

International Relations Officer Report to Timaru Convention 2.6.02

It is my pleasure to report another busy and interesting year from an IRO perspective. The proliferation of computers and email facilities around the world certainly make for much easier contact and interaction and is definitely beneficial to the health and well-being of 41 Club.

The North Island leg of the Apex 40 tour followed the Upper Hutt convention, and was just as successful as the South Island leg, leading to congratulations all round, and also many enduring friendships.

The then International Vice President Sammy Sampath was at Upper Hutt also and joined the Apex tour. We could never have imagined he would return this year as International President and this time accompanied by his wife Geetha. This is indeed an honour, its 10 years or so since we had an International President visit and Sammy's warm personality and hard work for the 41 Club cause endears him to all he meets. Sammy and Geetha have been billeted in Auckland, Wellington and Timaru, many thanks to those involved.

The trip to Great Britain and Ireland led by Peter Butchart was a resounding success, and their "reunion" this weekend has increased numbers and added to the success of this convention.

National President Hugh and Barbara carried the flag for us at the recent Aussie rort and I must say it was a little embarrassing to have only 2 people go to the rort when they had 40 to our last convention.

The International HYM is in Bangalore India in September. This is closer and cheaper than most international meetings and after high initial interest, this has waned to the point where only one couple is now interested.

The secretary of a Perth 41 club made contact recently, yes that's right, a 41 club in Perth. I'll bet that's a thorn in the side of the Aussies! Their members are all ex Round Tablers mostly from Britain, S.A. and Central Africa. They have asked for names etc of any X RT or 41 club people who are now living in Perth. Please have a think about it and let me know of any possibilities.

Many of you will remember Shayne & Susan Doyle. Shayne was a member of Upper Hutt club and National President 1995-96. They moved to Melbourne and following efforts by myself and the Australian IRO and probably some others along the way are now members of the South Melbourne Apex 40 club.

I have had a great deal of correspondence from various countries giving their views on "friend members". Sammy will have the most up to date information on this issue so I will leave further comment to him.

There have been a number of emails from various overseas 41 club couples, individuals, sons or daughters of 41 club people enquiring about billeting touring, snow boarding, skiing, mountaineering, hiring cars, buying cars, customs etc. I have replied in every case and done my best to make their proposed trip firstly happen and secondly enjoyable.

Coming events. There is of course the trip to Great Britain and Ireland next year led by Peter Butchart, and there are rumblings from Britain about them coming this way in "numbers" to coincide with the Lions tour here 2005.

If you have ever thought not much happens in 41 club, being IRO makes you realise there is heaps happening and it's also a job where you can "make things happen". My two year term is now complete; the field is wide open so what about it? Good luck.

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