



a passion for the Port Hills

SUMMIT ROAD SOCIETY: 73rd PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2021

Once again it is my privilege to present the report of the Summit Road Society for the year ending 2021.

Reading last year's report, we managed to complete a few more items compared to 2020 when Covid-19 disrupted our intended schedule. Resulting in it being another year of progress and a milestone in two major projects due to the enthusiasm and dedication of members and the anticipation of another two.

The completion of the formidable task of fencing the boundary of Omahu Bush to ward off invaders of feral animals such as deer and pigs. Completion needs just a bit of tidying up plus a low 600mm small animal barrier netting to be placed to the bottom of the deer netting. This is a new and innovative protective fencing construction system for protecting indigenous vegetation thanks to the enthusiasm and commitment of Graham Corbishley.

There was a terrific acceptance from our Board and the public regarding receiving the news that the Avoca Valley restoration project had received a grant from the Department of Conservation's Jobs for Nature programme.

With carbon credits being the topic of climate change, the Society has made application for all our properties that qualify for carbon credits as a means of income. A company specialising in making applications has been engaged with them receiving a small percentage of the money earned from credit dividends. Apart from the incredible work that was needed to supply the necessary application evidence, the Society will have very little involvement if our application is successful.

The realisation of the John Jameson Lookout became close to finalisation with all the necessary funding and organisational team confirmed. This will be a magnificent addition to the Port Hills.

The annual Arbor Day planting took place and was not cancelled as it was in 2020. There is something about watching the children working together in the interests of conservation. The mid-winter dinner went ahead but this time it was held at the Sign of the Takahe. This venue was chosen as there was more room to provide for social distancing and easier to access in case of inclement weather.

It is at this time of the year that I and the Board get to thank all those who have been part of the Society's work over the past year. There are a vast number, far too many to mention individually. I repeat those who were mentioned last year.

- First of all, there are the Work Parties who look after the Port Hills as if they owned them personally.
- The Rangers, Paul Devlin and his team who are always there to assist and guide us in our work to protect and enhance these majestic hills.

- The individuals who willingly give their time to assist with special projects that seems to be increasing year by year.

That is good as it shows that the Society is in good heart and will continue to be a functional part of the Canterbury environment.

Special thanks must go to the Board as the centre of the organisation that provides the provision of finance and the organisation to allow the Society to function successfully. My personal thanks go to both Marie and Jeremy in assisting me to carry out the role of President.

Membership total is down by eleven to 325. Although we have had new members join, a number of members passed away in the 2021 year plus others also shifted away from Christchurch.

Our Society is very resilient and maybe it is time that a concerted effort is required to attract more members. Realising that there are now over 27 like conservation organisations seeking membership from the catchment area that 70 years ago was almost exclusively ours.

Even with the reduced members the volunteer hours total has increased to an impressive 15,160 from 12,667 hours in 2020 - an increase of 2493 hours. Volunteers are the very essence of the Summit Road Society. 15,160 hours at \$22 per hour totals \$333,520, a massive contribution by any standards to conservation.

The Society can be proud of its achievements during the 2021 year.

*Bill Woods
President
May 2022*

TREASURER'S REPORT 2021

Annual Financial Statements - 31 December 2021

Once again, the accounts have not been audited due to the Society's Auditors being overwhelmed with audits and reviews and the lack of audit staff to complete the work. This is not just an issue with our current auditors but a concern for most accounting firms in New Zealand. With the borders closed in the last two years due to COVID 19, accounting firms have not been able to rely on accountants travelling in New Zealand to work. It has been predicted that New Zealand is short of about 250 auditors.

Attached are the final audited accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020 as at the annual general meeting last year we had only draft accounts.

The accounts have been prepared using the format and reporting standards required to lodge the Annual Return to Charities Services. These are commonly known as the PBE Tier 4 reporting Standards and are "cash accounts". That is to say the financial statements only record the actual cash transactions through all the bank accounts of the Society.

Draft Accounts to 31 December 2021

1. Statement of Receipts and Payments

Members will note that the total grants and donations received has increased from \$95,838 to \$451,314 while the balance of the cash received has remained “steady” based on 2020 (See page 2). Note 2, on page 7 acknowledges those who have provided grants to the Society.

Who From	Amount \$
Christchurch City Council	59,000
Environment Canterbury	25,000
Selwyn District Council	15,217
Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust	15,593
Lotteries Grant	65,494
QEII National Trust	3,250
Department of Conservation	119,888
Rata Foundation	40,000
WWF	2,500
Perpetual Guardian JD Stout Charitable Trust	50,000

On the expenses side the major increases relate to work undertaken in the Linda Woods Reserve. As noted on page 8 most of the costs relate to planting and maintenance costs in Avoca Valley.

Planning work still continues on the proposed John Jameson Lookout with expenses totaling \$9,126 for the year. A total of \$12,646 has been spent on this project so far (in 2020 and 2021). The costs in 2021 mainly relate to resource consent application costs to Davie Lovell-Smith and the Christchurch City Council.

Another major piece of work undertaken by the Society was fencing of the land in Avoca Valley. Additional “Field equipment” was also purchased relating to the purchase of auto traps in Omahu and Ohinetahi.

2. Statement of Resources and Commitments

This statement deals with the resources available to the Society as well as the liabilities outstanding as of 31 December 2021.

While the Society may look “cash rich”, members need to keep in mind that the bulk of that cash has been set aside to meet the terms and conditions associated with the grants received and cannot be used, generally, for other purposes. This is reflected on the Schedule of Other

Information which shows that the Society has \$230,434 of grants received which have not been spent for the purpose of the grant received as of 31 December 2021.

3. Closing Comments

During 2022 Parliament passed the new Incorporated Societies Act. This replaces the Incorporated Societies Act 1908. Over the next year or two the Board will be reviewing the Constitution of the Society to ensure it complies with the new legislation. The Board will also need to consult with the wider membership to ensure that the objectives and governance structures are robust for the 21st Century and beyond. Membership input will be required. It will be important.

We all know that climate change is happening and will affect the Society's work and focus attention on what effect it will have on the land the Society has and the planting it needs to do. While sea level changes may not directly affect the land the Society has, it will affect the community we work and operate in. If the people of Christchurch are affected, then the Society is affected. As a Board we need to look at what affects our work has on climate change both positive and negative and promote the reduction in harm on the environment and also the positive impacts we are making.

*Peter van Hout
Treasurer
May 2022*

OHINETAHI RESERVE ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Ohinetahi Work Party Report

Work has continued to maintain Ohinetahi Reserve with tracks being cleared, new plantings being undertaken and cleared around and pest weeds being eradicated.

Areas in Ohinetahi that were affected by the fire continue to make a good recovery. Māhoe, Coprosma robusta and fuchsia have regenerated well and are making strong growth. The plantings have made pleasing growth. The burnt trees are now starting to fall. The gall mite is thriving on the scotch broom. It would be great if biological controls could be found for the Montpellier broom and Himalayan honeysuckle. This year we planted podocarps (mataī, tōtara and kahikatea) in the lower parts and cleared blackberry near the Bellbird carpark area where we planted trees from seed collected in the reserve and raised by Helen Hills, a work party member.

Pest weeds are a continual problem and over 850 hours were spent in eradication. Old Man's Beard, passion vine, elderberry and spur valerian are the main culprits. Our secretary is a marvel at sourcing funds and Martin Freeman has continued to be engaged to remove spur valerian from the bluffs, mainly in the Faulkners track area. Thank you to Christchurch City Council, QEII National Trust Stephenson Fund and Whaka-ora Healthy Harbour for funding the spur valerian control in 2021.

As usual, this work could not continue without the support of numerous willing hands and thanks are due to all those who help to maintain this special place.

Anne Kennedy
May 2022

Ohinetahi Predator Control Report

The trap network has been extended and is almost but not quite at saturation point. There are now 263 traps in the reserve and its pleasing to see monthly predator catch numbers are double last year. Two new trap lines were installed on the North and South Boundaries of the reserve. There are now 9 trap lines in Ohinetahi. It is planned to install three or four new trap sites in the Bivvy Valley in the next few months.

New trappers Peg Gosden, Peter Moore, David Knoef, Marketa Cihlova, Joseph Zermatten, Darren Tatom and Cath Pollock have been trained and are monitoring their lines once a month along with our experienced crew of Helen Hills, Merv Meredith, Russell Genet and Matthew Hellicar. They are a willing and able crew and all their hard work is achieving results. We have added two new monitoring tracking tunnel lines bringing the total number to six.

Four new AT220 automatic resetting traps are an exciting development and possibly the way of the future, although very expensive. The future probably lies in these automated traps and technology but without a dedicated group of volunteers all singing from the same songsheet the bellbirds won't be there to reply.

Thank you to Ryman Healthcare for providing 10 DOC200 traps for the reserve and to Pest Free Banks Peninsula for funding the extension of the trap network.

Murray Smith
May 2022

EASTENDERS WORK PARTY REPORT 2021

The Eastenders had a successful year with 13 work parties out of a possible 18. Four work parties were cancelled because of bad weather and one at the outbreak of the omicron covid variant.

As usual, the bulk of our work was involved with track maintenance on the eastern aspects of the Port Hills. The tracks that we upgraded were the Captain Thomas, Taylors Mistake, Scarborough Bluffs and Hidden Valley tracks, all popular walking areas. Due to the nature of the loess clay that most of the Port Hills tracks are cut from, rain can easily cause rutting and erosion and side drains fill up with silt and vegetation. Our work involves keeping these tracks in good order so as they do not deteriorate and become dangerous to walk on or unusable.

Other tasks included our annual Arbor Day ground preparation at Victoria Park for school children to plant around 200 native trees as well as nassella tussock grubbing on the Linda Woods Reserve – an annual ECAN requirement. The density of nassella is low on the reserve

but we still found and removed around 40 plants. Other work on the reserve involved boxthorn and briar removal and staking areas for public planting days.

There was an average of 13 volunteers per work party (range 9-16) out of 62 that I have on my email list. Around 20-25 are regular participants. We meet twice monthly on the second and fourth Mondays of the month for three-hour sessions. As the majority of volunteers are retirees, there are some that have developed health issues and are unable to attend now but nevertheless want to remain in contact out of interest in what we are doing.

Our annual pre-Christmas "BBQ" was held at Victoria Park in early December and as usual had a good turn-out in fine weather. Because of Council Covid restrictions, we were unable to use their mobile BBQ trailer but Marie made a fine job with Subway substitutions!

We have a good relationship with the CCC Parks Department and in particular I want to thank Rangers Hamish Masters and Pieter Borchers (Taylors Mistake Track) for their direction and overseeing of our work on Council land. Also to Marie Gray for her excellent organisational skills.

Graeme Paltridge
May 2022

OMAHU BUSH ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Omahu Bush Work Party Report

The Omahu volunteer work team had a successful year with 6 to 12 starters on most work days. 755 hours were worked over 15 work days and a further 67 hours were spent spraying the new fence lines - a total of 826 hours. The planting days had the best turnouts.

240 native trees donated by Helen Hills were planted in the vicinity of our other plantings. 100 tōtara trees donated by Te Kākahu Kahukura were planted in an area near Prendergast track as part of their plan to plant 2000 tōtara a year on the Southern Port Hills over the next 5 years.

The track from Gibraltar Rock carpark to the top of Prendergast Track has been enhanced with fitted steps on the steepest sections. Base course was carried down by the bucket brigade. A pilot track has been formed for the proposed Rock wall track which we will continue once the fencing is finished.

Several old redundant fences have been removed as well as the usual track clearing and pest plant control has kept the team busy over the year.

Many thanks to all our volunteers who turn out every work party.

Ian Johnston
May 2022

Omahu Predator Control Report

Another busy year for the predator control team. Our group now consists of 10 volunteers (Greg Gimblett, Jeff Hall, Richard Mallet, Bill McSweeney Brent Williams, Dean McElrae, John Fulton, Peter O'Callaghan, Andy Stace and Graeme Sleeman). We clocked up 490 hours during the year with trap checking, monitoring, trap network maintenance, and installing new traps. Two trap runs are conducted every 4 weeks.

The network in the main part of the reserve has been rationalised with a number of corflute traps removed as they had reached the end of their life. Additional DOC200 traps and 12 new automated AT220 traps have been installed. Trap numbers are now 233.

We are in the process of installing another 90 traps in the lower grazing block, to the north-west of the main Omahu Reserve area, an area that has been fenced off and is regenerating native trees and shrubs under a gorse canopy. No poison control was done during the year as the monitoring suggested the rat population was below the threshold. This however has rebounded.

The total trap catch for the year to December was 356 predators, which is lower than 2020.

We were very fortunate to receive a donation from a Society member during the year to purchase 3 PIR cameras (Passive Infra-Red) and three auto lures. We have been deploying these in the reserve as a means of better understanding the interaction with traps and better understand numbers and types of predators. Ryman Healthcare donated 10 DOC200 traps to Omahu and these were placed in the reserve to improve our trap density, particularly for mustelid control. Finally, our thanks to Pest Free Banks Peninsula for funding the extension of the trap network.

*Greg Gimblett
May 2022*

Omahu Bush Feral Animal Management Programme

The deer mesh was completed around the entire perimeter of Omahu Reserve in December 2021. There is some minor ongoing work to complete, but this mainly relates to the installation of a 600mm high layer of 50mm equine mesh around the base of the entire perimeter fence to help prevent future feral pig infiltrations. This is quite an important addition to strengthen the effectiveness of the perimeter against future feral pig infestation. The mesh has been installed on a large portion of the fence on the Omahu/Otahuna common boundary and it is not visually obtrusive. There is minor work to complete adjacent to several of the pedestrian gates and at some creek crossings to strengthen the first line of defence that is already in place.

Some attempts had been made by feral pigs to get through the normal deer mesh, but this has been relatively isolated. If large feral pigs sense a potential food source within the reserve adjacent to the fence, it is likely they will work away at the fence to get in. That's why it's very important not to locate possum traps or bait stations on the fence line and this was the advice also given by the pest control contractors. Volunteers have been clearing the base of the fence in preparation for installation of the 50mm mesh and those efforts have been much appreciated.

The Gama Foundation has funded most of the fencing work around the perimeter of Omaha Reserve and their support has been invaluable. Grants were also received from the Selwyn District Council and were put to good use. Neighbours (including CCC) on common boundaries shared the cost of the new fence and this was hugely appreciated. Now that the fence is in place, it's easy to just take it for granted. I hope that doesn't happen because it is not easy to get funding for projects like this and the reserve is now in much better shape for the future because of this important work. Understory is regenerating nicely, and we are almost ready for Bill to release his wekas!

Construction of the fence was not just as simple as putting a stock fence up. It required a lot more attention to detail to act as an effective exclusion fence for feral ungulates. Signage will also be installed on all gates shortly to remind people to close the gates after use.

Graham Corbishley
May 2022

LINDA WOODS RESERVE REPORT 2021

The big focus for 2021 was the restoration of Avoca Valley.

We were delighted to hear that our Jobs for Nature funding application was successful. We have received funding to plant 45,000 plants and trees over three years. Part of the project also involves working with an adjacent landowner to create a one-hectare ecological corridor across their property, enhancing the link between Linda Woods Reserve and the neighbouring Christchurch City Council reserves – Duncan Park and Montgomery Spur. The corridor includes both riparian and lowland forest species, and extends the community-led planting undertaken 25 years ago to protect Avoca Valley Stream.

9000 plants and trees were planted in 2021. Volunteers planted 2600 plants and trees in early winter in our volunteer planting area adjacent to Duncan Park. Wai-ora Forest Landscapes staff planted a further 6400 plants and trees along the stream in Linda Woods Reserve and the neighbouring property. This was a remarkable effort given the short timeframes once funding was confirmed, heavy rain over winter and then lockdown. We have had an excellent plant survival rate thanks to a wet summer.

A digger has tidied up the old 4WD farm tracks to ensure safe access for contractors. 4km of fencing has been installed across the valley to protect vegetated areas from stock. We are on track to plant nearly 30,000 plants and trees in 2022.

Work continued on the management plan for the reserve. We held a workshop with Society members in early August to seek their feedback on the draft plan, including the track network, linkages with other reserves and biodiversity. We have also been working with the QEII National Trust to place a covenant over Avoca Valley.

The rock remediation for Horotane Valley has largely been completed. There is one difficult rock that has been trussed and will require a dedicated operation to mitigate.

Our thanks to the many volunteers who have worked on the reserve over the year. Thanks as well to the Eastenders who spent hours searching for and grubbing nassella tussock plants in the reserve and assisted with the Avoca Valley planting project.

A dedicated work party was formed towards the end of 2021. With a starting team of about nine volunteers mainly drawn from Eastenders, Omahu and Ohinetahi work groups, the work party had one session in November, releasing overgrowth from tree plantings and cutting boxthorn. This group is co-organised by Graeme Paltridge and John Marsh and is held the first and third Wednesday of the month.

We also held two guided walks to Avoca Valley over the year, one for members in May and a second walk for the public in November as part of the Banks Peninsula Walking Festival.

We are very grateful to the funders who support our work in Avoca Valley – Department of Conservation Jobs for Nature programme, Christchurch City Council, Harry Ell Summit Road Memorial Trust, Million Metre Streams, Environment Canterbury and donations from individuals, families and local businesses. And special thanks to John Marsh for his assistance with the Linda Woods Reserve management plan and Avoca Valley restoration project.

Bill Woods and Marie Gray
May 2022

PREDATOR FREE PORT HILLS ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Predator Free Port Hills continues to grow, year on year. Given the challenges of covid-19, we shifted to a focus on small local outdoor events, Zoom workshops and social media campaigns in the latter half of 2021.

Achievements in 2021 include:

- Thirteen community markets and events
- Five trap building days
- Five trapping workshops
- Distribution of our e-newsletter and multiple social media posts
- Working alongside four schools and two preschools
- A trapping pilot in urban parks with Christchurch City Council.
- Upgrade of our website and reporting system www.predatorfreeport hills.org.nz to very positive feedback.

326 new households signed up to Predator Free Port Hills in 2021. Trappers reported 1457 predators caught over the year, bringing the total caught to 6764 as at 31 December 2021.

We were delighted to receive first place in the 2021 Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Awards for Predator Free Port Hills. Our thanks to the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board for this recognition and to the Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust for their generous sponsorship. The \$3000 prize money is being used to support our education programme with children.

We also continued to support the Pest Free Banks Peninsula programme. This collaborative initiative received \$5.1 million from Predator Free 2050 for the eradication projects on the extended Wildside and Kaitōrete. The wider Pest Free Banks Peninsula strategy includes two goals related to the Port Hills: 1) reducing predators to low numbers on the southern Port Hills and 2) increasing backyard trapping across the Port Hills and Lyttelton Harbour. The Society has taken a leadership role on the Port Hills through both our Predator Free Port Hills project and reserve trapping programmes.

Sincere thanks to all our volunteer coordinators and backyard trappers who support our vision of a Predator Free Port Hills. Thank you as well to our funders Environment Canterbury, Selwyn District Council and Rātā Foundation - without their support, this project simply couldn't run.

Jeremy Agar and Marie Gray
May 2022

UPDATE ON THE PROPOSED JOHN JAMESON LOOKOUT 2021

This project aims to create a safe and accessible area for the community to enjoy the iconic view over the Harbour and learn about the area's cultural and natural heritage. The area will also provide a gateway into Ohinetahi Reserve and the walking tracks on offer.

The view from the lookout above Ohinetahi Reserve encompasses the entire harbour basin. It is proposed to name the lookout after John Jameson who founded the Society in 1948 and dedicated his life towards preserving the open spaces on the Port Hills for all to enjoy.

Work in 2021 focused on raising the remaining funding needed and obtaining the necessary approvals, such as the resource consent. We were delighted to receive the news in November that our Lotteries Environment and Heritage Fund application was successful. Final approval from the Banks Peninsula Community Board was received in December, ready for construction to begin in 2022.

We have also been working closely with Ngāti Wheke of Rāpaki to incorporate the history and stories of mana whenua through the installation of a pou whenua.

Our sincere thanks to landscape architects, Graham Densem and Nic Kaye, and engineering firm, Davie Lovell-Smith, for their work on this project.

Marie Gray
May 2022