

ProGuides Newsletter

26 February 2026



From the Committee

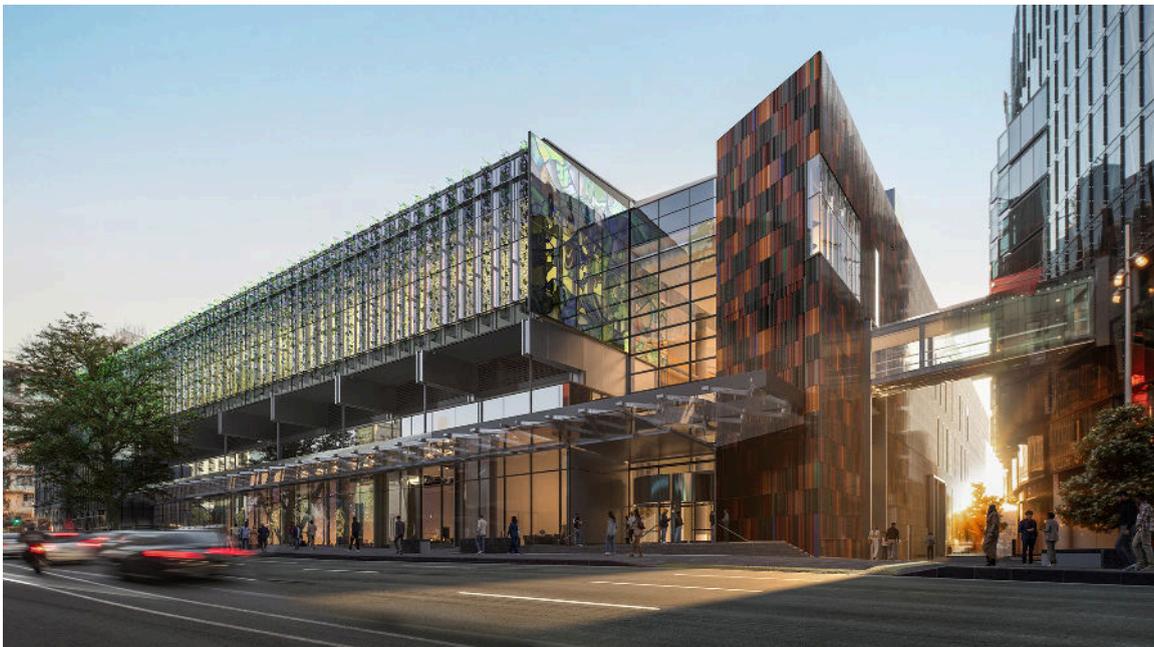
Welcome to our February newsletter. Our thoughts go out to all our colleagues who had to face the latest weather events, cancelled flights and ferries and interrupted train rides due to slips. The remaining season itself looks promising. TIA boss Rebecca Ingram sees the confidence of the industry improved and a growing sense of opportunity. The new international convention center in Auckland has opened and Queenstown has revealed its cable car plans, while Christchurch is looking forward to unveiling their new stadium. Check out DOC's information about nurturing and how a Kiwi tour operator earned a

badge for sustainable operations. Enjoy the read!

From the Chair

ProGuides will work together with [Service IQ](#) and Yoobee Colleges to promote our industry and recruit new tour guides. There has been already a meeting with Pippa from Service IQ , as well as a video meeting with Karen from [Yoobee Colleges \(NZ School of Tourism\)](#). Both are excited by the prospect of working together. It will take different forms, but we are definitely moving forward with this! Now we need to find volunteers who can go and talk to the enrolled youngsters about what it means to be a tour guide. [Please contact us](#) if you are interested or if you need more information.

From our Industry



Milestones for Auckland and Christchurch

Two significant developments are set to create optimism in the economy as well as in tourism industry. Located in the heart of Auckland's CBD, the recently opened [New Zealand International Convention Centre](#) (NZICC) is set to offer "an unrivaled event experience". The new venue has 33 spaces on 4 levels, can host events of all sizes, from board room meetings of 20 guests to large events up to 4,500. On top of that, is a 2,850-seat theatre. Have a look at this [video clip](#).

Similar excitement is prevailing in the South Island, where [One New Zealand Stadium Te Kaha](#) is set to open in April this year. The stadium is designed to host up to 30,000 fans for sports and 37,000 for concerts.

Growing Sense of Opportunity

New Zealand tourism has entered 2026 with a growing sense of opportunity and a renewed focus on resilience, **writes Tourism Industry Aotearoa chief executive Rebecca Ingram**. Her vision includes building resilience in uncertain conditions, making smart use of new investment and infrastructure, adapting to changing traveller behaviour, and ensuring tourism continues to deliver real value for communities.

Queenstown Connections

Plans for a cable car system to ease the city's transport woes have been released, giving the public its first detailed look at the proposal. Jenna Adamson, director of Southern Infrastructure Limited, the private developer behind the project, is convinced that **Queenstown can lead with innovation, sustainability** and community at its heart. The company has **selected Leitner to build the ropeway**, connecting the airport with the city.

Future Famils

As the season comes to an end and quieter times ahead, some famils are on the agenda for April and May. Famil fairy Sharron Hickman is already working behind the scenes with local guides in Auckland to offer an interesting excursion. Watch the space! If you have any ideas or would like to explore a specific part of the country, **please contact ProGuides NZ** and we will try to work something out together.

Sustainability Matters



Walking the Talk

Tour operator [Wild Kiwi is now a certified B Corp](#), which means that the company has met high standards for social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency. Wild Kiwi, who offers small group tours for younger travellers, sees itself as part of a global community of businesses working towards a more inclusive, equitable, and regenerative economy. [Click here for more info on B Corp.](#)

The Art of Nurturing

The Department of Conservation is offering a Beginner's Guide to [The Secret Art of Nurturing](#). It is a balance between playful encouragement and genuine enthusiasm for connecting with nature. DOC shows in simple, relatable steps that invite everyone to embrace the outdoors, and find joy in the little moments. Public Conservation Land is closer than we might think. [Check out their encouraging clips here.](#)

Fiordland Charter gets fined

Charter company Fiordland Cruises Limited has been fined NZ\$ 60,000 [after illegally catching crayfish](#) and serving them to passengers. An investigation by the Ministry of Primary Industries found that 1,630 crayfish were served onboard the charter between January and October 2023. They would have cost nearly NZ\$ 250,000 if sold on the domestic market.

Dairy production vs ecology

Our member [Hella Bauer](#) contacted us following the previous newsletter to request that we balance the information provided by Dairy NZ with the dark side of the industry, who is responsible for **high levels of nitrates in drinking water in Canterbury**. She has an MSc in Agricultural Sciences and wrote her thesis on dairy farming in NZ. Here is [one of the links](#) where more information can be found. Let us know if you are interested to know more about it and we will arrange a webinar on the topic.

Notes from the Road

Wine Tasting by Boat

Cromwell Winery Cruises is a new venture taking small groups on the glassy Lake Cromwell, **visiting three Central Otago wineries** via the water for tastings during full-day excursions.



Te Tapu Culture Garden

This Christchurch based project is **an evolving sculpture garden** and native regeneration project with the mission to support contemporary sculpture practice and to enhance native biodiversity in Canterbury.



New Zealand explained

Check out this inspiring reel from **Kiwi comedian Te Radar**. He explains in a nutshell why New Zealand is not a small country but a big village that likes to bring a bit of joy to every occasion.



Welcoming new Members



Jacky Toepfer

Jacky likes to make every guest feel welcome, sharing stories they won't find in a guidebook. When she is not guiding, you'll find her involved in conservation efforts, voluntarily helping to protect the environment. [Click here](#) for her profile.



Siyuan Chen

(Chinese-Cantonese, Chinese-Mandarin, English)
specializes in bespoke private tours. Whether you prefer a comfortable journey in a luxury Toyota Vellfire or a unique adventure on a Harley-Davidson, he ensures a safe trip. [Click here](#) for his profile.



Natalie Absalom

(English and basic sign language)
She has a background in health, which shapes how she think about wellbeing, accessibility, and looking after people. She guides for Ability Adventures, tours for people with disability, and is based in Amberley.

Laurie Adams

Originally from the UK, he is a

Andy Moser

qualified International Mountain Leader and has been guiding and teaching outdoor skills for over 30 years. Now based in Moutere, where he runs tours around Abel Tasman National Park with his company Tasman Adventures

(German, English, Samoan)
Born in Austria, now based in Thames.

Dong Hyuck Parks

(Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, English)
Auckland based.

ProGuides New Zealand.

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