



### Work Party Reports

The work parties have been as busy as ever during the last few months. Full reports of their activities will be presented to the Annual General Meeting in March. Up to mid-December, the total number of volunteer hours for 2005 reached a very respectable 3,400.

#### Eastenders:

Over the last six months, the Eastenders have been active with maintenance on a number of tracks, including the loop track in Barnett Park, which has become quite neglected in recent years. They have also carried out some general maintenance work in Jollies Bush and John Britten Reserve. Plans are in hand for a new track linking Barnett Park with the Summit Road, and some 'prospecting' has been done on a possible new track from the HMS Steadfast site in Cass Bay, linking with the Whaka Raupo Reserve on the upper slopes.

#### Ohinetahi Reserve:

The group's work has been the usual mix of track maintenance, weed clearance and planting. Planting efforts on the reserve have been concentrated in the Bay Heights area, and this winter a further 450 natives were added. We would like to thank the Lion Foundation for funding the cost of these plants. Following an approach from IAG Insurance, a group of six volunteers joined the regular work party on the 4th October. Tamara Clark, Direct Claims Co-ordinator Assistant writes:

*"As part of our company commitment to helping within the community, the Summit Road Society very kindly offered us the chance to join them, helping to clear the Port Hills tracks of prickly Gorse bushes and straggling branches. We arrived full of enthusiasm despite the prevailing mist and cold winds and were geared up with the essentials - a bottle of very pink poison and some trusty shears. Our IAG team's experience was limited to the odd weeding in the garden so the society had much to teach us! I for one never realised quite how hardy Gorse was and despite chopping it down to its root, there is only a window of about 30 seconds in which to apply poison before it seals itself and returns from the 'dead'.*

*We all attacked the gorse with vigour, chopped back the prickly nettles so determined to grow on the paths and sawed our way through stubborn branches. Lunch was eagerly anticipated as we had all worked up quite an appetite - not being so used to physical*

*work! The view was definitely worth the effort though, as we were transported from the usual park bench or staff canteen to perching on rocks overlooking the stunning Governor's Bay. Lunch had never tasted so good.*

*By the end of the day the general consensus was the same - a sense of accomplishment and achievement. The society were wonderful and very supportive - we certainly came away with a strong sense of admiration for all of them and were amazed at their stamina and determination to improve the tracks for the enjoyment of others. A very worthwhile day and we will certainly be recommending others to volunteer with the Summit Road Society."*



#### Weekenders:

The small but select bunch we call the Weekenders has now grown to eight. The love/hate relationship with Sugarloaf Reserve and its Old Man's Beard continues, and despite the fact that a whole new area of infestation has been discovered, progress is being made. In some areas changes to the understorey are already evident. The group hosted a PhD student from the UK doing her thesis on public attitudes to plant pests. Hopefully, an afternoon of bush-bashing and Ongaonga stings, will have proved useful research. The group also worked in Scott Reserve, on the Arbor Day plantings at Latters Spur, and at Cracroft Reserve.

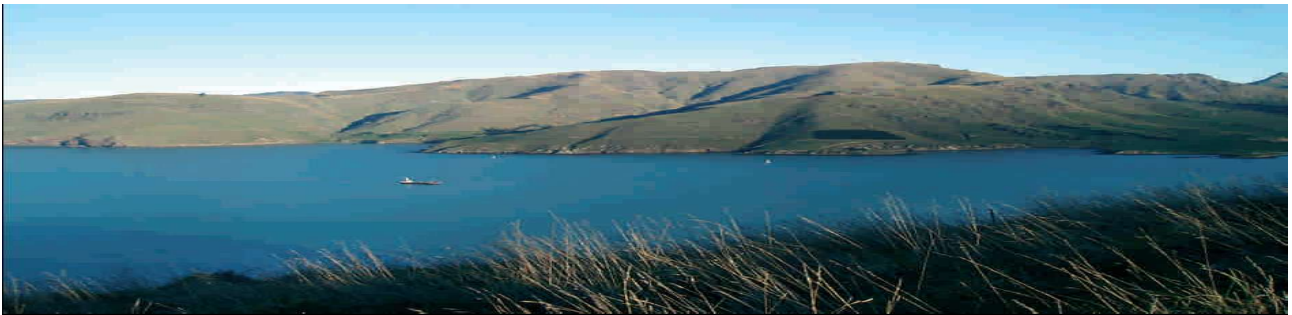
## Pest Control at Ohinetahi

No-one needs reminding of the impact on New Zealand's fauna and flora of introduced pests. The Ohinetahi group carry out some pest control work, and Target Pest Control, acting on behalf of Environment Canterbury have been through the reserve a few times in the recent past, accounting for a fair number of possums on each occasion. This has had only a limited impact, and the group has decided that a more coordinated effort is required. A Pest Management Strategy has therefore been developed, which will cost around \$4,000 to implement. We are delighted to be able to report that the Society has received a Transpower Landcare Trust grant of \$1,800 towards the cost. We are currently investigating ways of funding the balance.

The strategy is to deal with possums, rats and mustelids, with bait stations and kill traps, and is in three parts

- Along the upper boundary of the reserve. This is to complement the intensive pest control being introduced by the City Council in Kennedy's Bush.
- An area around Ohinetahi Stream and the Wai-iti track, which is considered to have good potential for forest regeneration.
- The new plantings in the Bay Heights area.

Many of you will be familiar with Hinewai Reserve on Banks Peninsula, and Hugh Wilson's philosophy of minimum interference and letting nature do the work of regeneration. However, Hugh has concluded that the cost of possum control is worthwhile, as it makes a significant difference to native restoration and biodiversity. Hopefully, once our strategy is implemented, we will see a steady improvement in Ohinetahi's biodiversity.



## Our City

At the end of November, the Society had an exhibition at Our City O-Tautahi, the former Municipal Chambers at the corner of Oxford Terrace and Worcester Boulevard. A new venture for us, the exhibition was a combination of historical material relating to the Port Hills and the Society, together with an illustration of our current work and some of the issues facing the Port Hills. The exhibition was well received, and helped to raise our profile. We would like to thank the staff at Our City O-Tautahi for all their help and advice, the Port Hills Rangers, the Department of Conservation and John Jameson for their support, and Janey Thomas for her work in preparing material and setting up the exhibition.



## Claydon's Block

Claydon's block is an area of land owned by the Department of Conservation, above the Summit Road, to the southwest of the head of Evan's Pass. For a number of years, the Society has been concerned that the land has been neglected, particularly the sunny slopes above Sumner, which are now covered with rank grass. Whilst DOC has been sympathetic, in practice, active management of the land has had to be a low priority, given their budget and other more pressing issues in the Canterbury Conservancy. The most effective management tool would be sheep grazing, which would allow the land to be returned to healthy native tussock. However, the major factor preventing this is the cost of repairs to the fencing. The Society has been discussing the possibility with DOC and the City Council, of the land being grazed in conjunction with the Council's recently acquired Greenwood Park. In an attempt to find a solution, we have offered a contribution towards fencing costs from the Harry Ell Summit Road Memorial Trust. There has been a positive response to this, and we are hopeful that 2006 will see this issue resolved.

# Membership

Welcome to the following new members:

- Alison Chambers
- Zane Dalzell
- Mr B Ellwood
- Brian Hall
- Jeff Hall
- Frank King and Honora Renwick
- Lynette Hardie Wills
- Mrs P Kearns
- Ivor Lewis
- Pam McMillan
- J Smyth
- Beatrice Tsai
- Melanie White
- Doug Williams

As part of our continuing efforts to increase membership, over the last few months we have contacted several local recreational groups, informing them about our work. This has proved to be successful, with a number of individuals and groups joining the Society. In addition, some groups have asked the Society to give a presentation to their club meetings. We welcome:

- Bishopdale Tramping Club
- Canterbury Mountaineering Club
- Diamond Harbour Ramblers

Reciprocal membership of other local organisations is also something we have been following up. The purpose of this is not simply to increase membership, but to create more formal links and to increase the ability to share information and to pool resources. We already have a reciprocal membership arrangement with the Canterbury Horticultural Society, and are delighted to be able to confirm that these arrangements have been extended to:

- Godley Head Heritage Trust
- Orton Bradley Park.
- Otamahua/Quail Island Ecological Restoration Trust
- Waihora/Ellesmere Trust

Our membership grew to 257 during 2005, and yet this is still a tiny fraction of the people who use the Port Hills for recreation or leisure. Growth in membership gives the Society increased lobbying power when addressing issues about the hills, particularly in resisting the ongoing pressure for urban development. All members can help to increase our membership base by encouraging others to join.

If you are not on the Society's email mailing list and want to be kept informed of news and events this way, please email the secretary, with 'mailing list' in the subject line, at:

goodrich@caverock.net.nz



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

President	Mike White	03 312 1551
Vice-President	Maurice McGregor	332 0597
Secretary	John Goodrich	326 7330
Treasurer	Paul Loughton	322 7082
Board Members	Geoff Bendall	384 9254
	Steve Cottrell	337 9049
	Bill Woods	03 318 4825
	Anne Kennedy	377 0364
	Janey Thomas	03 314 9514
Honorary Life Members	John Jameson	354 5925
	Gordon Kirk	960 7134
Representatives		
Selwyn District Council	Annette Foster	347 8651
Banks Peninsula District Council	Jeremy Agar	328 9956
Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board	John Freeman	326 6406
Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board	Paul de Spa	041 8999
Port Hills Rangers		332 5627
Dept of Conservation	Tony Woods	388 1678
Work Parties		
Eastenders	Geoff Bendall	384 9254
Ohinetahi	Mike White	312 1551
Weekenders	John Goodrich	326 7330

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.



## Resource Management Round Up

The major activity in the resource management area has been on Variation 2, the Rural Provisions of the Banks Peninsula District Plan. The draft District Plan was first published in 1997, and the Rural Provisions, particularly the areas in the Rural Zone that were designated for protection, were seen by many as controversial. A 'task force' was set up which made a number of recommendations to the Council. It was the work of this task force which led to the formation of the Banks Peninsula conservation Trust. In 2002, the Council published Variation 2, and in November of that year, the Society, along with many other groups, organisations and individuals made submissions. The Council then considered these submissions, and formally adopted Variation 2 in June 2005.



A major issue with many submitters has been the land identified for protection in the Plan's proposed 'Landscape Protection Areas' and 'Coastal Protection Areas'. Views have ranged from those who believe that Plan proposes excessive protection and thereby interferes with private property rights, to groups whose view is that insufficient protection is proposed. In the event, the Council agreed 'interim' protection areas and an independent study over a period of six months to determine the precise extent of these. The Society appealed against the decision on the grounds that it believed that a separate Rural Zone is appropriate for the Port Hills and harbour basin, and that in agreeing only interim landscape protection areas, the Council is not fulfilling its obligations to identify and manage 'Outstanding Landscapes and Natural Features' in accordance with the Resource Management Act.

A pre-hearing conference took place in the Environment Court in December, where it was evident that the majority of the appeals were either directly related to the areas proposed for 'protection' and the associated rules, or were affected by the outcome of the independent study. The Court determined that this whole issue should be the subject of a managed mediation process, starting with a meeting on the 25th January to ensure that all parties agree with the terms of reference for the study. The proposed study will be broader

than that recommended to the Council by the Hearings Panel, and will attempt to identify a community vision for Banks peninsula landscape, identify four different landscape categories under the Resource Management Act, and to develop management strategies for each of the various landscapes. It is worth noting that in the Plan, the Council has recognised the importance of the Port Hills, but the Society still believes that the proposals are not consistent with Christchurch's City Plan or the Selwyn District Plan. We also have some serious concerns about increasing pressure on the harbour basin. Both these factors led us to submit our appeal, and to commit to the time and effort involved.

## Outings

The Activities and Promotions Committee has been finding it increasingly difficult to come up with fresh ideas for the monthly outings programme. The Board agreed therefore to cut down the programme to six per year. Details will be notified in the normal way (leaflet and email), and the provisional programme is:

Sun 19th March	A walk in Ohinetahi Reserve
Sun 23rd Apr	A visit to the wind turbine in Gebbies Pass
Sat 24th June	Mid-winter dinner at the Sign of the Kiwi.
Sun 27th Aug	Lyttelton Port Company
Sun 29th Oct	Bus tour looking at native plantings on the Port Hills.
Fri 15th Dec	End of year barbecue.

If any member have any ideas for an outing, please contact the Secretary. It may well be possible to put on more than those in the above programme.

## Recent Outings

---

### Lyttelton Volcano Field Trip

Sunday 25th September saw 40 members and supporters taking part in a field trip to learn about the history of the Lyttelton volcano and particularly those features that can be seen around Sumner and along the Summit Road. We were delighted to have Professor Jim Cole from the University of Canterbury leading the trip. Jim's enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject meant that everyone who took part came away better informed about this fascinating topic. Jim has also agreed to speak at our AGM in March.



### Captain Thomas Track

This outing on the 30th October attracted 17 people. At the start, Ken Rossiter spoke about Captain Thomas and his work in Canterbury and on the Port Hills in the 1850's, and described the work that the Eastenders have carried out on the track over the years. The walk followed the Captain Thomas Track to the top of Evans Pass, then returned on the eastern side of the valley via the track built by Bill LeGros, Terry Everard and Ted Matthews. A number of the party had not been on the track for many years, and were very appreciative of the work carried out by the Ranger Service and Society volunteers that makes this such an attractive area for walkers and joggers.

### Little River Railtrail

Joy Burt and Bruce Stanton led this outing on the 20th November. Joy works for the Department of Conservation, has been involved in DOC's role in the setting up of the Railtrail, and was therefore able to illustrate some of the many issues around access, land ownership etc that have faced the project. Bruce, a keen cyclist, is a member of the Railtrail Trust, and was able to talk about the work that has been involved in making the project happen. We started at Motukarara, which will be the start of the first section of the trail, then moved on to the baches opposite the Kaituna Valley, where there will be another entrance giving access to a great wetland area and superb views across the lake to the plains and the Alps. Whilst there is still much to be done, it is hoped that the Motukarara to Little River section will be open in late autumn.



## Barbecue

The now traditional end of year barbecue was held in Victoria Park on Friday 16th December. After a week of wet and unsettled weather, 25 members were fortunate to enjoy a beautiful evening of sun, sausages and social chitchat, wrapping up what has been a successful and interesting year for the Society.



## Book Review

---

"Older and Bolder"

by Judith Doyle,

published by New Holland Publishers.

Among Society members there are many examples of how entering the 'third age' need not prevent a person from being active. We only have to look at our hill work parties to see what can be achieved. However, for those of us who have not quite reached that age, there must be many who are concerned about what life will be like, and whether they will be able to keep up with their activities, or do some of the many things that perhaps work and family have prevented them from doing so far. For those in this category, this book is quite inspirational.

Judith Boyle has a positive message about not allowing age get in the way of one's interests and activities. Late in life - Judith Boyle is now in her early seventies - she realised that the growth of organised outdoor activities in New Zealand afforded 'older people' many opportunities of continuing with activities or taking up new challenges. Each chapter covers an activity such as tramping, horse trekking and kayaking, where being with an organised group means that age is not an issue.



Highly recommended for those of us who wonder what life after work might hold for us..

## Annual General Meeting

---

Captain Cook identified Banks Peninsula as an island. He was wrong. But if he had passed by 8-11million years ago instead of in 1770 he would have been right. Come and hear Professor Jim Cole tell us about the formation of Banks Peninsula and the volcanology of the Lyttelton Harbour Basin at our AGM.

Wednesday 22nd March

7.30 pm

The Boardroom

Beckenham Service Centre, Colombo Street