

Inside Nigel Coventry Tourism

PO Box 100, Taumarunui, New Zealand.

Tel/Fax 64-7-8957-737.

nigel@insidetourism.com

www.insidetourism.com

Member: TIANZ, PATA.

Subscription rates on application.

ISSN 1176-3574

ISSUE 534

February 18th, 2005

ITOC discusses demise of TAT Travel

ITOC board members this week discussed the demise of TAT Travel Ltd of Auckland. But CEO Peter Lowry says nothing more can be said because the matter is in the hands of liquidator Terence Hillson, who mailed out his first report to creditors on Wednesday.

"It's a commercial situation," Mr Lowry tells us. "People who are owed money all gave credit to TAT Travel and they now have to work with the liquidator. Both TAANZ and ITOC terminated the membership of TAT Travel back in September. People who have been dealing with TAT Travel since were well aware of the situation."

Mr Lowry says no other companies are likely to close as a result.

"Business is good...the market is buoyant."

There have been calls for all inbound operators to be licensed - ideally by ITOC with government support. (IT532)

Hilton for Queenstown

IT can confirm that the Hilton chain is to manage a five star 120-room hotel in Queenstown.

PATA says industry at crossroads over crises

AFTER the Indian Ocean tsunami the industry stands at a crossroads: does it mount another crisis management and recovery programme that will allow it to go back to business as usual? Or does it seriously reflect on the past in order to learn from its mistakes and play a more responsible role in being better prepared for future disasters? PATA asks these questions in the organisation's latest *Issues and Trends*.

"For an industry very fond of buzzwords, here are three that may serve us well in future: prevent, prepare, pre-empt. In other words, do we keep fighting fires or shift towards fire prevention?"

PATA says the latest spate of crises started with the forest fires which blanketed much of South East Asia with haze in 1997. "Since then, the Asia Pacific region has suffered literally a fire a year - otherwise known as 'external shocks.' Such external shocks include the Asian currency crisis (1997), local political fallouts in some of the

Southeast Asian countries (1998), September 11 (2001), the Bali bombing (2002), conflict in Afghanistan (2002), and Iraq (2003), SARS (2003), bird flu (2004) and terrorism (continuous and ongoing). In addition, last year also saw the dollar's slump and unstable oil prices (2004).

Each time we extinguish or learn to cope with one fire, another erupts..."

PATA says every crisis yields valuable lessons from which the industry should learn in order to devise preventative measures. One man's crisis is often another's opportunity. Within hours of the tsunami, unaffected destinations were scrambling to pick up diversionary business from affected destinations. "'Come-hither' press releases were sent from beach destinations throughout the Asia Pacific region. Business is business - and it is often ruthlessly opportunistic."

Moving from crisis management to crisis prevention is a new ball game. "Nevertheless, it needs serious consideration for the simple reason that we clearly do not have the ability to prevent most external shocks," PATA adds.

Inside

- * Tips on Indians - pg3
- * Milford not a busy airport - pg4
- * Pacific Blue into Auckland - pg5
- * Short walk for long name - pg7
- * More women are travelling - pg8
- * Accor has record occupancies - pg9
- * Try getting a top job today - pg10
- * DoC to prosecute "guide" - pg11

For back issues
visit:
www.insidetourism.com

Pages Past...

TEN years ago in IT...

LATEST figures for the year to December show that for the first time the number of Asians visiting New Zealand exceeded the number of Australians. While the Australian market grew seven percent to 386,606 the Asian market jumped 27 percent to 387,183.

IT was sent to all subscribers by modem for the first time.

CLASSIC Air has temporarily stopped trading while an investigating accountant goes through the books. It is understood the ASB Bank is considering taking over the sole aircraft, a luxury DC3.

WANTED. Individuals with commercial nous and marketing skills. Wellington Mayor Fran Wilde wants them to apply for the six directors' positions on the yet-to-be announced Tourism Wellington.

The tourism interests of the Capital Development Agency are being integrated into a new organisation, also called Tourism Wellington, which will represent the overall interests of the region.

MAORI have big plans for tourism, according to Aotearoa Maori Tourism Federation chairman Tommy Wilson.

In Tauranga there are plans for a 90 metre tall statue of Tamatea, captain of the first canoe to land here. For arriving cruise passengers it will be like the Statue of Liberty, he says.

More than 100 cruise ships are scheduled to visit New Zealand in the next 18 months. Those that arrive in Tauranga will have the option of being paddled ashore aboard Maori canoes to take a lift to the top of the statue inside Tamatea's spear.

The Tourism Research Working Group says tourism contributes 5.6 percent of GDP. NZTB (now TNZ) CEO Ian Kean says 10 percent. IT wonders who is right.

PAUL Yeo is back in the Minister's office as private secretary. He replaces Tai Parata who's been with Minister John Banks for two years.

Mr Yeo was Ministerial private secretary for 18 months until he moved to Melbourne for NZTB three years ago.

A compulsory booking system has been introduced by DoC on the Routeburn Track. About 11,000 walk the track each summer.

THERE'S a "do" at Makarora to celebrate the sealing of the Haast Pass road. It's on April 1!

Govt gives \$1.2M to help operators be environmentally smart

A \$1.2 million project to help tourism operators tap into the rewards of smart environmental business practice has been announced by Tourism Minister Mark Burton and Environment Minister Marian Hobbs.

The funding is for six regions to take part in the three-year Environmentally Sustainable Tourism project. It is funded by the New Zealand Tourism Strategy Fund and will be managed by the Ministry for the Environment.

Mr Burton said tourism relies heavily on our unique natural environment. So it makes sense that tourism businesses look after the environment.

"By putting in place some simple initiatives these businesses can boost their marketing opportunities and brand integrity while also becoming more efficient," he adds.

Knowledge

Ms Hobbs says the project aims to give operators resources, knowledge and practical tips that they can incorporate into their daily business.

The project involves each region developing a sustainable tourism charter, with interested local businesses committing to the charter's principles.

A sustainability expert will work with the businesses to turn the charter into action, focusing on making improvements over time. Energy efficiency, waste reduction, recycling, water quality and conservation, are examples of areas that might be improved.

The project builds on the success of the Northland Sustainable Tourism project with Enterprise Northland and the Ministry for the Environment in 2003-2004.

Fullers Bay of Islands CEO Kit Nixon says visitors and wholesalers alike are increasingly looking for businesses that can show their commitment to good environmental behaviour.

Dive Tutukaka owner Jeroen Jongejans says the sustainability programme provides a new way for him to look at his business.

Ms Hobbs adds that the Northland experience proves that tourism operators see the value of good environmental practice, but simply lack the trigger to take action.

All 28 RTOs have been invited to apply to the Ministry for the Environment if they want to take part in the project. Northland has already been confirmed as taking part. An announcement on other participating regions is expected next month.

Aratere restricted to cargo

THE interisland ferry Aratere continues to crisscross Cook Strait with cargo. But it may be weeks before it can carry passengers again. The Spanish-built ship was detained by the Maritime Safety Authority after it developed steering problems.

The authority released the vessel from detention - but expressing a lack of confidence in the ship and ordered that it not carry passengers. Passengers have been put on the Lynx fastferry, instead

By TNZ manager India
Kiran Nambiar

NEW Zealand is a dream-come-true destination for the majority of Indians. But don't expect Indians on your tour to get up early in the morning!

Although Indians have a very positive perception of our country there are cultural differences that New Zealand operators need to be aware of.

Indian tourists do not like early morning starts for their journey or travel. On holiday the idea is to relax. However, they still want to see as much as they can, so they do like their itinerary to be very planned, but not too many activities crammed into one day. The best option is to set a schedule with ample time for shopping, sightseeing, etc.

Cuisine

Indian cuisine is very different from much of what is available in New Zealand, and Kiran says that not only the content, but the timing of meals should be considered carefully.

Indians tend to eat late - with dinner often after 8pm. In the case of families travelling together as a group the men like to have a few drinks before dinner - in that case dinner could be as late as 10 or 11pm. Those on packages expect all the meals to be included.

Many, especially Hindus, are strict vegetarians. This means not only no meat, but no fish or eggs etc. Having said that other Indians do not necessarily want Indian food

Indians are late eaters - *and even later risers!*

every night. Most are open to try out local cuisine. For instance they are generally comfortable with things like pizza and burgers when expedient.

Indians are modest and conservative in their dressing, and Indian women do not expect to be greeted with a hug or a kiss. The usual tradition of greeting them would be joining the hands together in Indian style.

Habits

The travel habits of Indians are also unique, with a short booking time of only six weeks to one week before departure. They are keen on exploring and visiting new locations, and often travel in groups of two to three families at once.

At the other end of the market are the youth and honeymoon travellers. These make up about 15 per cent of total Indian travellers, and are far more adventurous. They are interested in things like bungy jumping, jet boating and four wheel drive experiences. Generally, however, Indians are less adventurous than other travellers - they are more the passive watchers type. They may not bungy jump but would love to see someone else do it.

Quality

Indian travellers are also very conscious of quality - they like to be pampered and demand the best in lodging, food and travel.

In India the standard of four and five-star hotels is exceptionally high, with high staffing levels. As a result Indians have very high expectations of service levels, particularly when it comes to staffing. Many accommodation providers in New Zealand interpret

this behaviour as demanding, but Indians would not realise this.

It is worth doing some research and really getting to grips with the market if you are a company that is thinking of getting involved in the Indian market.

There are things that may seem rather insignificant to Westerners which can make a difference in the respect in which you are held.

For instance Indians believe in giving everything with their right hand including business cards, as left hand is considered unclean. Also the Indian mentality is also very much to take their time - they do not value time materially, so don't expect meetings to necessarily finish on time or for groups to rush back to be on buses in time.

Environment

But it is also important to think about the sort of environment that Indians live in. India is a busy, bustling, noisy, competitive country. If you don't say what you think, you don't get heard. This occasional loudness and demanding nature can sometimes be mistaken by New Zealanders for rudeness, but it is not personal! It is simply the way they have to act at home.

TNZ has pulled together information for Indian tour operators to give to group clients on etiquette while in New Zealand. This is distributed with airline tickets. TNZ also incorporates information on these differences into all its trade training activity.

There were 15,694 Indian visitors in the year to December, an increase of 6.1 percent. The median stay is 10 days.

Christchurch gets World Peace Bell

CHRISTCHURCH now has a World Peace Bell, one of 20 in 16 countries. It is one metre high, 609 mm wide, and weighs 365 kg. The bell is cast from the coins of UN member nations and is a replica of the one presented to the UN in 1954 by Japanese to remind the world of the importance of peace. Plans are to place the New Zealand bell in the

Christchurch Botanic Gardens, where it will become an integral part of a new city peace walk.

Stockcars a roaring success

SOME 14,000 visitors were expected in Palmerston North at the weekend for the CIS ENZED 2005 Stockcar Teams Championship. The event is thought to be worth \$3.5 million to the city.

PATA to release latest forecasts

THE PATA Strategic Intelligence Centre is to release Asia Pacific Tourism Forecasts 2005-2007 at the 54th PATA Annual Conference in Macau SAR in April.

The updated version, by noted academics Professor Lindsay W. Turner and Professor Stephen F. Witt, covers predicted travel flows to and within the region for 2005, 2006 and 2007.

PATA says that taken collectively these forecasts provide a timely and authoritative perspective on the immediate possibilities for tourism within the wider Asia Pacific region, and allow marketers and planners to make informed judgements about resource allocations for optimal returns. The report is US\$350 for members and US\$499 for non-members. Orders: patcharin@PATA.org.

New taxes may further hit crippled industry

THE US Air Transport Association (ATA) claims thousands of airline jobs will be at risk and the long-term health of the overall economy placed in jeopardy if Congress approves plans to raise air security ticket taxes further.

Industry consensus is that the cost of airline security should be borne by government.

ATA president James May says: "Last year, the industry lost another \$10,000 million, bringing our three-year total to a staggering \$33,000 million," he said. "Now, if that isn't the definition of a crippled industry, I'm not sure what is."

Fairlie unusual hatchery...

OSTRICH feathers, with their magnetic properties, make ideal dusters for forensic and electronic use, whereas the strong leather is used on products such as Harley Davidson motorcycles. Ostrich meat and eggs are also popular. Who provides them all? Glen Heslip who runs Heslip's Hatchery at Fairlie, Canterbury.

He began diversifying his business a few years ago and now hatches small birds as well as the larger ostriches and emus.

Quail, pheasants, turkeys, ducks and partridges are all incubated and hatched on-site, destined for places such as restaurants and game parks. The hatchery is also looking at working with DoC to help conserve birds such as the kiwi and kaka.

The hatchery hosts people from all over the world. One of the most popular parts of the tour is seeing newly hatched chicks. Details: 03-6858778.

Figures show Milford not busy airport

DESPITE what DoC says Milford is not a busy airport, Wanaka Flightseeing's Andy Woods says. Mr Woods, who is spokesman for the Queenstown-Milford Users' Group, tell *IT* there are 18 regular operators with fixed wing and rotary aircraft plus up to five irregular. In total they operate about 40-45 aircraft. He says there are 18,000 - 20,000 takeoffs and landings a year.

"The average movements per day are 80 - 90 on the days that are operable, which is 60 percent of the year. And the average over the course of a year is about 50 movements with a maximum recorded number of 230 in one day two years ago."

But there are only four to five days a year when movements exceed 200 a day. Movements in the quiet months can be as low as five-10 a day.

Mr Woods adds: "These numbers are much lower than, say, Queenstown, that average more than 80,000 a year and which peak at 700 in a day - with averages of 230 a day operating 99 percent of the year.

Aircraft that operate into Milford are mainly Cessnas, Britton Norman Islanders, and the quieter Gippsland GA8 Airvans. (See also *IT*533)

Stewart Island down under

IN a first for southern New Zealand, tourism operator Stewart Island Experience on Saturday launched the Mollymawk, a semi-submersible submarine that allows visitors to explore Stewart Island's waters without getting wet.

The 17.75m Mollymawk has attracted a lot of interest among locals and visitors.

While it cruises slowly around Halfmoon Bay passengers, comfortably seated a metre below the water beside large picture windows, experience a snorkeller's-eye view of the rich marine life for which Stewart Island is renowned. Skipper Jason Wells and nature guide John Cushen are thrilled by the diversity of sea life they have seen.

Mr Cushen says that on Thursday they had a close encounter with a pair of sea lions who had swum across to check them out. "We weren't quite sure who was looking at who. They had their noses right up against the glass and gave us a bit of a start," says Mr Cushen. A semi-sub tour take 40 minutes and has an on board guide. Tours leave regularly from the Stewart Island Visitor Terminal on the main wharf and cost \$35 for adults and \$15 for children.

Ferry facelift

THE Hokianga ferry Kohu Ra Tuarua is to be given a \$260,000 facelift. Far North District Council says the vessel will be slipped at The Narrows for about 10 days during September/October.

Black Cat grows 100-fold

WHEN Akaroa Harbour Cruises launched in 1985 few people had heard of the rare Hector's dolphins - and tourism was a relatively small industry. The company had just one small boat and carried 1,000 people in its first year.

The business has grown to such an extent that in 2005 more than 100,000 people will experience a Black Cat Group cruise in Akaroa and Lyttelton harbours.

Pacific Blue cuts Wellington flights and launches into Auckland

PACIFIC Blue is launching Brisbane and Gold Coast services to Auckland on May 12. CEO Tony Marks says: "Over the past 12 months, we have established ourselves as a serious trans Tasman player offering great value and a unique service, and we have never been shy about giving traditional carriers a run for their money on our current routes out of Christchurch and Wellington."

He adds: "Now that we have carved out a successful position in these competitive markets, we are confident the time is right to turn our attention to answering the many calls we've had to launch Auckland services."

Tourism Auckland CEO Graeme Osborne says: "We are delighted Pacific Blue has recognised Auckland as New Zealand's most popular visitor destination."

"Nearly 40 percent of all international visitor nights in New Zealand are spent in the Auckland region and the average international visitor stay in Auckland is 10 nights - the longest of any region in the country."

* The carrier is axing its five times a week Wellington/Sydney service and increasing its Wellington/Brisbane flights from twice to three times a week.

Rotorua continues growth

ROTORUA continues its steady growth. For the year ending December the city hosted 1.4 million overnight visitors, up 6.7 percent, that collectively stayed 3.2 million nights, which was up 11.1 percent. Visitor nights in commercial accommodation and private homes for the month were up 31.4 percent.

Season pass prices announced

SEASON passes for the 2005 winter season at New Zealand's premier ski areas are on sale. The Early Bird range of passes - covering Mount Hutt, The Remarkables and Coronet Peak - offers the best deals to those who buy on-line within the next month.

Sales and marketing manager David Owendale says new high speed chairlifts at Mount Hutt and Coronet Peak are among a range of developments to be unveiled for the coming winter.

The nzskipass, \$649 for an adult, \$549 student \$349 youth (seven-17) and senior (65 - 74), offers unlimited skiing and riding at the big three, and Ohau. A range of additional benefits including discounts at other ski areas is also covered.

The Queenstown Only pass is \$549 for an adult. The Mount Hutt Only pass is \$449 for an adult, \$349 student, \$199 youth and senior, which offers unlimited skiing and riding at Mount Hutt and Ohau - plus a 50 percent discount on day passes at Coronet Peak and The Remarkables. The Early Bird prices are available until March 10.

Details: 03-4090816, david@nzski.com or www.nzski.com.

* Ski buffs point out that passes are \$50 more expensive this year - with access to one less mountain.

Realising potential is theme of global summit

THE fifth Global Travel and Tourism Summit is to be held in New Delhi, India, from April 8-10 The theme is: Realising the Potential.

Acoustically controlled apartments

THE Prime Property Group has opened Terrace Heights Executive Apartments, The Terrace, Wellington, offering one, two and three bedroom apartments with ensuite bathrooms and self-contained kitchens acoustically controlled sound ensuring a peaceful night's sleep. There are meeting facilities for up to 20 people. GM is Antoinette Muollo. Details: www.terraceheights.co.nz or 0800-163000.

On the move...

ACCOR'S new New Zealand GM is **Thomas van Vlie** who has worked with Accor for more than 18 years in a variety of positions, most recently as GM of Accor Resorts in Australia and New Caledonia. Netherlands-born van Vliet will be based at Accor's Auckland corporate office at Novotel Ellerslie. He succeeds **Neil Scanlan**, who moved to Brisbane.

LANGHAM Hotels International (LHI) has appointed **John Dick** GM for its newly-rebranded five-star property, the Langham Hotel, Auckland. He starts on Tuesday. Mr Dick has had extensive experience in the UK and New Zealand.

FOREST and Bird has appointed conservation strategist **Michael Britton** to its re-defined lead position of GM. Mr Britton has held a variety of senior managerial positions with the Department of Lands and Survey until 1988. He has also held a number of private secretary, senior private secretary and policy advisor positions to a number of government Ministers. He worked for DoC from 1987 to 1993.

TOURISM Auckland has promoted **Jacqui Lloyd** to GM marketing. She was previously international marketing manager. Ms Lloyd has more than 15 years experience in the industry. She began at Kelly Tarlton's Antarctic Encounter and Underwater World, and was THL Experiences Division account manager. She replaces **Graham Rouse**, who has moved to ASB Bank. **Tania Williamson** is now Tourism Auckland's publications manager.

Don't take a punt on what you call visitors

PUNTERS. Is it ok to use the word for visitors, international or otherwise? The Guiding Company's Dave Jordan last week took issue with us when we used the word in a story on glacier watching. We did not quote him saying 'punter' - we used it ourselves. But he said he always corrects staff when they say the word.

"I have always found it offensive," he told us. "I understand its a widely used expression. But here at The Guiding Company we use the words 'guests' or 'clients'."

We referred Mr Jordan to the Collins English Dictionary which says punter is "a member of the public, especially a customer..."

He replied: "WoW - OK - I withdraw my objection."

What we didn't tell his was that the dictionary added: "a prostitute's client...a victim of a conman!"

Mr Jordan agrees that we should really call visitors 'guests' as that's what they are...paying guests - certainly NOT 'tourists'. And from now on certainly NOT punters!

Hawke's Bay develops "Cultural tourism accelerator programme"

TOURISM forecasts for Hawke's Bay point to a significant growth in visitors to the region over the next six years. Visitors are expected to spend 590,000 extra nights in 2010 compared to 2003. Much of this is expected to be due to strong growth in international visitor numbers.

Hawke's Bay Tourism is therefore working to ensure that the region can handle this growth in a way that will see the region develop as a more distinctive and desirable destination.

"We need to act now to provide visitors with even more outstanding experiences - particularly activities where visitors can enjoy our Hawke's Bay culture," says Hawke's Bay Tourism GM Hamish Lowry.

The RTO has put together a Cultural Tourism Accelerator Programme that will offer local operators the chance to hear from leading New Zealand tourism agencies, learn from experienced tourism mentors, and take part in a promotional event targeting business that bring international visitors to New Zealand.

It has been developed as part of the Hawke's Bay Cultural Tourism Development Plan which saw the region granted \$100,000 by the Ministry of Tourism to develop cultural tourism.

The programme starts on March 1 and runs for three months under the guidance of Craig Wilson of Quality Tourism Development. Details: Kerry Spence at kerry@hawkesbaynz.com or craig-wilson@xtra.co.nz.

Developing fast

DEVELOPERS of a proposed 99-unit visitor accommodation complex on Frankton Road, Queenstown, have been accused of carrying out illegal earthworks on the site, before the project has been granted resource consent.

Praise for Black Cat

PRAISE we would all like: "I recently brought friends from the UK over to Akaroa and we were treated to fine weather, dolphin sightings, seals, a penguin and awesome coastal scenery. Above all that was the service of the crew who were awesome. Both were knowledgeable, helpful and polite. The skipper's narrative was informing and interesting. If this is what Canterbury tourism offers, I'll be bringing more tourists. Many thanks for the fabulous day." - *Karen Fletcher to Black Cat Cruises.*

Global interest

GUESTS have come from all over the world since Rosalie and Russell Smith opened the fisherman's retreat Matuku Lodge, Twizel, in November. Details: 03-4350144 or www.matukalodge.co.nz.

Smart seminar

A Smart Seminar for Smooth Operators is to be held at The Vintners Retreat Conference Centre, Renwick, Marlborough, on March 31. Contact: Tom Humphries at international@destinationmarlborough.com.

400 pages in miniature

SMALL Luxury Hotels of the World has launched a credit card-sized electronic replica version of its 400-page directory for 2005, and claims this is a 'first' for a global hotel brand. The CD-Rom features an e-browser facility that creates the impression that the reader is turning each page of a real directory, and the disk can be used to make click-on bookings.



New Zealand domestic fares now able to be held in credit if cancelled the day prior to flight departure

\$50 change fees will still apply

ADVERT

Intrepid Kiwis on show at maritime museum

NEW Zealand National Maritime Museum's next major exhibition 'Intrepid Kiwis' is to open on March 2.

The museum says New Zealanders are known for their adventurous attitudes; risky and reckless - we attempt it all.

Intrepid Kiwis is about New Zealanders who have sought adventure and challenge at sea; from punk rockers to naked rowers, from kayakers to dinghy sailors, to solo sailors and circumnavigators.

"They've sailed just about every stretch of water imaginable and then back again; in Chinese junks, yachts, kayaks and even an ark. What motivates people to set out with such guts and single-minded determination? Visit this exciting exhibition and see for yourself the individual accounts and images of some of these journeys..."

Great way to travel

ALLAN Gash, the man behind The Cook Connection, provides a great way to travel within the Mackenzie district. Based in Twizel, the company travels as far east as Oamaru, with the opportunity for a same day connection onto Dunedin. A popular new addition to the timetable offers day trips to Mount Cook Village from Lake Tekapo or Twizel, meaning that the national park is still accessible to visitors, even if accommodation is not available. There is a maximum of 19 passengers per journey. Contact: 0800-266526 or www.cookconnect.co.nz.

Magic brings business to new lodge

WHEN it opened on December 27, the Lakefront Lodge, Lake Tekapo, was an instant hit, thanks in part to the Magic Travellers Network.

It was in April that Lake Tekapo Motels and Motorcamp manager Pete Speedy asked Magic to consider changing their route to include the Mackenzie district. The beauty of the region, coupled with the increasing tourist facilities there, meant that it was an appealing option, he told them. The backpacker bus first stopped at Tekapo on October 1 - and within a short time the lodge was built by Tekapo Holdings to help accommodate the new visitors.

Since it opened, the lodge has been operating at around 95 percent capacity, with travellers from the Magic Bus making up about half of the occupants. Contact: 03-6806825 or www.laketekapo-accommodation.co.nz.

Green Acres "drug supermarket" goes

AFTER operating as a caravan park for decades, Green Acres, Mangere, has been ordered to close by next Wednesday.

Two weeks ago more than 100 police swooped on the park in a raid which uncovered drugs and firearms - and resulted in 20 arrests. The park has been operating without council consent for at least two years. Police said the park was a health hazard and "drug supermarket."

Kururau Krusher

THE King Country Milk

Kururau Krusher is on February 26 when Taumarunui is flooded with hundreds of visitors. Details: Lynda Gulbransen 07-8966908 or kururaukrusher@hotmail.com.

Short walk to a long name

TAUMATA whakatangi hangakoauau o tamatea turi pukakapiki maunga horo nuku pokai whenua kitanatahu. If you are fit enough to say this - the world's longest place name with its 85 letters - and then able to walk to the hilltop which takes the name, you will discover spectacular views, a feeling of being in a special, spiritual place and learn a little of New Zealand's cultural history. The Taumata walk is near Porangahau, Central Hawke's Bay. Maori chief, Tamatea, composed this lament to name the prominent hill as a tribute to his brother, who was killed in battle there. Hundreds of years later, the 250-hectare farm is still owned by Tamatea's descendants, the Scott family. Ross Scott says they want to share the area and have others recognise its place in New Zealand history. Rock pou (sculptures) and additional signage are to be developed on the hilltop. Ngati Kere are keen to see the exposure and tourism potential carefully managed.

The walk is on well-formed tracks and accessed only with Airlie Mount's Central Hawke's Bay Historic Farm Walks. Contact: 06-8587601.

Have you considered entering the New Zealand Tourism Awards 2005?

For more information go to www.nztourismawards.co.nz

Entries close on Friday 8 April 2005

ADVERT



More women are travelling - and spending billions!

WHILE 75 percent of women in the US take nature, adventure or cultural trips, their Asian counterparts prefer to shop and pamper themselves at spas and resorts.

MasterCard's *Asian Lifestyles Survey* shows shopping ranks a clear first in terms of preferred travel activities for women, followed by visiting places of cultural/historic interest and beach resorts.

In contrast, in Europe or the US shopping is perceived as a secondary activity and shopping lists consist of mementoes, souvenirs and locally produced crafts.

Asian women concentrate on branded goods, such as apparel, shoes, handbags, accessories and toiletries. MasterCard says that assuming conservatively that women travellers spend twice as much as men, and that the ratio between men and women travellers will be 50:50 by 2011, the report estimates that US\$13,400 million will be spent by women travellers in Seoul, Hong Kong, Singapore and Bangkok alone.

Powerhouse

Women travellers are Asia's new spending powerhouse. The report also shows that the ratio of male to female travellers has shifted from 90:10 males to females 30 years ago, to around 60:40 males to females today. The figure is expected to increase with women travellers matching male travellers by 2011 and exceeding them in the long term.

The report also shows that 77.5 percent of women consider travel as important for their lifestyles, and 36.7 percent report that they have taken at least one international flight for personal travel purposes in the past 12 months.

Planning

It also reveals that the most important planning source for women is word of mouth contacts with family, friends and colleagues. The internet and travel agents tied for second and third positions.

Shopping ranks a clear first in terms of preferred travel activities for women. This is followed by visiting places of cultural/historic interest and beach resorts.

Asian women are more family-oriented, placing time with family high on their list of priorities for travel. An interesting pattern is the trend towards mother-daughter and mother-daughter-granddaughter travel in Asia/Pacific.

High disposable incomes of one generation combined with travel-savvy planning skills of another generation are sending these intergenerational family teams all over Asia/Pacific shopping, and pampering themselves.

Gunn defends slimmed down board

THE Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board has been reduced from 21 to 13 members to ensure a more streamlined organisation, says Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing GM Don Gunn. This is so the board is better able to advise on matters relating to the activities of his organisation.

"It is purely tourism focused and that is why there is no representation from forestry or farming," Mr Gunn tells *IT*. "The board composition has always been determined by industry."

He was commenting on media reports that the board has been finalised without approval of or input from Rotorua District Council.

Structure

The new structure consists of six appointed members, three elected members, three councillors - and Mr Gunn. Those who were appointed from a secret ballot were Skyline Skyrides' Neville Nicholson, Richard de Graaf from the Duxton Hotel, Agrodome MD Warren Harford, Polynesian Spa MD Martin Lobb, Andrew Te Whaiti from the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute and consultant Ray Cook. Their term is for two years.

Council works committee chairwoman Glenys Searancke says those appointed by secret ballot represent the old guard. She says ratepayers have put in "a considerable sum of money" for tourism. "The \$1.4 million (for tourism) is ratepayers' money and surely as the guardians of the purse we should have had a say on the structure, not the advisory board."

Hawke's Bay focus of Aussie TV

HAWKE'S Bay is priming itself for exposure on the popular Australian travel programme, *The Great Outdoors*, which is watched by millions of viewers throughout Australia, Asia and New Zealand.

A TV team will be in the region this weekend to film art deco celebrations. Presenter Di Smith, also known for her roles in several of Australia's best TV dramas and movies, including *Muriel's Wedding*, was due to arrive in Hawke's Bay yesterday (Thursday).

Film Volcanic promotes North Island

FILM Volcanic has been set up to promote the use of the central North Island sites as locations for TV and movie production. It includes Whakatane, Kawerau, Rotorua, Tauranga, Western Bay of Plenty, Lake Taupo and South Waikato.

Other areas and regions may join later according to Destination Rotorua Economic Development GM Kevin Rowell. Details: 07-3484199 or 027-4904454.

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

Accor enjoys record occupancies in NZ

ACCOR saw record occupancies last year for its New Zealand network of 20 hotels - and is predicting continued growth in 2005, fuelled by low airfares, a buoyant economy and our positive image in key feeder markets. In 2004, Accor's hotels increased their overall occupancy rate to 76 percent across the network, up by 5.1 percentage points.

Best performing destinations were Queenstown - where Accor's three hotels averaged 78 percent - and Auckland where the average was 77 percent. Despite increased room supply in the Auckland market, the Mercure Hotel Auckland boosted its occupancy rate to 86.1 percent from 71.1 percent in 2003, reflecting the popularity of the Auckland waterfront area and the completion of the Britomart transport, heritage and urban renewal project.

Strong performances

Accor's three hotels in Wellington averaged 74 percent and also enjoyed strong performances, as did the Novotel Tainui Hamilton, which increased its occupancy rate by 6.3 percentage points in 2004 to 76.4 percent. Rates across Accor's New Zealand hotels were steady, with hotels in Queenstown and Wellington registering small gains.

Extra room supply in 2004, particularly in Auckland, dampened rate increases, but expectations are for moderate increases in 2005, reflecting predictions for a continuation in demand growth.

This year will see a number of significant hotel openings for Accor in New Zealand. In August, Sofitel Queenstown will open, debuting Accor's prestige five-star brand here. A Novotel is nearing completion in Palmerston North, and a Mercure is being developed in Dunedin.

All Seasons

Also set for expansion is Accor's All Seasons brand. This is aimed at motel, hotel and serviced apartment owners seeking sales, marketing and reservations support through a franchise agreement. Two All Seasons hotels in Auckland have been added to the group, and the company is talking to a number of other property owners seeking inclusion in the Accor network. Accor's new New Zealand GM Thomas van Vliet says the climate for the hospitality sector in New Zealand is positive, although still price-sensitive. "To register such a large increase in occupancy across the board in just one year is unusual but it was driven by a number of factors."

New business

He adds: "Low cost air travel has been fundamental because it has created a new group of leisure and business travellers domestically and from Australia who are seeking mid-market accommodation - a sector where Accor is the market leader.

"However, these new travellers are price conscious and with extra room supply affecting a number of markets, the increases in occupancy have not been accompanied by a similar increase in room rate."

Bargain

Mr van Vliet says we are still seen as a bargain destination. With the NZ\$ still low compared to the Australian dollar and other currencies we can anticipate that the country will remain an attractive destination for the foreseeable future. This is complemented by New Zealand's positive image in key feeder markets such as Australia, Europe and North America.

"Accor is looking to introduce its budget Formule 1 brand in the next two years, while continuing to expand in major regional centres," he adds. "We believe there will be a number of new opportunities for the group, especially given our proven ability to drive occupancy even in the most competitive markets."

Paratiho - our leading spa resort

PARATIHO has been awarded the title of New Zealand's Leading Spa Resort at the 11th Annual World Travel Awards, voted by travel agents worldwide. This year's voting campaign reached a total of 160,000 travel professionals, of whom 80,000 were travel agents.

Q'town growth still rising!

FIVE years of continuous tourism growth in Queenstown looks set to continue. Latest figures show that guest nights to the region increased 5.2 percent in the year ended December. This compares with national growth predictions issued by TNZ of an average 3.5 percent growth each year until 2010.

Destination Queenstown says the growth is the result of a combination of factors including capitalising on national and international events, working with TNZ to promote 'safe harbour' perceptions and *Lord of the Rings* destinations as well as carefully targeted marketing.

MIT to highlight NZ in Macau

NEW Zealand tourism will be highlighted in Macau in April at an event being organised by Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT) principal lecturer Alan Collier. The event is run in conjunction with a New Zealand food promotion week and will coincide with the annual PATA conference.

Says Mr Collier: "The food promotion week is an annual event in Macau and it attracts wide interest from local residents as well as the industry. The intention is to highlight the cuisine of a specific country but I thought it was an excellent opportunity to also highlight Destination New Zealand in a wider tourism context."

Chefs

TNZ will provide input via its Hong Kong office and two chefs will be flown from New Zealand to take care of the cuisine. Both have extensive industry background and experience and are professional chef lecturers.

"I chose these particular chefs" says Mr Collier "because part of the event involves training sessions for a select number of industry personnel on how to best prepare, cook and present New Zealand food. Their combination of industry experience and training backgrounds made them ideal."

Low unemployment - but try getting a top job, says Whybro

ALTHOUGH New Zealand has almost record low unemployment and a good, strong labour market - jobs at a senior management level remain in short supply, high demand and very competitive!

So reports Michael Whybro, who left THL as group GM last month, after five years with the company.

"I've had some positive signs in the first few weeks with a number of interviews - and even a third interview - but no offers to date."

He adds: "As part of my redundancy I was able to attend the DBM outplacement agency - a pretty sobering experience.

"I had an hour with the MD who, along with other things, explained that my situation was certainly not uncommon.

"In fact, the latest statistics suggested that anyone commencing a corporate career today, and with ambitions of senior/executive management, is likely to be made redundant 4.2 times throughout their career!

"He also explained that at my level, the average period from redundancy date to commencement of a new role is between six and nine months."

Network

Mr Whybro says that he was also advised that at senior management level only five to 10 percent of people obtain a new job by applying for advertised roles. More than 70 percent obtain them through a network of friends, family, ex-work colleagues/customers/suppliers and industry contacts, sporting team members or other acquaintances.

"That's not suggesting for a minute that they get handed a role on a silver platter or that their network has any role to play other than keeping their ear to the ground, providing an introduction or, where appropriate, maybe putting in a good word. All the experts have told me that I must enlist the aid of a network if I am to find a new job anytime soon!"

Skills

Mr Whybro is interested in a senior management role that will make good use of his skills and experience. Preferably a general management type role such as GM, national manager, divisional manager, area/regional manager - and preferably within the service industry. "Tourism would be nice as that's where I've clearly had significant recent experience, but I'm not holding my breath and remain very open minded. I'm more concerned with the company itself - their culture, direction, leadership etc. I'm sure we all want to work for a company we respect, where the company respects us and where we feel confident we can make a difference.

Mr Whybro was national operations manager at THL, Auckland regional security manager, Armourguard Security Ltd; manager merchant services, Westpac Banking Corporation. Contact: mwhybro@xtra.co.nz.

Farewell for great woman with even bigger heart

INDUSTRY colleagues from up and down the country are expected at Frederick Wallis House, Lower Hutt, on Sunday to bid farewell to Eleanor Burger who is moving to Canada due to ill health.

Ms Burger - known to many as a great woman with an even greater heart - has not been well since August when, on behalf of the Hotel and Catering Institute Management Association, she presented the first New Zealand Young Hotel Manager of the Year Award in Christchurch.

Colleagues say Ms Burger has made a big contribution to the hospitality and tourism industry in New Zealand and the Cook Islands. She is highly regarded and experienced as an educationalist. She helped set up the Hospitality and Tourism Training Centre, Rarotonga, and was Head of School - Hospitality at what was the Central Institute of Technology, Upper Hutt. Until recently she was at Whitirea Community Polytechnic.

The industry wants to bid her adieu with tea, canapes and a buffet. Details: Don Manning 04-5677868 or 027-2494275.

Crazy balloonist at it again...

DAREDEVIL balloonist Rick Walczak will make his flight from the crater of White Island over the open sea to Whakatane some time between Monday and February 28.

The flight is weather dependent and the wind needs to be just right to propel him in his 'Egg Balloon' to the mainland.

Mr Walczak describes the event as one of the craziest things he has ever done. And with more than 25 years' of experience in adventure ballooning he'd know!

Although, last year he made his "An egg a day is now OK" balloon trip over Mount Taranaki and Mount Cook, the White Island trip is regarded as unique and potentially more dangerous as he will leave from a crater of a live volcano and travel across the open sea with nowhere to land until he reaches the mainland.

F and B slams dog of a Bill

FOREST and Bird is welcoming the call from National Party Environment spokesman Nick Smith for government to withdraw the Resource Management and Electricity Legislation Amendment Bill. "We have thoroughly analysed the Bill and it is a dog," says conservation manager Kevin Hackwell.

"Local authorities will face major costs as they struggle to implement Ministerial edicts resulting from the 'I am God' clauses that give the Minister for the Environment unprecedented powers to interfere in local government.

"Everyone will find that the resource consent process will become more expensive due to increased formality at the council level. Developers will find themselves paying for the extra council-level formalities such as transcribing hearings," he adds.

"As most resource consent issues are resolved at the council level, the extra costs could be quite significant. Public interest groups and members of the community will face increased costs too. "

Four given 10 years' jail for attacking visitors

FOUR men who attacked British tourist Paul Speakman and son Christian, 12, in their campervan near Katikati on October 12, have each been jailed for 10 years.

Rotorua District Court heard they also attacked a Wellington man who had parked near Okere Falls, Rotorua, and also robbed two tourists at Tongariro National Park. Judge Phillip Cooper said the "terror attacks" had a profound effect on the victims, most of whom were from overseas. The four were heavy P users.

DoC to prosecute "guide"

DOC has decided to prosecute a Whangarei-based company, owned by a foreign businessman, for guiding tourists in Fiordland National Park without approval.

The department alleges that between January 18 and 20 this year the company conducted a guided walk on the Routeburn Track without having obtained a concession to carry out that activity, as required by the National Parks Act 1980.

The penalty for carrying out an activity without a concession under the Act is a fine of up to \$25,000.

Council ruling merely "levelling the playing field"

DESTINATION Queenstown CEO David Kennedy says a controversial ruling by the Queenstown Lakes District Council should be brought in to "level out the commercial accommodation playing field".

The ruling in the council's district plan will potentially cost many short-term home renters thousands of dollars.

Under the plan houses rented for less than three months to groups of four should be subject to resource consents and/or higher mixed use or commercial rates.

The council decided in November to enforce this rule - but enraged homeowners forced them to think again.

But moteliers and other commercial accommodations providers are delighted with the move.

Mr Kennedy agrees with them. "All the motels and hotels in this resort pay big levies to fund Destination Queenstown which is given \$1.7 million a year."

He adds: "We work very hard marketing Queenstown nationally and internationally so why should holiday home owners get it all for nothing. It's definitely time for some levelling. If you rent out your accommodation commercially - then you pay - simple."

Auckland VIC moves

THE New Zealand Visitors Centre, formerly at Auckland's Viaduct Harbour, is now on Quay Street, at the entrance to Princes Wharf. Tourism Auckland CEO Graeme Osborne says that up to 37,000 motorists drive past the spot daily and it has a large volume of foot traffic. The centre already serves nearly 200,000 customers annually. Adds Mr Osborne: "This location is a prime central spot to raise awareness with locals as well as reach visitors from ferries, hotels, cruise ships and the Viaduct Harbour."

Tourism Auckland's offices will remain at the Viaduct Harbour.

Omarama flies into Queenstown

SOUTHERN Soaring - the Omarama gliding company - is launching in Queenstown this week. Owner Peter Newport says the company, in collaboration with local helicopter companies, will fly visitors into Omarama for a "gliding experience." The cost will be \$500 - \$1000 per person depending on the length of the gliding flight.

Hubber took up the challenge - and won

OTHERS may cross the Southern Alps in 11-13 hours. But 10 days was excellent going reckons Kirra Tours' MD Richard Hubber.

He, wife Terry, son Thomas and two of his friends set out from Kumara Beach walking across Harper's Pass and the Taramakau and Hurunui River valleys.

Mr Hubber tells *IT*: "Without doubt the gods were smiling as weather was generally very good; virtually no rain.

"The 20 or so river crossings in the Taramakau were therefore manageable, overnight beside Lake Taylor was like being in a railway tunnel with the train in it due to extreme winds."

Tavern

He adds: "Jackson's Tavern has undergone a big make-over and is great with excellent hospitality and food. The Star and Garter Hotel at Waikari is a great country pub in every respect - the first beer and real food for eight days probably helped - and we only had one incident: Terry had a pot of near boiling water fall off the gas cooker and onto her ankle which resulted in a major burn. But with the help of the District Nurse at Jackson's she was patched up and completed the journey."

Mr Hubber says Harper Pass is approaching tiger country status, "being rugged, no tracks, very steep, up dry stream beds and through uncut bush." He adds: "It was definitely no comparison to the more famous and popular walking trails. We saw only two other trekkers in five days!"

Before departing Mr Hubber told us: "The whole project is something of a challenge for people who spend far too much time at a desk and too little out and about enjoying the great outdoors..."

Heli-ferry for island

MOUNT Anglem Helicopters has joined Stewart Island Experience to offer a heli-ferry package to/from Stewart Island for \$145. Details: 03-2127700.

Ministry studies ways central government may be able to help improve infrastructure

IF, and if so, where and what central government should be involved in improving tourism-related infrastructure is an issue the Tourism Ministry is to grapple with in the next six months.

Ministry GM Ray Salter says the infrastructure work the Ministry has already been doing has two parts. "The first is the water and waste water work that will provide a subsidy scheme for those two components of infrastructure. This is well under way, especially with \$11 million in the budget for this.

"The second component is to look at all the other bits of infrastructure that are heavily utilised by visitors. We will be looking more closely at that over the next six months to try to evaluate what and where central government should be involved - and there is no guarantee that it will."

Rating

Mr Salter believes that if there are appropriate rating policies in place then they will pay their way.

"Higher commercial rates will cover much of it as the benefits flow back to the community through increased turnover and economic activity in the town.

"One needs to also remember that the local residents are the principal beneficiaries of increased services in the main as they travel on the local roads and use the facilities all year and not just for the one or two days that a visitor might be in the region."

Mr Salter was responding to an *IT* reader who says: "(TNZ CEO) George Hickton comments on 'maintaining standards while hosting more visitors is a major challenge'. I can only strongly agree that we focus on quality, and that we want to retain our place as a 'hot' destination.

"A real concern for me is that some of our present infrastructure New Zealand wide is unable to cope, or non-existent.

"Things like toilets, roading, dump stations, rubbish removal, signage - directional and informative..."

The reader adds: "Whilst local authorities have some responsibility up to what their ratepayers might be prepared to fund, perhaps in light of the continuing increases in international visitors for which they wax lyrical, central government should be investing in some of the necessary infrastructure?"

Trekking through the Moonlight - and other escapes

THE Ben Lomond High Country Experience is a new product from Kiwi Discovery which offers clients a chance to escape to a high country station.

They can trek through the Moonlight Valley or take a helicopter trip. Options for the return to Queenstown include trekking or rafting. On arrival clients can relax or go mountain biking, pan for gold or hike the nearby tracks. Accommodation is provided for a maximum of 35 people on a share basis with seven per bunkroom. Three meals a day are included and the retail price starts at \$119 per person. Details: Jaye Castles on 03-4427340 or info@kiwidiscovery.com.

* The Landsborough Wilderness Experience has been relaunched and now places more emphasis on taking part in a wilderness experience, with rafting as a mode of transport. Some of the more extreme rapids are no longer rafted.

* The leisurely three day trip passes spectacular glaciers, mountains and native beech forests and the guides provide sumptuous meals along the way. Details: Jaye Castles on 03-4429792 or info@queenstownrafting.co.nz.

ADVERT

Tourism & Lifestyle Opportunities

LAKE EDGE - 1.75km's of lake edge with freehold 4.7 hectares offering two dwellings on this magnificent property. Sharene Temple 027 224 6045.

ROTORUA - Truly lake edge motel business, 9 motel units with manager's house, long lease and the freehold is also available. Mark Slade 027 498 8911.

COROMANDEL PENINSULA - Nine well presented motel units, comfortable owner's accommodation with great water views. Sloping landscaped site. Attractive seaside town offering white sandy beaches, boutique cafes and of course great fishing and diving. FHGC. Garry Paterson 021 341 447.

GREAT BARRIER ISLAND - Auckland's best kept secret, splendid waterfront setting - studio units, cottages, lounge, garden bar and licensed restaurant. Gateway to Great Barrier tramping tracks and bush walks. Multiple revenue streams. Tom Crawford 0272789199 Pat Regan 0274483348.

0800 BAYLEYS

www.bayleys.co.nz/tourism

