

Congress Planning Committee Report to NZNF AGM, 28 December 2016

Introduction and Background Information

- 2016 International Congress of Naturism formed the basis for the 35th General Assembly of the International Naturist Federation, founded 63 years ago.
- Federations representing 35 countries are members of the INF. Delegates representing the Federation along with the INF Board make up the GA.
- The INF Congress is held every second year, usually in Europe. It is now agreed that the Congress will be held outside of Europe at least every ten years.
- Following an informal discussion with the INF President in September 2013, the NZNF successfully applied to host the 2016 Congress in New Zealand during the GA at the 2014 Congress in Ireland.
- Although the GA is normally held in September, the INF-EC originally agreed to a March date, then decided that November would meet the financial obligations under the INF Statutes. The Congress would be held from 16th to 20th November at Te Marua, Upper Hutt, Wellington.
- Thanks to promotional and financial assistance from Tourism NZ, the NZNF was provided with a Professional Conference Organiser who assisted with the preparation of a feasibility study. In addition to the glossy hard copy presentation, GO NATURAL IN NEW ZEALAND was screened at the 2014 Congress in Ireland and enthusiastically accepted by the delegates.
- One of the recommendations in the feasibility study prepared by TNZ was the appointment of a PCO with a fee of \$30,000.00 plus 10% of all income. This suggestion was cordially declined.
- Instead, the steering committee appointed by the NZNF Executive morphed into the Congress Planning Committee, reporting to NZNF President, Wendy Lowe and WNC President, Ken Mercer.
- Kay Hannam, Donna Miller and June Campbell-Tong between them had the necessary skills and experience to put this event together as well as the passion and staying power required.
- Judging from the overall feedback received from delegates, observers and volunteers, the management of the Congress was appreciated. One delegate wrote *the Congress was organised and delivered in an OUTSTANDING manner*.

The Venue

- Two minutes after midnight on 14th November, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake centred in Culverden in the South Island caused a landslide on the eastern coast resulting in the closure of SH1, also widespread damage in the Wellington region. Delegates travelling in the South Island suffered considerable delays due to Cook Strait ferries being unable to disembark passengers. Heavy rain also meant access to/from the airport was closed for some time.
- In spite of the earthquake and rain, the Wellington Naturist Club provided an ideal venue with *first class facilities and an alternative model of just using a hotel complex would have been very sterile in comparison*. The only adverse comment being *the temperature of the hall during meeting sessions*.
- President Ken Mercer and club members pulled out all the stops upgrading the Club's facilities to a very high standard. The grounds looked fantastic and full credit is given to all those involved.
- The General Assembly worked well, with minimal disruption to the layout by meals having to be served indoors on the first three evenings due to the inclement weather. The volunteer crew set up dining tables and chairs around the perimeter of the hall which created a friendly atmosphere.
- The two mezzanine floors provided space for other activities including the International Photographic Competition; Lecture and Workshop with Phillip Beach; astronomy lecture; plus an informal discussion on the INF Working Plan by delegates at the conclusion of the GA. Above the stage; a private space for the INF Board to hold their meetings and the Planning Committee to discuss progress as well as space to set-up for the Gala evening, and for the Kapa Haka group to prepare for their performance.
- While the outdoor bar by the barbecue would have been an ideal location had the weather been fine, the decision to relocate to the indoor lounge was the right one. Storage and fridge space was a problem and could have been mitigated by moving the office to the room above the stage.

Operational overview

- The overall operational success of the Congress was largely due to the planning committee utilising ASANA, an online application designed to help teams track their work.
- Of the 50 plus identified tasks, key areas of responsibility were: Registration, Accommodation, Pre-Congress Arrivals, Catering, Website, Facebook, Newsletters, Treasury, Budget, Sponsors, Volunteers, Liaising with INF and NZNF, Programme, Entertainment, Hall Layout, Interpreters and Sound System.
- The planning committee worked together in an effective manner and while it may have irked others this cohesion meant that discussions were frank and open and that informed decisions were reached democratically.

Sponsorship and Funding Review

- A new concept to support the Congress was the introduction of our Congress Partner program whereby we offered promotion in a variety of ways in return for financial support.
- We are grateful to the following organisations who responded positively to this unique opportunity:
 - Platinum level Tourism NZ Business Events, International Naturist Federation.
 - Diamond level Upper Hutt City Council, Wellington Naturists, Australian Naturist Federation, Kereru Brewing Company, Saint Clair Family Estate.
 - Gold level The Australian Naturist Magazine, Auckland Outdoor Naturist Club, Waikato Outdoor Society, Hawkes Bay Naturist Club, Wai-natur Naturist Park, gonatural Magazine.
 - Silver level Katikati Naturist Park, Pineglades Naturist Club, Brenlin Stationery.
 - Bronze level Orchard Sun Club, Counties Sun Club, Free Beaches NZ.
- TNZ, INF and WNC didn't actually respond to the opportunity or make a financial/sponsorship contribution as such. We deemed that this was the category that they should fit in due to their level of support.
- A total of \$5,779.38 was raised from our Partners. The bulk of this funding was set against our volunteer program. In addition Saint Clair Family Estate and Kereru Brewing Company each provided discounts in sales from \$1,000 upwards.

Financials

- The attached Profit & Loss Statement outlines the financial outcome for the Congress.
- Interpreting and Sound, one of the major items of expenditure was not included in our expenditure. While the Congress Planning Committee liaised with both Tranzealy and Multi-Media throughout the planning stages, these items were approved and funded by the INF-EC.

International Tourism

- A total of 53 International visitors representing 23 countries participated in the Congress:

➤ Australia	➤ Ireland	➤ Slovenia
➤ Austria	➤ Italy	➤ South Africa
➤ Brazil	➤ Liechtenstein	➤ Spain
➤ Canada	➤ Luxembourg	➤ Switzerland
➤ Denmark	➤ Malaysia	➤ Thailand
➤ France	➤ Netherlands	➤ United Kingdom
➤ Germany	➤ New Zealand	➤ United States
➤ Hungary	➤ Portugal	

- Accommodation analysis of International visitors:

➤ Wellington's Kiwi Holiday Park	16 pax	102 guest nights
➤ Wellington Naturist Club	31 pax	159 guest nights
➤ Other accommodation	2 pax	10 guest nights

- A group of seven German speaking visitors which included the INF Executive Committee, spent four days visiting scenic areas in the North Island prior to their arrival in Wellington, with a further seven days touring the South Island following the conclusion of the Congress. The private tour, pre-arranged with a New Zealand company, did not visit any affiliated naturist venues. A total of 77 guest nights.
- David Jones of Leisure Theme provided specialist advice to attendees of the 2016 Congress gratis. This was his way of supporting the NZNF and naturism in New Zealand.
- As a result 21 guest nights were booked by Leisure Theme at naturist venues with a direct influence of a further 10 guest nights at clubs/resorts with visitors who preferred to book themselves.
- Including those who booked through Leisure Theme and others that made their own reservations, indications are that international visitors spent 70-75 guest nights in NZNF affiliated venues providing an economic benefit of approximately \$4,000 in addition to the total number of guest nights at WNC.

Experience of a World Class Event

- By offering full registration as an Observer or Volunteer via a dedicated website, Facebook and newsletters a number of New Zealanders took the opportunity to experience a world-class event.
- The level of interest and support gained momentum as the date of the Congress drew near with 15 registrations and 42 volunteers from New Zealand.
- One participant commented afterward: *I just loved the experience of being around people from other countries for the first time and learning from them, since I am still new to all of this. Totally enjoyed it.*

Volunteer Benefits

- The Congress Planning Committee acknowledges the huge contribution made by the volunteers and wishes to express their sincere thanks to each and everyone of them. It is impossible to determine the total number of hours contributed by volunteers (before and during the event).
- Nor does this report include the incredible amount of hours of volunteer work carried out by members of WNC during the previous three years in bringing the facilities up to a very high standard.
- The volunteer teams, without exception, all performed above expectations, in particular the transport team which (in addition to the shuttle service to/from the Airport and the Holiday Park) carried out other personal requests such as visiting the hairdresser and supermarket without hesitation.
- A total of 46 volunteers registered to assist. All gave their time willingly. There were many who made themselves available throughout the whole period of the Congress in a variety of roles.
- A team leader headed up the following sections:
 - Accommodation
 - Bar
 - Catering
 - Goodie Bags / Registration
 - Guided Excursions
 - Hall Set-up
 - Hygiene
 - Security
 - Transport/Airport Greeters
- The average age of the volunteers was 55 to 65 and the majority of registered volunteers were members of WNC. The following is a breakdown of their affiliation.
 - ANF Supporters 2
 - Autumn Farm 2
 - NZ Naturists 1
 - Pineglades 1
 - Rotota 1
 - Wai-natur 1
 - Wellington Naturists 40

International Exposure Assessment

- While the beauty and scenery of the country is widely known, some Federations would have previously been unaware of New Zealand as a naturist tourism location. Through hosting the Congress, we are now indisputably recognised as being active promoters of naturism, for our unequalled friendliness and hospitality, and for our professionalism and dedication to providing a world-class event.

Media Analysis

- Due to the extraordinary nature of events in Canterbury and also locally, reporting crews and equipment were otherwise occupied despite a promising response to our media releases. Unfortunately interviews that had been pre-arranged and attendances at the Maori Powhiri were cancelled due to the unavailability of resources and gear. Donna, as Congress spokesperson, gave a live interview on Radio New Zealand about 30 minutes prior to the Powhiri beginning.

Other Media, Marketing and Promotion

- We are grateful to TNZ for funding \$3,108.28 of magazine advertising in overseas naturist publications. This was used for 1/4 page full colour adverts in British Naturism, Going Natural, TAN and H&E magazines in their December 2015 and March 2016 issues. It is hard to gauge the performance of advertisements in print.
- In addition to this, an advert was funded from sponsorship in the June 2016 issue of TAN Magazine.
- Kay and Donna wrote and submitted several articles as advertorials for the publications mentioned above. These were mostly about travelling via our clubs and naturist parks to see the sights of our country.
- Facebook was the other predominant form of promotion. Posts were made regularly - weekly at a minimum but generally twice or three times a week. As well as providing information about NZ, and details of the Congress and venue, registration via the website was heavily promoted. In most FB posts there was a call to action with a link to the Congress dedicated website. FB was also used to reciprocate sponsorship with promotion of partners. To date the page has 993 'likes' and is still growing which is awesome.
- One of the best posts was a link to details of the International Photographic Competition in July which had a reach of 2,980 people, 17 post shares and 15 likes with another post that included the video of WNC just a week later reaching 2,839 people, 16 shares and 24 likes. TNZ allowed access to their visual library so many of the images used, depicting NZ scenery and Maori culture, were stunning and of a high quality.
- 2016 Congress Newsletters, compiled by Donna, were circulated via MailChimp which provided the added advantage of being automatically promoted via FB. These two-monthly publications were translated into French and German by the INF Office. The 'Congress Focus' then circulated to federations in a PDF form.
- Despite repeated requests, little - if any - media support was provided via the INF website with all information pertaining to the Congress accessed by federations through an internal download centre.

International Photographic Competition

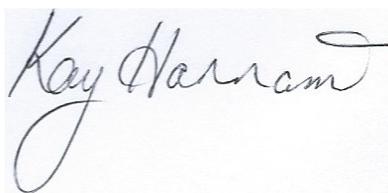
- Of the 40 entries received, few registered early. The one real difficulty many entrants experienced was the rather difficult 'Horde' web server that the federation used. Unfortunately many gave up, and others took the organiser's suggestion of just sending the photos to his own personal email address.
- Dropbox just didn't seem to work in conjunction with the federation's web-server. Two possible entries from Asian countries and another from Wanganui just gave up altogether. That would certainly need to be changed if we were to hold the competition again
- Associate of the Photographic Society of New Zealand Roger Thwaites, judged the winning entry from Ricardo Cisternas of Claudia Kellersch on Black's Beach, San Diego, California.
- Ricardo hopes to take up his prize of accommodation at Waitata Bay Naturist Retreat during our current summer season.

Key Recommendations - What was the level of interest and support from NZ spectators/audiences?

- We felt the level of general interest and support outside of WNC sadly was low. Information was readily available via regular newsletters to the Club Secretaries and the FB page. The unique opportunity to observe and view a Congress first hand could have been enjoyed by many more New Zealand spectators.
- Some clubs contributed to sponsorship of the Congress however outside of this did not optimise their partnership potential. This could have been done by engaging with the Congress FB page and sharing its posts on with their own page.

Conclusion

- While there is little likelihood of an INF Congress being held in the New Zealand in the foreseeable future, it is possible that a similar event may be held such as a non-European conference, its focus on the growth and acceptance of naturism, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.
- One of the key factors ensuring the success of the event was summed up by one of the delegates who wrote: *'The coordination and empathy of the volunteers was truly exceptional. A benchmark for us all to aspire to. They were all able to answer every detailed question and they understood the British sense of humour.'*
- One of our goals was to provide quality meals and top class entertainment. And while we accept there were some adverse comments regarding breakfast packs and lunch, conversely the feedback received indicated that visitors rated the food first class, especially the quality of the ingredients, preparation and service.
- The Maori powhiri was an emotionally charged occasion, appreciated by all participants, not just our visitors. The Kapa Haka group provided a small but powerful expression of culture that we as New Zealanders can be justly proud.
- JuztJazz provided quality entertainment at just the right tempo and sound level.
- The Black & White Gala Evening with delicious food and wine and entertainment by *The Hollywoods* was just the right mix for the occasion bringing a successful event to a memorable finale.



Kay Hannam

Congress Planning Committee Chair

December 2016

2016 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NATURISM			
Profit & Loss Statement			
Revenue	Actual	Budget	Variance
Registrations	30,225.00	47,000.00	-16,775.00
Sponsorship	5,779.38	0.00	5,779.38
Volunteer & Others Revenue	2,425.00	0.00	2,425.00
Photographic Competition	260.00	0.00	260.00
Total Revenue	38,689.38	47,000.00	-8,310.62
Expenses			
Venue hire & costs	1500.00	1,707.00	-207.00
WNC - Catering	22,631.00	26,900.00	-4,269.00
Shuttle expenses	419.50	1,250.00	-830.50
Equipment Hire	570.00	620.00	-50.00
Presentation	1,555.59	1,710.00	-154.41
Photographic Exhibition	232.98	0	232.98
Entertainment & Speakers	2,700.00	3,500.00	-800.00
Non-Delegate Excursion	992.00	1,515.00	-523.00
Admin Expenses	1,147.85	1,475.00	-327.15
Additional O/S Magazine Advertising	435.09	400.00	35.09
Meeting & Sundry	2,783.44	2,228.00	555.44
Welcome Drink	500.00	500.00	0.00
Contingency	0.00	1,440.50	-1,440.50
Total Expenses	35,467.45	43,245.50	-7,778.05
Net Profit/(Loss)	3,221.93	3,754.50	-532.57
OVERALL CONGRESS POSITION			
2014 Bid Expenses	-1,475.19		
2015 Expenses	-1,329.02		
2016 Profit	3,221.93		
Overall Profit	417.72		