

Inside Nigel Coventry Tourism

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Subscription rates on application.

ISSN1176-3574

ISSUE 514

September 10th, 2004

\$150M monorail dream closer to reality

PLANS for a \$150 million monorail from Queenstown to Te Anau - unveiled on Tuesday - are the culmination of a 16 year dream for Riverstone Holdings' executive director Philip Phillips.

Mr Phillips says that since major shareholder Wanaka based company Infinity Investments came in two years ago, the project has taken a meteoric leap.

A former environment assessment report done in 1999 has been successful - but the rules have changed.

"I am certain we will be successful for a second time and it will all go ahead. I'm very excited about our plans."

Riverstone CEO Bob Robertson says that with environment assessment plans lodged with DoC last week he feels sure they will have the concession to operate the project by July.

But DoC's monorail project manager Colin Pemberton says it will take time to work through the 400 page document.

The proposed monorail journey will link Queenstown to Te Anau in three stages. Named the Fiordland Link Experience the journey will involve a 20 km catamaran trip across Lake Wakatipu to Mount Nicholas, a 45 km drive in an all terrain vehicle through the Von River Valley to the monorail terminus at Kiwi Burn, where up to 160 passengers at a time will board for a 41 km trip through the Snowdon Beech forest to Te Anau. (See map).

The estimated passenger cost is \$145 return, the monorail speed estimated at 70 kmh, and travel time will be 100 minutes with up to four trains operating at once in a year-round business.



Gondola backer unruffled

DEVELOPMENT of the planned \$100 million gondola link between Queenstown and Milford is not threatened by plans for the monorail to Te Anau.

Skyline Enterprises chairman Barry Thomas tells *IT* he is unconcerned and does not feel threatened by any glamorous plans. "I'm not worried in any way at all. There's no mortgage on ideas."

Mr Thomas says the last time two big ventures went head to head in the resort were over the two casinos which involved the Skycity Queenstown, and the Wharf Casino. "They were both given consent. There's room

for two. That's is the sort of town Queenstown is."

As spokesman for Skyline Enterprises and Ngai Tahu Mr Thomas says the companies have much to do before any applications can be lodged. Both sets of plans are at the environmental assessment stage.

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Pages Past...

TEN years ago in IT...

NEW Zealand needs to attract the "cream" of China's outbound market. And Tourism Minister John Banks - just back from the PRC - reckons we'll be able to double the number coming here to 10,000 by 1995. "It was blatantly obvious that it is the proverbial land of opportunity for us," he says. "But we must not sit passively on the sidelines. We should aggressively take our products and services to the market itself..."

We hosted 5,214 Chinese in the year ended June.

TOURISM Minister John Banks and Environment Minister Denis Marshall are expected to appear before the Select Committee inquiry into NZTB (now TNZ) this week. The committee, under chairmanship of Trevor Rogers, will also hear from NZTB chairman Norman Geary and CEO Ian Kean.

LAWYER Keith Jeffries has told the Select Committee inquiry into NZTB that Wharekauhau Lodge, Wairarapa, found the board "of no value in assisting or advising with regards to international marketing of their facilities." He wrote in a submission that the lodge found the boards's attitude as negative. "It's our client's view that there should not be taxpayer funding in respect of the ...board under its existing or similar structure."

FOREST and Bird conservation director Kevin Smith told the Select Committee he found it remarkable that government money should be used for tourism promotion "when most industries no longer rely on direct government support or subsidy."
He adds: "The tourist industry is no more sustainable and probably no more important than existing primary industries such as agriculture or forestry."

NZTB staff turnover at 21 percent is too high and could have grave effects on the industry, according to Opposition Tourism spokesman Ross Robertson. But CEO Ian Kean has told the committee that of 10 who resigned in the last three months, all but two left of their own accord.

WET and Dirty Waitomo Weekends were one of two themed packages suggested to promote the Waikato now charter flights have started arriving in Hamilton from Australia.

HOTELS of the future will have express check-in and check-out, possibly using in-room printers and TV. In room fax machines and computer jacks, voice mail, improved lighting and more facilities for non smokers will be in the hotel of the future, according to ITT Sheraton Asia/Pacific president Ed Davie.

TNZ launches Asia Awards

TNZ launched its inaugural Tourism New Zealand Asia Awards 2004 and the Kiwi Specialist Travel Agent Award at a dinner in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, last week.

More than 100 delegates from Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, India, China, Taiwan and Hong Kong attended the trade conference, formerly known as Kia Ora, hosted by TNZ every two years.

RM Asia Tony Everitt said: "The outlook is good thanks to our travel agent and airline partner, namely Malaysia Airlines, Qantas and Air New Zealand.

"The launch of the Tourism New Zealand Asia Awards for outstanding product and marketing innovation is in appreciation of this invaluable support to push Destination New Zealand."

At Kiwi Link, the NTO also introduced a "Kiwi Specialist" travel agent training and accreditation programme as well as the updated TNZ TV commercial.

Apology

THERE are always two sides to a story and we apologise for not representing the view of the Tourism Industry Association New Zealand (TIANZ) in an article run last week regarding the New Zealand Tourism Awards and Hell's Gate Wai Ora.

New lodge for Martin's Bay

WORK on a new lodge at Martins Bay on the Hollyford Track is underway after 45 tonnes of building materials were shipped from Bluff.

Hollyford Guided Walks is building the \$750,000 lodge to provide better staff facilities, a guest lounge, and dining and kitchen for up to 16 guests. At 160 square metres, the building will be slightly bigger than the existing lodge. It is hoped the accommodation will be open by the end of the year. Details: GM Andy Armstrong on 021-765489.

King country

ASHLEY King has taken over the Ruapehu Hotel, Raetihi. It includes Raetihi Motels, and Raetihi backpackers. Contact: 06-3854016, 0275-107836 or fax 3854017.

AirNZ makes \$243M profit

AIRNZ has announced a profit of \$243 million before unusuals and tax for the year ended June 30, up 10 percent on the previous financial year. The net profit after tax of \$166 million was on a par with the 2003 result.

CEO Ralph Norris says the airline closed the year in an improved financial position, with the first phase of the short haul transformation going as planned and the more demanding international airline transformation programme on track. The result has benefited from the rise in our dollar, offset in part by a 15 percent increase in jet fuel prices.

Tourism annual conference

Some things just never change...

AUTHENTICITY, quality and ensuring our products and services are up-to-date are what will make us a success today - just as it did 40 years ago, pointed out TNZ CEO George Hickton at the annual tourism conference. Speaking at the launch of historian Margaret McClure's book *The Wonder Country: Making New Zealand Tourism*, Mr Hickton said the past, present and future are inextricably linked.

The book, he added, reflects the industry's history "which is littered with wonderfully rich, vibrant, challenging, controversial stories."

"The things we used to get up to are incredible!" he pointed out. "They had a lot of fun in those days."

Later Mr Hickton said tourism is at the pinnacle of 100 years of development. "One element is the campaign we use. Five years ago the 100%Pure campaign was launched...since that time tourism has had growth of 40 percent. If we had said then that we had a campaign that would stay the same and maintain the same

direction during that time and we would also guarantee 40 percent growth in arrivals, and double the receipts, you would probably be impressed. But that's what's happened. And the campaign continues to work powerfully for us, right around the world."

Inner invigorated

Mr Hickton said people are "inner invigorated" when they come here. "If that is one thing we can give people when they visit this country I really do think we will stay ahead of the game for a very long time. We have to make them excited, ecstatic and ensure that they go home as walking brochures for New Zealand."

Ms McClure said that tourism is no longer a Cinderella industry. It is now the gold mine it was predicted it would be - 100 years ago.

Our landscape is now enlivened, infrastructure has been developed, services improved - "food is no longer a national calamity" - and in an era of terrorism we can sell isolation to our advantage. Tourism is now a leading industry..."

ADVERT



Head of Kiwi Experience

***Full Business Unit Responsibility**

***Sales and Marketing Focus**

Kiwi Experience is part of the "Experiences" group of Tourism Holdings Ltd, New Zealand's leading tourism operator. Their iconic green buses provide a unique and extensive traveller network to the fast growing backpacker/youth and adventure market. With a comprehensive "hop on - hop off" transport service, customers have the freedom and flexibility to get off the beaten track and "live" the unique experiences that represent the real New Zealand.

Reporting to the Group General Manager, you will have full business unit responsibility and lead a team of over 70 people. You will have responsibility for managing revenue generation, financial reporting, key accounts, operations and customer service. Being the face of the Experience offering in NZ and the youth/adventure industry, you will develop and maintain relationships with key clients, suppliers and partners to enhance the offering and maximise market share.

You will need to have proven experience of leading a team and, ideally, have had exposure to managing a number of key functional areas. The emphasis is on someone who can drive sales and market share through managing people and building relationships. You must have a "hands-on", "do as I do" leadership style that brings people together and generates energy and excitement.

To apply for position reference 38632; email cvakl@sheffield.co.nz or phone Janet Sullivan (09) 367 1553. Closing date: Friday 24th September 2004.

Apply online at www.sheffield.co.nz/careerzone or send your application to Sheffield Ltd, PO Box 5621, Wellesley St, Auckland, quoting the position reference number. All emails will be electronically acknowledged and you may receive further correspondence by email. All CV's will be forwarded to the client who will respond directly to applications.

Tourism annual conference

Ms McClure said she was told tourism is the business of selling pleasure.

But for New Zealand vital elements are the landscape and Maori. The scenery is our richest gold mine, the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts (now TNZ) said a century ago.

While we do not have to reproduce the scenery time and again we do have to invest in it, something that was not realised for many years.

Maori had been entrepreneurs in tourism since the days of the Pink and White Terraces. The locals were guides, they provided meals and accommodation, they protected the landscape from vandals and they were the wealthiest Maori community in New Zealand.

Curiosity

“While they were commercially successful they were also the object of curiosity. They were expected to be always aesthetically pleasing, to be at one with nature. This meant that tourists were sometimes indignant over the way Maori charged for their tourism. They charged through

the roof sometimes. People at one with nature were considered not to want any commercial interest. So there have been clashes over Maori tourism right through our history!”

Ms McClure said former Premier Sir William Fox had been to American national parks like Yosemite and could see New Zealand could become very wealthy. But he could also see the other side: trashy sideshows, rubbish, pollution and vandalism.

Speculators

“He knew private speculators would come in and try to monopolise the assets of nature. He felt government could step in and do something about conservation and control. Even in 1874 he was an early advocate for government involvement. But no sooner did government become involved that you had the (Tarawera) eruption of 1886. The prime tourist site disappeared overnight!”

This was the days when Maori had the first bunkhouses and controlled the guiding. Marketing of New Zealand was fragmented with each company promoting its own area of interest.

In 1901 government set up the world’s first national tourism organisation which ran steamers, took over failed hotels, set up overseas offices and printed 100,000 postcards in its first year.

The Superintendent, Thomas Dunn, who was passionate about sport, imported deer for hunting in national parks. The deer ate all the plants. He said sport and tourism profits are much more important than trees! “But,” added, Ms McClure, “he said we lie at the wrong side of the world - and that was the heart of the problem.”

Government focused on Rotorua, where it built a spa on European lines, the town was landscaped and there was entertainment in the form of street bands and a zoo. A second thrust was Maori culture, although Maori were

ousted as entrepreneurs and expected to just figure in the landscape “to be a novelty to satisfy European fascination of looking at the daily lives of indigenous people.”

Mr Dunn thought there were not enough Maori in the landscape and the department introduced pretty Maori women to the tea rooms. There was a clash of architecture in housing and government wanted to control the public view of Maori. “So they built a model Maori village. But no one wanted to live in Whakarewarewa. So it became sterile and empty. A popular but not living museum.”

The South Island had a different style of tourism, based on the glaciers and the Southern Alps. Elite world travellers were attracted. But places like The Hermitage struggled to survive. It was beautifully built on a North American lodge style. But it was too small and people had to be packed in, some sleeping under the billiard table and in the linen cupboard.

Yet, Ms McClure noted, in August 1991 not one guest turned up.

Visionary

Harry Wigley was a visionary who started a motor coach services to the Hermitage, which he also took over in 1922. He provided a range of activities including donkey rides.

He had The Chateau built in the North Island along the lines of a North American hotel and planned to attract people south from Rotorua and for cruise ship passengers to be chauffeured down from Auckland. He believed that national parks should not be sanctuaries for indigenous plants - but a playground. When The Chateau opened in 1929 it had a gym, crèche, and even a cinema.

It was in the middle of a “dry” area and while staff had to smuggle their alcohol in, guests arrived with suitcases full of grog.

Naked

They were riotous times with guests of the tourist department even seen naked in the corridors.

Skiing was introduced and instructors brought in from Austria. Then came World War II.

In the 1940s overseas tourists to New Zealand had dwindled to 500 a year. New Zealanders also stopped travelling domestically. Hotels like the one at Franz Josef went bust - and government stepped in and bought them.

Government hotels were renovated once a feeling of optimism returned after the war and commercial jets started to arrive. But, for the most of the 1950s they were melancholy years - and tourism became known as a Cinderella industry.

Ms McClure said tourists began to return and soon there was a shortage of beds. Strangers had to share twin rooms. Complacency set in. In the 1940s and 1950s government did not allow hotel rates to rise which meant rooms were not renovated. “The result was a raft of shabby hotels...”

Tourism annual conference

This was the days of no alcohol in restaurants and dinner only between 6pm and 6.30pm. The AA called food in New Zealand a national disaster.

“Waiters would ask which soup a guest would prefer ‘thick or thin?’” she added. There were no salads, iced water, percolated coffee - or any concept of service. Treasury made a report in 1955 which said there was no future for tourism. There were 20,000 arrivals a year - and there would never be more, it said.

“You are not always right, Treasury,” Ms McClure added as an aside.

Government set up the Tourist Hotel Corporation (THC) with the idea that if it put in businessmen to run the hotels things would be OK. But Treasury still held the purse strings...

Colbeck

Things started to change when Yorkshireman Eric Colbeck was recruited. He had a more sophisticated approach, raised the quality of the environment, trained staff and even the breweries followed his innovations.

At the same time jets started to arrive with more and more visitors from different countries. New Zealand was no longer isolated...

Milford became more accessible and soon became an icon. But every aspect of it brought conflict. Did Milford belong to the fishermen? The young New Zealanders who became drunk and smashed hotel windows or urinated in front of tourists, even?

Pirates

Fiordland Travel “sneaked in like pirates”, Ms McClure added, “Their words, not mine!” And private enterprise was up and running.

With a private enterprise-government joint venture new wharves and other facilities were built to accommodate increasing numbers of visitors.

The 1990s saw new innovations in New Zealand tourism. We no longer imitated European styles or copied North American architecture, we were at the forefront of extreme adrenaline thrills.

“Thrills were taken out of the fairground of the city into the wilderness. Tourists were using nature like a trampoline. It was a shift from empty landscapes to celebrating action and involvement.”

Back

Added Ms McClure: “In the 1990s there was another interesting shift of Maori back into the forefront as tourism entrepreneurs. Today they ARE at the forefront - right where they were 100 years ago.”

Ms McClure said issues remain. “Who controls the images of Maori culture? Is it tacky or authentic? Suzanne Paul is already a part of history...How do you portray Maori culture to a tourist who is always in a hurry? And does a living people lead to a spectacle?”

But, she added: “We have had advances. The landscape has been enlivened, infrastructure developed and services have been improved...”

Aussie pushes benchmarking

ISOLATION is no excuse for not benchmarking, according to Australian trainer and consultant Jurek Leon. He told delegates that their objective should be to become the benchmark for their type of business. Not just within their region - or even their country. “You want to become their benchmark full stop!”

Mr Leon added: “Whether they are in Central Otago, Rotorua, Sydney harbour or some other part of the world, you want them to compare the service, the experience, to your offer. And you want them to say to their fellow travellers ‘This is really great. It’s almost as good as...’ and name your business. Once you do this, you are truly excelling in word-of-mouth marketing.” Mr Leon said operators should learn from every encounter they have as a customer. “Every time you buy a product or service, compare the experience that you’re having with the experience that you deliver to your customers.

“That’s benchmarking. And look for ideas, best practices, that you can ‘steal’ to make your business even better. When you’re passionate, focused and paying attention, life is free research.”

Teachers

He said that tourists are great teachers. They make us aware of what we have. “People go to places not just to discover new things and engage in new experiences. They go to discover themselves. In so doing they can help us discover *ourselves*. They can help us appreciate our heritage...” Word of mouth marketing requires that you give customers a story to talk about.

On advice for employees, Mr Leon believes they should “go out of their way to make someone’s day and be proud of the place where they work and the community they work in. It pays dividends.”

When you support other businesses in a group or local community everyone wins - including the customers.

Industry profitability is low

PROFITABILITY in tourism is very low, business consultant Dianne Ludwig told one break-out session. The Gosling Chapman director said there is therefore limited ability to invest in development.

The median net profit per working owner in a backpacker’s hostel is \$24,000. For b and bs it is \$3,700. For hotels \$40,500 and motels \$20,800. She said operators should consider what else they could do with their money.

If they deposit it in a low risk bank they’d receive four percent return. If medium risk it would be eight to 12 percent and higher risk would attract 15 percent. But what would you pay someone to do your job? “Drive for a high return. Work smarter,” she said.

Successful companies have a business plan, provide quality management information, have identified a profitable business model and they spread their risks. Accounts should be done monthly and KPIs daily or

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weekly. KPIs can be the number of people through, the average spend or average occupancy.

They should plan for seasonal fluctuations, taxation and capital replacement expenditure. They need to know their cost structure, their fixed versus variable costs and whether break-even is realistic. Also what are the sales and total costs involved.

The pricing choice is that they can be a low cost operator with a low price and high volume or a niche operator with a high price and low volume.

They need to ask if the target market is profitable, to measure return on marketing spend, to consider the exposure to a single market, and how to reduce it - and cooperative marketing.

Pooling costs through industry groups can drive costs down as can flexibility in staffing. Also Pareto analysis can identify which 80 percent of result comes from 20 percent of the effort. For further help Ms Ludwig suggested: www.biz.org.nz and www.nzte.govt.nz.

Creative tourism - the new thing

A relatively new concept - creative tourism - was introduced during another session by Crispin Raymond, who is founder of Creative Tourism New Zealand.

Mr Raymond said the concept was piloted through Nelson Bays Arts Marketing with 23 tutors offering workshops for visitors. Subjects included Maori culture and traditions, arts and crafts, as well as woolcraft, flora and fauna and cuisine.

He explained: "Creative tourists develop their creative potential, and get closer to local people, through informal participation in hands-on workshops that draw on the culture of their holiday destination."

Creative Tourism New Zealand Ltd was launched on June 1 to offer a range of interactive workshops and creative experiences in different regions.

Visitors are taught informally by imaginative and skilled tutors.

Mr Raymond said creative tourism is an authentic product for the interactive traveller. It provides additional employment in arts and creative sectors and is culturally, socially and environmentally sustainable. He's looking for partners in other regions. Details: www.creativetourism.co.nz.

Choice, it's no longer Flag

FLAG Choice Hotels has just become Choice Hotels Australasia, marking the close of a two-year programme to revitalise one of the region's largest hotel groupings. President and CEO Brent Russell says traditional Flag customers have already embraced the Choice Hotels Australasia brands: Comfort, Quality and Clarion.

"These brands have quickly become synonymous with value, reliability and quality - Comfort at the three star value end, Quality in the four star middle and Clarion at the five star top end."

There are more than 330 Flag hotels and serviced apartments in New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea, American Samoa, Singapore and China. The company is growing at 10 percent a year.

Sandford to speak in Ruapehu

JASONS Travel Media publisher and CEO John Sandford is guest speaker at Ruapehu's first regional tourism seminar being run with TNZ at The Chateau, Tongariro, next Thursday. The programme starts at 9.30. Attendance costs \$35. Details: Lisa Knight on 07-8958188 or info@ruapehutourism.co.nz.

Dolphin Encounter expands

KAIKOURA'S Dolphin Encounter is building new premises which includes a purpose-built conference facility catering for up to 40 delegates, and a new café. It's to open by the end of the month.

Manager Dennis Buurman says: "Not only will the conference facility enhance Dolphin Encounter's operations, but we hope it will also provide positive flow-on effects, in terms of increased visitor numbers, accommodation nights and retail spend, to our entire community."

Dolphin Encounter is owned by Ian Bradshaw and Lynette and Dennis Buurman and has grown from small beginnings in 1991 to become a major tourist attractions. Details: 03-3196777.

11 find Southland an eye opener!

ELEVEN inbound operators were impressed with the quality of service and product available when they visited Southland recently, according to Venture Southland Australian and domestic marketing manager Kate Watkinson.

The operators, who were hosted, were taken to the Catlins, Stewart Island and the Hump Ridge Track during the weekend famil.

ADVERT

Visiting Stewart Island?

There's plenty of accommodation at Beach House and Kereru House. Bookings: Brenda and Roger Hicks on phone/fax 03-2191348



Legally speaking - with Brookfields Lawyer

THE Gambling Act 2003 came into force on July 1. It repeals the Casino Control Act 1990 and the Gaming and Lotteries Act 1977. The regulation of gambling under the new Act has undergone a radical overhaul which will affect any business or premises that is in some way connected with gambling. Obviously that will include many in the tourism industry, including for instance, night club operators, bar owners, and gaming arcades.

Act

The Act prohibits all gambling that is not authorised either under its provisions, or the Racing Act 2003 (which continues to administer racing activities). Private gambling is exempted but must be conducted in a private residence and according to the rules set out in the Act. Bookmaking and remote interactive gambling are illegal. Remote interactive gambling includes any gambling activities conducted via the internet or cellphone text messaging.

No new casino licences will be issued under the Act, although existing ones may be renewed. There can be no increase in the

opportunities for casino gambling. For example, if you increase the number of tables, you must make a corresponding reduction in the number of gambling machines, and vice versa.

Gambling is classified based on the amount of money and the risks of problem-gambling or criminal activity associated with that gambling.

Low

For example, low stake and low risk gambling is in class one and does not require a licence, while class four covers high turnover and high risk licensed gambling. Compliance costs have been reduced by raising the thresholds for the different classes. So organisers of lotteries, prize competitions, games of chance and instant games will only have to get a licence if the total prize value exceeds \$5,000.

Class four gambling, which involves the use of gaming machines, is subject to restrictions on numbers and venue locations. These are to be imposed by local authorities under Gambling Venue Policies adopted under the Act. New class four venues may not exceed nine machines or such lesser number as the local authority specifies.

The Department of Internal Affairs says that giving local authorities the

power to regulate gaming machines means the number of the machines will continue to decline. The latest figures show the number of machines, to the end of June, was down more than 2,700 from the same time last year.

The Act gives powers to gambling inspectors, who have inspecting, monitoring, investigative and auditing functions. They can serve notice requiring further information for the purposes of their investigation. There are fines for a range of offences from obstruction and cheating, through to infringements.

Inspectors

More importantly, inspectors have significant powers of entry, search and seizure. And in addition to a penalty, a court may order that any equipment, thing, document or money used in the commission of an offence under the Act, be forfeited to the Crown.

The purpose of the Act is to control the growth of gambling and many of its provisions are therefore more restrictive than previous legislation. This is a significant piece of legislation which will affect many in the tourism and hospitality industry. **Contact Linda O'Reilly at o'reilly@brookfields.co.nz.**

HAPNZ launches more useful site

HAPNZ has launched an upgraded version of its website. It has been developed for use by international and domestic visitors and by member parks.

Holidaymakers can access detailed information on all 289 parks along with tourism links that will assist them with itinerary planning.

CEO Fergus Brown says: "It is all about making it easy for visitors to find information and book their holiday park experience."

The new members only section offers a wealth of information for operators.

Detailed product supplier information, a wide range of downloadable documents including employment agreements, links to important websites along with sector news make this an important and valuable tool for members.

Adds Mr Brown: "We see the www.holidayparks.co.nz

website as a major benefit of belonging to the association. Members can save hundreds of dollars and many hours work just by using the employment documents that we have provided plus the benefit of the on-line bookings.

Hyatt - one of the best

HYATT Regency Auckland has been rated by the readers of the US publication *Travel and Leisure* as one of the world's best business hotels.

Tanks for the fuel, Mobil

VISITORS hoping to fill up with petrol in Milford Sound could soon be out of luck. Mobil has just confirmed it plans to remove its two tanks from the village. Spokesman Peter Thornbury says the company will remove the 35-year-old tanks from for commercial and environmental reasons.

Research Analysts – Information and Communications



Ministry of Tourism, Wellington

- Does the challenge of working on a variety of issues in one of the most dynamic sectors of the New Zealand economy interest you?
- Do you have experience in research support and provision?
- Are you interested in the ongoing sustainable development of tourism?

The Ministry of Tourism (TMT) is the Government's advisor on tourism. We provide policy advice on tourism related issues, deliver tourism research and statistics, and manage and monitor the Government's investments in tourism. Our current programme is focussed on implementing the New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010, which set out a vision for the sustainable development of the industry.

TMT's Research Team is responsible for managing the core tourism dataset, advancing tourism research, supporting the Tourism Research Council New Zealand (TRCNZ) and facilitating increased access to research and data outputs.

Due to growth in our Research Team we have opportunities for two Research Analysts:

- The role of **Research Analyst, Information** (Ref # 04/103) is focussed on supporting the information, analysis and content development functions of the Research Team. In this position, you will be involved in managing the information architecture and construction of the online tourism databases, identifying information delivery development opportunities and contributing to knowledge management and sharing.
- The role of **Research Analyst, Communications** (Ref # 04/104) is focussed on developing and delivering communications materials about the TMT & TRCNZ research programme. In this position your responsibilities will involve the preparation of communication material including new information and education resources, developing and maintaining an understanding of the Ministry's products, websites and databases, organising and presenting training workshops and responding to user enquiries.

For both of these positions, suitable tertiary qualifications are required, preferably related to tourism, and you will also bring an interest in the tourism industry and economic development. We are looking for excellent relationship and networking skills, and well developed communication skills. Ideally, you will have a good working knowledge of government and business processes.

These are exciting and varied roles within an interesting area of the Ministry and offer challenging opportunities with excellent scope for development.

The Ministry of Tourism is a semi-autonomous Ministry within the Ministry of Economic Development (MED).

For a role description and application form, please refer to our website:

www.med.govt.nz/about/jobs. Applications and CV, quoting the relevant vacancy number should be emailed to helen.wilson@med.govt.nz, no later than 17 September 2004.

ADVERT

MACI in a unique position?

THE Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, Rotorua, (MACI) is uniquely positioned to benefit from the interactive traveller, believes its CEO Andrew Te Whaiti.

Mr Te Whaiti says most visitors to New Zealand are interactive travellers who like to take part in cultural activities as well as visit thermal areas.

“Our geothermal valley is one of the wonders of New Zealand, and we’re exploring more ways of educating international and domestic tourists through wonderful stories of our land, people and culture.”

Mr Te Whaiti says he is committed to ensuring the institute is a world class cultural attraction. “We have a statutory responsibility to keep Maori arts, crafts and culture alive, so we’re doing everything we can to ensure the Institute remains an iconic attraction in New Zealand and contributes to the growing number of visitors by creating a world class cultural attraction.”

He adds: “We’ve been operating as a stand-alone leading cultural destination for more than 40 years, and we’re continually measuring our focus in the business of tourism without compromising the authenticity of the visit.”

Important role

TNZ CEO George Hickton says the move away from the traditional display of Maori culture and performance means attractions like MACI play a strong role in attracting international visitors. “As Tourism New Zealand focuses more on the development of Maori cultural tourism, the institute plays a very important role in the more contemporary cultural offerings. Interactive travellers rate authentic cultural experiences highly and don’t want traditional displays any more.”

Mr Te Whaiti adds that interactive travellers demand authentic experiences - and can readily detect anything that is in some way contrived.

“Often visitors sit on a plane for 24 hours to get here, so they want an authentic experience when they come here and they’re quick to dismiss anything that doesn’t cut it.”

AirNZ launches more domestic flights

AIRNZ is to introduce weekday morning and evening flights between Blenheim and Christchurch, taking its total number of return flights from seven to 17 a week. The services will start on October 11.

Capital tops for association conferences

WELLINGTON has secured its place as New Zealand’s leading destination for association conferences, new figures show. The National Convention Activity Survey for the year ending June shows the capital had the largest share of association conferences at 27 percent of total. Trailing Wellington were Auckland at 24 percent and Christchurch at 11 percent.

Over the year, a total of 4,629 conferences of two or more days were held in Wellington, with a total of 333,662 conference delegates worth a total of \$80 million to the local economy. Domestic delegates spend on average \$345 a day, while international delegates spend on average of \$405.

Golf cluster gains own website

THE tourism golf cluster website will be live from next month.

Www.bestofgolfnewzealand.com is hosted by Jasons Travel Channel, as is IT’s site. Details: Geoff Burns 027-4582832, geoff@fernmade.co.nz or Pip King 027-2203060 or pking@ihug.co.nz.

FitzSimons plays for us!

AUSTRALIAN rugby union great and author Peter FitzSimons is fronting AirNZ’s new multi-million dollar marketing campaign aimed at refreshing its brand in the Australian market place.

The series of TV, print and online advertisements represents the largest campaign the carrier has ever undertaken in Australia.

Huge contribution

THE Spencer on Byron Hotel has won the North Shore City Council Excellence in Tourism Award at the Westpac Enterprise North Shore Business Excellence Awards.

The tourism category was the only one in which judges gave a highly commended award to finalist McLaren Brown Publishing.

The judges said the 149 room Spencer on Byron Hotel and McLaren Brown Publishing had made a “huge contribution” to tourism on the North Shore and the Auckland region.

No dividends for city

WELLINGTON airport’s sudden decision to stop paying a dividend to Wellington City Council has prompted speculation that it wants to pressure the council into selling its 34 per cent shareholding, according to media reports.

Larner wins \$5,000 prize

HAWKE’S Bay Tourism’s international marketing executive Kristine Larner won \$5,000 worth of consultancy services from Red Marketing at the annual tourism conference.

Ms Larner says: “It is just fantastic to win this prize. We have several marketing challenges we are keen to work on, and the expert advice we will receive from Red Marketing will be invaluable to our RTO. We are rapt.”

First wellness spa planned

NEW Zealand’s first authentic wellness spa is to be built on the site of one of the country’s most popular visitor destinations. Waiwera Thermal Resort and Spa, which attracts 350,000 visitors a year, is undergoing a \$125 million transformation which includes the development of a 3,000 sq m wellness spa - complete with the latest inner health and beauty techniques and technology - a deluxe hotel and ocean-front apartments.

No downside to consolidation - Kawarau Jet

TEN years ago, visitors to Queenstown seeking the famous jetboat trip along Lake Wakatipu, down the Kawarau River and into the braided lower reaches of the Shotover River faced a confusing array of up to 13 competing operators offering much the same experience.

Recently, Kawarau Jet - the world's first commercial jetboat operation and the pioneer of the lake and rivers trip - merged with Twin Rivers Jet, to become the only operator on the 43 km route.

Director Andrew Brinsley says the long and slow consolidation process was the result of a maturing industry and changing waterways management. Far from offering fewer choices for visitors, he adds, the consolidation offers wider choices, less confusion, greater professionalism, easier differentiation between competing jetboat products as well as higher standards of safety and customer service, more investment in research and development and a better all round experience for a wider range of visitors.

Increased quality

Fellow director and world class jetboat racer Shaun Kelly has been involved in commercial jetboating since 1987 and says the quality of the experience since that time has increased 10-fold.

"Visitors now choose between strongly differentiated products and can be certain that their experience will be conducted in the safest and most professional manner possible."

Now, Kawarau Jet invests heavily in driver and staff training and has rigorous maintenance schedules which result in a quality product for every customer. And, there is a race department responsible for pioneering developments such as the now standard twin engine. Boats have greater carrying capacity resulting in fewer boats on the water even though more people are taking the trip.

But, has decreasing competition resulted in any downside for consumers, such as higher prices? Messrs Brinsley and Kelly say no. They maintain there's strong competition with other jetboat operations and products in Queenstown. Prioritising customer focus has reshaped the products offered.

Rounded experience

"We've learned that jetboating isn't just about the thrills of the Hamilton turn and screaming through river rapids," says Mr Brinsley. "The emphasis has moved to providing a rounded experience that satisfies a broader visitor base. We know that many of our customers want a more passive adventure experience where they could take in magnificent scenery, the countryside and the gardens and homes that can be seen during the journey down the Frankton Arm."

Following the acquisition of the Twin Rivers plant, Kawarau Jet now has carrying capacity for up to 150 people an hour.

Cown is Ambassador of the Year

WAIARIKI Institute of Technology's head of school for Tourism and Hospitality Paula Cown was awarded the Hospitality Standard Institute's Ambassador of the Year at the 2004 HIS Excellence in Training Awards for her advocacy of national qualifications and her commitment to industry training at a local level.

Auckland prepares for invasion of Lions fans

TOURISM Auckland has set up a regional working group to help prepare the industry for the British Lions rugby tour from June 4 to July 9 next year, bringing at least 15,000 fans to New Zealand.

The group includes Tourism Auckland, transport providers, business associations, accommodation providers, city councils, police and Auckland rugby officials. Tourism Auckland CEO Graeme Osborne says the tour is taking place during what is traditionally a quiet time. It is important for the industry to be prepared so it can maximise the huge benefits the event will bring.

Benton behind luxury bike rental business

MOTORCYCLES New Zealand, a Christchurch-based tourism venture aimed at the international motorcycle enthusiast, has just been launched. It describes itself as a boutique, top-of-the-range rental company targeting motorcycle enthusiasts wanting to experience the South Island.

Behind the new venture are International Antarctic Centre director Richard Benton and businessman Mike Hyde.

Mr Benton says the luxury motorcycle rental service aims to tap into the new breed of international traveller who, according to TNZ, is seeking out new interactive holiday experiences. Details: 03-3579197 or ride@motorcyclesnewzealand.co.nz

Gallop goes to CityLife

PAUL Gallop has been promoted to hotel manager CityLife Auckland. He was assistant manager at Heritage Auckland. Darren Thurlow has replaced Mr Gallop.

Flag trustee

TNZ'S Waimaria Erueti is a trustee of The Nzflag.com Trust, together with Lloyd Morrison and Paul Ridley-Smith of Morrison and Co and Port of Tauranga CEO Jon Mayson. Details: www.nzflag.com.

Katikati ambitions...

KATIKATI people want the Kaimai coast to be a tourist destination in its own right. So the likes of John Searle and Jane Burke plan identifying all tourism operators between Waihi and Wairoa and publishing a directory of them.

MLC is Cafe of Year

THE Scenic Circle MLC Café in Queen Street, Auckland, has been named Café of the Year at the New Zealand Culinary Fare competition, held in association with the Restaurant Association of New Zealand.

Call to review NZITT branches

RETIRING NZITT president Susan Mohammed says the reason for having institute branches needs to be reviewed. "Members don't support the functions adequately. Yet some suggest a reluctance to change the structure."

She adds: "We need to continue to raise our profile and speak up and speak out on issues both positive and negative and if we rock the boat - well and good. Change that is required must happen at a greater speed and not take years to work through or we may just be out of business...."

Waikaremoana hut rates up

VISITORS to the Waikaremoana Great Walk in Te Urewera National Park must now pay \$20 per night for the use of DoC huts, up from \$14.

Aniwaniwa area manager Glenn Mitchell says fees for campsites will remain at their present level

AIAL changes for Customs area

Auckland International Airport Limited (AIAL) has started work on two further construction projects in the international terminal, reflecting the unprecedented growth in passenger numbers travelling through the port.

AIAL is to reconfigure the emigration, or departures, area in order to more efficiently use the space available. The second programme of work occurs in the immigration (arrivals) area, where it will increase the number of Customs counters from 25 to 32 and will be reconfiguring the public arrivals area in order to enlarge the amount of space available for Customs secondary screening and MAF processing, with the number of MAF x-ray screening points increasing from seven to eight.

Robertson's key to success...

FRIENDLY hosts competing for the tourist dollar but at the same time looking after their 'locals' is a key to success, says HANZ CEO Bruce Robertson. He was commenting on 10 finalists announced for the seventh annual HANZ awards for excellence "Over the years, increasingly sophisticated standards and a preponderance of South Island finalists have reflected a trend in the hospitality industry," Mr Robertson adds.

Winners will be announced in Auckland on October 6 as part of a three day conference and trade fair.

TNZ wants 100% Pure welcome

TNZ is working with regions to give the thousands of British visitors here for next year's Lions' tour a 100% Pure New Zealand welcome.

Says CEO George Hickton: "We want to help ensure that not only the accommodation and transport infrastructure in New Zealand is set to deal with the influx of visitors, but that the welcome mat is put out everywhere that they go. (See also IT513)

Bayleys sells NZ in UK

BAYLEYS Realty Group will be the only real estate company with a stand at the Opportunities New Zealand Exhibition being held in London on October 16-17 where it will promote country and tourism property and business portfolios.

Group marketing manager Mark Macky says

Bayleys offices throughout New Zealand are currently sourcing properties for the exhibitions.

They are being staged in response to strong interest in New Zealand property opportunities from both British nationals and from Kiwi expatriates.

Contact: Neil Prentice on 09-3758408

McNicholl moves to Impressionz

AFTER 10 years as communications manager for Christchurch International Airport Lee McNicholl has left to become a partner in First Impressionz, Christchurch. Details: firstimpressionz@xtra.co.nz.

Not about the price!

IT'S Not About The Price is the theme for HAPNZ's annual conference in Rotorua next year from July 26-29.

No longer ITOC members

HUNG Ta Travel New Zealand Ltd is no longer a full member of ITOC or the China market portfolio group. Orient Express and Family Tours is not an ITOC member any longer. It has ceased trading.

One site for all

NEW South Island website www.southislandnz.info has been set up to include all macro regions.

It's been developed for an AirNZ campaign targeting the US market in conjunction with new direct flights into Christchurch.

Frogs in NZ!

A French guidebook to the South Island - and Wellington - has just been published.

Anyone interested in selling the book, Frogs In NZ, should contact: www.frogs.in.nz.com.

Aussies bullish

THE Australian inbound tourism industry is experiencing a marked rise in business confidence and largely predicts a bullish end of the year, boosted by the new Brand Australia campaign and an improving world travel climate, according to the findings of the second Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) International Tourism Index

ATEC's survey of inbound tourism businesses with responsibility for A\$10 billion of foreign exchange earnings has found operators are doing better than first predicted and expect a surge in business as Australia's high season approaches.

VIN going from strength to strength, believes Marshall

THE VIN network is going from strength to strength. And the I-SITE success and profile has been recognised internationally with a number of enquiries as to "how we do it" says network chairman Kerry Marshall. His annual report also shows that VIN's relationship with DoC is improving - with the department acknowledging the part it plays in tourism. Plans are being made to link DoC visitor centres to the network. VIN Inc also wants to improve the delivery of Maori tourism product and experiences to enhance visitor satisfaction. "VIN Inc has developed a guiding strategy and a component of this is to encourage members to form stronger relationships with the tangatawhenua and regional Maori tourism organisations."

* Hurunui mayor Tony Alps said at the opening of the VIN conference at Hanmer Springs on Sunday that hosting 150 experts on visitor information and tourism is like cooking for a chef! "Fortunately, we know Hanmer Springs is no amateur when it comes to tourism services," he added.

Fight over DoC plans

THE Whangarei Deep Sea Angler's Club has voted to fight a DoC proposal to turn Mimiwhangata marine park near Whangarei into a marine reserve.

Action Stations for 36 US students

SOME 36 Californian students are on a programme with the Bay of Plenty's Action Stations working and having fun as they learn about our natural, cultural and social worlds. The company takes up to 40 at a time over two weeks.

Aussies here in record numbers

RECORD numbers of Australians are arriving here to ski and Qantas has added capacity on Sydney flights by upgrading the 737-300 to a 737-800 which has 38 extra seats. Qantas regional GM Allan Williams says New Zealand is enjoying an excellent season with good conditions expected into October.

Okarito to come under brand

OKARITO Boat Tours is coming under the Explore Franz Josef brand, which already includes Franz Josef Glacier Guides and the Franz Josef River Experience

Higher profile in Geraldine

THE Geraldine Information Centre is moving into new premises today (Friday) in the revitalised Oaks complex. CSIT GM Glen O'Brien says the new location is in a busier part of town where a large number of FITs stop to sample locally made cheeses and Barkers produce. "We believe the higher profile area will cater for the demands of travellers and give us an opportunity to encourage tourists to stay longer in the district," he tells *IT*.

SkyCity nets \$121M

SKYCITY reports a NZ\$121.1 million profit before non-recurring item for the year ended June 30. The result is a 13 percent increase over the FY03 year. MD Evan Davies says the period has been a solid, although difficult, one for the group during a year of significant corporate activity. Skycity Auckland increased revenues by 4.1 percent to \$389 million, Skycity Hamilton by 53 percent to \$31 million and Skycity Queenstown by six percent to \$64 million.

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Tourism & Lifestyle Opportunities

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