

# ANNUAL REVIEW

# 2014



Using Outdoor Adventure to Grow Great Communities



**2014** has been the most challenging year of Adventure Specialties Trust's 30 years of operations. Lyndsay Simpkin the Trusts founder and CEO died on April the 1st from cancer after being terminally diagnosed 2 months previously. Lyndsay was 58 and was actively running the organisation including governance, management, instructing and leading camps. His life positively affected so many and his loss has not only been significant to Adventure Specialties Trust but to the wider outdoor community. A testament to this was that Lyndsay was posthumously awarded the Skills Active Supreme Award which recognises dedication, commitment and significant contribution to outdoor recreation and education in New Zealand.

With the death of Lyndsay, Tim Wills who has worked for the Trust in various roles for many years, was placed as Acting CEO. By June the Trust Board made this a permanent position.

In the early part of the year, led by Lyndsay, we worked with a consultant sponsored by Wilberforce 21 Trust. The consultancy process helped us review the work of Adventure Specialties Trust and find ways of improving our organisation. Partly as a result of the consultancy process and through a review, we made a number of changes to our structure and developed a new Vision, Mission and Values statement.

The new structure included a few new roles, the most significant of which being the employment of a Business Development Manager. This role has the responsibility of bringing funding into the Trust and to further develop the work of Adventure Specialties Trust. We have never had such a role and it was decided that for us to grow and to be more sustainable we required someone to manage this vital area of development. Jared Partridge was assigned this position at the end of 2014 and was previously working as Auckland's Operation Manager.



Furthermore, Mark Johnston who has been running the Christchurch Branch for the last 12 years will be working closely with the Business Development Manager to increase the opportunities in the Canterbury Region. Mark previously has been very hands on with operational concerns which limited his ability to grow the Christchurch Branch. We have been able to free up some of Mark's responsibilities through the employment of Amy Horn. She has taken many of Mark's operational responsibilities giving Mark increased time to source further work and additional income. This has always been a frustration for Mark finding the balance between

instructing, operations and growing the Trust but we are now confident that these changes put us in a better position to develop this growth. Mark's title also changed to Regional Manager which represents his new role well.



Using Outdoor Adventure to Grow Great Communities

## Our Vision

Using Outdoor Adventure to Grow Great Communities

## Our Mission

To respond to the needs in our community by providing outdoor adventure programmes that facilitate the holistic development of individuals, families and communities.

## Our Values

**FAITH** - We are guided and motivated by our Christian faith which shapes how we work alongside people.

**HOPE** - We believe that there is hope for all people and that positive life choices can bring about change.

**COMMUNITY** - We collaborate with community partners to enhance their good work and to achieve shared outcomes.

**EXCELLENCE** – We strive to deliver high quality, exciting and safe programmes.

**ADVENTURE** - We believe healthy and positive learning can come out of well facilitated adventurous activities.

The new Vision, Values and Mission statement embodies more of who we are and what we are striving to achieve. It gives a point of difference from other organisations and clearly defines the Trust agenda simply and transparently. It took a lot of discussion and processing to come to this point but in August we were able to make our new statements public which was received with unanimous support.

# Finances

Financially 2014 has been a tough year with the number of programmes being down and through not having any overseas tour groups injecting capital into the organisation. At the end of the 2013/2014 financial year we came out with an operating loss of just over \$85,000 of which \$48,568 was depreciation. This was a difficult hole to fill but due to the generous support of a number of individual supporters we were able to recover some of this loss. Our overall income for this financial period was just under \$943,347 of which \$231,347 came from our Christchurch Branch.

Although 2014 was a financially challenging year we are pleased that through good management and generous support we were still able to pay the bills and to pay our staff. We look forward to a better 2015 which will start to reap the rewards of a few more lucrative programmes and some further funding.

# Programmes

Throughout the year we have run a number of successful expedition type programmes including 4 contracts with Project K and 4 Journey Programmes. We also delivered 8 strengthening family programmes, 7 weeks of free holiday programmes and a number of programmes with Youth Justice and Care and Protection. We also



ran numerous other programmes with a number of schools and community groups.

Some of the groups we partnered with are as follows: Massey Community Trust, Dayspring Counselling Centre, 24/7 Youth Workers, FYD, Care Waitakere, Vision West, Te Puna Wai o Tuhinpo, Kia Marama, Social Workers in Schools, Methodists Missions, South West Baptist, Caroline Reid Foundation, Christchurch City Council, STOP, Scripture Union, Cashmere High School, Middleton Grange, Burnside

High School, Kelston Girls, Manurewa College, Tangaroa High School, Kaipara College, Kings College, Birkenhead College, and Waitakere College.

We have had consistent positive feedback from our client groups throughout 2014 including good reports from Child Youth and Family and Ministry of Social Development who fund a number of our programmes. This feedback is reflective of Adventure Specialties Trust being well resourced with quality staff, good processes and pools of specialised equipment.

A frustration is that even with these great programmes and feedback we are budget restrained and unable to increase our volumes of delivery. This is due to the fact that we are reliant on external funding and it is difficult to secure this on an ongoing basis and to offer increases in our delivery.

# Compliance

Adventure Specialties Trust continued to meet all our legal compliance requirements and 2014 was a significant year for adventure organisations due to the industry becoming regulated. By November 2014 if an organisation was not registered with Work Safe and had not gone through a safety audit they would be unable to operate.

Adventure Specialties Trust had already gone through the safety audit process voluntarily 5 years previously so we had no issues in complying. Furthermore, due to our expertise and having industry leaders in our organisation we were also called on by a number of other organisations to assist them with compliance or to act as their Technical Advisor.

Our safety auditing body is Outdoors Mark who in 2014 transferred ownership from Outdoors NZ to Skills Active. This has not affected us in anyway as the audit is still valid but we are required to be re audited in October 2015.

2014 also saw us undergoing audits from the Ministry of Social Development and Maritime NZ. Both organisations found that we comply well with their audit requirements.

## Adventure Specialties Christchurch

Our Christchurch branch continues to be effective in serving the people of the Canterbury Region. They continue to work with Youth offenders and to develop their father and son programmes and family camps as well as their general education work. 2014 saw the resignation of their Senior Instructor and the maternity leave of the Office Administrator. This left a significant gap in the organisation that Mark Johnston the Regional Manager handled well.

Midway through 2014 we employed Amy Horn who has had extensive instructional experience and who had been working with Child Youth and Family services. In August Amy went to the Wilderness Adventure Therapy Conference in the USA and came back excited about implementing a programme in NZ. Part of her new role is to research the NZ potential, find funding and attempt to establish a programme here. She is also responsible for running part of the operations for Christchurch which will free some operational time up for Mark.



Christchurch generates about 25% of the National income and we continue to look at ways of growing our Christchurch work. There are some exciting opportunities especially with what Amy has been tasked to achieve and with our new structure allowing greater support for the growth of the Christchurch Branch. We are expecting 2015 to be a more profitable year in income and in the programmes that we deliver.

## Resources

We are well resourced however equipment maintenance and new purchases is an ongoing concern for the Trust. The turnover and replacement of equipment is necessary to stay compliant with safety requirements and to provide a professional service.

During 2014 we were able to replace a number of our sea kayaks and vehicles. Funding for the kayaks came from individual gifts, the ASB Community Trust and through the sale of some older boats. The vehicles were replaced through the generous loans from the Keith Hay Charitable Trust.

# Staff of 2014

Lyndsay Simpkin

Glenda Simpkin

Tim Wills

Mark Johnston

Jared Partridge

Erin Chapman

Cathryn Butcher

Anne Bilton

Davis Moss

Tyler Bichan

Hanna McLeay

Denise Talamahina

Josh Geddes (resigned April) Naomi Geddes (maternity leave April) Graham Gilbert (redundancy September)

## Trustees

Brian Knolles (Chair)

Wayne Mitchell

Lyndsay Simpkin

Glenda Simpkin

Ken Stevenson

During 2014 the Trustees met more frequently than previous years with 10 Board meetings being held. The earlier part of the year the trustees focus had been on supporting staff through the loss of Lyndsay, working through the restructure and refining our Vision, Mission and Values. The latter part of the year focused on supporting the new CEO and ensuring the usual aspects of good governance.

It also needs to be noted that Ken Stevenson who had resigned in 2013 came back to help with the governance after the death of Lyndsay Simpkin. Ken's wisdom, insight and 30 years of experience as a Chairman of the Board has been invaluable as we implemented changes and transitioned into a new era with the loss of Lyndsay.



## Training

Ongoing internal and external training is important to the Trust and each staff member has a training pathway designed for them. On top of this we pulled all staff together for a retreat with the purposes of refocusing on the vision of the Trust, enhancing staff relationships and some specific staff training. This was held at the beginning of 2014 and staff spent 4 days at Whananaki, Northland.

In June we had Bruce Dunning who has been the Executive Director of Medeba Adventure Learning Centre in Ontario, Canada spend a week with us. All staff spent this week sea kayaking in Northland while Bruce spent time with us teaching and training.

We also sent representatives to 2 national conferences; the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association Symposium and the Christian Outdoor Leaders Conference.

Not only did we undertake training but staff were also involved in delivering training and assessments for NZOIA, CCNZ and Skills Active NZ.

## Grants

We are grateful for grants and contracted services from the following organisations:

- ASB Community Trust
- Community Organisation Grant Scheme; Waitakere, Manurewa, Christchurch, Rodney
- Lottery Grants Board
- The Trust's Community Foundation
- Canterbury Youth Services
- Farina Thompson Charitable Trust
- Christchurch City Council
- The Canterbury Community Trust
- Wilberforce 21 Trust
- Ministry of Social Development



## Statistics

During the year our Auckland Branch worked with 3,173 people in 115 programmes and our Christchurch Branch worked with 2,098 people in 78 programmes.

The total breakdown of ethnic origin is:

Maori 13%	Pakeha 44%	Pacific Island 12%	Asian 11%
Indian 6%	South/African 1%	American 1%	Other 1%

## Emerging Needs

Our major needs are:

- To find additional funding to subsidise the ongoing work of Adventure Specialties Trust.
- Replacement of camping and other specialised equipment.
- Refurbishment of some of our Auckland office plant, painting, some carpet replacement and the revamping of our reception area.
- Funding the Business Development Manager's seeding salary.
- Sourcing funding for the wilderness adventure therapy programme.

# Conclusion

2014 was our 30th year of operation. It has been very heartening to see all the good work we have carried out and we are extremely grateful to everyone, both individual and philanthropic trusts who have supported our work. We are also extremely grateful to all the support we received from individuals and organisations as they heard about the death of Lyndsay. The support was a real testament to Lyndsay's character and his commitment to the Trust. Lyndsay was an incredible man and visionary who has ensured through good management and good governance that the Trust will continue for many more years to come.

Although this was a tough year all staff remain very committed to the work of the Trust. We look forward to 2015, coming into this year with a refined vision and a new structure in place. It is intended that the volume of work will increase as we push to be more sustainable and groups will benefit from the services that we provide!

Tim Wills

Chief Executive Officer

