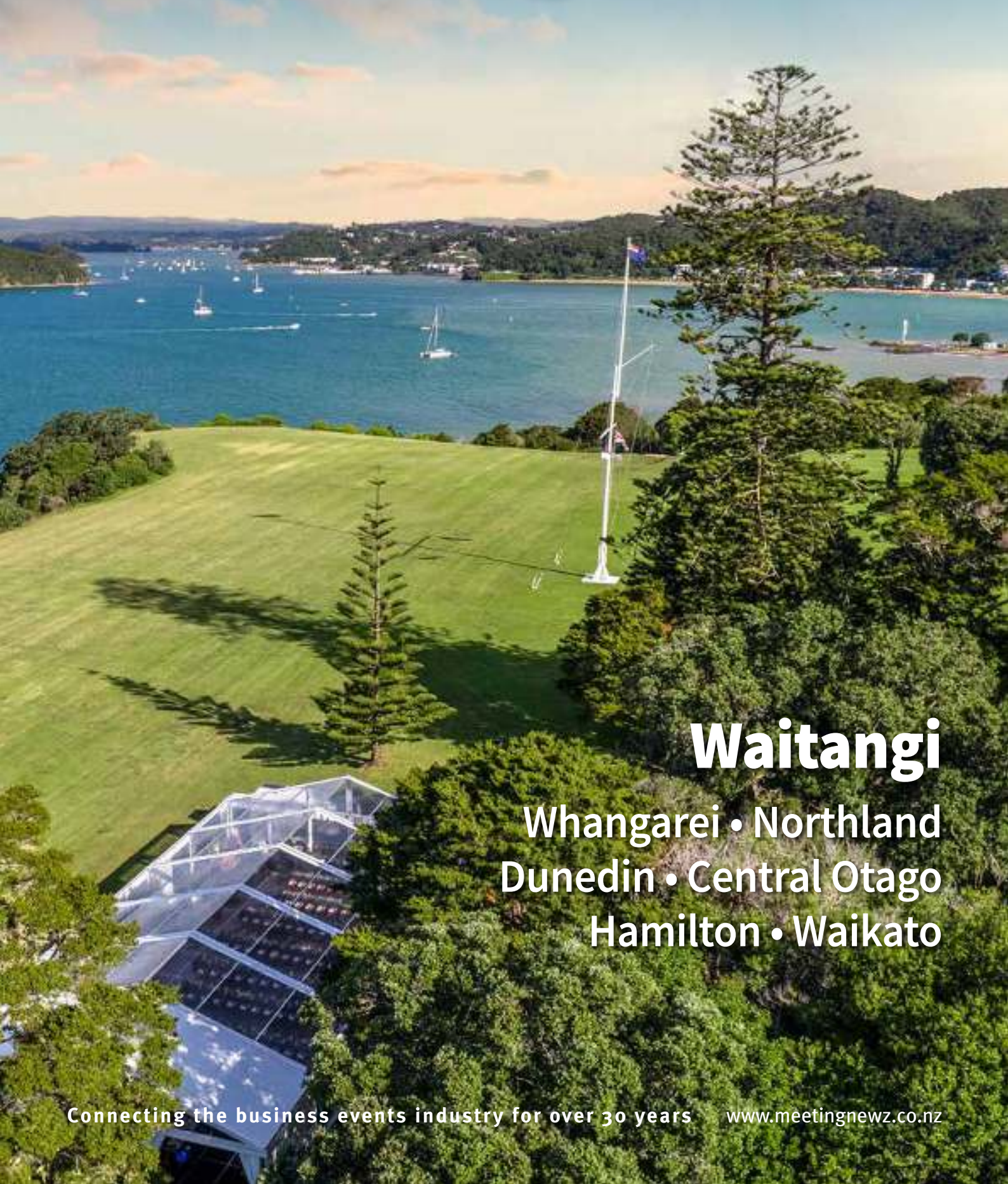


NEW ZEALAND'S

MARCH/APRIL 2023

meeting newz

● The Conference, Incentive & Exhibition Magazine



Waitangi

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Dunedin • Central Otago
Hamilton • Waikato

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Contents

Features

Dunedin/Central Otago	10
Northland/ Waitangi	22
Hamilton/Waikato	30
Brisbane	44

Regular Features

News	4
Social Scene	26 & 27
People on the Move	28

Industry Insights


NZEA Column	38
AIME Review	46
BEIA Column	48
Coast Group Series	50

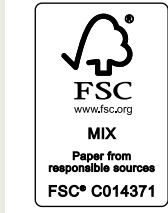
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Note from the publishers...

They say timing is everything, but when it comes to launching a new product or service there is often a sense of trepidation as to whether the time is actually right.

We at Tourism Media Group believe the business events sector is ready for a new Business Events Expo which will take place on 21 November 2023 at the Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland.

The exhibition will bring suppliers and buyers together again in Auckland, for the first time in several years, and provide opportunities for businesses of all sizes to be involved. The Business Events Expo will bring together a world of events from New Zealand, Australia, Pacific and beyond all under one roof – a significant point of difference to other business events expos in New Zealand.

We are working with some of the best operators in the industry to deliver the event and we can't wait to bring it to market. You can read more about it on page 4.

Attending many great face-to-face events recently and experiencing their continued effectiveness has confirmed the value of bringing the Business Events Expo to the New Zealand market. You can't beat the interaction and energy these events provide and nowhere was this more evident than at AIME in Melbourne in February. AIME celebrated 30 years in style – the buzz and business conducted over three days reinforced the need to meet in person.

MEETINGS will also create history in June when, for the first time in 27 years, it will take place in Wellington at the new Takina – Wellington Convention and Exhibition Centre. Wellington will be an amazing host and our full MEETINGS Preview in the May/June edition will give our readers a taste of what to expect from our capital city.

Meantime, the clean up continues for many of our regions in the North Island after Cyclone Gabrielle. The east coast was one of the hardest hit and plenty of hard work has been going on to restore communities. We have an update from Hawke's Bay on page 40 which sees the region welcoming guests back and grateful to visitors contributing to the local community after weeks of disruption.

In this edition of Meeting Newz we also bring you the latest developments from the Northland/Bay of Islands, Hamilton/Waikato and Dunedin/Central Otago regions.

We look at the latest offering from Brisbane, review the recent AIME event and provide our regular industry news, events, people on the move and social pages. Of course we also have updates from our key partners BEIA and NZEA.

Put the coffee on and enjoy the read.

Paul, Terry and Gary



Upcoming Meeting Newz 2023/24 features

May June 2023

- Invercargill
- Southland & Fiordland
- Wairarapa
- Wellington
- West Coast
- MEETINGS Preview Magazine

July August 2023

- Bay of Plenty
- Taupo
- Rotorua
- Australia
- MEETINGS Review
- Incentives

September October 2023

- Christchurch & Canterbury
- Marlborough
- Nelson Tasman
- Australia
- End of year celebrations and events
- Pacific Business Events Magazine

November December 2023

- Auckland
- Hawke's Bay
- Gisborne
- Australia
- Sustainability, CSR
- Company Profiles
- Dreamtime review
- PCOA preview

January February 2024

- Taranaki
- Palmerston North
- Whanganui
- Australia
- AIME Preview
- PCOA Review

March April 2024

- Bay of Islands/Waitangi
- Northland/Whangarei
- Queenstown and Southern Lakes
- Australia
- Pacific update
- AIME 2023 Review

Features subject to change

For any enquiries regarding the upcoming features please contact
Terry: terry@meetingnewz.co.nz or **Paul:** paul@meetingnewz.co.nz







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HOTELS AND RESORTS



Restaurant refurb for Waitakere Resort & Spa

Waitakere Resort & Spa, located in the Waitakere ranges, has recently undergone a refurbishment of the restaurant. It is a continuation of the investment and development of the property over the last few years.

Owner Reg Nevill-Jackson says the restaurant has had a complete refurbishment with new carpet, wallpaper and furniture.

“The new carpet is in keeping with the native rainforest setting within the Waitakere Ranges and the chair frames sourced from Italy were assembled and upholstered by Archers Hospitality who are based in Kaiwaka.”

He says that the resort's conference business has come back strong post-Covid and future corporate bookings are looking promising. The resort offers a range of meeting spaces, accommodation, spa and wellness centre which create a true retreat for delegates.



Waitakere Resort & Spa Restaurant

A new exhibition aimed at the conference, association and group travel sectors will bring the best of business events from around New Zealand and beyond to Auckland later this year.

Just launched by Tourism Media Group, publisher of Meeting Newz magazine, The Business Events Expo will take place at the Viaduct Events Centre on 21 November.

TMG directors Paul Hailes, Terry Holt and Gary Covich say the show is filling a specific need in the market and will complement existing events in the conference, incentive and business travel sectors.

It will be the first time in New Zealand that both national and international business events solutions will be presented under one roof in one day.

Exhibitors will include national and regional tourism offices (NTOs and RTOs), venues, accommodation, conference and exhibition services, destination management companies (DMCs) and transport providers. Niche and boutique operators like cruise vessels, lodges and other off-site options are also welcome to be involved.

“This will be the first event of its kind in Auckland for several years and will reinforce

the return of the Viaduct Events Centre to this market,” says Paul Hailes.

TMG, working with industry partners The Coast Group, The Production Agency, Tourism Marketing Solutions, Event Solutions and TRAVELinc Memo, will deliver a mixture of pre-scheduled appointments and free-flowing meeting and networking opportunities.

Buyers will be administrative professionals, EAs, PAs, professional event planners, destination wedding professionals, sporting and trade associations, travel management companies, travel brokers and retail agents, travel wholesalers and special interest group operators.

“We are offering exhibitors flexible options, to give smaller, niche event suppliers the opportunity to be part of this new event, which we believe will appeal to the buyers we will be attracting,” says Terry Holt.

Registration details will soon be available on line at businesseventsexpo.co.nz. In the meantime anyone who is interested in attending as an exhibitor or buyer can contact:

Paul Hailes, paul@tourismmedia.co.nz
or Terry Holt, terry@tourismmedia.co.nz



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Business Events Sales Manager

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Offshore incentives – back big time

Interest in offshore incentives has never been greater, according to organisers and attendees at Destination Management Services re-Connect workshop and roadshow in late February.

The event at The Maritime Room in Auckland attracted 50 local incentive organisers and sellers of high end leisure travel and special interest group tours. This was a record for the trade expo and up from 35 when it was last held in February 2020.

Exhibitors included 18 destination management companies (DMCs) and five others made up of national tourist offices and airlines.

Marissa Fernandez, managing director at DMS, says things have never been busier out of New Zealand.

"People are cashed up now, they didn't go anywhere for three years, companies have saved money from that and from having people working at home."

Joelle Talbot, managing director of Fortis Events and a panelist during re-Connect, says

companies are desperate to get their teams away and engage with them again.

"Because people have not travelled for so long many of them are making their own individual arrangements and taking a leisure holiday after the incentive programme."

Adam Leslie, general manager – events at 212F, says enquiries for offshore incentives are surging. "People have missed seeing each other – we're back in the game."



At DMS re-Connect in Auckland Christian Fernandez and Marissa Fernandez, both Destination Management Services; Jenny Walsh, Motive Events

TableHub partners with the Hurricanes

TableHub has partnered with the Hurricanes for the 2023 Super Rugby season. TableHub will be transforming the corporate lounge table experience at all Hurricanes home games at Sky Stadium in Wellington.

"We are thrilled to partner with the Hurricanes for the 2023 Super Rugby season and are looking forward to elevating the corporate lounge experience for their guests," says Xanthe Smythe, marketing manager for TableHub. "TableHub will assist with delivering brand messaging and incorporate engagement opportunities for guests while they are at the table; acknowledging and promoting high value sponsors with extended brand exposure.

"It is exciting to see TableHub being utilised outside of the traditional gala dinner and awards night set up, and really showcasing the versatile nature of the Tablehub platform."

Dunedin takes a trophy with congress win



Hinds on the Invermay Hill Farm overlooking the Taieri Plains

Dunedin has won the International Deer Biology Congress in 2026, which will attract up to 500 cervid researchers and professionals to the 'unofficial wildlife capital of New Zealand'.

Themed 'Your Deer Here', the conference will take place in February 2026 at the University of Otago, bringing together biologists, ecologists, veterinarians, geneticists, wildlife managers, conservationists, food, health and production researchers to discuss the diverse aspects of deer management and biology from various perspectives globally.

It's the first time the event has been held in New Zealand since Dunedin hosted the inaugural event in 1983. The winning bid was

led by scientist Jamie Ward from AgResearch, with support from Deer Industry New Zealand, Enterprise Dunedin, and the Tourism New Zealand Business Events team.

Tourism Marketing Solutions, which specialises in connecting buyers of conference product with suppliers, initiated the conversation between Deer Industry New Zealand and Enterprise Dunedin.

"We thank the TMS team for connecting us with our winning bid champion," says Louise Woodburn, business events lead - Enterprise Dunedin. "Their relationships with industry leaders and knowledge of our region plays a key part in helping us secure business events."

Jamie Ward says: "Dunedin was chosen for its iconic legacy with this congress, its strength in Deer Science at AgResearch's Invermay Agricultural Centre, and the strong history of scientific excellence at Otago University, as well as a fascinating history of deer introductions, diverse landscapes and uniquely accessible wildlife. To get the news of hosting this congress not long after we celebrated the milestone of 50 years of Deer Science at Invermay makes it even more special.

"We want to bring together the world deer science community as well as bringing together the entire New Zealand deer community which has never been done before.

"The intention is not only to showcase New Zealand and our interesting and innovative approaches to deer, but to share our ideas, techniques and technologies, learn from our international colleagues and have wide-ranging conversations on how we can work to improve all things deer globally.

"We also want our visitors to have a great time and hopefully extend their stays to see more of New Zealand, so many of them are very excited already, it really is a bucket list country to visit and see 'Their Deer Here'."

Emil Murphy, science and policy manager at Deer Industry New Zealand, adds: "This win is testament to the close relationship between researchers and industry that has enabled New Zealand to be at the leading edge of deer science for the last 50 years. The congress will help build interest for deer science in New Zealand and lift the research collaborations that will advance our knowledge about deer."



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Te Pae Christchurch commits to carbonzero

Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre has taken the next step in its sustainability journey, drafting an agreement with Toitū Envirocare as the centre commits to reducing its environmental footprint.

The agreement is to join and work towards to being a certified Toitū net carbonzero organisation. This commitment underscores the seriousness with which the centre is approaching its environmental obligations.

Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre general manager Ross Steele says committing to net carbonzero operations is a clear indication of the centre's desire to lead by example and create meaningful change.

“For us, sustainability and sustainable operations go beyond just measuring waste and offsetting carbon emissions. It's about legacy – what we leave behind for future generations, and how we instil values that will ensure we are not only environmentally sensitive but leading the way in this area for years to come.”

Steele says with the centre yet to complete its first year of operations, the focus is currently on the benchmarking phase. “It's essential to get an accurate benchmark of operations to not just know where we are at, but where we need to head in the future.

“From here, we will turn our attention to achieving net carbonzero operations by the end of the next financial year,” Steele says.

“The goal will then be to bring clients and suppliers along on the journey and look at ways to work with them to minimise the impact of the events we host – something we are well supported in with Ōtautahi Christchurch's own commitment to reaching net zero emissions.”

ChristchurchNZ head of business events, Megan Crum says the destination's guiding principle is ‘Small Footprint – Big Impression’.

As the region's economic development agency, ChristchurchNZ has a big part to play in helping to foster and promote sustainability initiatives.

“Among the many actions underway for the business events space this year will be delivering a comprehensive Business Events Sustainability Framework for Christchurch, doing our bit to help achieve the target to halve the city's emissions by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2045,” she says.

When looking at partners to assist the centre in its journey to carbonzero, Toitū Envirocare was the obvious choice, Steele says.

Not only a long-standing Te Pae Christchurch partner, the Toitū carbon



Ross Steele & Megan Crum speaking with the press at AIME 2023 about its sustainability journey

programmes are also the only ones in New Zealand certified under the ISO 14064 standard (organisation) and ISO 14067 standard (product) by the JAS-ANZ (Joint Accreditation System for Australia and New Zealand), meaning they are internationally recognised.

“Toitū has been an invaluable part of our journey to date. The guidance and support they have provided us since 2020 in their capacity as New Zealand's strongest environmental programme has set us up well to take this next step.

“The fact their programmes take a science-based approach also gives us the confidence to aim high and set big goals in this area.”

BEIA launches 10th BE Mentored programme



Mentees warm up with a Team Up Events session.

Business Events Industry Aotearoa (BEIA) has launched its 10th BE Mentored Programme with a one day meet-up for 50 participants in Auckland late February.

The six-month programme will see 25 mentee/mentor pairings taking part, the largest group since BEIA (then CINZ) began the programme in 2014.

BEIA chief executive, Lisa Hopkins says as the peak industry body, BEIA recognises investing in the development of talent is key to boosting the sector's growth.

“New Zealand's business events capacity and its people capabilities go hand in hand. With New Zealand in high demand on the world stage, it is more important than

ever to be nurturing and developing our business events talent.

“With support from Tourism New Zealand, we are able to offer this highly sought-after programme with real benefits for all participants,” she says.

Mentees come from a broad range of event management, tourism and hospitality backgrounds and are looking to develop their careers, build valuable relationships and broaden their experience within the business events industry. Mentors, who all volunteer their time, are experienced practitioners within their fields and hold senior management positions.

“The response from both mentors and mentees who took part in previous programmes has been outstanding. We give mentees a personal support system, to help both professionally and personally, while mentors have the chance to share and give back to the sector, nurturing and sharing the wisdom of their experience,” she says.

Leadership development expert, Sally Doherty of Sallyd & Co is facilitating the training sessions. On launch day, mentees joined a collaborative session with Team Up

Events, while mentors took part in a learning session with Dr Angela Lim, CEO and founder of Clearhead, a specialist in mental health support for workplaces and individuals.

Mentors also took part in a leadership summit where they heard first-hand from industry colleagues located in the areas devastated by the recent weather events.

“It was crucial, after a session on mental health, to hear from members of our industry affected by the recent weather, and to talk about the issue of health and safety. This was an important korero (discussion) and it was vital for those affected to feel the support,” says Hopkins.

The BE Mentored programme runs from March to August, with mentors and mentees meeting six or more times during that period. BEIA will hold a mid-point online get together for participants to share experiences so far and provide any advice and support to each other, and be available throughout the programme for support and advice. The programme will conclude with a recognition event held during BEIA's annual conference from 18 to 21 September 2023 in Marlborough.

— MEET THE — ORIGINALS

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Sean Marsh, Te Puia

— MEET — SEAN

Protection of the rich local natural and cultural taonga (treasures) of Rotorua is what drew Sean in 11 years ago. He still feels a strong responsibility to the tipuna (ancestors) who fought hard to create the proud cultural and geothermal town that Rotorua is today. After more than a decade, Sean's passion is still burning strong and his focus is sharp on delivering unique and memorable events for manuhiri (visitors) that are talked about for years to come.



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Local flavour and collaboration enhances
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Building on the Village of Learning concept and connecting conference organisers with local experts from many different sectors is one of the major objectives of Enterprise Dunedin.

Louise Woodburn, Enterprise Dunedin's business events lead, says the organisation is continuing to work with Dunedin Venues Management Limited (DMVL) and Tourism New Zealand to nurture relationships with academic institutions and others in the city.

'We are hosting a breakfast with Tourism New Zealand at the University of Otago and we are planning another at

Otago Polytechnic.

'We are also looking at extending this to industry sectors.'

Woodburn says Dunedin has a strong cohort of 'whizz kids' working in various sectors. 'These people fly under the radar, but they have a wealth of expertise to pass on.

'So, if business events organisers want a real local flavour at their conference this is a way that objective can be achieved.'

Green Pavlova Conference 2022,
Dunedin Town Hall. Photo: DunedinNZ

She says the city is currently bidding for a major conference in the brewery and distillery sector, where local expertise in the field will definitely be a drawcard.

In terms of confirmed future events, with more of an academic slant, Dunedin is looking forward to hosting the International Deer Biology Congress in 2026 and the International Congress of History of Science and Technology Conference in 2025 which has just had dates confirmed for 30 June to 3 July.

Woodburn says Enterprise Dunedin, in collaboration with hotels, venues and other suppliers, is also keen to work with organisers around the timing of their events.

“We want to make sure we don’t have someone confirm a venue for a multi-day conference and then find out it’s hard, or incredibly expensive, to get a room. That doesn’t enhance the experience for anyone – including the conference delegates.

“Our accommodation partners and function venues are key, so for any conference enquiry of 200-plus delegates that goes to Dunedin Venues we do a quick check that the dates work for everyone.”

Getting around

While it is not unusual for cities to claim they are ‘walkable,’ Dunedin really does have solid credentials when it comes to getting around by foot.

“We have more than 600 four to five-star hotel rooms within five to 10 minutes walk of the Dunedin Centre,” says Woodburn. “For most weeks of the year we can easily house 300 people in good accommodation and they



Otago Museum

can have a leisurely walk to the venue.”

She says this obviously fits well with the focus on sustainability.

“The core programme of the World Leisure Congress looks like it will be completely walkable – they are planning to use no transport once they are here in the city. It gives the clients exercise as well and it is almost impossible to get lost.

“At the same time, if people do want to get out of the city for an off-site function, we have exciting options for that as well.”

Tūhura Otago Museum

Combining the private venue hire and public programmes teams has created a larger team to handle the wider events related business at Tūhura Otago Museum.

This allows the museum to have better coverage across events throughout the facility, better strategise the use of venue spaces and bring the finesse of venue hire to public events and the innovation of public



The Otago Museum events team - Jessica Hatfield, Rachel MacJeff, Imogen Ramsay

programmes to private venue hires.

“We wanted to bring a bit of that events pizzazz to our venues and conferences,” says new manager Rachel MacJeff.

The changes make it easier for corporate clients to create special experiences as part of their own events – from karaoke in the Planetarium to cocktails in the Tropical Forest, team-building workshops in the Science Centre and bespoke tours from museum professionals.

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Scenic Hotel Southern Cross



With over 18 events spaces on offer, the museum is flexible in the variety of events it can host.

It is one of Dunedin's featured spaces for balls and gala dinners, conferences and meetings. The museum frequently hosts public talks and forums for clients around Dunedin and has a close relationship with education providers across the city.

Since the merger, the venue has run new events such as murder mystery nights, interactive film screenings and live performances.

Scenic Hotels

The Scenic Hotel and Scenic Hotel Southern Cross offer a total of 299 centrally located rooms, plus dedicated conference venues.

Ali Smith, head of product and innovation at Scenic Hotel Gorup, says all of the team at the properties uphold the Hospitality Principle. More than just hospitality, this encompasses respect, generosity and care for each other and the guests.

"At Dunedin City this is led by hands-on manager Adrian Clifton, while at the Southern Cross the longevity and passion of the general manager /area general manager Richard De Graaf and his team allows them to give great continuity and a high level of

service for every event."

De Graaf, points out that head porter Martin Lillis has been welcoming guests at Scenic Hotel Southern Cross for nearly 30 years. "Guests love being recognised and acknowledged.

"When looking for the perfect destination for conference programmes, pre or post conference incentives or rewards for delegates and/or incentive qualifiers, Dunedin as a region and Scenic Hotel Group deliver the goods. Combining the people, the diversity of the central business hub and a region full of surprises, Dunedin is ideal for a concervative programme," De Graaf adds.

Smith points out that while Dunedin is justifiably known as the wildlife capital of New Zealand, it can also claim to be 'the fastest tech city' in New Zealand – thanks to the likes of Sir Ian Taylor working behind the scenes.

"The benefits of these substantially faster internet speeds mean that Dunedin's tech companies and other businesses have a massive competitive advantage – seamless streaming and smooth uninterrupted high-definition experiences are the norm. This is great news for business events organisers bringing a conference, meeting, or incentive

programme to the city."

Fable Dunedin

With a picturesque location, Fable Dunedin offers a Qualmark five-star blend of elegance and functionality for meetings and events.

Fable Hotels' director of sales and marketing Lisa Breckon, points out that the event space features state-of-the-art technology and amenities, including its audio-visual equipment and high-speed internet access.

"The hotel's team of specialists is on hand to ensure that each event is executed to perfection, from the initial planning stages to the day of the event."

Breckon says The Chancellor Room is the centrepiece of Fable Dunedin's event spaces.

"With its soaring ceilings, stained glass windows, and timeless feel, it is a perfect setting for weddings, banquets and other grand events. Groups can use the adjoining pre-function space for cocktails or pre-dinner drinks."

For smaller gatherings or meetings, the hotel offers three rooms that can accommodate a range of social events, board meetings, team-building sessions and presentations.



POSITIVE COMMUNITY IMPACT

Ali Copeman, managing director of akB Conference Management, says much of her consideration is around how business events she works with can leave a positive legacy in the community.

"We've been on the sustainability path for many years but we are also increasingly looking at how we impact the local people in a wider sense."

Copeman points to the International

Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity Conference 2023, set for late June in Dunedin.

"There is a real connection between academics, clinicians and the community and we are holding a massive 'Have a Go' day, run by the Halberg Foundation."

She says it is increasingly important for conference organisers to think about what they can give back to a host community.

"That might be public lectures by expert speakers, conservation efforts like planting trees, or fun, educational activities that involve local people, just as some examples.

"Things have changed and it's important that we leave the community in a better space than when we arrived. I have found that our clients are very supportive of that mindset."

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PCST Delegates in Dunedin

Using spaces that business events organisers may not have even considered before, continuing to offer a quintessential Dunedin experience and capitalising on local expertise in the city and region are among the priorities for Dunedin Venues Management Limited (DMVL) as it looks forwards towards 2024 and beyond.

The organisation set up its Village of Learning during the Covid pandemic to provide a human resource of experts from University of Otago and Te Pūkenga - Otago Polytechnic, who are available to speak and present at the venues DMVL manages (notably The Dunedin Centre and Forsyth Barr Stadium).

“That is a real point of difference for us,” says business development manager Nicole Carvell. “We have world class speakers right here, so organisers don’t need to look

overseas. This all builds on our reputation as a knowledge centre with easy access to academics and others who are recognised leaders in their field.”

The wider events and hospitality industry is clearly getting behind the initiative. One of the most recent activations was the hosting by Scenic Hotels, working with DVML, of guests from the tertiary institutions along with a leading professional conference organiser (PCO) for the Six60 concert at Forsyth Barr Stadium mid-March.

“That was a huge success for us and it showed how the village can work in more ways than one,” says Carvell. “It allows the industry to show Dunedin based academics what we can do if they host events from their own field of expertise in Dunedin.”

Kim Dodds, business and commercial manager, says DMVL is also looking to be

innovative and imaginative in other ways, “At Forsyth Barr Stadium for example we are providing new experiences be they out on the pitch or back of house. Some of this involves the dark spaces that previously wouldn’t have even been considered.”

Dodds says that new gender-neutral changing rooms have been launched at the stadium and are providing an attractive, albeit slightly unusual, option for business events.

“This is the space that will be used by teams for the FIFA Women’s World Cup this year as well as Super Rugby teams. People can experience the green rooms used for major artists like the recent Red Hot Chili Peppers with Post Malone concert and many other sporting and entertainment identities. People love hearing the stories about the space they are in.



Conference at Fable Dunedin

“Events here are really community driven – the style of the building, the people involved with any event, the walk through the city to get here, and the southern hospitality and pride offered here mean that delegates really know they are conferencing in Dunedin.”

Nicole Carvell points out that the 2024-25 year is looking strong for the venues. “We’re still getting short lead times with bookings for events within six to 12 months for domestic conferences, but at the same time we are also seeing a return to some normality and lead times of a year or more.”

She says the flexibility of the Dunedin Centre remains a big plus for groups of between 100 to 400 people.

“The venue works really well for a conference with a trade component. We can flip our trade floor from an exhibition set up to a gala dinner in four hours so that adds value for an organiser.

“However, we are also happy to help and guide people who want to look at off-site options. It is all part of the collaborative approach Dunedin has to catering for events.”

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CASE STUDY: NZHL (New Zealand Home Loans) National Conference



DUNEDIN DELIVERS

Meeting Newz talks with events manager **Julienne Gibbs** who has been organising the NZHL conference for 20 years.

ABOUT THE EVENT:

DATES: 11 to 13 August 2022

DESTINATION: Dunedin

VENUES:

Conference: Dunedin Town Hall

Dinner: Larnach Castle and Dunedin Town Hall (Phantom of the Opera theme)

Other: Team Build Activity – Forsyth Barr Stadium

ACCOMMODATION: Distinction Hotel, Fabel Hotel and Scenic Circle Southern Cross

NO OF DELEGATES: 200

DELEGATE ORIGINS: From across New Zealand (NZHL Franchisees and employees, Directors and Support Office and key Suppliers for the Team Build Activity)

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: two workshops – training and development sessions



ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION

NZHL is a purpose-driven (financial freedom, faster) home loan and insurance adviser network. We help over 50,000 Kiwis collectively save millions in interest costs each year.

We do this by taking a structured, personalised approach: providing coaching and advisory support, tailored smart home loan structures, and tools that put our clients in control.

WHAT WERE THE KEY CHALLENGES FOR THIS EVENT?

Outside of Covid related concerns and keeping an eye on the weather (which was lovely and sunny) one of the biggest challenges is trying to keep the event activities a secret from the support office and franchise network. The other challenge for a Conference of this scale when located outside of your home city is the logistical organisation, event theming, and venue setup when you can't easily access it. Dunedin Events were on hand to help overcome this with a thorough site visit (a must), regular Teams calls, access to floor plans and example photos, and preferred supplier recommendations.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE DESTINATION?

As a passionately local, New Zealand-owned business, we wanted to support regions where NZHL has representation and other local businesses. We'd never been to Dunedin before but knew it had great venues for an event of our size. During the scouting phase, our initial engagement, and the professionalism of the team at Dunedin Venues gave us the confidence to hold the event in Dunedin.

WHAT YOU LOVED ABOUT THE DESTINATION?

The venues were unique and a destination in themselves with delegates enjoying experiences they may not otherwise have – such as the traditional Haggis ceremony at Larnach Castle and the dinner inside the beautiful Town Hall. The team build activity at Forsyth Barr Stadium, run for us by Doug Kamo and his great team at DKCM LTD was a highlight. Delegates tried their hand (and boots) at a range of rugby-related activities inside the stadium grounds, earning points that were converted to non-perishable food donated to local charities.

WHAT YOU LOVED ABOUT THE VENUES?

The individual character of the buildings and the ease of all venues (outside of Larnach Castle) being managed by Dunedin Venues. This meant I had one primary contact point for the whole event, with venue contacts who worked together to coordinate and manage the different events across the three-day programme. Their local knowledge extended outside their own venues into accommodation and transport recommendations making the whole organizational experience that much simpler for us.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME?

Having one hotel for all attendees. While our three selected hotels were all within walking distance, it is always easier to have everyone in one place.

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF A GREAT EVENT?

As we hadn't been able to be all together since 2019, having everyone in one place to reconnect with friends and colleagues, share business and market updates, and celebrate our local businesses and individual successes was the highlight for all of us. Our network was blown away by the conference activities and events and left motivated and engaged. This was largely due to Event's Dunedin, who showed unwavering professionalism and eagerness to make this a unique event for us. Their team was as invested as I was to create a successful event which was evident both in the lead-up and during our time in Dunedin.

WHAT IS YOUR BEST PIECE OF ADVICE?

Complete at least one site visit, take lots of photos and get the floor plans for all venues. It's important to make sure the venue's event team understands and is aligned with your conference objectives to support you to deliver them. Before you sign a contract be sure to analyse the quote and be clear on all the details such as venues' cancellation policies and minimum delegate numbers. And make sure you communicate regularly during the lead-in period so there are no surprises on the day!

WHEN AND WHERE IS YOUR NEXT EVENT?

August 2023, Auckland

Central Otago Vineyards and
Lake Dunstan Trail



Take a closer look at
**CENTRAL
OTAGO** By Terry Holt

Choosing Central Otago for a business event will connect delegates directly into a region that keeps community at the heart of decision making. Businesses seeking a bespoke, tailored event will enjoy connecting with Central Otago's owner operators who delight with their attention to detail.

Situated in the centre of the lower half of the South Island, Central Otago is a 45-minute scenic drive out of Queenstown International Airport (well serviced with daily direct flights out of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne) or a two-hour drive inland from Dunedin Airport. The region includes the four main townships of Cromwell, Alexandra, Roxburgh and Ranfurly.

The region is perfect for boutique conferences and meetings where people like stunning landscapes and scenery, meeting local people and discovering a real community led approach to life.

Small conferences, incentive itineraries, executive retreats, product launches or training seminars are all a great fit explains Andrea Lauder, Central Otago business events lead.

“Company executives are cognisant of delegate well-being,” says Lauder. “They are seeking low population areas with good proximity to airports, offering wide open spaces and outdoor activities.

“As a producer region, our venues serve locally grown and sourced export-quality produce (meat, fruit and wine) – delegates will enjoy premium wine and food when they meet here.”

Businesses looking for opportunities to contribute to the improvement of the local environment through their event will find a mix of locally led initiatives that welcome

support, be it in kind or financial. The Central Otago business events team can help with connecting event organisers to an appropriate project.

Early adopter

The Central Otago District Council was an early adopter of destination management. A Regional Identity crafted by the Central Otago community in 2005 has been brought to life through the Central Otago – A World



Blindfold Buggy coned course

of Difference programme which is based on nine key values.

These core values – making a sustainable difference, protecting the rich heritage, learning from the past, making a difference, adding value, meeting obligations, embracing diversity, respecting others and having integrity – are the basis on which all marketing decisions, developments and community strategies have centred.

Central Otago's eco-credentials have been in place for generations – some of the region's orchards and farms are now in the fifth generation of family ownership and management. This place inspires people to do better for the future – in the words of Danseys Pass high country farmer, David Crutchley: “sustainable is simply not good enough”.

From sourcing locally grown, export-quality produce, restoring or upcycling historic stone buildings from the 1860s, extreme water conservation practices and management in New Zealand's driest region, bio-dynamic and organic crop management

and wherever possible employing locals, these are communities doing their very best for generations of the future.

Numerous local business operators have a 100-year perspective. One such example is Te Kano vineyard's native planting vision: "This is a one-hundred-year project, not just making a quick buck," says head winemaker, Dave Sutton.

Seasonality

With a continental climate, four defined seasons and low rainfall, Central Otago's growers and producers are working in an environment which inspires best practice and a strength in the fields of organics, biodynamics and regenerative land management.

There is no single time of the year that stands out as the best time to host a business event or meeting in Central Otago. Whatever the season, there is a venue, experience and vista to meet the needs of event organisers.

Venues with a difference

Delegates meeting in Central Otago will leave behind the traffic congestion of a larger city but not the comforts. Venues are ideally suited for smaller conference groups



(around 100 delegates) with a variety of alternative venues ideal for intimate incentive groups of around 30 guests.

Snapshot of winery venues

The region's winery venues each offer something a little bit different, not just in the setting and their award-winning architecture, but also in the size and type of event they can host.

Domaine Thomson owners also have

vineyards in Burgundy. Here visitors can compare the old and new world of wines and learn more about the organic and biodynamic practices that the vineyard is well known for.

Cloudy Bay's 'Shed' is a luxurious venue with views over Lake Dunstan to the Pisa Mountain range. Its location in the midst of the Northburn vineyards and edged with the relics of past gold mining makes it a special location for business events.

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GT Private Lounge at Highlands



Te Kano’s tasting room on Felton Road is an architectural award-winning building. Its strong form is clad in Cor-Ten steel with balcony views to the Kawarau arm of Lake Dunstan and back towards Mt Difficulty. Te Kano translated means ‘The Seed – the seeds we plant today will blossom for future generations’.

These are just a few of the tasting rooms and winery restaurants in Central Otago. There are many others that deliver exquisite experiences in stunning locations

and, better still, they produce award winning, world-class wines.

Meeting planners can also choose from an array of local restaurants, cafés and country pubs with flavoursome meals celebrating local flavours complemented by Central Otago wine, beer or other local beverages.

The great outdoors

When the hard work of the meeting or conference is done, getting into the

outdoors is easy in Central Otago. With four great ride cycle / walking trails, unique sports such as curling, plus jetboating, galleries, lakes and rivers to explore – there is something for most people to enjoy.

Highlands Motorsport Park and National Motorsport Museum

Highlands Motorsport Park is well positioned to offer premium experiences for conference and incentive delegates.

This world-class 88-hectare complex on the edge of Cromwell, 45-minutes from Queenstown, offers a variety of event spaces and activities for business groups that won’t be found anywhere else.

Meeting spaces include the Pit Lane conference room, Member Lounge, the recently expanded Highlands Café (it now seats 100 guests) and the National Motorsport Museum. For larger events marquees can be set up on the grounds that offer 360 degree views of the Central Otago hills.

“We find that Highlands is popular for on-site board and executive meetings and high-end incentives wanting the thrills and spills and tailor made options,” says Paula Buchanan, business development manager at Highlands.

“The park is filled with fun activities and



Host your business event somewhere new

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Marsden Lake Resort



experiences ideal for delegates on half or full-day programmes. With 12 activities on-site we feel we have something for almost everyone.”

Hands-on driving experiences include using the new Subaru WRX fleet with four experiences to choose from, or the U-Drive Radical and V8 Mustang experiences with a pro driver in the passenger seat. Highlands’ first electric car experience, in a Porsche

Taycan, is aptly named ‘Taycan Take Off’ – the vehicle and its passengers are propelled from 0-100kmh in just 2.4 seconds.

One team building event that people love are the blindfold buggies, says Buchanan.

“This is all about team work and communication as the passenger navigates the blindfolded driver through a coned course, which is timed. Then they swap

over. There are always plenty of laughs for those involved.”

Highlands also runs a social responsibility programme that helps fund charities such as Cure Kids, Ronald McDonald House, Prostate Cancer Research, plus a mental health social worker for youth at local schools.

“We also host an extravagant Easter egg hunt for the community as well as Camp Quality’s annual outing for sick children and their caregivers. It’s something we are all very proud to be involved with,” adds Buchanan.”

Marsden Lake Resort

On the shores of Lake Dunstan in Pisa Moorings, Cromwell, is Marsden Lake Resort.

The 62-room boatshed-themed accommodation includes one and three bedroom villas with large overwater decks, private moorings for boats or jet skis and direct access to the waterway. A mix of studio room types are on the upper levels with spectacular mountain and lake views.

Meeting and event spaces cater for up to 220 guests theatre style, 200 for a stand-up event or 120 for a banquet.

New general manager, Lara Cunningham knows the venue well having been sales manager at the property for a number of years.

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SPONSORED CONTENT

Fable Auckland Hotel entrance



NEW LUXURY EVENT SPACE FOR AUCKLAND

Fable Hotels and Resorts expand on their ever-growing portfolio of luxury conference and event space, launching a highly in-demand Auckland offering! Fable Hotels and Resorts are known for their range of conference and event facilities across the brand, from small, intimate lounges to grand rooms and outdoor spaces.



Chancellor Room 1 at Fable Dunedin

The addition of 5-star Fable Auckland's newest conference and event space is a welcome addition to the group's already significant portfolio. Two stunning spaces have been developed in the luxury hotel, catering for up to 100 guests. Step inside, the central location provides the perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of the city. Enjoy premium service, amenities and catering, all whilst Auckland's finest activities, shopping and dining offerings are right at your doorstep.

"It's exciting to see these new luxury spaces come to life," says Marcus Keenan, Regional General Manager - North Island. "We are excited to see how popular this will be with corporates and private events alike. The versatile space is suitable for events of all nature, the team is excited to start curating bespoke packages. The space has such potential, with a lovely character which fits within our boutique image. Bookings are already being taken, with doors set to open at the end of March. A truly boutique experience."

The South Island properties; Fable Christchurch, Fable Terrace Downs Resort and Fable Dunedin have all seen an influx of bookings over the first quarter, a good indication of the year to come. The

conference and event spaces at all properties have been well utilised for a number of different events, allowing each team to work on new and exciting gatherings.

Take comfort in knowing the brand has a wealth of experience in hosting a range of events, from corporate meetings to product launches, sporting events, weddings, and social gatherings. The team's expertise and attention to detail ensure that every event is executed flawlessly, leaving clients free to focus on their core objectives.

The Fable Hotels and Resorts Conference and Event teams offer a range of services, including event planning, venue selection, catering, and accommodation. The team works closely with clients to understand their needs and preferences, and then creates a bespoke event package that meets their requirements. This level of customization ensures that every event is unique and memorable, leaving a lasting impression on attendees.

Each property offers a range of catering options for conferences and events, including coffee breaks, buffet lunches, and formal dinners. The brand's culinary team creates menus that are inspired by local cuisine, using the freshest ingredients and the latest cooking techniques. The result is a range of dishes that are both delicious and visually stunning, adding a touch of class and sophistication to any event.

Accommodation options across the group are equally impressive, with each property offering a range of rooms and suites that are designed to provide maximum comfort and luxury. The Fable team works closely with clients to ensure that their guests' accommodation needs are met, whether they are looking for a single room, suite or an entire floor.

With a range of venues, catering options, and accommodation choices, Fable Hotels and Resorts is an ideal destination for your next event.



Fable Terrace Downs

Please contact Angela Webster at angela.webster@cpghotels.com for all enquiries. www.fablehotelsandresorts.com



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Fresh face of NORTHERN EVENTS

Waitangi Treaty Grounds

New developments, refreshed venues and accommodation choices, plus a growing list of available activities are keeping Northland on the business events map.

One of the high-profile developments related to business events is the addition of a new marquee at Waitangi. The venue's clear roof and walls means function attendees can look at the stars above or out past Waitangi's flagstaff to the Bay of Islands.

Lara Thorne, sales and marketing at Waitangi, says the new space creates an extra opportunity for large events seeking a premium venue in the Bay of Islands.

"The venue optimises the incredible experiences accessible in the area, whether during a cocktail evening enhanced by the beauty of a Bay of Islands sunset, or a delicious dinner under the canopy of stars."

Thorne points out that the cultural and historical significance of the site makes Waitangi more than a venue.

"We offer a special events admission so that conference delegates can enjoy a private guided tour and spend time soaking up New Zealand history in our contemporary museums.

"We also have tailor-made experiences available including hāngi, waka-paddling and traditional Māori team building workshops. Educational and cultural components can easily be incorporated into clients' events."

Waitangi offers event planners a choice of nine venues, with capacities to hold up to

500 guests for a cocktail event or 300 for a banquet dinner.

Copthorne

Close to Waitangi, Copthorne Hotel and Resort Bay of Islands is building on a positive summer and offering a refreshed look and atmosphere as the region heads into the main business events season.

Todd Mears was appointed general manager in May 2022, bringing years of experience with Millennium Hotels and Resorts, including his immediately previous role as hotel manager for Kingsgate Te Anau.

Sam Horsnell, director of sales, conferences and incentives with Millennium Hotels and Resorts, says that Mears' background means he is able to develop the group's guest service culture throughout the property.



Copthorne Waitangi



Māori Sports Awards, Waitangi

"Our staged refurbishment is set to start later in the year," Horsnell adds. "Focusing initially on guest rooms in the Seaspray Wing, the refurbishment will also include the reception and common spaces as well as the Waitaha Events Centre.

"Waitaha Events Centre is one of the largest function venues in the Bay of Islands and it comes with superb views of the water from its private deck. It has long been a favourite with guests and the enquiries for 2023 are strong."

Copthorne Hotel and Resort Bay of Islands can host a variety of events in six flexible conference spaces, holding from 12 to 400 guests.

Scenic serenity in BOI

An ideal location, just around the corner from Paihia's town centre, and a size conducive to buyouts are two of the key attributes of Scenic Hotel Bay of Islands.

Ali Smith, head of product and innovation at Scenic Hotel Group, says the property perfectly showcases the Bay of Islands and Paihia.

"Having 114 rooms means that groups

who want exclusive use can have the lush sub-tropical grounds and resort atmosphere all to themselves and they don't have to go offshore to do it.

“It is a perfect environment for any organisation looking to change behavioural patterns.”

Smith reiterates that Scenic Hotel Bay of Islands is an easy walk to town so there is no need for transfers.

“This is an important part of the value proposition as it provides immediate cost savings. We also have the ability to create innovative partner programmes and we have both a dedicated conference team, plus an 0800 number.”

Smith herself has a depth of knowledge when it comes to the Bay of Islands and welcomes enquiries from conference, meetings and incentives organisers.

The hotel has versatile function space catering for up to 120 guests, but can also be broken down into two smaller rooms, making it ideal for team building, conferencing and seminars.

Explore Group

With the increasing interest in the Bay of Islands as an incentive destination, Explore Group has seen a marked increase in



Scenic Hotel Bay of Islands

enquires from the business events sector.

“Following our acquisition of Fullers GreatSights in 2022, we can offer a variety of vessel options for private charter, including the fast boat Ocean Adventure for up to 26 people,” says Explore’s charter and events manager – New Zealand and Australia, Tom Myatt.

“This is in addition to our three passenger vessels with capacities ranging from 56 to 230.”

Myatt says these provide a platform to explore the beautiful Bay of Islands including

highlights such as the iconic Hole in Rock (Motukokako/Piercy Island) and searching for marine wildlife.

“Our island-based restaurant, bar and venue, Otehei Bay, on Urupukapuka Island continues to grow in popularity for corporate groups seeking an off-site lunch/dinner venue with a difference. Reached only by a 40-minute ferry from Paihia/Russell (also operated by Explore/Fullers GreatSights), this offers a beach-front setting from which guests can enjoy delicious food, cold beverages and views,” adds Myatt.

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Find us at **MEETINGS 2023**



1ST BIRTHDAY FOR HUNDERTWASSER



Hundertwasser Art Centre looking at Distinction Hotel Whangarei

New Zealand's northernmost city and regional capital of Northland is home to The Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery, which marked its first birthday on February 20, 2023.

There have been over 80,000 visitors to the centre and visitations reached record numbers in the first week of 2023 with over 900 visitors per day on several different days.

Once inside, visitors discover the exhibition, Hundertwasser in New Zealand 1973 – 2000 which includes paintings, original graphics, tapestries, conservation posters, ecological and architectural models as well as ephemera and documentation about Friedensreich Hundertwasser's life in New Zealand. In the Wairau Māori Art Gallery visitors can see some of New Zealand's finest contemporary Māori art with a changing exhibition schedule every four months.

Private guided tours are available 10am Tuesday to Sunday for visitors who wish to gain a deeper insight into Hundertwasser and his legacy. These are available on request.

The Hundertwasser Art Centre has held events that align with the philosophies of Hundertwasser and his legacy. Events held at the centre will be one that guests remember as the spaces are designed to inspire and uplift.

The recently held RTO (regional tourism) event saw delegates visit the Art Centre before heading to the nearby Whangārei Art Museum.

Note all events must meet the centre's terms and guidelines and be approved by the HNPF in Vienna.

Distinction Hotel & Conference Centre

In Northland's main centre, Distinction Whangarei Hotel's rooms and junior suites located in the rear wing have been renovated and refurbished.

CEO Duncan Fletcher says the rooms and suites have been given a modern, contemporary

vibe with hints of nautical character.

"We've given these rooms a four-star face-lift," he adds.

The popular hotel is located opposite the Whangarei Town Basin and new Hundertwasser Art Centre and Wairau Māori Art Gallery.

Fletcher says enhanced soundproofing and luxury cloud-like beds are a feature of the 88 new rooms and seven spacious suites, as are warm ambient lighting and an oversized oval mirror.

Other highlights include new carpet, oversized luggage rack, ample wardrobe space, mini fridge and tea and coffee making facilities. Bathrooms have been fitted with a sleek new vanity and vessel basin, a shower and complimentary Distinction toiletries, saved from going to landfill through The Hotel Weka recycling programme.

A table with comfortable armchairs, 51" flat screen smart television and free unlimited wifi help to make working away from home or the office easier.

Guests can have complimentary off-street car parking and access to an indoor swimming pool, spa and gym during their stay. The hotel's Portobello Restaurant is open daily for breakfast and dinner.

Distinction Whangarei offers two air-conditioned conference rooms separated by concertina doors, ensuring privacy when needed or the rooms can be combined to create a larger space catering for up to 130 people.



Distinction Hotel Whangarei Superior King

CASE STUDY ~ RTNZ

Tahuaroa Function Centre –
Waitangi Treaty Grounds



GETTING REGIONAL

CASE STUDY EVENT: Regional Tourism New Zealand (RTNZ) -

Te Ūnga Mai Professional Development programme

DATES: Monday 2 May –Thursday 5 May 2022

DESTINATION: Waitangi, Taitokerau Northland.

ABOUT THE EVENT:

In 2022, Regional Tourism New Zealand (RTNZ), the industry body for New Zealand's Regional Tourism Organisations (RTO), embarked on a nine-month Professional Development programme focused on the principles of destination management. Regions across New Zealand were given the opportunity to bid to host the wānanga, with the Northland RTO highlighting the cultural and historical significance of its region. Another key consideration in choosing Waitangi was the ability for all delegates to stay together at the Copthorne Hotel and Resort Bay of Islands, and a short daily walk to and from the conference venue, which combined help foster a great sense of community at the event.

Almost 100 delegates representing all 31 RTOs across New Zealand were welcomed to Taitokerau Northland for the first wānanga as part of the programme. Delegates were welcomed with a pōwhiri and dinner at the Waitangi Treaty Grounds followed by a full programme of speakers from regional, national and international organisations held at the Tahuaroa Conference Centre. Evening events during the four-day hui included a trip to Whangārei to visit the Hundertwasser Art Centre, an outstanding dinner curated by Steve O'Shea and his Aqua restaurant team delivered at The Whangārei Art Museum, and an evening boat trip to Russell for dinner at The Duke of Marlborough.

PCO: Miles Partnership with RTNZ as the client, Northland Inc in support.

Venues: Conference: Tahuaroa Function Centre – Waitangi Treaty Grounds. Morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea were all catered by the Waitangi Treaty Grounds team.

Accommodation: Copthorne Bay of Islands Hotel – Paihia

Evening events:

- Hundertwasser Art Centre: Guided tour followed by dinner at Whangārei Art Museum Gallery catered by Aqua Restaurant – Whangārei. Bus transport provided by Clarks coachlines.
- The Duke of Marlborough – Russell. Ferry transport provided by Fuller Great Sights.

Number of Delegates: Approx 100

Delegate Origins: From RTOs across New Zealand

International Speakers: Due to the border restrictions at the time, all international speakers joined virtually or provided pre-recorded presentations. International speakers included:

- Jane Cunningham, director of European Engagement Destinations International based in Stockholm, Sweden
- Jeremy Sampson, CEO The Travel Foundation, based in Washington,

United States

- Signe Jungersted (pre-recorded presentation), Group NAO, based in Copenhagen, Denmark

Domestic Speakers: Fortunately, Covid levels at the time allowed for travel around the country, so all domestic speakers were attendance. They included:

- Hon Stuart Nash, Minister of Tourism (pre-recorded message)
- Captain David Morgan, Air New Zealand
- Dame Jenny Shipley, former Prime Minister and co-chair of the Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan Leadership Advisory Group

Pre/Post Events: While there were no pre-planned pre/post events for this event, a list of activities and special deals by local operators were provided to the delegates. Delegates choosing to arrive early or stay later were welcome to take up any of these offers at their own discretion.

Event Dinner Theme/s: Both the event at Whangārei Art Gallery, catered by Aqua Restaurant, and the dinner at the Duke of Marlborough Hotel highlighted the unique food and beverage offering of Taitokerau Northland, in equally unique locations.



Hundertwasser Arts Centre

Local Transport Used:

- Clarks Coachlines provided transport between Waitangi and Whangārei.
- Explore / Fullers Great Sights provided ferry transfers between Waitangi and Russell wharves.

Suppliers:

- Waitangi Treaty Grounds
- Explore / Fullers Great Sights
- Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery
- Aqua Restaurant – Whangārei
- The Duke of Marlborough Hotel

AIME welcome party rocks at Marvel Stadium

AIME celebrated 30 years in style at Marvel Stadium, guests were treated to a spectacular night out on the turf of the stadium and enjoyed a pearl-themed catering menu by Victorian producers Delaware North. Then a dance party kicked in with DJ Hot Dub Time Machine with a selection of music from the last thirty years. Guest were also involved in a group photo that had every one filling in a 30 mapped out on the field to celebrate AIME's birthday.

Sam Horsnell, Millennium Hotels, Eugene De Villiers, Liberty International Tourism Group Australia, Brian McHenry, Accor Perth



Vicki Annison, Vokali; Emma Ringdahl, Fable Hotels & Resorts; Aimee Tyson, Hamilton & Waikato Tourism



Michelle Geale, Scenic Hotel Group; Samantha Smith, Tourism NZ (now with Arinex)

Singapore promotes wares

Business events organisers were among the target audience when Singapore Tourism Board (STB) hosted an event at the Rooftop, Rydges Auckland recently.



Michelle Thoo, Oliver Chong, both Singapore Tourism Board (STB); Paula Kerr, Singapore Airlines; Stephanie Yong, STB



Nicolette Brown, Fortis Events; Meliana Hamilton, STB; Angela Manase, Manase Travel Studio



Jess Ogg, ETM; Anthony Valeriano, STB; Rachel Proudfoot, ETM; Stephanie Yong, STB



Reconnecting with **global DMCs**

Destination Management Services (DMS) had a record turnout to the re-connect event at the Maritime Room in Auckland, with about 50 business events and high end leisure travel organisers in attendance. Attendees caught up with 18 destination management company (DMC) representatives from around the world, plus five other exhibitors from National Tourist Offices and airlines.



Alison Roberts-Brown, Visit Monaco;
Jordan Davis, Motive Events



Joelle Talbot (centre), Fortis Events with Tom Svensen and Melissa Natawake, both Tourism Fiji



Lisa Lee, Hong Kong Tourism Board;
Victoria Wales, HOT Events

Did you get a **signature?**

Signature Experiences of Australia generated plenty of interest from the business events sector when the eight collectives hosted a function at The Libraries, Britomart Auckland recently.



Julia Bozich, House of Travel; Victoria Wales, HOT Events; Annabel Sullivan, Cultural Attractions of Australia



Jodie Burnard, Flight Centre; Kate Wright, Tourism Western Australia; Lizzie Brett, helloworld Travel



Daniel Wright, distribution and partnerships manager, New Zealand; Karen Fitzgerald, general manager experiences; both Tourism Australia

Millennium Hotel Group host clients pre AIME

The Millennium Hotel Group hosted a group of buyers at Botswana Butchery in Melbourne on the Sunday before AIME got underway. Paul Er, Paul Philp and Samantha Horsnell were the hosts and guests were treated to a selection of the finest of Australia's and New Zealand's best produce. Located at the 'Paris End' of Flinders Lane the restaurant is all about relaxed dining in a premium atmosphere.



Paul Er, Millennium Hotels and Resorts; Leni Tasman, PT Panorama JTD; Sam Horsnell, Millennium Hotels and Resorts



Eve Chia, Wicked Idea; Jess Chan, Nexus Events; Cyril Constantino, BCD Meetings & Events



Paul Philp, Millennium Hotels & Resorts; Harry Foo, Evo Communications

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Te Pae

The Christchurch Convention Centre

Kyle Habershon

has joined Millennium Hotels and Resorts New Zealand at the corporate office as the new national conference coordinator, to help with the increasing volume of conference enquiries. Coming from Grand Millennium Auckland, Habershon was part of the guest services team while it operated as a MIQ facility and then transitioned into reopening for business as usual.



Shelley Trutsch

has returned to Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre as the sales and marketing manager after a 21-month industry change during Covid. Before leaving she held the positions of corporate BDM and conference BDM consecutively since 2009 and in the new role will be working closely with corporate, associations, government and MICE clients as well as marketing.



Florencia Paredi

has joined the Tourism New Zealand Business Events team as marketing specialist. Paredi, originally from Argentina, moved to New Zealand in 2014 and has held roles with Tātaki Auckland Unlimited and in luxury and corporate travel. She's also no stranger to the TNZ whānau, having played valuable roles in both the industry partnerships and trade teams over the past three years.



Sammantha Milligan

has joined C&I Travel Specialists in a return to the industry after a short stint away during the Covid lock downs and border closures. She has worked in several areas of the travel industry for over 20 years. Her experience has spanned over several sectors of the industry including retail and corporate travel, weddings, wholesale travel, airline crewing and hospitality.



Kashish Grover

has been promoted to the new role of business development manager for Village Accommodation Group and Habitat Hotels & Apartments. Grover joined Village in 2021 as a frontline team leader at Ohtel Auckland before moving into an events manager role at Hotel DeBrett. Prior to joining Village, Grover was part of the pre-opening team at Pullman Auckland as assistant manager. He has a Bachelor's degree and Graduate Diploma, majoring in tourism.



Adith Almeida

is the new general manager for Kinloch Manor & Villas and Kinloch Club. Previous to this Almeida was director of sales and marketing at Crowne Plaza Queenstown and director of sales - corporate at Cordis Auckland.



Lisa Tully

has started a new position as business development manager - corporate at CPG Hotels. Tully was previously with Millennium Hotels & Resorts for over 10 years as conference and incentive sales development manager.





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WELCOME TO OUR PLACE

A refreshed welcoming through Hamilton Airport, a collaborative regional approach and a firm focus on both manaakitanga and tiaki are all to the fore in Hamilton and Waikato when it comes to hosting business events.

By Stu Freeman

“We are able to offer all the attributes and the infrastructure provided by a large city, yet we retain a regional atmosphere and attitude to our visitors,” says Aimee Tyson, events manager at Hamilton & Waikato Tourism. “We work like a family and we love welcoming people here.”

For anyone arriving by air, that welcome has been further enriched as part of a \$15 million passenger terminal refurbishment at Hamilton Airport.

A key part of this has been the installation of commissioned cultural artworks. Māori design specialists Eugene Kara (Ngati Koroki, Kahukura) and Norm Te Hira (Ngati Haua) collaborated with Archimedia Architects, Adrian Morton Landscapes and airport staff to co-design an environment that draws on the rich cultural history of the greater region.

Te Hira has infused the terminal ceiling and carpet design with cultural references to Waikato Awa (Waikato River) and Pu korero (deep history) of Pekapeka tou roa (long-tail bat). Kara, in his role as pukenga toi (project art curator and designer) has called on the expert skills of master weaver, Tina Wirihana (Te Arawa, Tainui Iwi) to produce a bespoke woven ceiling that promotes a warm and calm feeling in the arrival and departure gate area.



A pekapeka kapua (pekapeka cloud formations) designed by Kara, covers the glass balustrades.

Waikato Regional Airport Ltd group chief executive Mark Morgan says the cultural narrative throughout the refurbishment was incredibly important because the terminal now truly reflects the heart of Māoridom and therefore the heart of the region.

“The days of arriving at a functional and soul-less Hamilton Airport are gone. There can be no doubt, upon landing in Hamilton,

that you’ve arrived in a special region, rich in cultural tradition.”

Accessibility

Tyson points out that the airport is well connected with multiple direct daily flights to Wellington and Christchurch. However that is just part of the accessibility story.

“Our geographic position means we are just a short drive from places like Rotorua, Taupo and Tauranga. The new expressway from Auckland means we are only an hour

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and a half from its CBD without traffic, and for Australians coming into Auckland International Airport it is even quicker.’

Collaboration

The team approach will be in evidence again when Hamilton and Waikato attend MEETINGS 2023 in Wellington from 21 to 23 June.

Claudlands Conference & Exhibition Centre, Discover Waitomo, Hobbiton Movie Set, Novotel & Ibis Tainui Hamilton will be joined by MEETINGS first-timers The Red Barn, The Event Girl and Hamilton Gardens under the Hamilton & Waikato umbrella at the event.

Association gathering

AuSAE New Zealand held AuSAE IF in Hamilton recently, providing one on one meetings between 15 association event managers and the same number of suppliers from around the country.

It also included a workshop on how participants could work together to address concerns and challenges currently faced by the sector.

“I think the collaboration aspect of the event was why it was so successful – everybody got something out of it,” says



High Tea at Zealong

Brett Jeffery, general manager AuSAE New Zealand.

Jeffery says Hamilton “nailed the inaugural event as a conference destination” and took the opportunity to put on a family of the region as well as a sponsored cocktail event.

“Accessibility was a key part of AuSAE IF. We had 60% of the association executives from Wellington who flew in to the new

look airport and another 30% from Auckland taking advantage of the easy drive down the expressway. We also had a couple of locals.

“The event was one of the best AuSAE has conducted in New Zealand over the last 10 years. Everyone walked away enthused and with additional knowledge to ensure that associations are important in the conferencing market.”



IMAGINATION BLOOMS FOR BUSINESS EVENTS

Ancient Egyptian Garden

The adage ‘seeing is believing’ takes extra meaning when it comes to planning an event at Hamilton Gardens – which is why getting people on site is such an important part of the attraction’s marketing strategy.

“We often find that people who have not been here have no concept of what we offer,” says Ali Bartleet, business development lead, visitor destinations at Hamilton City Council.

“Hamilton Gardens offers a venue like no other and the opportunities to create bespoke events with the iconic gardens as the

backdrop are endless.”

The 18 themed gardens each have a unique character and offering so business event organisers could (just for starters) consider canapés in renaissance Italy, cocktails in Tudor England, afternoon tea in early 20th century New Zealand, or music and dancing

in Ancient Egypt.

“It is important people realise that we offer something completely different from a botanical garden, so we’ve been hosting families, in conjunction with Hamilton and Waikato Tourism, for business events and corporate audiences as well as the tourism and travel trade community. The efforts are definitely paying dividends,” says Bartleet.

Hamilton Gardens is currently going through a significant development, which includes a fresh and dramatic new entrance and also a major refurbishment of the Hamilton Gardens Pavilion.

The upgraded pavilion will include increased flexibility and options for commercial hirers.

“The new look venue will be ready to host events in 2024 and will include five versatile rooms perfect for expansive dinners, exhibitions, meetings, corporate functions and seminars. The installation of a new fire prevention system will increase the maximum capacity of the pavilion from 500 to 1000,” Bartleet adds.

Lucy Ryan, Hamilton Gardens director, emphasises that while the pavilion is being re-developed, business event organisers still have a myriad of choice provided by the individual themed gardens and their surrounds.

“The gardens themselves will still be fully accessible and unaffected during the



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construction period.”

The new Summerhouse, as an example, overlooks the Mansfield Gardens and is an elegant addition to the hire options, perfect for more intimate gatherings, events or incentives and situated in the heart of the enclosed gardens.

Ryan points out that there are also plans for new additions – a Medieval Garden in 2025 and Pacifica and Baroque Gardens later in the decade.

Waikato Museum

Another Hamilton City option for those seeking a conference or event with a cultural flavour is Waikato Museum.

Located in the heart of Hamilton’s CBD, the museum’s foyer offers a striking architectural space, while there is also a choice of galleries and meeting rooms (including a lecture theatre for up to 100 people).

Ali Bartleet says organisers can easily combine the museum and gardens – perhaps with day meetings in the former before heading out in the evening for a cocktail function or al-fresco dining in the latter.



Concept image of the new pavilion at Hamilton Gardens

Business Events at The Red Barn

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EV CHARGING STATIONS REENERGISE CLAUDELANDS’ OFFERING



H3 event delivery manager Michael Gilling with the new Hikotron EV charging stations

Visitors to Hamilton’s Claudelands Conference & Exhibition Centre can now recharge their electric vehicles on-site, following the installation of new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.

Two Hikotron Alternating Current (AC) EV charging stations are now operational on Claudelands’ Exhibition Plaza directly outside the conference centre, with plans for a further charger to be added to its Gate 1 car park shortly. Each station is capable of charging two vehicles at a time, meaning once all three stations are operational six vehicles will be able to charge on-site simultaneously.

H3 event delivery manager, Michael Gilling says the new EV charging stations aim to meet the changing needs of clients and reflect the venue’s commitment to sustainability.

“Over the past 12 months we have seen a clear increase in demand from visitors who have made the switch to electric vehicles and would benefit from the ability to recharge their vehicles while on-site,” says Gilling.

“One of the key offerings we have always been able to provide to business event visitors here at Claudelands is free on-site parking, which is quite a rarity across large conference venues in major centres. To now be able to further enhance this offering with the additional convenience of on-site EV charging stations is something we are proud of and we know will be well received by delegates. It is also a great reflection of our ongoing commitment to sustainability.”

Not only has H3 introduced EV charging stations, thanks to



its exclusive catering partner Montana Food and Events, the group also recently added a new type of muffin to its menu. As of December last year the new muffins were introduced across H3 venues to help reduce food waste and signal a shared commitment by Montana Food & Events and H3 to more sustainable practices.

The new muffins are baked on-site by Montana Food & Events' chefs using a flour mix sourced from Rescued, along with other fresh ingredients. The Rescued flour mix is made using unwanted bread prior

to its best before date – the surplus bread is then processed back into 'rescued bread flour' that can then be used as the basis for a range of baked items.

Melissa Williams, H3's business development manager – business events, says utilisation of rescued ingredients aligns with H3 and Montana Food & Events' shared commitment to sustainability and minimising the environmental impact from events.

"Sustainability is incredibly important to us and we are constantly looking for ways to be more environmentally friendly and

ensure we are being responsible global citizens," says Williams.

With muffins being one of the most common items ordered off Montana Food & Events' menus, this change will have a significant impact. Not only will it utilise product that would otherwise go to waste, it will also remove the need for the original source crop – further contributing to sustainability.

Those wanting more details about the new chargers and muffins, should visit claudelands.co.nz/spaces.



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RED BARN – "READY TO ROCK AND ROLL"



The Red Barn has a fresh new look following a full refurbishment last year and is set for a big season of hosting corporate groups and other events business.

“We’re geared up and we’re ready to rock and roll,” says The Red Barn owner and founder Bridgette O’Sullivan.

“We’ve retained our historic and traditional atmosphere but given the venue a new lease of life by replacing the floor with oak wooden flooring in the main dining room, installing an authentic feature bar with all the bells and whistles and making a number of other improvements.”

Red Barn Photo: Amy Bell Photography



The Red Barn is well known as a wedding venue in the heart of Waikato (hosting some 70 weddings a year) and the reopening of borders has allowed it to kick-start staple business associated with inbound tourism and day trips from the cruising sector.

At the same time, it has built up a strong reputation in business events, capitalising on a location 45 minutes drive from Hamilton, Tauranga or Rotorua as well as just under two hours from Auckland.

The Shed at the Red Barn – a relatively recent addition to the offerings on site – gives corporate groups and other private events their own secluded park-like setting and complete privacy.

The Shed can be set up for meetings in various styles with a maximum of about 100 theatre style, but tending to be used by smaller groups in board room, U shape or classroom style.

The Red Barn itself can cater for up to 140 guests requiring a sit-down meal. A variety of menu choice is available and the catering team includes award winning head chef Harry Williams.

O’Sullivan says the venue suits both multi and single day events.

“We have a variety of accommodation in the area. The Hidden Lake Hotel is one of the popular choices for corporate customers.

“We find the venue works well for anything from product launches and training through to gala dinners and awards nights,” she adds.

The Red Barn is a hospitality partner with Range Rover and has a number of other close corporate relationships.

The venue is set on a working dairy farm, so can also provide farm walks or tours for groups wanting to build this into a programme.

IBIS HAMILTON TAINUI

The newly refurbished Ibis Hamilton Tainui is the first ibis in the Australian-Pacific region to showcase the brand’s new ‘Plaza’ concept.

Placed alongside the Waikato River, across from sister hotel Novotel Tainui, Ibis Hamilton Tainui is close to restaurants, bars and the city’s

attractions and amenities.

Ownership by Waikato-Tainui is respectfully reflected in subtle artwork and bilingual signage in the public areas alongside framed photographs and local artists’ works to illustrate Hamilton and embody a local flavour.



REFRESHED JETPARK WELCOMES BACK GROUPS



Propeller Restaurant & Bar

Delegates meeting at JetPark Hamilton will be greeted by totally refurbished conference rooms, updated audio-visual capabilities and refreshed accommodation.

Director of sales and marketing, Angeliqve van der Merwe, says the upgrade encompasses virtually everything that can be seen or touched – including carpets, blinds, walls and even chairs.

“It is really like meeting in a new hotel,”

van der Merwe adds.

At the same time, JetPark Hamilton has retained its key attributes, particularly its proximity to the airport, the natural light in its conference facilities – The Harvard and Hudson rooms – and free parking.

The conference rooms look out to park-like surrounds complete with picnic tables.

“We have a lot of meetings where people fly into Hamilton, have their meeting or conference here and then fly out. Alternatively it is so easy to drive here and take advantage of the parking – we’re only an hour from places like Rotorua and Tauranga and, with the Waikato Expressway, not much longer from Auckland.”

The hotel and sister properties JetPark Auckland and JetPark Rotorua, are offering trade and industry rates of \$130 every Sunday night (with extensions into other nights on application) to help meeting professionals and others experience the new look properties for themselves.

“This is an opportunity for us to show people what the hotels look like now.”



Executive Twin Room

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AROUND
EXPERIENCE?



H3

By Elaine Linnell

General Manager
New Zealand Events
Association (NZEA)

Kia Ora,

It is lovely to have a message from New Zealand Events Association in Meeting Newz magazine. It has been a crazy start to 2023 with wild weather impacting a number of events. We recently surveyed our members on the impacts this has had on them. The results show that over 300 events were cancelled or postponed, with financial losses that run into the millions. We also asked them what their biggest challenges in 2023 would be, and nearly 75 percent of respondents indicated the increased costs to deliver events would be the biggest challenge, as well as expecting fewer attendees. Just over 60 percent said funding is hard to

come by, with sponsors and funders seeing events as too risky. Staff shortages are an issue for nearly 30 percent of respondents, and volunteers are in short supply for 35 percent of respondents.

We know how difficult it has been for our industry lately and look to support them in any way that we can. We have a number of webinars coming up that could be of interest including Health and Safety updates, Engaging Māori at events, and engaging casual staff.

And don't forget our national conference Eventing the Future is taking place on 22 & 23 August 2023 at the Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland. There are over 40 speakers taking to the stage throughout this two-day event, sharing their expert opinions, knowledge, and industry insights with you. There is a promoters panel, a ticketing panel, and a venue manager panel. As well as plenty of practical sessions to choose from too. These include health and safety updates, sustainability best practice, how to gain sponsorship for your community



events, and much, much more.

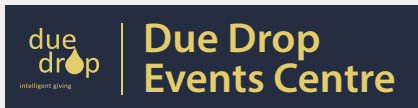
I know our NZEA New Zealand Event Awards are a staple on the calendar, and this year we are taking the event to Te Pae Convention Centre in Christchurch on 9 November 2023. Entries open on 11 April, and close on 23 May 2023. Keep an eye on our website for more updates.

**Ngā mihi,
Elaine Linnell**



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A welcome return to conferences in HAWKE'S BAY

Business events in Hawke's Bay are humming once more after two successful conferences in the region at the end of March.

The region's two major venues, Napier Conferences and Events and Toitō – Hawke's Bay Arts and Events Centre in Hastings, were unharmed by Cyclone Gabrielle in February. Both were quickly stood up temporarily as Civil Defence and recovery centres to assist with the State of Emergency, displacing some events due to take place at the end of February and early March.

With that officially behind them now, it is exciting to once again welcome delegates, says Jacqui D'Ath of Napier Conferences and Events.

"Following the cyclone, we did a lot of work to assess how things were going in the region, looking at whether it would be beneficial for both delegates and us as a community to have conferences gather here in Hawke's Bay.

"We discovered that if delegates were

flying into Hawke's Bay or driving here from south of the region, there was no reason why they shouldn't come and enjoy meeting here. What's more, the region has been incredibly grateful for the return of visitors contributing to the local economy."

A large conference for Green Cross Medical at the end of March saw approximately 300 delegates meet over three days, while 150 delegates from the Hydrological Society, also in March, gathered in Hawke's Bay across a full week.

More than a month after Cyclone Gabrielle, it is "a positive return to business" in Food and Wine Country, says Hamish Saxton of Hawke's Bay Business Events.

"It has been fantastic to see delegates return to Hawke's Bay and enjoy everything our region has to offer," says Saxton.

"We are thrilled with the commitment these delegates and organisers showed in coming to Hawke's Bay, with the vast majority of our operators ready and very willing to welcome our manuhiri."



Napier Conferences and Events

While some Hawke's Bay communities are still recovering from the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle, the lasting damage is largely concentrated to communities outside of the city centres, meaning the main challenge for business events was access to the region from the north.

However, with Hawke's Bay Airport fully operational, easy connections south by road, and incredible work by Waka Kotahi to reconnect the region to the north via State Highway 5, clients now have the reassurance to continue with their plans throughout the year, says D'Ath.

The Hawke's Bay venues, hotels and hospitality providers continue to offer the same levels of service as they did prior to the cyclone, so it really is "business as usual," says D'Ath.

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ICMS Australasia opens NZ office

ICMS Australasia (ICMSA) has expanded its geographic footprint and opened an office in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Karen Hamilton, who has been working in the New Zealand business events sector for the past 16 years, has assumed the new role of director New Zealand.

She will join ICMSA owner and managing director, Emma Bowyer and fellow directors at the company's first directors' meeting in 2023 in Christchurch in late March.

Bowyer says it had been a long-held goal for the company to move beyond Australia and, with confirmed future business in New Zealand, now was the right time.

"In recent years we have been approached by our clients – particularly associations – to manage their events in New Zealand,"

"With a dedicated New Zealand office that now becomes more realistic.

"The opening of Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre, Tākina Wellington Convention & Exhibition Centre coming online this year, and excitement building for SkyCity's New Zealand International Convention Centre bodes well for a strong business pipeline," says Bowyer.

ICMSA has already been confirmed as PCO

for the Australasian Polymer Conference in New Zealand in 2024 and the 62nd Annual Meeting of the International Forensic Toxicologists in Auckland in 2025. Bowyer says there are further opportunities on the way.

ChristchurchNZ head of business events, Megan Crum, said she was thrilled ICMS Australasia had selected Ōtautahi Christchurch as its New Zealand base.

"ICMSA has recognised the significant advantages in infrastructure and natural assets this region offers for international events, and we are excited to have them join our dynamic and collaborative business events community," Crum says.

"The arrival of ICMSA here brings a new level of high-profile event opportunities and boosts Christchurch's reputation as a fantastic place not only to host business events but also to do business."

ICMSA director New Zealand, Karen Hamilton, says she is thrilled to be heading up ICMSA in New Zealand and was confident the investment in her and the business would be rewarding both personally and professionally.

"I have had a long association with ICMSA and am looking forward to embarking on this new chapter" she says.

Fiji's Shot of Happiness Project

Tourism Fiji celebrated International Day of Happiness on March 20 with the launch of a new initiative – the Shot of Happiness Project.

For 24 hours, Fijian locals took over the Tourism Fiji Instagram feed, sharing 24 unfiltered and authentic moments from the archipelago.

Despite the fact that the hashtag #happy has over 688 million posts on Instagram, studies show the detrimental impact filtered and edited images can have on mental health and body image.

By showing how people can embrace the beauty of unedited moments in their lives, Tourism Fiji hopes to encourage the world to spark more moments of authentic happiness, inspired by the infectious joy and culture of the Fijian people.

The Shot of Happiness Project saw the local community, armed with a handful of disposable cameras, take one shot of what makes them happy.

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Sustainable business event practices are supported by BEDA's Business Events team, helping you create an event which delivers successful outcomes for both delegates and our city's environmental footprint.



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BUSINESS EVENTS BRISBANE



AIME celebrates 30 year milestone

Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME) celebrated its 30th anniversary in Melbourne in February with more than 350 exhibitors representing 25 countries and giving delegates and exhibitors the perfect opportunity for education and to establish business relationships.

“AIME gives Victoria a huge opportunity to harness the benefits that business events can deliver for the economy now and into the future,” says Victoria’s Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos. “International business events like AIME bring thousands of visitors to Melbourne, providing a boost to local hotels, restaurants and shops, while also showcasing our city’s strength as a world-class events destination.”

AIME’s Knowledge Program on day one included a keynote presentation from Australian tennis star, Jelena Dokic, and

saw a mix of industry business leaders and renowned professionals and speakers share their knowledge and experience.

Concluding AIME’s first day was the welcome event held at Marvel Stadium. Guests were treated to a spectacular night out on the turf of the stadium and enjoyed a pearl-themed catering menu by Victorian producers Delaware North before a dance party kicked in with DJ Hot Dub Time Machine.

Two days of pre-scheduled appointments followed – over 10,000 face to face meetings connecting buyers with exhibitors

showcased the best from the APAC region.

Robin Mack, executive general manager commercial, Business Events Australia says, “Any event that gets international buyers and media back to Australia is fantastic, you can’t replicate or beat the energy of meeting face to face.”

Julia Swanson, CEO of Melbourne Convention Bureau says AIME is a really important way for people to connect and do business. “It’s creating that business events community that everyone attends and is important for our industry cohesion”.

Melbourne had also seen huge growth



Matt Pearce ceo, Talk2 Media & Events; Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events; Minister for Creative Industries; Natalie O’Brien AM, ceo Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre; Julia Swanson, ceo, Melbourne Convention Bureau; Phillipa Harrison, managing director, Tourism Australia at the AIME opening press conference



On the show floor Northern Territory Stand 'Country to Couture' fashion show



New Zealand stand

of hotels over the last couple of years Swanson says. “There had been such a strong development pipeline coming into Covid that those projects kept going, so we had a huge amount of new product open last year and that is continuing into this year. There’s a lot at the premium five-star luxury level that international travellers want and expect but also lifestyle brands as well, so we will have the full spectrum of products giving all our delegates the diversity.”

BIG NZ PRESENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY TOP OF MIND

Tourism New Zealand was joined by 27 partners and 60 personnel, the largest ever for AIME.

The stand set a benchmark for a more sustainable future, says Tourism New Zealand.

Tourism New Zealand general manager NZ & Business Events Bjoern Spreitzer says New Zealand’s business events professionals were wearing tiaki t-shirts at AIME, and that ethos was echoed in the exhibition stand itself.

“Tiaki means to care for people, place and culture, and within that lies a strong sustainability message. It’s important that we walk the talk on this. This is our most

sustainable stand to date, and we’ve got plans to reduce, reuse and recycle our exhibition footprint every time Tourism New Zealand shows up at these trade events.

“We have been showcasing New Zealand’s natural beauty and sustainability credentials as part of our destination’s appeal, so we’ve got to be committed to protecting and progressing those.”

Initiatives included offsetting the carbon emissions for international flights for every New Zealand partner on the stand. The stand design and build utilised local crews, warehousing, printing and production to minimise the transport emissions generated.

The stand construction itself had been designed in conjunction with Tourism New Zealand’s long-standing exhibition partner, Auckland-based Peek Exhibition.

“Exhibition stands are designed to be temporary structures, thus historically can have a very short lifespan and can create a large amount of waste,” says David Ross, sales and marketing manager at Peek Exhibition Ltd. “This is a big step towards improving sustainability at these events.

AIME 2024 will take place 19-21 February in Melbourne.



Welcome party at Marvel Stadium

AIME 2023 FAST FACTS

- AIME celebrated its 30th anniversary – a significant testament to the longevity and legacy of the show and its importance to the global business events industry
- AIME 2023 is the first tradeshow on the international business events calendar
- This was the fifth year AIME has been delivered in partnership with Talk2 Media & Events and AIME owners Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) (fourth year delivering AIME as 2021 was cancelled)
- Over 350 exhibitors were in attendance at AIME representing a growth of over 50% on AIME 2022
- Exhibitors include convention bureaux, partners and suppliers from every Australian state as well as international destinations including Japan, New Zealand, Hawaii, Qatar, the Philippines, Singapore, Abu Dhabi and more
- 400+ hosted buyers attended AIME– this is a growth of over 40% on AIME 2022 (100 international / 300 domestic buyers)
- Buyers were from Australia, India, New Zealand, South-East Asia, North Asia and EMEA
- More than 12,000 meetings took place across the two-day tradeshow
- 33 media representatives from around the world attended AIME
- 25 countries represented at AIME 2023
- 3,000 visitor buyers, visitor media and visitor suppliers attended the tradeshow

WHAT WAS NEW AT AIME 2023

- Collaboration and fostering community is front and centre at AIME
- AIME welcomed nine AIMEbassadors to the show – representing different sectors of the industry to help amplify the value of business events
- New zoning on the show floor enhanced networking and navigation. Product and destination precincts aided wayfinding. The new Victoria precinct occupied the largest footprint on the show floor
- AIME Activate and AIME Activate Live featured new products and suppliers on the show floor, helping event planners activate and up-level events – this zone has tripled in size from AIME 2022
- New tech zone showcasing the latest and greatest in event technology
- In celebration of AIME’s 30th a commemorative ‘legacy lanyard’ in partnership with First Nations creative agency Little Rocket and sponsors Business Events Geelong was distributed to all attendees. The lanyard featured bespoke indigenous artwork that honoured AIME’s 30 years with a vibrant and bold design that tells the story of celebration.

KNOWLEDGE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- The Knowledge Program is the launchpad for the global events industry to come together, immerse in learning, growth and inspire events for the next year and beyond
- For the first time the Knowledge Program was curated by an Advisory Committee consisting of eight industry leaders from the APAC region
- The theme for 2023 was: Your Industry. Your Opportunity. What is the opportunity for the events industry now?
- Health, wellbeing, and resilience were central points of discussion
- Keynote speakers included Australian tennis star Jelena Dokić, futurist Professor Ben Hamer and storyteller Monica Rosenfeld
- The education program continued over the next few days of show through the Ideas Academy sessions – sessions were held on the show floor and accessible to all attendees

Resilience fundamental to crisis recovery

Resilience: noun

the capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.
"the remarkable resilience of so many institutions"

A word used in abundance, but the best word we can think of to describe this industry as we seem to lurch from crisis to crisis.

It was wonderful to see the team from Hawke's Bay join us at the BE Mentored programme in Auckland last month, taking a well-earned break away from the challenges being experienced in their region. We learned that venues were being used to perform different tasks from normal. They became rescue centres and emergency hubs. Business was pushed back, but postponed rather than cancelled. However when the supply chain is affected, it affects everyone, so fundamentals like accommodation availability were a challenge when hotels were being used to house those who had come into the region to provide support and services.

Being part of the Visitor Sector Emergency Advisory Group (VSEAG), we were able to highlight this to officials for their awareness, suggesting that returning to business as usual, when it is right to do so, is important.

On the very subject of resilience and dealing with crisis, BEIA in conjunction with our friends at Celebrity Speakers, held a special members' coffee morning. When thinking about how we can best help those who may be struggling with the results of the recent flooding, it was one of our members who suggested this idea.

Fortunately, Dr Lucy Hone, a resilience expert was available to speak and share her strategies on dealing with a crisis. Whether it's the remnants of Covid, the Auckland Anniversary floods or Cyclone Gabrielle, or even a personal emergency, having access to someone like Dr Hone, who is one of the many incredible assets our industry has, helped in some small way.

Politics vs journalism – is it always what you read last that you believe?

Hilary Rodham Clinton once said, "If I want to knock a story off the front page, I just change my hairstyle." I can feel the

cringing already, especially with International Women's Day still fresh in our minds. But you only need to see the headlines about the Sussexes to know that sensationalism sells.

I don't like to comment on politics. My job is to simply present issues and solutions that affect our sector to the ministers of the day, irrespective of their sway or mine. But I do want to make a comment about Minister Nash, the recent decisions made by the Prime Minister and the media.

I think Stuart Nash would be the first to admit it took him some time to fully appreciate the tourism portfolio and all its nuances, especially during Covid. I know it did take him time to fully understand the business events sector. But we cracked that nut when we talked about the quality, not value, of visitors and how delegates sat at the very top of that pyramid. From that point on, the minister and BEIA enjoyed an open and transparent relationship. I always found him to be very practical. When he felt an issue made no sense whatsoever, he would express it. When I was trying to convince him to do something for the sector, he would consider it, perhaps discuss with the Minister of Finance if there were dollars involved, but would give me an honest, practical assessment of the ask.

Bottom line, he liked our sector and what we did.

When he was made Minister of Police and the tourism portfolio was transferred to Minister Henare, I messaged him, thanked him for his support and wished him well. He responded by saying how much he enjoyed working with all in tourism and the great work that had been done, especially during Covid.

What has transpired of late was for the PM and Cabinet to decide, but knowing Minister Nash as someone who comes from a position of best intent, I have struggled with some of the headlines and opinion pieces in the media, and have been questioning whether it's been a slow news day? You may feel completely different, that the vitriol is

By Lisa Hopkins

Chief executive
Business Events Industry
Aotearoa (BEIA)



justified. But I have been concerned by some of the language used.

In saying that, we welcome Minister Henare to the portfolio. Having been the associate minister since 2017, this is not a new portfolio for the minister. Nor are we strangers as I met with the him a couple of weeks before we entered our first lock down in 2020. By the time this goes to press, we would have had our first meeting. There are several issues on our agenda that we will be bringing him up to speed on and solutions as well.

Full plate

We have a very full plate on our internal agenda. Stay tuned for some exciting announcements. The excellent work Sally Bunce did recently, taking your feedback (exhibitors and buyers) from MEETINGS and giving us an invaluable assessment on how you would like to see this critical, annual event, is pure 'gold'. Thank you to all those who participated. This will form the basis of the next five-year strategy that will help evolve MEETINGS and retain its position as the premier event of its kind in New Zealand.

Nga mihi nui,
Lisa Hopkins



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TĀKINA OPENING AMONG HIGHLIGHTS FOR COAST GROUP



The impending opening of Wellington’s new convention centre, Tākina is already stimulating the capital’s business events industry in what continues to be a busy year for the Coast Group team nationwide, says the company’s national manager Dane Botherway.

“We’ve had a site visit at Tākina, which has given us a really good perspective on the venue from an operational point of view,” adds Botherway. “We have some sizeable business going in there this year, including some well established events.”

He says one of the first will be Business Events Industry Aotearoa’s MEETINGS 2023.

“This will give the industry a great opportunity to experience the centre and be a really productive introduction to its capabilities and services.”

Botherway says the Exhibition Hire Services team is keen to work in the fresh new venue. “We’ve got Lu Budden down there as a new face along with Kade Tiatia and the team.”

Both EHS and Show Light and Power have also been busy in other city venues and beyond.

“We had the Central District Fielddays in Feilding mid-March. That was successful for us and straightforward for our experienced crew there.”

Botherway says the busy times in Wellington are indicative of what is

happening for Coast Group nationwide.

“The big challenge for us, like others involved with business events, is fitting everything into the calendar. We thought the second half of the year might be a bit quieter but that is starting to fill up – so the advice to anyone planning an event is to get onto it early.”

He says the positivity continues to reign in the sector, despite the headwinds of the economy and the recent bad weather with some continuing impacts in seriously hit regions.

“Postponed events can obviously add pressure, but the industry is working together to find positive solutions.”

He says the reopening of the Auckland Showgrounds has already resulted in three events at the venue – Autumn Gift Fair, The Baby Show and Covi Motorhome and Caravan Show.

“Having the showgrounds available again is certainly a great boost for the industry and we are generally buoyant in Auckland. One of the biggest events we’ve been involved

with in the city was actually at Eden Park, for Te Matatini (kapa haka festival).”

Botherway says key destinations are continuing to promote their attributes both here and offshore – another factor that keeps the industry buzzing.

“Coast Group is involved in the Destination Rotorua Showcase (late in March), visiting Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Gold Coast. All of this activity helps keep the industry moving into the future.”



Dane Botherway



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Melissa Pollard,
Tourism Industry Aotearoa
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