

# Inside Nigel Coventry Tourism

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## TRC to play greater role in prioritisation

WHILE a substantial amount of research is being carried out, there is little strategic value in much of it, the level of investment is low and declining in some areas and the communication of results to relevant parties is weak, says Tourism Research Council chairman Lex Henry.

The council is to take a leading role in determining and articulating research priorities for tourism. "It is essential that the research be driven by the users of the research."

It will also examine structures that might best generate the research needed and it will look at resources needed to get the optimal research programme under way.

The Ministry of Tourism is to approach a wide group in the industry with a wish list for possible research projects.

"The council will use this feedback and its own judgement to set out a research agenda for tourism and it will then set about getting this research under way."

Mr Henry adds: "Tourism is an increasingly mature and competitive industry, and it needs quality information to support its development."

## Workforce skills findings present big challenge

IN quick succession to the government's move last week to boost numbers of skilled immigrants given current unemployment levels of four percent, this industry has identified its skills and labour shortages through to 2010.

The *Tourism Workforce and Skills Projection Report* prepared by BERL shows for the first time the wide range of skills and training required in the industry. It provides operators, planners, and politicians with the tools to staff the sector.

But TIANZ CEO Fiona Luhrs says the findings present a considerable challenge. "Across the country in almost all industries the workforce is tight, given current low unemployment.

"In addition some parts of the tourism industry are typified by historical practices often based on myths and stereotypes such as 'tourism is a part-time industry,' and 'you work in tourism until you get a real job.'

"These concepts must be challenged and dismantled if we are to keep pace with visitor numbers and

expectations. The stakes are high."

Ms Luhrs says one of the most positive outcomes of the report is that for the first time we can say with certainty there is a strong career path in tourism. "Young people passionate about their country can follow a job in tourism from school through industry or tertiary training to later life.

"There are many opportunities and with the information from this report we can be confident about the skills and training required to fill those positions."

The message TIANZ is sending to operators and investors in the industry is: **pay close attention to your workforce!**

Adds Ms Luhrs: "TIANZ and research partners are asking operators to go beyond current expectations. The numbers to keep pace with visitor growth are startling and if we stand still and do nothing we will effectively be going backwards."

\* In October last year TIANZ and research partners ATTTO, HANZ, the Hospitality Standards Institute (HSI) and the Ministry of Tourism commissioned BERL to forecast the industry's workforce and skill needs for the period up until 2010. The final report is based on quantitative economic modelling and qualitative surveys and interviews. The latter took the form of sector consultations with the objective of identifying emerging trends in the

(over)

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# Workforce skills findings present big challenge

(from pg1) skills that will be required of employees in tourism.

The consultations were carried out via face-to-face interviews with a selection of larger employers and investors, postal surveys completed by a selection of other employers from a range of tourism 'characteristic' sectors, such as hospitality, and a web-based survey completed by almost 200 other small and medium sized employers throughout the country.

## Key issues

The most consistent theme to emerge in the report from the sector consultations relates to the personal attributes and characteristics currently required of most if not all employees in the industry.

These include a warm and friendly personal empathy with customers, an ability to work in teams, cultural awareness, motivation to provide excellence in customer service and the ability to multi task.

Tourism directly and indirectly employs more than 100,000 people - around 10 percent of the workforce.

Growth projections forecast in the report suggest that the number of full time employed positions (FTEs) in the industry will rise to 120,500 by March 2010. That is a rise of 2.1 per cent a year.

At the same time economy-wide employment is projected to grow by just 1.8 percent (an additional 224,000 total full time positions). This means, to meet the needs of visitor growth alone the tourism industry will demand a growing share of total employment.

\* Within the industry, modelling in the report suggests that of the additional 16,440 FTEs required: 5,800 will be in the accommodation, and food and beverage sector; 4,280 will be in transport; 5,740 in other tourism-related sectors; 620 in attractions, tours and services.

These figures do not take into account the number of people who work part time, or who leave or move within the industry each year. Nor do they take account of the number of people needed to fill tourism-characteristic industries, such as those that cater to an audience beyond just visitors i.e. restaurants and airlines. If these factors are taken into account the total number of FTEs required is 190,680 by 2010!

## Industry will reap what it does, or does not, sow...

THE industry needs more people, more training and greater investment in employees if we are to retain our coveted place in the global tourism market. TIANZ says this is obvious from the *Tourism Workforce and Skill Projections Report*.

"Other findings are more of a surprise such as employment seasonality - assumed to be a major factor in high staff turnover. Results show this is not as significant as commonly thought, and that reduction in staff over trough periods is in fact quite specific to certain regions."

Spokesman John Moriarty, warns that if the industry does not respond to findings in the report the country will reap what it sows - or rather doesn't sow.

"If no action is taken nothing will happen at first. But there will be a gradual lowering of quality and capability as other sectors of the economy obtain the best people."

He adds: "Thereafter, investment would decline as the reputation of New Zealand slowly declines. The rest is potentially, the future."

The report is forward looking and gives fair warning about the challenges that exist "whether or not we respond to them."

Mr Moriarty believes the single imperative for the industry is to focus on creating and delivering both the perception and reality of a rewarding career for its people. Why? "Because quality staff are scarce and good people have alternatives and options. Furthermore, choosing poorly matched staff is expensive and damaging to customers. Quite simply the costs of not focusing on workforce are too high for any business that is committed to quality, to bear."

\* Under **Transport** the report shows that total employment is projected to increase by 11,091 workers between 2001 and 2010 representing an increase of about 1,232 a year.

This expansion includes a strong increase in operations related workers in air and surface transport.

The finance, sales and administration associate professional occupation group also records a sizable expansion reflecting on-going growth in services to transport. Passenger coach drivers, travel consultants, aircraft pilots and travel attendants are among those occupations projected to increase significantly.

On **Accommodation**, it says that projections indicate significant increases are required in housekeeping and restaurant service workers; the administrators and corporate managers' occupation; and in the labourers and related elementary service workers area. Relocation options and packages for senior staff present particular difficulties to employers in the major accommodation sector, the report notes.

When it comes to **Food and Beverage**, the largest increases expected are in bartenders and waiters; restaurant, tavern and catering managers; and chefs' and cooks' occupations.

The main skills required will be: cooking skills; food hygiene and food presentation skills; cost management skills; organisational, scheduling and co-ordinating skills and communications skills.

**Activities, Attractions, Tours, and Services** are areas most affected by visitor seasonality, the report points out. But this is not particularly pronounced in employment patterns where employment falls to between 90-95 percent during winter. Writers, artists, entertainment and sports professionals; administrators, and corporate managers; and office clerks are the fields projected to build the most significant increases to 2010.

# Workforce skills findings present big challenge

## ***Skills critical to quality experience***

KNOWING what quantum of people skills we will need in the next six years will be fundamental to a quality tourism industry - especially given the training lags in the system.

Tourism Ministry GM Ray Salter says: "This work already shows up the issue of 'churn' as being quite critical to the performance of the industry in the future, especially if there is an expectation of being able to recruit new staff easily - and I don't think that is going to be true.

"The detail around where the staff are required and the fact that there are a lot of generic attributes being sought across the sector presents an opportunity and a risk. An opportunity in that there will be a significant pool of people with those skills - and once initial selection is made then they can be trained.

"The risk is that there will be lots of other service sectors of the economy seeking the same set of skills in terms of interpersonal abilities, communication skills, customer service and the like."

He says the report provides a good basis for employers and the public sector to think about how training is delivered within the sector.

"ATTTO and the other ITOs for the sector will benefit from having the big picture laid out. It then is up to them to start deciding how to deliver the specifics in time for the anticipated demand for labour to be met."

Mr Salter believes that demand for young labour in the traditional age groups is expected to tighten as the baby boom echo recedes.

"Also, our visitors' expectations are rising and that means that our service standards will have to rise to meet the expectations of our interactive traveller visitor. Hence we have a dual challenge - labour constraints and rising expectations of service quality. That is the big challenge..."

## **ATTTO on right path...**

EMPLOYERS across all sectors of the industry affirm that the qualifications staff need are national certificates and national diplomas that have been developed by the likes of ATTTO.

Says ATTTO CEO Gayle Sheridan: "They affirm that the sorts of things they are looking for in their staff are customer service skills, working with other cultures, and having a knowledge of New Zealand history and as a visitor destination, which is the foundation of our qualifications."

She adds: "Other things the employers acknowledge is that training is important in not only service but in the training of staff because they see a big issue of turnover in the industry.

"Employers say that providing professional development and career pathways through training will be the key to retaining good skills in the industry. What they see as working for them is on-the-job training. So, rather than sending staff off on courses, it's training

that's done on the job which is relevant to their businesses. So that was also affirmation of what we are doing with our businesses now."

## ***Hospitality losing eight percent a year!***

ONE of the significant factors the report highlights is the rate of 'churn' the hospitality industry experiences - those who leave the sector for other industries. The report highlights that the hospitality industry is losing eight percent of its workforce to other industries each year, points out HSI CEO Steve Hanrahan.

"With a current industry base of around 90,000 we currently require over 7,000 new employees annually just to replace existing positions."

Mr Hanrahan says the information highlights the importance of addressing this churn.

"From the perspective of HSI it is important that we work closely with employers to implement practices that assist in retaining staff. Current programmes such as the traineeships, and modern apprenticeship programmes, support the retention and reward of staff.

"Identifying and promoting career paths is important to promote the credibility of the industry. We are also forming strong relationships with schools to promote hospitality as an attractive career option."

The need for partnerships is paramount to the success of these initiatives.

## **Report confirms what we already know**

THE *Tourism Workforce and Skills Projection Report* will reinforce what most in the industry already know - that there are significant skill shortages across the hospitality sector, says HANZ CEO Bruce Robertson.

"With the projected growth in tourism numbers and the on-going 'churn' within industry employment, recruiting sufficient skilled personnel is going to be a challenge every year between now and 2010."

He says HANZ will continue to work with the other funding partners and appropriate agencies to ensure that the industry's requirements are met. The priority will be developing the potential of the workforce and to this end the work of the Hospitality Standards Institute will be critical.

"Equally important will be hospitality employers developing and retaining their workforce. Every hospitality employee that is retained is one less that has to be recruited," he adds.

## ***Visiting Stewart Island?***

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

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## DoC report “makes grim reading”

DOC’S annual report makes for grim reading, according to Forest and Bird biosecurity awareness officer Geoff Keey. “It confirms that most threatened species may be headed for extinction but are not getting the help that they need.”

He adds: “Amongst those with no targeted programmes are ‘nationally critical’ lizards, sea birds, orchids, southern elephant seal, and even an octopus. These are considered to be amongst the most ‘at risk’ species in New Zealand.

“There are also ‘endangered’ animals such as southern right whale, land snails, weka, falcon and the erect crested penguin,” he adds.

“A range of other animals are in either serious or gradual decline including penguins, kiwi and albatross.”

Mr Keey says: “It’s clear from these figures that New Zealand is a long way from meeting the Biodiversity Strategy goal of halting the decline in our native plants, animals and ecosystems. We won’t halt the decline of our native plants and animals while most of our threatened species are left defenceless.”

The report shows few of our 800 threatened species are getting the attention they need to halt the decline. Some 92 percent of threatened species do not get enough help with 77 percent having no targeted programme aimed at preventing their extinction. (IT521)

## Penrose in place

**QUALMARK’S new CEO Geoff Penrose took over from Fiona Luhrs last week. At the same time Ms Luhrs became CEO of TIANZ.**

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## Premier Tourism Destination Sales Managers (2)

**Tourism is the key to New Zealand’s future.** With in-bound tourist numbers expected to grow significantly in the next five years the opportunities to market premier products on a global stage are immense.

Combine this potential with the resources and support of one of New Zealand’s leading tourism destinations and the opportunities for top sales professionals to excel will be incredible.

Based in Rotorua, New Zealand’s tourism mecca, these new roles coincide with a multi-million dollar investment by this organisation in state-of-the-art-facilities.

- Key markets - Domestic, USA, UK, Australia, Events, Conference and Incentive.
- Huge personal growth potential.

Reporting to the Marketing and Sales Manager these new roles will drive the promotion of the organisation’s brand and products within the designated markets. Working closely with travel industry wholesalers and inbound operators throughout New Zealand the appointee will build and foster enduring relationships to ensure all potential tourist opportunities are secured.

The successful candidates will be fiercely **competitive**, have exemplary business skills and the drive and energy to become key players within the organisation. They will also have the ability to engender respect and co-operation in their client relationships and to provide professional representation for the organisation at all key marketing events, both nationally and internationally. They will be working closely with representatives from other world renowned tourist attractions and destinations as they increase both national and international tourist numbers to the client’s site.

This exciting opportunity will provide personal growth and career development opportunities for the individual who strives for recognition and commercial success.

You will need to demonstrate an exemplary sales track record, ideally with international exposure, and an acute awareness of key marketing disciplines. However, above all else you must have the determination and passion to be the best in everything you do.

**If you are a competitive person that needs a challenge and this role appeals to you, please send a comprehensive CV and covering letter detailing relevant experience and qualifications to Debra East, Staples Rodway, PO Box 9159 Hamilton, email [debra.east@staplesham.co.nz](mailto:debra.east@staplesham.co.nz) phone(07) 834 6811 or fax (07) 838 3191.**

**Applications close Friday, 12 November 2004.**

## Pages Past...

### TEN years ago in IT...

AIRNZ rejects as “untrue, outrageous and irresponsible libel” the allegations of the Australian Licensed Aircraft Engineers’ Association that it would have sub standard technicians inspecting aircraft and endangering lives if it is permitted to fly in Australia. The carrier says it meets and will continue to meet all world recognised aviation safety requirements.

THE Auckland Regent is one of the most desirable places in the world to stay! The New York Institutional Investors’ annual hotel rankings have given the property the accolade. It has been given a \$4.5 million facelift making it an establishment of world renown.

THE West Coast’s traditional winter downturn may soon be the subject of tall stories only. Tourism Council executive officer Ian Wooster reckons the region could become a year-round destination. “While the West Coast may not be poised to turn into another Queenstown (heaven help us) it is possible to speculate that our traditional winter lull may be severely reduced.”

TOURISM Minister John Banks this week opened the Adventure East Tourism Office, Whakatane. He said the area had traditionally been off the tourism track. But that’s all changing.

NEARLY 2,000 hotel rooms will be added to the national stock over the next 18 months, at a cost of up to \$500 million, according to Tourism Minister John Banks.

ROTORUA’S Agrodome, like Queenstown’s Shotover Jet, is going offshore. While Shotover opened in Fiji and plans developments in South America, the Agrodome is aiming to sell its expertise in Japan, England, Canada and South Africa.

WOUNDED Bull Corporation is seeking \$2.6 million public investment to complete a project it says will become the hub of tourism on the East Coast. The complex, near Ruatoria, will have accommodation, recreational facilities and general services for travellers.

OBJECTIONS to an application for a concession to run guided trips in Whanganui National Park are due to be heard today. Outdoors Experiences of Reporoa want to conduct short walks and camp-outs. But local Maori will challenge DoC’s authority to hear objections, claiming it can’t be objective as it makes money from granting concessions.

### Otago takes tourism to Auckland

FOR the first time Aucklanders will be able to take advantage of a new paper being offered at the University of Otago’s Auckland Centre: Ecotourism Operations (Tour 306). It’s available for students from January 14 to February 14. Enrolments are now being taken.

Tourism Department acting head Dr James Higham says: “We hope that delivering this programme through the University’s Auckland Centre on Queen Street will be ideally suited to tourism practitioners and students working in Auckland and surrounding regions where growth in the ecotourism industry has been spectacular.” Details: [www.otago.ac.nz/courses/summer\\_school](http://www.otago.ac.nz/courses/summer_school) or contact 0800-808098.

### Horse trekking business for sale

A 178 hectare Kaikoura property with a well established horse trekking business, overlooking the Southern Alps, is for sale. Fyffe View Horse Treks is 10 minutes drive from town. The horse trekking business is run by Sue and Peter McInnes, who have owned the property for more than 25 years.

Peter Harris of Bayleys Christchurch, who is marketing the property, says the fact that the property is in the Alpine Pacific Triangle - an established touring route which links Kaikoura with Hanmer Springs and Waipara Valley - means that the new owner could develop more tourism-based activities. It will be auctioned in Christchurch on November 25. Details: Peter Harris on 03-3772215 or 027-2276009.

### Just put the ticket price up!

WHILE AirNZ increased its fuel surcharge due to the record high aviation fuel prices, Destination Twin Coast Discovery producer Chas Benest points out that it is also true that the carrier has oil price hedging in place until 2005. “Why not just put the ticket price up?” he asks. “You can’t pull the wool over the eyes of the interactive traveller. Cashmere may be.....wool never!”

### Global tourism grows 12 percent

INTERNATIONAL tourism grew 12 percent between January and August, according to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO).

“(It) shows a spectacular rebound in tourism as all regions saw a surge in international arrivals.” Asia and the Pacific led all regions with an increase of 37 percent.

WTO says tourism is firmly back on the upward track with many destinations reporting double-digit, and some even triple-digit, monthly increases.

In the peak month of August the number of worldwide international tourist arrivals topped the 90 million mark for the first time.

Arrivals have surged by 17 percent as Australia and New Zealand increased their results by 13 percent and 15 percent respectively. “Australia’s strong economy, a stable exchange rate and a large re-branding campaign are factors to consider in such performances.”

## Whangarei entices Aucklanders

IN a bold move to change the perceptions of Whangarei as a tourism destination, the Whangarei Tourism Trust has decided to take the message directly to the market. This week large format billboards have been strategically placed to capture a driver's attention in and around Auckland. They carry new images of the district, including the Poor Knights Islands, the Quayside Town Basin area, lush tropical foliage and fruit, the Lion Man and a typical Northland bach will be accompanied by the statement "2 hours to..."

Trust chairman John Goulter says: "The Auckland market is only two hours away. But more often than not, Aucklanders drive right past us, or don't think we have anything much to offer.

"By giving them something new to see and consider we believe we can change their perception of Whangarei. And once you change perceptions, you begin to change behaviour."

Mr Goulter says a group of stakeholders, led by Kim Wicksteed formerly head of Saatchi and Saatchi, met earlier in the year to develop the outline of the strategy. The group decided that the key to developing Whangarei tourism is to capitalise on the proximity of more than a million potential tourists two hours away. "The campaign is very simple," he adds. "The billboards rely on the images, taken by local photographer Diane Stoppard, and a website which expands the story with much more detail, with more photos, maps, suggestions for a range of options and is linked to the major tourism sites in Northland. And of

course, once we get them here, the rest is easy because we already have fantastic options, great accommodation, food and beverage - everything a tourist could want."

The campaign will see the billboards repeated in January to capture Aucklanders - and others driving through - at a time when going on holiday is on their minds. Details: GM Advance Whangarei Ros Martin on 09-4381540.

## New VIC ready by March

**THE new Nelson Visitor Information Centre complex is on track for completion by the end of March.**

## BackpackNelson being set up

A co-operative tourism marketing group called BackpackNelson.com is being set up to further promote the Nelson/Tasman region as a backpacker destination, increase the number of backpackers coming into it and encourage them to stay longer and spend more - particularly in the low and shoulder seasons.

A website is being developed that will contain information for backpackers and will be promoting the region as a real mecca for them. A test site is be viewable from the middle of this month.

The co-operative consists of Tasman Bay Backpackers, Mapua Adventures, Vic Rose/Shark Club, Abel Tasman Wilson's Experiences and Abel Tasman Coachlines.

Details: Peter or Georgie Pattullo on 03-5487950 or [stay@TasmanBayBackpackers.co.nz](mailto:stay@TasmanBayBackpackers.co.nz).

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### Marketing Coordinator - Consumer

Working in our Sydney office, Tourism New Zealand has an opportunity for an energetic and respected team player to carry out consumer marketing functions within the Australian market.

The role of Marketing Coordinator - Consumer is focused on leveraging the "100% Pure New Zealand" brand through consumer media channels and promotional or event activity.

A relevant qualification in marketing, communications or a tourism related discipline and/or experience, together with knowledge of the Australian tourism industry, travel market and media is desired.

To apply, please forward your CV and a covering letter to [rebeccad@tnz.govt.nz](mailto:rebeccad@tnz.govt.nz), before 5.00pm on Tuesday 16 November 2004. Visit [www.tourisminfo.govt.nz](http://www.tourisminfo.govt.nz) for more information and a position description.

## **CATE to highlight tourism**

TOURISM will be given a prime student career focus at this year's Careers and Transition Educators (CATE) conference being held in Wellington from November 17-20.

Speakers include TNZ manager industry communications Dawn Muir, AirNZ business direct operations manager Susan Wallis and New Zealand School of Travel and Tourism (NZSTT) education and careers advisor Emma Meijer.

All will include employment options, pre-employment qualifications and the transition from school to employment.

NZSTT national promotions manager Nick Williams says that with in-school tourism teaching and its new flexible eLearning tourism programmes, NZSTT has gained credibility as a genuine liaison between school and industry, "(which is) especially important in these times of tourism industry skills shortages." Details: [www.cate.co.nz/2\\_Confer.htm](http://www.cate.co.nz/2_Confer.htm).

### **NZ Tourism Online jumps to 13th**

NEW Zealand Tourism Online - [www.tourism.net.nz](http://www.tourism.net.nz) - climbed nine places to rank 13th in this year's Deloitte/Unlimited Fast 50 which is an index of New Zealand's fastest growing companies based on percentage revenue growth.

GM Garry Bond says: "This placing not only reflects the positive growth for tourism in New Zealand but the fact that the Internet is an integral part of the marketing mix for tourism businesses in New Zealand. The internet is definitely now one of the most popular tools for people to plan and book their travel."

The company was one of only five to better their placement from 2003 and one of only 16 to make it into the Fast 50 for two or more years.

## **Operators encouraged to enter Export Awards**

TOURISM companies with export operations are encouraged to compete for the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise 2005 Export Awards, by entering the Service Export Category.

Entries must meet the criteria of the awards, which require that the company must have been exporting for more than three years, have earned at least \$500,000 in foreign exchange in the last financial year and have consistently strong foreign exchange growth for the last three years. Details: [www.exportawards.co.nz](http://www.exportawards.co.nz).

\* Trade and Enterprise group manager events Vito Lo Iacono says NZTE encourages tourism companies to enter the New Zealand Tourism Awards as they are the official industry awards programme.

## **Food and wine network growing fast**

THE New Zealand Food and Wine Tourism Network (NZFWTN) is growing fast and already has 57 members including six national, 16 regional members and 14 wineries.

Co-ordinator Craig Wilson says the marketing and development of the network will be discussed on December 7 and to finalise priorities for next year.

Chairman is Graeme Avery, Sileni Estates Ltd. Also on the committee: Keith Fong, Air New Zealand; Vaughan Schwass, TNZ; Chris Yorke, New Zealand Winegrowers; Hamish Lowry, Hawke's Bay Tourism; Richard Mitchell, The University of Otago; Peter Robertson, Brookfield's Vineyards; Allan Scott, Allan Scott Wines and Estates; Jenny Stewart, Ki Tao Culinary School.

The NZFWTN is modelled on other tourism marketing networks established by TNZ, such as the ski and backpacker networks.

Details: 027-2410549 or [craig.wilson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:craig.wilson@xtra.co.nz).

## **Managing Motueka**

LATITUDE Nelson is working with Tasman Bays Promotions on the possibility of the RTO managing Motueka VIC.

## **Wellesley cruise**

THE restored heritage vessel Wellesley Harbour Cruise Ship will offer a unique cruising experience in Nelson Bays in January. Details: 0800-277863 or [sales@thewellesley.co.nz](mailto:sales@thewellesley.co.nz).

## **AirNZ profit looks good**

AIRNZ'S profit outlook looks good despite higher fuel costs, reckons the Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation. The profit is likely to be down nine percent to \$220 million due to higher fuel costs and increased Tasman competition.

But shares in the carrier rose, following confirmation of a \$186 million rights issue to fund new aircraft.

"Adding to market sentiment is news the long-awaited rights issue has the support of majority owner, the New Zealand government - and the carrier will resume paying dividends this financial year." Says the centre: "AirNZ also indicated forward bookings are strong for the UK, North American, Japanese and domestic markets."

## **New Southern Link**

SOUTHERN Link Coaches has a new service that links with its Nelson/Christchurch service via Lewis Pass. There will be two Motueka/Nelson and vice versa trips a day. Owners are Rod Robinson and Marie Johnsen. Details: 03-3588355.

## **Chopper restriction**

ONLY two helicopter arrivals and departures a week are allowed into and out of the Omata Estate's Homestead Lodge and restaurant tourist complex near Russell, following a decision by independent hearing commissioners.

There will be no flights between 8pm and 8am the following day - and noise levels will apply.

The commissioners also approved a plan for expansion of the property.

## December looks set to be better than expected

WE are likely to be hosting a record 313,000 international visitors next month. The Tourism Research Council says we are on track to reach this forecast peak, or even exceed it!

The council notes that in September 48 percent of all international arrivals were from Australia, up from 35 percent in the same month last year. At the same time the US market increased 11.2 percent. But the Asian and European markets were down 1.3 percent and 3.1 percent respectively.

The council says that while these are one-month movements, it is important for the industry to consider these and how the movements may affect individual businesses.

“For instance, operators focusing on Asian markets may not benefit from the strong Australian market and so their individual performance may not be reflective of the overall growth across the sector.”

International visitor expenditure of \$6,500 million in the June year was driven by the Australian, UK and South Korean markets while the US, China and German markets had lower spending levels.

\* The council says international passenger data by port has been reinstated. And for the September year a total of 8.13 million passengers crossed New Zealand borders with 73 percent passing through Auckland, 16 percent through Christchurch and 6.5 percent through Wellington. But when it comes to international arrivals Auckland handles 72 percent, Christchurch 20 percent and Wellington five percent.

## Brown GM at Carlton

**MIKE Brown is the new GM at the Carlton Hotel, Auckland. He was previously GM Carlton Crest Hotel, Sydney.**

## Whitewater sledging now on the Kaituna

VISITORS to Rotorua can now enjoy whitewater sledging through the Awesome Gorge on the Kaituna River.

Whitewater sledging is described as an extreme activity which caters for adventure seekers and those keen to appreciate the scenery whilst riding the river.

Sledgeabout has exclusive access to this stretch of water and is the only adventure company to be able to offer this exhilarating experience. Sledgers are given full-control of their own purpose built sledge, manoeuvring themselves with flippers on their feet.

They enjoy an exhilarating 90 minute experience through an exclusively accessible section of the river. Co-founded by Peta and Jason Birchall, and Steve and Kylee McNab, Sledgeabout is also owned by Raftabout, which offers whitewater rafting. Details: 0800-723822 or [www.sledgeabout.co.nz](http://www.sledgeabout.co.nz).

## Deadlines for Tourism for Tomorrow and PATA awards

DEADLINE for entries to the new Tourism for Tomorrow Awards - previously run by British Airways and, since last year, under the auspices of the World Travel and Tourism Council - is December 10.

The awards honour initiatives that, while being dedicated to making a profit, reflect leadership in terms of responsible development. This includes demonstrating a commitment to the principles of sustainable tourism, such as enhancing cultural heritage and diversity, protecting the natural environment, and providing economic benefits for destination communities. Details: [www.tourismfortomorrow.com](http://www.tourismfortomorrow.com) or [info@tourismfortomorrow.org](mailto:info@tourismfortomorrow.org).

\* Entries for the 2005 PATA Gold Awards close on December 1. The awards competition is the Asia Pacific's premier travel awards recognising excellence, innovation and dedication across the whole spectrum of travel and tourism endeavours in the region. PATA also presents Grand Awards in: environment; marketing; education and training; and heritage and culture, as well as travel journalism, public relations and advertising.

## Americans vote for - us!

WHILE most Americans are waking up to presidential realities, eight of their most influential travel buyers are giving New Zealand their vote.

The group - which includes *IT* subscriber The Best of New Zealand Fly Fishing's Michael

D.McClelland, - arrived yesterday (Thursday) on AirNZ's inaugural LA-Christchurch direct service.

They are in the South Island for four days accompanied and hosted by Christchurch and Canterbury Marketing CEO Ian Bougen.

He says: “The South Island is an increasingly high profile destination for international visitors. The new route will capitalise on our region's reputation in the North American market, and is another huge boost for tourism in Canterbury and the rest of the South Island.”

The South Island is now directly linked to the US and the UK.

## Peppers now on the Point

ON the Point, Lake Rotorua has joined Peppers Retreats and Resorts and is now known as Peppers on the Point. It is only the second Peppers property in New Zealand. The first was Peppers Hotel du Vin, which became part of the portfolio in October last year.

## Whale Watch wants peninsula rezoned

WHALE Watch Kaikoura is seeking a zoning change to the 170 hectares of land it owns on the Kaikoura peninsula where it has plans for a large tourism development. The company appeared before Kaikoura District Council's planning committee on Tuesday.

It wants the land changed from a rural to a tourism zone, to allow for the development, which includes a hotel and visitor centre.

## Davies still in chair

**FORMER TNZ deputy CEO Jon Davies - who now runs the boutique lodge Aoturoa near Wanaka - has been reappointed to his second term as chairman of the Southern Lakes Marketing Board.**

## Northland tourism to be worth \$1B by 2010

NORTHLAND'S tourism earnings will top \$1,000 million annually by the year 2010, according to new forecasts, making the visitor industry the region's largest contributor to the economy. Destination Northland says initiatives are underway to increase the earnings even more.

Northland already receives the third-highest number of visitor nights, behind only Auckland and Canterbury. It is expected to maintain this position through to 2010.

But when the Tourism Research Council's 2010 forecasts are analysed by visitor expenditure Northland is expected to be in sixth place - with similar dollar figures to Wellington!

Destination Northland manager Robyn Bolton says: "The challenge for us now is to outperform the expectations, by increasing visitor numbers, the length of stay and the amount they spend while they are here. This means developing more products, at higher values, and keeping them in the region longer."

This is an objective of the major regional initiative (MRI) Activate Northland - a four-year project which began this year - which aims to build capability and grow 400 small to medium-sized enterprises along the Twin Coast Discovery Highway.

Ms Bolton adds: "These forecasts will provide a measure of confidence for existing and new tourism operators to invest in developing their offerings." The figures show Northland's total visitor nights are expected to grow 2.4 percent a year to 2010.

## Staff "not up to job" says IHG director

SOME of the 15 staff from the Queenstown Parkroyal who were made redundant last week were "not up to the job", according to InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) South Pacific operations director Bill Sheppard. IHG took over the hotel, together with Christchurch property magnate Philip Carter, on Monday, after buying it earlier this year for \$20 million from Asian consortium Wedson Holdings.

Mr Sheppard says 15 of the 70 staff were not "re-engaged". This is "partly because their job descriptions didn't fit in with the IHG structure and way of doing things."

Even though several who lost their jobs were long term locals, Mr Sheppard says it hadn't been planned "The reality is a real mix of people were not rehired it wasn't just long term locals."

Two employees, who wouldn't be named, said they thought their jobs were safe forever and had made their home in Queenstown.

"But there are other jobs here so it's pointless being too upset for too long. But it's a horrible shock all the same."

## Site visits grow 10X

SINCE its launch three years ago, Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing's official website, rotoruaNZ.com, has drawn more traffic with unique sessions/users growing 10-fold.

In October/November 2001 the site was recording 4,000 unique visits a month. Yet for the past six months such visits have averaged 41,333 a month. The highest was May, with 45,000 unique visits. Total page views for the six months to September exceeded 1.2 million.

## Fams are the thing...

FAMS are proving to be an excellent way for clients to take a fresh look at some of this country's most enduring retreat locations. Two groups of corporate function organisers from Auckland based companies recently spent two days taking a fresh look at ways to mix business and pleasure in Rotorua and Paihia. The trips were hosted by Scenic Circle and local suppliers. Wolters Kluwer Health's Annie Parrent was among seven guests hosted on an overnight excursion to Rotorua. She says the trip was "really productive." She was impressed by the selection and variety of attractions. "I haven't been to Rotorua for years, but I was blown away by what was there."

**HAPNZ directory out**  
**SOME 289 holiday parks are detailed in the latest HAPNZ directory.**



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## **Tranz Scenic cans Northerner to focus on “unique tourist experiences”**

TRANZ Scenic has announced it will no longer operate the Northerner night train between Wellington and Auckland and vice versa from next Friday. The company says it's part of a change in direction that will see a shift in focus from long-distance travel to “unique tourist experiences aimed at showcasing New Zealand's beautiful landscapes, which is clearly where public demand now sits.”

National passenger manager Ross Hayward says Tranz Scenic is to focus on becoming a tourism experience rather than simply a way to get from A to B. “Due to cheaper air travel the public demand for long distance rail commuting has lost much of its popularity.”

He adds: “This is evidenced by the declining popularity of...The Northerner...Stiff competition from airlines and buses has made this service uneconomic. Demand for the 12-hour overnight trip has been steadily declining since 2001.”

Mr Hayward says The Overlander, which operates a similar daylight service, will continue.

“It is important that we put our energy into the services that the public have clearly shown there is a demand for, such as The TranzAlpine service.

“We recognize this is a New Zealand icon and the carriages on this popular service are currently undergoing refurbishment to give the interior a fresh new look. Improvements are also being made to the onboard facilities on The TranzCoastal and The Overlander services.”

\* The Overlander is to have a new timetable from December 5.

### **120 celebrate 75th anniversary of Grand Chateau**

SOME 120 guests celebrated in style the 75th anniversary of the Grand Chateau at a black-tie dinner held at the hotel on Monday.

Dignitaries included Tourism Minister Mark Burton, Tumu Te Heuheu Paramount Chief of Tuwharetoa, Dato Loh, who is the Singapore owner of the Chateau - and descendants of the original developers, architect, former GMs and staff spanning the hotels life.

Guest of honour was Doreen Beath, who as a 10-year-old, was present at the official opening of the hotel on November 1, 1929. Mrs Beaths father was the first GM.

Announced on the evening was the re-branding of the Grand Chateau to Bayview Chateau Tongariro.

The Chateau was originally named Chateau Tongariro, until 1990 when government privatised all Tourist Hotel Corporation Hotels (THC) and current owner Bayview International took over.

## **Where are Lions' fans reservations, asks HAPNZ**

WHILE campervan operators are receiving a large number of bookings for their vehicles during next year's Lions rugby tour, reservations are not being made for holiday park sites.

HAPNZ reports that most parks currently have plenty of space available for campervans in powered and unpowered sites. “We are keen to see these existing facilities fully utilised before temporary facilities are provided,” says CEO Fergus Brown. “A good example is Auckland, where HAPNZ parks have nearly 1,400 campervan sites in member parks. Many of these are available for the Lions tour visitors.”

The association is working with inbound operators and travel agents in a bid to help the thousands of fans expected to follow the games in campervans.

## **Silver Wings for Grey Power**

**ORIGIN Pacific has developed a discounted air travel programme called Silver Wings, for Grey Power members nationwide.**

## **Retro-cool at Haast**

THE Haast World Heritage Hotel is set to highlight its retro-cool look as part of the long term vision of its new owners, a syndicate including Queenstown Businessman Alister Wood and Greymouth identity and veteran realtor Frank O'Donnell.

## **More West Coast flights**

**AIR West Coast on Monday increased its return Westport to Wellington service to five days a week.**

## **GM buys chopper firm**

GLACIER Southern Lakes Helicopters, Queenstown, has changed hands. It is now owned by GM for the last 10 years - Pat West. He is now the owner and MD of the Queenstown operation which now trades as Glacier Southern Lakes Helicopters, Queenstown. The West Coast operations at Fox and Franz continue under their current owners, Helicopters New Zealand, based in Nelson

## **Most are happy**

**INDEPENDENT post event research shows that in 2004 some 97 percent of buyers and 95 percent of exhibitors rated their attendance at TRENZ as either 'very' or 'quite' successful.**

## **Airport bullish**

CHRISTCHURCH International Airport is prepared for a buoyant summer with inaugural flights to Los Angeles and the Gold Coast taking off this week.

## **Award for Pearce**

VICTORIA University Professor of Tourism Management Doug Pearce has won one of the university's Awards for Excellence in Research. His research has been recognised worldwide within the discipline of tourism studies. Colleagues say that throughout his career he has produced research of high quality. The University Research Committee believes Prof Pearce has a sustained record of research excellence, hence the award.

### **Casino trading - it's down, says Thomas...**

CHRISTCHURCH casino is millions of dollars down on revenue - and in its worst position for 10 years, according to part owners Skyline Enterprises.

Skyline chairman Barry Thomas says in his six monthly review that the downturn is caused by bickering between the casino's board and management, "which shows little sign of improvement."

But Skyline's tourism and property divisions are trading well. The group expects the year ahead to be successful. Overall group profitability is significantly up on the previous year.

Mr Thomas says of the casino: "There are major problems between the board and management, which is a hangover from the Aspinall disposal of its 40.5 per cent share in the casino. And until these issues are resolved, no improvement is likely."

Skyline's Dunedin Casino is performing strongly, "with good profitability and dividends flowing." But the Sky City Queenstown Casino is "having difficulty succeeding and the very substantial overheads are making progress slow".

The performances of Crowne Plaza, Christchurch, Blue Peaks Lodge, Queenstown, and Leisure Lodge, Dunedin, are described as enjoying "satisfactory" to "excellent" occupancies.

### **...reasonably strong, says Pitcher**

CHRISTCHURCH Casino CEO Arthur Pitcher has reportedly lodged a personal grievance claim against Skyline chairman Barry Thomas.

Mr Pitcher disputes that the casino's trading is poor, saying it is "reasonably strong." Mr Pitcher was dismissed from the casino board after Mr Thomas learned that Aspinall, which Mr Pitcher represented, was selling its 41 percent share to rival Sky City Entertainment.

\* SKY City Entertainment says it expects to achieve a profit of between \$116 million and \$119 million this financial year.

\* But analysts say this is optimistic given that a ban is to be imposed on smoking in public places.

### **Guide of convenience**

**A comprehensive guide for motor home users to find the right place to empty their toilet and wastewater is now available. It's produced by the Ministry for the Environment. Details: [www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/waste](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/waste), 04-4997334 or 09-2985466.**

### **White Island is best in the Bay!**

WHITE Island Tours, Whakatane, has won the supreme award as well as the outdoor category of the Bartercard Bay of Plenty Tourism Awards. Merit award went to Comvita New Zealand Visitor Centre, Paengaroa, while the innovator award was won by the Montana Jazz Festival.

Peter and Jenny Tait have owned White Island Tours for 15 years. They take more than 10,000 people to the active marine volcano every year.

The business started from almost nothing but now employs 30 staff.

The Montana Jazz Festival, now in its 43rd year, also won the events and conference category for the second year in a row.

The event is reportedly the longest running jazz festival in the southern hemisphere. The festival attracts 40,000 visitors to Tauranga every Easter and pours an estimated \$2 million into the region's economy.

Comvita Visitor Centre manager Diane Riley says: "It's great to know that we're actually on the right track. Tourism is a very important part of what we do and we are obviously keen to help grow the tourism pie.

"The sum of the parts is so much greater than the whole. I am really impressed with the calibre of the winning entries and I'm convinced tourism has a bright future in the Bay of Plenty."

### **Black Cat wins global Skål award**

THE Black Cat Group is one of only six of 46 entries from 21 countries to win a 2004 Skål International Ecotourism Award. Their award was for transportation. MD Paul Bingham says: "It's fantastic recognition for us and for eco-tourism in New Zealand. We have created a number of leading edge programmes to recognise the unique partnership we have with the Hector's Dolphins and other marine wildlife."

The group was the world's first cruise boat company to be Green Globe benchmarked. It has an annual community and environment fund of \$45,000, which it commits to sponsorships, tree planting programmes, research, education and lobbying on environmental issues.

### **Pacific blue expands**

**PACIFIC Blue this week launched twice weekly Brisbane - Wellington services. It is the carrier's second direct destination from Wellington. It coincides with the launch of services between Christchurch and the Gold Coast.**

### **Rough guide critical**

QUEENSTOWN has come in for a drubbing in the latest *Rough Guide To New Zealand*.

It claims the resort is a victim of its own popularity. New Zealanders and overseas tourists alike can "often be overheard complaining that the country's main centre for adventure sports is getting overcrowded and too big for its boots."

The guide also slams Auckland for being small-town, Christchurch strait-laced while Dunedin is described as "darkly attractive." "Go-ahead" Aucklanders rank the city of sails alongside Sydney, the guide says. But it "fails to live up to the claim, struggling to match Wellington ... for exciting culture and vibrant night-life".

Beyond Auckland's glitzy shops, the city has a "modest small-town feel", which can seem frenetic compared with rural New Zealand.

## **“Mr Rotorua” moves to Hell’s Gate**

INDUSTRY personality and former sales manager for the New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute (MACI), Rotorua, Patrick Tamati has taken on a new role as operations manager at Hell’s Gate and Wai Ora Spa. He was at MACI almost 15 years.

“If you were to personify Rotorua, Patrick would be it!” says Hell’s Gate and Wai Ora Spa marketing manager Nadine Rippey.

Mr Tamati’s recruitment signals the start of a new phase of development. GM Bryan Hughes says: “I am extremely happy that Patrick has decided to join us, as he will be a key member of our team and certainly should signal loud and clear to the tourism industry of our intent to become a major player both locally and nationally.”

## **Nelson optimistic**

INTERNATIONAL visitors to Nelson region should increase 47 percent between now and 2010, according to Latitude Nelson CEO Paul Davis.

Speaking at the RTO’s annual meeting, Mr Davis said domestic visitors are expected to rise seven percent. “Latitude Nelson considers the ratio will be 50:50 international to domestic by 2010.”

By 2010 there would be about 3,500 visitors a night in Nelson, who will be worth \$1.8 million in the region - each day.

But, he warned, the relative decline in the number of New Zealanders staying will affect some accommodation providers. “Campgrounds and backpackers are most affected, motel and bed and breakfast providers are recording flat guest night numbers or slight growth.”

The number of international visitors to the region will grow by 10-15 percent this summer.

He said the region is spending between \$1 million and \$2 million less on marketing than it should be. And he called on operators to spend at least three percent of their annual turnover on marketing.

## **Aussies enjoy best ski season ever**

**THIS winter was the best yet for the Australian ski industry. Tourism Australia says there were 2.3 million skier days recorded, up 7.9 percent on the previous season.**

## **Trowell represents touring route**

PAUL Trowell is the new sales and marketing executive for the Great New Zealand Touring Route. The new full time role was created in response to increasing FIT demand for touring routes. He replaces Fiona Mayes.

### **It’s the law, says Lowry**

IT’S not because tour guides do not have to be licensed in New Zealand that overseas guides require work visas when they come here. It’s because the law says anyone receiving any sort of payment or reward needs a visa, says ITOC CEO Peter Lowry.

“We totally oppose that for guides who are there to facilitate the tour group and we think it’s very bad for New Zealand that they require work visas.”

ITOC has been talking to NZIS about the issue and is preparing to lobby the Minister of Immigration to have such visas dropped.

## **Heritage offers broadband**

**HERITAGE Hotels have introduced high speed internet access into its major city centre hotels. They now have ReiverNet broadband internet in all accommodation rooms.**

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