



ON TRACK

JULY 2021



WORD FROM THE CEO

Kia ora friends and family! Welcome to our mid-year newsletter. An awesome turn of events this year has seen us purchase our first building for Adventure Specialties Trust.

This has been a goal of ours for years and to see it come to fruition (especially on the back of a year like 2020) has been a blessing indeed.

One of the challenges of working in the charitable sector is financial viability. Last year, we recognised our vulnerability, but **we also felt a strong sense that we were not done yet** and we still have many more years left of impacting rangatahi (youth) and whānau. Owning our own building is a big part of setting ourselves up for this kind of ongoing success. It gives us so much more freedom and stability, as well as financial security. So, as I say, it has been an awesome turn of events!

We also want to **give a big thanks to Glenda Simpkin** who, with her late husband, Lyndsay, founded Adventure Specialties Trust in 1984. Glenda recently resigned from her employed role, but we couldn't let her get away quietly!!! We had a huge celebration at the end of March where **we honoured Glenda and her 37 years of significant input into shaping the Trust.**

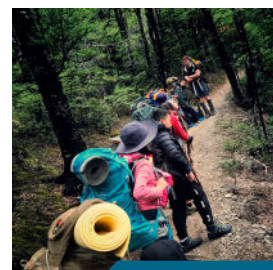
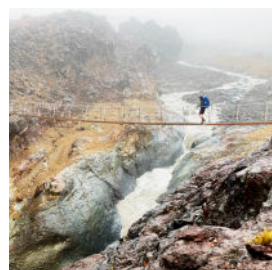
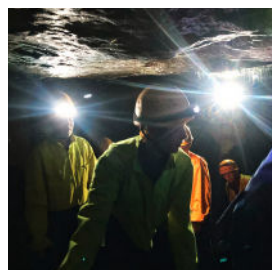
We even launched a book in her and Lyndsay's honour! (Copies will be available soon). Thanks Glenda! We know your heart, prayers and support continue for Adventure Specialties Trust, and we will continue to lean on your wisdom and guidance!



As Helen Keller said, **"Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all."** We are looking forward to seeing what lies ahead for Adventure Specialties Trust.

Ngā mihi

Tim Wills, CEO





PROGRAMME UPDATES

Our outdoor adventure programmes are fun. But they are so much more than that. We have a deeper purpose. We use the tools of team-building activities, facilitated discussions, one-on-one chats, connection with nature and connection to others to create positive change in people's lives.

We create our programmes in partnership with our clients so that we can meet their needs; whether that means leadership development for school students, social development for young mums, adventure therapy for youth offenders or anything in between. In 2020, **we ran over 250 programmes** from our Auckland and Christchurch branches, **reaching over 5000 participants**. Here are a couple of snippets from some recent programmes:

> Te Māhuri

We partnered with *Purapura Whetu*, a Māori mental health provider in Christchurch, to create a programme for young people struggling with a range of mental health issues. These rangatahi (youth) have often come from rough backgrounds, as well as having to deal with the Christchurch earthquakes, the Mosque attack, and now the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme includes 5 single-day adventures plus a 5-day haerenga (expedition). We aim to give the young people tools to deal with the hard parts of life; for example, through recognising their in-built character strengths and their ability to persevere.

> Partnering with the Chinese community

We collaborated with a lovely woman named Rachel Chen who is passionate about supporting the Chinese community in Christchurch. The outcome was an amazing programme, teaching bush skills to ten young Chinese students. They loved it and there are some more trips planned for later this year!

> Green Prescription

Anneke and April from our Christchurch branch have trialled a new programme for adults wanting to get outdoors, experience

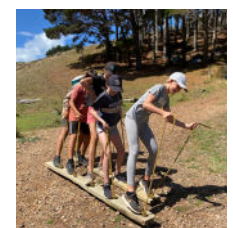
nature, connect with other people, and increase physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. It is part of *Green Prescription*, a free health and wellness service provided by the Ministry of Health and available throughout New Zealand (greenprescription.nz). The group had a great time and some of them have even caught up with each other afterwards; the start of beautiful new friendships.

> Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa

We received funding from Sport New Zealand's *Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa* fund for the purpose of increasing physical activity and encouraging ongoing active participation in our rangatahi. We ran several programmes, one of which offered adventure activity days for young wāhine (women). It was awesome to get the girls outdoors, out of their comfort zones, and on a great adventure. (The photo above is from that programme).

> And lots more!

Check out photos and videos from these programmes, plus more heart-warming stories, on the *Latest News* blog on our website, or on our Facebook page, Instagram account and YouTube channel (search Adventure Specialties Trust).





ADVENTURE THERAPY

More than a third of our programmes fall into this category and we want that to increase. But what exactly is Adventure Therapy?

Amy Horn, our Adventure Therapy manager in Christchurch, pioneered Adventure Therapy within Adventure Specialties, and has also had a huge role in developing the industry within New Zealand. She has been working in the industry since 2003 and is currently completing a Masters in Counselling with a thesis on nature-based therapy. She is currently the chairperson of Adventure Therapy Aotearoa and also the co-chair of the International Adventure Therapy Association. Here are her thoughts:

> What is Adventure Therapy?

“Simply put, Adventure Therapy is about using outdoor adventure experiences as part of a therapeutic intervention.

“During an international Think Tank about Adventure Therapy (AT), we came up with this concept of a bridge, where ‘outdoor instructor’ is one pillar of the bridge, and ‘therapist’ is the other pillar of the bridge, and Adventure Therapy bridges between the two. Most people in NZ start as either an outdoor instructor or a therapist, and then build towards the other. **I started as an outdoor instructor then decided to get qualified in therapy as well**, but there aren’t many people in NZ that are qualified in both.

“At Adventure Specialties, most of the staff have outdoor instructor skills, so we build on their facilitation skills, their understanding of therapeutic safety and techniques. We help them understand codes of ethics. We help them understand mental health conditions that people might be struggling with, and best ways to be able to be helpful in that. We teach them how to build positive relationships, and how relationships can be influential. We teach them bicultural understandings. **So we build on their skills on that bridge.** They’re not becoming

therapists but they are building across that bridge towards understanding therapeutic methods.”

> How is Adventure Therapy different to traditional therapy?

“It’s a different way of achieving the same things. **Often young people don’t like sitting in offices and talking with people about their problems.** They don’t want to review the anger situation that they had last week where they hit someone. They don’t want to talk about their emotions. But when we’re outside going surfing and we talk about how emotions are like waves, how some are bigger and some are smaller, and if we can feel them building, then we can deal with them. It’s a bit more relatable.

“**Experiencing success is also a big part of it.** For students that don’t do very well in a classroom, who might feel confined, or they can’t stop talking, can’t stop moving, and they can’t get what the teacher is talking about, **to then get outside and use their humour to keep the group morale up, instead of getting told off for always making jokes, they can suddenly see that humour is a huge strength.** Or, a kid [with high energy levels], when the group needs something, they can run over and get it and run back, and then run over again, and run back. And suddenly their energy becomes a huge strength, rather than something to be contained and stamped on in the classroom. **Often the young people that don’t do well in classrooms do really well in our programmes**, because they’re in a completely different environment, and they can think, oh this is actually the cool part of me, not the part that I need to hide and be ashamed of.

“[Other tools we use are] facilitated discussions, group activities, individual one-on-one conversations, and being outside in nature.”

Amy is heading off on an exciting new adventure, with maternity leave and a newborn baby in her immediate future. **We will miss her and we wish her all the best for that journey!**





NEW CHRISTCHURCH HQ

For the first time in our 37-year history, we have purchased a building to use as a home base. It gives us stability and a financial asset and it will help us to expand and develop our life-changing outdoor adventure programmes. We are pumped!

We would love to see you! Come visit us at **71 Bamford Street, Woolston, Christchurch.**

The official opening on 18th June was an amazing evening with around 80 people turning up to celebrate with us. The evening reflected **our Christian values and our bicultural journey**, where we had a blessing in te reo Māori and then our new 'waka' was prayed for and metaphorically 'launched'.

We also had a number of partner agencies talk about how **the mahi (work) of Adventure Specialties Trust has positively impacted their young people.** The building was also gifted a carved waka on a pounamu stand, which was significant because the pounamu was a taonga (treasure) from one of our Trustees and the waka carving was done by one of our staff.

Overall, **we were very humbled by the support of everyone who was there (and those who couldn't be).** Thank you to everyone who has made this significant milestone possible, through payer, financial support and hard work!

The building is still a bit of a "diamond in the rough" with lots of renovations needed before it can be fully used for our outdoor adventure programmes.

Stage One is completed: cleaning up the warehouse area, knocking down some walls, creating a temporary office/meeting room, painting, building shelves, cleaning, and more cleaning!

(Check out the video on our YouTube channel - Adventure Specialties Trust - to see the renovations in action!)

Stage Two is in the planning stage: There is a lot to be done, from drawing up plans, to applying for council consents, repairing the roof, building an area for group sessions, building a kitchen, laundry and storage space, and more!

But before we start Stage Two, we need to raise more funds. Can you help us?

Would you be willing to donate towards our renovations, so that we can continue using outdoor adventure to grow great communities?

DONATIONS

We appreciate your generous support! Your donations allow us to reach more people with our life-changing outdoor adventure programmes.

Debit or credit card: On our website www.AdventureSpecialties.co.nz/donate

Internet banking: Adventure Specialties Trust / account 06-0153-0109509-00 / please email office@adventurespecialties.co.nz to let us know what you would like the money to go towards, and so we can send you a receipt.

