

Out for a duck?

HAS Mark Burton resigned? Only the latest ATTTO newsletter says the Minister of Tourism is Trevor Mallard!

24 nominations for this year's tourism awards

TWENTY-four entries have been nominated for this year's New Zealand Tourism Awards, it was announced at TRENZ tonight (Monday).

They are:

Visitor Accommodation - Heritage Queenstown; Regal Palms - 5 Star City Resort, Rotorua; Te Anau Top 10 Holiday Park, Te Anau.

Visitor Activities and Attractions - Dive Tutukaka, Tutukaka; Elm Wildlife Tours, Dunedin; Hanmer Thermal Pools and Spa, Hanmer; Hell's Gate and Wai Ora Spa, Rotorua; Hobbiton Movie Set and Farm Tours, Matamata; Nomad Safaris, Queenstown; NZONE 'The Ultimate Jump', Queenstown; Otago Museum, Dunedin; Shotover Jet, Queenstown.

Tourism and Transportation Services - International Travel College of New Zealand; Jasons Travel Media Ltd; KEA Campers; New Zealand Tourism Online, Christchurch; ATS Pacific New Zealand; Wotif.com.

Tourism Innovation - Awaroa Lodge, Takaka; Hokitika Wildfoods Festival; Intercity - Flexi Pass; KEA Campers; Lake

Taupo Cycle Challenge; Womad New Zealand 2005 New Plymouth. TIANZ, which organises TRENZ and the awards, says there is an excellent calibre of nominees this year.

CEO Fiona Luhrs says: "For 50 years now the Tourism Industry Awards have recognised those operators who are committed to providing a world class visitor experience backed up by a world class business.

"It is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate those operators who are exceptional at what they do." She adds that getting to the nominee stage is the first step in a thorough review process.

"Firstly, the written entries from these selected nominees were rigorously assessed, critiqued and scored and now each company will undergo an in-depth site visit by industry judges.

"The process is scrupulous because we want the best to win."

The winning companies will be chosen in coming months and will be announced at the Tourism Industry Awards Gala in Auckland on September 21.

* Some 15 of the 24 nominated are exhibiting at TRENZ this week.

Delegates given glimpse of latest Tamaki "touchstone"

AFTER four years of planning, Tamaki Heritage Experiences has announced that the fourth "touchstone" in its network, this time in Christchurch, will open in October next year, adjacent to Ferrymead village.

This evening (Monday) more than 170 international and national buyers and media were taken to the Heathcote Valley for a dramatic and colourful site inspection.

Director Doug Tamaki said: "It has been a long road to get to this point, but it is all so close now. We are set to go and are really looking forward to this experience, splashing more colour on to the offerings of Christchurch - and to that of New Zealand."

He and brother Mike made their mark as the first to take Maori performance out of the hotels and out to a recreated pre-European Maori village set in a forest. Tamaki Maori Village, Rotorua, is now 15 years old!

History, told with flare, innovation and a love of storytelling is the focus of Christchurch. The colonial neighbours, Ferrymead village as well as the colonial flavour of Christchurch itself, have been important considerations in the story development.

Added Mike: "In

(over)

Delegates given glimpse of latest Tamaki “touchstone”

(from pg1) Christchurch, our story is of colonial encounter between two cultures: tangata whenua and the early European settlers. From the costuming, to architecture, to the stories we share, we will remain wholly and solely within the colonial era. Our time frame is post the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (1840) - early fractious days, fraught with challenges but loaded with hope.”

TRENZ delegates heard that the experience will focus in on moments that have helped define the spirit of New Zealand. The treaty, fractious misunderstandings, important interdependence at times and cohesion between two cultures all play their part.

“The story honours our ancestors, as well as those in the ‘here and now’, for their intent - the intention of goodwill and the obligations of the treaty. Our unity as a nation through this document, despite the misunderstandings along the way, makes us unique within the world. It will give a real sense of the spirit of New Zealanders,” Mike added.

Storytelling

The project is the fourth experience in a growing family of storytelling encounters the brothers have. The original, Tamaki Maori Village, has been joined in Rotorua by The Realm of Tane. There the focus is upon pre-European concepts and stories. The company also bought Dart River Wilderness Adventures, which “celebrate the pioneering spirit and southern grit of early settlers - both Maori and European.”

And in Christchurch it will be the colonial era of New Zealand history.

The brothers said the developments are part of a bigger plan to develop a series of cultural “touchstones” across a handful of locations and ultimately to change the way visitors experience New Zealand.

Experience

Each experience constitutes a chapter within an overriding story of New Zealand. Each is within remarkable settings, centres on a specific time in our history and is shared by real New Zealand characters with great stories to tell.

Instead of the Tamaki brothers, guests were met by the great, great, great grandfather and great great great uncle of the brothers, who, guests commented, bore an uncanny resemblance to Mike and Doug!

Koro Hone and Matua Arana Tamaki led guests back to 1860, through Old Christchurch town and Old Christchurch Pa.

Travelling by tram, the guests had a sense of life as it was for the colonial settlers and Maori they encountered.

The idea of the evening was to introduce the feel of the product, which has made its way off the drawing board into action.

Later, over a few quiet beers and a hearty colonial feast, the Tamakis finally made an appearance. They beamed in via satellite from the future - not to mention from a Miami hotel poolside - to introduce their kaumaatua (elders) and their sales and marketing teams.

High profile for Qualmark

MORE than half the eligible exhibitors at TRENZ this year hold a Qualmark licence, demonstrating the commitment by the industry to the delivery of high quality standards. This year 58 percent of those eligible to hold a Qualmark licence, were licensed, compared with 30 percent in 2004.

Last year there were 125 Qualmark licence holders. This year: 202.

“We are working closely with our licence holders at TRENZ to help them profile their Qualmark,” says CEO Geoff Penrose.

Qualmark is also exhibiting, meeting with international buyers to help in their understanding of the quality assurance system. “The system is one of the most innovative in the world, particularly in the endorsement area,” he adds.

Free trip to Taiwan

A two-week trip to Taiwan including airfares and accommodation is being offered by the country’s Ministry of Education for five New Zealand tourism students/agents. The tour, from August 12-25, so they can learn about Taiwan’s history, geography and culture “and to gain an appreciation of what the country has to offer tourists.” Applicants must be 18-35, able to communicate in English, be familiar with the industry and willing and able to promote Taiwan as a tourist destination. Applications have to be in by June 20. Details: Arlenna Schmidt at arlenna.schmidt@attto.org.nz.

Our new extension is completed! Now we want you to come and experience the Chateau Tongariro in all its glory. This May and June we are offering an industry rate of \$70.00 per room per night - You can even stay in the weekend! For bookings e-mail reservations@chateau.co.nz.

- Valid for industry staff only
- Rooms based on 2 persons. Additional persons incur extra person charge
- Valid until June 17th 2005

Includes GST

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The Hermitage to celebrate its most memorable moments...

BIG celebrations are being planned at The Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Mount Cook. The property has a history dating back more than 120 years - and plans are underway to celebrate memorable moments in the iconic hotel's history.

September 22 marks the 50th anniversary of the first ski plane landing onto the Tasman Glacier.

Mount Cook Ski Planes made aviation history in 1955, when Sir Harry Wigley made the first snow landing in the ZK BDX Auster aircraft equipped with "home-made skis." It was a unique bit of Kiwi ingenuity - the first fixed wing landing experience onto a glacier.

Today Mount Cook Ski Planes continue to fly the Alps and the company reportedly operates the only fixed wing snow landing experience in the southern hemisphere.

The anniversary will be observed on October 1

hopefully to fit in with the election schedule of PM Helen Clark and Sir Edmund Hillary, who will be attending. Sir Edmund was on the second flight onto the glacier that day 50 years ago.

Celebrations continue next year when the centenary of the arrival of the first two cars to be driven to Mount Cook is marked on February 8.

The Hermitage has bought the only surviving car - a 1902 De Dion Bouton on display at TRENZ this week. (The other car was destroyed in a garage fire in Fairlie in 1907).

This anniversary will see a commemorative vintage car rally from Timaru to Mount Cook between February 4 and 6 and a re-enactment of the 4am arrival of the two cars will be held on the anniversary day. More than 100 vintage and veteran cars are registered for the rally including five Rolls-Royces from the UK and the US.



Hotel, Tourism and Leisure Consultants

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Luxury Lodge General Manager

Our client, the owner of a luxury lodge in the South Island, requires a General Manager who will be overall responsible for the operation of the lodge.

The lodge is presently undergoing an extensive refurbishment programme and on completion later this year will be positioned at the upper-end of the New Zealand luxury lodge market.

The General Manager position is both challenging and rewarding for a pro-active and enthusiastic person or couple. Attributes of candidates our client is specifically looking for are:

- * management experience and expertise in luxury lodges or resorts
- * international experience, as the majority of the guests are international FIT visitors
- * ability to operate independently with a high degree of initiative
- * ability to undertake a 'hands-on' role
- * knowledge of food and beverage
- * sales and marketing, financial management, budgeting, cost control and planning
- * results driven
- * motivation of staff
- * empathy with the outdoors

To apply for this rewarding position, please forward your CV and covering letter to Frank Mestrom by 10 June 2005 at frank.mestrom@horwath.co.nz or Horwath Asia Pacific Limited, PO Box 628, Auckland 1015.

Horwath Asia Pacific Limited is a management consulting firm specialising in the hotel, tourism and leisure industries, and is a member of Horwath International Association. The firm's website is www.hap.horwath.co.nz

THL launches eco-trust with BP

A far reaching eco-trust that will raise funds for environmental projects has been launched by THL and BP. It aims to raise \$200,000 a year.

The scheme is to be funded by a loyalty fuel card that is handed to everyone hiring a THL motorhome, campervan or rental car, and to THL staff.

Says THL MD Denis Pickup: "As New Zealand's leading tourism operator, we take a long-term view and establishing this trust shows our determination to make an ongoing contribution to a sustainable future for this country's natural resources."

He adds: "The pristine environment and unique wildlife we have in this country continue to be a major draw for many of our international visitors. It is part of THL's vision to help protect these precious resources - not just for tourists, who contribute enormously to our economy, but also for New Zealanders and the generations to come."

Environment Minister Marian Hobbs says our environment is special and plays a vital role in tourism. "It's encouraging to see one of our biggest tourism companies recognising that link and actively playing its part as a responsible business."

Under the scheme BP will make a contribution to the trust for every litre of petrol or diesel sold to travellers

who present their card when they purchase fuel. THL will match BP's contribution dollar for dollar and the funds will be paid into the THL-BP Charitable Trust for distribution to environmental projects.

An attention-getter will be the bright green swing tag dangling from the key ring of every Maui, Britz, and Backpacker rental vehicle.

The scheme will be promoted through all THL's businesses: Fullers Bay of Islands, Kelly Tarlton's Antarctic Encounter and Underwater World, the Waitomo Glowworm Caves, The Legendary Black Water Rafting Co./Ruakuri Caves, Milford Sound Red Boat Cruises, Johnston's Coachlines, Great Sightings and Kiwi Experience.

Januskiewicz: *the reason why*

SHOTOVER Jet CEO Adrian Januskiewicz says he's resigned so he can go into partnership with a private equity investor. "Our intention is to invest in a portfolio of businesses including in the tourism industry." He tells *IT*: "We are looking for opportunities where we can add value whether by way of capital injection and/or intellectual capital." Why? "I really enjoy the process of growing great businesses and it has long been a goal of mine to do this in a business where I have an equity stake."

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Special Rate for Industry Stars

What do Rod Stewart, Neil Diamond, Cher and Billy Connolly all have in common?

They have all enjoyed the hospitality of Crowne Plaza Christchurch recently.

Come and sample the hospitality yourself (at a slightly cheaper rate than they paid). We are very pleased to advise that Crowne Plaza Christchurch's special industry rate of

\$125.00

per night plus GST

Will now be valid until 30th September 2005

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3 restaurants and 2 bars

Innovative dining options – ask about the Dine-Around or Chef's Table

Central city location with undercover parking

Complimentary mountain bike use

298 luxurious guestrooms and suites including two Club Floors_ (Club Rooms are an additional \$60+GST and include twilight drinks, continental breakfast and 24 hour access to the Club Lounge)

High speed Internet in all accommodation rooms

We really appreciate the support we receive industry and are delighted to be able to hold this rate for a longer period for our industry star guests.

Call Crowne Plaza Christchurch Reservations on 03 365 7799.

On the move...

AFTER seven years as TNZ's RM Japan, Tenshin Kobayashi is retiring at the end of July.

TNZ CEO George Hickton says: "Tenshin pioneered a number of product development initiatives aimed at improving New Zealand's seasonal performance, as well as challenging the traditional golden route mentality of the Japanese travel industry."

He established the Te Papa Club consultation concept that has provided a strong marketing influence for New Zealand at a high level in the Japanese industry. Mr Hickton says Mr Kobayashi has become a passionate "Kiwi" during his time with TNZ. "He has been an enormous influence on New Zealand's significant profile in the tourism and travel sector in Japan."

CATHY Hemsworth, NCC (NZ) Ltd director sales and marketing, has resigned, effective June 30. Ms Hemsworth, who has been with the venue management company six years, has bought a shareholding and becomes a director of The Conference Company with Jan Tonkin.

Executive director Mike Kelly will be acting sales and marketing director in the interim, a role he also filled 1996-99.

SUBRITZKY SeaLink has appointed Donna Gauci as sales and marketing manager. Mrs Gauci has more than 20 years experience in tourism and travel - having worked in retail, wholesale, inbound and Australian tourism product sectors.

As GM sales for Great Southern Railway, she was responsible for promoting Australia's Ghan and Indian Pacific Railways in South Australia. Starting her career with United Travel in Auckland, she also served as CEO of the Proud Australia Holidays Group, which included, among other interests, the Barossa Wine Train and 'Proud Mary' replica paddle steamer on the Murray River.

Subritzky has also made Jean Goodbrand product development manager. Ms Goodbrand, who is a resident of Waiheke Island, has responsibility for promoting Waiheke and Great Barrier.

Her previous career highlights include serving as GM for Abercrombie and Kent and as Harvey World Travel's first New Zealand franchise manager. For the past four years she has been responsible for marketing the Subritzky brand.

Paulette Campbell has been appointed sales and marketing co-ordinator. Miss Campbell brings extensive sales and marketing experience to this new role garnered from within the hotel industry and FMCG sector - most particularly with the Goodman Fielder Group and Nestlé.

2,300 expected at ATE

THE most important trade event on the Australian tourism industry's calendar, the Australian Tourism Exchange, begins in Perth on Saturday. About 600 international wholesalers and around 1,700 delegates from 630 Australian tourism businesses will attend. Tourism Australia is also hosting 41 international media.

Barmy Army for swaggers' muster

TOTARA Estate, North Otago, is hosting a "swaggers' muster" on June 17 and 24 - to coincide with the arrival of the Lions Barmy Army.

Spokesman Scott Elliffe says the aim is to introduce the Brits to "the home of their Sunday roast", a reference to Totara's experimental role in frozen meat exporting to the mother country. Small "live days" are planned prior to the Lions' games against Otago and the first test in Christchurch.

Visitors can expect: a taste of hot mutton broth, girdle scones and butter-making in the cookhouse; horse and carriage rides; storytelling and quilting in the men's quarters; displays of traditional trades including blacksmithing and woodworking.

There will also be a swagger's tale or two around the campfire, together with billy tea and damper and sheep dog displays. Details: phone/fax: 03-4347169.

NZ airfares stable, says Amex survey

NEW Zealand is enjoying some of the most stable airfares in the region according to the second quarter American Express Airfares Index for Asia Pacific.

Lodge reverts to opening rates

GRASMERE Lodge, in celebration of its 10th anniversary, is reverting to its opening tariff for July, August and September. It opened with seven guest rooms in the original 1858 limestone homestead. The lodge now consists of 13 guest rooms designed and built to today's exacting standards. Rooms are contained within three new separate buildings. Guest rooms include six deluxe rooms and seven junior suites. The celebratory tariff, which applies to a minimum two-night stay is \$300 plus GST per person per night for a twin or double room and \$350 for a junior suite. This is inclusive of a pre-dinner cocktail hour, five-course gourmet evening meal, full breakfast, and a 90-minute 4WD tour. Current tariffs are \$600 to \$800 per person per night. "We've had an exciting first 10 years winning numerous awards, including Andrew Harper's Grand Award," says GM Tom Butler. "We want to celebrate by making Grasmere Lodge more accessible to New Zealanders over winter, so they can see why tourists are raving about New Zealand's luxury lodges."

Railway website upgraded

TAIERI Gorge Railway's website www.taieri.co.nz has had a total make-over and is described as "much brighter and user friendly."

Hurunui has a rethink on RTO self-funding, after TIANZ warning

A proposal that Hurunui's RTO be self-funding would make the district promotion and marketing dependent on voluntary contributions. TIANZ has told Hurunui District Council that such an approach is risky - because it's never worked anywhere else.

TIANZ suggested the council drop the proposal, which is in its draft annual plan. It is inappropriate because the non-exclusive nature of the benefits of marketing and problems with "freeloading" create a high level of risk that the agency responsible would not have enough critical mass to be effective.

"This in turn could jeopardise the future of the local tourism industry, an industry which the council claims to support."

Self-funding is also inappropriate because community surveys show a high level of support for the council being directly involved in tourism and district promotion.

The proposed model does not recognise the wide indirect benefits of tourism activity and would make a small section of the community responsible for paying for a service which would benefit many other residents indirectly. "This is illogical and inequitable."

TIANZ suggested that council drop the idea in favour of a combination of general and targeted rates.

"Such a funding approach recognises the value of tourism to the local economy, supports the feedback provided in a recent community survey, and would demonstrate that the council is serious about playing an active role in ensuring tourism is successful in the future."

TIANZ said it has consistently recognised the valuable role councils have in the economic development of local areas and the country as a whole.

"Overall, there is a symbiotic relationship between tourism and local authorities and the communities they represent. Supportive communities enable tourism to flourish in local areas."

Councils can add value to the industry where they: engage in fair and equitable rating practices and ensure that funding decisions lead to productive outcomes for all; undertake activities that lead to strong public good outcomes; ensure core infrastructure is of a high standard and can support a happy community and a vibrant industry; recognise the importance of early and

frequent consultation with the business community; work with tourism to "manage" regions as destinations and to promote and market local areas effectively. TIANZ also pointed out that guest nights have increased 61 percent in Hurunui over the past five years.

"TIA encourages the council to continue to pursue policies that enable it to grow."

* A survey undertaken in October 2003 shows that 79 percent of residents "strongly agree" or "agree" that Hurunui needs to continue its involvement with tourism and district promotion compared to 13 percent who "disagree" or "strongly disagree."

"We suggest the council's proposition that there should be a shift away from using general and targeted rates to fund marketing and promotional activities is not justified by the results from the residents' survey," it added. "On the contrary, the survey results would appear to support the continuation of the use of rates to fund tourism promotion."

Hurunui Tourism says it has emerged from the review with a green light to continue its operations in destination marketing and management.

The review occurred under the draft annual plan, in response to the Hurunui District Council's decision to re-engineer tourism funding.

Many submissions were received on the issue leading the council to decide on a funding model with a higher level of industry contribution and a reduced contribution from general rates.

Mayor Garry Jackson says: "The importance of tourism for our region is clear and we have re-engineered the funding model to meet the long term needs of both the local tourism industry and our ratepayers."

Hurunui Tourism GM Scott Pearson adds: "The quality and strength of submissions highlighted how far Hurunui has come in the last 10 years. It also demonstrated that some form of collective council funding was essential for sustainable growth of the visitor destination."

He says a challenge will be to make sure the community, councillors and others stay informed of the RTO's purpose and achievements. Hurunui Tourism will operate with a similar budget to last year.

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Campaign needed to stop the slide in Japan, says Gunji

WE need to launch a short-term strategic campaign in Japan to lure back holidaymakers after a 3.2 percent decrease in arrivals from that market in the first quarter of this year.

Southern Travel Holdings MD Kiyomi Gunji tells *IT* the 100%Pure campaign is generally working. But more needs to be done to stop the sudden downturn.

“Japan outbound is growing at 14 percent a year. It is healthy growth. But we are not getting them here or in Australia.

“Between January and April there was a big downturn. It is very disappointing as we were expecting growth. The trend started in December and looks like continuing in May...”

Aggressive

Mr Gunji says other destinations have been more aggressive since SARS, the Iraq war and the Boxing Day tsunami. “Europe, the US and particularly mainland China, and Asia in general are being aggressive in securing market share.”

Mr Gunji says that while New Zealand has been popular for a long time other markets are catching up “and possibly taking over the growth.”

He adds: “We have to stimulate the market harder than the other countries. It needs a separate campaign.”

Mr Gunji, whose company is responsible for 25,000-30,000 Japanese arrivals into New Zealand each year, says countries like the US and UK are spending big dollars in Japan. We have to do the same.

He suggests trying to boost the school groups’ sector, as well as senior citizens, as New Zealand has broad appeal to them.

They love nature and short walks in a safe environment.

“So a campaign needs to stimulate this group, too, as well as the general FIT.”

The young “office ladies” group, which has been visiting New Zealand for more than 20 years, is now taking shorter breaks closer to home. We also appear to be losing the honeymoon market.

Mr Gunji says AirNZ has a campaign to entice the office ladies back by promoting wine tours and visits to places like Waiheke Island.

There is a need for more than one carrier on the Japan-New Zealand route. Japan Airlines code shares with AirNZ but has only about 10 percent of the capacity, so they don’t do much promotion of the destination.

He says that of 168,000 Japanese arrivals only about 100,000 book through operators or travel companies of which his firm has 25 percent of what is becoming a dwindling market.

Busy in Southland

SOME Southland operators report they were busier than normal in April and May. Venture Southland Tourism manager Kate Watkinson says it’s encouraging to see a shift in the shoulder season.

Government accused of about-face

GOVERNMENT has made a dramatic about-face on its proposals to introduce stricter vehicle exhaust emissions legislation, points out the Bus and Coach Association. It says that, following consultation with the wider industry and a trial programme, the Ministry of Transport has concluded its proposals, would be too costly to implement, too difficult to perform and unreliable in practice.



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