



a passion for the Port Hills

Newsletter, July 2012

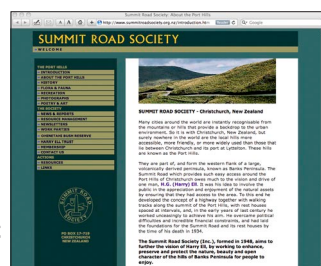
From the Secretary

It's been a long time since our last newsletter, and you'd be forgiven for wondering how your Society is faring. As you will see, we are still as active as ever. Our volunteers continue to work hard on our two reserves, there is a good turnout at the Eastenders twice a month outings, and the Board continues to manage and plan the Society's affairs. The lack of a newsletter is my fault entirely and I hope you can accept my apologies. We do, of course, live in 'interesting times', and so far this year has been more interesting for Liz and me than we would have liked. In January we lost our house in a fire which, not surprisingly had a big impact on our lives. We got through this with wonderful help and support from friends and neighbours, and as we have just been re-zoned 'green', we are on track to rebuild. Following this, in March, I was called in at short notice for a shoulder replacement. As some of you may know, this is quite painful with a long recovery period. The operation was successful, but I was effectively one-handed (the wrong one!), so for a long time everything has been taking me much longer than normal, particularly on the computer.

It's a sobering thought that many of you will still be feeling the pressure of the impact of the earthquakes and be wondering what the future holds for you. Our thoughts are with you. Despite it being a very difficult year, 2011 was a reasonably good one for the Society. Not surprisingly, after the annual growth of the last few years, our membership decreased slightly, and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those of you who took the time and effort to renew your membership. Despite the decrease, our numbers remained healthy at the end of the year, at around 400, with a significantly large 'constituency' when tramping clubs, walking groups and organisations with whom we have reciprocal membership arrangements are taken into account. It would be good to see an increase this year, so please tell your family, friends and colleagues about our work. Whilst the focus over the next few years will be on rebuilding the city and repairs to homes, it is important to remember that recreation and access to the Port Hills have a fundamental role in our return to normality. The City Council recognises this, and despite all the issues it has to address, the Port Hills Ranger team has continued with its maintenance and extensive planting programmes on the hills. No doubt as things progress, and more tracks are deemed safe, the Society's workload will expand.

Website

Courtesy of Holly Loughton, we now have a new look website. Holly will also be making sure this is kept up-to-date. Please visit this at:
www.summitroadsociety.org.nz



Mike White receiving the well-deserved Volunteer Recognition Award, 5th December 2011.

Volunteer Awards

Volunteering Canterbury annually invites nominations for groups and individuals for its Volunteer Recognition Awards. We were delighted that our nomination for Mike White was accepted. The full citation was:

The Summit Road Society is proud to have "A passion for the Port Hills". Mike personifies this passion, and his love of our local hills goes back to a childhood spent exploring them. He has been a member of the Society for over 20 years and of the group that works on our Ohinetahi Reserve since he retired in 1996. Mike joined the Society's Board in 1999, and served as President from 2005 to 2009. If asked, he would readily admit that he was a reluctant President, and that he is much happier 'getting his hands dirty', having spent countless hours doing just this by building walking tracks, planting native trees and tackling the seemingly never ending battle with weeds and animal pests. However, he willingly gave his time to committee work, meetings and to addressing local groups, where his commitment and enthusiasm never flagged. Not content with volunteering locally, each year Mike disappears to inaccessible locations to give his time to the Department of Conservation, wardening and working on their huts. The Society is proud to have him as a member and to acknowledge the contribution he has made to our work.

The Awards were presented by Mike Crean from the Christchurch Press at a ceremony held on the 5th of December 2011. In total, 31 awards were presented which shows how strong the voluntary work ethic is in the region. In typical fashion, Mike commented that he was embarrassed by the award and felt that it should have gone to the Ohinetahi team as a whole. There is no doubt that the team has done and continues to do fantastic work on our reserve, and the Society Board recognises this. However, it felt quite strongly that Mike's contribution to Ohinetahi together with his involvement over a number of years in the Society's governance merited an individual award.



Funding

This year sees a major change to our funding from the City Council. Previously we have been one of many recipients of the contestable 'Strengthening Communities Fund'. Council officers recognised that our work does not easily fit the fund criteria and is more closely aligned to the Council's work on biodiversity and outdoor recreation. As a result, a Memorandum Of Understanding was signed on the 29th May by Vice-President Jeremy Agar and Mayor Bob Parker at a ceremony at the Hilltop Tavern. The MOU means that we will now be funded directly from the Council's budget, initially for 3 years. Whilst we will still be reliant on membership subscriptions and need to apply for funding for specific projects or purchases, the funding brings welcome security. Four other local groups also signed similar MOUs, the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust, the Port Hills Park Trust Board (Mount Vernon), Orton Bradley Park and Otamahua/Quail Island Restoration Trust. We all see this as a significant step, which will further strengthen the partnership with the Council and the relationship between our groups.

AGM

The Society's Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday the 28th March at the Canterbury Horticultural Society. Liz Garson from Christchurch City Council gave a presentation on the Banks Peninsula Ecological Study. The study, which should be completed by the middle of this year, is as a result of an Environment Court Consent Order following the hearings for the Rural Variation to the Banks Peninsula District Plan, and will identify areas of ecological importance, and the means to manage and protect

these. It has been a long and complex process, but it will result in much better knowledge of the biodiversity of the peninsula. Liz is a very enthusiastic advocate for the value of the biodiversity of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula. There were no changes to the Board, and the Society should consider itself fortunate that it is managed by this group of enthusiastic, knowledgeable and committed volunteers.

Work Parties

Despite the closure of Ohinetahi Reserve we have identified safe working areas, and the team continues with its programme of planting, plant releasing, weed control, track maintenance and animal pest control. However, the restricted access means that in some areas grass growth and other invasive weeds will become a problem. The Eastenders have not been able to work in their usual haunts, but have been concentrating their efforts in upper Victoria Park, in particular the Latter's Spur Track, and Marley's Hill. They have sufficient work to keep them occupied for the foreseeable future at Scott's Reserve and around Coronation Hill. The team's enthusiasm means that despite the earthquakes, and the increased distance to travel, we have only seen a small reduction in volunteer hours for 2011. At Omahu, under the guidance of Honorary Ranger Paul Tebbutt, work has focused on maintaining the tracks, dealing with the seemingly endless task of controlling gorse and broom and some animal pet control.

Track update

Unfortunately, **Ohinetahi** remains closed to the public as there is still the risk of rockfall. We are in the process of commissioning a full geotechnical survey, for which we will need to apply for funding. This should tell us what is safe, what is not, and the extent and cost of any remediation work. It will be a long process, but we are now taking the first steps. However, at **Omahu**, with the exception of Prendergast's Track and Gibraltar Rock, the tracks are open.

The Rangers are working hard to re-open tracks, with the priority being the most popular ones on the city side of the hills. Rapaki Track was opened on the 23rd December—and closed the same day following the large aftershocks. A process has been agreed where tracks with potential rockfall danger are automatically closed following a magnitude 5 earthquake. With the Rapaki track, an inspection found minor damage which was dealt with very quickly, resulting in the track then being reopened. The pre-Christmas quakes proved to be a 'live' test for the process, and the City Council and the Port Hills Rangers should be commended for the work that has been done and continues to be done on walking and mountain-bike tracks.

Up-to-date information can be found on the City Council's website at: <http://www.ccc.govt.nz/cityleisure/parkswalkways/popularparks/theporthills/index.aspx>



Summit Road Society (Inc)
 PO Box 17-719, Christchurch
 Website: www.summitroadsociety.org.nz
 Email: secretary@summitroadsociety.org.nz

President	Bill Woods	03 318 4825
Vice-President	Jeremy Agar	328 9956
Secretary	John Goodrich	354 0346
Treasurer	Paul Loughton	322 7082
Board Members	Tony Edney	329 9868
	John Hayman	335 0984
	Anne Kennedy	337 0364
	Paul Tebbutt	384 3086
	Annette Foster	347 8651
<i>Honorary Life Member</i>	John Jameson	354 5925
Representatives		
Selwyn District Council	Malcolm Lyall	347 2800
Hagley/Ferrymead	Islay McLeod	389 0954
Lytelton/Mt Herbert	Jeremy Agar	328 9956
Port Hills Rangers	Paul Devlin	332 5627
Eastenders work party	Paul Tebbutt	384 3086
Ohinetahi work party	Anne Kennedy	337 0364
Omahu Bush work party	Paul Tebbutt	384 3086

We are a voluntary society working to enhance, preserve and protect the natural environment, beauty and open character of the Port Hills of Banks Peninsula for people to enjoy.

We need and welcome contributions to our work through memberships, donations and corporate sponsorships, participation in work parties (non-members welcome - but why not join us as well!), and bequests.



Geoff Bendall

The latest news from the Eastenders is that Geoff is retiring after a staggering 21 years, the past eight as convenor. His dedication to the group and its work can be judged by its success over the years, the hours of work that have been carried out on the Port Hills and its lasting legacy of projects such as the Eastenders Track in Barnett Park and the re-emerging native bush in Sumnervale Reserve. He will be succeeded by Paul Tebbutt. The Society is certainly lucky to have such dedicated volunteers.

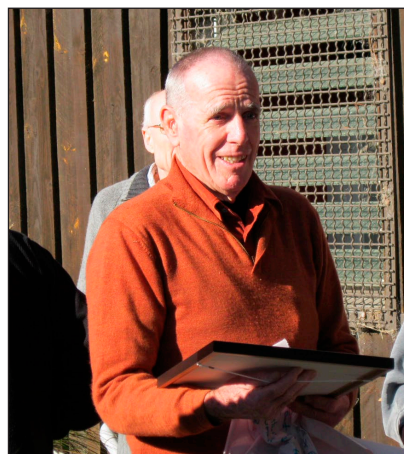
In Geoff's own words:

"Home town – New Plymouth, where my parents had a small dairy farm and where I spent my early years. Educated at Vogeltown Primary School and New Plymouth Boys' High School. I completed schooling in 1952 and was immediately involved with CMT doing 3 month's military service

before beginning work for ANZ Bank where I spent all my working life.

In those days staff were transferred between branches "to further their experience" and in 1959 I found myself in Whakatane in the Bay of Plenty - a fortunate event as that is where Patricia and I met, married and had our children, Mark and Simon. After Whakatane, I ran a sub-branch at Edgecumbe for a couple of years then went further up the ladder as Accountant at Masterton Branch. From there in 1970 I was appointed as Manager of a new Branch at Glen Innes, Auckland. This was followed by two years auditing Branch lending throughout New Zealand and then my final NZ appointment as Manager, Papatoetoe, Auckland. In 1983 I was transferred to the Gold Coast as Manager, Broadbeach then, north of Brisbane to Gympie where I took early retirement in 1989. Patricia and I decided to retire to Christchurch and arrived here late in 1989 settling first on Mt Pleasant and later to our present home in Redcliffs.

In my early days I tramped and climbed on Mt Egmont and the adjacent ranges, played rugby and cricket and, after our children were old enough, resumed tramping mainly in the central North Island. I also became interested in Orienteering and in 1980 was selected for the New Zealand team to compete in Australia that year. Further selection in 1981 and 1982 followed, and in 1981, I was also NZ champion in my grade and the inaugural winner of the trophy for NZ Orienteer of the Year. Since returning to Christchurch I have spent many happy hours and days exploring the Southern Alps ranging



Geoff with a framed citation presented by President Bill Woods.

from Tapuae o Eneku in the North to George and Dusky Sounds down south.

I have also found time to become involved with the Summit Road Society having been introduced to the Eastenders by John Willocks in 1991. This has been one of the most rewarding times of my life and I have many happy memories of the men and work we have done on the Port Hills. Gerald Ward was Convenor when I joined up, followed by John Willocks who then passed the Official Tea Break Whistle to me in 2004. Unfortunately I haven't been able to use it as the gang always manages to pre-empt the signal! During my 21 years with the group we have built 9 new tracks, from Castle Rock to Godley Head and, over the past few years, have also maintained the circuit track in Barnett Park, alas closed now due to danger of rockfall. In fact most of the tracks we serviced are presently out of bounds and since the events of the past 21 months we have been concentrating our efforts in and around Victoria Park We have also planted some hundreds of trees, dug holes for many Arbor Days and enjoyed the Port Hills Ranger staffs' assistance, guidance and annual BBQs.

The Board and members of the Society have always been most supportive and helpful in all our ventures and it has been a privilege and pleasure to work with them all. Now, it is time to move on and Patricia and I leave our many friends in Christchurch with much regret but also the anticipation of enjoying having our children and grandchildren closer to hand."



Geoff and the Eastenders with a small memento given to him by the Port Hills Rangers

Outings and events

Omahu Field Day, 30th October 2011

The last Sunday in October saw approximately two dozen souls congregate at the Gibraltar Rock car park for a day of learning and discovery! The original plan was to start at Coopers Knob and work our way down to the stream at the foot of the reserve, however a straw poll changed all that and instead we decided to stick to the reserve proper and so we started by making our way down Rhodes Track—the 4WD track on the south side of the bush.

My initial fears that we would reach the bottom early were rapidly quashed as the stops became more frequent. Native clematis—*clematis foetida* and *c. paniculata* and jasmine *parsonsia heterophylla*—were both in flower and a sight to see, cascading over the tops of the bush. Several stops were made to confirm the authenticity of ferns, with Sally Tripp pointing out the differences and making sure we pulled out any invaders! We eventually made it to the bottom and after a reasonably leisurely lunch we started on the return walk through the bush. Alice Shanks from Queen Elizabeth II National Trust soon had us all enveloped in her enthusiasm for the bush, pointing out the differences in the flora as we climbed. Coprosmas and Kanuka changing to Five Finger and Totara, then Mahoe and Lancewood to Tree Fuschia at the top. The abundance of seedling Five Finger, Lancewood and Totara especially was pleasing and confirms that our pest control measures are being successful. After the recent rains the streams were running well, adding to the overall atmosphere.

A side trip off the main track onto Kirks Track took us to the large Matai and Kahikatea where we fossicked around for a while, discovering several seedlings of each, much to everyone's satisfaction. Eventually the long climb took us back to the car park, passing some splendid ferns including a couple of large Silver Ferns and more seedling natives. I would like to thank everyone for coming and especially Sally and Alice for giving everybody a most interesting day out. I'm sure everybody enjoyed themselves, and who knows, perhaps next time we can even start at Coopers Knob...

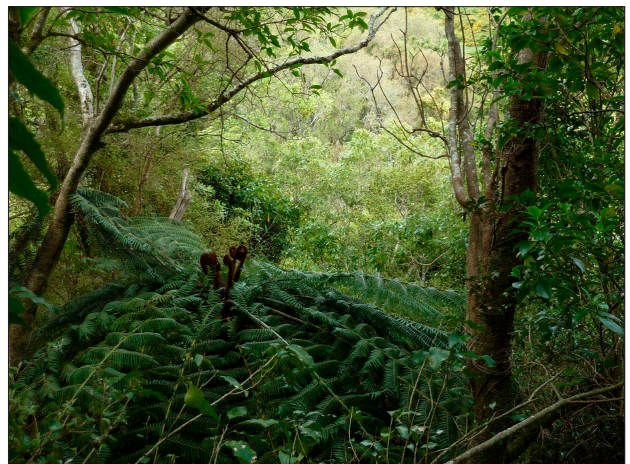
Paul Tebbutt



The perfect grassy bank for a rest and snack...



Rhodes Track, Omahu Bush



Silver Fern under the Omahu Bush canopy...

Orton Bradley Park, 11th December 2011

A small (but select!) group met at the park on a dull but warm day for an end-of-year picnic. Before lunch, park manager Ian Luxford spoke to us about the fascinating history of Orton Bradley and the trustees' vision for its future. He reminded us that the park is protected by an Act of Parliament, which will ensure that this fantastic asset to the region will endure. Orton Bradley suffered only minor damage from last year's earthquakes, with only one of its historic buildings requiring repairs.



The Cottage at Orton Bradley Park...

Future Outings and Events

With outings and events in general, there have been major changes since, for instance the 1970s, when we could expect over a hundred participants on some of our walks. During my time with the Society it seems to have become increasingly difficult to arrange outings that attract members in sufficient numbers. (Perhaps I'm just running out of ideas!). There may be a number of factors—weekends are precious for busy people, there has been a growth of walking, other interest groups and independent recreation, and of course, the earthquakes have not helped. As one of our Board members has pointed out, we are not really a participatory Society, other than our hill work parties, and many members sign up simply to 'support a worthy cause',—which is a very good reason for doing so!

The Board is happy to continue to arrange outings if this is what the membership wants. It would be good therefore, if you could take a few minutes to let me have your views: secretary@summitroadsociety.org.nz or Ph: 354 0346.

- ❑ Do you want the Society to continue to offer outings and events?
- ❑ If so, how often?
- ❑ What events would you support—walks, specialist-led walks, visits to local attractions, social functions such as picnics?

John Goodrich, Secretary

Banks Peninsula Conservation Forum

Previous newsletters have covered this and the conservation days that have taken place in the recent past. The Forum is a Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust initiative and has developed from an opportunity for local groups and agencies to meet and exchange information about their activities, to covering specific topics or issues that are of interest to all of us who are committed to improving biodiversity on the Peninsula and the Port Hills. The last Forum took place on the 8th of May and focussed on monitoring, particularly in relation to animal pest control. The morning started with presentations by Bruce Warburton and Chris Jones from Landcare Research followed by Delia Small from the World Wide Fund for Nature. We then broke into four groups to discuss:

- ❑ Measuring biodiversity outcomes
- ❑ Collecting and standardising data
- ❑ Data storage and analysis
- ❑ Feedback to the community

With each group having a good mix of scientists and enthusiastic agency and group representatives, there were some stimulating discussions, with all of us agreeing on the importance for our work on biodiversity of monitoring and reporting. We will be taking this further at the next Forum. As far as the Society members who were there are concerned we came away determined to make improvements to the way we carry out this work.

Note: if any members would like a copy of the Forum minutes, please contact the Secretary. Alternatively, they are on our website.

Weedbusters

From the website www.weedbusters.org.nz

Weedbusters is "...about working to reduce the threat of weeds to New Zealand's natural environment. Weeds are one of the greatest threats to the environment but together we can make a difference." Nationally many local groups are supported by a range of agencies and organisations, including in our area, Environment Canterbury.

On the 1st of July there was a 'Canterbury Weedbusters education and information-sharing day' held at the Little River rugby clubrooms. This was very well attended, and there were presentations from scientists, students undertaking relevant research, landowners and representatives from voluntary groups. It's exciting to hear about all the work that is going on, but a bit of a daunting reminder of the scale of the problem. There were a number of awards, and the Ohinetahi group were presented with one for their work at our Ohinetahi Reserve.

Some common weed pests are well known, for instance gorse, broom, old man's beard, banana passionfruit. However, what is probably less well known and understood by the general public is the risk posed by garden escapees. This is particularly relevant to peri-urban areas like the Port Hills.



Joan Swift, Mike White and Anne Kennedy of the Ohinetahi Group presented with a Weedbuster award.

You can all 'do your bit' by taking care about what you plant and cultivate in your own gardens. Weedbusters produce an excellent booklet entitled *Plant Me Instead!* This has pictures of a wide range of problem garden plants and suggestions for alternatives. The booklet is available free and can be ordered through the website.





Native plantings at Ohinetahi Reserve

After a visit by Hugh Wilson of Hinewai Reserve, to provide us with advice, planting commenced on our reserve in June 2002. About 70% of Ohinetahi Reserve is covered with forest, the remainder in gorse and old pasture, mainly on north facing slopes. There is little chance of native species regenerating through a thick matt of rank grass, so planting seedlings was the best option.

Gorse had been cleared along several of our boundary fences—a mandatory requirement—so initially our plantings were to replace this to avoid any reinfestation. Also Gordon Kirk saw a need to enhance the reserve entrance at Governors Bay where gorse clearance had been carried out in areas bordering the lower sections of Titoki and Ngiao tracks and a planting programme commenced there as well. This area, now known as Gordon's Garden, is in memory of the man who was instrumental in obtaining the reserve for the Society.

Ten years on from our first plantings the initial seedlings are now maturing and changing the landscape for the better, particularly at the Titoki track entrance and along the boundaries adjacent to Ngiao track further up. Each winter since 2002 three to four hundred seedlings indigenous to the area have been planted so that now approximately 3500 have been established and are at various stages of development. Species selected were mainly the hardwood shrubs of pittosporums, coprosmas, olerias and hebes, with kanuka, a few lancewoods, totara and flaxes. Seedlings are purchased from the DOC Nursery at Motukarara with funds granted by a number of funding bodies including Pub Charity, some are collected from the edges of tracks on the reserve and grown on in members' gardens and occasionally other donations of seedlings are offered. The family of Ferris Cross, a long time enthusiastic member of the Society's work parties, donated and then helped plant seedlings in memory of him. Recently, instead of a birthday present for his wife's 60th birthday, a Society friend planted 10 seedlings along Ngiao track. It is satisfying work preparing the planting sites and carrying out the planting. But it is also important in getting each plant established, to weed and mulch for three or four years after planting as they can be easily overwhelmed by the fast growing grasses and weeds surrounding them. This is a hard and ongoing task. Losses are inevitable but with careful nurturing we believe the success rate to be well over 90%. For those of us involved with the planting programme from the beginning, it is most satisfying to see native forest developing from our efforts.

Mike White



Natives taking hold at Ohinetahi Reserve



Tui News

The project to restore tui to Banks Peninsula continues to prove its success. During last winter, feeders were put out in Akaroa, and in the Smith Street area and groups of 7 or 8 birds were seen regularly, with a total 12 on one occasion. Weekly counts in the area showed 8–12 in early winter reducing to 1–3 in September. This may reflect some mortality due to the winter weather, but is more likely to be natural dispersal to set up spring territories. Similar numbers are regularly seen in the Long Bay and Otanerito area. Whilst most sightings are by the dedicated 'tui watchers' in the Akaroa area, they have been reported from Flea Bay, Stony Bay and the Okuti Valley. However, not all sightings are from the peninsula, and birds have been reported in Huntsbury, Victoria Park, and from Bay Heights and Zephyr Terrace in Governors Bay. It is interesting to speculate how long it will be before these beautiful birds are a feature of Ohinetahi Reserve and Omaha Bush. So far this winter will already have proved problematic for our local avian population, but hopefully our local tui are established enough for it not to have a major impact.

Above details courtesy of Laura Molles

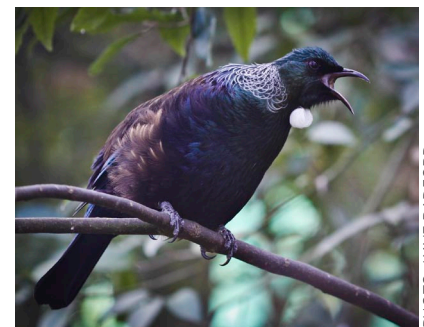


PHOTO: KAYE RADFORD

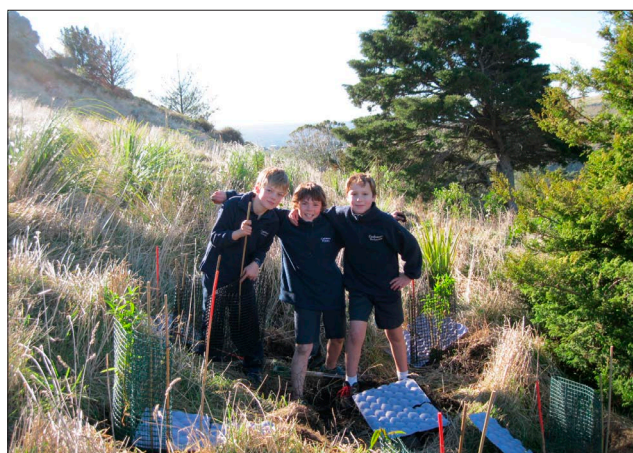
PHOTOS: MIKE WHITE

Arbor Day

Our annual plantings for Arbor Day took place on Wednesday 13th June. This year was touch and go due to the weather, but amazingly, sandwiched between a bitterly cold and wet Tuesday and an even wetter Thursday, we once again had a beautiful day with a cool wind but sunshine and a pleasant 12°C or so to maintain our unbroken record since 1948! Two classes from Cashmere Primary School and one from Freeville School had a great time adding to the many native trees that are now becoming well established by the Latter's Spur Track on the eastern edge of Victoria Park. Once again our thanks go to Di Carter and the rest of the Port Hills Rangers team for continuing to support this event, and to our own Eastenders for preparing the site.



Arbor Day 2012. Vice-President Jeremy Agar helping pupils from Cashmere Primary and Freeville Schools plant and protect a new generation of natives on Latters Spur Track, Victoria Park.



From the archives

This article appeared in 'Christchurch Tramping Club 1932-1982' published to commemorate its golden jubilee. It is reproduced here with the kind permission of Christchurch Tramping Club.

Tramp to Governor's Bay via Marley's Hill – Sunday, May 29, 1938

Out of a most unpromising night stepped Sunday morning, all bright and sparkling, fresh from the weather factory and then (with a rattle of loose mudguards and the creak of rusty chains) came forty-odd innocents riding, with their faces washed (we hope) and their tummies tight with Scotch Delight—never tramp on an empty stomach girls—not with your boots on—to park an outstanding collection of bone-shakers in one of Wilson's sheds on the Hoon-Hay homestead. After performing the usual almost miraculous transformation we stepped forth to survey our prospective track; at first glance we were almost persuaded to go back and put our trousers on again. However, the gorse proved no formidable obstacle and the long line of happiness hunters proceeded up a comfortable grade to the top of Marley's Hill. This gorse track is the, one time, road down which stone for the Christchurch Cathedral was carted in bullock wagons. Edna suggested that those ferocious looking cows we saw grazing on the hillside were perhaps the progeny of those self-same bullocks, tut, tut, Edna.

Arrived at the top of Marley's a blustering wind deterred us from too long admiring the view although the atmosphere was like glass. Also, the urgent prospect of that inevitable cup of tea precipitated us over the edge and down a slope as steep as one of Uncle Ernie's yarns and by jumping one step and sliding two we landed on the roof of Governor's Bay without breaking our necks. A few rolling stones dislodged by those above gave us an anxious moment or two; care should be taken always not to disturb a likely looking boulder. Now why is it that whenever we camp in the shadow of a pub the whole party evaporates, to reappear later wiping their beards or replacing their rouge, declaring that this is the "besht tramp of the



Governors Bay from the Summit Road. Image from Christchurch City Libraries, File Reference: CCL PhotoCD 17, IMG0027. Source *The Lyttelton times*, 28 June 1851, p. 3.

sheason"? Hilda I'm surprised at you! After her third disappearance Hilda gave us a demonstration of how she subdues her kids with a stern look.

And after lunch and packs up Dunc' served us a dirty trick. He led the majority of us down the garden path in the direction of a refreshment bar. We had visions of celebrating his new office—at his expense of course—but he was merely returning a borrowed billy and we had to retrace our steps uphill back to the main road. Now Duncs' little joke came near to having serious consequences. Bill, our ex-honeymooner, fell for Duncs' ruse, whilst Marjory, being an astute woman, refused to bite and was miles out of sight when Bill rounded the corner in hot pursuit of his wife. Marjory, with a small advance party, took the wrong turning; thus did a loving couple become separated for the first time in their young and passionate lives. There was a happy sequel, however, when the two parties met behind 'Sugarloaf'. I believe the reunion was very touching and the Club, like well-behaved Hapu Koas, looked the other way.

As the main party perspired up the long stretch to the 'Kiwi' Ted regaled us with a history of past adventures. "I remember one time," he said "on a blazing hot day, five of us walked all the way from town to Kaituna and back, and when we called at a pub we found that we only

had ninepence between us and that was no use; so the barman brought us a jug of water and we drank it." Water, mind you and they actually drank it! Ye Gods! What a thirst. You know we read of these things in Comic Cuts and dream them in nightmares, but one never imagines such a thing could be true. And Molly. 'tis said, whilst collecting, cut her hand on an attenuated threepence, and she wouldn't say whose sub it was because his name also smells like a thistle. Well! Well! Molly, after all, blood is thicker than water.

And so was the cup of tea at Victoria Park 'thicker than water' for it stiffened our courage for the last grand tussock slide down into Homestead Valley and back to where, by the light of Bert's pipe, we untangled our bikes and like good scouts and guides went straight home to bed. But I never realised until I got into my bath how much gorse we had really waded through. Whew! Suffering Snakes! Doesn't one have to be tough to be a 'Hapu Koa'?

V. Harris



The Sign of the Kiwi & Marley's Hill from Rathmore Rock [ca. 1920]. Christchurch City Libraries, File Ref: CCL PhotoCD 15, IMG0050