



ADVENTURE  
SPECIALTIES TRUST

EST. 1984

# Annual Review

— 2015 —



# A year of future-shaping

2015 has been an exciting year of consolidation, development and growth. Adventure Specialties Trust is now in its 32nd year of operation and 2015 was an example of the Trust going from strength to strength with excellent staff, great resources and the running of programmes that make a difference!

Highlights of the year apart from the delivery of great programmes have been seeing our new staffing structure come into action, a revamped logo, better financial sustainability and the tackling of a number of compliance issues.

Financially 2015 has seen the Trust in a good position and with the combination of continued good management, generous donations, great community support (in the way of grants) and a couple of profitable commercial ventures (American University Tours) which helped significantly. This resulted in a much less stressful year financially and we have recovered well from our 2014 deficit.

We have also seen good momentum with the resourcing of our Adventure Therapy programmes. Due to some generous funding we were able to free up our Adventure Therapy Manager from operational tasks to fully concentrate on the development of this work. This is an exciting prospective for New Zealand as we are working towards New Zealand first programmes that fully integrate outdoor adventure within a therapeutic approach.

In 2015 we also found that, as our Regional Manager put it, “we had become earthquake orphans”. Our Christchurch office/warehouse that we had leased for the last 8 years was scheduled for demolition resulting in a need to move. It was tough going trying to find the right place but by October we had secured a new building in the Middleton area. The lease was more than we were hoping to pay but it is home for now and is suiting Christchurch’s purposes well.

Furthermore, the past year has been full of “good news” stories, with many of our programmes being a catalyst for positive change. We heard many examples of our participants increased confidence, accepting new challenges and changed attitudes. It is really encouraging to know that our programmes not only have short term effects but also long lasting benefit to the participants. One example of this is that through advertising for new instructor’s one applicant included the following in her covering letter, “I was fortunate enough to go on a Journey with Adventure Specialties in 2006, this was a pivotal point in my life that gave me confidence, inspired me to pursue adventure and be a positive influential figure”. This is a great testament that we certainly can be part of shaping ones future and 2015 saw a lot of “future shaping”.



# Finances

Coming out of the 2013/14 financial year saw our accounts being approximately \$37,000 in deficit. This was a significant challenge to overcome but through some generous donations, funding and the delivery of 2 profitable commercial programmes we were able to make an impressive recovery. By the financial year ending March 2015 we were back on track with income and expenditure showing in the positive by \$36,000. The year continued in this form and it is expected that the next financial year will again show some positive results as we have had some substantial growth.

## Year Ended 31st March 2015

TOTAL INCOME  
**\$1,059,776**

TOTAL EXPENDITURE  
**\$1,023,661**

SURPLUS  
**\$36,115**

# Programmes

We have seen some significant growth and this was especially apparent with the Christchurch Branch who throughout 2015 delivered programmes on a scale not previously experienced.

Much of this growth was through new opportunities including intermediate school aged activities and through the continual development of Adventure Therapy programmes. Auckland has also seen new opportunities and nationally we continued to grow whilst still fulfilling our Vision of "using outdoor adventure to grow great communities"!

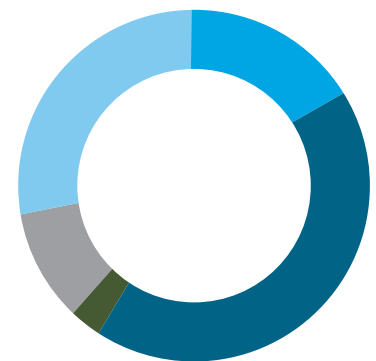
As an example of this we ran a number of successful expedition type programmes including 4 contracts with Project K and 4 Journey Programmes. We also delivered 8 strengthening family programmes, 7 weeks of free holiday programmes and a number of programmes with Youth Justice and Care and Protection. We also ran numerous other adventurous 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, VisionWest, Salvation Army, 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, Hillmorton College, Kelston Girls, Green Bay College, Tangaroa High School, Kaipara College, Kings College, Birkenhead College, Recreate NZ, Parnell Senior College, Avondale College, Southern Cross, Alfriston College, and Waitakere College to name a few.

Part of our growth has been through the undeniable fact that we have great staff and that our programmes are effective in delivering positive outcomes. A recent quote from VisionWest gives an example of this. "Often our clients have never had the opportunity to participate in outdoor adventures like this before and have reported back that it was an amazing experience. It has helped facilitate and create positive family memories and build self-esteem and confidence".

2015 also saw the delivery of 2 University Tours with students from Eastern Mennonite University and Messiah Collage of which both are based in the USA. These two programmes were highly successful in generating income that is used to subsidise the greater working of Adventure Specialties Trust.

Programmes delivered by type in 2015



- Social Development 43%
- Adventure Therapy 16%
- Outdoor Education 28%
- Other 10%
- Commercial 3%

## Compliance

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October saw Adventure Specialties Trust going through its first safety audit under the new Adventure Safety regulations. Pervious to this we had voluntarily gone through the process and held the safety assurance stamp of Outdoors Mark New Zealand. However, with the advent of new legislation all operators were required by law to meet the new standards. Although the audit process was not new to us the price tag that came along with it was significant, costing the Trust \$12,000. This is a substantial increase from our previous audit which has further increased our annual operating expenses. However, we continue to operate legally and have picked up a number of new opportunities from other organisations that have been unable to comply. It was also good confirmation that we continue to have robust safety policies and processes in place ensuring best practice.

We are also audited by the Ministry of Social Development and Maritime NZ and we continue to comply well with their audit requirements.

## Resources

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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 2015 we were able to replace a number of our resources including camping equipment and safety equipment.





## Staff of 2015

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We have some great staff that are committed and dedicated to the Vision of Adventure Specialties Trust. Staffing highlights for 2015 saw the marriage of Cathryn Butcher to James Hunt and the marriage of Tyler Bichan to Sarah Woolley. We also saw staff gain numerous national instructional awards and of course staff delivering some great adventurous programmes.

### The staff of 2015 were:

Glenda Simpkin	Tim Wills	Mark Johnston	Jared Partridge
Erin Chapman	Cathryn Butcher <small>(resigned in May)</small>	Anne Bilton	Davis Moss
Tyler Bichan	Hanna McLeay	Denise Talamahina	Tim Shaw
Amy Horn	Andy Balcar	Helen King	Ben Pearson

## Trustees

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2015 also saw the support at Board meetings from Steven Perich and David Moorman. As the years have gone by the Trustees are pivotal to the governance of the Trust. The Trust Board met 7 times throughout 2015 and were part of a Capability Assessment and Plan Workshop which has strengthened how the Trustees govern.

We are sorry to see Wayne Mitchell, after 24 years of service, resign as a Trustee. He continues to be one of our greatest supporters and a huge thanks goes to Wayne for his years of wise input, guidance and the special projects he worked on. His input over the years has certainly been incredibly valuable in bringing the Trust to the position that we see it in today. We wish Wayne all the best for his future endeavours.

### The Trustees for 2015 were:

Brian Knolles (Chair)	Wayne Mitchell <small>(resigned in December)</small>	Glenda Simpkin	Ken Stevenson
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# Training

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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 2015 and staff spent 4 days at Piha in Auckland.

Some staff were also involved in mid-year training held in the Central North Island. This training covered some practical skills from river crossing to fire lighting. As well as the continual up skilling staff are also assessed on a national level in skills relevant to outdoor instruction. 2015 saw a number of Instructors gaining national awards such as NZOIA Bush 2, Sea Kayak 1 and Bush 1.

We also sent representatives to a number of national conferences including the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association Symposium, the Christian Outdoor Leaders Conference and the CCNZ National Conference. Further to this Amy Horn attended the International Wilderness Therapy Conference held in USA.

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

# Grants

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We are grateful for grants and donations from the following organisations:

- \* Foundation North
- \* Community Organisation Grant Scheme
- \* New Zealand Lottery Grants Board
- \* New Zealand Post (envelopes)
- \* SkyCity
- \* The Trust's Community Foundation
- \* Canterbury Youth Services
- \* Farina Thompson Charitable Trust
- \* Christchurch City Council
- \* The Canterbury Community Trust
- \* Wilberforce 21 Trust
- \* Keith Hay Trust

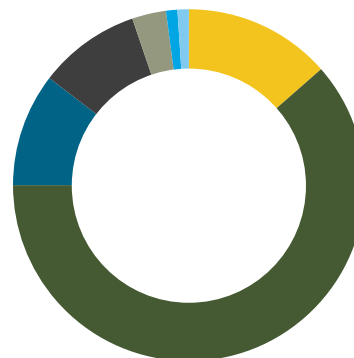
We were also very grateful to a number of individuals whose financial contributions totalling over \$90,000 continued to help us serve our communities.

# Statistics

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During the year our Auckland Branch worked with 2,898 people in 162 programmes and our Christchurch Branch worked with 2,126 people in 111 programmes.

The total breakdown of ethnic association is:



- Maori 13%
- Pakeha 59%
- Pacific Island 10%
- Asian 9%
- Indian 3%
- African 1%
- Other 1%

## Emerging Needs

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There is massive demand for our services and staffing is currently one of our critical needs. Good staff are difficult to find. This is especially tough as we require staff that are qualified, fit within our special character, skilled outdoor practitioners and expert facilitators.

This need has become increasing apparent as we have grown and it has become challenging to staff our programmes without putting further demands on our existing staff. Looking to 2016 we will need at least 18 full time staff to deliver the programmes scheduled. We continue to look at ways of providing in-house training of potential staff and sourcing instructors from Polytechnics and Universities but we are still having difficulty in employing the right people.



## Conclusion

2015 was our 32nd 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. It was also a rewarding year financially as we managed to work our way out of a deficit to be in current position of some positive gain.

Throughout the year we delivered some great programmes that motivated, encouraged and positively changed lives. If it wasn't for the dedication and commitment of our amazing staff we would be nothing and I am proud to be leading a team of such committed and hardworking adventurous people. We all look forward to 2016 and the challenges ahead as our volume of work increases and of course the challenge of keeping our organisation sustainable so we can carry on "using outdoor adventure to grow great communities".

Tim Wills  
Chief Executive Officer

# Creating Everyday Heroes



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