

# Selling the Dream highlights industry's history,

## art and innovation



*PM and Tourism Minister John Key with Dave Bamford at the book launch.*

HOW New Zealand first developed a tourism brand and marketed it to the world through travel posters and other tourism publicity is the focus of *Selling the Dream*, launched at Park Road Post Productions, Wellington, on Monday and attended by PM and Tourism Minister John Key.

The 408-page coffee table book, with almost 1,000 images and 11 research essays, has been produced by TRC Tourism's Dave Bamford, as well as artist Peter Alsop and designer Gary Stewart.

In the early 1900s, New Zealand could see a prosperous future in tourism but, to win that, needed an initial foothold in a competitive global industry. There was no clear identity for New Zealand itself, let alone an established tourism proposition, Mr Bamford explains to *IT*. "Without the web, TV and even colour photography, our publicity pioneers had to design travel posters - and make them good enough to compete with those of the world's best poster artists. And as if being a newcomer wasn't tough enough, we had to convince the most adventurous of northern hemisphere travellers to travel six weeks to

get here by boat."

Overcoming these challenges must count as one of NZ's most striking achievements on the international stage. The art work was pivotal in creating the industry and in shaping New Zealand's national identity. The book, therefore, portrays some of the finest graphic art ever produced in New Zealand, and is as arresting and impressive today as when first created.

A foundation of the story was the establishment of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts in 1901, the first government tourism agency in the world (now TNZ).

Dreamy campaigns included *Scenic Wonderland*, *The Pocket Edition of the World*, *Thousands Of Feet Above Worry Level*, *The Sportsman's Paradise*, *Maoriland* and *A World in Itself* - suggestive of the exotica, diversity, adventure and escapism on offer.

"As with most successes, the environment was also ripe," Mr Bamford adds. "In the early 1900s, the 'art of the street' would have surely impressed. Outdoor advertising beautified railway stations, as well as the landscape as thousands of advertising hoardings were progressively erected along the rail network. There was also a marked shift in poster style from typography to eye-catching graphic work, a trend that would strengthen to underpin the golden age of the travel poster in the 1930s. And commensurate with the growth of international boat travel and much later air, posters were swapped internationally through reciprocal display agreements with other governments and transportation companies."

The posters were good enough to impress 50-100 years on. "These artworks, with lasting historical significance, were only designed for momentary appreciation and disposal. Instead, some posters luckily survive and resurface to again work their magic, this time in a comprehensive celebratory book," he says. "You have to be prepared to reminisce, feel even better about this great country, and plan your next New Zealand adventure," Mr Bamford says.

"Having crafted some of these images and supported the creation of many others, I was thrilled to read this book," says former National Publicity Studios art director and manager (1944-1986) Alan Collins, who attended the launch. "It is a timely and timeless celebration of almost-forgotten New Zealand art. We did our utmost in the day to faithfully portray the best of New Zealand, and in a creative and alluring way to grab attention both here and abroad. This wonderful publication will similarly arrest and, like the art, impress for a long, long time."

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***editor@insidetourism.com***

***with Dream Book in the subjectline. Please also provide your details. You will then go in the draw.***

***The book costs \$79 from shops or, for 10 percent discount including postage, visit: [www.sellingthedream.co.nz](http://www.sellingthedream.co.nz).***