

STRATEGIES

INFO//IDEAS//INSIGHTS

88 **Travel innovators**

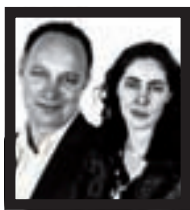
98 **Travel + Business**

100 **Flight Crew**

THE 2007 T+L TRAVEL INNOVATORS AWARDS

In this, our second annual awards, we salute 20 Australian individuals and partnerships who, through their vision, flair and dedication, have helped enhance the way we travel – both in Australia and overseas. By Kay O'Sullivan and Megan Anderson.

Callum Fraser and
Zahava Elenberg,
interview page 88.



CALLUM FRASER AND ZAHAVA ELENBERG

Architects

Innovation A fresh alpine experience.

The low-down Callum Fraser and Zahava Elenberg's mission is to convince more

travellers to look to the mountains and their method is an innovative approach to architecture. Huski, the apartment hotel they opened at Falls Creek, Victoria in 2005, was the first step. Inspired by the angles of a snowflake, it was feted in architectural and alpine circles around the world. This year, they unveiled their refurbishment of Silverski project at Falls and plans for The Saints, a development of three apartment-hotel complexes at Buller, Falls Creek and Mount Hotham that will redefine alpine life.

Why alpine development? Fraser: "The timing is right – people are looking for alternatives to beach holidays."

On their love of mountains

Fraser: "Australians have a shallow understanding of mountains. There is a more direct relationship with nature."

The viability of alpine resorts here

Fraser: "Elsewhere, alpine tourism is strong year round. The European resorts grew out of summer and in northern America summer competes with winter. Whistler [in Canada], for instance, has more summer than winter visitors. Thredbo is doing well here and our plan is to see the Victorian alpine region do the same. People want to know that when they visit in summer there will be people around and things happening."

TRAVEL INNOVATORS THE HALL OF FAME

This year's innovators join the distinguished group of Australians recognised in our inaugural awards in October 2006.



MICHELLE GARNAUT Restaurateur

Innovation Putting the buzz into the Bund.

The low-down When the former Melbourne chef opened M on the Bund in 1999, Shanghai's now-famous riverside strip was something of a culinary wasteland.

Undaunted by the challenge, the visionary Garnaut launched Shanghai's first independent, international restaurant. With its modern European sensibilities and views across to burgeoning Pudong, it pioneered fine dining in Shanghai.

It was five years before other commercial ventures – restaurants, cafes and galleries – descended upon the area, emboldened by Garnaut's success.

Armed with a degree in politics – not all that useful a tool for a chef – Garnaut left Melbourne in the 1970s, making her first splash in the Asian restaurant business by opening M at the Fringe in Hong Kong in 1989. She no longer rattles the pans, but she grabs opportunities. Shanghai's M on the Bund has a spin-off – the classy Glamour Bar – and Garnaut has her sights set on Guangzhou and Beijing.

www.m-restaurantgroup.com

Ken Latona Sustainable tourism

Peter and Margaret Lehmann Wine tourism

Graeme Wood Online accommodation

Sarina Bratton Luxury cruise pioneer

Tony and Maureen Wheeler Travel guidebook publishing

Brook Ramage Health retreats

Terry and Cathy Maloney Integration of indigenous culture into a world-class spa

Fred Ariel Adventure tourism in Far North Queensland

Flora De Kantzow Changing the face of Tasmania's accommodation

Paul Cave Redefining a Sydney landmark through BridgeClimb

Graham Turner Pioneering affordable and accessible air travel

Geoffrey Conaghan Melbourne Airport website

Christine Gee Adventure travel

Jan Cameron Travel goods

Brett Godfrey Aviation pioneer

Terry Schwamberg Creating a range of stylish boutique accommodation

Ron Walker Major events tourism

Paul Ah Chee Ngala Indigenous tourism

Grant Hunt Luxury eco-travel

Andrew Fairley Sustainable tourism

To view last year's feature on the first T+L Australian Travel Innovators Awards go to:

www.travelandleisure.com.au

VALE, STEVE IRWIN

On September 4, 2006, shortly before *Travel + Leisure's* October issue went to press (featuring our first Australian Travel Innovators Awards), Australia lost one of its greatest tourism ambassadors in Steve Irwin. The Crocodile Hunter's enthusiasm for his country and what it had to offer did more to advance Australia's profile overseas than any amount of money, advertising campaigns or marketing ploys. A true innovator, Irwin never let the fact that something had not been done or a path hadn't been explored deter him.

**SUE LLOYD-WILLIAMS
AND JUDY ROMANO**

Event organisers

Innovation Mixing business and pleasure and reshaping big-event tourism.

The low-down Racing was on the fast track to nowhere when Lloyd-Williams, then a publicity assistant with the Victoria Racing Club, decided to introduce event marketing to racing, specifically the Melbourne Cup. In came the era of the marquee and the concept of corporate hospitality. Romano entered the arena a couple of years later. An event organiser with a long list of heavyweight corporates

among her clientele, her style and attention to detail, plus the largesse of her clients' budgets, created the Melbourne Cup Carnival's irresistible, international buzz.

Today, the carnival, once merely a four-day race meeting, brings an estimated \$419 million to Victoria's coffers, attracts visitors from around the globe and is the model for big-event corporate tourism, both here and away.

On the carnival's success

Lloyd-Williams: "As big events go, only the Olympic Games is bigger in this country. Overseas race clubs, including those in England, Hong Kong, Singapore and New Zealand, have

followed the model, as have other race clubs in Australia."

Romano: "It looks and feels like a week-long cocktail party but really it's a business opportunity. If you are serious about doing business, you wouldn't miss it."

How has it changed the way we travel?

Lloyd-Williams: "We made a conscious effort to expand the carnival. We've added events on non-race days. People are staying longer."

Romano: "People come from everywhere. I know because quite a few tell me how far they have travelled when they are trying to get into a marquee they haven't an invitation for." >>



TOM MCLOUGHLIN Chief executive,
Per Aquum Resorts
Innovation Redefining luxury.

The low-down In 2003, Australian Tom McLoughlin created Per Aquum Resorts in partnership with Universal Enterprises, the company that developed the first resort in the Maldives. Dhoni Mighili, a tiny sliver of an island, with just six private bungalows and six fully crewed 20-metre dhoni sailboats, was his first resort. Huvafen Fushi followed, attracting headlines as much for the guest list as for the world's first underwater spa. The Fortress in Sri Lanka was added to the collection; Dubai and the Seychelles are in the pipeline. McLoughlin is looking to expand further afield but with provisos. He likes the view from where he is, standing at the pointy end of the small luxury market, setting new standards in luxury and service in small niche resorts and spas.

Define luxury today "It's not about gold taps and marble foyers. Anyone can give you those. It's about time – spending it with the people you love."

How can a resort fit that bill? "We need to create the space and beauty and provide the service that will form part of the fabric of a guest's memory."

On Australians making it in travel internationally "We like to do it our way. For a long time the hotel industry was dominated by the Swiss; now Australian general managers are going out into the world and taking on all the top jobs."

His view on hotels "I hate hotels, or ones that fit some model. I want to take every one of those rules and break them."





JUDY AND DON FREEMAN

Theatre developers

Innovation Advancing indigenous tourism.

The low-down There was no plan when Don and Judy Freeman set up the Tjapukai Dance Company in Kuranda, in far north Queensland, 20 years ago, but an indigenous success story was hatched.

It started with a one-hour show in a shopping centre and snowballed into the 10-hectare Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park near Cairns, Australia's most awarded and patronised Aboriginal cultural attraction.

Having helped forge a modern outlet for the 40,000-year-old Aboriginal culture, the theatre-trained Freemans, both from north America, are now showing other indigenous tourism ventures the way forward. As government-appointed mentors, they are advising start-up businesses on finance, marketing, corporate image and all points between.

www.tjapukai.com.au.



KERRY HILL

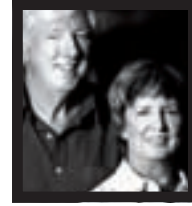
Architect

Innovation Regionally sensitive and stylish resort architecture.

The low-down Originally from Perth, Kerry Hill turned what was supposed to be a short stint in Asia in the early 1970s into a long-term tenure and set new standards in resort and hotel architecture.

Hill is acclaimed for his regionally sensitive designs of hotels in the Asia-Pacific region, notably the Datai Hotel in Langkawi and the Lalu hotel in Taiwan. He has successfully blended his innovative, modernist approach with traditional Asian design, exemplified by ground-breaking hotels such as The Chedi in Chiang Mai, and is widely recognised for his contribution to the architectural culture of Singapore, where he is based. He has won many awards, both for public and residential buildings, including the Royal Australian Institute of Architects Gold Medal in 2006.

www.kerryhillarchitects.com.



DENIS AND TRICIA HORGAN

Winemakers, event organisers

Innovation Cultural tourism.

The low-down When Denis and Tricia Horgan established Leeuwin Estate in Margaret River back in the 1970s their ambitions were to produce world-class wines, and, simply, to get noticed. But Margaret River's reputation was then more about waves than wine. Their solution? Cultural tourism. The Horgans leapt into the deep end in 1985 by underwriting a visit from the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Their much-coveted – and copied – annual outdoor picnic concerts were launched. The first event doubled Margaret River's population. Tens of thousands have since made the pilgrimage to see performers such as Sting, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and James Taylor perform at the picturesque vineyard. A restaurant and gallery complete Leeuwin's smart cultural mix of wine, food and art.

www.leeuwinestate.com.au. »

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CASSIDY ULURU

Co-founder, Anangu Tours
Innovation Indigenous tourism at Uluru.

The low-down Cassidy Uluru helped start the highly successful Anangu Tours in 1995 after he and members of his extended family recognised an intense interest in Uluru and its traditions. They reckoned sharing their culture and stories through tours, dot-painting workshops and sales of handmade weapons would be a way to promote understanding and tolerance between cultures, and pick up a few bob along the way to support their families. Today, the company is still owned and operated by the Anangu, the traditional Aboriginal owners of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, and each year more than 30,000 people take tours.
www.ananguwaai.com.au.



DAVID WALSH

Founder, Moorilla Estate
Innovation Wine tourism in Tasmania.

The low-down It wasn't enough for David Walsh to buy Tasmania's oldest winery in 1995. He wanted

Moorilla, near Hobart, to be a complete cultural and hospitality experience. So he set about adding a few "extras" such as five-star accommodation, a restaurant, a gallery of antiquities, the Moo brewery and a concert venue for gatherings of 2000 people. The next phase of his grand plan is his private museum, MONA (the Museum of Old and New Art), being built alongside the winery. Due for completion in late 2009, the \$55 million venture says much about the scope of Walsh's ambition.
www.moorilla.com.au.



GEOFF MCGEARY

Chairman, APT
Innovation Global touring with a personal touch.

The low-down You don't get to be as big and successful as Australian Pacific Touring without being innovative. For 80 years, APT has consistently demonstrated a willingness to explore new frontiers. Founder Bill McGeary found a way to get Melbourne moving again after a tram strike by plonking a bus body on a tray truck. In the early 1960s, his son, Geoff McGeary, showed the same savvy when he cadged an under-age driver's licence to carry on the family charter business after his father fell ill. Now chairman of directors, Geoff McGeary still travels widely to explore new destinations.
www.aptouring.com.au.



DELLAROSE BAEVSKI

Founder, Awaken Designs
Innovation Developing an ecologically sustainable destination.

The low-down Developing an environmentally sustainable resort is one thing; developing a complete eco-friendly destination is on an entirely different scale. But that is the task that Dellarose Baevski and her husband, Michael, have set themselves with Sunrise at 1770. When it is completed, their evolving \$100 million development on five kilometres of beachfront near the Queensland towns of Agnes Water and 1770 will encompass two residential areas, an eco-tourism village with 100 bungalows, and a six-star resort and all that entails. And it will be largely self-sufficient, thanks to a \$30 million investment in infrastructure, strict building covenants, reforestation and the gifting of a significant parcel of land for a nature reserve.
www.sunriseat1770.com.au.



ROSS BROWN

Chief executive, Brown Brothers
Innovation Wine tourism and regional food in north-east Victoria.

The low-down Brown Brothers goes back almost to the beginning of the Australian wine industry. Established in Milawa in 1889, it is one of Australia's oldest wine labels. While he is proud of the company's history, Ross Brown has always been intent on moving forward. Under his stewardship, the company has diversified and played a pivotal role in the development of wine tourism and the regional food movement in the north-east region of Victoria. Brown, who joined the family business in 1970, was responsible for developing the cellar-door experience. With more than 100,000 visitors annually, it is an extraordinary success. He also drove the Epicurean Centre, where visitors can match wines and regional food.

On innovation "We had to decide what kind of business we were in. Was it just wine? How much did we want to move into food? We decided we were a lifestyle business. The Epicurean Centre grew out of that discussion. We wanted to show off our wines in the best way. When you have food and wine harmony, you have a match made in heaven."

Why do Australians love their cellar doors?

"I could just say our wine but it's bigger than that, it's the whole experience. It's about a feeling of connection. And it's about being made welcome."

So where does that lead? "People are looking for a deeper experience. They are also looking for quality. Regions have to be mindful of this and work out ways to deliver what the public wants." »

NEIL PERRY

Restaurateur

Innovation Food in the air, food tourism.

The low-down In 1997 Qantas asked chef Neil Perry to take over the catering in the first-class cabin. Perry agreed on the proviso that both the name on the menu and the food would be his own. He also insisted that the service reflect the standards at his Sydney restaurant, Rockpool. The logistics of sourcing the

produce Perry insists on, in foreign locales, was difficult enough, to say nothing of the strictures of cooking mid-air. Business class was next on the menu and now his culinary influence has spread to the economy cabin. Recently Qantas opened Perry restaurants at its new Sydney and Melbourne first-class lounges. Meanwhile, Rockpool is two years off its 20th anniversary and was recently confirmed as one of the world's top 50 restaurants, for the sixth year in a row. A new restaurant, Rockpool Bar and Grill,

will open in Sydney next year after a successful outing in Melbourne.

The Qantas challenge "Designing food is easy, delivering it in the air is a different matter. It took an enormous amount of work."

His food philosophy "Food is about produce, wherever you serve it."

On the importance of service

"There are many elements to in-flight dining. The attendants have to be incredibly skilful working within the limitations of the cabin. And Qantas's investment in equipment is extraordinary."





DREW KLUSKA

Managing director,
Outback Encounter

Innovation A bespoke portfolio of
Australian experiences.

The low-down Fresh out of Africa in 1997, Drew Kluska decided there was something missing from the Australian tourism scene. His experience of being a guide at Kenya's luxury lodges convinced him that travellers were searching for connections, not just sights. Kluska is now a modern-day holiday matchmaker, putting travellers in places where they want to be and in touch with people who hold the knowledge of the area, be it a station owner, a naturalist, a winemaker or cook. His travel company, Outback Encounter, now in its 10th year, specialises in custom-designed journeys to places hand-picked by Kluska.

www.outbackencounter.com.



GREG FARRELL

Managing director, the Federal
Group

Innovation Travel experiences in
Tasmania.

The low-down Seven years ago,
Greg Farrell decided to widen the
Federal Group's focus beyond its

landmark Wrest Point Casino in Hobart. Farrell believed no other state was as well placed as Tasmania, with its wilderness, heritage, food and wine, to take advantage of the growing fascination with tourism experiences. It was a decision that has reaped dividends for the company and for Tasmanian tourism in general. Federal Group set about building a series of experiences, and the infrastructure to support them, in Tasmania's iconic destinations. Wrest Point was joined by the Country Club in Launceston, Strahan Village, Freycinet Lodge and Cradle Mountain Chateau. At each location, excursions such as Gordon River Cruises, the West Coast wilderness railway and the Wilderness Gallery at Cradle Mountain were either purchased or developed. The company's next move is into the five-star market with the development of The Hazards at Coles Bay, along with an as-yet unnamed development overlooking Port Arthur.

www.puretasmania.com.au.



COLIN HACKWORTH

President, Harmony Resorts

Innovation Taking skiing to
new heights.

The low-down Colin Hackworth had 25 years in the Australian ski industry and was in charge of Mount Hotham and Falls Creek when he went to Japan's then-obscure ski-fields. Like the ad, he liked the product so much that he bought the resort, or

specifically, the Hanazono ski field on the northern island of Hokkaido. Now, Hackworth and his partner, former lawyer Roger Donazzan, are developing their side of the mountain into a full-blown, Australian-friendly, ski-in ski-out resort that will include a village, with hotels, restaurants and a residential development of 10,000 beds in single family residences, condos and apartments.

www.harmonyresorts.com.



MARC NEWSON

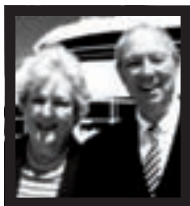
Designer, Qantas creative director

Innovation Changing how we fly.

The low-down While some may quibble as to whether Marc Newson is the world's most influential designer, there can be no doubt that he represents an increasingly important influence on Australian aviation. Nuts and bolts aside, he has designed virtually everything on board the Qantas A380s, the new plane set to revolutionise travel. The Newson sensibility will extend the length of the 450-seat plane, and eventually right through the airline. The interiors of the 747 and 767 fleet are also getting a Newson makeover. The new first-class lounges at Melbourne and Sydney airports are both his designs. An inveterate traveller, Newson boarded his first international flight at 12. He loves travelling. It fuels his passion and refreshes his spirit.

www.marc-newson.com;

www.qantas.com.au. »



TREVOR AND GERALDINE HAWORTH

Founders and directors, Captain Cook Cruises

Innovation Showcasing Sydney Harbour.

The low-down The only way to see Sydney Harbour back in 1970 was on a private boat or a commuter ferry. It was something that struck Trevor Haworth, a retired master seaman, as absurd. Here was the world's most beautiful harbour and there was no easy, comfortable and informative way for visitors to see it. Today, as a result of the Haworth's vision, Captain Cook Cruises is nearly as much a part of Sydney life as discussions of real estate. Like its namesake, Captain Cook Cruises has continued to explore new horizons and today a fleet of 16 vessels carries the company flag around the Fiji Islands, along the Murray River and the Great Barrier Reef. And twice daily at 10 am and 2.15pm, the cruise that spawned the company, the Captain Cook coffee cruise, leaves Number 6 Jetty, Circular Quay, taking visitors out onto the most beautiful harbour in the world.

www.captaincook.com.au.

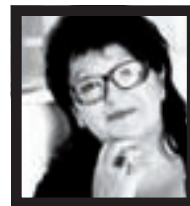


JAMES AND HAYLEY BAILLIE

Owners, Baillie Lodges
Innovation Rejuvenating Australian islands.

The low-down In a past life as an employee, James Baillie was pivotal in reshaping Queensland's Lizard Island into a world-class destination. His creative handprint also extends to Bedarra, Dunk and Heron islands. When Baillie and his wife, Hayley, set up Baillie Lodges, they had a clear view of what they wanted to achieve: unique, contemporary, nature-based and sustainable. And identifiably Australian. Their properties celebrate with style and confidence the difference between Australia and the rest of the world, taking their inspiration from the drama of their locations. Capella Lodge on Lord Howe Island was first on their agenda. Opened in 2005, it has delivered a new level of style and sophistication that is quintessentially Australia. Southern Ocean Lodge is due to open in March next year on South Australia's Kangaroo Island. Next on the radar: Tasmania's Tasman Peninsula.

www.baillielodges.com.au.



ALLA WOLF TASKER

Owner, Lake House, Daylesford
Innovation The country-house restaurant.

The low-down Quite simply, Alla Wolf Tasker put the central Victorian town of Daylesford back on the map. This picturesque destination had fallen off the tourist radar when Wolf Tasker and her husband, Allan, decided the lake at Daylesford was the spot to build a restaurant. When the Wolf Taskers opened The Lake House in 1984, locals thought they were misguided. Who would want to drive an hour and half from Melbourne for a feed? Well, these days, the answer is more than 500,000 people a year. The Lake House fulfils the Wolf Taskers' dream of creating a high-end country-house hotel with fine local produce, great wine and excellent service at its heart. The restaurant has grown into a fully fledged destination, with 33 guest rooms, a spa and a superb dining room that at last count had won 48 chef's hats from the annual foodie bible *The Age Good Food Guide*. +

www.lakehouse.com.au.

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