

# Inside Nigel Coventry Tourism

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## Dismay over DoC proposals for Milford

SEVERELY restricted aircraft movements at Milford Sound airport are proposed in DoC's draft amendments to the Fiordland National Park Management Plan. And TIANZ is concerned at the process that has been used to develop these proposals - and the lack of evidence used to justify them.

"The association is dismayed that DoC is prepared to propose decisions that affect tourism businesses and the significant capital they have invested without working with key stakeholders to investigate alternatives that help maintain the environment, and enable businesses to remain viable." DoC also proposes to move all mass transit operations - including boat cruises - to a new development at Deepwater Basin. (Also see pg 4)

## Industry loss at Erebus

**TOURIST and Publicity Department GM Mike Roberts and his wife were among the 257 killed when AirNZ's DC10 crashed into the base of Mount Erebus, Antarctica, 25 years ago on Sunday. T and P was the forerunner to TNZ.**

## Growth challenges identified

THE industry faces serious growth challenges which require urgent attention, according to Horwath Asia Pacific director Terry Ngan. Writing in the firm's latest *Hotel Tourism and Leisure Outlook* e-publication, he says that despite the positive international visitor growth outlook there's a need to: improve management skills, training standards and career development structures; raise hotel room rates through better yield/price management and value propositions; improve quality visitor experiences using greater research and development; further address high seasonal demand variations to achieve better use of capital; compete against lower outbound airfares.

### Rates

Mr Ngan says hotel room rates are relatively low by international standards.

"Average room rates in several centres, including Auckland, Rotorua and Queenstown, are still barely above the levels achieved in the mid-1990s."

This concern, and recognition of the

need for improvements in yield management, is increasingly being acknowledged as a significant issue by the hotel industry, and also in the wider tourism industry.

"In Wellington and Christchurch, a growth in hotel room rates in recent years, caused by demand increases outstripping new room supply additions, will be tested by the addition of three new hotel/apartment complexes totalling 460 rooms under construction in Wellington - and due to open in the next two years - and the announcement of two new hotels to be developed in Christchurch."

### Competition

Existing Queenstown hotels and serviced apartments face significant new competition over the next four years from an extra 750 hotel and strata titled apartments being constructed or planned.

Mr Ngan says that despite the strong international visitor outlook for 2004 and 2005, signalled by TNZ in 2003, some hotel managers appear to be too conservative in their room pricing strategies and have generally failed to take advantage of strong overseas demand for hotel accommodation in most of the main tourism centres. The publication also notes that the recently released Tourism Skills and Workforce Study - prepared by BERL and Howarth Asia Pacific - identifies that the visitor industry also faces a significant challenge in recruiting and retaining sufficient skilled staff in an increasingly competitive labour market. (Over)

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## Pages Past...

### TEN years ago in IT...

WE have blinkered vision of the future involving an ever increasing number of visitors and constant growth, warned University of Calgary Prof Don Getz at a research conference at Massey University. He said it is a threat to conservation and the New Zealand way of life.

"It is actually an impediment to achieving higher yields. The opportunity exists to attract fewer but higher quality tourists thereby achieving many national and industry goals without constant supply increases and mass marketing."

There's a need for greater dissemination of research results and for greater co-ordination between researchers and the industry, the conference was told.

A paper at the Massey University research conference shows that a third of clients who use prostitutes are overseas visitors. The industry is worth \$4 million in Auckland and twice as much in Wellington. The findings are based on the number of condoms sold.

TRANSIT NZ this week agreed to spend \$300,000 building passing bays in the Homer Tunnel. But the Bus and Coach Association says this should be minimum expenditure.

WE should not be forced to reduce our prices, according to Skyline Enterprises CEO Chris Reid. He told an ITOC meeting that our facilities are cheap by world standards. But it doesn't mean we should rip people off. "It simply means that if your product is right - charge accordingly."

AVERAGE room occupancies are now 64.1 percent, up five points on last year, according to the latest Ernst and Young Hotel Survey.

MOUNT COOK Airline has increased its flights to the Chatham Islands from two to five a week.

SUPPOSEDLY the world's largest monohull, the Sea Shuttle, is due to start its Cook Strait service.

THE controversial entertainment tax was this week taken off all business-related activities except such things as holiday accommodation and corporate boxes.

### Growth challenges identified

(from pg1) Fellow director Stephen Hamilton says the study highlights the need for improvements in skills, particularly in customer service, and in industry training and career development.

Mr Hamilton adds that, in this environment, employers increasingly need to ensure they provide and maintain strong career paths for employees.

The industry generally needs to provide international best practice standards of training, whilst operators need to ensure their standards of management skills are equal to those in other growth industries.

#### Decrease

He also highlights the trend of a decreasing length-of-stay by international visitors for the latest October year which was 20.2 days, 2.3 days - or 11 percent - lower than in 2003.

Messrs Ngan and Hamilton say this trend, in addition to a reduction in overnight domestic travel, partly due to lower trans-Tasman airfares, necessitates a need for central and local government funding of destination marketing to be reviewed - and increased if considered necessary to achieve regional and national tourism economic growth goals.

#### Domestic

The newsletter says although lower trans Tasman fares have promoted international visitor growth there's concern in the industry about its effect on domestic tourism. Domestic tourists now have the opportunity to substitute a regional trip to Australia resulting in loss of domestic tourism expenditure.

Regions may have to increase or revisit destination marketing strategies in the domestic market and ensure the development of new products and services to maintain or increase market share.

"This will require increased local government funding to RTOs and investment in new tourism products and, perhaps, greater central government support to stimulate visit demand, such as event related bid funds."

#### Seasonality

On seasonality it says the best approach is to ensure a broad range of geographic visitor markets are targeted to ensure differences in time availability between countries mitigates the level of seasonality in New Zealand.

"Destination appeal is the variable that has the greater ability to be influenced. To reduce the level of seasonality marketing messages need to be carefully developed that assist in lifting visitor demand, particularly in the shoulder months.

"New Zealand and tourism destinations within New Zealand also need to focus on the development of a wider range of tourism product, including major events, which enhances destination appeal in the shoulder and low season months."

It says that until seasonality is reduced operating efficiency and profitability will continue to be compromised, and return on investment is relatively low for high capital cost tourism businesses such as hotels, resorts and attractions.

*DOC'S latest annual report highlights the perilous state of many of our native species. The department's strategic media adviser **Bernie Napp** says that behind the doom and gloom there is good cause for hope.*

THIRTY years ago a child playing outside in summer would have at some time chased a skink - they were everywhere. Now you would be lucky to see even one. Many of our native species are in a similar boat, among them, kiwi, whio (blue duck), bats, frogs.

IT521 reported the alarming new figures, highlighting the challenges DoC faces in preventing further extinctions of native species.

#### **Decline**

Of 847 species at most risk of becoming extinct, 77 percent lie outside DoC work programmes, 12 percent are continuing to decline in numbers, and work was unsuccessful for a further three percent in 2003-2004.

At stake is the future, not least, of "Moa's Ark", the name that English botanist David Bellamy coined for New Zealand and its unusual wildlife.

The list includes our wattlebirds (tīeke, kōkako), large flightless birds (kiwi, kākāpō, takahē), the world's only alpine parrot (kea), whio - one of two torrent ducks worldwide - a honeyeater (stitchbird), wētā, tuatara, a diverse lizard and land snail fauna with alpine species among them, native frogs lacking a tadpole stage, and the short-tailed bat.

The good news is that DoC can protect and even strengthen at least some populations of some species, thanks to learning gained in controlling introduced pests.

The annual report also said that 113 acutely-threatened and 34 chronically-threatened species had their security improved during the

## DoC says there's hope behind the doom and gloom

financial year. What does this mean?

Take North Island brown kiwi, which the *NZ Herald* has categorised as "last chance to see?", and to which the answer is "take heart."

There are about 8,000 North Island kiwis in Northland, 1,000 in Coromandel, and 16,000 elsewhere in the North Island.

#### **Halving**

As a rough rule, numbers are halving every decade outside managed areas. But, inside DoC's kiwi zones in Northland, Coromandel and Tongariro forest, their numbers are increasing.

Kiwi are doing well at DoC projects in Hawke's Bay, southern Mount Ruapehu, Mount Bruce forest and in Wanganui Conservancy, (but suffered in northern Te Urewera last year because of uncontrolled dogs). In addition, there are 50 private kiwi conservation projects around the country, the vast majority of which are in the North Island.

#### **Thriving**

Managed populations of North Island brown kiwi will continue to thrive, while overall numbers will continue to decrease. At issue is that it is practically impossible to control stoats in all places where there are kiwi.

The same principle applies to whio, orange-fronted parakeet, mohua (yellowhead), and our native frogs. Their numbers may continue to decrease at the same time as representative populations are enhanced. In the future, it may be possible to manage our two bat species in this way.

Black stilt (kaki) is in a different category of difficulty. In the 1970s numbers dropped to a low of 23. There are now more than 200 birds, mainly because we have learned how to breed and raise them in captivity, for example, by adding iodine to their diet.

The species is still nationally

critical, but, rather than losing it, DoC is improving its security. While protecting them in the wild from feral cats and ferrets will continue to be very difficult, because they are sparsely distributed, their numbers in the wild are increasing.

Back to the 847 acutely and chronically-threatened species. That number breaks down into: flowering plants, conifers and ferns (295 species), land invertebrates (233), mosses and liverworts (89), birds (84), fungi (61), marine life (33), reptiles (24), freshwater fish (16), and 12 bats, frogs, and freshwater invertebrates.

#### **Plants**

Plants, fungi, marine species and invertebrates, which make up at least 83 per cent of the list, are very difficult to protect in any targeted way, because they are hard to find, reproduce, protect from pests, or study. Lizards are further examples of species that are sparsely distributed. Even for such cryptic species, however, some hope remains.

DoC's practice of controlling several pest species at the same time at specific sites to protect targeted species means that benefits may spill over to at least some non-target species. Boundary Stream, an 800 ha reserve in inland Hawke's Bay is a good example of integrated conservation management.

There possums, stoats, weasels, ferrets, feral cats, and rats are controlled to low densities allowing kereru and whitehead to thrive, and ensuring stability in robin numbers. Such results, over time, have encouraged DoC to attempt reintroductions of kiwi, kokako and North Island saddleback (tieke).

**Please send submissions  
for this column to:  
[nigel@insidetourism.com](mailto:nigel@insidetourism.com)**

## Eight good reasons why DoC should reconsider Milford plans

TIANZ has identified eight reasons why DoC should reconsider proposed changes to the draft Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

They are: that the department has taken a piecemeal rather than strategic approach to air access; aircraft operators are an integral part of overall tourism opportunities available; such operators are long standing concessionaires whose interests rank alongside other clients and customers of the park; the rationale for proposing new and larger types of aircraft is flawed; the scientific basis for conclusions drawn is weak; the timeframe allowed for business to adapt to proposed changes - three years - is unreasonable and unrealistic; inadequate consultation has been held with the TIANZ; proposed amendments reflect a strained relationship.

### Modified

TIANZ says Milford is an environment which has been modified by tourism for more than 100 years. DoC already manages the fiord for high use through concessions on boat and coach businesses and infrastructure and staff accommodation that exists.

“To manage the area strategically the department first needs to develop a much better understanding of the Sound as a modified environment which already accommodates large numbers of visitors - and is expected to receive even more in future - and to manage all activities and visitors in an integrated way.”

The association says it also needs to be recognised that if visitors cannot fly into Milford they will demand to fly elsewhere in the national park.

Aircraft services are part of a product mix which includes day and overnight boat trips, kayaking, underwater observatories, guided and unguided walks, scenic flights and coach transport.

### Purpose

The purpose of aircraft-based services is to enable accessibility and enjoyment of the park.

“Scenic flights are a very popular visitor experience in their own right” TIANZ adds, “a reality that is not recognised in the report. They also provide accessibility to those who wish to see and recreate in remote locations. Flights also make this area accessible to those who may not be in a position to walk very far, including elderly people and the infirm.”

It also points out that air services are used to balance the visitor load throughout the day with Real Journeys’ 9am and 3pm cruises fed largely by visitors arriving by air.

“Overall, we believe the report does not demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of scenic flights at the Sound.”

The report has also largely overlooked the rights and needs of the 30 operators. “These flight operators have made significant investments in aircraft, staff training, marketing, quality assurance, premises and the like for many years.

“TIANZ is particularly concerned that there has been no analysis and testing of the likely business impacts of the proposal on the affected operators.”

If current aircraft have to be replaced by larger ones, this could cost more than \$60 million.

“The report recommends the use of larger aircraft as a way of carrying a large number of passengers with less flight movements, thereby reducing noise from aircraft. However, larger aircraft do not provide the same scenic experience as smaller aircraft as a third to half the passengers in a large aircraft may not be seated by a window...it is reasonable to assume that larger aircraft may result in a degradation of the scenic flight experience and not attract the same number of tourists as smaller aircraft.

### Suffer

“If the scenic flight segment of operators’ businesses suffers some operators may not remain in business to provide transport links, search and rescue operations and transport DoC staff and resources.”

TIANZ says the aircraft type which DoC suggests cannot be used at Milford. “This is surprising given that one of the conditions in the proposed plan is that ‘the extent of the runway will not exceed its existing footprint.’ This is a matter that should have been dealt with unequivocally in the report.”

Neither does the report provide scientific justification for the proposed amendment.

### Measurements

“Of particular concern is the absence of measurement details for current noise levels.” The industry is also concerned at the lack of visitor satisfaction data to support the proposal.

TIANZ says the department does not have enough definitive empirical evidence to justify the measures proposed that may lead to the loss of capital and livelihood of many operators now in business.

The suggestion that operators be given three years to make the proposed changes is not enough to allow them to introduce new technology, re-equip their fleets and determine their future products and operations.

**The association says that while it represents 3,000 businesses it only heard of the proposed amendments through a third party.**

### Goodwill

It also notes: “It is clear there is currently a low level of goodwill and trust between the Milford aircraft operators and the department. We are concerned at this situation and we believe such a relationship is not conducive to the sustainable management of our natural areas, not is it consistent with the partnership that is developing between the department and the tourism industry at a national level.”

TIANZ suggests that DoC “put aside” the proposed amendment on the grounds of logic, fairness and natural justice. “We believe these proposals will only perpetuate the current lack of goodwill between operators and the department.”

The department should instead make a comprehensive study that examines the relationship between the park environment and visitor activities including aircraft.

## Police investigating latest credit card scam

LODGE owners and other tourism operators are being warned of someone claiming to be a Patrick Kwaku Emeku who books and pay in advance for accommodation using a credit card, doesn't turn up and then requests a refund - to a different card number.

The whistle is being blown by Pen-y-bryn Lodge, Oamaru, whose Bernice Vannini says several lodges have been approached.

"His email address is methalzx@yahoo.com so he could be from anywhere. The police say that one card was from Rhode Island, New York, and another from Texas and they are working on the other..... I am sure he will not be the only one to attempt this sort of scam."

She says the emails came through as a normal request, although one property received a booking through their online reservation form.

Pen-y-bryn had a booking from "Patrick Kwaku Ameku" for five nights, although he has tried the scam elsewhere for a total of 17 nights.

Adds Ms Vannini: "With the original booking he gave us a credit card number and told us to debit the card immediately BEFORE his stay.....we did not, and do not, debit cards until the stay is completed.

"When contacted via email to ask why he had not turned up he wrote back and I quote 'sorry i was not able to make it. i have won a business deal which will have to keep me away. please i have also lost my creditcard so it is not safe to deal with it. i will contact you with another card or bank details to have my refund back regards.' In other words, using a stolen card and name looking for a refund!" Police and credit card companies are investigating.

## HAPNZ denies lobbying for freedom camping ban

HAPNZ has never lobbied local or central government to make freedom camping illegal, confirms CEO Fergus Brown.

He was commenting on a story in the latest Rental Vehicle Association newsletter which says HAPNZ had lobbied against freedom camping because those who practice it "dump their litter and toilet waste and thereby degrade the environment."

Mr Brown adds: "We have advised the RVA of our concerns regarding this incorrect statement and are working with them to have the article corrected.

"We are very much in agreement with the Minister of Tourism's comments from the HAPNZ conference reported in the RVA article...the Minister states that 'in the right place, with the right facilities, freedom camping is a positive form of tourism, which both local and international tourists have enjoyed for years'."

He says that while HAPNZ has a vested interest in visitors using holiday park accommodation, the association sees freedom camping as an important part of New Zealand's product range.

## Epidemic hits new-born penguins

THE mortality rate of recently-hatched yellow eyed penguins on Otago peninsula is almost 60 percent. They are being killed by the avian diphtheria bacteria. DoC is trying to determine the extent of the epidemic.

## New category for awards

A new business category has been added to the 2005 New Zealand Tourism Awards Criteria for Tourism Business and Tourism Innovation. It's called Tourism Distribution. This is open to any company whose core business is the marketing of New Zealand tourism product internationally. Details: [www.nztourismawards.co.nz](http://www.nztourismawards.co.nz).

## What are your research needs?

WHAT are your main priorities when it comes to tourism research? The Tourism Research Council and the Ministry of Tourism would like to know. Why? Because they want to "significantly enhance the research and development capability of the tourism industry." Details:

[Danielle.Mckenzie@tourism.govt.nz](mailto:Danielle.Mckenzie@tourism.govt.nz).

## Limes line up the lodge

AN avenue of lime trees leads the way to Wanaka's newest boutique accommodation, Lime Tree Lodge, which opened its doors to guests for the first time on Sunday.

Four en-suite guestrooms and two superior suites make up the accommodation. Facilities include a swimming pool, spa pool and five-hole golf course. Managers are Sally Carwardine and Rebecca Butts. Details: 03-4437305 or [revive@limetreelodge.co.nz](mailto:revive@limetreelodge.co.nz).

## Increased competition

FRANCE, Germany, Italy and Switzerland top the list of European countries popular with Chinese since the Continent was given ADS status by Beijing in September. Agents are worried that rates are now "competitive."

## Just out: *New Zealand Events Update*

Crammed with news and views and containing the most comprehensive list of events in New Zealand.

Back issues: [www.insidetourism.com](http://www.insidetourism.com).

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## Professor discusses how to maximise burgeoning research

TOURISM research continues to expand at a rapid rate - as testified by the ever-growing number of journals, books and conferences in the field. But whether there has been a similar increase in our understanding of tourism is another matter!

Victoria University tourism management professor Doug Pearce says: "This explosion in output has meant it is more and more difficult to keep pace with what is being produced and much tourism research remains of variable quality."

Prof Pearce is providing a personal perspective on how these issues might be tackled and how tourism research might be advanced at the Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference which opens at Victoria University next Wednesday.

### Three ways

"In particular, we need to be able to better manage and learn from an existing and emerging body of knowledge that is characterised by fragmentation, diversification and specialisation. Three inter-related ways forward are proposed to do this," he adds.

"**Firstly**, there is considerable scope to contextualise our research more comprehensively by making more explicit links to relevant but often non-convergent literatures.

"**Secondly**, the greater use of integrative frameworks can provide more coherence and a greater sense of direction to the research we are doing.

"**Thirdly**, more systematic and comprehensive research approaches are needed which explicitly recognise the complex and multi-faceted nature of tourism and endeavour to incorporate a larger number of elements and dimensions in the research design of tourism projects."

His paper attempts to lay out challenges for tourism researchers to consider - and to provide a reflective foundation for other presentations that are to follow.

### Dialogue

Lecturer Adam Weaver says many of the 95 papers will address recent advances in tourism and hospitality research.

"The conference promises dialogue between researchers and industry. We're trying to promote a conversation that will hopefully continue long after the conference ends - a conversation between the producers of research - academics, and government organisations - and the end users (the industry)."

Dr Weaver adds: "Of course, these two parties are not perfect partners. Academics are required to publish their research in scholarly journals and make presentations at conferences. These venues are not always interested in the same type of research as the industry. Industry is probably not interested in theory or conceptual models - academics are."

More than 100 have registered for the conference which has the theme: "tourism research: advances and applications."

### Themes

Dr Weaver says conference sessions will address an array of themes and topics: planning and management, sustainability, tourism education, risk, entrepreneurship, and wine tourism. Delegates include tourism and hospitality researchers from New Zealand and 15 other countries. Tourism Minister Mark Burton will open the conference. This will be followed by a special afternoon session co-hosted by the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism Research Council New Zealand: Smart Information, Smart Decisions - Applying Research in Tourism. The purpose of the session is to generate dialogue between research providers and users. The free session will be chaired by Tourism Research Council chairman Lex Henry. Panellists will include TNZ's Vaughn Schwass, the Ministry of Tourism's Bruce Bassett, Julie Warren from CRESA, Professor Pearce and Campbell Moore from The InterIsland Line.

## New brochure, new options

THE latest Discover New Zealand brochure highlights a new two-night/three-day Waitomo holiday including a full day of sightseeing in Auckland first.

Passengers stay overnight at Waitomo and there is time to explore the Waitomo Glowworm Caves or try the subterranean excitement offered by The Legendary Black Water Rafting Co. From March there will be a new experience in the Waitomo region when the Ruakuri cave is re-opened. Details: info@discovernewzealand.com or 0800 330 188.

**Brown at Carlton**  
**NEW GM at Auckland's Carlton Hotel is Mike Brown, ex GM Carlton Crest Hotel, Sydney.**

## AirNZ brochure due

AIR New Zealand Holidays' new brochures is due to be launched in South East Asia, following the recent reappointment of General Travel as the official inbound operator to promote the holiday packages in the region. Recently, as part of the Air New Zealand Holidays revamp for 2005, Auckland-based General Travel was re-appointed the official inbound operator after a tender process.

**Holiday park for sale**  
**JUST listed for sale: Whangarei Falls Holiday Park which is listed as a freehold going concern. It includes 50 beds in dormitories and cabins and 26 van/tent sites. Contact: Michael Miles 027-2238875 or www.bayleynelson.co.nz.**

## Arts Centre of attraction

LEADING fashion company Untouched World has opened its flagship store at The Arts Centre, Christchurch. The centre is one of the city's most visited attractions. It boasts 40 shops and galleries, working studios, a selection of cafes, restaurants and bars, theatres and a weekend craft and produce market.

## Mission accomplished, O'Brien moves on...

CENTRAL South Island Tourism GM Glen O'Brien is moving on. Mr O'Brien, CSIT's first manager, has held the position for five and a half years and has decided it's time for a new challenge.

"I feel I've fulfilled all the goals I've set myself here. I'm leaving the organisation in very good health and I also believe it's good to have some fresh ideas brought to the position."

When he arrived in the Timaru district and assessed the state of its tourism promotion and marketing operation he estimated it was 15 to 20 years behind most other RTOs.

"But we're definitely up with the play now. There's been a huge growth in both the awareness of the need to market our district, and in visitor numbers themselves. The scale of our visitor information centre and marketing information operations reflects that. We've also seen major growth in our events marketing and in the promotion of Timaru for conferences."

Mr O'Brien is considering setting up a consultancy in Timaru and is also looking at ways to use his new qualifications.

Recently he became the first person in New Zealand working in the tourism industry to gain a two-year graduate diploma in economic development. In this field he also holds a diploma with the Ball State University (Indiana, US) Institute Economic Development Academy.

### Parks prepare to entertain Lions fans

LARGE screen TVs in lounges for pre and post match watching and special transport services to and from city entertainment are early suggestions for making Lions rugby tour fans feel welcome in holiday parks.

HAPNZ says a number of member parks are now receiving bookings for sites over the tour dates. Some are considering adding temporary sites to accommodate as many as possible.

"Our main aim continues to be to achieve maximum utilisation of existing facilities before temporary facilities are developed."

## Resort opens in Nelson

**NINE two-bedroom Orchard Villas and six one-bedroom Summerhouse Villas have just opened at the Monaco Resort and Hotel, the first major accommodation complex to be built in Nelson for 20 years. It has been developed by directors Mike Jepp and Rod Duke. Contact: 0508 Monaco (666 226), reservations@monacoresort.co.nz or www.monacoresort.co.nz.**

## Two join YHA

TONGARIRO'S National Park Backpackers and Katikati's Sapphire Springs are the newest members of YHA New Zealand's now 62-strong network. Marketing manager Daniel Shields says: "Travellers who prefer hostel accommodation are seeking unique experiences, not just a bed. They want to see the things about New Zealand that only the locals can tell them. They also enjoy hearing stories from other travellers and YHA staff. But many enjoy having the option of a private room, with ensuite attached. The new additions to the YHA network represent this trend, as they offer a wide range of accommodation - from double and twin, to family and shared rooms."

## World recognition for Buried Village?

BURIED Village of Te Wairoa, Rotorua, has appointed Sue Gunn as marketing and retail manager. She has had 20 years managing and marketing shopping centres in Christchurch and Auckland.

Sue says she is looking forward to working with the owners, the Smith family, in having the Buried Village recognised as a World Archaeological and Heritage site show-casing the birthplace of tourism in New Zealand.

## Cowan changes jobs

**JAMES Cowan, former sales and marketing manager at Novotel Tainui Hamilton has been appointed Accor director of sales and marketing central region. He will focus on business travel sales. Prior to starting with Accor in 2003, Mr Cowan was general sales manager for the Radio Network in Wellington, where he managed revenue streams for Newstalk ZB, Classic Hits and RadioSport. Before this he worked with Tranz Rail Limited and with British American Tobacco, Vietnam, as brand manager.**

## Airport attraction

TAURANGA airport is becoming a major tourist attraction in its own right, according to Tourism Bay of Plenty.

"An aviation museum is being built which will house some classic planes and will be the catalyst for more visits from warbirds from around the country.

"With scenic flights, helicopters to White Island, the arrival of Volcanic Air Safaris from Rotorua, glider flights, learn-to-fly, micro lights and commuter air services plus much more, we have a whole new product category opening up," the RTO points out.

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### Visiting Stewart Island?

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

## Christchurch readies for bumper season

FOLLOWING the launch of direct services to Los Angeles, Christchurch International Airport reported a record 29,702 international passenger movements last week.

“This is just the start,” says CEO George Bellew. “We’re gearing up for a bumper summer and expect that the records will continue to fall with the significant number of new services we have attracted.”

The recent addition of direct services to Los Angeles, the Gold Coast and Rarotonga means the airport now offers access to key international destinations or hubs.

Mr Bellow says the airport is well placed to cater for future growth with the final touches on the international terminal expansion due to be completed before Christmas, providing four extra air gates and increasing passenger capacity by 37 percent.

## Lynx pounces back

**THE Lynx, Interislander’s fast ferry service, commenced its daily summer operation on Sunday. The 91-metre catamaran can carry 760 passengers and 175 vehicles**

## Red Marketing focuses on premium six

JUST six “premium” clients. That’s all Red Marketing wants to focus on with its new sales representation service.

Director Sue Marshall says: “The service offers a targeted call cycle plan, structured reporting systems, brochure distribution, negotiation of product representation, active prospecting for new opportunities and monthly email communications to sales targets. The sales calls will be made to a mixture of inbound tour operators, wholesalers, professional conference organisers, event managers and some direct corporate clients.”

She adds: “We would like to offer more than just a sales call, focusing on building relationships and lifting profiles for our clients.

“Being a small team, providing cost effective and professional marketing services tailored to each business’ individual requirements, sales seemed the next logical service to offer...” Contact: 09-5291056 or [sue@redmarketing.co.nz](mailto:sue@redmarketing.co.nz).

## Manawatu in partnership with “Dept of Conversation”

DESTINATION Manawatu launched the “McKinnon Hut Experience” to TNZ’s international media team in Auckland on Tuesday.

“Packaged in partnership with the area office of Department of Conversation (sic) based in Palmerston North, the experience takes trampers between 4-5 hours to reach stunning views on the second highest point in the Ruahines,” says the RTO in a media release

“Requiring only an average level of fitness, this option is accessed from the Kawhata Base less than two hours drive from Palmerston North or Feilding.”

Destination Manawatu leisure tourism manager Julia Sanson says: “International travellers in particular are seeking new interactive experiences. This is a great overnight tramp and it is also possible to link up with other huts for those visitors wanting to extend their stay.”

\* The release also identifies Ms Sanson as CEO when it’s Kathy Gibson.

## Maori showbands online with Te Papa

**MAORI Showbands, Te Papa’s first on-line exhibition, is being launched tomorrow (Saturday).**

**It reflects the musical phenomenon of the 1950s and 60s when a generation of multi-talented performers took their blend of popular music and Maori culture to the world. Visit:**

**[www.maorishowbands.co.nz](http://www.maorishowbands.co.nz).**

## New hotel opens in Rotorua

ROTORUA’S first new international hotel for more than seven years opened on Wednesday. The 145-room Hotel Ibis Rotorua is adjacent to the Royal Lakeside Novotel Rotorua.

Guests staying at the Ibis are able to use the facilities of the Novotel. Together, the Ibis and Novotel complex offers a choice of two restaurants and bars, and the Matariki Maori Entertainment Centre, where guests can enjoy a traditional Matariki hangi and concert every night. The Novotel and Ibis also share one of Rotorua’s largest convention areas with a capacity for up to 400 delegates. Accor GM New Zealand Neil Scanlan says: “Rotorua’s image has been completely transformed over the past decade. It has combined its traditional natural and cultural attractions with modern sporting and recreational facilities, along with a very vibrant restaurant, arts and entertainment scene, quality convention and tourism facilities and the highest service standards.”

## \$2M FOR CULTURE

**TRADE and Enterprise has allocated \$2 million for the development of cultural tourism products in the Auckland region. The Auckland Regional Economic Development Strategy group (AREDS) is preparing a business case to present to NZTE. Details: [www.areds.co.nz](http://www.areds.co.nz).**

## Operator not reckless

MOUNTAIN Action was not reckless or negligent and took all reasonable steps to comply with requirements under Health and Safety laws, says OSH Taupo manager Murray Thompson. He was commenting on the death of James Skipper, 18, in September, who hit a partially buried tyre while riding a three-wheel cart. The tyre had been put alongside the track for safety reasons. But Mr Thompson hit it at 35kph and his cart became airborne. He died of chest injuries. The tyre has since been removed.

## Major facelift for oldest spa

STAGE one of the \$125 million redevelopment of New Zealand's oldest spa at Waiwera is underway with the release of 215 investment apartments to the market. It is the first step towards a major overhaul of Auckland's most visited destination - Waiwera Infinity Thermal Spa Resort.

Around 350,000 visit the resort each year attracted largely by its hot mineral water pools and adventure slides.

These will remain while the resort is redeveloped over the next three to five years. But CEO John St Clair Brown, says they will eventually be replaced by a deluxe hotel, wellness spa, conference facilities, shops and restaurants. "To be classified as an authentic spa, like Evian or Perrier, the experience has to be based around a mineral water source and this is exactly what we have and why our resort will be the first truly international spa in New Zealand."

The apartments at Waiwera are being marketed by Baileys Real Estate Orewa and Premium Real Estate in Takapuna, Auckland. They will be leased by a hotel management company and used for accommodation needs by the 80-room deluxe hotel which is stage two of the redevelopment. Owners will have access to their apartment for 28 nights per year. The apartments will cost \$395,000 - \$3 million. Details: Tel: 021-943664.

## Te Puke, far more than kiwifruit

**TE Puke is proving to be more than the Kiwifruit Capital of the World after three operators were lauded at the Bartercard Bay of Plenty Tourism Awards. They were the Comvita Visitor Centre, Kiwi360, and Longridge Fun Park who won awards at the prestigious event. They say their awards will help market Te Puke as a destination and not an attraction.**

## Well known horse trek business for sale

HURUNUI Horse Treks, North Canterbury, is for sale. It began in 1987 and now has clients from Europe, North America and the UK. It offers treks ranging from two to eight days. Accommodation ranges from tents and shepherds' huts to farm-stays. The 40 horses used are mainly thoroughbred/Clydesdale crosses.

Marketing agent Peter Harris of Bayleys Christchurch says: "It offers a unique pioneering experience through some of the South Island's most beautiful and isolated countryside."

It is the only company of its type to pass the New Zealand Way quality assurance programme and is the first multi-day trekking operation to earn Qualmark accreditation.

Owners Rob Stanley and Mandy Platt have run the business for 17 years and are selling in order to pursue other business interests. Details: 027-2276009 or [www.hurunui.co.nz](http://www.hurunui.co.nz).

## Plenty of do, or not to do, on Great Barrier Island...

WHAT to do on Great Barrier Island? You can go sea kayaking with Wayne Anderson from \$30 for a two hour trip to \$55 for a kayak and snorkel adventure. You can also go kayaking at night for \$50. Overnight trips and freedom rentals are also available from 09-4290664 or [aoteakayak@hotmail.com](mailto:aoteakayak@hotmail.com).

Visitors can also go sea fishing, diving, surfing, horse trekking, mountain biking, golfing and visiting natural hot springs. But by far the most popular activities are tramping and bird watching.

And, of course...there's John Mellars' vineyard which produces 1,000 bottles of cab sav a year. It's said he has the world's smallest cellar and winery.

TIPS: There are several shops and a bottle store on the island, all of which closed at 5pm when we visited. Popular buys: local honey and essential oils.

## Most of our growth comes from Australia

THE Australian market contributed 60 percent of total growth in the year to October, the Tourism Research Council (TRC) points out in its latest *Tourism Leading Indicators*.

"Clearly, the marked shift in the trans-Tasman aviation market since October last year (lower airfares and more capacity) has transformed what was a relatively stable market into a high growth one, having increased by 23 percent to reach 834,000 visitors. At the same time, New Zealand outbound travel to Australia as main destination was also stimulated by the change to the aviation market with growth of 26 percent to reach 864,000 trips to Australia."

### Exceed

The TRC says Australian inbound travel for 2004 will likely exceed the forecast figures, but more critical is the pattern of the "out" years, which indicates that this market will once again stabilise to a more steady growth rate, albeit at a higher level due to the shift in the aviation market.

"In considering the strong 12.7 percent growth in total inbound arrivals over the year to October, it is useful to compare the measures of tourism performance on the ground within New Zealand. In this respect, the total visitor nights in commercial accommodation in New Zealand provide a useful point of comparison, but this data is showing a more modest growth rate of 4.5 percent (year to September).

### Downside

"Put into this examination the pattern of New Zealand outbound travel and it becomes reasonable to conclude that the very strong outbound activities of New Zealand travellers are resulting in lower growth in demand for commercial accommodation by New Zealanders," it adds.

"This is reinforced by the shift in the origin of guests in commercial accommodation that has moved from international visitors providing 34 percent of guests in 1999 to 41.5 percent today."

## Deane impressed with industry's enthusiasm and innovation

ONE of the biggest surprises to greet TNZ GM marketing Tim Deane when he joined six months ago was just how positive tourism is!

"The enthusiasm, innovation and drive of the people who make up the tourism industry has been a real eye-opener."

He says tourism is full of entrepreneurs and innovators - and he's impressed by how open people are to new ideas.

### Openness

"I've seen this openness first hand with the way the New Zealand industry has embraced the interactive traveller.

"The research describing the needs and wants of our target market has only been talked about in the last 18 months. But already there is a great understanding of what this information means to our industry."

He notes that many tourism businesses have already made big changes to their product offering or developed new products, which better meet the needs of the type of visitors we are trying to attract. Importantly this approach has helped their businesses grow.

"The interactive traveller research tells us that culture is the secondary motivator for international visitors who come to New Zealand. There is no doubt that there are still opportunities to bring cultural elements out more in the tourism products we offer. Research confirms that the stories we tell our visitors add real value to their tourism experience and increase customer satisfaction."

### Opportunities

Mr Deane adds that as a marketing organisation, he believes there are still some great opportunities for TNZ to increase New Zealand's profile offshore. "Financially we will always be a small player internationally, but this doesn't mean we can't continue to create a significant presence in our target markets.

"As an organisation Tourism New Zealand is looking to continue to innovate in how we promote New Zealand offshore.

"The Chelsea Flower Show project is an example of this sort of innovation. As well as directly touching over 150,000 people who visited the garden, it is estimated that the New Zealand tourism message reached over 47 million UK consumers through leveraging the media profile generated by the event. Ongoing development of the 100% Pure campaign will also ensure it remains fresh, relevant and effective.

"Our new television commercial is a good example of this; expect to see more work in the advertising area over the next 12 months."

### Training

Another opportunity, he sees, is working to take a more active role in influencing the offshore travel trade. TNZ's international offices already do considerable work with the trade in the training and trade event areas.

"We believe that with the use of some new tools there are further things we can do with our international trade partners to amplify the 100% Pure New Zealand campaign.

"Leveraging media through our international media programme continues to be a vital part of our marketing activity. We will be increasing our focus on broadcast media in the future to deliver even greater broadcast coverage of New Zealand as a holiday destination, because we know television can be a powerful way of influencing our target market," Mr Deane adds.

## More may come on working holidays

**CHANGES to the Working Holiday Scheme just announced include removing the cap on the number of applicants from the UK, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands. British working holidaymakers will be able to stay for up to two years and work for 12 months. From 2005/06, an extra 10,000 places will be reserved for young people from Canada, the US, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, and Italy.**

## Industry should get behind new flag

IT'S time the industry got in behind the campaign to change New Zealand's flag, says company director Lloyd Morrison. "The tourism industry, more than any other, understands the advantages to New Zealand of having a clear and consistent image of the country portrayed to offshore markets."

He adds: "New Zealand has been evolving its image and presentation in offshore markets for some time.

We are not a 'lame duck' dependency - our country is not only extraordinarily beautiful, but can be enjoyed easily by travellers because of the vibrant, professional, exciting and environmentally aware tourism sector. Where does this show in our national flag? How does our current flag convey this excitement and distinction?"

### Brandmark

Mr Morrison says that in 1998, the tourism sector called for a new flag. "As (TIA CEO) Paul Winter said then: 'We would be nuts not to make the most of the best known brandmark we've got. But when we raise our flag, people get confused.' Trevor Hall, then head of Tourism Wellington said: 'We have confused the world by putting another country's flag (Union Jack) on our flag, and only having a small difference to Australia's flag'."

### Recommended

In 2001, a tourism working party chaired by Sky City casino chief Evan Davies recommended New Zealand adopt a new flag. Mr Davies said: "We're simply saying that in terms of selling the nation and selling the attractions of this nation internationally, consistency and strength and recognition is important. The silver fern would be very good for that, and if you could do that everywhere, that would be great."

Mr Morrison says the timing of those initiatives was too early. Now, the time is right. The arguments and logic are still the same. Tourism sector participants need to mobilise and support the timely and appropriate initiative to change the flag ... **Details: [www.nzflag.com](http://www.nzflag.com).**

## When operators fail to cough up, who will pay, asks Ebrey

RUAPEHU District Council deserves to be congratulated for organising recent tourism-related events, but the real test will come when it works to implement a new Major Regional Initiative (MRI) says Blazing Paddles Canoe Adventures' managing partner Mark Ebrey.

He expressed concern at the time about the government's \$2 million grant to the Ruapehu, Rangitikei, Wanganui and Iwi Regional Partnership to further the MRI, which is largely based on a new touring route.

### Fears

"While the concept had potential, I had fears that the costs would fall directly on ratepayers, because small tourism operators like us would only support proven marketing strategies because we did not have funds to invest in projects where no direct return could be measured."

He tells *IT*: "I raised this as a concern because the sector input over the life of the project was expected to be between \$600,000 and \$900,000. As recently as this year we have had the council prop up Ruapehu Marketing Group's summer marketing campaign by \$30,000 when a significant number of smaller operators in the north decided the group was not producing direct results for them."

### Ratepayers

Council has committed to the MRI spend over three years, so if they can't get it from the operators, Mr Ebrey believes, that only leaves the ratepayers.

"Council's ability to target operators alone is impossible. So either the commercial sector or all ratepayers will have to foot the bill.

"We now have the ludicrous situation in Ruapehu where we already have two marketing groups trying to gain our support and adding a new level on top could be the straw that breaks the camel's back."

But changes in recent local body elections have given him hope. "Reluctantly I am prepared to put my hand up again to assist, based on the premise you can't achieve anything outside the tent."

## Council disputes claims

RUAPEHU District Council [RDC] does not share Mr Ebrey's views about the MRI or the issues he perceives the MRI is confronting.

RDC says the \$2 million grant shows that the government has recognised the region has struggled to effectively harness its tourism potential and also the benefits that will come from the implementation of the MRI.

"Statistics and future projections of tourist numbers clearly show that tourism is a significant and growing industry for New Zealand. For Ruapehu district to gain our share of this spend, it was recognised that we needed to do more to develop our tourism infrastructure."

The council says MRI funding is aimed at 'kick-

starting' the region's tourism industry and to consolidate a strong competitive advantage in tourism, and allow it to build the foundation for a more robust and sustainable economy.

"Mr Ebrey's statement that the MRI is largely based around a new touring route is incorrect and understates the scope of the initiative.

"The touring route acts as the mechanism to deliver visitors to the region. There are two other major aspects to the MRI, being product and business development, and the implementation of a marketing strategy."

### Initiatives

It adds: "The product and business development is aimed at training and investment through a series of economic development initiatives to train and up-skill operator's business skills, improve quality, development of new products and encourage increased investment." Currently the number of tourism products in the region that are able to meet the needs and standards of high yield interactive travellers is low. "The majority of tourism businesses in the region are small family/owner operated that often work on a part-time basis. The MRI is aimed at increasing the critical mass of businesses and products that meet international visitor requirements."

### Strategy

The other significant aim of the MRI is the implementation of a marketing strategy. This will be designed around increasing awareness of and demand for the product.

"Mr Ebrey also mistakenly states that RDC needed to 'prop up Ruapehu Marketing Group's summer marketing campaign by \$30,000."

RDC through the Economic Development Service facilitates, coordinates, supports and advocates for sustainable economic development in the Ruapehu district.

"As part of this process RDC works with several alliance/cluster groups to market the district. This strategy of partnership assists the district with achieving more for its limited resource input.

"Ruapehu Marketing Group [RMG] is an example of one such alliance/cluster group that the council works with. RDC has had an on-going relationship with RMG over the previous three years and the \$30,000 contribution was part of council's contribution to this partnership strategy."

The council believes the MRI will deliver "significant beneficial outcomes" and is committed to the continuing support of the programme for the benefit of all tourism operators and other businesses within Ruapehu district.

## Auckland takes the info to the people

**TOURISM Auckland's new mobile visitor information centre - the first of its kind in New Zealand - made its debut at the Ellerslie Flower Show.**

To look up back issues of *IT* visit:  
[www.insidetourism.com](http://www.insidetourism.com)

## Don't discriminate, says RVA

ANYONE who refuses to hire a vehicle to a blind person who has an otherwise acceptable designated driver risks being reported for discrimination under human rights legislation.

The Rental Vehicle Association has told the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee that provided the designated driver holds a valid licence, operators are happy to hire a car to someone blind or with impaired vision.

The association was replying to complaints by the Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind and the Association of Blind Citizens that some blind people have been turned down. But the RVA found the submission was based on an unquantifiable number of anecdotes with little basis in fact.

## Drink Check available

**THE Alcohol Advisory Council has developed DrinkCheck, a new resource, that can be used in the workplace for early identification of those at risk of developing alcohol-related harm and/or those already experiencing alcohol-related harm.**

## What floats your boat?

WHAT floats your boat? Theme cruises continue to rise in popularity on the high seas. Individuals and groups with such varied interests as music, sports, art, nature, technology, personal finance, literature and even gastronomy are choosing cruises that let them mingle with like-minded travellers and learn more about what they love. Thrill seekers, adventurers, hobbyists and anyone yearning for a unique escape, have a whole new world to explore on the high seas," says Travelers Advantage and [travelersadvantage.com](http://travelersadvantage.com) VP Julia Ryan.

New themes: A Cruise to Die For (whodunit?); Food Lovers Mix It Up (epicureans); Hot Ports, Cool Sounds (music fans); This Is Your Brain on Vacation (for intellectuals).

## Etched in stone...

REPUTATION and brand, a desire to increase attractiveness to employees and cost management targets are most important in motivating SMEs to pursue sustainability, according to a Waikato University survey. Reasons for not changing their practices are cost implications - and the amount of time managers fear they would spend on the job.

But some such as Phil and Lana Morgan of Ohiwa Holidays, Bay of Plenty, have etched sustainability in stone. And their efforts have been recognised by their winning a first place in the Sustainable Business Network's small business category.

## Court turns down billionaire's plans

THE Environment Court rejection of the proposed massive development on iconic Cape Kidnappers by billionaire Julian Robertson has been welcomed by Forest and Bird's local branches.

**"The Hastings-Havelock North and Napier branches were very concerned about the effects of this proposal on the landscapes, natural character and native seabirds at Cape Kidnappers," says Hastings-Havelock North branch chairman Peter Collins.**

**"Cape Kidnappers is an important breeding location for gannets and other native sea birds. It would have been inappropriate to locate such a major development so close to the gannet breeding colonies."**

ADVERT

## Tourism & Lifestyle Opportunities

ROTORUA - One of New Zealand's best waterfront lodges offered for sale for the first time in 29 years. Described in the Los Angeles Times as "geographically the most beautiful position anywhere in the world". Geoff Stafford 027 288 8788

ROTORUA - 5 Minutes walk from the CBD. Located in quiet side street, 6 bedrooms and owners quarters, Thermal mineral pool and thermal heating of home, easy to maintain home and grounds. John Perrett 027 656 5464 or 07 349 5358

SIERRA CAFÉ - Auckland. Busy indoor/outdoor café on Princes Wharf. Daytime operation only. Fantastic brand with strong support, no royalties. Net \$150,000. Asking price \$395,000 motivated vendor. Louise Rendell 027 472 1870

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.

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[www.bayleys.co.nz/tourism](http://www.bayleys.co.nz/tourism)

