events.

It was an evening that included a visit to the Smith Street Mall to see the luxury crocodile-skin goods at di CROCO and to Paspaley to learn about their pearl production.

Leading event management company Agentur, a specialist in Indigenous cultural themes, organised the event, while



the evening was given a touch of "Priscilla" by well-known NT Indigenous drag queen "Constantina Bush."

Scott Lovett, director of business events for the Northern Territory Convention Bureau (NTCB), said, "This creative welcome function highlights the many ways in which culture can be woven into a business event held in the Northern Territory.

"We have such an amazing depth of home-grown talent here and judging by the reaction of the famil participants to not only the venue but also the food and entertainment, it was a sure-fire winner."

The group is pictured above at the Darwin Town Hall Ruins.



crumbs!

MILLIONAIRES or incentive planners with plenty of readies can take advantage of a 10-day luxury Cambodian immersion trip into Khmer culture being offered by Khiri Travel Cambodia.

Highlights include helicopter visits to spectacular 11th century mountain temples away from the crowds, a personal dinner with a view of Angkor, and a private jet to an exclusive island retreat on the Cambodian Riviera.

Khiri Travel ceo and co-founder, Willem Niemeijer said, "Guests should prepare for glorious Khmer temple complexes, innovative dining, but also to see the journey this country has made since the murderous years under Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge."

The trip uses hotels such as Amansara Resort, Raffles Hotel Le Royal and overwater villas at Song Saa Private Island.

Find out more - email sales.cambodia@khiri.com.

Dusit puts a smile on your dial

ASIAN hospitality group Dusit International has announced its sponsorship of cleft lip or cleft palate surgeries for 100 Thai children with these facial deformities.

The program Dusit Smiles created in partnership with Operation Smile Thailand is made possible due to various fundraisers organised by the Group and donations collected from guests and staff of Dusit International's hotels and resorts.

Kuruvita Noosa opens

GROUPS heading to Noosa might like to check out acclaimed chef Peter Kuruvita's new restaurant, Noosa Beach House, which opens in late May.

On the site of the old Cato's Restaurant & Bar it will transform one of Hastings Street's most iconic & popular meeting points.

Enter Doubletree by Hilton

HILTON Worldwide will introduce its fastest growing full-service brand, DoubleTree by Hilton, to Australia when it rebrands four Northern Territory hotels on 1 May.

The three hotels, DoubleTree by Hilton Darwin, DoubleTree by Hilton Esplanade Darwin and DoubleTree by Hilton Alice Springs will open alongside Hilton Darwin in the Territory.

The Northern Territory hotels are in prime locations for business travellers in the mining & resources sectors offering some of the most incredible tourism experiences Australia has to offer.

Ashley Spencer, vice president, operations, Australasia, Hilton Worldwide said they are

delighted to add another Hilton Hotel & Resort in the region's most significant areas of growth.

"We have been looking to enter into the Northern Territory for some time and are committed to making these properties the leading full-service hotels in the market."

All four hotels will offer guests the ability to earn and redeem Hilton HHonors.

Hilton Worldwide's area general manager for the Northern Territory, Martin Kendall will have overall responsibility for all four hotels, supported by Carey Osborne, hotel manager for the two DoubleTree by Hilton hotels in Darwin and Clinton Farley, general manager for DoubleTree by Hilton Alice Springs.

Heritage Rooms offer

FOUR Points by Sheraton Sydney, Darling Harbour has opened four brand new meeting spaces.

Known as The Heritage Meeting Rooms they will add an additional 300 sqms of new space for clients and guests.

The introduction of these rooms will give the hotel 21 event spaces with a combined total of approximately 2,000 sqms.

Four Points has a special introductory Heritage Meeting Rooms offer of 20% off a minimum spend and room rental until June.

For more information visit - www.fourpointssydney.com/meetingoffers.

Chow down at Sonaisali

IF you like the full Enchilada for breakfast the Sonaisali Island Resort, Fiji has re-introduced its full American Buffet Breakfast for all resort guests.

The American Buffet Breakfast replaces the tropical (continental) breakfast and is included in the room rate of the resort so there is no additional charge for guests.

Fiji Airways new A330



ON Monday, Air Pacific operated an inaugural (pre-Fiji Airways) 'sneak peek' commercial flight to Brisbane with its first new Airbus A330.

The first scheduled Australian port of call for Air Pacific's first of three brand new aircraft, the arrival of the A330 with its new 'Fiji Airways' identity is the capstone of Air Pacific's turnaround plan to position the carrier for future success.

Although, the airline will not assume its new 'Fiji Airways' identity, service, and other brand attributes until June, the new branding is true to its Fijian roots.

The all-new Kryal Castle

FOR the first time since opening in the 1970s, Kryal Castle, an iconic structure in Ballarat, a one-hour drive from Melbourne, has been recreated into Kryal Castle Adventure Park & Resort.

The transformation into a new land of medieval adventure means corporate groups now have something unique to add to their conference program.

Here you can meet at the Round Table like the knights of old, try a trebuchet team-building challenge or gather in the Abbey for a one of a kind conference.

Delegates can even stay overnight in one of the 17 on-site luxury Castle Suites, complete with hand-woven French and Belgian tapestries.

Team-building options include a medieval treasure hunt and knights training complete with armour and sword skills – or a sports day in medieval costumes with bow and arrows, a tug of war and a championship joust.

When it comes to conferences and meetings, there is event space for theatre style seating for



up to 200 or 1200 in the Marquee on the Arena.

A special Meetings Package is available for a minimum of 15 at \$49 per person, per day and includes morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Bookings also receive 20% off Castle Suites accommodation, and two-day delegate packages receive a complimentary private 'basic armoured combat battle' for your team.

For more information on the new event centre visit the website at - www.kryalcastle.com.au.



Central Coast plans for the future

A new Tourism Opportunity Plan for the Central Coast has been released in which 44 investment and infrastructure opportunities have been identified.

Five of these are classified as catalyst projects which will have a significant impact towards supporting sustainable tourism growth in the region.

The five catalyst projects are: Pioneer Diary Sporting Hub; Tourism Hub at The Entrance; The Waterfront Development at Gosford, Stage 1; Mt Penang Tourism Precinct and Motorsports Precinct.

Central Coast Tourism chairman, Bob Diaz said, "Without

investment in these projects and experiences there is no doubt that the region will lag behind our competitors and visitor numbers will decline.

"Central Coast Tourism will work together with the local councils, the State and Federal Governments and Regional Development Australia to encourage investment in the region to ensure that we maximise the growth opportunities of both visitor numbers and length of stay" Diaz confirmed.

Divas tailored for events



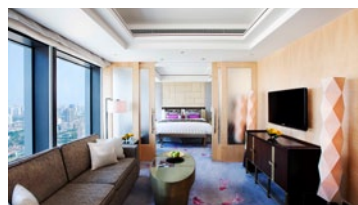
SUCCESSFUL entertainment comedy group, Leave it to Diva with a repertoire of characters, cabarets and full scale productions specifically created for the corporate market has developed a range of new shows and they also have a new website.

How about Julia Gillard or Kath and Kim compering your next awards night or Dolly Parton for a bit of country glamour.

Rohan Seinor (star of Channel 10's I Will Survive) joins the Diva team as Tony Abbott, while the Carpenters from Kempsey is another new act as is Tom Sharah currently seen on the Morning Show and recently performing in the Priscilla Spectacular at Voyages, Uluru.

Ask them about their special video messages – Kath and Kim's wedding invites, the PM's birthday message or Susan Boyle's style tips.

For information see - www.leaveittodiva.com.au.



Jakki Temple, General Manager Sales and Marketing The Star



Business Events News recently caught up with The Star's general manager sales and marketing, Jakki Temple. Jakki has been with the The Star for nearly two years and previous to that held a number of roles with the sales and marketing teams at Sofitel Sydney Wentworth, Accor's Darling Harbour Hotels and Novotel Sydney Olympic Park.

What does your role entail?

My role entails engaging guests and clients through marketing, events, PR and sales, all of which I oversee at The Star.

What's the first thing you do when you get in the office?

To be honest I get straight into it. I'm not much for small talk and the team are already on the ball and ready to go.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Ensuring all the marketing moving parts work in harmony with one another, and with the rest of the business.

How do you inspire your team?

I would like to think I empower my team so they feel they are responsible and care about their own reputations when delivering their work. I also ensure I give regular updates on the business so that they feel their work is directly contributing to the bottom line.

Dealing with new technology - bonus or headache?

Bonus and a headache! I like to understand the background to the IT programs I am using but sometimes I think it might be better if I just take them as they are!

What would you be doing if you weren't general manager sales and marketing, The Star?

Running a florists or a restaurant in my home town of Adelaide.

Who has inspired you?

My family has always worked hard to achieve their goals and whilst I may not have appreciated it when I was younger, I must have been inspired by and inherited my parents' work ethic.

How do you relax?

Stress relief is being a Mum which soon brings you down to earth.

What makes a great conference?

Preparation, having great communication with the client and unique creativeness.

What the most inspiring conference you have been involved in?

I tend to go to industry conferences such as MEA and EEAA and I find inspirational moments in both.

How many conferences have you attended in the last 12 months?

As a delegate and a seller – 8.

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Business Events News is part of the Travel Daily group of publications which also include: Travel Daily, Cruise Weekly & Pharmacy Daily.

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