IPA



Around the Regions

Members Travel Articles

Delegates Wishlist

International Police Association
New Zealand Section Inc.

Summer 2012
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FREE TO MEMBERS


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IPA
International Police Association
New Zealand Section

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NZ IPA Secretary General Coleen Meyers with newly elected IEC President Pierre-Martin Moulin and NZ IPA President Paul Visser at the IEC Conference, Israel, September 2012.

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From the Editor's Quill



Hello everyone and welcome to the last edition of the IPA magazine for 2012.

I am delighted to be taking over the editorship of the magazine at a stage when I think there are exciting times ahead for both IPA in New Zealand and internationally.

I hope I can rise to the standard your former Editor Ken has set!

My introduction over 25 years ago to IPA was in fact through a former editor of this magazine and now a great friend, Carole Tipler. I have to thank Carole as I've been fortunate enough to utilise the services of IPA internationally in the past with travel through Rome, Ireland and Canada and plan to call on connections again with an anticipated trip to the USA next year.

So, who am I – your new Editor!

A born and bred Westie I left the Police nearly nine years ago after 18 years service. A variety of jobs followed which saw me traverse south from Auckland spending 7 years in the Waikato, before venturing across the Strait to Christchurch nearly two years ago.

Anyone who knows me will be well aware of my penchant for our four legged friends which leads me to choose the country life.

Not well known for my cooking skills I own a Massey Ferguson tractor, have trained a racehorse that was far too slow, am an avid motor-racing fan and one day would like to have the courage to climb a large mountain.

Anyway, enough of me and more about what you can look forward to in this edition.

I am extremely thankful to Paul, Aimee, Diane and Kerry for providing us with their articles. If ever there was an example of the benefits of IPA membership these stories certainly push that point home.

I know our President Paul was nervous about sharing his experiences on paper so if there was any message I wish to get out with this, my first edition, it's please don't be afraid to share your stories in whatever way you choose.

The beauty of this magazine is, while we may have some constraints, copyright, standards, etc, the stories we share can fit whatever style suits you.

If you need help putting pen to paper I am more than happy to lend a hand. There is no right or wrong way to tell your story. It doesn't have to be about an international trip either – the magazine is your way to connect with other members who share a common bond.

Even if you wish to express a thought, an idea or suggestion, please drop me a line or get those fingers to the keyboard and fire away.

Following our tales of travel we have some local news from the Regions and also the results of the PEB elections, along with the elected member's thoughts on their roles.

I have included the "Wishlist" which was requested by the newly elected International President Pierre-Martin Moulin of all delegates at the international Conference. It makes for interesting reading.

Lastly is a letter from Pierre-Martin, written to all members. The exciting times I referred to for IPA come from the sense one gets from reading this letter and the feedback from both our President and Secretary General with them having met Pierre at the Conference.

Every organisation needs a fresh perspective from time to time and it would appear IPA is about to undergo a "revitalisation"!

What better time for us to publicise IPA and encourage new members to join an organisation that offers so much.

Before I go I'd just like to thank those members whom I have had opportunity to meet with so far for being so welcoming and kind– a testament to the principals of IPA.

I look forward to getting to know many more of you through the magazine and sharing your stories and news. All the best for a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

From the Editor's Quill

Servo Per Amikeco
Kathy Graham
Editor

Stop press: As we went to print we were advised that Paul Housley, Region 1, has been awarded an Arthur Troop Scholarship. Congratulations Paul and we look forward to learning more in the next IPA magazine.



The President's Report

Hello members

Seasons greetings to you and your families.

On behalf of the Executive of IPA New Zealand I would like to extend best wishes for the festive season and the year ahead of us in 2013.

This last part of 2012 was certainly an eventful time as far as IPA goes.

Coleen Meyers and I attended the IEC meeting in Israel and by the look of things we were out of there at the right time due to the escalating political situation.

What a beautiful part of the world to visit and the history was amazing. It is a place I never dreamed of ever visiting so I thank IPA for this opportunity.

At IEC a new President was elected, Pierre-Martin Moulin; I hope at some stage we can encourage him to get down to New Zealand.

I was elected onto the International Cultural Commission, a daunting task in which I hope I do not let you down.

I recently attended the Region One dinner at the Silverdale RSA where I presented a number of long service certificates. It is prudent also to advise you that I presented two members with their 50 year badge. We now have 5 members with over 50 years service to IPA. Thank you for inviting me to your event and an amazing meal and I look forward to next year.

Kerry Morrell has been awarded a Silver Merit for our website. If you haven't already, go and have a look and don't forget to log in and create your profile. We are very fortunate to have such a great website, www.ipa.org.nz.

Ross Pinkham and I attended the Australian IPA AGM in October and also their formal dinner. We have invited two of their members to attend our AGM in New Plymouth in April. This is a great opportunity to share knowledge and procedures.

Don't forget to check the calendar on our website for upcoming events and if you have an event you want published pass it on to Kerry.

I would like to thank Ken Brewer for all the work he has put into the smooth transition of Editor and of course welcome Kathy Graham as our new Editor.

Kathy will be keen to hear from any of you especially if you have a story for her.

Take care and have a safe time over Christmas and the New Year.

Paul Visser
President

Proudly supporting IPA New Zealand....



The Assistant Secretary General's Desk



Hi there everyone!

Well one can only look back and say once again, "where has the year gone?" So much has happened in 12 months both personally for you and me in our own lives, IPA internationally and IPA in New Zealand.

Things on the IPA front both internationally and nationally have been ticking along with lots of comings and goings.

First and foremost, welcome to our new magazine Editor Kathy Graham. We hope that she has many pleasurable hours working on this magazine.

At the recent Region One Christmas luncheon, recognition was given to Ken Brewer, our now retired [although I am not too sure just how retired] Editor in the presentation of a gift for his untiring service he gave to our magazine. – Thank you again Ken.

Don't forget this is your magazine and I am sure Kathy would appreciate any contributions from you as members and what is happening in your Region.

Israel World Congress was a huge success. Paul and I appreciated the opportunity to be able to represent the New Zealand Section. The friendship week that followed was well attended [450] and what a great experience it was travelling through Israel and visiting the many sacred spots.

What an inspirational man the new International President, Pierre-Martin Moulin is and I am sure he will be a great leader for our Association. He is a young man with enthusiasm and a vision for IPA and I am sure that with these qualities, all members will see the results of this appointment.

A new PEB was also elected – as detailed here in the magazine.

New Zealand Section has been recognised in that Paul [our National President] has been elected onto the Cultural Commission. We congratulate Paul on this and hope he gets much joy in serving IPA in this forum.

IYG is in Switzerland from 20 July – 03 August 2013. We have two nominees from New Zealand whose details have been submitted to the organisers for approval.

The 2nd World Police Officers Congress is to be held in April 2013 in Brisbane and we have two young serving police officers attending this, one from Region One and one from Region Five. I am sure they will have lots to report back on when they return.

Our National Council meeting was held in Wellington during October. Police have allowed for the IPA flag to be flown on the 31st of May [IPA day] from selected Police Stations. Our thanks to the Police for allowing this to happen.

Congratulations to Kerry Morrell, our website administrator in gaining a Silver Award from the PEB for the New Zealand IPA website. Our website was judged against other IPA sites from around the world.

I continue to be encouraged by the number of new members joining IPA. Welcome to our new members and we hope that you will enter into the spirit of IPA and enjoy the fellowship and friendship of the organisation.

Obituaries

Paul Howard - Region 6

Jean Dougall - Region 4

Our thoughts and friendship go out to the families of these IPA members.

Again I thank those who regularly send in their updates, changes of addresses, bereavements, etc as this does help us to maintain an up-to-date record of all our members.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and New Year. If you are setting off for some well deserved R&R take care, don't get too sunburnt and enjoy the rest.

Servo per Amikeco

Coleen Meyers



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND FRIENDSHIP WEEK 2012 – ISRAEL

In September IPA President Paul Visser, along with Secretary General Coleen Meyers attended the IPA International Conference and Friendship week in Israel. Paul gives us a brief glimpse into his trip and the highlights of the conference.

On the 1st September 2012 I headed off from Christchurch for that long dreaded trip to Europe.

If you're anything like me you dream of travelling to far off exotic places sitting in First Class or the very least Business Class, but alas no I was sitting in cattle class.

I teamed up with Secretary General Coleen in Auckland to travel to London via Hong Kong for a brief stopover. In London we stayed at the Union Jack Club beside Waterloo Station which is a great place and has great rates for IPA members.

A day spent tiki-touring around the heart of London was a first for me and a chance to get a few photos of Big Ben for my youngest son Ben.

Next stop was Tel Aviv where we were met for the next part of the journey to Eilat, the destination of the International Executive Council Conference.

We arrived in Eilat at about 2030hrs on Tuesday 4th September to temperatures in the high 30's with high humidity. The hotel we stayed in was amazing and the catering had without question the most variety I have ever seen.

This was my second Conference and I recognised a number of friends from the previous conference which had been held in Romania.

As it was election year it was very exciting and the buzz around the "village" was great, with the candidates vying for positions and getting around speaking to everyone.

Eilat sits on the banks of the Red Sea between the borders of Jordan and Egypt.

The Conference went well with long days of debate and voting. A break in the middle of the conference saw us take a boat trip on the Red Sea where we stopped off by the Egyptian border for a BBQ and a sea swim in water temperatures of 32 degrees.

The elections went well and as you are all aware Pierre-Martin Moulin was elected as the new International President.

What an amazingly refreshing guy. He is so easy to talk to and really wants to get to know you.

To this end IPA is in good hands.



ABOVE: Paul and IPA International President Pierre-Martin Moulin.

The Gala Dinner was a truly amazing event with a lot of the members dressed up in uniform and parading in their national uniforms. Everyone was keen to get their photos taken with the flashiest uniforms. Personally I think the RCMP is still the best.

It was sad to say goodbye the next morning as those with other commitments departed. For us lucky ones we stayed on for Friendship Week and I was fortunate to have my son, Isaac, join me from Finland for the week.

The tour groups were split into buses according to our spoken language. Our bus was by far the most favoured bus and we had a huge amount of fun not to mention getting lost with our guide and two armed Police in the City of the Crusaders.

On Sunday the 9th we headed off on our journey around the Holy Land and for those brought up on Bible stories it was truly an amazing trip.

We headed up the Jordanian border to the Dead Sea and up to the Masada, the last stronghold of the Jewish rebels and fortress of King Herod. I'm pleased to say we took the cable car option as opposed to the 45 minute walk up in 40 degrees.

The ruins are still there and how the Romans managed to build the ramp up to the site is beyond my imagination.

After checking into our hotel we had a "swim" in the Dead Sea. It really is fascinating floating in water that is 33% salt and like sitting in oil; well almost sitting as you bob up to the top of the water. I kept looking around for Greenpeace to come and rescue me as I was like a stranded whale and couldn't stand up.



ABOVE: A sign at the entrance to a temple in Israel

Tuesday saw us heading to the Syrian border at a stronghold looking over at the UN outpost in Syria on the way to Nazareth. We visited the Church of the Annunciation, Jesus' Synagogue Church and the Church of Joseph the Carpenter and continued to Kana village before descending to the Sea of Galilee.

The next day we took a boat trip on the Sea of Galilee and ended up at the Baptist site on the Jordan River.

This was a long day on the bus but very enjoyable and a lot of friendly banter took place between our groups.

On Wednesday we travelled by bus to the Mediterranean Sea and the City of the Crusaders, with a walk in the colorful markets, then we continued to Haifa to observe the Baha'I Gardens and the city itself. After a brief time wading in the Med and viewing the aqueduct we travelled to Jerusalem.

The next day we went to the Holocaust Museum, a heart wrenching place, then onto the Armenian Quarter and entered the city via the Jaffa Gate and had a walk through the Jewish quarter and then onto the Wailing Wall.

Friday was a quiet day and for those who wanted to there was a chance for a trip around Tel Aviv. I was all bussed out so elected to have a quiet day in Jerusalem and sitting around the pool at the hotel.

On Friday night we had a farewell dinner and an early night as we had a 3.30am start the next morning. Security reasons meant we had to be at the airport 5 hours before our flight.

The shuttle picked us up and took us to the airport through a number of check points, one of which at I was removed from the shuttle at gun point as my acknowledgement that I didn't know all the people in the shuttle raised some concern. After the production of my passport and the invitation from the Israeli Government to attend the IPA functions we were on our way again.

We then boarded the plane for a quick 47 hour journey to NZ clearing customs in both London and LA before boarding immediately again. We were however questioned everywhere about the reasons for visiting Israel.

It was nice to finally touch down at home in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Israel is a fantastic country with so much history to offer. It is so diverse in religion and the people are friendly. This trip will be dear to me for many years to come and visiting places I had heard about so much as a youngster at school was incredible.

I can fully recommend the friendship weeks if you ever get the chance.

Paul Visser

President NZ Section IPA



ABOVE: Paul and NZ Secretary General Coleen Meyer 'working' at the IPA International Conference



ABOVE: Paul and his son Isaac

LAURENS COUNTY, USA.

Region 1 member Aimee Dodds writes of her visit to Laurens County, USA.

It was 5pm on Thursday the 19th of July 2012 in Greenville, South Carolina. A furiously hot humid summer's day had been spent at the Greenville County Sheriff's office and Forensic Department, an area of policing I hope to go into later in my career.

Good friends of mine Crystal and Keith picked me up from the Forensic Department and we took a drive by the Liberty Bridge for some final pictures together before I continued my journey.

Crystal's phone rang and she handed it over to me. I knew Art and Jo Alloy, members of the IPA Region 14 were expecting me in Laurens County that night. I was delighted to hear Art's New York accent, my favourite American accent. He was calling to see what time I would be arriving and whether or not they should wait for me for dinner. When I found out Jo was making lasagna, a home cooked southern dish I couldn't resist but allow them to save me a plate.

This was my 5th week of a 7 week holiday and I hadn't had many home cooked meals!

During my planning for this 7 week trip to America I'd been in touch will Bill Weiner, the IPA region 14 travel liaison officer. He had put me in touch with Art, a fellow member of the IPA region 14.

I was sorry to leave my friends but curious of this small town I was headed to where I knew no one, nor knew anything about it. My best friend Kara, who was my old bunk mate from summer camp in New York in 2005, had left on her honeymoon to Cypress a few days earlier. The wedding had been my reason for destination South Carolina. She'd lent me her oversized 4x4 and I was slowly getting used to driving on the right side of the road, with the odd turning into the left lane heading into oncoming traffic before swerving to the other side just in time.

I punched in the destination of Art and Jo's house in Laurens County, pop. 9134. It was closer than I'd realised, a somewhat 40 miles south-east; surely there was no rush hour in this part of America.

I set the GPS and I hit the I-385 S. The sun was just going down and in a very cliché sense it was like something from out of a movie. I flicked the radio channels and was amazed that even in the middle of nowhere there was a crisp radio reception on every channel and almost every channel was playing country music. I'd quickly become a fan of country music, having now spent 2.5 weeks in South Carolina.

As I turned onto US-221 S the sun was setting, the sky was pink and I felt so far away from home. The GPS guided me through Main Street, Laurens, a small but beautiful historic town. There were signs posted in the ground "Vote Sheriff Chastain". I knew Art had organised for me to meet with the Sheriff the next day and the interesting concept of town Sheriff struck me - just like in the old movies, the people of the town vote for their Sheriff.

The GPS told me to turn off Main Street into Barnes Road and I was expecting it to be very easy to find Art and Jo's home. Still trying to calculate the GPS system in miles it told me the destination was on my right. I looked across to baron fields, just as it was getting dark. There were no houses. I pulled over to the side of the road and thought to myself that maybe it would be the next house on my right. I pulled down a long drive where there was a big rundown looking farm house. I could see a woman was watching me out of her kitchen window. I pulled up and went to the door and politely told her I thought I was lost but figured I'd ask someone because in a town like this I assumed everyone would know their neighbours. She didn't understand my accent and just stared at me saying "y'what?" I told her not to worry about it and repeated "I think I have the wrong address".

Heading back to the start of the road I saw a house set back off the road with a large American flag attached to a pole on a spacious manicured lawn. I went with my gut and drove up the long drive to the back of the house. It was then I saw a sign "Welcome to our home Aimee 19-07-2012." Instantly it felt like it was my home away from home.



Art and Jo were watching for me out the window and came to greet me and help with my bags. I immediately felt overwhelmed by the hospitality.

They showed me my room, a gorgeous country style room furnished with lots of floral decor and books, ornaments, and stuffed animals and with a lovely big en-suite. Dinner was ready at the table and although Art and Jo had eaten they sat and chatted with me for what was left of the night.

Art found an old photo album with photos from their visit to New Zealand many years ago and told me stories about all the places they visited, laughing and reminiscing. It sounded like they had had an amazing trip.

Art and I had a beer and I attempted to clean up a huge plate of delicious lasagna, but my appetite was still not that of your average American.

Art explained we needed to be at the Sheriff's office by 10am as the

local newspaper was going to meet us for a photograph. To avoid sleeping in I set my alarm for 8.30am and got up to find Art and Jo preparing breakfast. Art gave me an option of bacon and eggs, French toast or pancakes; we went with Bacon and eggs. Quite the fry up it was and we sat around the table discussing the day ahead. Art was dressed smartly in his IPA shirt and I being on a summer vacation had to scrape together something semi- formal as I'd been traveling with everything but work clothes.

After a short drive into town we met the Sheriff, Ricky Chastain (pictured below with Aimee), a 23 year veteran, at his office. He was immediately charming and friendly. We sat in his office and chatted for a while and someone from the local newspaper took a picture of Art, the Sheriff and I.

Sheriff Chastain gave me some Laurens County Sheriff Department t-shirts and caps to add to my oversized luggage. Sheriff Chastain runs a radio show online and to my surprise asked if I'd like to do a radio interview later in the day. I was excitedly nervous and said yes. So as not to embarrass myself too much I made sure I did some online research so I could get some of the facts right; the topics being the differences between NZ and USA policing and the International Police Association.

Larry Young from the DARE program stopped by to introduce himself and gave me some DARE trinkets including a toy car and slinky, souvenirs I thought were very cool.

Sheriff Chastain then invited me to be a special guest at the Martha Franks Retirement village. The staff at the village had put on a cook-out for the Public Safety officers of Laurens to show their gratitude for the work they do. Sheriff Chastain drove Art and me there and introduced us to everyone. People were fascinated that I'd come so far to visit Laurens. We sat at tables decorated with American style table cloths and filled our plates with burgers, cob corn and hotdogs with a Pepsi and potato chips on the side. We talked about New Zealand and the differences between policing in Auckland and Laurens.



After lunch we took a drive to the Laurens County Detention Centre. We were introduced to all the staff and had the grand tour - black and white jumpsuits, circular dorms, security camera stations.

Back at the office Sheriff Chastain wanted to show me a special project of his. He has instigated a conversion of the old downtown jailhouse into a haunted house for Halloween to raise money for the Christmas for Kids program to assist families in Laurens County who can't afford Christmas. Despite being an old run down building it can only be imagined that the visitors who go to the jailhouse on Halloween will have quite the adventure.

Back at the Sheriff's office we met with Sergeant Scott Franklin who prepped us for the one hour radio show. Art and I had a few things to talk about and Sheriff Chastain also had some topics. I was wondering how I would manage to pass an hour of live radio but somehow Americans manage to do this very well and the hour flew by - my nerves were gone within the first five minutes. Sergeant Franklin was fascinated we have an unarmed police force; the concept to him was baffling. Art talked about the International Police association and the friendships it creates across the world.

After a long but exciting day Art and I drove home to get ready for dinner. To my delight the restaurant of choice was Senor Garcia Mexican Restaurant. I had already eaten an abundance of Chimichangas and Enchiladas on the west coast so finding an authentic Mexican restaurant in a small town on the East Coast was an added bonus. I enjoyed an enormous plate of deep fried chicken and cheese burritos and a Shirley Temple, all for less than US$10.00 and got to know Art and Jo's family a little more.

It was here I met Lt Marty Ray Crain (pictured below with Aimee), a 15 year veteran of the Laurens County Sheriff's Department. He stopped by in his patrol vehicle on the way to work to meet me and pick me up for my ride along.



Lt Crain handed me a bullet proof vest (the Sheriff had kindly allowed me to wear his own) and we headed for the Sheriff's office to meet the rest of the shift, Bravo Platoon. Bravo Platoon work the night shift 7.00pm to 7am, 5 days in a row with 2 days off, followed by 2 days in a row with 5 off making it on average a 42 hour week. Lt Crain's shift consists of a Lieutenant, Sergeant, Corporal and 3 Deputies. Each of them is assigned their own vehicle and work autonomously, meeting up at various call-outs. Laurens County Sheriff's office protects a 714 square mile area.

As Lt Crain and I headed for his vehicle I asked him if there was anything I needed to know before embarking into the unknown.

Lt Crain showed me where he keeps the rifle in the boot and told me to use call sign 214. He said if things go really bad on a job, just to leave him at the scene, save myself and take off in his vehicle and if that didn't happen to either grab his Glock, a 22.40 Calibre side arm or the 27.40 Calibre backup weapon attached to his ankle if he was down, or the rifle from the boot. I imagined myself driving (on the wrong side of the road) out in the country in the pitch black, lost with no GPS. I'm sure I presented a slightly worried look on my face and questioning Lt Crain about the possibility of such incidents evolving with firearms. He informed me it was common to attend firearms jobs and relayed the unfortunate story of his Deputy who was shot and killed in front of him at a job where they

were arresting a murder suspect in 2011. Lt. Crain performed CPR on his Deputy but he died in his arms.

Although shooting at law enforcement officers is common, for Lt Crain this was the first time one of his men had been shot and killed on his watch.

We took a drive around the streets of Laurens and Lt Crain decided to stop off and get some dinner at Subway. We joked about being worlds away from each other but still having the common ground of dining at Subway when on duty. We met up with Deputy Allen Burden and State Trooper Chris West at Subway with them pausing to say grace before enjoying their foot-long subs.

Taking to the highway we carried out some traffic stops. Compared to pulling over cars in the Auckland City it seemed like a breeze; there was a middle lane specifically for vehicles to stop meaning there was really no excuse to delay in stopping.

It was a fairly quiet night in Laurens County but I enjoyed the conversations and the people I met the most. Lt. Crain kept me entertained with stories about battle scars, pursuits across state and the dangers of deer on the highway while blue-lighting at 3.00am. We drove to Clinton to meet some of the Public Safety officers, and the Laurens Police Department and then the communications centre before a stop at the gas station for my first chocolate pie.

We attended a domestic job at a trailer park, my first time visiting a trailer park. Although a minor incident, the reality of people living in such conditions that cockroaches and ants were littering the floors was one to make anyone's skin crawl. Laurens County have a large problem with Meth labs which Sheriff Chastain has processes in place to try and eradicate. However, domestic violence and property crimes create the largest percentage of call-outs in Laurens County.

Also that night an operation was in place on the highway involving several reserve Deputies, school resource officers and other officers who can be spared to assist with traffic checkpoint. The officers test for drink drivers, drugs, license checks, stolen vehicles and persons with a warrant for their arrest.

It was getting late and I had the growing realisation that I had a two hour drive to Charlotte airport in the morning. Sleep didn't seem that important though when I was having such a great experience so I stayed out as late as I could.

Lt. Crain dropped me home at around 2.00am and I thanked him for his hospitality. He gave me a Saint Michaels Patron Saint of law enforcement coin, his old badge and some patches. I was very appreciative and now carry the coin with me on duty.

I snuck inside as I was worried I would wake up Art and Jo. I spent an hour tip toeing around repacking my luggage to trying and fit in all the souvenirs I'd been given by Art and the Laurens County Sheriff's office.

Waking up just four hours later I could hear Art and Jo in the kitchen. Art was ready waiting in his 'All American Barbeque chef' apron ready to cook me another big feed before my flight. I shared my ride-along stories over breakfast before we headed outside for a few photographs together outside their home. Waving good-bye I took to the road. The roads were clear and I cranked the country music and wound down the windows to keep me awake. As I was leaving Laurens I noticed the road leading to I-85 N was posted with 'Vote for Sheriff Chastain' signs.



I felt honored to have been part of this slice of life for the past two days. Hitting the main highway I felt very nostalgic about leaving. I wondered if I'd ever get the chance to return and felt lucky I'd been given the opportunity through the IPA to visit with such warm and welcoming people in a place I would have never noticed on a map.

Since my visit Sheriff Chastain has been re- elected for his 4th term as the town Sheriff so he will be due to complete 16 years. I have remained in contact with several of the people I met, including Lt. Crain, who I now call Marty, and the Sheriff. I was able to repay the gesture of gifts sending a large care package to the Sheriff's office full of souvenirs, Pineapple lumps, Minties and Jaffas. I am hopeful that one day some of them will visit New Zealand and that I, along with other IPA members, can offer the same hospitality.



ABOVE: Art, Aimee and Sheriff Chastain

DIANE LIMBRY'S EUROPEAN TRIP

Diane Limbry travelled to Europe recently in her role as a NZ Judo referee. Diane took the opportunity to make contact with IPA representatives in the countries she travelled to and shares her experiences.



ABOVE: Diane and Slovenian IPA host Marjan Prah

I've been a member of the IPA since 2000 and am currently a sergeant on front line duties in Wanganui.

Back in June I headed over to Europe for three and a half weeks. The main reason was I had been selected as a New Zealand judo referee to referee in two European Cup competitions, in Celje, Slovenia and Prague, Czech Republic - each a weekend apart. This was to be my first foray into refereeing in Europe. I decided to get more bang for my buck and expand the trip so instead of just flying in and out for the judo, I wanted to see the parts of Europe I was visiting.

I organised through Marlene Merriman, our travel secretary, contacts in the European countries I was heading to: Germany, Slovenia, Austria and the Czech Republic.

Leaving NZ on 8 June I flew to Hong Kong, staying there for two nights to help break up the flying. The stop-over was well worth it as there was plenty to see and do.

I then flew on to Frankfurt am Main, Germany on Lufthansa. It is an airline that reminded me of Air New Zealand 20 years ago complete with small televisions hanging in the aisles instead of being located in the seat backs.

I was met at the airport by IPA members Mr Udo Dorn and Mr Hubert Porche. Both are retired policemen. I had booked my accommodation in Frankfurt at a backpackers but on their recommendation changed it to a more desirable place in a much better suburb i.e. not the red light district!

For just ten Euros a night I was now staying at the police training facility complete with my own huge room, en suite and cheap washing facilities which were much appreciated after the heat of Hong Kong.

The pair generously gave up their time for two days, especially Hubert, as they showed me the sights of their wonderful city including the city's most important police station in the 18th century that was complete with a prison, gallows and a pillory. However these days it's a café surrounded by shops in an outdoor mall! The current police HQ is massive and comes complete with a helicopter pad for AOS call-outs.

A 15th century defence tower you had to pass through to gain access to the city is now Frankfurt's oldest building in the city centre and houses a café. They showed me their town hall and Udo took me out to a quaint old pub to try the local apple wine (bitter compared to our cider) and the local cheese, best described as smelly and served with raw cut onions. Interesting!

Hubert took me up a very tall building (190m odd) so I could look out across the city as well as a boat trip on The Main.

The first thing I noticed as we drove around was the quality of the cars (maybe this has something to do with Frankfurt being the financial heart of Europe) not to mention the BMW police cars and the magnificently built old architecture.

Also interesting was the speed driven on the autobahns. It was raining and we were doing well over 100kms. My (then) Inspector would have called us into her office for that speed which was of course without lights and siren!

After a couple of days it was now time to fly to Ljubljana, Slovenia. Here I met up with Marjan Prah, an IPA member and serving officer equal to our Inspector level or higher.

I was bowled over by the beauty of this city, the magnificent architecture, the friendly people, the warm weather and a city without hustle and bustle, not to mention the food and wonderful fresh cherries. Marjan took me to a typical Slovenian restaurant, the awesome Sokol in the heart of the city.

He knew the owner and we dined outside for lunch. I savoured their special mushroom soup served in a bowl made of bread and had venison and cherries for my main. Both were outstanding and in itself worth the journey.

I met a cop who polices the city on a pushbike; an awesome way to navigate the old, narrow streets. She was putting some school children through their paces, testing them on their riding skills as you need to pass a road safety test to be able to ride. She travels in each day by train from Maribor a distance of 130kms each way! Apparently Ljubljana is an expensive to live in, however I found the backpackers cheap and friendly!

After two nights I was picked up by the judo organisers and taken to Celje, a city 80km away with a population similar to Wanganui's. It was a far cry from the 600, 000 plus of Frankfurt and near on 300, 000 of Ljubljana (not that I bumped into nearly that many in the capital).

The tournament itself was a far cry to what I was used to in this part of the world. There were 400 odd competitors all of a high standard and there were only two referees who had English as a first language; an English guy and me! Aside from me, they were all funded by their respective countries for their airfares and accommodation. Lucky buggers!

On Sunday evening I was driven back to Ljubljana and on Marjan's recommendation I went to the Celica Hostel which is a former jail where the current head of state (I believe) was imprisoned in the 1990's for his stance on the then country. It is an interesting hostel, but rather cramped and expensive.

Marjan dropped me off the next day at the train station, having organised my ticket to Salzburg, Austria for my trip to the next

judo competition in Prague the following weekend.

The scenery from the train was wonderful with snow still on some of the mountains, even in June.

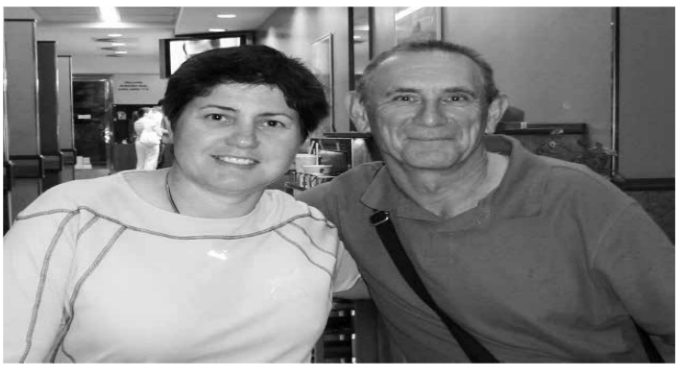
On arrival in Salzburg, the home of Mozart and the Sound of Music I found this to be yet another beautiful city and everything was within easy walking distance of my hostel. I met Roland Link, their IPA representative, another serving officer. He was able to spend some time showing me around and also drove me out to Oberndorf, a small quaint town just outside of Salzburg where, on Christmas Eve 1818 the first performance of Silent Night was heard at the St Nicholas parish church.

I went on a Sound of Music bus tour to relive the movie I was first introduced to as a child by my mother. This seems to be a major part of their tourist trade and was well worth doing. I stayed here for four nights, the longest stay in the same bed on my trip. It was nice to relax and chill out. One thing I noticed was the lack of eftpos use by shops. Even when out for dinner at a local café, they only accepted cash!

I also saw the home of Christian Doppler, a man who grew up in the city back in the 1800's before heading to Prague, and who is responsible for the 'Doppler effect' that is used in our speed enforcement technology today.

Having again made use of my IPA contact to book my next train trip, I headed up to Prague on the eve of the next judo competition. Leaving Salzburg on a near new train which reached speeds of up to 150 km's per hour. I changed twice more as I was whisked to Prague.

And oh how the scenery changed as I went, not to mention the quality of the trains. They don't announce the border crossings on the trains but I knew once I had crossed the border. The train stations were run down and littered with graffiti. My arrival into the train station at Prague was different though as it had clearly been recently renovated and was very busy.



ABOVE: Diane Limbry and IPA host Vladi Macek

I eventually found my IPA contact, Vladi Macek, another serving officer. He took me to my accommodation, the HQ for the judo competition, where I sorted my accreditation, attended the referee's briefing and got an early nights sleep.

The weekend saw another big competition for me, where the standard was even higher than Slovenia. As it turned out I refereed the soon to be gold medallist of the women's under 78kg division at the Olympics and a bronze medallist in another weight. Some of the stars had come out to play as part of their final preparation to The Games.

The weekend also saw my niece arrive from England for a catch up. After changing to a more central hotel after the competition we hit the streets of Prague, seeing all the sights we could and taking in the local cuisine for the next few days. Like all cities I went to, a trip on the river became a must-do, it's a great way to see the city from another angle.

Vladi's daughter took us out to a water show; a dazzling display at the Prague Krizik's Fountain, often referred to as the Dancing Fountain or Musical Fountain, a spectacular show of water, light and music.

After leaving Prague I flew to Beijing, China for three nights not only to break up the travel but also to see what the city had to offer. I can now proudly say I have climbed the Great Wall of China, sat on Tiananmen Square, eaten Peking Duck, wandered through the Summer Palace (along with an estimated 34,000 visitors in temperatures over 30oC on the day I visited!), marvelled at the Forbidden City and seen an amazing acrobatic show, to name just a few of the things I did.

It was an amazing trip with so many highlights - all captured on a ton of photos. Having the IPA contacts was invaluable. People to show me around and to talk to, to see and do things local and help me with things like booking the trains. It was an experience I will never forget and one I am keen to repeat next year should I be given the opportunity to referee in Europe again. One thing's for sure if I am, I will be contacting Marlene and organising IPA contacts.



ABOVE: Diane and her German IPA hosts Hubert Porche and Udo Dorn – who wrote an article for their local IPA magazine about her visit.

MOTORCYCLING IN THE BEAUTIFUL BALKANS

IPA website editor Kerry Morrell writes about their adventurous motorcycle ride in the Balkans

Firstly I have never been to the Balkans before and secondly I didn't even know where they were, but I do now.

Previously part of Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro and Croatia are the countries that we chose to ride through. The other countries that are part of the Balkans will have to wait.

My wife, and I arrived at Ljubljana airport from Barcelona after completing a 24-day Mediterranean cruise. We were staying in the city centre for 8 days before embarking on an organized motorcycle tour that took in 4 countries over 15 days.

I must say that Ljubljana is interesting and compact. From the moment we arrived until the day we departed, Marjan Prah-Podborski, a Slovenian IPA member and serving Police Officer for the Ministry of Interior, hosted us.

Marjan spoke perfect English and acquainted us with the city by taking us to various traditional places for lunch plus sightseeing tours of the city; he even took us all the way to the south of Slovenia to a beautiful farming area where he and his wife, Helena, are building a house.

I was astonished with Marjan's new house for within the lower level he has created a museum of Police memorabilia which includes many Police hats from all over the world - very impressive.

During our stay my wife and I took a day tour to Lake Bled in the north of Slovenia, this is a must see. On the same tour we travelled to the South and on the way stopped to experience a remarkable castle built into the hillside before continuing on to visit an enormous cave system called Postojna Caves, WOW!

Marjan was the perfect host, checking often to make sure we were safe and meeting us for coffee pretty much any place that we were within Ljubljana. Most of his suggestions for filling in our days were spot on and we had a wonderful time.

On our last day before our motorcycle tour, Marjan and his wife took us to a traditional restaurant in the old part of the city where we sampled traditional Slovenian food finishing off with a traditional Slovenian alcoholic drink which I can only describe as schnapps on steroids. Believe me you could most probably pop a litre or two in a drag car and break the sound barrier.



ABOVE: Kerry and his wife (L) with Marjan and Helena

Just prior to the motorcycle tour we moved from our central hotel to a B&B just outside the city ring road system; this was where the tour was to depart from.

The day before our departure Slovenia suffered a balloon crash of their own which almost seemed to mirror what happened in New Zealand in the Wairarapa except their tragedy involved a large balloon with 32 passengers hitting trees and bursting into flames. Six died and 26 were injured, some critically and Marjan was involved in the initial phase. The weather the day of the crash was very stormy and while we were having breakfast at the B&B we watched a severe lightning storm off in the distance.

The day arrived for the motorcycle tour to begin. There were 10 motorcycles including the guide, some solo riders and some two-up.

The riders were from USA, Canada, Australia and NZ.

We chose to ride a Suzuki V-Strom 650 as it was similar to our Suzuki V-Strom 1000 back in New Zealand. Others were riding different models of BMW 800's and 1200's plus one Ducati Multistrada which can only be described as "nasty".



ABOVE: Kerry and his ride for the trip

Our tour was to take in four countries with the majority of our time being spent in Croatia with most dinners and all breakfasts plus accommodation included in the tour.

We were most impressed with the company we chose, Adriatic Motorcycle tours. You can find them on the internet at http://www.smtours.com/. They were very responsive to emails and provided endless information; the owner Matje met us on our final day at our last evening meal.

The tour included a guide, who rode with us, plus a support vehicle. The support vehicle carried our luggage and met us at our destination each evening with our luggage in our rooms. All we had to do was uplift a key and find our room. There was also a replacement motorcycle in the vehicle just in case.

Ninety-five percent of our riding was done on secondary roads off the tourist track and with less traffic. All roads were sealed although a reasonable amount of loose gravel could be found, generally towards the road edge.

Upon entering Bosnia from Slovenia it became very apparent this was a country still suffering from the effects of the war in the early nineties; roads were rougher and there was an abundance of bombed and derelict buildings.

Marjan had warned us in no uncertain terms not to venture off the road or go walkabout as the whole country was still mined. Marjan had served in Bosnia post-war and was well aware of the dangers. The Serbian army initially mapped all their land mines but as time went on they stopped mapping and now it is anyone's guess where the mines are. There is an ongoing plan to demine the country but 20 years on that has not been completed.

I won't go into any great detail of the places we visited but will say that Sarajevo is a lovely city with a black past but you could almost feel the happy spirit the people have. They are still surrounded by damaged buildings, etc and have very strong views on their neighboring countries.

One of the intriguing parts of riding in Bosnia is the tunnels don't have lighting and are usually just a large unlined hole though a mountain. One of the tunnels was 360 degrees, uphill and unlit - very challenging.



Within 20km's of entering Bosnia the group had set off about 6 speed camera flashes. We were told that these did not contain cameras only flashes!

Whether that was true or not I don't know but the cameras face you and the registration plate on a motorcycle, as you know, is on the rear so no worries about being snapped.

Mostar is a must-see with the replicated 15th century arched bridge. The original was bombed by Serbia as a way to demoralise the Bosnians but it served to create the opposite effect.

The best ride in Bosnia was through the Durmitor National Park, a high alpine pass with a two-way road the width of one lane; luckily not much traffic.



ABOVE: Negotiating the tight turns

Border crossings were easy, especially as we had a guide who spoke the language and usually smoothed the way.

Croatia is another beautiful country and very modernised compared to Bosnia. The people were friendly and generally we had a wonderful time.

The weather was very hot and averaged 32 degrees plus each day; even the wind while riding was hot so there was no reprieve and water was drank at an alarming rate especially when the days riding finished and the water turned into beer.

Our favourite place in Croatia was Dubrovnik, an ancient walled town that provides spectacular views of the Adriatic Sea.

Montenegro is also an interesting country. There were Police doing check points everywhere and it became apparent that they were poorly paid and were doing extra duty to earn extra cash, if you get my drift. One of our riders, an Australian, was stopped doing 124km/h in a 50km/h zone. Initially it was to cost 3 or 400 Euro but with some quick talking he was on his way 50 euro lighter and he wasn't going to look back.

Kotor in Montenegro is another great place to explore and the ride down into the town was challenging with 23 switchback turns zig-zagging down the mountain. The only problem was there were cars and buses coming up the hill and the road was only one lane wide. At one stage I was against the bank supported by my foot as a bus crept past. Thankfully the sheer drop was on the opposite side of where I was.



ABOVE: Corner one of 23 hairpin corners

Our tour didn't take in Serbia, Kosovo, Albania or Slovakia, as there is only a certain amount you can do in a limited time, maybe we will be back to do those countries another time.

Most of the days riding were around 6 -8 hours with the longest distance being 385km's but most days were between 130km's and 300km's; these included stops and detours for sightseeing.

There were a couple of mishaps encountered on the tour. One member lost his GPS; it was later recovered but not in working order and another lost his wallet, at a hotel, containing a large sum of cash. This was also recovered with all the cash accounted for and reunited with the owner at the end of the tour. Funnily enough this was the same member who was caught speeding in Montenegro.

As for rain, well we got 10 minutes worth on the entire tour and that was only a shower, we were told this was a record for the company and beat their previous record by far.