

# Inside Nigel Coventry Tourism

PO Box 100, Taumarunui, New Zealand.

Tel/Fax 64-7-8957-737.

nigel@insidetourism.com

www.insidetourism.com

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## Call for licensing of all inbound operators

TAT Travel of Auckland has gone into liquidation owing suppliers an undisclosed sum of money.

The company had its membership of ITOC and TAANZ terminated in September.

ITOC appointed an assessor to work with the company in order to pay some of the money owing. It paid some of the debts - but then went into liquidation.

\* Late last year *IT* was advised that TAT was in trouble and that it could go under owing 124 suppliers a total of \$1.4 million. We were told it could involve "very influential people."

\* The industry must now look to license inbound operators, says Agrodome MD Warren Harford, who is also an ITOC VP. "Tourism is extremely important for the country and at the moment anyone can come in and set up as an inbound operator as there are no controls. But if we are going to keep New Zealand a quality destination we have to start better managing the inbound industry."

TIANZ CEO Fiona Luhrs says the matter should be discussed and debated "and a requirement to license is one possible outcome."

## Talking rubbish

**RUBBISH in Aoraki / Mt Cook National Park will be a major topic for discussion at the international zero waste conference in Kaikoura from April 5-8.**

## DoC may prosecute Korean "guide"

DOC will decide later this month whether to prosecute the Korean businessman suspected of illegally guiding on the Routeburn and Milford tracks, discovered during an investigation into a serious breach of the Conservation Act 1987.

The businessman was spoken to when he came off the Milford track with a group of 17 Korean trampers.

The department says it can confirm that the group was being guided and that this was believed to be the third guided trip the businessman had conducted here.

## NZ 4th most popular destination

INDEPENDENT travellers from across the globe have

rated New Zealand as the fourth most popular destination they would most like to visit next. The annual *Lonely Planet Travellers' Pulse Survey* has Australia top of the list, followed by Chile and Brazil. Behind us is India.

\* We've been voted the best adventure destination in the world by the Irish travel industry. The Irish Travel Trade Awards is the largest ceremony of its kind in Ireland, with 600 travel industry people attending.

## Be different, Yeo advises Maori

**THE challenge facing Maori operators in the top of the South Island is how to offer a visitor experience unlike anywhere else in New Zealand.**

**Destination Marlborough CEO Paul Yeo told a hui of 30 operators in Picton on Monday: "International tourists want an experience that is unique that they can't find elsewhere."**

## Mehrts the new face of Christchurch

CANTERBURY'S favourite son Andrew Mehrts is the lively new face of Christchurch, with the launch of a campaign to attract more New Zealanders to the city. Christchurch and Canterbury Marketing (CCM) has just launched its largest-ever domestic tourism advertising campaign with a message from Mehrts to North Islanders that Christchurch is a vibrant, sophisticated and relaxed city to enjoy.

## Cassimir Lodge on market

**CASSIMIR Lodge, Tauranga, is to be sold by tender. The lodge has hosted stars like Patsy Riggir, Joan Collins, the late Johnny Cash and Larry Hagman.**

## Kelly Tarlton's celebrates 20 years!

KELLY Tarlton's Antarctic Encounter and Underwater World, Auckland, is 20 this week! Nearly eight million people have visited the iconic attraction since it opened. In December, Stingray Bay opened and is now home for 200kg Phoebe, now aged 40, and her stingray family and friends. The open topped tank holds 350,000 litres of water in an open-topped acrylic tank.

Stingray Bay is stage two of the \$12 million redevelopment being carried out by THL to ensure the attraction remains world-class.

## **Peace, Man...new resort has it all**

IT sounds like something from the 1960s days of flower power, pot smoking and sitar playing. But Takaro Peace Resort, Te Anau, is, in fact, an exclusive luxury spa resort! It is the flagship property of The Peace Club - a global membership organisation "that supports high net worth individuals to relax, unwind and experience inner peace."

## **Our own Stonehenge!**

**STONEHENGE Aotearoa, a new science project in the Wairarapa, opens on February 12. It is an adaptation of the mysterious 4,000-year-old monument on England's Salisbury Plains - but designed for the southern hemisphere.**

## **Maritime cluster gets to work**

TOURISM Auckland's Maritime Tourism Cluster Group are preparing initiatives such as increased promotion of operators who offer a certified education programme component to their product, as well as targeted joint venture marketing campaigns.

## **Good summer for guided walks**

**FAMILY groups, groups of friends, couples looking for a 'civilised adventure' and Australians in search of a weekend away with a difference are all making for a bumper season for New Zealand's guided walks industry.**

**Guided Walks spokesman Darryl Wilson said the season so far had been excellent despite heavy rain in some parts of the country, and all tracks are in good condition.**

## **Sort yourself out - Queenstown told**

"IF the business and tourism community knew what we had to go through to get these people here they would shit themselves." So says Capital Jet Services chief Peter van Dyk who organises 50 private jet flights into Queenstown each year. He warns that hassles over parking private planes is threatening tourism there.

## **Best value yet predicted for campaign**

**A marketing campaign targeted at boosting visitor numbers to Queenstown during the autumn shoulder season is back for a third year and tipped to offer unprecedented value for money.**

**Destination Queenstown and AirNZ are joining forces again for the 'Do More in May' campaign which is designed to highlight the resort as a diverse and value-packed autumn destination.**

## **Marlborough now well placed**

TE Mahia Bay Resort owner Trevor Hook has been reappointed chairman of Destination Marlborough with local businessman Brian Moore as vice-chairman. Says Mr Hook: "We are very well placed to ensure Destination Marlborough is well positioned to take advantage of the growth and accompanying challenges that tourism will provide in the next few years."

## **Gold in the oldies, says expert**

THE ageing population presents the travel industry with a potential bonanza, claims Dick Stroud, training director at the UK Chartered Institute of Marketing. He says people retiring now are more affluent than any preceding age group. More importantly, succeeding generations will not have benefited from rampant property inflation, stock market growth and well-funded pensions. "Travel companies must decide how the changing age and wealth profile could affect their business. In the UK, the 60 plus category accounts for 20 percent of the population compared with 12 percent in 1950."

## **Ngai Tahu Tourism now worth 37M - feature story**

NGAI Tahu Tourism is a success story. It's built a portfolio of products which has grown from nothing 20 years ago to a business with an asset value of about \$37 million today.

Its interests range from Whale Watch Kaikoura to Shotover Jet, Kiwi Encounter and a water taxi business in Abel Tasman National Park. To some its interests are illogical and too diverse...And now there are rumours the group wants to buy even more. So we asked CEO Adrian Januszkiewicz **if there is a motive, other than to make money...is there a vision behind it all?**

His reply: "We see our core competency as managing high quality tourism attractions. Our vision is to own and operate great tourism attractions businesses in iconic NZ locations. We want to develop a market leadership position in natural heritage tourism attractions in particular."

**Asked why the company should be interested in natural heritage attractions,** Mr Januszkiewicz says reasons are, in part, commercial.

"When we looked at the industry, we considered the various sectors and the performance of businesses within each sector. We looked at accommodation, airlines, attractions, distribution and transport. We considered the performance of businesses in those sectors and also considered what was important to Ngai Tahu - its values and aspirations."

**Will Ngai Tahu product ever be packaged?** Reports Mr Januszkiewicz: "We have, from a company structure perspective, made a deliberate decision not to centralise our operations. We don't run any of the businesses from the head office in Queenstown. We put GMs in place who are profit accountable and who run each business as if he/she owns it. They are completely separate business units.

"Our rationale for this is that a lot of marketing and competitive activity is day-to-day and tactical work. How well this is executed makes a tremendous difference to the performance of the business.

**Asked if Ngai Tahu Tourism is interested in helping other Maori businesses,** Mr Januszkiewicz says Ngai Tahu Tourism always wants to advance its leadership position in tourism and work with other iwi.