

International Department South Island Tour Report

From 11 to 23 January 2021, Mr Retemeyer, Mr Davidson, Mr Benn and Miss Mitchell took 32 of our international students on a tour of the South Island of New Zealand in four vans.



To ensure that the boys were contributing photos to their agents, parents and homestays, we decided to run a photo competition where the best photo of the day would get a \$10 prize.



On Monday 11 January, we departed Palmerston North for Wellington and travelled to Picton via the Interislander Ferry. For all but two students, it was their first time visiting the South Island.



On Tuesday 12 January we made our way to Christchurch. The boys were able to see some seals on the rocks on the drive to Kaikoura where we stopped for lunch. We continued on to Christchurch, where we stayed at Adams House, the hostel of Christchurch Boys' High School. A big thanks to former PNBHS staff member Mr. Archibald for having us to stay at Adams House!



The next day we spent the morning at the International Antarctic Centre where the boys learnt about life in Antarctica and the impact of global warming on the rest of the world. We had a ride in the Hagglands (snow mobile), had a 4D movie experience, a tour of the centre and watched the penguins being fed.



We then spent the afternoon at Jellie Park Pools where the boys swam and went down the hydrosides.



On our last morning in Christchurch (Thursday), we drove to the city centre where Mr. Benn gave the boys a quick tour and history lesson of the Christchurch Cathedral Square and the effects of the earthquakes in 2010 and 2011.



Following this, we had a three-hour trip from Christchurch to Lake Tekapo, stopping for lunch in Geraldine. Upon arrival, the boys had free time to visit the Church of the Good Shepherd and explore the magnificent scenery of Lake Tekapo. Lake Tekapo is the largest

Dark Sky Reserve in the world and luckily, we had an amazing night to have a guide explain the stars to our boys.



On Friday, we travelled to Queenstown, stopping to see the views of Lake Pukaki with a view of Mt. Cook on the way.



Upon arrival in Queenstown we went to the Gondola and Luge, where the boys all raced each other to the bottom!





On Saturday we had eight boys go sky diving, and everyone else in the group (including some of the sky divers) went jet boating. The boys also had free time to explore Queenstown.





Sunday was part two of the Queenstown adventure time! We had 14 boys on the Giant Canyon Swing, and one did the Nevus Bungy. More sightseeing and free time!



On Monday, we had a day trip to Lake Te Anau, where we had a boat cruise and a tour of the Glow Worm Caves.



On Tuesday, we left Queenstown for Wanaka and Puzzling World proved a challenge for most.





On Wednesday, we left Wanaka for Franz Joseph, via the Haast Pass. We were virtually the only people on the roads, and we were treated to some amazing scenery and waterfalls! Unfortunately, the Fox Glacier was closed, and the weather was too poor to visit the Franz Josef Glacier, however we did get a chance to have a quick look the next morning!





The evening was filled with games, cards and pool table, and Rawin, Supanaht and Parm cooked up some Salmon Fried Noodles. Although the weather limited our activities at times, it really allowed our international students to form close bonds with each other and talked to students from different countries and year levels – something they sometimes don't do!





Day 11 was Franz Josef to Westport via Shantytown. The weather was average again, so some of our scheduled stops could not go ahead (Punakaiki Pancake Rocks). The highlight of Shantytown was the boys panning for gold, and all were able to come away with a gold souvenir.

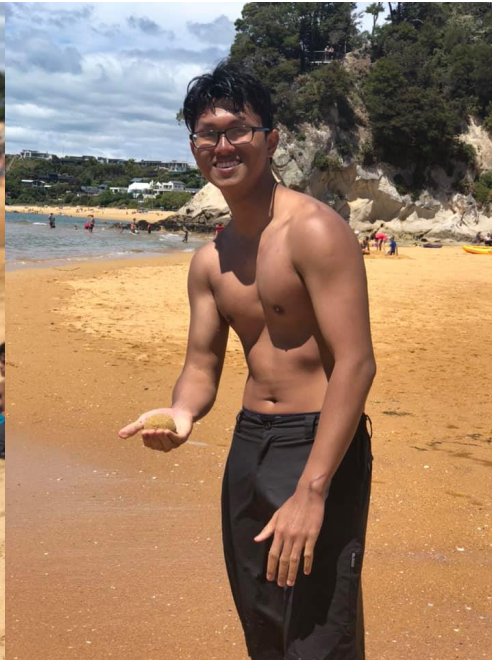






The next day we headed north to Nelson, for our last night's accommodation. Half the group went to the stunning Kaiteriteri Beach for swimming and sun, and were treated to amazing weather, and the rest continued to Nelson for some sightseeing. The evening was spent ten pin bowling, where Hojin Cha prevailed as the winner!







That evening, we had a short prizegiving with Jason and Junior chosen as the two most helpful boys on the trip, often doing jobs without being asked.





The following morning was the long trip back to Palmerston North. Nelson to Blenheim (McDonalds for lunch), then headed towards Picton for the ferry crossing to Wellington.



All in all, a successful South Island Tour where the boys were challenged, put outside their comfort zone, treated to some of the most amazing scenery, and we all got to know everyone a bit better!