

NEWS



JOHN LANDRIGAN ANSWERS SOME SEARCHING QUESTIONS MICHELLE HYSLOP

At your service

When reporter *John Landrigan* applied for a job as a male chaperone, he was told he could be someone's cuppa tea — perhaps more gumboot than red zinger?

I made the grade — just. Then, after more careful consideration of my clothes, I was told I didn't quite have what it takes to be a male chaperone. Not just yet.

Betty McCullough and her daughter and business partner, Rachael King, are canvassing Auckland for men.

Suave, sophisticated men.

They had seen about 40 applicants for their Knights2Rememba male chaperone service before meeting me at the swanky SkyCity Grand Hotel Lobby Bar.

Our mock interview began disjointedly because, if this had been a real interview, the pair would have had my curriculum vitae and it would have been me asking most of the questions. I gave them a rundown of my last 20 years in a 30-second burst.

This was enough to garner a few nods of approval of my potential to maintain a woman's interest.

My presentation, however, was a point of contention.

"We could polish him up," says

Betty. "He's a bit untidy. He might be someone's cup of tea."

Brilliant, I thought, gumboot or red zinger?

My protest that my clothes are understated and that's why they are fashionable did not wash. Nor did pointing out that McCullough and King hail from Tauranga so they'd know little about the quality of a Bauhaus jacket.

Smart-casual, collared shirt, pressed pants, dress shoes are the order of the day for their men. I wore acceptable shoes but they needed a polish.

Betty and Rachael thought it good that I was well-educated though it was not a prerequisite. Well travelled — always good for conversation.

And humorous, especially when defending my wardrobe.

I was being auditioned to take women out on engagements. Certainly not to be confused with escorting women, which might suggest sexual connotations or dates. This is not a dating agency.

This is a service for women seeking the company of men who will treat the clients like ladies, who are good conversationalists, and will spoil them for an evening (with the women's money).

At a minimum of \$180 for a three-hour get-together (plus all expenses), I had better resemble Cassa-bloody-nova, at least conversationally and with exacting etiquette.

"We run an executive male chaperone service for business or corporate women," says Betty. "Someone with no expectations at the end of the evening."

So it is a non-sexual service: a dial-up companion for weddings, business dinners, theatre visits and conferences.

"I've come from a male-dominated industry," says Betty. "I went to a lot of conferences alone."

"This service is for women who are not going out because they have no one to go out with. Discretion guaranteed."

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MR ALMOST

Believe it or not, if you were looking for a companion, John Landrigan was almost your man.

- Eye contact — tick
- Conversation — tick
- Police check — a four-week wait so you'll have to trust me on this one — tick
- Good sense of humour — tick
- Don't mind being taken out at client's expense while being paid — tick
- Good looking — there was no mention of this, so I'm counting that as a tick
- Well-travelled and interesting — tick
- Presentation — seriously lacking. Asked to come back for a second interview

For more information see
www.knights2rememba.co.nz

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