



Good ideas are worth repeating

THE other night whilst talking with fellow industry nabobs, I marvelled at how clever the Dockside Group are to send a reminder to their 'Our Kitchen Table' event, which I had previously accepted.



It came in the form of a printed brochure and was posted out, complete with a listing of the names and companies of those who were attending.

Karen Mathieson of ID Events smartly observed that a reminder like that made it pretty hard to pull out of a function or event, especially when your name is printed on an official list.

Meanwhile, if it's Sunday it must be Antarctica.

Yesterday, I flew on one of the Concord Travel/Qantas, Antarctica Sightseeing Flights.

The day started at 8am and returned to Sydney in the evening.

More about that airbound adventure and how it can be utilised for incentives and groups, in a later edition of **BEN**.

Today's **BEN** features the latest industry appointments, photos from IHG's Secret Garden Party, AIME's visitor diaries details, a Getting to know and more - *Jill*.

Unexpected Wellington

WELLINGTON, the Kiwi capital in the heart of the country's world famous film industry and dubbed 'Middle of Middle-earth' for its starring role in the blockbuster trilogy about Hobbits and dwarves, has no shortage of options when it comes to planning events.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey around the world premiere and celebrations helped drive record traffic to the region's official tourism website in November, with year-on-year growth for the month at 107%.

Positively Wellington Tourism (PWT) chief executive David Perks says Australian visitors accounted for 11% of traffic to WellingtonNZ.com during the city's Middle of Middle-earth campaign, nudging out New Zealand's own Canterbury for second place in out-of-town visitor ranking.

"During the Society of American Travel Writers convention recently we hosted a Weta-themed event at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongerewa for about 450 delegates," Perks recalls.

"The response from guests was overwhelming; the opportunity to see the skills and craftsmanship behind some of the world's most successful creative forces up close was so unique - as was the opportunity to be photographed with some monsters from Middle-earth."



Pictured above at the launch of the Middle of Middle-earth event, is Wellington's Mayor, Celia Wade-Brown.

The next installment *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* is due out in December 2013.

ASPCC's Corporate Social Responsibility

THE ASPCC firm commitment to promoting Corporate Social Responsibility partnerships will again be showcased in a creative and collectible fashion at AIME through their partnership with 'Cheeky Dog' artist Dion Beasley - a talented NT cartoonist challenged by Cerebral Palsy and profound hearing impairment.

"Our Cheeky Dog tote bags were highly-coveted items at AIME last year and we can't wait to see the response to this year's gorgeous, quirky items from Bindi inc," Mansfield said.

Congrats Fiona

FIONA Parr from Ultimate Conferences is the very lucky winner of a three night stay in Morocco courtesy of DMS and Unique Venues.

Parr will enjoy three nights in a prime ocean view room at Mazagan Beach & Golf Course in Morocco, including dinner for two at Marketplace restaurant.

MEANWHILE inPlace Recruitment is giving you the chance to win a \$300 Red Balloon gift voucher to indulge in an amazing experience of your choice.

See page three for the 'in 25 words or less' question and email the answer to comp@businesseventsnews.com.au.

Sutherland joins Exhibition Park

MATTHEW Sutherland's hard work and determination has culminated in him being appointed as senior venue operations manager at Exhibition Park in Canberra.

He has a solid background in the venue and events industry including a multitude of roles in government, private and public entities, working across all facets of venue and event management.

Sutherland commences his new role mid February moving from Canberra from Hunter Venues, where he held the position of event and operations manager since 2011.

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IHG's Secret Garden Party

150 guests arrived in a fleet of water taxis to IHG's 'Secret Garden Party' on Sydney Harbour last Thursday. Adrift on a floating oasis called The Island and moored off Mosman's Athol Bay, meeting planners and trade partners of Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn across NSW, ACT and South Australia enjoyed perfect summer weather and innovative catering by Hugo, while watching the sun set over Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Opera House. **Pictured** below are Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn general managers and representatives from NSW/ACT/SA in party mode on 'The Island.'



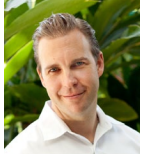
LEFT: Shelley Ryan mci Australia, David Valentine, Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach & Stephanie Davidson from the Business Development team at Crowne Plaza Terrigal.

ABOVE: Shelley Ryan and David Addison, mci Australia & Karen Mathieson ID Events Australia.

Anantara's about face

IN a strategic direct swap, Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas has announced the appointment of two general managers to resorts in Thailand and Vietnam.

In Thailand, Patrick Both joins as general manager of Anantara Rasananda Koh Phangan Villa Resort & Spa, moving from Anantara Mui Ne Resort & Spa in Vietnam.



Mark Eletr moves to Anantara Mui Ne Resort & Spa in Vietnam as general manager, from Anantara Rasananda Koh Phangan Villa



Resort & Spa, where he held the position of gm for two years.

Both gms joined their previous resorts at the time when Minor Hotel Group, Anantara's owning company, took over the management contracts for those properties.

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A cruisey conference



ONE of the world's largest cruise ships with modern conferencing facilities, *The Voyager of The Seas*, is to host the TravelManagers 2013 National Conference.

"I would say the opportunity to up skill and to network while enjoying yourself this much would have to be pretty unparalleled in the industry," says Michael Gazal, executive general manager for TravelManagers.

Having recently announced TravelManagers' membership with cruise holiday specialists, CruiseCo, Gazal says taking their sixth National Conference to the high seas is a celebration of the opportunities the CruiseCo membership affords, and is also the perfect introduction for any cruise-holiday novices among their personal travel managers to discover much of what cruise product has to offer.

"It is already generating a lot of anticipation.

"*The Voyager of The Seas* is an exceptional vessel, large enough to house an ice-skating rink, a rock climbing wall and a Royal Promenade alongside the usual leisure features offered at this level of cruise line."

In 2012, TravelManagers' sales of Royal Caribbean International Cruises, who own *MS Voyager of the Seas*, were up 85% when compared to 2011.

"We're absolutely delighted to welcome TravelManagers' delegates on board for their 2013 conference," said Gavin Smith, regional vice president, Royal Caribbean Cruises Asia Pacific.

AIBTM Rego opens

HOSTED Buyer applications are now being accepted online by The Americas Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition (AIBTM) which takes place 11-13 June 2013 at McCormick Place in Chicago.

The event gives buyers the opportunity to meet exhibitors for one-to-one appointments. See - www.aibtm.com.

Arms open for Tiger

OPENING up Australia's iconic Red Centre, Tiger Airlines has announced four weekly return services to Alice Springs from Melbourne and Sydney.

Commencing 9 April, Tiger Airways Australia commercial director, Carly Brear, said, "I am particularly thrilled to tell the people of Alice Springs we have listened.

"We have been inundated with requests for Tiger's low cost flights."

Kylie Mansfield, sales and marketing manager, Alice Springs Convention Centre (ASPC) said, "We welcome Tiger back with open arms, Tiger represent a vital piece in the Business Tourism puzzle for Alice Springs.

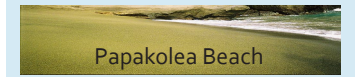
"150,000 additional seats into Alice Springs really supplements our appeal as a business tourism destination.

"The convenience of morning or midday arrivals leaves our delegates with even more time to gather together and engage with their event," Mansfield said.



TIRED of dreamy beaches with sands of a white or golden hue? Then check out Hawaii's Big Island green beach Papakolea which gets its colour from olivine minerals.

Then there's Coral Pink Sands Beach in the Bahamas whose pink sand is the result of tiny sea creatures with red shells that get broken down into fine granule-size pieces, or the Red Beach in Panjin, a city about 300 miles northeast of Beijing, with its wetland home to a unique variety of alkali-tolerant seaweed that changes from green to red in the autumn.



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This week **Business Events News** and **inPlace Recruitment** are giving you the chance to win a \$300 Red Balloon gift voucher to indulge in an amazing experience of your choice.

As the MICE job market heads into full swing for the year inPlace Recruitment is asking you:

*What office perk would you choose, to make your workplace more satisfying and why?
(in 25 words or less)*

Email your answer by COB on Friday 15th February to: comp@businessesnews.com.au





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Bali's overdevelopment

THE chairman of the Indonesian Conference and Convention Association (INCCA-Bali), Ida Bagus Surakusuma says



discussion is underway within the government to require new hotels in Kuta to have a minimum of 5,000 square metres of land in an effort to help control overdevelopment of accommodation in that area of Bali according to the Bali Discovery Tours' latest newsletter.

Surakusuma, more popularly known as Lolec, told Bisnis Bali that most tourism practitioners in Bali support calls for a moratorium on new hotels in the southern part of the island.

To this end, the Badung regency administration is reviewing the application process for new hotels.

The Badung administration is promising to implement rules in Kuta and enforce coefficient rules requiring 60% of any project remain green, open and unconstructed.

With the cost of land in Kuta now reaching US\$200,000 – US\$330,000 per 100 square meters, it is hoped that the minimum requirement of lot size and "green space ratio" will help to increase the cost of investing in a Kuta hotel project and slow down the proliferation of new hotels in that area.

Lolec, however, feels that indigenous investors should receive special treatment when building or upgrading hotels in Kuta and be exempted from the minimum lot size rule.

Macau's encore

MACAU'S newest and largest hotel the Sheraton Macao Hotel, Cotai Central, is starting the New Year with a bold MICE offer, 'Successful Events Deserve an Encore'.

Meeting organisers who book and hold their meeting or event by the end of this year (December 31) can receive the same deal for their next event within the next five years.

To be eligible organisers need to confirm within 12 months of their first event and the booking must be of similar dates, stay pattern and size.

As an added incentive, secure more than 100 rooms at peak and choose from a list of attractive options to enhance their meeting.

The Sheraton's general manager of sales and marketing, Sheraton Macao Hotel, Ruth Boston said, "We hope that meeting planners will take advantage of this special deal to experience what we can offer them."

More China flights

AS China Southern Airlines increases its Brisbane services, the local team has also expanded with the addition of Nikki Woodward as sales development executive Queensland.

China Southern's increase in its Brisbane flights from four per week to daily between 29 January and 28 February, connect with the airline's first seasonal services to Cairns during the same time.

From 25 June, Brisbane to Guangzhou services will increase to five a week with the addition of a Wednesday flight.

China Southern Airlines flights link through to Europe on the so called "Canton route".

Register for Ipswich's MICE Expo



IPSWICH, Queensland's oldest provincial city, located 40 minutes west of Brisbane, with its blend of heritage charm and metropolitan sophistication, is to stage a MICE Expo on Wednesday 13 March.

Being held at the Metro Hotel Ipswich International, it is an initiative of local Ipswich businesses.

Conference planners and business event organisers from Queensland and Northern NSW are invited to attend.

Those who register before 1 March have the incentive of being included in a draw to win an overnight stay at the hotel with complimentary breakfast and dinner, and a scenic helicopter flight over the Ipswich region.

Ipswich councilors David Pahlke and Andrew Antonioli are expected to open the Expo, after which guests will enjoy a complimentary lunch prior to a tour of the hotel to view its conference and event facilities.

California here I come

THE Anaheim/Orange County Visitor & Convention Bureau has created a special 2013 Destination Reference Guide, which has been launched in conjunction with this year's Visit USA Road Show.

The guide includes a full list of online tools for groups planning activities in Southern California as well as a comprehensive events calendar and contact details for key Anaheim/OC suppliers in the Australian market.

More than 15 operators from the region are in Australia this week to help launch the guide which is free at the Travel Trade section of www.anaheimoc.org.

Malaysia's mega incentive

AN incentive group of 2,300 arrived in Kuala Lumpur last week from Japan's upscale cosmetics production and distribution brand, POLA.

The incentive, supported by the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) is made up of 150 company officials and top sales staff from various parts of Japan.

Zulkelfli Hj Sharif, ceo of MyCEB said the incentive is estimated to generate RM 24 million (AUD\$8 million) in economic impact for the country.

"POLA's incentive tour has exceeded the number of participants of similar past large incentive groups from Japan such as SUBARU, the automobile manufacturing division of Japanese transportation conglomerate Fuji Heavy Industries and HOMER ION, a Japanese cosmetics company featuring its flagship brand, Moisteane, which had 700 top sales staff to Malaysia back in 2007," explained Zulkelfli.

Hutton joins SAT

JANINE Hutton has been appointed to the position of chief marketing officer (cmo), South African Tourism.

"For an ambitious marketing organisation such as South African Tourism, the cmo position is absolutely critical in driving the organisation's marketing and trade work at Head Office and our increasing number of country offices and target markets around the globe", said South African Tourism ceo, Thulani Nzima.

"In Janine, we have found an extremely competent and capable candidate to lead our company's marketing efforts, as we seek to continue to be innovative and effective in driving the growth of tourist arrivals to our country and in keeping pace with global trends affecting tourists' behaviour and travelling patterns."

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tion of the matters canvassed.

Travelodge to Hobart

AS of late March, the Leisure
Inn Hobart Macquarie will be
known as Travelodge Hotel Hobart.

The announcement marks the
arrival of the Travelodge Hotels
brand in Hobart.

The newly refurbished 131
room property offering the best
value hotel option for guests
features 24 hour reception, a
breakfast lounge, room service
and complimentary parking.

The centrally located hotel
close to Battery Point, Salamanca
Place, Constitution Dock and
the waterfront, is close to
key businesses for corporate
travellers.

Allan Vidor, md said, "The
Tasmanian location of the 17th
Travelodge Hotel marks an
important milestone for Toga
Hotels, now proudly operating
hotels & apartment hotels in each
state and territory of Australia."

AIME Visitor diaries

NEW Visitor Appointment
Diaries, a system that was
previously only available to
Hosted Buyers will be made
available to visitors to AIME this
year.

The Visitor Appointment Diaries,
which open on 18 February, will
be complimentary to use and will
allow visitors to book meetings
with exhibitors.

Pre-registered visitors will
receive an email notifying them
that the system is open.

With a number of high profile,
big budget visitors attending,
the Visitor Appointment Diaries
have been established to give
exhibitors the opportunity to
meet with these prominent
visitors who are not attending as
Hosted Buyers.

Visitors will be able to view their
diary of appointments on-site
via the AIME mobile app, which
can be downloaded by searching
IBTM Events in their phone's app
store.

Visitor registration is free at
www.aime.com.au if registering
before the show, or pay \$25 at
the door.

AIME will take place on 26-27
February.

StageSafe safety app

STAGING Connections has
launched StageSafe, a custom
built smartphone App that allows
employees across the business to
manage and execute events.

Designed to encourage a
safe workplace and ensure the
continued safe delivery of events,
the StageSafe App is the next
generation of the organisation's
HSE program.

Tony Chamberlain, managing
director at Staging Connections
commented, that "StageSafe is
not just a system, but a way of
doing things, an attitude that the
whole Staging Connections team
bring to each event they deliver.

"Our crews are trained in
all aspects of what they do,
and understand that safety is
paramount in creating a brilliant
show.

"This intuitive piece of
technology empowers
employees to understand safety
requirements and enact safety
procedures in a more immediate
fashion", Chamberlain added.

Designed to maintain the
strictest of risk management
principles the StageSafe App is
only available internally for use by
Staging Connections' employees.



Getting to Know: Chongqing, China

by: *Barry Matheson*

WHEN Wendy Wu Tours was recently appointed to represent the Chinese port city of Chongqing in Australia, most would never have heard of the place, but Wendy Wu wants to change all that by lifting its profile in this market.

BEN spent some time there last year before embarking on a Yangtze River Cruise, but make sure you stop over for a few days as you'll be richly rewarded by its diverse range of unbeatable tourist attractions. Located on the upper reaches of the Yangtze, it's the biggest city in China with a staggering 33-million residents.

Founded 3,000 years ago, the city sparkles at night because of its radiant lights and dynamic nightlife, and was recently ranked as one of the top ten places to visit in China. One of its most magnificent natural sites is The Three Gorges, located in the eastward reaches of the Yangtze.

As well as The Three Gorges Dam, a must see is Chongqing Zoo, famous for its animals, more than 230 kinds of rare wild ones such as the South China tiger, elephants, giraffes and the most popular of them all, the Pandas. Millions flock here to see the loveable creatures and visitors can get a close encounter to see the giant Pandas and their offspring at feeding time, but venture a few hours' from the city and there's so much more to see.

Top of the list are the World Heritage-listed Dazu Rock Carvings, thousands of them carved into cliffs and grottos from the late Tang Dynasty and early Song Dynasty. You'll stand agape at these beautiful, intricate carvings that have remained unscathed down through the centuries. They provide a fascinating insight into the religious life of China dating back from the 9th to the 13th century.

The most important scenic area along the Yangtze Three Gorges is the Lesser Three Gorges in Wushan, honoured as "The Wonder of China" by virtue of its elegant mountains, clear water and beautiful stones. Make sure you also check out the Mystical Three Natural Bridges, a series of natural limestone bridges and the biggest in the world. Chongqing is also known as The City of Hot Springs, boasting over 40 hot springs, and people come from all over the world to relax and savour their therapeutic qualities.

If you're into spicy food, you've come to the right place, for Chongqing specializes in Sichuan cuisine, which is famously spicy and flavourful, and is found at hundreds of restaurants, along with Sichuan hotpot, said to be the birthplace of this popular Chinese dish.

