



A quarterly newsletter for
Club and Regional members of
Friendship Force in New Zealand

SPRING EDITION
October 2023

News from the RSM desk

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Greetings friends, welcome to the Spring Edition of our NZ Friendship Flyer. It's great that the weather is warming up and summer is on the way.

I had a great time at the World Conference in Dubrovnik, there were about 300 members there from around the world and we had a great programme of cultural entertainment. One of the highlights for me was finally getting to meet the other staff members in person rather than on Zoom, and going kayaking and snorkelling with the team in the pristine waters of the Adriatic Sea during our down time. I also thoroughly enjoyed the post-conference tour of Croatia and Slovenia, it's a fascinating part of the world and their history is very complex.

Two important items of news to share with you all. Firstly we are in the process of advertising for a replacement for me in my role as RSM for New Zealand, as Wilson and I are downsizing our lives and freeing up our time to do more of what we love—like cycling and painting. We are selling our landscaping business and have just purchased a new home in Waikanae, so we are moving off the farm after nearly 40 years. So, lots of changes! The RSM role is currently being advertised on TradeMe, so if you know of anyone who might be interested, tell them to look out for it. Ideally we are looking for someone with great computer skills and some marketing experience—it's just 5-10 hours a week, so good for someone who wants a part-time job.

Meantime we have the Scenic & Farming journey here at present, and we are using the services of a PR consultant, Hayley McLarin of Compelling PR) to promote Friendship Force while the group is here. Hayley has asked if members would be able to share something of their experiences when being a host. *"For example if there was a female 65-75 who is a regular host and has had 'lots of strangers' stay at her place it might be a nice story for NZ Women's Weekly."* So please get in touch with me if you have a great story about hosting and how it has helped you understand FF members from other countries and other cultures, and I will put you in touch with Hayley.

Ngā mihi, Debbie Lattey
NZ Regional Support Manager

'SPECIAL' INBOUND JOURNEYS

We have two Special (formerly called Global) journeys coming to New Zealand between now and February. The **"Scenic & Farming Journey"** is being hosted this month by six clubs, with the 30 ambassadors being split first between Northland, Tauranga-WBOP and Hamilton-Waikato for the first week, then split between Kapiti, Wellington and Wairarapa for the second week, before heading south for a tour with Pete Higginbottom. John Hannah from Christchurch is the JC for this tour, which should be a great one for the ambassadors.

The second Special Journey coming in February is **"Great Cycle Trails of New Zealand"**, and we have 20 keen e-bikers signed up for that one. They will be hosted first by the Hamilton-Waikato club and then divided between Kapiti and Wellington for their second hosting. Again we will be heading down to the South Island after that and cycling the Lake Dunstan and Otago Rail Trails before finishing the tour in Queenstown. I am the JC for that tour, and am really looking forward to showing off our beautiful country to the group.

If you have an idea for a Special Journey do feel free to suggest it, these journeys seem to be very popular with our members worldwide.

2024 OUTBOUND JOURNEYS

New Zealand clubs were allocated four outbound journeys in 2024. Unfortunately the Northland and Wairarapa Clubs were unable to proceed with the Isle of Wight and this journey has been relinquished, but the other three journeys are hopefully still proceeding. They are:

- ⇒ Cairo, Egypt, October 2024—assigned to Christchurch and Hamilton-Waikato clubs. JC is Jan Harrison, jandavid@snap.net.nz. Contact Jan if interested.
- ⇒ Greater Hamilton & Burlington and Haliburton Highlands, Canada, September 2024—assigned to Wellington Club. JC is Malcolm Sime, malcolmS@esgasiapacific.com
- ⇒ Tamworth, Australia, September/October 2024—assigned to Kapiti Coast club. No JC as yet, if interested contact me on my personal email debbie@otaihanga.co.nz. We were also allocated North Moreton but unfortunately that club has declined the hosting, so we are looking at alternatives.

2024 NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL GATHERING

Plans are progressing for our next National Gathering to be held at Silverstream Retreat in Upper Hutt on Thursday 4 and Friday 5 April 2024. Following the Gathering there will be home hosting offered by our local clubs over the weekend of 6-7 April. Make sure you have the dates in your diary—we are looking forward to another great few days of friendship and fun.

2024 AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE ON NORFOLK ISLAND

Always wanted to explore Norfolk Island? The Australian National Conference is to be held there from 25 October to 1 November 2024. This conference is open to club members worldwide, so you may be interested in joining them. I have included the flyer for the conference as a separate attachment to this newsletter, so check it out and contact the organisers if you are interested.

FFI MEMBERSHIP FEES 2024

FFI has set the membership fees for New Zealand at NZ\$43 pp. This is less than the equivalent US\$30 that is the usual fee, but with our weak exchange rate Jeremi has agreed to a reduced rate. Your club will add on the club sub to this amount.

I would ask you to reflect on the fact that we have not paid any FFI membership fees for two years and have had the benefit of free domestic journeys during that time. And the total fee payable by members will only equate to about one cup of coffee a month—great value to belong to an international organisation!

DOMESTIC JOURNEY FEES

As far as domestic journey fees are concerned, Jeremi has also agreed that as long as there is an element of club building, publicity or recruitment built into future domestic journeys, they will not attract the usual US\$25 per night fee. This is in recognition of the small size of our country and the fact that domestic journeys are often 'just down the road' rather than travelling long distances. So if you are planning a domestic journey do make sure to include one of these criteria in your journey and let the RSM know how it qualifies for no fees.

Happy Summer holidays everyone, and a Merry Christmas. I'll be in touch again introducing the new RSM in due course.