

TOUR OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT – 2007

It is with much pleasure that I present my Annual Report for the past year.

While no groups have left New Zealand on 41 Club planned tours this past year, we have had much enjoyment from welcoming back to New Zealand, 41'ers from places such as Northern Ireland, England, South Africa and even Latvia – all of whom came here as a follow up to our visits to their respective countries. To me, this is the reward for our making an effort to visit them in their homes.

However, much planning has been going on and as a result of this, a group of 17 are leaving Auckland in mid August for a two week visit to Perth and Western Australia, and we will be making contact with the 41 Club over there.

Planning has also been going along for a 41 Club visit to Europe next year. Initially we had a group of 21 people who had expressed interest in the trip and had paid their deposits.

However, when we put out a proposed itinerary, numbers fell to just 11 – those who withdrew all had valid reasons, but we kept hearing the word “Bland” being used in regards to the itinerary.

With this in mind, we have re-visited this trip, and have sent out a new itinerary, taking in places in Eastern Europe such as Romania, which we had been told were difficult to get into, and Croatia.

I have kept in touch with one of our drivers from the 2005 trip to Scandinavia, and he has offered to help us make this trip happen.

We have also put the dates of travel back to around July/August of 2008.

All 41 Club members throughout New Zealand have recently been advised of this change of plans, and if anyone is interested in joining us for this trip, there are still some places available, and I would welcome their enquiry.

An overseas 41 Club member has recently passed away in Johannesburg, South Africa. Eric Stroud was a 41'er who gave his all to things 41, and he will be remembered by those who visited South Africa in 1992 as the architect of that trip. He did so much to make the link between our two Associations as strong as it is today. We have spoken to his widow Sue and expressed our condolences at Eric's passing.

Those of you who have travelled to the U.K. with 41 Club groups, since the first one in 1980, will well know the name John Eddy – our coach driver, from Tally Ho Coaches for 3½ of those trips. It is with much sadness that I must tell you of John's passing away on April 30th of this year. John almost became an honorary Kiwi within our groups, and I can assure you that the success of those trips was due in a large part to John's personal input. I have sent a message of condolence to his wife Lynn.

Early last year I notified the then incoming National President, Les Mockford, that I would not be seeking re-election after the 2008 A.G.M. in Oamaru, and this is still my intention.

Therefore, for the last time I offer myself for re-election as your Tours Officer.

The 41 Club website is still growing in content, and it is available for all Clubs to use. In fact I wrote to each Club asking for snippets of local information such as meeting dates, times and places, that could be posted, but sadly not one Club has come forward with any such information.

Do have a look at the site www.41club.org.nz and learn something more about your 41 Club.

Thank you for your support during this past year – certainly not one of the best – but both Margaret and I appreciate all the calls and messages of encouragement we have received from all over New Zealand.

Yours in 41,

Peter Butchart - **TOURS OFFICER** - **June 2007**