



A star was born

WHERE were you 40 years ago?

I know.

"Wasn't alive then", "was part of the opening celebrations," "still in kindergarten?"

No matter what or where you were, 40 years ago on Sunday, 27 October 1973, Beethoven's Ode to Joy officially opened Australia's most famous building, the Sydney Opera House Australia.

Now, this year the 40th Anniversary Concert will be held featuring artists and performances celebrating the life of the Opera House.

All this will culminate in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in the presence of the Opera House's Anniversary patrons, Denmark's Crown Prince couple, HRH Crown Prince Frederik and HRH Crown Princess Mary, and the family of Opera House architect Jørn Utzon.

Tickets to the month long program go on sale 8 August, priced from \$39-\$49 - Jill.



Keeping up appearances

KEEPING up with the evolution in event technology isn't always easy as the products and services mysteriously multiply.

Fear not, help is at hand at the Australian Business Events Expo (ABEE) with the launch of the Technology Village, a new feature at this event being held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, 14-15 August.

Leading event technology suppliers will converge to share, demonstrate and answer event professionals questions about how to, and why to use their technology.

Oliver Bampffield, managing director of IML Australia will lead a session that will explore the power of harnessing audience interaction.

"We'll be examining how our technology can be used to increase engagement, facilitate discussion and answer all the questions people might have.

We are looking forward to



meeting event buyers and showing them how to ensure a return on investment from their meetings and events," said Bampffield.

To attend the Technology Village, you must first register, for free, via the Expo's website - www.abeexpo.com.au.

Radisson Blu redesign

A REDESIGN of some of Radisson Blu Hotel Sydney's public areas began this month.

Upon completion in late 2013 the hotel will unveil a new location for Bistro Fax Restaurant, an additional restaurant and bar and a new hair salon and spa.

Belfast hosts the WPFG

THE Belfast Waterfront Conference Centre's versatility and specialist resources have proved the ideal registration venue for the city who are hosting the 2013 World Police and Fire Games (WPFG), which is taking place until 10 August.

With 7,000 athletes made up of police, fire, prison and border security officers, contractors and staff, the event is the third largest international multi-sport event in the world.

With around 56 different sports scheduled during the games and more competitors than any previous Commonwealth Games it is the largest ever sporting event to take place in Northern Ireland.

In addition, more than 350 competitors from Australia are thought to have travelled to Northern Ireland for this event.

John Tully, chief executive, 2013 WPFG added, "Belfast Waterfront has proved to be the ideal venue for our registration centre given its central location and the expertise of its in-house conferencing team.



"As a first experience for the many thousand athletes and supporters it has been extremely positive.

"The registration process has been very streamlined particularly as a result of the bespoke technology provided by 2013 WPFG Platinum Sponsors Fujitsu."

The Star's Festival partnership

AIMING higher in their participation, The Star, already an existing partner of the Sydney Festival, the annual celebration of art, culture and ideas held every January, has announced a four-year Principal Partnership from 2014.

The move follows The Star's \$870 million redevelopment, leveraging their award-winning restaurants, hotels and events and entertainment venues to enrich and enhance the Festival, from pop-up bars atop its recently opened Event Centre rooftop overlooking the Sydney skyline, to performances and special events in its live venues including the Sydney Lyric, Marquee and Rock Lily.

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business events news

7th August 2013

Kalgoorlie fit to burst

SUGGESTING all the imagery of a high rolling casino shindig, Australia's largest mining conference, Diggers & Dealers is celebrating its 21st anniversary in the West Australian town of Kalgoorlie and Accor's ibis Styles Kalgoorlie is reaping many of the benefits.

The event, in town from 4-7 August has seen ibis Styles Kalgoorlie at 100% occupancy over the three-day conference, with the hotel busy taking forward bookings for next year's conference and expected to hold 60% of reservations for the 2014 conference by the end of this week.

With many of the delegates' international visitors, extra flights were put on by the major airlines to accommodate the influx of delegates.

First held in 1992 with 150 delegates attending, the conference now attracts close to 2400 people.

Acting gm, Shaun Fahey, said "As the demand for rooms over the conference period keeps getting higher and higher, the demand for accommodation in Kalgoorlie keeps growing and we've seen an increase REVPAR year-on-year during this time.

"We love welcoming the Diggers & Dealers delegates and there's a real buzz about town with them all here."

Gather round and be rewarded

AS an incentive idea for one of The Gathering Ireland 2013, 4,000 or so events and initiatives organisers who bring their groups to Kildare Village, a 50-minute drive north east of Dublin, will be offered a €50 organiser/handling agent gift card.

Each member of the group (minimum 10 people) gets a VIP Day Card (an additional 10% saving), as well as a glass of bubbles in their VIP Lounge.

Kildare Village is one of the Collection of nine Chic Outlet Shopping Villages by Value Retail, the only company to specialise exclusively in the development and operation of luxury outlet shopping villages.

Smaller groups of less than 10 people but a minimum of five adults, will receive a VIP Day card, complimentary access to their Shopping Collection Service, a hands free shopping experience, and a free gift.

In addition, a purpose-built VIP Lounge, will be at the disposal of MICE or incentive groups so that they can combine a shopping trip with an informal reception, presentation, small meeting (capacity 20 to 40 depending on the use) a style master class or personal shopping.



The new lounge is due to open in September this year.

Groups must be pre-booked to avail of the offer.

For more information visit - www.KildareVillage.com/chicgatherings.

Visit us at ABEE on stand B42



Go in the draw to win a night stay at the Sebel Pier One, Sydney including breakfast for two and a bottle of Champagne.



HEAR ye, all James Bond fans.

The five-star Isle of Eriska Hotel, which lies just off Scotland's west coast, has launched a James Bond Escape package to celebrate 50 years of the movie franchise.

Wanabee Bonds arriving at Edinburgh airport (as it happens to be the birthplace of Sir Sean Connery) will be given the keys to an Aston Martin DB9, along with a recommended route map which takes in Rannoch Moor and Glencoe - a location in the recent Skyfall movie.

Once ensconced at the hotel, a private speed boat will be on hand for private trips to the nearby Isle of Mull - guaranteed to leave guests shaken, not stirred.

In the evening, guests will be treated to a Martini Cocktail Masterclass, where the history of 007's favourite tippie will be explained ahead of a black-tie dinner.

Music to the ears

HERE is a golden opportunity for an incentive group or visiting conference delegates to capture the thrill of hearing Australia's much-loved soprano, Emma Matthews, reprise her role as Violetta in La Traviata, following a

spectacular performance during Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour last year.

As it is, last year was a bumper one for Opera Australia with growth in paid attendances rising 34% in 2012 and audiences rising by 40%, an outcome which the company attributes to the success of the Handa production.

Named number one cultural event in the world in March 2012 by *The Guardian Online*, this season's La Traviata runs through to 31 August, interspersed throughout the month with other sparkling productions of Tosca,



Don Pasquale and Albert Heering.

Opera Australia can organise a large group to attend a scheduled opera and include pre-performance cocktails and canapés or dinner, or a small interval function.

You can book a private performance complete with pre-performance dinner or cocktail function and a host of special effects or take a private back stage tour.

To find out more contact Groups & Tourism Planner kim.jacobs@opera-australia.org.au.

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business events news

7th August 2013

A ghostly gathering



IT was a gathering of a ghostly kind when the general managers of eight Accor MGallery Collection of hotels around Australia and New Zealand assembled at Sydney's historic Harbour Rocks Hotel as part of a dedicated showcase of the countries' newest upscale brand to 30 top PCO, corporate and leisure clients.

The evening, hosted by Simon McGrath, Accor Pacific's coo, included visits from Harbour Rocks Hotel's resident ghosts, Eric and Scarlett accompanied by heavenly music from a classical harpist.

The MGallery's three brand categories – Heritage, Serenity and Signature - were showcased with the serving of each hotel's signature drinks and dishes.

Commencing in Eric's Bar, Heritage hotels dished up smoked duck, pork belly and martinis.

Moving on to Harbour Rocks' spectacular Garden Terrace, the group sampled the delights of the Serenity collection of hotels, before proceeding up to the Harbour View penthouse suite where Signature Hotels showed-off their trademark epicurean cool.

Brisbane wins AGW/WGO Int'l Congress

THE Gastro 2015: AGW/WGO International Congress, with 2,500 of the world's leading gastroenterology experts expected to attend, has been won by Brisbane.

The first time the combined meeting of the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) and Australian Gastroenterology Week has been held in Australia, it will take place at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) in September 2015.

Brisbane's key convention partners led by the BCEC joined with the Gastroenterological Society of Australia (GESA) in bidding for the six day event, which is expected to generate \$9 million for the Queensland economy.

In addition, the Queensland Government through Tourism and Events Queensland, BCEC and Brisbane Marketing all played significant roles.

The Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games Jann Stuckey said the Newman Government understood the important role conferences like this played in boosting tourism and showcasing Queensland to delegates.

"The business events market is worth more than \$719 million to the State economy with a total of 4,971 business events taking place in Queensland in 2011-12," Stuckey said.



Face to Face with...

Jacqui Timmins, Exhibition Director AIME and CIBTM



Business Events News recently caught up with the recently appointed exhibition director for AIME and CIBTM, Jacqui Timmins. She brings with her over 25 years travel industry experience and has previously held the position of general manager for Travelscene American Express, as well as senior management positions at Stella Travel Services and Qantas Airways.

What does your role entail?

My job is to oversee the delivery of two of Reed Travel Exhibitions major events; AIME and CIBTM. My key responsibility is to ensure that every detail of these events is top quality. Also to keep all facets of both teams running smoothly and making sure we're all working towards the same goal of creating the best shows for the MICE industry.

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

I usually go through all the emails that have come in overnight from head office, in the UK, as well as having a cup of tea and catching up with the team.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Finding the most efficient ways to leverage, differentiate and add value to our events. Keeping up with new technology is definitely one of the best ways to do this but also one of the most challenging aspects of my job. Both CIBTM and AIME are looking at creating hybrid events and using resources like Skype to go further than the events' walls and project the ideas discussed at the shows to a wider audience.

How do you inspire your team?

Making sure everyone in our team has ownership of their roles is a very important part of inspiring them. Personal satisfaction is a powerful motivator. I also encourage my team to keep up to date with industry news and market trends and to seek new insights that the rest of the AIME and CIBTM team can learn from.

Dealing with new technology -

bonus or headache?

Staying up to date with technology advances can be a headache but it can also be a huge bonus. When new technology is embraced and used strategically it can boost the value of an event exponentially. Technology is having a big impact on the meetings and events industry and I think this will accelerate over the next few years. Those who can best leverage these advances will find themselves ahead of the pack.

Who has inspired you?

Many people have inspired me over my working life. I don't want to name and embarrass them, however they have been strong mentors within the travel and airline industry.

How do you relax?

I try to relax by finding "me" time. This comes in different forms, like enjoying my favourite pastime which is shopping, taking my dog for a walk in the park, or simply lying on the lounge in front of a good TV show with a delicious glass of red.

What makes a great conference?

Providing a forum for the brightest minds in an industry to share new ideas and concepts, is what makes conferences indispensable in the quest for industry development and progress. I think a great conference is when this is genuinely facilitated and new ideas come to light as a result. It is also very important for all attendees at a conference to leave with a sense that they have gained something from their attendance.

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