

## Day 6: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012

### Drive from Christchurch to Dunedin - 361 km - approx. 5 hrs

We woke to sun light, no new snow but the cold overnight has turned the snow to ice making it very (dangerous) slippery to walk around unless you were on the snow itself. On the news this morning we heard there were over 1000 homes without power, schools closed, public transport not running, Arthur's Pass closed, and all the ski fields on the South Island with nearly 1m of snow. On the news tonight we saw the video of the train that goes from the west coast across Arthur's Pass to Christchurch ploughing through the snow. It looked magnificent with the snow plough fitted to the front of the diesel engines throwing snow into the air well above the engines.

After packing up the motorhome we headed to Countdown to stock up on food, buy a couple of things to store our food etc. While cars were slipping and sliding around on the black ice our motorhome took the snow and ice easily.



The streets, houses, footpaths, front and back yards looked like a picture, I have never seen snow this deep and wide spread before. We turned into the shopping centre car park and found a parking bay where we could park parallel to make it easier to leave without reversing.

Having bought our supplies at the Warehouse and Countdown we both held on to the shopping trolley to stop ourselves slipping over as we made our way across the car park. Time to make our way south to Dunedin a 5 hour drive in the best conditions and we had to make our way through snow and black ice. Before we left Australian Robyn had downloaded the New Zealand street maps on her Tom Tom so all we had to do was to listen to the instructions, we just hoped the Tom Tom would work, and it did. Heading out of Christchurch past the airport we heard on the news that flights had either been cancelled or delayed, but that didn't affect us, we were on the road, what a difference two days makes.

I was told by Kea that the speed limit for this size motorhome was 90 Kmph so I set the cruise control, followed the Tom Tom voice instructions and just adjusted speed according to the speed limit signs. The snow started to thin out the further we headed south but to the right, the mountain range was covered in snow.

At one stage as we were cruising along at 90 Kmph all of a sudden without warning there was a 4 wheel drive parked on the road and a lady getting out holding up a stop sign with the words cattle crossing. Two men were rushing across the road with tape bunting blocking off Highway 1 so the dairy cattle could cross the road to the pastures on the other side.



Having resumed our journey we headed to Geraldine where we were told by Marilyn Wells (CQUniversity) they had the best chocolate on the South Island. Geraldine is a very small town just off the highway that has three chocolate shops so we bought chocolate from two of them. To make lunch the gas had to be turned on and the DC circuit breakers for the entertainment system and the water pump to fill the kettle. After lunch the reverse, switch off the circuit breakers except for the fridge, turn off the gas and head back on to the road to join Highway 1 for Dunedin.

If we wanted to reach Dunedin before dark there would be no stopping for any points of interest. The maps provided by Kea shows points of interest all along the road but really you would need to spend months if you wanted to visit every one of them.

At around 5pm Robyn rang the Dunedin Holiday Park to let them know we were on our way and would be there before they closed at 8pm. Closer to Dunedin we could see remnants of snow along the side of the road and on parts of the country side, but certainly nothing like Christchurch. The magical Tom Tom led us through the city straight to the Holiday Park. We were allocated bay 7 right opposite the amenities building, how handy even though the temperature was a lot warmer than Christchurch.

After we made tea and washed up we headed up the road to stretch the legs and get some fresh air. How exciting, the sewerage plant, bowling centre and golf club, but our home was set up, shower and ready for bed as tomorrow is our free day to see the sights of Dunedin. With the Holiday Park being out on the Otago Peninsula next to St Kilda Beach, all we would have to do is head out of the Holiday Park, turn right and our adventure would start.