

MEET OUR JUDGES FOR 2020 . . .

More than 50 travel editors, writers and industry experts devoted their valuable time and expertise in judging this year's extraordinary Australian Society of Travel Writers (ASTW) Awards of Excellence.

Judges from as far afield as the UK, Canada and the USA joined their Australian and New Zealand colleagues in valuating entries on the new *Award Force* portal.

Despite the effects of the global pandemic and the restrictions they placed on travel, the response from the ASTW members to enter was overwhelming with almost 620 entries across the 18 categories.

Such was the quality of the entries, the judges responded with such glowing reports as:

- *"The author's creative and muscular prose pulls the reader along on the journey and leaves us wishing we were traveling with them."*
- *"This is how it's done. A clear narrative with lots of detail that sets the scene. Who would not want to go after reading this!"*
- *"Informative and inspiring in equal measure, imparting a greater understanding about sustainable tourism. Very impressive."*
- *"Fascinating experiences, narrated in a compelling and exciting way."*

On the photographic side, experts were quoted:

- *"An outstanding set of images with great use of natural light and wonderful composition."*
- *"There's nothing much to say about this image apart from the fact that it's brilliant."*

The awards – which have been held annually since 1992 – celebrate the best of travel writing, photography, and travel PR communications throughout Australia.

Time to meet the judges who donated their time and efforts to ploughing through the entries:

Ewan McDonald -

President of Travcom NZ, Ewan has been Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor and Features Editor with NZME, publishers of the NZ Herald and other print and online platforms. He is president of Travcom, the NZ Association of Travel Writers, Photographers and Communicators, and is a multi-award-winning travel writer.

Emma Thomson –

Winner of 2019 British Guild of Travel Writers (BGTW) Writer of the Year Emma is a respected travel writer for the UK national press, who spends roughly three-quarters of the year away on assignment covering adventurous off-the-beaten-track destinations. Commissions have ranged from a world-first expedition crossing Namibia's Skeleton Coast unsupported, to traveling the length of the Silk Road from Xi'an to Istanbul. A passionate advocate of responsible tourism, she has lived with families around the world from Australian Aboriginals to nomads in Mongolia, and frequently visits countries recovering from natural disaster or political upheaval, penning features that help travelers regain their trust in these destinations. She's also an experienced travel-writing panelist at consumer travel shows and workshops, and contributes to podcasts, radio and TV.

Elaine Glusac –

Winner of the writer of the year Lowell Thomas award, Elaine has won numerous awards for her work, including the Gold Medal as Travel Journalist of the Year in 2019 from the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), and the Silver Medal as Travel Journalist of the Year in 2018. In 2019, the judges said, “Elaine Glusac’s portfolio demonstrates a mastery of every form of travel writing, from a breaking news story about the FAA’s refusal to regulate airline seats to beautifully written features about her adventures in under-frequented spots on the globe.” In 2018, the judges noted, “her writing voice is that of the wide-open traveling companion who knows to sit at the bar, make friends and listen carefully for the story.”

David Swanson –

A past president of the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), David has been a freelance travel writer-photographer since 1995. His stories and photos have appeared in National Geographic Traveler, American Way, Los Angeles Times, USA Today, Miami Herald, Dallas Morning News, and San Francisco Chronicle, and he was a contributing editor at Caribbean Travel & Life magazine for 14 years, where he wrote the award-winning Affordable Caribbean column. David is currently past president of SATW, the world’s largest organisation of travel communicators.

James Rushforth -

The British Guild of Travel Writers (BGTW) Photographer of the Year (2019 and as well as 2018), James is one of the world’s most awarded photographers with 12 international photography competition wins. His most recent achievement saw a double first place at the prestigious International Photography Awards, where he was also named Special Photographer of the Year. His work has been published in numerous magazines and national newspapers including National Geographic, The Times, The Guardian, and The Daily Telegraph (UK). James also writes tutorials and blog posts for popular media platforms such as Viewbug and 500px and has appeared as a judge in several global competitions. James is also an experienced and professional climber, mountaineer, skier, and travel writer.

Peter Muhlbock –

From 1969, Peter spent more than 40 years at News Limited in Sydney where he completed a four-year cadetship in the photographic department. He worked as a photographer on The Sunday Telegraph until 1990 covering news, features and sport for almost 20 years. During this stint Peter was promoted to Picture Editor of The Sunday Telegraph following that with two years as a Picture Editor on The Daily Telegraph. With the introduction of digital imaging he was asked to head up the new imaging department until his retirement in 2010. Despite that Peter has continued to be passionate about photography building a healthy portfolio from his travels. He has also volunteered as a photographer for Special Olympics Australia covering many local and overseas sporting events.

David Kirkland -

David is one of the most widely published tourism photographers and writers in the Asia Pacific region (though, more recently, his work has taken him to the Middle East and the African continent). He specialises in capturing memorable promotional photographs for national tourism authorities and producing world-class images for international resorts and boutique properties. David became a professional travel and tourism photographer and author in 2000 after more than a decade of managing tourism authorities in Australia. His earlier background was in journalism and public relations. He has written and photographed 15 books, and he owns the largest on-line photo library dedicated specifically to travel and tourism in the Asia Pacific region.

Paul Dymond -

Paul has been a travel and nature photographer for nearly 16 years and was contracted to Lonely Planet Images (now Getty) for more than 10 of those years. His work has been published in most of the big magazines. He even won the ASTW Photographer of the Year back in the day when connecting to the Internet involved R2-D2-like sounds coming out of the modem. These days, as he balances the needs of a young family with being away with work, his business is moving more and more towards helping large organisations get a handle on their out-of-control image libraries, creating custom photographic and video databases so that they can more easily access and utilise these mostly untouched photographs. He is still represented by three major photo agencies and continues to do photographic work when it comes across his desk in Cairns.

David Motte –

Having started in press photography at The Birmingham Post and Mail in the UK in 1963 working on both morning and evening papers, David moved to Australia where was employed at The Daily Telegraph from 1970-1972 (under the Australian Consolidated Press banner). The newspaper was eventually absorbed into News Ltd, in 1972. From that year he worked on The Telegraph and The Sunday Telegraph and during his time there David was runner up in the Australian Press Photographer of the Year and Best Series. David returned to England in 1974 and worked on Provincial Sunday Newspapers, during which time he was awarded Press Photographer of the Year and Best Series. Five years later he returned to Australia and once again worked on The Sunday Telegraph, where he was awarded Best Series and Best Magazine Photographer of the Year. The multi-award-winning David transferred to The Daily Telegraph as senior photographer and eventually moved into the newly developed Imaging Department to learn more about the digital world.

Jules Lund –

After 15 years hosting some of the biggest TV and radio shows in Australia, Jules Lund is now on a mission to unlock the world's creativity through his tech company, TRIBE. With offices in five cities across the globe, TRIBE is a self-serve marketplace connecting 10,000+ brands with 50,000 everyday creators to generate premium content at scale, speed and a fraction of the cost. Known for his showmanship, Jules travels the world helping marketers get the jump on the next multi-billion-dollar category.

Chloe Knight Gregson –

Chloe plays a key role in digital marketing as Tourism Australia's social media producer. During her nine-year tenure at Tourism Australia, Chloe has helped cement Australia as a leading global destination in social media. Communicating with millions of fans, supporting the tourism industry and sifting through the hundreds of holiday snaps submitted to #seeaustralia daily means that Chloe has seen and heard her fair share about travel. Funnily enough, she still doesn't know where her favourite Aussie destination is, but four-wheel driving through outback Queensland and snorkelling with manta rays in the Southern Great Barrier Reef are both up there with the best.

Libby Moffet –

As joint principal of MG Media Communications, Libby Moffet spent more than 20 years representing the public relations interests of an array of international and Australian tourism operators including cruise lines, airlines, major hotel brands and destinations. Her PR career followed a decade working as a journalist with national media outlets including Australian Associated Press, ABC radio and the Australian Financial Review. Initially employed as a political reporter at the AFR, she began her association with the travel industry in 1990 when she started covering aviation and tourism for the paper. Having closed MG Media's doors to agency work in 2017, Libby continues to work part-time as a writer and business consultant.

Adrian Phillips –

Adrian Phillips runs Bradt Travel Guides – the world's largest independent guidebook publisher – and is also a leading UK travel writer and broadcaster for outlets including the BBC, ITV, Sky, The Telegraph and National Geographic. He currently holds the awards of Travel Writer of the Year (BGTW Awards), Consumer Writer of the Year (Travel Media Awards), Magazine Writer of the Year (LATA Awards) and Travel Writer of the Year (silver) (AITO Awards).

Sue Bryant -

Sue Bryant is an award-winning writer and editor specialising in travel. She is cruise editor of the Sunday Times, writes for Cruise Passenger and World of Cruising. Her work has also appeared in High Life, Food & Travel and TRVL magazine for iPad, among many others. Wearing a different hat, Sue is editor of Journeys magazine (@JourneysMagUK), the UK's first glossy mag dedicated to experiential travel. She also edits Uno Stile di Vita, the guestroom magazine for Baglioni Hotels. Sue has also written or edited more than 25 travel books, from guidebooks about the Costa del Sol, Barcelona, Ibiza, Cyprus and Tel Aviv to Insight Guides' Great River Cruises (Europe and the Nile). She has edited coffee table books, writes all the destination content for CountryNavigator.com and has produced cross-cultural training guides to more than 70 countries for executives going to live and work abroad.

Ken Eastwood –

Ken Eastwood is currently the Associate Editor of R.M. William's *Outback Magazine*. An award-winning journalist, editor, photographer and author his work has been widely

published in Australia and overseas. He worked for *Australian Geographic* magazine for more than a decade, most of that time as associate editor. A bushwalker for as long as he can remember, Ken has walked extensively throughout Australia and in many countries overseas, from the Arctic to Antarctica.

Kalpana Sunder –

Kalpana Sunder is a, award-winning freelance travel writer and photographer based in Chennai, India where she lives with her entrepreneur- husband, and two children. She believes that life is too short to do just one thing and she has re-invented herself several times- she is a qualified company secretary and a Japanese language specialist. She has taught Japanese to adult learners and children, handled interpretation assignments for corporates and organised creative writing workshops for young learners. Her life changing trip was in 2001 when she travelled through Japan on a Japan Foundation Scholarship. She has snorkelled on the Great Barrier Reef; zip lined through rainforests, snowmobiled in Lapland, and floated on the Dead Sea, in her search for a good travel tale. She loves spicy Chaat, cheery colours, junk jewellery and cherubic kids, reads anything she lays her hands on, and slows down with yoga. She believes in serendipity, the power of a hug and in always eating dessert. Travel and writing are integral parts of her DNA.

Barbara Orr –

An experienced editor and writer from the US, Barbara is a freelance journalist, author of the Frommer's *Guide to the Niagara Region*, third and fourth edition, and *Globe Pequot's Day Trips from Toronto*. Barbara is the immediate past president of SATW, having also served as Vice President and Active At Large. She is the recipient of multiple writing and photography awards, including Lowell Thomas Awards for Excellence in Travel Journalism. Her work has appeared in many national and international publications, including *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Living*, *NUVO*, *The Globe and Mail*, *American Express UK* and *Readers Digest*. She's also an accomplished award-winning photographer, as a well as an embarrassingly inept but enthusiastic artist.

Christopher Reynolds –

Previous winner of the Thomas Lowell, Christopher has written about travel, the outdoors, the arts, and culture for the *Los Angeles Times* since 1990. Since 2009, he has climbed Mayan pyramids, roamed Red Square in a snowstorm, been shushed at the New York Public Library and jumped from the tallest building in Soweto (rope attached).

Ben Lerwell –

Ben is an award-winning freelance travel writer based in England. His writing has appeared in more than 50 national and international titles, including *National Geographic Traveller*, *BBC Travel*, *The Guardian*, and *The Sunday Times*.

Richard Tulloch –

Richard began to travel extensively through his work as a writer of plays, books and television for young people, most famously writing the original *Bananas in Pyjamas* and recent plays adapted from *The 13-Storey Treehouse* series. He now divides his time between bases in Sydney and Amsterdam. Since 2009 he has been a regular contributor to Fairfax Media, particularly specialising in active travel stories.

Arnie Wilson —

Arnie is former regional UK TV reporter, former UK national newspaper reporter, deputy news editor and diary columnist, former Financial Times writer for 15 years (specialising in skiing but also writing regular non-skiing travel) former editor of the Ski Club of Great Britain's magazine, Ski+board, and former regular columnist in Australia's Theskimag!). Now he is freelancing.

Aaron Millar -

Aaron is an award-winning travel writer, journalist and author. He contributes regularly to The Times, The Guardian, National Geographic Traveller (UK), CNN and many other national and international publications. He is The Times of London's North American travel specialist and National Geographic Traveller's USA columnist. He is the host of the podcast Armchair Explorer, where the world's greatest travel writers tell their best story from the road, and is the 2014 and 2017 British Guild of Travel Writers Travel Writer of the Year, the IPW Best Destination Writer 2017 and Visit USA's Best National Newspaper Writer 2014, 2016, 2017 & 2018. Aaron grew up in Brighton, England but is currently hiding out in the Rocky Mountains of Louisville, Colorado.

Amanda Statham -

Editor Cosmo UK. Following a BA Hons degree in Politics from Newcastle University and a Post Graduate Diploma in Journalism from De Montford University, Amanda has enjoyed a successful career. Amanda is Travel Editor of Cosmopolitan and www.cosmopolitan.co.uk and was travel editor of *You and Your Wedding* magazine for eight years. She writes for national newspapers, magazines and guidebooks and has also presented films and university lectures on travel writing.

Erin Riley –

Erin is the senior travel editor of Outside Magazine, one of America's leading active lifestyle magazines with 2.5 million readers each month. Through its focus on the outdoors, it aims to inspire active participation in the world outside through in-depth storytelling.

Jennifer Bain –

Jennifer is an award-winning Canadian journalist. She is now freelancing for a variety of publications after spending 18 years at Canada's largest newspaper (the *Toronto Star*), first as food editor and then as travel editor. She has published two cookbooks and her next book, *111 Places in Calgary That You Must Not Miss*, is due out in Spring 2020. She's currently writing a fishing memoir/thesis for a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Nonfiction.

Lisa Kjellsson -

Lisa is a UK-based freelance travel writer and a member of the British Guild of Travel Writers. She covers spa and wellness travel, ecotourism, indigenous cultures, and equestrian escapes for the likes of The Sunday Times, City AM Magazine, Jetsetter, Boat International, Robb Report, Sleeper and Condé Nast Traveller. Lisa's work has taken her to environments as diverse as the frozen wilderness of the Arctic, the grassy plains of the Kenyan bush and the sweeping sand dunes of Oman's Empty Quarter desert. She is passionate about promoting sustainable travel and experiences that foster a greater understanding of cultures around the world.

Jane Archer –

Jane is an award-winning freelance travel journalist and one of the UK's leading cruise experts. During her 30-year career, she has travelled the world and been on more than 400 ocean and river cruises around Europe, the Caribbean, India and Egypt, and to far-flung places such as Antarctica, the Arctic, Greenland, the Galapagos and Kimberley. Her features appear regularly in national newspapers in the UK including the Daily Telegraph and The Times, as well as in lifestyle magazines, online and in various trade titles.

Liz Fleming –

Liz is a respected award-winning member of the Society of American Travel Writers and as far as she is concerned, the only thing better than having a great adventure is sharing it. That's why travel writing is her dream job. For more than 15 years, she's been exploring the globe from Machu Picchu to the Arctic Circle and from the sultry beaches of Bora Bora to Botswana's Okavango Delta – and writing about it all. Her work has appeared in major newspapers and magazines across North America, she's the Editor-in-Chief of Cruise & Travel Lifestyles Magazine and is on the editorial mastheads of a couple of other travel magazines, makes regular radio talk show appearances and is always ready to jump into the next adventure.

Caroline Eubanks –

Caroline is a graduate of College of Charleston and member of the Author's Guild, the Society of American Travel Writers, and the Professional Travel Bloggers Association. Her first book, *This Is My South: The Essential Travel Guide to the Southern States*, was published in 2018. Caroline started out as an intern at an alt-weekly and leveraged her travel blog into a freelance writing career. Story bylines include BBC Travel, Fodor's, The Daily Beast, National Geographic Traveler's Intelligent Travel, AFAR, Thrillist, Roads and Kingdoms, Marriott Traveler, Shermans Travel, AAA.com, Modern Luxury, and Frommer's. Her travel website, [This Is My South](#), is devoted entirely to traveling in the southern USA, including attractions, accommodation, and restaurants. It was recognised by *Southern Living* as a blog to follow in 2015. *Caroline in the City* documents her personal travels with millennial-focused topics.

Jennifer Howze –

Jennifer is an award-winning journalist, former *Times* lifestyle editor, and cofounder of the BritMums, the UK's original parent influencer network. She is the communications director of the British Guild of Travel Writers and blogs about family travel with flair on her personal blog Jenography.net, ranked as a top UK Travel Blog. Her creative writing has been shortlisted for several prizes and she has written for a range of publications including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Times* and *Travel+Leisure*. She appears frequently on television and radio.

Eric Stoen –

Eric is a writer and photographer specializing in family travel, based in California. His goal is to encourage everyone to take their kids to unique destinations, and he provides first-hand information through travelbabbo.com to make it easier to plan those trips. He's travelled with his kids (ages 8, 10 and 12) to 49 countries on seven continents. He's won Conde Nast Traveler's Photo of the Year award and is a NATJA gold award winner for travel writing, and in 2017 Forbes named him the World's #4 Travel Influencer. He's an ambassador for Travelocity, AFAR Magazine and Universal Orlando.

Tracey Bond –

Travel and lifestyle writer Tracey is the president of Travcom (New Zealand Travel Communicators). She is a self-described lover of sunsets, cocktails and discovering new places.

Mar Pages –

In February 2018 Singapore-based Mar left her 15-year corporate career to do what she was most passionate about: travelling and growing her two blogs - Once in a Lifetime Journey, (www.onceinalifetimejourney.com) a travel blog focused on the most exclusive hotels and resorts, the unforgettable experiences, the best destinations and the least visited countries in the world and [Singapore n Beyond](#), her second blog. In the last 13 years, she has visited over 100 countries and now spends the majority of her time writing, travelling and consulting to companies on digital, social and influencer marketing.

Toni Eatts –

During her impressive career as a journalist, Toni spent 10 years editing cruise publications, including Cruise Passenger magazine, and writing cruise stories aimed at passengers and travel industry professionals. Her articles have been published in The Australian, the Australian Financial Review, Cruise Passenger magazine, on Cruise Critic and in various trade publications. She also wrote three substantial cruise guidebooks for a leading travel chain.

Jennie Carr -

Jennie, a member, and formerly on the board, of the British Guild of Travel Writers (BGTW), has been at Silver Travel Advisor for nearly a decade since the company's creation. She edits *The Silver Traveller* as well as curating and creating much of the website's online

content. Jennie is a respected speaker at UK travel industry events. A keen traveller, with experiences in the Caribbean, Europe and Africa, her notable overseas moments include surviving Aeroflot flights in 1983, hill climbing in Göcek & Kalkan in Turkey and two 100-mile treks in the Namibian desert. Jennie has worked with people from many countries and has a good knowledge of cultural differences, and what to expect when travelling to Japan, Russia and Kazakhstan! She loves islands - her challenge is to equal Ben Fogle in his book, *The Teatime Islands*.

Mike Unwin –

British Guild of Travel Writers (BGTW) award winner, Mike is a writer of non-fiction books for both adults and children, specialising in travel and natural history and with a particular interest in Africa. He also writes regularly for many leading newspapers and magazines, including *The Independent*, *BBC Wildlife*, *Travel Africa* and *Wanderlust*. Mike's writing has won him several awards, including the *BBC Wildlife/Bradt Travel Writer of the Year* and *Latin American Travel Association Travel Writer of the Year*. He is a regular speaker at travel and wildlife events and occasionally pops up on radio programs such as *Radio 4's Excess Baggage*. Best Travel Story about AGM Host destination

Sue Dobson -

Sue is an award-winning travel writer and magazine editor based in the UK, whose life-long passion for discovery and experiencing different cultures has taken her to every continent and into countries less travelled.

Ellen Hill –

When not crafting communications for high-end clients, Ellen traipses the country with award-winning photojournalist partner David in search of feature stories and travel yarns, usually in a grubby hatchback piled to the ceiling with gear, a lanky teenager and, sometimes, a pampered pet rabbit called Sophie. An award-winning travel writer, Ellen also specialises in character profiles, history, culture and lifestyle pieces and social issues. Her work has been published in *The Australian*, *Australian Traveller*, *Jetstar*, *Open Road* magazines and more.

Ian McMahon -

Ian entered travel journalism in 1974. Returning to Australia after a nine-year stint in London working on a range of business titles, he landed the job of Melbourne bureau chief for *Traveltrade*. He quickly realised this beat working for a living and continued in travel journalism for the remainder of his career. In 1976 he moved from *Traveltrade* to *Travelweek* which he edited for more than 25 years. In 2004 he partnered with the late Eddie Raggett to establish the monthly *Travel Bulletin* which he edited for a decade until it was sold to *Travel Daily*. He also contributed to a range of publications in Australia and overseas and for 10 years he presented a weekly radio travel segment for Doug Aiton's drive time program on 3LO (now ABC Melbourne). He has twice received ASTW 'Journalist of the Year (trade and industry)' awards as well as numerous other awards and citations from national and international bodies including PATA, AFTA, CLIA and ABPA.

Mary Evans –

Mary is a former magazine editor and now a freelance travel writer living in London. She was the France expert for tripsavvy.com for 8 years and edited the Gault Millau Guides to London for 4 years. She is the author of guidebooks to Brussels, Bruges and Stockholm, writes on Finland, contributes to Frommer's Guides to London and France and blogs on Silver Travel Advisor and Everett Potter's Travel Report. She has just launched her own website.

Rita Erlich –

Melbourne-based Rita is a food writer and occasional lecturer, and consultant. She writes about food in its forms and meanings – restaurants, recipes, nutrition, history, culture, agriculture, wine – in newspapers, magazines and websites. Her latest book was *The Makers: a story of food, family and foreigners*, published by Hardie Grant. Over the years she has collaborated with a number of chefs on their books. For 15 years she co-edited *The Age Good Food Guide* from 1984-1998. Now she has launched a career in broadcasting. She broadcasts regularly with Travel Writers Radio, on SoundCloud.

Max Brearley –

Max is a freelance writer specialising in food, drink and travel. A Yorkshireman by birth, a Londoner at heart, he's currently to be found in Perth, Western Australia... doing a fine impression of a bearded lobster. His passion for a good yarn and great produce has led him to forage for native foods in the north west of WA, follow abalone from ocean to plate in the south west and dig for black truffles in the towering Southern Forests. Writing for delicious, *The Australian*, *The Guardian*, *Halliday* and *Conde Nast Traveller* the next farm gate or kitchen door exploit is never far away. As a proud Yorkshireman he may call WA home but he hankers after a decent Yorkshire pudding and a proper pint of beer; but for now smashed avo, ocean views and a cold local drop will have to do.

Alan Orbell -

Alan's travel writing career began on the now defunct *Travel Agency Magazine* published by Canadian company Maclean-Hunter. He was appointed editor of *St James Press's Travel Bulletin* in 1977 and in the 1980s purchased the magazine from the company when it was taken over by Reed International. After a brief period as a freelance he was appointed launch editor of new magazine *Selling Long Haul* – later *Selling Travel* - in 1989 and subsequently became publisher and then part-owner of the publishing company, BMI Publishing. After selling the company in 1995 Alan remained with BMI Publishing as publisher/managing editor until April 2015 after which he continued to write on a freelance basis.

Zach Everson –

Zach is a Washington, D.C.-based freelance writer, focusing on travel and food. He has contributed to *The Wall Street Journal*, *Air Canada's enRoute*, *USA Today* and *Eater*. When traveling he's usually looking for Caravaggios, bourbon-based cocktails, and restaurants with cheese carts. He was a winner in the Travel News category at the Society of American Travel Writers annual awards. Contributing Editor at Global Travel Media

Ian McIntosh –

Ian was a founding member of the ASTW. He edited and wrote Going Places in the Adelaide News, the biggest tabloid travel section in Australia. He left newspapers for a few years to join the newly created Northern Territory Tourist Commission where he took on the formidable task of putting the destination on the global map. The role centred on new resorts, roads, transport links and massive marketing campaigns. He returned to The News in Adelaide as special projects manager before establishing his own full colour magazine plus state regional newsletters for the trade in Australia and New Zealand - Travelnews Australia. Accolades included a prized Telstra small business award. These days he remains in close contact with the industry via his weekly Australia's Top10 Travel Deals column. He is also a contributing editor for e-global travel media and has extensive world-wide travel contacts through Facebook and Twitter.

Jacinta Tynan –

Jacinta is a News Presenter with Sky News, Columnist for Sunday Life Magazine, author and mother of two young boys. With more than 25 years' experience as a journalist, she's regarded as a commentator for her generation with her candid and heartfelt columns about life, love and motherhood. Jacinta has published four books including Mother Zen - described as a manifesto of modern motherhood - and manages a website motherzen.com Jacinta also writes travel stories focusing on travelling with kids as a solo parent. Her work has been published in various publications including Escape and Sunday Life. She also produces and presents Change Makers on Sky News, interviews with inspirational people making a positive difference in the world.

Alexia Santamaria –

Alexia is a New Zealand freelance writer with a passion for travel and good food. She's lived in Japan, France, Scotland and England and still travels overseas for work - but is now based in Auckland with her husband and kids. Alexia loves discovering new sights and sounds in New Zealand with her family and is constantly blown away by the surprises they find in the many unexpected corners of this gorgeous country.

Max Olijnyk –

Max is a writer, editor, photographer, and ageing skateboarder. An ex-Melbourne resident, he now lives in New Zealand with his family. His first book *Some Stories* was released in 2016 and his favorite destination is New York City. His writing has been published in *ABC Life*, *The Age*, *Broadsheet*, *The Guardian*, *Smith Journal* and *Vice*.

Michelle Grima -

Michelle is an established media communications consultant based in the Blue Mountains. Having started her career at the Daily Telegraph in the late '80s, Michelle went on to manage national media for Tourism Tasmania, and now runs her own travel and lifestyle media business, Australia PR. She has worked closely with a number of tourism related clients, particularly in the Blue Mountains. Michelle has held the position of visitor experience manager at the Blue Mountains Botanic Garden Mount Tomah. She is also a former journalist and editor.

Bill Gray -

Bill's tourism industry experience dates back to the 1980s when he joined the Australian Tourist Commission as Director Public Communications after a 17-year media career that included news reporting in Australia at the ABC and Nine Network and in the UK and Asia with the Herald & Weekly Times group. Bill spent eight years managing ATC's public affairs division during an era which included the award-winning Paul Hogan and Greg Norman campaigns. He resigned from the ATC in 1993 to establish MG Media Communications, a PR agency specialising in travel and tourism. Clients included international airlines and cruise lines and a range of destinations from Tahiti and New Caledonia to Brunei and Norfolk Island. Since retiring from MG in 2015, Bill has been involved in pro bono projects that included raising political and community awareness for the ravages of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) amongst military veterans and the production of an 11-part documentary on the Australian Special Air Service Regiment (SASR), which he served with in Vietnam as a National Serviceman.

Maggie Grady –

A lover of the travel experience and an avid reader of all to do with it, in a former life Maggie Grady was a travel trade editor and writer. At the age of 30, Maggie had the dubious honour of being employed by the publisher of *Travelweek* as "the oldest cadet journalist in Victoria". From here she worked her way up to deputy editor before moving to Hong Kong where she was editor of *Travelnews Asia*. On her return to Australia, Maggie transferred to the head of PR of the now defunct Traveland. She then went onto the more lucrative job of heading Corporate Affairs in a global bank, a position she held for around 12 years.

Janyne Moore –

Janyne has 19 years' experience working as a journalist including her time as an on the road reporter and newsreader at Sydney Radio 2UE and Executive Producer of the Ray Hadley Morning show on Radio 2GB before moving into Public Relations. Janyne co-founded In The Media PR generating widespread media coverage for clients like Cancer Institute NSW, Nike Damn Am event, UbiCar, Garvan Institute and MooGoo.

Phil Burfurd –

Phil is one of Australia's most experienced communicators, having spent 54 years working across the communication spectrum from journalist and editor to corporate communication counsel and consultancy head. After more than 10 years in journalism he spent 25 years in senior corporate communication and public affairs roles for global companies, Australian Airlines, Nissan Motor Company, Cathay Pacific Airways and ACNielsen market research. He retired from corporate life in 2000 to launch ICON International Communications. As chairman he has led the company's growth into Asia (Singapore and Indonesia) and its' expansion to become a fully integrated communication services firm, and subsequent rebranding as The DAYLIGHT Agency. He has been National Treasurer of the PRIA; on the Advisory Board of

the China Research Centre at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS); and a member of the NSW Executive of the Australia Indonesia Business Council.