



# Skyline

# Views



*A TOTAL CHANGE: Former Queenstown Skyliners Blair Deasy and Kellie Goodwin will lead the management and marketing of the company's latest acquisition, the iconic Totally Tourism, a group with interests in numerous areas of the industry.*

## Tourism is totally Skyline!

**Skyline's presence in New Zealand tourism has grown even more with a leading international operator now included in the company's stable.**

The acquisition means Skyline now has more interests in Queenstown, along with bases in Wanaka, Mount Cook, Franz Josef Glacier, Fox Glacier, and Fiordland, offering a huge range of activities.

Totally Tourism was founded by well-respected tourism operators Mark and Jackie Quickfall in 1999 and acts as an umbrella company for a group of operations including The Helicopter Line, Queenstown Combos, Challenge Rafting, Air Fiordland, Glacier Helicopters, Milford Sound Scenic Flights, Wanaka Flightseeing, Harris Mountains Heliski and Mitre Peak Cruises.

These days some 140 staff provide experiences for more than 150,000 international and domestic visitors every year.

Skyline Chairman Ken Matthews points out the move represents the future of the company's strategic direction.

"For Skyline this opportunity means our focus will expand significantly throughout the region," he says.

"Ownership of Totally Tourism offers us a strong presence on the West Coast and in Milford Sound. The acquisition is consistent with the company's goal of extending our activities in selected key locations."

With numerous activities in the new portfolio, Skyline's plant now includes helicopters, fixed wing aircraft, cruise ships and property, which adds up to a great

formula for cross-marketing throughout the group.

"We consider this an exciting, timely period of development for Skyline. The company is well placed to embark on new initiatives and we see this as providing some means to achieve a greater presence for existing activities in Queenstown as well as reciprocal benefits for the newly acquired businesses," adds Ken.

### Management on the move

Skyline's acquisition has meant an exciting period with Managers taking on new positions throughout the company. Turn to page 2 for a full update.

# MANAGEMENT IN MOTION

Skyline Managers are busy slotting into new roles with new positions and promotions across the company's international operations.

The Totally Tourism acquisition sparked an extensive recruitment search which eventually proved Skyline staff ticked all the boxes, with interest.

Blair Deasy has stepped out of his office at Skyline Queenstown to take over as General Manager of the Totally Tourism concerns.

"It's an exciting time for the company and a position I'm delighted to have been offered," says Blair.

"There's always been a dynamic feel about the company and this growth has brought a real feeling of exhilaration."

And he won't be among strangers either as Kellie Goodwin also makes the similar move, becoming the new unit's Marketing Manager.

"It's a great chance to bring everything we've refined at Skyline into a new arena. It's a real step out into some new activities and I'm enjoying learning the new business and realising its huge potential," says Kellie.

The newly vacant General Manager's spot at Skyline Queenstown will be taken over by the man who has been at Sentosa Skyrides and Luge since its very beginnings.

Lyndon Thomas watched and stewarded the growth of the Singapore operation from its roots as a green field site to the unstoppable tourism force it is today.

"It's been nine years of intense learning and working with a lot of great people which means I'm bringing some really valuable and relevant experience to the new role," says Lyndon.

"It's great to be coming back to New Zealand too and taking up the reins of a property with so much going on is a real thrill."

Back in the heat of Singapore Danny Luke has moved up from managing Skyline Luge Tremblant for the last three years to run the Sentosa operation as General Manager.

"Having worked alongside Lyndon here over the years and managed the Canadian teams gives me a really wide experience base in two very different markets, but the Skyline systems and demands are consistent, so taking over a site with such a great record and aiming for continued growth is hugely exciting," says Danny.

Meanwhile the man who's been at the helm in Rotorua for 27 years is taking his experience around the world.

Neville Nicholson was there at the planning stages for Skyline Skyrides and now he's exporting Skyline knowhow in his new role as General Manager, International Luge Development.

"Having seen the way the luge has evolved over the years and the way visitors are constantly excited by it has always proved it's a winning formula wherever we take it," says Neville.

Fellow long-server Bruce Thomassen is another veteran of Skyline Skyrides and luge growth and is now the new General Manager in Rotorua.

In the last four years he's spent as General Manager International Luge Development, he established and managed both Luge sites in Canada and Singapore.

He's also brought his extensive experience to an enormous amount of research to initiate the new Calgary site, Skyline's latest step up the global tourism ladder.

Neville is now heading over to project manage the construction.

"When you consider how much has changed here in the last few decades you could be forgiven for thinking there's nothing left to learn, but if there's one thing I've got from my experience here is that there's always something exciting round the corner. This is the perfect job to make things happen and unlock all sorts of potential, who wouldn't enjoy that!?" says Bruce.



**NEVILLE NICHOLSON**  
Position: General Manager,  
International Luge Development



**BLAIR DEASY**  
Position: General Manager,  
Totally Tourism



**BRUCE THOMASSEN**  
Position: General Manager,  
Skyline Rotorua



**KELLIE GOODWIN**  
Position: Marketing Manager,  
Totally Tourism



**LYNDON THOMAS**  
Position: General Manager,  
Skyline Queenstown



**DANNY LUKE**  
Position: General Manager,  
Luge Sentosa

# BIG WHEELS keep on turning

Queenstown's world-leading mountain bike track has become a star of the small screen since TV3 made a special trip to the official opening. Skyline Views cameras were there too, to catch the names and faces trying their skills on the track that's putting New Zealand downhill on the international map.



*IT'S ALL UPHILL... Guest of honour for the occasion was former Junior World Champion Scarlet Hagen who rode up to the start with Skyline Chief Engineer and the man who drove the project, Ross Davidson.*

*...TO GET SOME DOWNTIME; Ross and Scarlet carve up the track in a blistering run through the trees, the first run of the season... don't try this at home!*



## FESTIVAL FOOD A SMASH HIT

**October saw the Skyline team setting out their stall at Taste Queenstown.**

The food and wine event was run in conjunction with the Real New Zealand and Queenstown Jazz Festivals.

Visitors loved the Skyline offerings and raved about goodies including pork belly roasted in soy, garlic and ginger; smoked Stewart Island salmon with a Vietnamese salad; baked ham sliced on kumara bread with apple and cranberry, and an old favourite, chocolate mousse.

"It's a great chance to put something back into the community and the team worked hard each weekend serving hordes of hungry festival goers and getting amongst the locals and visitors alike," explains Blair Deasy.

Captain Gravity was on hand to make a few appearances and delighted some of the youngsters with his neat line in chat.

Highlight of the day was a stage appearance by Skyline's extremely talented chefs for a live cooking display, showcasing the different styles of food on offer at the top of the gondola.

# RETAIL

## moves into space

**Skyline Queenstown's retail shop is coming into summer with a whole new look after a mid-winter makeover.**

The Miller Studios design makes the best possible use of available space thanks to custom-built stands with onboard storage.

There's more room for customers to browse too, and reduced stand height offers a view across the whole store.

Local photographer and postcard supplier Todd Sisson is a featured artist on the walls which brings a wide overview of Wakatipu life into the mix.

And Skyline shareholders now have the added benefit of 15 per cent discount in the store, so that's two great reasons to drop in!



## FAREWELL...



Globe-trotting Skyliner Graham Rogers is on the move again, though this time to a new role in Australia.

In his six years with Skyline Graham's been a popular feature at Queenstown, Rotorua, Dunedin and Mont Tremblant.

"Graham and his big personality has got to know and impress many of the staff throughout the company with his funny stories and grand ideas, so though he'll be sorely missed we wish him all the best in his move to Melbourne," says Blair Deasy.

# Big time beckons for bike team's Brad!

**He's only 24, but Skyline Queenstown's Brad Rowe has big ideas for the future.**

And so he should, the Mountain Bike Coordinator's just been named the tourism apprentice of the year in a glittering ceremony in Wellington.

Tourism Industry Association awards judges agreed Brad has what it takes to become an industry leader, and his \$2,000 professional development scholarship will certainly set him on the right road.

But the accolades didn't stop there, with Brad also receiving the Aviation, Travel and Tourism Training Organisation award for modern apprentice of the year!

Summing up Brad's achievements, TIA Chief Executive Tim Cossar was generous in his recognition.

"Brad has a 'go for it' attitude, a passion for tourism and has shown strong leadership skills in setting up and managing this new department for Skyline. With mountain biking he is in the right place at the right time in a growing niche market. I am sure he will achieve great

things and go on to hold senior positions in the sector," he said, while presenting the award.

Acting ATTTO Chief Executive Kathy Wolfe was equally fulsome in her praise.

"The A+ Awards are a chance to recognise the individual achievements of industry trainees. They are also a celebration of the valuable economic role vocational education and training has to play in the success of industries and businesses," she said.

Brad beat off around 140 New Zealand tourism industry employees who completed national qualifications through ATTTO in 2010/2011 to achieve his award.

He received a \$500 training scholarship from ATTTO and a one-day pass to TRENZ 2012 from TIA and he has no doubt where the prize would be invested.

"I'm going to put the scholarship towards developing my leadership skills, so I can further help build Queenstown's reputation as an international mountain biking destination," he says.



*Brad Rowe may work in downhill mountain biking but his career's well and truly on the up after scooping a major tourism accolade.*

# WINNING SMILES

## Rugby World Cup comes to Skyline Queenstown



(ABOVE) **ALL BLACK CABIN FEVER:** Ann, Andrew, Graham, Taika and Blair fly the flag, or in this case the gondola for the All Blacks in Rugby World Cup. "Competition on the field was fierce enough but every day New Zealand supporters at the bottom terminal were vying with each other to ride up in cabin number 10," says Blair.



(LEFT) **SHARPE CREASES:** Cheryl Sharpe puts the finishing touches to the international flag display that welcomed Rugby World Cup supporters from all over the world as they arrived at Queenstown's bottom terminal. As the teams left the competition their flags came down until there were only two left. "It was a pleasure to see the New Zealand flag up there at the end, I've never been more proud to hang up my ironing!" says Cheryl.



(ABOVE) **CELTIC SURPRISE:** Irish skipper Brian O'Driscoll poses with Queenstown Primary School pupils Billie, left (11) and Alfie Parvin (9) during the team's civic welcome at Skyline at the very start of the tournament. Skyline also hosted visits from England, Georgia and Romania who all caused quite a buzz of excitement as they strolled, lugged and swung at Skyline. "Brian was really nice to us though I don't know how he'd feel now if he knew my mum and dad are Welsh," says Billie, after seeing Wales knock Ireland out in the quarter finals!

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# WORLD'S LONGEST HOT DOG & Seafood Chowder with a twist hit Skyline Rotorua this summer!

This summer Skyline Rotorua starts a series of exciting new improvements in its Terraces Café with the addition of the World's Longest Hot Dog (aptly named the 'Long Dog'), and by adding the world famous Skyline Seafood Chowder served in a bread bowl to its menu.

The 'Long Dog' is served piping hot in a mouth-watering freshly baked ciabatta bun; delicious special 'non slip' sauces (for easier and tidier eating!) and is proving a hit already.

Skyline Rotorua has served world famous seafood chowder for a few years but has taken this signature dish to a new level by serving this in a delicious specially baked bun – so the customer can enjoy their soup and eat the bowl as well!

Both dishes are getting rave reviews from the first customers to try them and Skyline Rotorua staff members are extremely excited and motivated to provide these innovative new dishes.

"The Long Dog is seriously long...and delicious" claimed one excited international visitor.

These two new additions signal the start of more exciting additions and improvements in the Terraces Café at Skyline Rotorua in the coming months so keep your eyes and taste buds at the ready when you next visit Skyline Rotorua.



# RWC BOOTS N' ALL!

The world came to Leisure Lodge during Rugby World Cup as players from all over the globe descended on Dunedin.

As well as visits from comparative world cup newcomers Georgia and Romania the team also welcomed rising stars Argentina and Italy in the tournament's early stages.

"We only hit the odd language barrier but I think we've all come away learning a little bit of everybody's native tongue. Between us we should be able to string a sentence together!" jokes Manager Jan McDougall.

Linguistics aside the Leisure Lodge team had the chance to show off some of the reasons the property's one of New Zealand's most popular bases for touring rugby teams.

"When people have special requests we pride ourselves on meeting them as best we can. For instance Argentinians love their beef cooked on charcoal

barbecues and there aren't too many of those around these parts," says Jan.

A few phone calls and a bit of leg work saw the only two old-fashioned barbies in town delivered just in time for a spectacular South America style cookout on the lawn.

"They certainly enjoyed their food and when they left they presented us with a signed team jersey which now takes pride of place in McGavin's Restaurant," says Jan.

The extra mile service carried on when minnows Georgia set off to play their match against England, two teams that share a similar flag but that night the Georgian version was being flown by Leisure Lodge staff.

Eastern Europeans Romania took up residence next, putting everybody's sign language skills to the test, then staff enjoyed a complete rugby-free rest... for a whole day before Italy pulled in for their clash with Ireland.



"The madness of it all was a great experience for all the staff involved and we all have our little moments with the teams that we'll never forget," says Jan.

Now with Grand Pacific tours on the summer agenda the foreign accents and culture will be replaced with regular renditions from that great New Zealand tradition, haggis and bagpipes!

## Numbered and unencumbered

**Getting back to your room at Leisure Lodge has never been easier!**

First a new numbering system has introduced more logic to guests' journeys through the property, and a new card access means the days of carrying chunky keys around are also numbered!



## Time honoured



**Long service award recipients:** Josie Dick – 15 Years – Housekeeping; Wonhee Lim – 10 Years (both pictured above) – Housekeeping Supervisor; Katrina Hyde – 2 Years – Reservations Manager; PJ Munro – 2 Years – Kitchen; Georgina Scrivener – 2 Years – Kitchen, and Nichola Calder – 2 Years – Restaurant

With the kitchen staff's famed morning tea on offer it's no surprise so many Leisure Lodge staff stay on for their long-service presentations!

The latest recipients tucked in when Skyline Operations Manager Maryann Geddes officially recognised the most recent team members to clock up significant milestones in Dunedin.

## SMOOTH SALADS



Not only are the drinks flowing in McGavin's Restaurant but so are the diners, all thanks to some nifty new buffet units.

Dessert and salad bars now boast much easier access and the whole ensemble moves up another spacious notch when chairs and tables arrive in December.

## Jamie jets in

Management Trainee Jamie Franklin arrived in Dunedin from her Rotorua sojourn just in time to enjoy a baptism of epic event proportions as Leisure Lodge's Rugby World Cup Coordinator.

Clearly she took it all in her stride though, before stepping smartly into her next role in the functions department as part of her six-month rotation in the south.



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## A CITY OF SALES!



With yet another increase in numbers at Sentosa the mid-year months saw the team's sleeves well and truly rolled up to keep things running smoothly.

As the temperatures kept Singapore in its customary sauna-like state, visitors made for the thrill of the luge and added another 10 percent to last year's ride numbers.

"We supplied more than 300,000 rides within the three month period from June to August and to put that into a Kiwi context, that's equivalent to the population of Christchurch coming through the turnstiles," says Manager Lyndon Thomas.

Working hard at Sentosa also means playing hard though and the now-traditional celebration night out included a lot of cooling libations, a superb buffet and a tug-of-war competition! (above)

## Son of Sentosa!

They love a celebration at Sentosa so when little Mohammed Faheem Ramadhan became the Luge family's first baby his head was wetted in true Skyline style.

Mommy Farah, as Faheem's mum Nurfarhana Binte Abdul Rahim is now affectionately known, is enjoying getting to know the wee fella during her maternity leave and only time will tell if she lives up to the good old Luge tag line... Once is never enough!



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## BIG SUCCESS IS NO ACCIDENT

You'd think that with a record number of almost 228,000 rides in the high altitude Canadian Luge season there'd be a fair sprinkling of grazed knees among the riders.

But you'll be amazed to read the accident book barely covered a couple of pages with just 15 incidents throughout the summer!

"When you work it out you'll see it makes a ratio of one accident per 15,212 rides so we're absolutely delighted with both our records this year," says ecstatic Manager Danny Luke.

August was the pick of the season with another operational milestone when the rides topped out at 85,668.

"The place was full of people, the people were full of smiles and the accident book's all but empty. We're more than happy for it to be gathering dust instead of incident reports!" jokes Danny.



# Property peaks in comfort stakes

Staying at Blue Peaks is like staying in a high-class furniture showroom these days!

Both the lodge and apartments are boasting a fabulous array of the very latest interior décor styles as the constant search for perfection goes on in the Queenstown accommodation icon.

"We're used to enjoying some lovely comments from our guests but people are really loving the new look throughout the property," says co-Manager Anne McMillan.

"Everybody loves the location and its convenience of course, but now there's a real 'Wow' factor that our guests are delighted

to come and share with us. It's a great feeling to see them all so happy," she adds.

Along with couches, divans and bed topper pads that wouldn't be out of place in some of Queenstown's renowned grand homes, there's a high-tech addition to improve the experience too.

"We've updated the lighting and fittings, but as an extra touch of luxury the rooms are equipped with poly-functional electronics as well. It's a whole new world of luxury and our guests are delighted to have it all at their fingertips," says co-Manager Michael McMillan.

