



# D P ACTION

Disabled Persons' Assembly—Christchurch and Districts  
Issue: September-October 2003



*The bi-ski enables people with disabilities such as Cerebral Palsy and Tetraplegia to enjoy snow sports*

## Disabled skiing possible with Back-Up

By Sandra-Leigh Montford

Christchurch resident Chris Bartlett recently grabbed an opportunity to ski with Back-Up New Zealand at the Cardrona ski fields in Wanaka. On 20 July 2003 Mr Bartlett travelled by bus to Wanaka for a five day skiing experience. He was notified of the opportunity through an email received from DPA Christchurch a mere six days before the event! Through diligent planning, numerous phone calls to Back-Up New Zealand staff and determination Mr Bartlett was soon on the slopes!

"Finding funds to go skiing in the past had been difficult – until I heard about Back-Up New Zealand and the special deal they offered for the week," said Mr Bartlett.

Back-Up New Zealand (*contact details page 8*) is a registered charitable trust that runs outdoor adventure courses for people with disabilities.

"Our main aim is to get as many people with disabilities achieving and pushing their boundaries, getting participants out of their comfort zones to aid their personal development," says Jane Denton, adventure co-ordinator.

"I'm an OT with several years experience with the Back-Up Trust; my colleagues Ian Fowler and Jim Gilligan have qualifications as long as your arm! They've got every single adaptive outdoor pursuit qualification you need. Ian did honours in sports science at university – Jim has worked in outdoor pursuits for about eleven years since the age of about sixteen."

Mr Bartlett lost his sight in 1995 and is classed as legally blind.

"To ski I use the buddy system. This is a volunteer system with a person skiing behind me, instructing me as to which direction to ski in. We wore bright yellow signs which read 'blind skier', so that other skiers were aware of my blindness and hopefully on reading the signs they would stay out of my path."

When asked what he enjoyed most about skiing, Mr Bartlett replied, "the highlight was the sensation of moving under my own steam - under my own control and the freedom and exhilaration that comes with this."

"I think that all people with disabilities should give it a go as there is a range of equipment available to enable this, for instance the bi-ski."

Mr Bartlett is planning another ski trip before the ski season for 2003 ends.

## President's Message

Greetings to all of our DPA Members

Again a very eventful few weeks for the DPA consequently there is much to share with you.

I attended the Sustainable Transport Utilities Committee meeting concerning the Springfield Road pedestrian crossing. It was passed that a traffic signal pedestrian operated crossing be installed in a mid block position - not the Springfield/Edgeware Road intersection crossing. Unfortunately last week at a council meeting Mr O'Rourke opposed the proposal and it was voted out. The Councillor had continually referred to the crossing outside the Tuam Street offices as being the same whereas there is absolutely no comparison as only few hundred metres either left or right and one comes to a traffic light controlled intersection – hardly the same facilities in Springfield Road. Hopefully, the intersection lights will go in for traffic control on this ever increasingly busy road within the next few years anyway.

The last Disabled Persons Centre network meeting had presentations from Anna Stercq from Seabrook McKenzie Centre for Specific Learning disabilities and Julie Broerse who works specifically with the attention deficit disorder support group. Anna spoke of the range of learning disabilities and the fact that they can only fund 20% of a young persons referrals (approximately 900 in 2002) as no government funding is accessible. Julie has an 18 year old son who after many years of special care has had several positions in the workforce but cannot retain a job. One day he can remember what to do and the next he cannot. Very hard for him and his family and many like them.

A seminar promoting Shared Care was enlightening. It addressed the new models of caring for those people who are currently under Mental Health Service Care. The options consist of Mental Health Service and GP care or GP care alone if it is both appropriate and agreed. Some pilot schemes have continued although at least one has set their criteria so high that hardly anyone is taking part. In two groups those taking part in the seminar worked on listing all the areas covered in Mental Health, too numerous to mention here, suffice to say that we had an extremely knowledgeable person in our group from whom we gained much. It was agreed that there needs to be an accessible data base listing all related Mental Health organisations - there are said to be several hundred such groups and organizations in Christchurch. Information gained from the group input goes to the DHBs for analysis.

The Disability Support Advisory Committee meeting that I, as your representative attend, addressed the increasing numbers of over 65s in the community requiring home care and meeting their needs adequately. The committee decided to write to the CDHB. We also have issues that people with disabilities are in double jeopardy when it comes to waiting lists for operations. From personal experience I have received two letters of rejection for operations, where do we go from here? Devolution is well underway for the new service provision for the over 65 age group Disability Support. Effective on the 1 October 2003 under the CDHB but the under 65 group will still be with the MOH. Rest Home accountability is improving as audits make sure the new criteria and guide lines are in place non-conformity means closure.

As one of many who are Guide Dog users in New Zealand I felt compelled to share my experiences with dog attacks on my two dogs in order that the new Dog Control legislation will protect us and allow unimpeded travel whilst working and walking within our communities to point out our. Consequently, I wrote the submission from a personal point of view (the vulnerability from a Guide Dog users perspective) but had it endorsed by other organisations including DPA Christchurch, ABC Canterbury HR Network Speaking Forum Christchurch and The Guide Dog Society – Auckland. Anyone who would like a copy of my submission please let me know.

Kindest regards

Gloria Weeks (DPA President)

## LOCAL DPA Happenings

### **National Council of Women**

The well attended National Council of Women meeting discussed the following remits for conference: Remit 1: Shop trading hours; Remit 2: School Operating Grants; Remit 3 Nuclear disarmament; Remit 4 Vehicle emission standards; Remit 4 Sale of land; Remit 6 Tourism tax; Remit. 7 Health audits.

The NZ Endometriosis Foundation presentation provided the staggering. Statistics that 1 in 5 women have this problem. It is the cause of the highest number of lost working days but is quite unknown in African countries. Educational promotion and awareness in Christchurch schools has proved extremely successful given the numbers of young people being diagnosed. The earlier detection now enables more successful treatments.

### **The Treaty of Waitangi & Human Rights**

DPA President Gloria and co-ordinator attended a Symposium regarding Human Rights and the Treaty of Waitangi in light of the DPA Constitution and its commitment to Maori. Sir Paul Reeves was the chair the meeting but fog at Christchurch airport prevented that. Presentations were made by the Vice Mayor of Christchurch (Gary Moore was also fog bound) Donna Matahaere-Atariki on behalf of Nga Tahu and a brilliant presentation from historian Jim McAloon gave all of the background and more besides regarding the context before, after the Treaty, and where we are today. Human Rights Commission lawyer Andrew Stockley, shared much of his expertise, emphasising the prominence today of the different language of Human Rights and the Treaty but the New Zealand law only uses one—Article 2 provides for more Human Rights for Maori while Article 1 the same. Very interesting. It was a memorable occasion.

### **Disability Support Action Group Re the ACC/DSS Disparity**

As a follow up to a meeting with the Minister for Disability Issues in February this year the DSS Action Group completed the submission and forwarded it to the Minister.

No public advocacy is planned by the group at this point. However you will be kept informed of

any progress made on this important issue and to advise you on any further lobby action to be taken by the group.

However the group would welcome your support in gathering case studies from people with disabilities describing their personal experiences and impressions of DSS and or ACC. Further information on the nature and scope of the case studies can be obtained by contacting the DPA office.

### **Housing Action Group**

A growing concern regarding the city's rental housing (eg energy efficiency, affordability, accessibility, vulnerability of certain groups including disabled persons) and the impact on tenants has resulted in the setting up of an action group. The group will formulate a plan of action which will be considered by the wider forum later this month.

This systematic approach to the complex but interrelated issues is assured of positive outcomes given the commitment of all parties (non-governmental and government). The DPA co-ordinator is a member of the action group.

### **Anglican Diocese of Christchurch Disability Policy**

The Policy for people with Disabilities has been completed and is to be presented to Synod in a few weeks. Currently the Task Force Group are working on an Audit Tool for the Policy, and I sincerely hope that the disability community of Christchurch will take advantage of the opportunities, when they arise, to be part of their local parish team who will work on this project, after all we are the experts. Gloria Weeks President

### **Funding applications**

I would like to express my thanks to Neil Barltrop (Treasurer) and Linda Telfer (co-ordinator) for all of the work that they have put into the Funding application for the current year. As a non profit Charitable Organisation we rely on local community funding to support DPA in order that we may continue advocacy and representation of issues on behalf of the disability community.

Gloria Weeks President

Extract from Diary in "The Press", Saturday August 16,2003

### **Helping hand**

A DISABLED Sydenham man was struggling home from the supermarket on his electric wheelchair last Thursday evening. The batteries were fading and he feared he would not make it across Brougham Street. He asked a passerby if he could give him a push. The middle-aged man declined and rushed off. Several minutes later a young man on a bike came along. He dismounted walked beside the wheelchair, towing it with one hand, about 600m to the disabled man's home. He gave only his name as Mark. To the disabled man, he was the true Good Samaritan"

#### ***John Brown gives us the background to the above.***

It was almost dark. I'd been at a meeting of the Canterbury Civil Defence Welfare Agencies Group (WAG) on which I am the DPA rep. Went to South City New World – stocked up my larder. The scooter was labouring under the extra weight and the journey to and from the Civil Defence meeting in Kilmore Street. Clearly my \$400 a pair batteries were starting to show their age.

I decided to return home to Strickland Street via Montreal Street and the railway crossing, as the battery punch would be insufficient either of the over bridges. I neared the Lane Walker Rudkin factory through frequent stops, when I turned off the power. A few minutes of this action and battery power seemed to get a bit stronger. As a complete "non-mechanical" person I can not explain this temporary battery rejuvenation.

Anyway ...out from the LWR factory emerged a well built guy about 40/50 years of age. "Could you please give me a push across Brougham Street I haven't got the power to do it safely" ..his reply left me speechless (OK that can happen with me !!) "Sorry", he almost growled, "I am not going that way" Then the biggest shock of all. He then proceeded to cross Montreal Street – walk, very briskly, along the northern side of Brougham Street and then cross that street and go down Scott Street (all the way I was hoping to go!~!)

But to continue my cautionary tale about ageing batteries. A motorist stopped his car. He put his hazard lights on, left his car and rapidly got me across Brougham Street. (All this had given my batteries more rejuvenative spark as I had waited and waited about 20 minutes for help). Chugging now along the road next to the gutter I began to think I'd make it home if I did a few more stop/starts. Meanwhile the 6:30/7pm traffic roared past heading up towards the Southern Motorway. Even got a friendly honk from drivers of the road monsters with the inappropriate name "trucks"

Just as I was getting the feeling I'd be stuck at the road edge for hours, without hope of making it to the safer footpath, I heard a cheery, and for me, a very welcome greeting.

"Having battery trouble, need a hand", said a bicycle helmeted young fellow in his early 20's. He put his bike on its stand, automatic blinking lights adding a little touch of colour to our quickly agreed joint task.

Managed to find his name was Mark. He told me he was "into computer graphics" at a factory in nearby Battersea Street – I wouldn't have cared if he said he was the hit man for the local mafia. His offer to tow me home was 100% This he did. Right to my door – and who said young people don't always care for those less able than themselves.

## Letters to Editor

Alpaca House Bed and Breakfast  
115 West Coast Road  
R.D. 6 Telephone:  
Christchurch.



19 August 2003  
3424230/fax 3424231

I wish to share with DPA members my recent experience when travelling to Australia. It may help other disabled folk who want to travel with their 'wheels' as I did.

I contacted Air New Zealand regarding the procedure required to take my mobility scooter with me. I usually take my wheelchair, but have recently purchased a small (35kg in weight) electric three wheel scooter for mobility and greater independence. Air New Zealand, Information desk at the airport, advised me it should be fine as it is for my mobility. Before I left I met a lady who told me she had had a lot of trouble getting the airline to take her larger mobility scooter, so maybe I ought to check on the policy, procedure etc.

I phoned Air New Zealand and was passed around, no-one really knowing the rulings. Then I phoned the Air New Zealand Travel Centre and a young man there asked me to hold and came back to say I would be able to take the scooter, but it would be charged as excess baggage at \$12 per kilo. I was astounded. To double check, I phoned yet again, and another employee in the cargo section, said it would have to be disconnected from the batteries (very securely sealed) before travel, but then would be fine to travel as a normal wheelchair would.

I was quite perplexed as to who was correct, so I approached the Ministry of Health and Disabilities and they put me onto the Disability Information Service, Christchurch. Bernice there proceeded to clarify the situation for me with Air New Zealand and established after speaking with the manager of the Cargo International Dept. of Air New Zealand that:

- A scooter required for mobility is conveyed at no charge and:
- if it was a sealed battery holder it would be fine to travel as it was and
- a memo to all check-in staff to clarify this matter would ensure I had no problems travelling with my scooter. That was wonderful!

When I arrived at the Christchurch airport Air New Zealand staff confirmed I was clear to take the scooter as they had received a memo about transporting of mobility scooters. One person did query it at the customs check point- but found that it was securely sealed and did not have any power going through it when the key was not connected. Unfortunately snow disrupted flights from Christchurch and my husband could not follow me over the following weekend. As I had the scooter I was able to use it all the time in Australia, and it was wonderful to be independent and mobile!! I would have been really restricted on my own, as my family living there worked and could not be taking me about in my wheelchair.

Problems began at the return flight check in at the Air NZ counter Brisbane Airport. At first they refused to take the scooter, even though I had bought it with me from N.Z on a previous flight!! Then they would if the batteries were disconnected. After a while, a Qantas Engineer declared that it was quite safe to take as it was sealed and would not leak, and completely immobilized when the key was removed. Unfortunately he was not Air NZ staff, so then they decided to have two more engineers come and dismantle it. The engineers took the cover off completely and had parts scattered all around them, taking about an hour to do this.

The Duty Manager would not take any responsibility as "rules are rules", she said, and then to add insult to injury she then informed me that I would have to pay the \$12 per kilo of weight of it, as excess baggage!! My daughter and son-in-law were with me, luckily, as I

*Continued from page 5*

was quite distraught by this time. They tried to talk by phone, to the staff in Christchurch, and got nowhere, even though we asked if we could find the staff person who was on duty the fortnight before, to see if they could shed some light on this problem. We were then put in touch with staff at the Air New Zealand Airports staff in Christchurch, as I came over on Airpoints – but really that should not have made any difference to their policy. A customer services person was most unsupportive, and finally my daughter lost her cool and they ended up getting nowhere, in fact the staff member hung up on my daughter. This solved nothing, so my only option left was to use my credit card and pay the \$360 NZ just so I could get home again to Christchurch with my scooter and luggage!!

On my return I contacted the Manager for Southern Region, Air New Zealand, and he immediately replied and passed my letter on to the Customer Relations Dept. They reimbursed me the excess baggage costs and apologised for the confusion. Also, said that they are currently revising the Special Handling Procedures and hope to streamline this to avoid problems in the future.

I wrote a further letter requesting something in writing to assist me in any future travel. The reply states:

“ According to the Airport Support Co-ordinator, if a customer is totally dependent upon their mobility scooter (ie uses this or a wheelchair to get around) the mobility scooter should be dealt with in exactly the same way as a wheelchair. So, if you take the scooter away with you again, you should have no further problems. The staff at Brisbane have been made aware of their error and other airports reminded of this policy.

I am unsure why the engineers would have needed to dismantle the scooter and apologise for any distress which was caused on this occasion.

I am confident that you will have no further difficulties with your scooter, but should they occur, please ask the ground staff to contact Customer Relations for clarification of the policy”.

(Hopefully there would be staff available, especially when travelling late at night, or on weekends!!)

I feel that this may be of assistance to any travellers in a similar situation. I think I was a different case, as I can get about (short distances) without the scooter or wheelchair, and use crutches, so perhaps this made it a difficult case.

Regards Linda Ellwood.

oo0oo

While on matters aeronautical you may enjoy the following from DPA member Lesley Tyzack:

### **Qantas funnies**

After every flight, pilots fill out a form called a gripe sheet, which conveys to the mechanics problems encountered with the aircraft during the flight that need repair/correction. The mechanics correct the problem, responds in writing what remedial action was taken and the pilot reviews the gripe sheets before the next flight. Never let it be said that ground crews and engineers lack a sense of humour! Here are some actual logged maintenance complaints and problems as submitted by Qantas pilots and the solution recorded by maintenance engineers (NB Qantas is the only major airline accident free)

(P = The problem logged by the pilot.)

(S = The solution & action taken by the engineers.)

S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Left inside tire almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: Something loose in cockpit

S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P Number 3 engine missing.

S: Aircraft handles funny.

P: Dead bugs on windshield.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

**Congratulations  
Congratulations  
Congratulations**

To Philip Haythornthwaite—  
DPA vice President who was  
recently made a life member  
of Epilepsy New Zealand.

**International Day of the Disabled  
Person**

will be celebrated with a Xmas  
afternoon tea and entertainment on  
3 December 2003. More details next  
newsletter.

**Retirement Villages and You**

At a recent meeting of the National Council of  
Women the speaker Leo Steele, a Solicitor with

interest in Retirement Villages offered the follow-  
ing advice.

- Residents buy a License to Occupy not a Title.
- Depreciation is charged at different rates for the first 4 or 5 years, may be 4 or 5%. Some villages charge more depreciation when a client transfers from a unit to a studio or full care.
- Many agreements include a “restore to original condition” clause, or similar, which is paid by the previous client [or taken from the Estate]. This is over and above the weekly charge which in most cases is charged until the unit is sold. The exception is Anglican Care which guarantees to pay out the Estate within two months. Anglican Care is Bishopspark, Churchill and Fitzgerald Complexes including Harper Gardens.
- The client pays all legal fees in a transfer of License to Occupy.
- Many elderly people do not comprehend the agreements and need to have them explained.
- Solicitors can only advise, they cannot make the decisions for clients.
- Because of all the charges many elderly people [or their estates] end up with less money that they expect.
- People must read agreements and get advice.  
*Thank you to Christine Haythornthwaite for taking these notes.*

UNIVERSITY  
of  
OTAGO



*Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtago*

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

**EDUCATING FUTURE DOCTORS FOR NEW ZEALAND**

It is my pleasure to invite you to participate in our public consultation forum to be held at **7.30 p.m. on Tuesday 16 September 2003 in the Rolleston Lecture Theatre, Ground Floor, School of Medicine Building**, to discuss the future training of medical practitioners in New Zealand.

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Otago has been planning major changes in the way we educate doctors to better serve our communities in the future. At this meeting you will hear from the Dean of Faculty, Professor John Campbell, who will overview the educational objectives of our course, and from Associate Professor Tim Wilkinson who will outline some of the major changes that are planned.

Your involvement and feedback is important to us. Everyone is welcome to participate and join us at this meeting. Further details of our graduate profile can be viewed at our website [www.chmeds.ac.nz/studentinfo/profile.htm](http://www.chmeds.ac.nz/studentinfo/profile.htm)

I look forward to hearing your views.

Professor Ian Town, Dean Christchurch School of Medicine & Health Science



## Disabled Persons' Assembly (New Zealand) Inc

### The Assembly of People with Disabilities

Christchurch  
Community  
House  
141 Hereford St  
CHRISTCHURCH

Ph: (03) 379-8525  
Fax: (03) 366-8535  
E-mail: [dpachch@cyberxpress.co.nz](mailto:dpachch@cyberxpress.co.nz)

**President:**  
Gloria Weeks  
Ph: (03) 389 3881  
[weeksie@xtra.co.nz](mailto:weeksie@xtra.co.nz)

**Newsletter Collator:**  
Linda Telfer

Deadline for  
next issue:  
8 December 2003

**Office Hours**  
Monday and Tuesday  
9.30am - 5.30pm  
Answerphone  
cleared regularly throughout  
the week.

## Noticeboard

### DPA Membership Renewals 2003/04 are now overdue

Members need to be 'financial' in order to nominate, be nominated and vote in the forthcoming election. Thank you to those members who have completed their renewal. New members are most welcome.

Wouldn't it be great if each DPA member recruited one new member for the 2003/04 year? Imagine the collective wisdom, energy and action that would create!!

### WANTED

Christchurch Community House is in need of a wheelchair for use of clients at Community House at the time of an emergency evacuation.

If you are able to assist please contact the House Manager:  
Mike Asmussen  
Telephone: 365 3139  
Thank you.

### DISABILITY NETWORK

Meet others working in the Health and Disability Sector in Christchurch. Share ideas and information. A genuine opportunity to keep up to date.

Bring your lunch, tea and coffee provided.

**Date:** 10 September 2003

**Time:** 12.0– 1.30pm

**Venue:** Disabled Person's Centre  
314 Worcester Street, ChCh

**Speakers:** DPA and Assn of Blind Citizens

### DISABLED PERSONS' ASSEMBLY ANNUAL MEETING

7.30 pm WEDNESDAY 22 October 2003

Annual Meeting

Guest speaker:

Dot Beard 30 years as a guide dog owner

Supper

All most welcome—please mark your diary

### Backup New Zealand (See story front page.)

#### Contact Details

Jane Denton  
Back-Up New Zealand  
P.O. Box 8832  
Havelock North  
Mob: 021 50 30 95  
Email:  
[jane@backup.org.nz](mailto:jane@backup.org.nz)  
Web:  
<http://www.backup.org.nz/participant.htm>

### DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in articles contributed to this newsletter are not necessarily those of DPA Christchurch & Districts or DPA (NZ) Inc. Readers are, however, welcome to submit articles of interest to the DPA membership. Advertisements are welcome but publication does not signify endorsement by DPA. Please note the publication deadline date on this page.

The DPA Christchurch and Districts is grateful for the support from: The Community Trust, The Christchurch City Council, COGS, Lotteries Welfare Grants Board & the Southern Trust.