



Hello,

It may be that I'm a little bit superstitious but I just have this thing about April 1 and so this newsletter arrives in your inbox a bit later than it should. Or could it be I find myself behind schedule as I gather my scattered creative thoughts in putting together this, our 21 st Edition. Celebratory Bubbles perhaps should be put away until I have finished writing this edition.

While on the subject of birthdays, congratulations and best wishes go to our very own Sue Currie and Steve on the birth of their third daughter Sarah on 14 th February – a sister for Sophie and Samantha. Both are well and settling into the routine of life at home.

As part of our continuing educational program of keeping up to date on venues across the country, three of our team will be visiting Sydney and surrounds later in April. This follows on from a very successful visit by our team members to the AsiaPacific Incentives and Meetings Expo held in Melbourne in February 2005.

Daylight saving has gone away and with it the end of the twilight sailing. We didn't get out on the water as much as we liked which was reflected in our inconsistent results with our best effort a second place. The winter Wednesday series starts soon ... I'll keep you posted.

Regards,

Jim Conway

P.S. Our thanks go to all those readers who have provided their comments and suggestions on our newsletter. We do appreciate your feedback.

SPA COUNTRY RETREAT

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## Spa Country Retreat

Set in the heart of Victoria 's Spa Country, Peppers Springs Retreat is an iconic Art Deco establishment with a dash of Gatsby glamour. The attractive village of Hepburn Springs is just over an hour's drive from Melbourne and 3km from Daylesford with its many boutiques, cafes and restaurants.



Built in 1935, the main building has been beautifully restored, combining the character of the art deco building with contemporary decor using rich warm colours. On site accommodation comprises a choice of 25 stylish rooms and spa suites.

DECO restaurant's excellent food is best described as modern Australian but each dish also has its own unique twist. Warm fires burn throughout winter, whilst in summer the leafy gardens make the perfect spot to linger for drinks.

Stepping into the newly created Springs Retreat Mineral Spa, guests enter a sanctuary of calm. Tucked away at the back of the retreat, the spa houses 3 open-air mineral pools, a sauna, steam room and 8 treatments rooms offering an excellent range of rejuvenating therapies.

Completed in June 2004, the purpose built conference centre boasts a contemporary reception lobby and three flexible conference rooms catering for executive gatherings or meetings for 50 or more delegates. Features include state of the art AV Equipment, natural light and both the main conference room and breakout areas offer total privacy.

To find out more call [Pam Conway](#) +613 9870 4611

**" A strong positive mental attitude will create more miracles than any wonder drug. "**

- Patricia Neal

## Golden Era in Southern Highlands

## CONFERENCE TIPS

### Meeting/ Conference Room Configurations

The way the meeting room is set up dictates how effective communication in the meeting will be. Ideally the room you have will enable optimal communication between delegates and presenters, working and interacting efficiently with no distractions.

There are many possible room layouts and selecting the right one requires an understanding of the space available, the numbers of attendees and the communication process.

Consider these elements when selecting the best layout for your meeting:

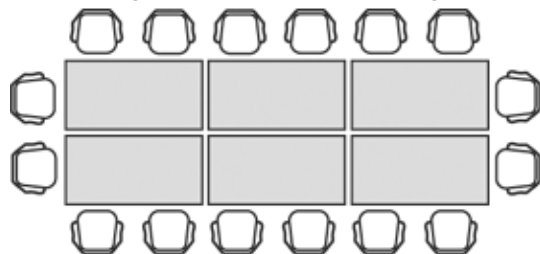
- the layout should foster a feeling of closeness between the group and the trainee
- each person in the room should be able to hear and see everyone's contribution
- all delegates in the room should easily see any visual presentations
- delegates should be able to enter and leave the conference or meeting room without disturbing others
- when seated delegates and their chairs should not be touching anyone on either side of them
- each delegate should have sufficient space for writing and reference materials

Many factors influence meeting and conference room layout. For example, a team arrangement, with small groups of four to eight around each table, is common for much team and experiential learning. A parallel row of tables with all delegates facing the front is a more traditional arrangement and is appropriate for lectures. Horseshoe shapes or U-shapes are common for discussion groups.

Recognised authority Author Coleman Finkel in his book *The Total Immersion Learning Environment* says it is vital to establish a climate for maximum interaction and discussion.

### Boardroom/Conference

This style is most effective with groups of less than 20 people as delegates can see and hear each other easily. Unity within the group is created by the contiguous tables or sharing one solid table.



There was once a Golden Era, when Sydney's wealthy and successful fled the heat of the city to the privacy, comfort and invigorating climate of their Southern Highlands retreats.

There, behind imposing gates, up tree-lined driveways, they enjoyed a lifestyle of gentle, relaxed pleasure, eating and drinking well, playing tennis and croquet, watching a season pass in splendid gardens while returning to the comfort of an open hearth and attentive, discreet service in the evenings.



At Milton Park Country House Hotel & Destination Spa that Golden Era still glows warm and inviting, the perfect escape from the stresses and pressures of life in the city and the ideal conference escape.

Milton Park excels in all aspects of professional conference management offering a private world without unwanted intrusion. You enter a world in which your only problems are those on your agenda; an ideal environment in which to focus on the ideas and challenges on the future.

To find out more call [Sue Wall](mailto:Sue.Wall@conferencesolutions.com.au) on +613 9870 4611

**" I was always looking outside myself for strength and confidence, but it comes from within. It is there all the time."**

**- Anna Freud**

## In the heart of the Otway Ranges

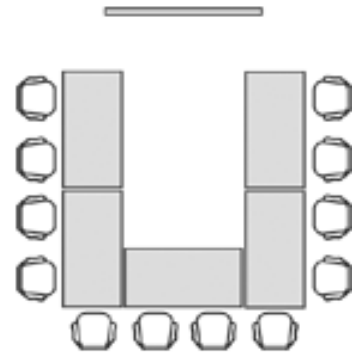
Does your team need to get away from it all, to get out of the office and into the fresh air? Wildwood Retreat has been the place for many of the top 500 Australian businesses looking to do just that.

One disadvantage is some people must re-position themselves to clearly see flipcharts or audiovisual presentations. Long narrow tables may discourage some to participate in discussion.

## U-Shape

Extremely popular for management seminars, the U-shape table usually gives participants the sense that they are all equal in status at the meeting. Meeting leadership may move to the open U for closer interaction with and among the group.

Seeing and hearing others in the group and the front of the room is easy and the openness of the set-up gives delegates a sense of freedom which encourages participation.



For more information on conference and meeting room configurations go to [www.conferencesolutions.com.au](http://www.conferencesolutions.com.au)

**" Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it ."**

**- Henry Thoreau**

## HAPPENINGS

Our resident venue researcher, Lisa Moloney Business Development Manager Key Conference Solutions, has just returned home from a working holiday visit to China.

Lisa stayed at the impressive 362 room The St Regis in Shanghai.



This magnificent hotel offers your very own personal butler throughout your stay who provides in-room check in, packing and unpacking service, light pressing of garments and so much more. Lisa reports the service including unlimited tea and coffee was "just amazing" and very indulgent!



Wildwood is a sole use Conference Retreat with a strong emphasis on team development and the outdoors. Designed to accommodate from 10 to 30 delegates, Wildwood is hidden in 20 hectares of rainforest in the Otway Ranges , yet a short drive from Lorne, one of Victoria 's most popular coastal resort towns.

At Wildwood Retreat the secluded location, tranquil surroundings, comfortable accommodation and warm dedicated service provide the foundation for a unique team experience. The meeting room is a converted barn and the lodge, with its relaxing lounge, library, open fire and well stocked wine bar, are some of the features that have already many guests returning on a regular basis.

Wildwood Retreat's meeting, leisure and accommodation facilities bring new meaning to the phrase "roughing it", where simple rustic charms combine with cosy comforts to ensure this is roughing it at its very best.

For further information on Wildwood Retreat contact [Stephanie Conyers](#) +613 9870 4611

**" The wisest mind has something yet to learn."**

**- George Santayana**

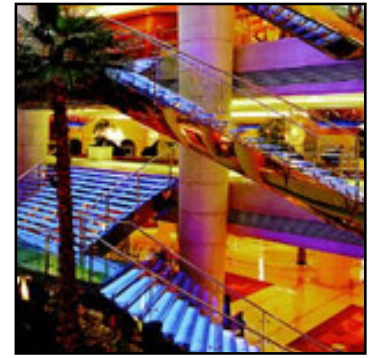
## SHARING THE KNOWLEDGE

Our ongoing schedule of briefing sessions and venue inspections ensures our product knowledge is extensive and current which allows us to offer you, professional, authoritative and independent advice on the conference and meeting venue scene Australia-wide.

## OUT AND ABOUT

Melbourne Business School Carlton, Sea Temple Resort & Spa Palm Cove, Alpine Retreat Hotel Warburton, Sebel Reef House & Spa Palm Cove, Langham Hotel, Debortoli Winery Yarra Valley, The Grange at Cleveland Winery, Cope-Williams, Fenix,

The second leg of the trip was a stay at The Westin Shanghai, which has one of the most inspiring hotel foyers, which reaches upwards over 5 levels.



This world-class luxury hotel is tailored to suit meetings, incentives and conferences. The dedicated conference area is spread over 2 levels and includes the business centre and a meeting planner's lounge.

Words fail to describe the time Lisa spent being pampered at the Banyan Tree Spa at The Westin in Shanghai. Described as a sanctuary for the senses Banyan Tree takes a holistic approach to physical and spiritual well-being and is well worth making the trip back to Shanghai for. As for the rest of the trip there was shopping, shopping and more shopping which may explain why Lisa mentions she would like to go back.

You can call [Lisa Moloney](#) on +613 9870 4611 to find out more about Shanghai.

**"There is only one good, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance."**

**- Socrates**

## JOIN AUSTRALIA'S LEADING COMPANIES

Join Australia's leading companies that are taking advantage of the **FREE venue-finding service** Key Conference Solutions offers.

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**"Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city."**

**- George Burns**

The Harbour Room, The Royce, Crown Promenade and Melbourne Exhibition Convention Centre.

## BEEN IN TO SEE US INCLUDE

Alison Van Staveren & Megan Smith - Stamford Plaza Melbourne, Antony Wallace - Wheelers Hill International, Elizabeth Loader - Ramada Melbourne and Waterview Function Centre, Kadifa Ridgway - Crowne Plaza Surfers Paradise, Cassandra Kerr - Intercontinental Burswood Resort, Patrick Lonergan, Richard Barrett & Annalisa Magnanini - Rydges Carlton Melbourne; Jacqueline Allen & Theresa Head - Lancemore Group, Melissa Jones - Holiday Inn Brisbane, Monique Harmer - Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts, Natasha Gudaitis - Crowne Plaza Terrigal, Kelly Newton - Batman's Hill on Collins Melbourne, Claire Harrington - Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart, Amanda Balaam - Hotel Grand Chancellor Melbourne, Nitin Balchandran - Saville Hotel Group, Kate Ritchie - Hyatt Regency Coolum, Felicia Corso - Epicure, Kelly Ashton - Swiss Grand Resort & Spa Bondi beach Sydney, Belinda Lee - Duxton Hotel Melbourne,

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**“ The key to being a good manager is keeping the people who hate me away from those who are still undecided ”**

**- Casey Stengel**

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We're eager to hear what you think of this newsletter.

Feel free to offer comments and suggestions when you [e-mail](#) me. Subscription is [free](#).

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**“ Laughing at our mistakes can lengthen our own life. Laughing at someone else's can shorten it. ”**

**- Cullen Hightower**

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## YOUR SAY

“I just want to thank you tremendously for helping me find a venue for next week. I know it was short notice, and I was just about to stress about having to ring zillions of venues to find something available and suitable.

A colleague referred me to you and it just took the load off me!! Thank you very much for a great service (and free to us as well). Keep up the good work and I look forward to working with you in the future.”

**Pearl Olivier**

“Excellent service – can't believe I've only just discovered it!”

**Frances Garnett**

“Always very polite, quick to respond, professional – definitely my first port of call when looking for venues”

**Debbie Petzer**

## CONTACT US:

Phone: +613 9870 4611 - Fax: +613 9870 4622

Sue Wall: Sales Consultant  
[swall@conferencesolutions.com.au](mailto:swall@conferencesolutions.com.au)

Lou David: Sales Consultant  
[ldavid@conferencesolutions.com.au](mailto:ldavid@conferencesolutions.com.au)

Pam Conway: Industry Consultant  
[pconway@conferencesolutions.com.au](mailto:pconway@conferencesolutions.com.au)

Lisa Moloney: National Business Development Manager  
[lmoloney@conferencesolutions.com.au](mailto:lmoloney@conferencesolutions.com.au)

Stephanie Conyers: Consultant  
[sconyers@conferencesolutions.com.au](mailto:sconyers@conferencesolutions.com.au)

**website**

Click here to visit the Key Conference Solutions website