

Aranui Bike Fixup Holiday Programme 2022

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Video link <https://youtu.be/-1JHd6oXGyE>

Aranui Bike Fixup ran a holiday programme for 8 year olds & up for 5 days from 17th – 21st January 2022. Each day started at 10am meeting at Breezes Road Baptist Church. Ezra & Steven Muir were responsible for coordinating the programme assisted by many other volunteers to do safety checks on bikes, teach repair skills, fix up bikes damaged during the week, drive vans & keep groups of kids on track. A group of six or so volunteers from the church were our catering crew. They provided 20 packed lunches and an extra bag of sandwiches, as well as morning tea at 10 for kids who had not had breakfast, then washed out the lunchboxes at the end of each day.

Monday 17th Adventure Park

The day started with introductions and making sure everyone's bikes were up to scratch with checks of brakes, gears seat height, tyre pressure & general operation. Many kids borrowed bikes from the Christchurch Bike Library and several personal bikes were swapped out for better ones. We had three vans, two loaned from Delta Community Trust and the third from a friend. The Christchurch Bike Library has two covered trailers that take 10 bikes each and were used to transport the bikes. There were 17 kids involved.

The Adventure Park generously offered us a free lesson and gear hire which meant that the kids got a great introduction on how to ride single tracks, protective gear and full suspension bikes. Most kids had never been to the Adventure Park before and none had taken the chairlift up so it was a novel and exciting experience. One kid over twelve was not vaccinated and could not take part in the lesson, but was driven up and managed to join the rest of the group for the ride down Duncan's Donuts. The 'easy' track was quite challenging for several kids who had never tackled anything like this before, so it took a long time to get down with several people falling off, but no injuries were suffered.

The more capable riders were then driven to Sign of the Kiwi while eating their packed lunches, and had a second ride on their own bikes down the Choir Boy and Loess Rider back to the Adventure Park base. One crash right near the bottom resulted in a decent graze on a knee & elbow, but the rider continued to the bottom fine.





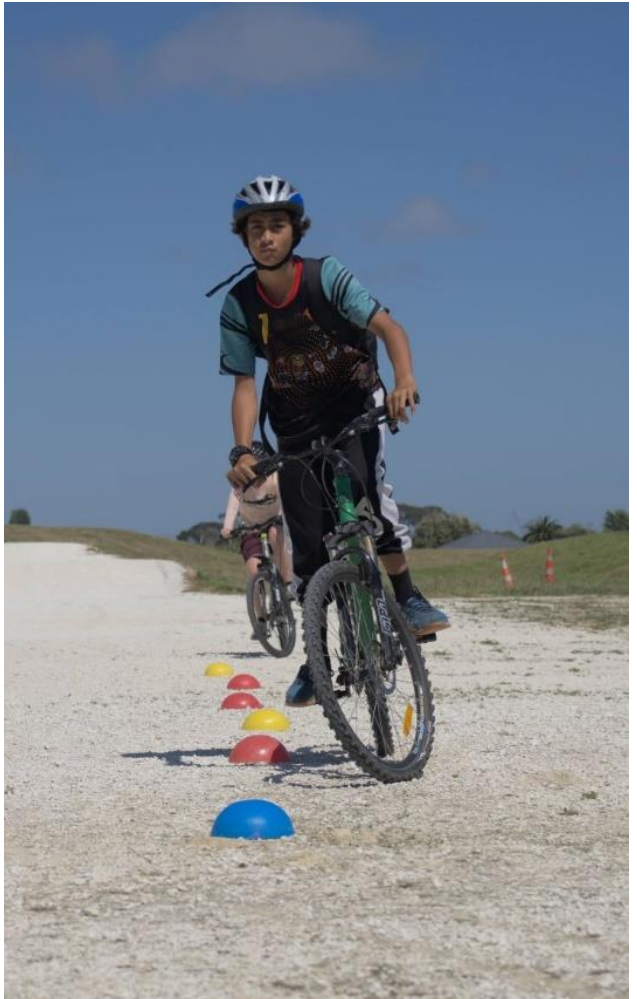


Tuesday 18th BMX & Frisbee Golf

Tuesday began with an hour of bike maintenance lessons focussing on puncture repair. Lots of kids got the opportunity to poke a hole in a tyre with a drill or a sharpened screwdriver, then remove the tube and repair it. Few of the kids had done this before, so there was lots of learning about how to remove wheels, use tyre levers, sand the tyre, apply glue & patches. Doing it themselves meant the skills were well picked up. Jonathon had built a custom tiny bike which proved very popular and Shannon elected to ride it with the group down the road to the Bexley Reserve BMX track where Les from the North Avon Christchurch BMX Club gave us some lessons on how to ride BMX. The kids had a great time racing around the track and playing a game of 'foot down' where you ride in a circle attempting to block others and not put your own foot down. It's good for teaching balance and manoeuvrability and was good fun. Les gave some trophies out, and one kid suffered a decent graze and sore wrist in a fall on the BMX track. The lack of a water supply at the track meant some rushing around to find water containers to keep everyone hydrated on a very warm day.

We then drove everyone and their bikes to the Ascott frisbee golf park where we had lunch and attempted to play frisbee golf on bike. It turned out to be harder than anticipated to teach the concept of how to play frisbee golf which was new to most of the kids, and we soon abandoned the idea of doing it by bike and just ran around the course instead. Forgetting to take the maps of the course didn't help as navigating the course is difficult. Several kids just enjoyed a rest under the shade of a tree or rode around the park on their bikes and the rest had a good time developing their frisbee skills. On returning to Breeze Road we had a much-appreciated ice cream to cool us off and a race on some baby bikes which was very entertaining.







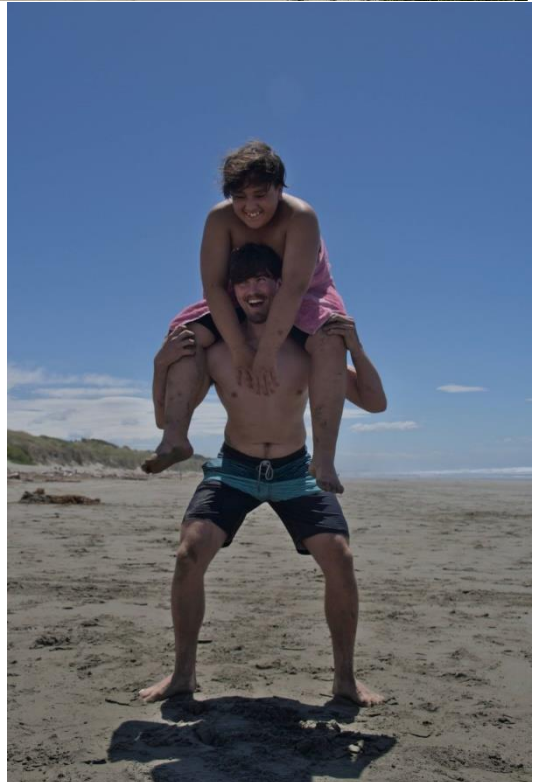


Wednesday 19th Bottle Lake

We had another session of bike maintenance for an hour. Some of the smaller kids had got lost on puncture repair so spent a happy hour just figuring out how to get their wheels on and off the bike and how to use spanners. More people got to hone their puncture repair skills and Dave showed the more capable ones some more advanced things.

We then set off to Bottle Lake Forest in the vans and biked out to the beach. One of the smaller kids was struggling even at the start of the ride around 11:30am, so we talked about his breakfast (one weetbix at 8am) and the need for good nutrition to keep you going. After a snack, then his lunch later on he was zooming along really well on the way home. It was a great day for the beach, though didn't reach the forecast 31 degrees. Lots of swimming was great fun and this was the thing we were most worried about during the week safety wise as there have been a lot of drownings this year in other parts of NZ. The kids were sensible about the depth they went out to and we had plenty of capable adults in the water too, so there were no problems. We then did sprints on the beach, jumping down sand dunes, lifting each other in the air etc. and it all went down very well. The faster group continued a longer loop around the forest while the slower ones returned via a shorter path back to the carpark. One derailleur got caught in the back wheel and crippled the bike, so they had to run out to the nearest exit with two supervisors and get picked up by car, which worked well. However the resulting lower number of supervisors on the longer ride did mean one kid got slightly lost at one stage, but they recovered their sense of direction and rejoined the group after a few minutes.





Thursday 20th Summit Road

The long-range forecast the previous week had been for a cyclone to smash into Canterbury coast with 3 days of heavy rain. Fortunately the cyclone diverted and Thursday was the only day with rain forecast with strong Southerlies, and we awoke at 7am with heavy rain. By 10am it had stopped and we had our bike maintenance session as usual outside, looking at derailleur repair, motivated by two derailleurs being destroyed in the previous days biking activities. We had a talk about how to enjoy biking in cold wet weather and what gear you can use to keep you warm and dry, but we didn't end up needing the spare jackets and balaclavas, as it ended up being another pleasant sunny day.

We drove everyone to the top of Victoria Park and the faster group biked East along the single track while the slower group took the Summit Road, getting great views over the city and harbour. Several kids had never been up the Port Hills before and everyone loved the scenery. There was lots of walking up the up hills and lots of variety on the downs, some going very fast, others nervously crawling down. It took longer than expected for the vans to get to Evans Pass, not helped by needing to refuel on the way, but it was a good spot for a much-needed lunch break. The fast group then continued out Godley head and down the Anaconda into Taylors mistake while the slow group went down the Evans Pass Road to the playground at Sumner to wait for the others to return. A van and trailer drive to Taylors Mistake to collect the faster group who enjoyed a very quick dip in the ocean before returning. Several riders fell off in the challenging Anaconda descent but no damage done.





Friday 21st Velodrome & Halswell Quarry

Friday we skipped the maintenance to allow more driving & riding time, as we had to get to the Hornby Velodrome to join Hamish and some keen track riders to learn about sprinting around the track with huge berms at each end. None of the kids or volunteers had ever experienced this, so it was very exciting learning to trust the bike would not slip out from under you on the huge sideways slope on the track, then do time trials to compare speeds from mountain bikes to the variety of road bikes in the Christchurch Bike Library. We had a chat with the regular velodrome riders about what they enjoy about track riding, and the sense of speed as well as the very friendly/social atmosphere seemed to be the main appeal.

We then drove to Halswell Quarry for lunch and a chat with Doug Ateremu McNeill about how cycling has benefitted his health & wellbeing. A bike ride was then enjoyed up the Crocodile, with some riders getting an impressive sprint right up to the top of Kennedys Bush, while others doing a smaller loop then heading over to explore the main Quarry pit (which most kids had never seen before) and imagine how tough working the pit would have been.

The holiday programme ended with some delicious smoothies being blended on the bike blender and some Russian honey cake, and some tools being given out to those who made it through. A few kids dropped out over the week and a few new ones joined in, so we had 17 kids at the start dropping to 14 by the end.

It was a fantastic week with lots of new experiences and a clear improvement in the riding skills of most kids (some were already very good). The feedback from the kids was very positive and the skills they learned are likely to benefit them for many years to come. It was a lot of work from many people to bring it all together, but everyone had a sense of it being a very worthwhile investment of energy for the joy that resulted.









A huge thanks to...

The Tindall Foundation for providing funding to make this holiday programme free to all participants. Most kids could not have taken part otherwise.



And to all our volunteers who put in such a lot of hard work

Ezra Muir - programme director
Steven Muir - assistant director
Meg Christie - van driver & ride supervisor & bike blender organiser
Pete Jonstone - bike mechanic & ride supervisor
Dave Whittam - bike mechanic
Jonathon Brown – photographer
Jess Tater – ride supervisor
Renee – ride supervisor
Alastair Brown - van driver & ride supervisor
Bruce Carey-Smith - van driver & ride supervisor
David Bosma - van driver
Gareth Vile – van driver
Doug Ateremu McNeill - ride supervisor & speaker
Les Gamble – BMX instructor
Hamish Fergusson – velodrome instructor

The very important & much appreciated food team from Breezes Road Baptist Church - Marion, Paul, Adrienne, Pat, Nia, Judy & Lyn.

Also thanks to Nourish Oraka for loaning us 25 lunchboxes and Chris from the frisbee golf club who hired us the frisbees & Oxford Terrace Baptist Church office staff who helped with admin & Delta Community Support Staff & Sam for use of their vans and Christchurch Adventure Park for the free lesson, gear hire and lift ride.