



Did you know?

SOME of the stakeholders at the recent International Rotary



Conference in Sydney (see **page two**) told of some interesting asides to organising this significant event.

Such as Sydney Airport having to alert Australian Customs and Immigration not to be alarmed if they found garden gnomes in the delegates' luggage.

They weren't part of a covert drug smuggling operation - some of the delegates were heading post convention to the NSW Blue Mountains, to take part in the annual Garden Gnomes Convention.

Sydney Airport also put ads in the Host Organising Committee newsletter *Corroboree* that showed delegates such things as how to fill in their arrivals cards, alerted them to goods they couldn't bring in and gave them 10% off duty free goods on arrival and departure.

Rotary received special permission to turn on the Olympic Flame at Olympic Park, not from the Park itself as you might suppose but from the Australian Olympic Committee who owns the rights to it - an honour not easily granted.

"Physically it would have been easy for us to turn on the gas," said the Olympic Park Authority's John Ferguson, "but not possible."

While many delegates stayed in hotel accommodation, other Rotarians camped.

Topping all this, one Rotarian, styled the Lawnmower Man, rode a lawnmower (dare I say a rotary one?) from Perth to Sydney to raise money for charity.

Such was the excitement as he passed through the NSW Southern Highlands that local Rotarians organised a lawnmower guard of honour for him to ride through.

As they say, only at a Rotary Conference. *Jill*

Cosmos wins World Youth Day

COSMOS has been appointed to manage travel and tour arrangements for the estimated 2,000 Australians taking part in World Youth Day 2016 in Krakow, Poland.

Over 30 groups are expected to participate in the event, with Cosmos selected following an extensive process which kicked off late last year when bids from group operators were solicited in *Business Events News* (**BEN** 06 Jan 2014).

The Australian Catholic Bishops Delegate for Youth, Bishop Anthony Fisher, said the appointment of Cosmos would provide young Australians with a great opportunity to visit the homeland of St Pope John Paul II and encounter Pope Francis through the WYD experience.

"I know Cosmos will be of great assistance in managing the logistical needs of our pilgrimage," Bishop Fisher said.

"The company has an established pilgrimage operation and provides comprehensive infrastructure to support us on this important faith journey."

Globus family of brands managing director Australasia Stewart Williams said "we understand not only the logistical importance of this event, but also the spiritual impact for the young people and the whole Church in Australia," Williams said.

"We have already begun preparations and are looking



forward to the journey ahead."

Cosmos already has an established program of religious tours in Europe and the Holy Lands, while the World Youth Day itineraries will be specially customised for the event.

It's understood that a special website is being developed by Cosmos as part of the project for pilgrims to help them raise support for their participation.

World Youth Day will be held in Krakow, Poland from 25 July to 1 August 1, 2016.

Festive @ Feast

FOR those who love the festive season but can't wait until December, Sydney's Sheraton on the Park is promoting Christmas in July.

Diners can enjoy all things Christmas at the hotel's signature restaurant, Feast, where they can indulge in a traditional Christmas gourmet buffet with lunch at \$75pp and dinner from \$85pp and everything that makes the season so delicious.

Find out more on the website sheratonontheparksydney.com/christmasinjuly.

AV1 joins BES

AUDIO visual production specialists AV1 has joined Business Events Sydney.

"Never satisfied with the status quo and dedicated to providing a first class professional service, AV1 is proud to be associated with this passionate organisation," said AV1 md Keith Wootton.

New Fiji experience

FIJI Airways is making Fiji more attractive for business events, with a revamp of its cabin product including better meals in both economy and business class.

The carrier's on-board cuisine includes dishes inspired by Lance Seeto, who's the executive chef at Castaway Island Resort.

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BRISBANE
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SYDNEY
 Wednesday 23 July 2014, 12:00pm – 2:00pm
 Star Room, above IMAX, Darling Harbour

MELBOURNE
 Friday 25 July 2014, 12:00pm – 2:00pm
 Eureka 89, 7 Riverside Quay, Southbank

A cocktail lunch will be served. PLUS one lucky guest at each event will WIN a trip for two to Cairns & Great Barrier Reef.

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business events news

27th June 2014



crumbs!



THE vexed topic of having free WiFi, not just in your hotel's lobby but in guest rooms has caused Hotels.com to release a survey where hotel guests ranked free WiFi as the most important in-room amenity and not the Mini Bar's contents or the Snicker bars.

Allowing that free WiFi has become more commonplace at least 64% of hotels, especially at hotels that cater to business travellers like Courtyard by Marriott and Loews Hotels who went free at all 19 hotels, one third of hotels out there are still charging for WiFi.

Typically it's the luxury hotels and the heavily franchised brands that are still holding out.

Weighing in, *Hotel Chatter* said "If the nefarious one third don't start offering free WiFi at a basic level (checking email, surfing the web), potential guests will make a reservation elsewhere."

Even when the WiFi is free, there are still some caveats such as requiring guests to join the hotel's loyalty program, offering it free only in the lobby or having it free for just a limited time (anywhere from 15 minutes to two hours) before a charge is incurred.

Still, it's good to know that two thirds of hotels have realised that offering free WiFi is in their best interests.

Chefs and the City

SIX award winning Executive Chefs from the Spicers Retreats groups will be heading to Spicers Balfour Hotel in New Farm, Brisbane from next month to "showcase their incredible culinary skills to urban foodies."

The *Chefs and the City* promotion will run through to the end of the year, with a series of events from July to December.

They're open to the public, with each four course extravaganza priced at \$75 per person, or \$130 including matched wines.

For more information on dates and to book call 1300 112 691.

Dubai signs on as travel show sponsor

DUBAI
Tourism is now the



official Exhibition Sponsor of the upcoming Travel Industry Exhibition, being run by Exhibitions and Trade Fairs on 18-19 July 2014.

The show is targeting the Australian travel industry, with more than 85 exhibitors over the two day event which is being run in the lead-up to the prestigious National Travel Industry Awards.

Dubai Tourism director Australia/NZ, Julie King, said partnering with the Travel Industry Exhibition "provides us with an exciting platform to highlight and educate our key trade partners on our strategies moving forward to 2020."

Exhibition director, Pascal Ibrahim, said he was thrilled that Dubai Tourism had chosen the show as a platform to engage with the travel industry.

Christchurch is back

A POST MEETINGS 2014 familiarisation tour to Christchurch and Hanmer Springs with eight Australian and international event organisers taking part - and the high level of interest in the destination from the expo - has revealed the city is back as a serious conference destination, says Christchurch & Canterbury Convention Bureau manager, Caroline Blanchfield.

"The clients included urban design, health, agriculture and education conferences and this was a chance to update them on all the conferencing and touring options the region had to offer," Blanchfield enthused.

"They were impressed by what they saw and heard from us.

"There is a positive attitude from the Australians we saw emerging last year.

"This year it has stepped up a gear and there is real business to secure," she said.

Rotary welcomes the world



WITH an estimated economic impact of \$63.1 million to Sydney, the combined support given by the seven stakeholders to the 105th International Rotary Conference, Sydney 2014 and the city's 'All of Sydney Approach', certainly paid off.

Against all odds, the event held at Sydney's Olympic Park 1-4 June, is unique for Sydney having to bid for the conference twice!

The first time was in 2006 when it won the bid - but they had to do it all again when they received the news that the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre was to be demolished, triggering the need for a new bid.

Having won for a second time, less than two months out from the conference, Premier Barry O'Farrell, who is also a Rotarian and was set to give the opening address, suddenly resigned.

"We lost a venue, we lost a Premier," lamented Bob Aitken exec director, Rotary Down Under.

The task fell to convincing Rotary that Sydney Olympic Park was the right venue and that Sydney had the supporting infrastructure - trains, buses, ferries and hotels, for the estimated 19,000 delegates.

The Government came on board providing financial support that included complimentary venue hire, 100% Australian content entertainment and an eight-day, train, bus, ferry and light rail travel pass for all delegates.

Central Station's country train platforms 1-5, dedicated to the Rotarians, ran trains every 15 minutes with shuttle services such as buses to wharfs, people movers and golf buggies.

John Ferguson, executive manager, event and precinct coordination for the Sydney Olympic Park Authority commented wryly, "This event proved that a direct train service to Olympic Park can be done and it will be something I will be addressing with them."

Sydney Airport, which described Rotary as their single biggest ever business event, had among other things dedicated signage and arrival flags, a welcome desk with support staff at the airport and at the venue, commission free foreign exchange and a fond farewell with "see you next time" support.

Feedback from the convention was that it was overwhelmingly a resounding success for Sydney and as John Ferguson remarked, "Olympic Park is a good example of how you can overcome a perceived difficulty."

Some of the Rotary delegates from Nigeria are pictured above.

Langham Sydney shut

SYDNEY'S Langham Hotel will be closing its doors for four months from Thursday 24th July to undergo a \$30m upgrade.

The project includes a complete redevelopment of the lobby, dining areas, guest rooms and "residential-style" ballroom while a Chuan Spa will also be added.

The 96-room property claims to have the biggest guestrooms in Sydney at 49 square metres.

The new ballroom, designed as "a much grander space," will have significantly more capacity, with space for 200 for cocktails or a banquet dinner for 150.



business events news

27th June 2014

MV EPICURE launches



THERE were cocktails and canapés and a plentiful supply of GH Mumm champagne when Bruce Dixon, ceo of the Spotless Group (inset), launched the *MV EPICURE* on Sydney Harbour on Wednesday night.

The luxury three-storey motor vessel with a bar on each level and 360-degree views has the capacity to host up to 450 guests.

In addition there is a dance floor, advanced digital and sound AV equipment including high speed wifi and multi-format connectivity, a full-production kitchen, an LCD media wall, a green room and a bridal room.

Guests snacked on remarkable cheeses from Simon Johnson and other delectable delights from a seafood bar with ceviche, North Queensland Cobia and new season mussels by Kinkawooka Shellfish.

Dixon said *MV EPICURE*'s contemporary cuisine is prepared with fresh ingredients, while the menu reflects Australia's well-established food culture and Australians' growing interest in where their food comes from and how it's been prepared.

"We're confident that *MV EPICURE*, with its incredible water setting on the harbour and the quality of the food it serves, will make it one of the most sought after event spaces in Sydney."

The venue can tailor any event including weddings, cocktail parties, conferences, corporate breakfasts, lunches "or any special occasion that calls for an



unforgettable experience."

Pictured above at the launch are Laura Richards, The Conference Business with Louise Schweikert, Daneila Chido and Ella Neath from cievents.

See www.mvepicure.com.au.

It's all show

MELBOURNE Showgrounds has secured the Caravan, Camping and Touring Supershow, being held from 11-16 February 2015, after the show moved to accommodate more exhibitors and increase visitor capacity.

In another win they will host the first ever Australian Motoring Festival, which will be held from 26-29 March 2015, an event designed to connect automotive manufacturers and distributors to the public.

Expressing a commitment to continuously enhancing the Melbourne Showgrounds, one of the venue's main exhibition pavilions, Expo Hall with 2,000 sqm of indoor, multi purpose exhibition space, recently underwent a \$2.4 million upgrade that features climate control, additional bathrooms and new storage space, with direct access to a commercial kitchen and function rooms.

AlliedPRA to Scotland

ALLIEDPRA has announced the opening of a new operation in Scotland, with the fast-growing company also recently expanding into Portugal and Hawaii, as well as forming a partnership with CanTrav Destination Management Services in Canada.

The new Scotland office will also service Ireland and is headed up by Gillian Rae, who has over 18 years industry experience.

NZIQS chooses Christchurch

THE New Zealand Institute of Quantity Surveyor (NZIQS) working with the Christchurch Canterbury Convention Bureau (CCCB), Tourism New Zealand (TNZ) and the Conference Assistance Programme (CAP) has secured the right to host the 20th Pacific Association of Quantity Surveyors (PAQS) Congress in Christchurch against strong international competition.

To be held in May 2016 it will bring 400 delegates to Christchurch and add an estimated \$1.2 million into the local economy.

"This is a timely win for Christchurch as we get back onto the world stage as an inspiring international conference destination," says Christchurch and Canterbury Convention Bureau (CCCB) manager Caroline Blanchfield.

Presented at the PAQS conference in Hong Kong early June, the 20th PAQS Congress will see Christchurch hosting 400 quantity surveyors from all over the Asia-Pacific region for two days of plenary meetings. Many of the conference delegates are expected to bring their partners and families with them and take the opportunity to explore the South Island either before or after the congress.

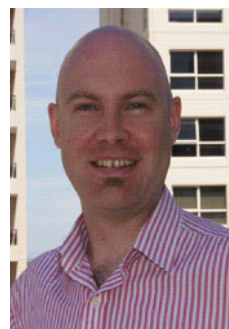
Ben on BEN



Each month Business Manager for inPlace Recruitment, Ben Carnegie, writes his observations from the recruiter's perspective to help job hunters find the perfect job.

Ben has over 15 years working in 5 star hotels and the MICE industry and has worked on some of Australia's biggest events.

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