

ON TRACK DECEMBER 2020



ADVENTURE
SPECIALTIES TRUST

EST. 1984

WORD FROM THE CEO

Merry Christmas! *Well, what a year it has been; one of many highs and many lows however one thing is for certain, it's been a year we have had to keep up with the times. Whether it's the **changing** alert levels, **changing** governments, **changing** weather or just trying to get over the Harbour Bridge, it has been a year that's required some flexibility, some stickability and a whole lot of kindness!*

Here at Adventure Specialties Trust this has meant some adjustments, but as I look back over the year I am proud to say that we are in an excellent position to navigate into the future. We have been blessed by hardworking and committed staff, generous supporters, gracious funding opportunities, and clients who inspire and amazed us with their stories.

Moving with the times has also resulted in some incredible new programmes where we have seen lives impacted, epic adventures had, fears overcome, and friendships made! More information on some of these are in this issue, including a new Māori pathway adventure programme and a Journey programme with Papamoa College.

I also want to acknowledge Jared Partridge, one of our longest standing staff members, who is resigning to head off on some awesome family adventures. Jared first cut his teeth as an Instructor here and since then has held various key roles in his 15 years to where he sits now, positively influencing many areas of our organisation. He has always

brought his heart and soul (and a lot of opinions) to the Trust. He is hardworking, fun loving and a keen adventurer, always keen for a dress-up, meal out or an in-depth discussion on anything from theology, politics, or the best way to groom his handlebar moustache! I will miss his wisdom, his out of the box thinking, our conversations and his availability to bounce ideas around. He is one of the most passionate people I know - especially about our organisation and the people we serve! I will miss his support, encouragement and friendship. I wish him the very best and know he will never be too far away as you can never really leave the Trust!

As we celebrate Christmas and the New Year, we are mindful of continuing to move with the times. We look to the future with hope for the impact we make and the lives that we can change through what we do. As a faith-based organisation, we also draw on our understanding that there is a constant within these ever-changing times, and this coming season reminds us that this constant is brought to life through the birth of Jesus. So, on this note have a Merry Christmas and remember the reason for the season!



Tim Wills
CEO



PROGRAMME UPDATES

*It's been a year of **changing** alert levels and **changing** programming! But amongst it all we have been continuing to offer life **changing** adventures in the wilderness places of Aotearoa. Here are a couple of highlights from 2020.*

PAPAMOA COLLEGE:

We ran our first ever programme for Papamoa College, taking a group of young men on a challenging programme they will likely never forget. As they braved terrible weather and challenging terrain they dug deep, growing as a team, growing in resilience and growing as people. Teacher, Tanya Laybourn comments:

"These 10 boys cycled, abseiled and tramped. They had a full-on time and were certainly challenged - but on the whole they had a great experience. The abseiling challenged them individually and the three day tramp challenged their perseverance and teamwork.

They worked hard and managed to summit Mt Te Aroha in the rain, wind and cloud on the last day! They should be able to talk about how hard work is worth it and how your attitude matters not only to yourself but to your teammates. Their euphoria was incredible as they took their last steps to the bus in the pouring rain!

They deserve to be very proud of themselves, and the Journey experience is now a tool in their "kete". "

ADVENTURE AOTEAROA MĀORI

We were thankful to Recreation Aotearoa and Sport NZ to receive funding to run a pilot programme for young Māori interested in pursuing a career in outdoor education and adventure tourism. Adventure Specialties Trust facilitated the trip, which ran in partnership with seven other outdoor and adventure tourism providers. Activities ranged from an overnight trip on a waka, canyoning, mountain biking, rock climbing and white-water rafting. The activities provided an experience of Pacific way-finding and environmental navigation, adventure tourism, conservation, iwi led business,

youth work and outdoor education. We made space for kōrero and pātai with role models working in each area along with people from appropriate training pathways.

Feedback from the programme showed it had achieved its aim of supporting Māori with increased connection, belonging and participation in outdoor activities in a way consistent with a Māori worldview. We would love to see this become a regular pathway programme and increase the number of people identifying as Māori in our industry.

Below are some thoughts from the team:

"I loved how they all shared whakapapa of the area and gave us time to kōrero. {It was a} Massive taste of how the industry rolls, and the diff ways to get into the industry was awesome to learn."

"The activities! Mad mahi! These experiences have made lifelong memories and differences... I feel very honoured for the opportunity."

"Great privilege to have the speakers come through and give us just that better insight into the industry! Found it super inspiring!"

"Activities were dope - lovely people, sick vibes, mean gear, great energy - pushed us out of our comfort zones and built confidence and self-belief."

"Amazing, warm, funny, energetic, uplifting and motivating team facilitators."





STAFF UPDATE

Farewells

Glenda Simpkin (AKA mum) one of the founders of the Trust and a BIG part of the fabric of life here, is moving on in early 2021. Her story is strongly woven into Adventure Specialties Trust. In the early years the Trust operated out of her garage with her two little boys running around her feet, random Instructors helping themselves to her fridge and her late husband Lyndsay dreaming of big adventures and big community impact. Glenda has been a consistent voice of kindness and wisdom and fun. We have some big and secret plans to celebrate her – watch this space!

In 2020 we also farewell **Anna Squires** one of our exceptional Christchurch Instructors, **Jaci Skelton** our Auckland administrator superstar as well as **Jared Partridge** (who has pretty much taken up half of this newsletter!) 😊 See his Reflection below!

Jared's Reflection

I have been a member of the Adventure Specialties whānau since starting here as an instructor in 2001. For over a third of my life (15 years) Adventure Specialties Trust has been my full-time vocation. It's been an epic journey filled with amazing memories, adventures, growth and people. To say it's a foundational part of who I am is a bit of an understatement. Adspecs has shaped and formed me in ways I never expected, whether it has been by the example of leaders like Lyndsay, Tim, Mark and Amy; the stories of the people we get to serve, both the heart-breaking and the wonderful ones; or the places I have visited- seeing creation putting on a show and reflecting something of who the creator is; or simply the privilege of "doing life" with the amazing people I have called peers and whānau over this time. All these things have shaped my beliefs, my values and my passions.

Next year Christina and I will be taking a year off to travel NZ with our kids. It's been a dream to do something like this for a while and we felt this was the last chance we might have before the kids get too old and don't want to know us. It's going to be an exciting adventure

Welcomes and Good News

We welcome to the team **Peter Ross** (Christchurch Instructor), **Hanna McLeay** (Auckland Instructor) and **Brenda Lewis** our new Adventure Therapy Co-ordinator in Auckland.

We wish a very big congrats to **Amy Horn** who is getting married in 2021!! Woo Hoo Amy!

Congratulations to **Dave Moss** and his lovely wife Sophia on the arrival of their first son Ezra. His cuteness makes up for his lack of sleep!

Congratulations to **Kyle, Laura and Joel** on getting their NZOIA Bush 1 qualifications, and **Anna and Grace** on getting their NZOIA Rock 1 qualifications.

We would also like to publicly thank our account auditor, **Colin Powell** and our accountant, **Liz Norton** who are finishing up at the end of the year. Colin has been auditing our accounts since the very start!! 36 years of trying to make us balance!

(definition - outcome unknown) and I'm looking forward to having the chance to share some of the adventures I have had at AST with other peoples' kids, now with my own family. On that note, if you have a place to park a caravan for a day, week or month, we are super keen to connect with our wider Adspec family as we travel around the place.

Who knows, I may yet be back (and as Tim says "you never really leave AST"), I certainly won't be standing still and have plans for study and PD over the next year as we travel. So, this is not so much a farewell as, "hey - when I'm in your hood let's grab a coffee and go for an adventure together". See you ALL in the very near future.

Aroha nui e te whānau, Jared

(This is only a snippet of the reflection that Jared wrote – if you're interested in the whole kōrero (including some funny stories) head to 'Latest' on our website adventurespecialties.co.nz/latest/).





IMPACT

This year your support has been amazing! All of you, our phenomenal extended AST whānau, have been a huge blessing and a big part of impacting the lives of our participants and the communities we serve.

Your encouraging words, mahi and generous giving has been the inspiration and resources we needed to make this happen. We feel humbled and grateful to know there is a whole village behind us. Below are just a few snippets of the impact you have supported:

"Our Te Waonui programme helping clients with social re-engagement – 7 participants have been brave enough to re-engage with society and have found paid employment. How cool is that!"

"Our Te Māhuri programme building up the mana of young men so much that their social workers and teachers are commenting on the difference our programme has made. Wow."

"Our work with Rutherford College, investing in young men struggling with school, home and each other. "The groups experience exceeded our expectations.... Their reflections are very positive and mention how the programme has changed them". Great mahi!"

"Our young mums programme bringing confidence and improved wellbeing. When asked what could be done to improve, they biggest response was "more sessions". Awesome."

"Our programmes with youth justice teens are giving hope "It's made me open up a bit more, it's given me communication skills, it's given me the ability to speak up more and more open in life."

2021 is lining up to be a big one for us. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the mental health, wellbeing and social cohesion of the whole community but the stats show that the greatest impact has been on youth. So, in this season of giving, if you are in a position to offer additional financial support, we will make sure it goes to good use bringing wellness to the youth of Aotearoa.

Check out our options below for donations, the best option is to go to our Support us page - adventurespecialties.co.nz/donate/. This is a great resource, where you can increase your monthly support or make a one-off payment online, quick and easy-peasy!

Donations

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO ADVENTURE SPECIALTIES TRUST:

DIRECT CREDIT

to 06-0153-0109509-00. Reference "Donations" (please email the office so we can send a receipt - office@adventurespecialties.co.nz)

POST

to Adventure Specialties Trust, Freepost 125380, PO Box 45 152, Te Atatu Peninsula, Auckland 0651
N.B. Tax deductible receipts will be issued for all donations.

