

## Easter Journey 2005

Last Saturday we tidied up after the Easter Journey 2005. As I closed some doors on those big containers, I reflected on the changes made to the Journey this year.

- It moved outdoors, and used containers to house the art.
- A 2 minute promotional video was sent to 30 major churches around Christchurch.
- We installed a “prayer chapel” at Easter Camp and provided van trips between Camp and the Journey on Easter Friday and Saturday afternoons.
- An opening gave a chance for about 35 people to pray through the journey, asking God’s blessing and celebrating the gifts of Peter and Joyce Majendie
- Church services were offered each evening, at 7pm, amid the Easter Journey.
- We moved the clean-up day from Monday to the following Saturday and about 40 people did a great cleanup job.

This year we were blessed with reasonable weather. Over 1,040 people walked through the Easter Journey (about 300 more than last year). We achieved good newspaper coverage, with an article in The Star and an article and photo in the Christchurch Mail. There was some excellent feedback, both in the comments book and in the emails after.

*"This is great! It is so uncontrived and managed to soften the heart of an old Cynic"*

*"Very powerful and moving"*

*"A powerful presentation which has and will bless those who participate"*

*"Moving and deepening of my faith - Thank you"*

*"Thanks for creating reflections that move me to the cross and beyond"*

*"Thanks ... a journey of the heart and not just the head"*

*"Just what my soul was crying out for - a profound reminder of the reality of it all"*

*"Thanks for the freedom to contemplate without being given answers"*

*"An oasis in a world besieged"*

*"Blew me away! Was impressed to tears on most stops!"*

*"Hooray - creativity is alive in God's people"*

*"A very significant spiritual experience"*

I sense a growth in our sense of community because of the Easter Journey. So many of you participate, give of your time and energy to set up, welcome, pour cups of tea, to help tidy up and a real warmth develops among people over the time of the Easter Journey.

There are always improvements we could make; for example, improve the link with Easter Camp, launch a dedicated website, offer schools - both local and Christian - a bus trip and guided tour. There is a Christian trust that gives significant money to teach Baptist’s about creativity. I reckon we could apply to that Trust and offer an Easter Stations workshop, teaching other churches how to set up and run something like the Easter Journey.

But for this year let us start as we finished; glad to offer the Easter Journey as our worship to God, thanking God for the gifts of Peter and Joyce, grateful to everyone at Opawa who participates and prayerful that the God who sows will also water.

*Steve Taylor*