

Magazine of the Marram Community



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# TOP 5 SUMMER DESTINATIONS for a great Winter getaway

Looking for some inspiration for your next holiday? Why not try one of these locations? Yes these are popular Summer destinations but also offer a place to escape from the Winter blues.

EACH LOCATION HAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT TO OFFER

Why?

- ✓ No crowds
- ✓ Last minute deals
- ✓ Great fishing in the Winter
- ✓ Great Golf courses on offer - just need to dress up warm
- ✓ Warm cafes and great food
- ✓ Shopping - to find great bargains
- ✓ RELAXATION - reading a great novel!



Raglan  
Mount Maunganui  
Ngarimu Bay  
Taupo  
Orewa



Book your Winter getaway now!

# ORIGINS OF THE Marram Community Trust

**Marram Community Trust was established as the Post Office Welfare Trust on 12 December 1945 to help Post Office employees and their families re-establish themselves from the effects of the Second World War.**

It succeeded a welfare fund established in May 1944. Post Office employees served as soldiers, delivering mail to and from service personnel, and as telegraph and radio operators. Many never returned such as the coast watchers beheaded on Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands (now Kiribati) in October 1942. Approximately 5700 employees, almost a third of the Post Office's staff, served in some capacity with over 700 casualties either wounded or dead.

The Trust provided holiday homes for convalescence following illness and for family holidays at a low cost. The Trust also provided budgeting advice and help, by way of working bees, following a death in the family. The first homes were converted army huts at Musick Point, Auckland, near a marine radio station which opened in 1942. They were not much more than tents, with the walls and floors made of timber and had canvas roofs. A separate hut contained washing facilities.

The welfare fund that pre-dated the Trust was originally funded from money received from the Reserve Bank in recognition for the sale of Government War Bonds to fund the war effort. However, in 1945 the Trust's Board of Administration asked employees to make a voluntary contribution of 9 pence (\$0.18) per fortnight to help fund the activities of the Trust. By March 1946, 10,000 employees (Contributors) were donating money.

By 1953, the Trust owned 42 homes from the Bay of Islands in the North to Riverton Rocks in the South. In the spirit of the times, all the homes had very basic amenities but at the time, employees thought the facilities were ideal as they enabled families to take inexpensive holidays in another town or at the beach which was considered a luxury.

In the 1960's, the healthcare assistance programme was added to the holiday home benefit, to help working families with their healthcare expenses. Subsequently, the holiday home benefit was extended to former employees (Lifetimers).

In 1987, with the split of the Post Office into New Zealand Post, Spark New Zealand (formerly Telecom NZ) and the Post Office Savings Bank (bought by ANZ in 1992), the Trust expanded to the employees of these three organisations (the Successors) and their subsidiaries. Today, all the affiliated employers can trace some of their DNA back to the Post Office with the exception of a few associated through the Trust's charitable endeavours. In recognition of the broader range of people involved, the Trust changed its name in 2008 to the Marram Community Trust.

**So there you have a brief history of a wonderful legacy so many people are still enjoying today. We're grateful to all those people who appreciate the legacy and treat the holiday homes with the utmost respect, keeping them in good shape for future generations.**



**Wow!.... Meet Bruce Isted who could well be the King of staying in the Marram Holiday homes!!!**

*"I joined NZ Post in June 1992 as a casual Postie for Wanganui Delivery Branch. Back then, unless you were a permanent staff member, you could not join what was known as the "Post Office Welfare Trust (POWT)".*

I knew the POWT was beneficial to join as one could access many health benefits and stay at almost 200 holiday homes (commonly called "cottages" at the time) in nearly 50 different locations in NZ. So once I became a permanent postie in mid-1994 I joined POWT and the rest is history. In 1994, it only cost \$4.26 per week to be a contributor, and now at \$5.93 (as \$1.37 is subsidised by NZ Post) it is still a bargain!"

**How many holiday homes have I stayed at and how many different locations?**

I have stayed at around 80 holiday homes so far. I have stayed at 29 of the current 30 North Island locations with only Maraetai Beach still to stay at which I booked for later this year and 15 out of 16 South Island locations with only Queenstown (central) yet to try. These

are not counting some of the homes that were sold off, like: Gisborne, Invercargill and Timaru. Sometimes I go by myself, or take family (my parents enjoy travelling) and sometimes friends. Those who join me are impressed with the homes and of course they save considerably on costs, well actually I pay for the lot so naturally they are pleased even more!

**What are my favourite holiday home locations and why?**

It is hard to pick my favourite home as so many are good, but the top three are: Hamilton, Greytown and Lake Tekapo - this is because they are comfortable, spacious, modern, and good bases to explore the area.

**What are the best things I like about the holiday homes?**

Many holiday homes are cheaper than motels and even some



Bruce Isted  
Coopers Beach

camping grounds, so it is great value for money. One can book up to one year in advance which means you can plan your holidays well ahead. I especially like the homes being flexi-stays as it means you don't have to stay at a place longer than you want to. Lastly, booking holiday homes via the website is easy as; so well done Marram.

## Healthcare Matters

### Optical

*Does this look blurred to you? Do you have difficulty focusing to read or see road signs when driving? Maybe you need to have your eyes tested?*

**Marram will consider reimbursement of 100% to a maximum of \$250 per person, per two years for Optical Expenses incurred. If you have previously been reimbursed by us for glasses or contact lenses, please contact us to find out when your next entitlement date is for the Optical Benefit. This is most important as we are unable to pay \$250 twice during a two year period.**





## Healthcare Benefits

**We introduced the new healthcare benefits effective from 1 April. All requests received in the Marram office after this date were reimbursed under the new benefit guidelines.**

In January, we started an email and postal campaign to inform Contributors that the changes were just around the corner, and to submit their Healthcare requests if they wanted their expenses to be considered for reimbursement under the previous benefits.

**We had an overwhelming response!!!** For the last five years we had averaged 1,800 requests per month and with the new benefits coming in, received a record number of 2,232 in February and 3,278 in March. It was all hands on deck for us then! By receiving this volume of requests, the 10 working day turnaround for payment went out by a couple of days but we are now well and truly back on track and are issuing reimbursement payments well within the 10 working days.

## Sub-letters and party goers .....The naughty ones!

Yes, they are out there and we have caught you! You know who you are! Unfortunately it is happening more than we would like. The homes are for the Marram Community only and you need to respect your neighbours. Just to remind you, below is what is stated in the Marram Holiday Home Conditions of Tenancy that you agree to when booking your holiday home:-

- You or your Spouse/Partner must be resident in the home throughout the term of occupancy.
- Homes must not be sub-let to any other person(s). If this occurs, Marram reserves the right to charge you a fine of up to \$5,000 for breach of contract.
- Parties and large gatherings are not permitted under any circumstances.

As yet, we have not charged any offenders for sub-letting but we have banned them from future use of the holiday homes along with any party goers! Moving forward, we will be enforcing this tenancy condition if you sub-let – being fined \$5,000 is not worth it! Please make sure you abide by the Conditions of Tenancy. This makes for a happy Marram!

## Healthcare Requests

Every time you submit a request for healthcare reimbursement, we require you to provide us with your bank account details. Even though you may have previously advised us, we need it written on your latest request form to ensure we reimburse to the correct bank account number. Please also double check that the number you have written is correct.

# Marram Survey

Thank you to all who participated in our recent survey. We had an outstanding response from 7,109 of you! We have gathered some great insight into how you feel about the Ballot, Pet Friendly homes and Cleaning/ Serviced homes which will help us plan for the future.

**Congratulations to Peter Cotton from Kiwibank Ltd, the winner of the prize draw for completing the survey. Peter now has a fabulous iPad to book his next Marram holiday. ☺**

## Pet Friendly changes

Our latest survey confirmed that a higher percentage would rather have cleaning included and charged accordingly instead of a Pet Friendly surcharge.....WE AGREE!

This way it eliminates any cleaning complaints! You can be assured that before you arrive, the home is thoroughly cleaned. It also allows the cleaner to check that everything is in order after each booking.....making it impossible to deny it's your dog poo left on the lawn! However, we're sure everyone will take extra care that no deposits are left anywhere!

All three Pet Friendly homes being, New Plymouth, Maraetai Beach and Westport have been changed to include cleaning in your booking cost. We want this to work so we can give you more Pet Friendly homes in the future.....so all you animal lovers, you can help this work!

## More Serviced Homes

You told us you want more, so we will give you more! Over the next 12 months we will be changing more homes to serviced. When booking a holiday location, you will have options to choose serviced, clean included or clean yourself. Having these options to choose what suits you and your budget best, we hope will be a hit with everyone.

## Ballot

Survey results tell us that you like the ballot just the way it is! The ballot will remain the same with ballots for Easter, April, July, October and Christmas school holidays.

# REFER & BE REWARDED

Refer a work colleague & be rewarded with a voucher of your choice.

Sign up a colleague by 12th June 2015 and be rewarded with either:

- \$50 Marram Holiday Voucher
- \$40 Westfield Voucher
- \$40 New World Voucher



Even better, if 2 friends sign up, you'll receive double the vouchers, 3 friends then triple the vouchers.....!

All your colleague needs to do is go to [www.marram.co.nz](http://www.marram.co.nz) and click on "Sign-up Now" and complete the online application. When asked "How did you find out about Marram?" select "Referred by Marram Contributor" and complete your name and organisation. Alternatively, have them complete a sign-up application form saying you referred them and send it into Marram.

Once the referred person's contributions start, we'll be in contact with you to select your voucher(s).

Thank you to all who referred a colleague in the last referral!!!! We hope you enjoyed your voucher!!! We really appreciate you spreading the word, as often your colleagues may not know about the Marram community or understand the great employee benefits they can enjoy.

Marram's terms and conditions apply. Please see FAQ's at [www.marram.co.nz](http://www.marram.co.nz)

## Lifetime Status *What Lifetime Status means:*

- You may continue to use the holiday homes for the rest of your life
- You no longer continue your contributions
- You are not eligible for the Healthcare benefit
- Lifetime Status is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees

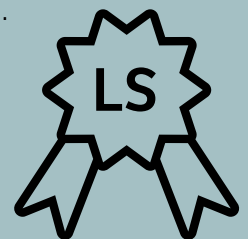
The criteria for Lifetime Status are:

- an employee must **have left** employment with an Affiliated Organisation **and**
- had five or more years of service with an Affiliated Organisation **and**
- with the last two years having continuous contributions to Marram Community Trust

If you have a scheduled leaving date from your employment at an Affiliated Organisation of Marram, you may be eligible for Lifetime Status. If you meet the criteria, you can go to [www.marram.co.nz](http://www.marram.co.nz) and download a Lifetime Declaration. Please complete this and post, fax or email it to us for this status to be considered.

*A Lifetime surcharge applies when booking the holiday homes which is:*

*\$100.00 per week Standard Season  
\$30.00 per week Shoulder Season  
\$20.00 per week Off-Peak Season  
\$5.00 per night*



This surcharge is payable even if you have booked the holiday prior to your leaving date.

# www.marram.co.nz

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