

# Aranui Bike Fixup Rides



## Contents

- Introduction ..... 3
- Bottle Lake..... 3
- Rapaki..... 6
- Christchurch Adventure Park ..... 7
- Spencer Park Bike Packing..... 11
- Old Ghost Road ..... 12
- West Coast Wilderness Trail..... 19
- Snow Trips to Broken River ..... 25
- Akaroa ..... 27
- Summit Road ..... 31
- Matariki Dawn Ride..... 32
- 2021 Summer Cycling School ..... 34



## Introduction

Aranui Bike Fixup began in 2020 at the Breezes Road Baptist Church, with the aim of developing a life-long love of cycling particularly among those living in the East of the city. Promoting physical activity and connecting with the beauty of nature brings many benefits to well-being. Many in the East do not have opportunities to travel far and many teenagers have never experienced the Port Hills, the Southern Alps or snow, so these outings are often a first-ever experience and very memorable. We give bikes to young people and have a collection of bikes available to loan when their own bike is not available. We have recently employed a youth worker to enable more regular ride experiences.

## Bottle Lake

This is our most frequented area being good for beginners, relatively close to Aranui, and playing on the beach is a great option for a rest stop. Night rides through the forest are an additional challenge for winter rides.







## Rapaki

Rapaki is a great option for fitter riders and is a good challenge. Several kids have 'earned' a better-quality bike by succeeding in riding up without too many breaks. The views are great at the top and there are lots of options for adrenalin pumping downhill which provides a good outlet for risk taking behaviour that teens often crave.



## Christchurch Adventure Park

We have had a few forays to the Adventure Park including one with an unexpected amount of mud. We often bike from PMH hospital up Hackthorne Road and down through the Park. We did get funding one year from Biketober which covered a ride up the lift which was a new experience for most riders and much enjoyed.











## Spencer Park Bike Packing

We have organised several over-night bike-packing trips to remote areas, but it is a steep learning curve, figuring out how to carry gear on a bike and ride with the extra weight. To prepare people we did a ride from the Aranui Bike Fixup out to Waimari Beach and up through Bottle Lake Forest to Spencer Park, camped the night and returned the next day. It was May and chilly in the morning and one lesson was that many people do not own gloves, so have since stocked up on loaners.



## Old Ghost Road

We have had two trips with kids from the Fixup over the Old Ghost Road which is a very challenging ride which we do over four days to allow plenty of time to rest and enjoy the beautiful scenery. First time was South to North then 2<sup>nd</sup> time was reverse direction so had to carry bikes up the stairs which worked well.













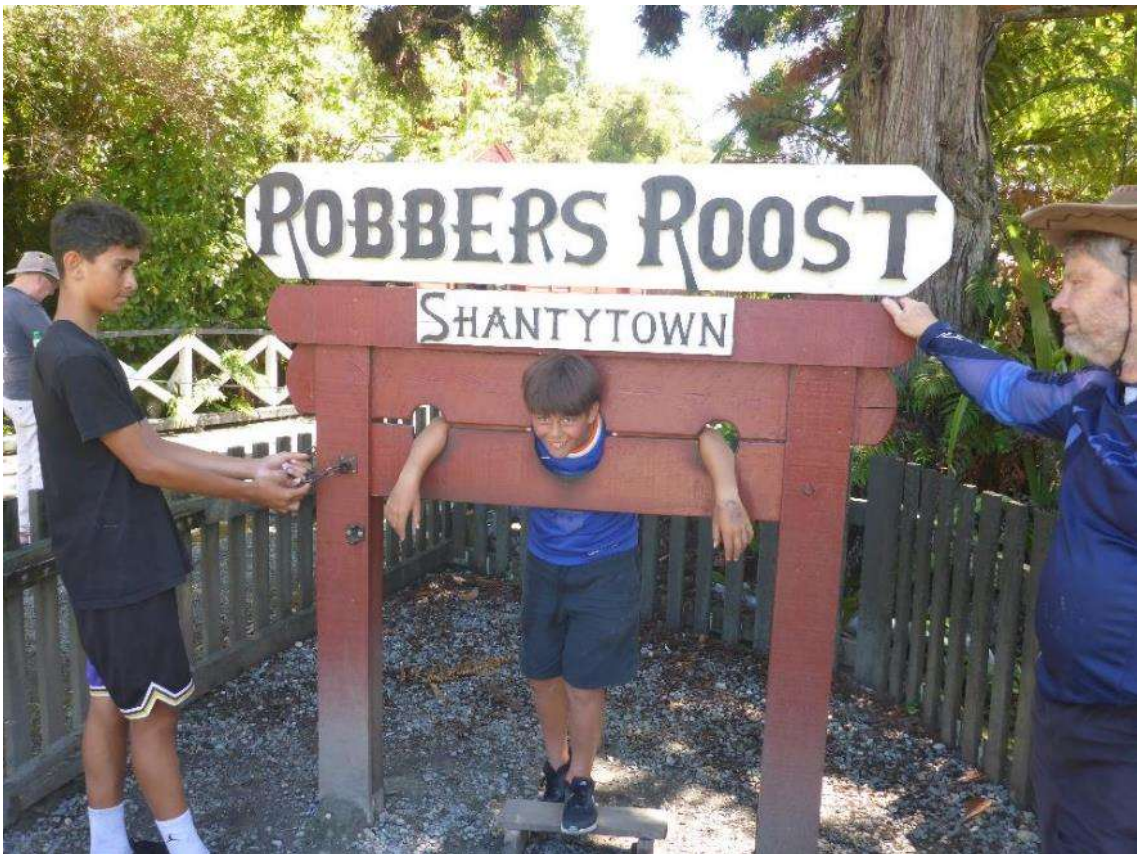




## West Coast Wilderness Trail

January 2023 we led an expedition to the West Coast Wilderness Trail which gave three out of the four kids their first ever experience of the West Coast and view of Aoraki Mt Cook in the distance. We also got to visit Shanty Town and the Tree Tops walk which were great experiences. Swimming in rivers and lakes, exploring gold mines and doing Cave Stream were also much appreciated.















## Snow Trips to Broken River

Most kids at the fixup have never seen snow, so we have organised two trips up to Broken River Ski Area. It involves a decent amount of walking on some steep snow, so is quite a challenge, but much appreciated by all those who came along. Lots of sledding, snowman construction and snowball fights.





## Akaroa

Akaroa is a 100km road ride with lots of hills so is a huge challenge for fitter kids. We have had three rides there and usually have half the kids drop out at Little River or on the first corner going up to Hilltop. Beautiful views and a great sense of satisfaction when the goal is accomplished is very rewarding. 2024 had some sombre views of recent fires which had just been put out.









## Summit Road

Driving up to sign of the Kiwi and riding the road along the Summit and down into Sumner is a ride with great views and is a good transition for those who are bored with Bottle Lake but can't quite manage hauling all the way up Rapaki. Its also a good winter ride when the off-road tracks are muddy.



## Matariki Dawn Ride

A great way to celebrate Matariki. On the bikes by 630am with night lights and ride through Bottle Lake Forest to watch the sun rise on the beach around 7.30







## 2021 Summer Cycling School

Our most ambitious programme ever – a week of riding skills and maintenance lessons in January 2021.

Video link <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=-1JHd6oXGyE>

### Day1 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.





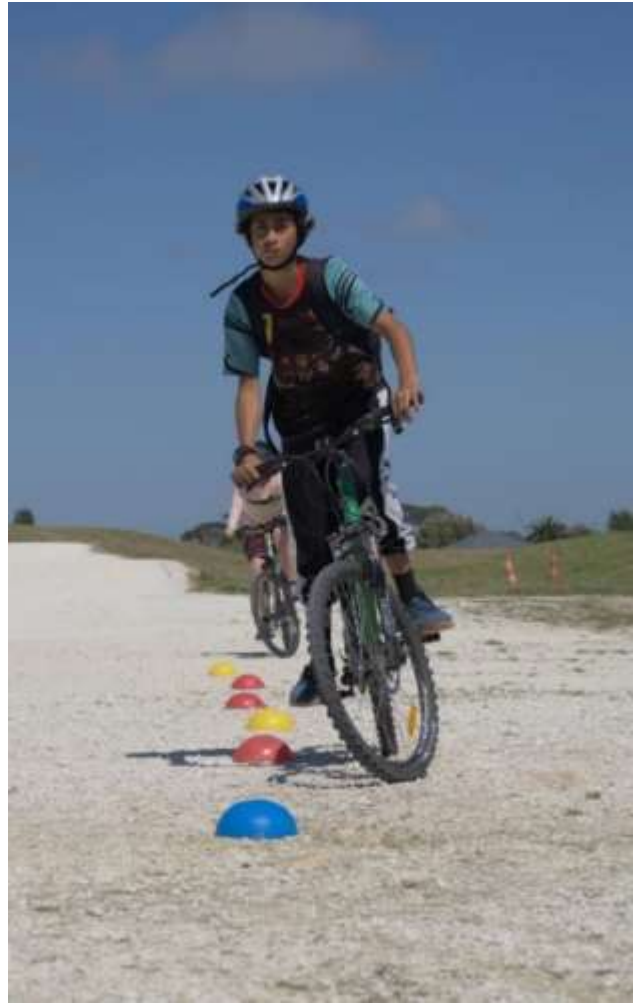


## Day 2 BMX & Frisbee Golf

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.













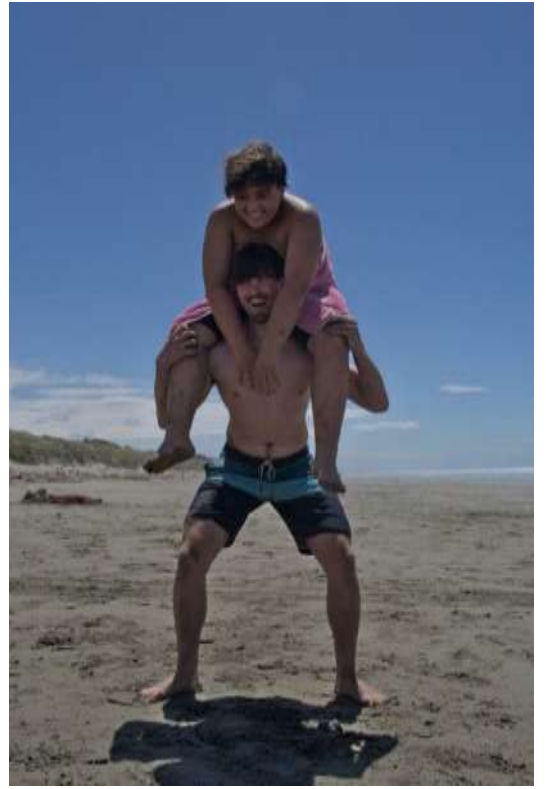


### **Day 3 Bottle Lake**

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.





## Day 4 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.





## Day 5 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.











