

December 2008

From the President

The Magic of the Christmas Markets is with us again

Here we go again folks, a busy December. First we have the UN Bazaar followed closely by the Christmas dinner and then the reception at the embassy with Peter and Reina Shannon. It's that time of the year when many of our members who remain unsighted for much of the year finally get to say hello, so I hope the same happens this year.

There is something else this month which I hope we will all enjoy: the Advent markets. Boy, aren't they something? I still remember the reaction of my kids to their first market when we lived here way back in the 1980s. It was snowing lightly, but was not cold. After the sand, surf and outdoor Aussie style Christmas, the atmospherics were nothing short of magic.

According to *The Vienna Review*, the mystique of Vienna's Christmas markets date back several centuries to 1296 as 'huts' were erected along the Graben and outside the St. Stephens's Cathedral. Through the centuries, stalls have continued to be set up along Vienna's open squares selling everything from the hot mulled Glühwein to Christmas decorations.

There are many Advent markets around Vienna, but the Christkindlmärkte at the Rathaus has got to be one of the biggest and best. It is open until 24 December and you can find more information at: <http://www.christkindlmarkt.at/>. It is widely popular for its magical décor, colour and lights, enticing gingerbread and a popular spiced punch. This year it is an environmentally friendly market with around 1,500 LED lamps replacing the bulbs that used to light up the market Christmas tree.

Surveys show that eight in ten Vienna residents plan to visit the market in front of the city hall. And 55 per cent of tourists in Vienna think the city is the most romantic place to spend Christmas.

Since 1959, Austria's provinces have provided free Christmas trees for the capital's city hall Christmas market. This year's 27 metre, 170-year-old spruce from the Schneeberg region in Lower Austria has been in place since 4 November.

The Vatican will also host an Austrian Christmas tree this year. Gutenstein im Piestingtal in Lower Austria is sending a tree to be erected outside the Vatican's basilica of St Peter on 13 December. And Upper Austrian capital Linz has donated a fir to the German city of Frankfurt, to be erected at Römerberg Weihnachtsmarkt, one of Germany's most-traditional Christmas markets.

I have included a list of many Advent markets with websites to get more information. The list is on page two.

And so all we need now is snow to add to the magic. On behalf of all the OzCon board members – Gabrielle, Amanda, Liz and Susanna - may I wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Lastly, I would just like to acknowledge the "passing" of an English institution here in Vienna, the British Bookshop. The bookshop began more than half a century ago in a reading room at the British Embassy after World War II, moving to the existing site in Vienna's city centre back in 1974. Due to declining sales and mushrooming competition, the bookshop has filed for bankruptcy. -- Brett

Pavlova..... Pavlova..... Pavlova

6 December 2008 is just around the corner. A big thank you to those of you who have offered to make pavlovas or to help out with the stall. But we still need more.

We still need more **pavlovas** and **helpers**. Donations of cut up **fruit**, which can be used to decorate the pavlovas on the day would also be appreciated.

If you can spare a few hours, can make a few pavs, or are happy to supply some fruit please let me know. jenny.hanna@dfat.gov.au

Pavlovas should ideally be small to medium size that can be sold (and eaten on the spot) in one easy piece. We have some fruit donations but could use some more - kiwi, pineapples, bananas, strawberries are best, other fresh berries would also be useful. We will supply the cream.

We still need a couple more helpers on Friday afternoon to assist with setting up. More volunteers on the Saturday are also required, particularly to help with the clean up at 5pm. Rosters will be distributed closer to the time.

Volunteers are encouraged to wear any Australiana clothing you may have – T-shirts, aprons or caps. If you want to get into the building before opening time and don't have a VIC pass please let me know so I can arrange to get a bazaar pass for you.

I've included a recipe for French Chocolate Ice Cream on page 5 to help use up those egg yolks.

Pavlovas and lamingtons can be dropped off at the Australian Embassy before 12.00 on Friday 5 December or at the stall in the Austria Centre on the Saturday.

The Australian stall has been moved this year and will now be in Hall Y in the middle section.

Christmas markets



Weihnachtsmarkt am Spittelberg till 23.12.2008
Stiftgasse
<http://www.spittelberg.at/weihnachtsmarkt/markt.htm>

Weihnachtsmarkt Schloss Schoenbrunn till
26.12.2008
Schloss Schoenbrunn
<http://www.weihnachtsmarkt.co.at/>

Weihnachtsdorf Belvedere till 24.12.2008
Belvedere
<http://www.weihnachtsdorf.at/weihnachtsdorf/bvd/index.html>

Weihnachtsdorf Altes AKH till 24.12.2008
Altes AKH
<http://www.weihnachtsdorf.at/weihnachtsdorf/aakh/index.html>

Altwiener Christkindlmarkt till 23.12.2008
Freyung
<http://www.altwiener-markt.at/>

Wiener Kunsthandwerksmarkt till 23.12.2008
Karlsplatz
<http://www.divinaart.at/weihnachtsmarkt2008/>

Weihnachtsmarkt "Natuerlich Christkindl" till
21.12.2008
Weingut Cobenzl
<http://www.fresco.at/lcc/>

Weihnachtsschau und Christkindlmarkt in den
Blumengaerten Hirschstetten till 21.12.2008
Blumengaerten Hirschstetten
<http://www.wien.gv.at/umwelt/parks/blumengaerten-hirschstetten/weihnachtsschau.html>

More markets and events - each district
<http://www.wien.gv.at/vadb/internet/AdvPrSrv.asp?Layout=Advent&Type=S>

OzCon Events

Christmas Dinner



When: Tuesday, 9 December 2008

Where: Wiener Kochsalon (formally known as 'Wrenkh') (www.wienerkochsalon.at)
Bauernmarkt 10, 1010 Vienna

Time: 6.30pm pre-dinner drinks (7pm dinner)
€35 for a three course dinner. This is described as a quaint restaurant. That also means small and so get in early to secure a place.
Please email Gabrielle gabrielle.costigan@gmx.at for confirmation of attendance by 1 December 2008
Ambassador Shannon and his wife Reina will be our guests.

Australian Embassy Christmas Drinks



Ambassador Peter Shannon and Mrs. Reina Shannon would like to invite OzCon Members for Christmas Drinks at the Australian Embassy.

When: Thursday 11th December 08 from 6 to 8pm
Where: Australian Embassy, Mattiellistrasse 2 (3rd floor), A 1040, Vienna.
RSVP: by 5th December 08. Tel: 5067 4112
Email: lisa.kirchebner@dfat.gov.au

Members of the Sydney-based Girls' School choir will contribute to a festive Christmas atmosphere. Consisting of a group of 35 music students, both instrumental and vocal, aged between 13 and 17, they will perform a program of traditional Christmas music.

IAEA Ball



When: Saturday 28th February 2009

Where: Hofburg Palace

Dress Code: Ladies, formal long evening wear or national costume. Gentlemen, dinner jacket/tux, smoking, formal evening attire with bow ties (not neck ties) or national costume.

Experience shows that you need to get in early to secure a seat. Tickets go on sale on the 3rd December and sell fast. We need to book before Christmas and kindly ask you to RSVP to this by Wednesday 17th December at the very latest. Brett will require numbers and money by that date to secure the booking.

There are many rooms with many types of music and you can wander from one to another. The main hall (the Festsaal) has a combination of Viennese Tradition and Big Band swing time music (Cost €75-80).

The Zeremoniensaal has "dance music for all tastes and ages with contemporary pop, R&B and a twist of rock" (Cost €65).

All other rooms cost €50 a person for a reserved seat at a table.

Forum: move with passion and fire to the Latin beat
Maria Theresien App. 11: Reggae/Caribbean music
Rittersaal: Blues and dance music
Radetzky App. 11: Modern Celtic music
Alte Hofkueche: Disco
Heuriger: Viennese heuriger music to go with wine.

Please RSVP to Brett before 17th December. Brett suggests he reserves seats at a table in one of the other rooms at the cost of €50 per person. You are free to wander around so it is not really an issue in which room the reservation is made.

Please email Brett on brett_bayly@yahoo.com.au

Travel Tip: The Innsbruck Card

If you are heading for Innsbruck for a short stay, here's a tip on how to cut down on your sightseeing expenses.

Buy an Innsbruck Card. For the price of €25 you can travel up and down once on cablecars for all of the mountains, travel on public transport (the IVB service), get admission to museums and the Swarovski Crystal World as well as travel on the "Sightseer" bus.

The €25 card lasts for 24 hours or you can get one for 48 hours for €30 with a 50 pc reduction for children under 15. The cards are available at the tourist office in the centre of the city.

To give you an idea of the savings, a return ticket to the top of Hafelekar 2334 m. cost €20.80 and to the other popular mountain on the opposite side of the valley, Patscherkofel 2246 m, €17.40. With the card you can travel from the bottom of one to the other by free public transport.



The top of Hafelekar is visible from the centre of the city

Austrian Railways offers weekend packages for the train to and from Innsbruck with three and four star hotels in the centre of the city (we stayed at Central Hotel which has a small gym and sauna to ease the aches and pains after hiking). It takes about five hours by train; less if you travel on the very fast train ICE. And so we took a long weekend, staying the two nights.

When not climbing mountains, a wander through the old city is well worth while. There are plenty of nice places to eat, except on Sunday night when you might have to hunt around a bit.



Hang glider over the autobahn to Brenner Pass

– Brett Bayly

OzCon Linz Connection

At long last we have a group of Australians in the Linz area. Four families met up on November 9th at a Huerigen in Strenberg. We want to let everyone know that we exist and are arranging regular get togethers. We are interested in becoming Ozcon Linz and making links with the Vienna group. Maybe people will move from Vienna to Linz or vice versa or maybe the Australians in Vienna may be interested in exploring the country and meeting other Australians.

I have included a photo of our get together. In the photo you can see Ingrid, Fred, Molly and Ruby Folger, Angela Aghow and partner Oliver, Adele Kofler with Aspen and Maximillian and Tracey, Josh, Olivia and Oscar Willard.



Feel free to contact at any time for further information or any advice about making connections to the Vienna group.

Ingrid Folger.
iweilguny@hotmail.com

Congratulations Rosalie

OzCon Member Rosalie Toomey gave birth to baby Mariella Rose on the 6th November at the Semmelweis Klinik in the 18th District. Mariella was born 4kg and 53cm. Congratulations are also in order for her husband Scott and daughter Isabella.



Rosalie sent us this interesting story. How Dr Ignaz Semmelweis in the mid-19th century, discovered that if midwives and doctors washed their hands and practiced basic hygiene they drastically reduced the incidence of puerperal or "childbed fever" which was the main cause of maternal deaths at that time. Women would give birth with no problems then a few days later develop an infection and fever then die, and often the baby as well. He realised that most cases occurred when doctors would come straight from an autopsy to deliver a baby without washing their hands, covered in blood! Anyway they named the hospital in his honour.

And a very nice place to have a baby it is too. Midwives play a major role and doctors only get involved if there is a problem.....and to stitch you up if necessary!

OzCon Membership Renewal Reminder

As 2009 is just around the corner we kindly ask you all to renew your membership to OzCon. You will receive a bank payment slip, Erlagschein in January, which we kindly ask you to fill out and arrange payment. It is imperative that you clearly mark your name and address on the red section of the payment slip or internet transfer to save confusion and for us to keep track of paid members. We are proud to inform you that the fee has remained the same, €20 per family.

Should you wish to make a direct debit transfer the OzCon bank details are as follows. Again we must stress that it is imperative that you clearly mark your name and address when making the payment.

Bank Account Details:

Susanna Martin-Murtinger

OZCON Account

Raiffeisenlandesbank Niederösterreich – Wien

BLZ 32000

Kontonummer (Account Number): 12.097.176

Membership Fee: Euro 20

French Chocolate Ice-Cream

3 egg yolks

1 ½ cups whipped cream

¼ cup sugar

170g chocolate pieces

½ cup water

Combine sugar and water and bring to boil for 3 minutes. Place chocolate pieces and hot syrup into blender and mix. Add fork beaten egg yolks and blend. Fold mixture into whipped cream
Put into a container and freeze for 2 -3 hours



On loan from the embassy for the bazaar....but is it big enough?

The Big Dry continues in South Australia

Leon and Nancy Schupelius recently returned from a visit to their old home town of Adelaide to arrange the renting of their apartment. Leon was struck by the extent of the big dry which pervades Adelaide and the whole state as another summer begins.

He writes: When flying into Adelaide we noticed the lack of greenery on the hills and the surrounding countryside, the grass had "browned off" like it was the middle of Summer, not the middle of Spring!

Our apartment is adjacent to the parklands and the grass is always green nearly all year round but even they were showing signs of "browning off". The trees were showing signs of stress and even the gum trees lacked their normal green sheen.

Water restrictions are in place with households only allowed to water their gardens for three hours per week and only on alternate days. Golf clubs and cricket grounds cannot use mains water, only those with their own water supply i.e. bores and/or dams will be able to maintain their courses and grounds in good playing condition.

The lack of water coming down the River Murray is causing great concerns and its future, especially in South Australia, is looking very bleak. Many properties using water from the Murray for irrigation have had their allocations reduced or have stopped using water altogether.

The government is building a desalination plant to assist with water supply. But rain and lots of it is needed in the water catchment areas and underground basins need to be replenished otherwise the desert areas will increase.

The wine industry and the cereal farmers are suffering, with harvests expected to be well below average this season due to the lack of Autumn rains.

On the bright side we got to eat our fill of King George Whiting fish, prawns and crayfish fresh from the sea and Leon got to eat his fill of meat pies (Villi's of course) and got to walk along the beach.

A Touch of Aussie in Carinthia

In early October we were looking for a long-weekend break destination. I really wanted to go to Trieste, while others in the family wanted to visit Croatia. The thought of a 6 hour drive with 2 babies in the car sent shudders down hubby's spine so much so that he decided to do a bit of web surfing to see if he could find something to meet all the family needs.



We decided that Carinthia was a good option – less than a 4 hour drive from Vienna and then easy day trips to the other destinations, including Slovenia which we hadn't thought of. A bit more web surfing and the Blue Mountain Hotel caught Mike's attention. And sure enough, there was an Aussie connection. The hotel is run by the Lively's – Michelle, Australian and Tugg, her British husband. They have twin 6 year olds, who live up to the family name and who were both happy to take Eloise (our 2 year old) under their wing. The hotel is located in a beautiful setting, a couple of kilometres up a mountain in Verditz. Bed and breakfast or half-board is offered and the food is plentiful. www.bluemountainhotel.at

The lakes are beautiful. Unfortunately for us the weather wasn't great but Michelle went out of her way to suggest activities to keep us, and the kids amused. We made it over to Bled and explored the castle in the rain. The big kids got to bottle some wine, and have the certificate to prove it. We then visited Villach where the little kids had the time of their lives in one of the best indoor play-areas I have seen. That evening it snowed and there was enough still on the ground for Eloise to make her first snowman the next morning. We also discovered an old castle nearby which houses a bird zoo.

Despite the weather, we had a lovely weekend away. The Lively's were warm and welcoming. The scenery was picturesque. The accommodation was comfortable and affordable. It was a break enjoyed by babies, teenagers and adults.

Jenny Hanna

Aussie News Briefs

28 Nov. - **INDIAN officials say four Australians have been killed** in the Mumbai terrorist attacks, as the Australian government warned the nation to "expect the worst". So far two Australians have been confirmed dead, Sydney timber merchant Brett Taylor, 49, and Sydney grandfather and former Woollahra deputy mayor Doug Markell, 71. Officials from India's Maharashtra state, of which Mumbai is the capital, said the dead included at least four Australians, a Japanese, an Italian, a Briton and a German. Mumbai's police chief said the total death toll had risen to 130. (AAP)



26 Nov. - **BHP Billiton has abandoned its \$135 billion takeover bid for Rio Tinto** in the face of a deteriorating global economic climate. In a shock announcement that sent Rio shares plunging 30 per cent in London last night, BHP chairman Don Argus said the recent dramatic downturn in credit markets had taken its toll and that there was now too much risk for shareholders. The prospect of taking on Rio's \$US42 billion debt and trying to sell assets in a market dramatically changed from when the bid was launched a year ago were the main concern. (Australian)

25 Nov. - **HEAVY rain** over the weekend has delayed by weeks the start of the bushfire season in East Gippsland and in some of the Alpine region and is pushing up the level of Melbourne's dams. Melbourne's biggest dam is now 19.5 per cent full, up from 19.3 per cent on Friday. Overall, Melbourne's dams rose by a net 6.5 billion litres, lifting from 33.2 per cent full on Friday to 33.6 per cent yesterday. The wet weekend increases the chances of them filling further with run-off and if more rain falls this week. (Age)

22 Nov. - **KEVIN Rudd never imagined a year like this.** Australia's control-minded Prime Minister has been hit by an out-of-control financial hurricane that will define his first term, disrupt his plans and pose a challenge he never conceived. In his reflective moments, Rudd now recalls former British PM Harold Macmillan's famous reply to the question about what worried him most: "Events, dear boy, events." It is a truism. There has not been a first-year prime ministership like Rudd's in the postwar era. This is courtesy of events, notably the collapsing global economy. The assumptions on which Rudd devised policy are being destroyed. Almost before his prime ministership is well established, it must be remade in economic and political terms. This task has just begun, yet, so far, Rudd's political skills have been supreme. This is the real message of the first year. Newspoll shows the Government leading the Opposition 55-45 in two-party-preferred terms, a stronger position than Rudd's November 24, 2007, election victory. Despite the Coalition switching leaders, the latest Newspoll shows Rudd leading Malcolm Turnbull 62-22 as preferred PM. It is true that Rudd has scored a remarkable series of firsts: no PM has made so many overseas trips in his first year, worked such prodigious hours, made such absurd demands on close advisers, ranged so widely, so relentlessly over so many policy areas, defined himself by such ceaseless activity and movement, and confronted such a dramatic reversal in global and domestic economic forecasts. (Paul Kelly in *The Australian*)

18 Nov. - **AUSTRIAN universities have come second last** in study by research institute Lisbon Council. Austria is ranked 16th out of 17 countries. The institute claims that only Austria's upper class benefits from the country's educational system, that the country produces too few graduates, and that only 1 in 5 students finish their degrees in Austria, as opposed to 40 per cent in other countries. It found that Australia, the United Kingdom and Denmark have the best tertiary education systems among the 17 OECD countries surveyed, while Germany, Austria and Spain have the worst. (Austrian Times)

17 Nov. - **BRISBANE has been officially declared a natural disaster area**, as soldiers help to repair damage caused by one of the biggest storms to hit the city in 20 years. More than 32,000 properties across Brisbane, Redcliffe and the Gold Coast were without power this afternoon after yesterday's storm brought hail and wind gusts of up to 130km/h, ripped roofs from houses and toppled power lines and trees. Acting Prime Minister Julia Gillard activated natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements, including the deployment of 40 soldiers, and pledged to cover half of the State Government's clean-up costs. (Courier Mail)

Aussie News Briefs cont'd



Illustration: Ron Tandberg

15 Nov. - **PRIME Minister Kevin Rudd** has met members of the Obama team in his first Washington engagement, pledging his Government will work closely with the new administration on the global financial crisis. Arriving for the weekend G20 meeting hosted by President George Bush, the Prime Minister became the first of the leaders to meet with Madeleine Albright, the former US secretary of state charged with meeting leaders on behalf of President-elect Barack Obama. (Age)



The mighty Daintree River is the gateway to the lush, world-heritage listed rainforests of the Daintree National Park. (Cairns Post)

13 Nov. - **THE average weekly wage** in Australia is now \$1,147.20, after growing by 4.7 per cent in the year to August. The quarterly seasonally adjusted pace of average weekly ordinary time earnings (AWOTE) jumped 1.6 per cent in the three months to August, Australian Bureau of Statistics data released on Thursday show. Economists expect the RBA will cut the cash rate by at least a further 50 basis points when its board meets next month, on top of the 200 basis points of easing seen since September. (AAP)

9 Nov. - **PRIME Minister Kevin Rudd** said his thoughts and prayers were with the families of victims of the 2002 Bali bombings after three of the terrorists were executed today. Bombers Mukhlas, Amrozi and Imam Samudra, three of the men responsible for the 2002 attacks which killed 202 people, including 88 Australians, were executed by firing squad in Indonesia just after midnight (4am AEDT).

Mr Rudd said today's long anticipated executions would have reawakened the nightmare of the October 12 attacks for the families, and all Australians should remember that. Australian authorities have advised Australians to reconsider the need to travel to Indonesia. (Australian)

9 Nov. - **JOHN KEY**, the boy trader of Wall St, was last night tasked with trading New Zealand out of its direst economic crisis for many years. He is preparing to build a Government of all colours, as he reaches across the political divide to work with not just Act and United Future, but also the Maori Party and the Greens. New Zealand voted for a change of direction, and a change of generation. Helen Clark, acknowledged by friends and foes alike as one of the country's strongest-ever leaders, last night announced her resignation as leader of the Labour Party. (NZ Herald)

5 Nov. - **THE US election result** was a great testament to the strength and maturity of the American democratic process, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said. Senator Obama carried a message of hope not only for America but for the rest of the world. "Australia looks forward to working in the closest possible way in the closest possible partnership with an Obama administration, acting together to deal with the great common global challenges we face as democracies," he said. Mr Rudd described Senator Obama's acceptance speech as "extraordinary". (AAP)

Bumper stickers for Seniors

There are three signs of old age. The first is loss of memory. I forgot the other two.

I'm retired
I was tired yesterday, and I'm tired today

Goodbye tension! Hello pension

I was at the beauty shop for nearly two hours.
That was only for the estimate

It's nice to be here.
At my age it's nice to be anywhere.

Sometimes I wake up grumpy...
And some days I let him sleep

Quit worrying about your health.
....It'll go away.



Performances with Australian Artists and other events

From the Australian Events Calendar, Australian Embassy Vienna

<p>5 December 15.00</p>	<p><i>Brisbane Concert Choir</i></p>	<p>Melk Abbey Melk www.brisbaneconcertchoir.com</p>	<p>The Brisbane Concert Choir will make two performances in Austria during their European Tour.</p>
<p>7 December 18.00</p>	<p><i>Brisbane Concert Choir</i></p>	<p>Vienna City Hall www.brisbaneconcertchoir.com</p>	<p>Brisbane Concert Choir is an auditioned adult community choir based in Brisbane, Australia.</p>
<p>8 December 20.00</p>	<p><i>St Clare's College Chorale in Concert</i></p>	<p>Church of Itzling Kirchenstrasse 22a 5020 Salzburg</p>	<p>The St Clare's College Chorale from Canberra will be performing live during Holy Mass. It is an all girls school choir comprising of 50 students.</p>
<p>9 to 13 December</p>	<p><i>"A Moment on the Lips" live on stage</i></p>	<p>Ensemble Theater Petersplatz 1 1010 Wien Tickets: 01 5353200 Email: info@ensembletheater.at www.ensembletheater.at</p>	<p>Crackling dialogue, brilliantly observed and achingly funny, this journey into the lives of seven woman won playwright Jonathan Gavin the 2003 Philip Parson Young Playwright Award and rave reviews. A Moment on the Lips is a comedy of recognition, a tragedy of domestic proportions. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll wish you were part of their gang. If you've got a sister, a female friend, a same sex lover of no idea about the female mind! – this one's for you.</p>

Unless otherwise specified, all telephone numbers are in Vienna

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www.australien-lifestyle.de

www.virtualvienna.net

www.australian-embassy.at

www.ninemsn.com.au

www.kids-days.com/Wien/index_wien.html

www.expatsconsulting.com

www.homesick.com.au

www.viennababiesclub.com

<http://www.abc.net.au/vod/news/>

www.australianaonline.com.au

www.news.com.au

www.expatriates.com

www.australia.gov.au

Guided Walks

Places of Human Rights, Shadow of the Past
Schonberg and Freud

Roman Findings in Carnuntum and the National Park

More information visit: www.veinnawalks.at

The Old City of Vienna

The Third Man

More information visit: www.wienguide.at

Other Associations

Austrian-Australian Society (OAG)

Hubert Heine, General Secretary

Tel: 0676 5003058; 9847328

Heine69at@yahoo.de

www.australia-austria.at

American Women's Association (AWA)

Tel: 9662925

awa@awavienna.com

www.awavienna.com

Women's Career Network (WCN)

Tel: 9662925

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Gelbe Seiten (Yellow Pages) – with an English index at the back.