

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- Peter Dimond

After a couple of reminders from Kent, here goes. Winter is behind us and summer and Christmas are rushing on. Most of us in the tourist industry here are wondering what the long-term effects of the September 11th terrorist attack in USA will be.

Most the membership of ACKMA are involved in tourism one way or another, Australia being more reliant on the domestic market than New Zealand. The New Zealand Tourism Board are predicting a down turn of 10%, a figure that is being revised every month. Different sectors of the industry are affected to a greater of lesser degree.

In New Zealand, there has been a significant drop in Japanese and US visitors, mostly group tours. Tour groups tend to be older and less adventurous and are the visitors who are cancelling. However the "free independent" traveller numbers are holding up to the relief of the adventure tour market. It is hoped the

Australia and New Zealand will be seen as a safe destination for visitors from the Northern Hemisphere.

Here at Waitomo there is plenty of activity. In the Glowworm Cave the old wooden duckboards in the Cathedral are being removed and being replaced with paving stones similar to the walkways in the rest of the cave. Dave Williams, who has sold his garden centre, has returned to guide in the Glowworm cave. Dave (an ACKMA Life Member) managed the Waitomo complex for a number of years before going into business on his own account.

Waitomo Caves Float Through (formally Waitomo Down Under) is continuing business under the capable hands of Irene Davis following the untimely death of her husband Joe. A 125 bed backpackers hostel is under construction in the village (behind the Tavern for those who know Waitomo) which should have an impact on some of the adventure operators.



The President of ACKMA, Peter Dimond, extends to all ACKMA members, and their families, his warmest best wishes for a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.