



Annual General Meeting 2004

The Society's 55th Annual General meeting was held on the 16th of March in the Boardroom at Beckenham Service Centre, and proved to be an entertaining and interesting event. It has been another busy year for the Society as can be seen from the following extracts from the President's report and those of our three work parties.

"...In glancing through my file of the minutes, correspondence and reports for 2003 to find a few major items that I could highlight in my Annual report, I found that we have again had a full year of:

- Working on tracks and reserves.
- Improving our land holding at Ohinetahi Reserve.
- Organising monthly outings.
- Watching out for applications made for residential housing on the upper slopes of the Port Hills.
- Maintaining good relations with the City Council and other environmental organisations and groups.

We continue to have a pool of around 60 volunteers who have contributed in excess of 3,000 person hours over the year. Special thanks go to Gordon Kirk, Mike White, John Willocks, Geoff Bendall, Bob Cawley, Ken Rossiter,

Alan Davey and Jim Grennell who share leadership responsibility for our teams.

We continue to make submissions opposing further residential building on the upper slopes of the Port Hills. This year we gave evidence in support of design controls on a house in upper Mt Pleasant, which is the highest subdivision on the hills. The Environment Court reduced to about half, the 380 sections sought by the developer for land in the Cashmere and Worsley valleys. The Court found that the valleys were "...a very important feature of the city, linking the plains via the Cashmere stream to the Port Hills. In the long term, the City Plan contemplates recreational access."

Maintaining the natural environment, beauty and open character of the Port Hills" is an ongoing task. In addition to the practical work carried out by the work parties, we took an active part in the preparation of the City Council's 'Port Hills Recreation Strategy', and I would like to take the opportunity of thanking the many individual members who contributed to this. We continue to have serious concerns about weed infestation, particularly on Claydon's block, owned by the Department of Conservation,

and have taken this up with both the local DoC office, and the Minister of Conservation.

We record with sadness the deaths during the year of Gerald Ward and Jack Tait, long standing members of the 'Eastenders', and Bill Gillies of Rapaki, who over many years provided us with advice and support.

Maurice McGregor
President

AGM Business

I am sure that many of you will be delighted that Maurice McGregor agreed to stand again as President, and was re-elected unanimously. Mike White and Paul Loughton were re-elected as Vice-President and Treasurer respectively, Paul having completed 20 years in his position. In addition, all existing Board members agreed to stand again, and were re-elected. The full composition of your Board can be found on page 2.

Two resolutions were passed under 'General Business'.

- That the incoming Board investigate, with a view to seeking an assurance from Banks Peninsula District Council, that access to Faulkners Track be maintained.

[This relates to a new subdivision in Governors Bay, adjoining Lighthouse Lane. Lighthouse Lane is a paper road which gives access to Faulkners Track and Ohinetahi Reserve. The Society is keen to see that this access is unaffected, as it is widely used by local residents. We also consider that there is potential to improve this access, and hope that the Council will consider this.]

- That the Society contact Christchurch City Council to seek an assurance that properly managed sheep grazing be continued on the tussock grasslands of the upper Port Hills, including on Mount Cavendish Reserve.

The question of grazing on the Port Hills has been debated for some considerable time. Clearly the Society supports, encourages and indeed actively pursues the regeneration of native bush.



Secretary John Goodrich speaking to Gordon Kirk during supper in the Boardroom of the new Beckenham Service Centre.

continued on page 2

However, we recognise that this will not be possible or appropriate for the whole of the Port Hills, and that the tussock grassland is an integral part of the Port Hills landscape, particularly on the city side. We believe that sheep grazing is the best way to ensure the health of the tussock grassland, and the best method to prevent the spread of weeds.

At the conclusion of the formal business, there was a joint presentation by Craig Pauling (Policy/Research Officer, Kaipapa Taiao, Ngai Tahu), Takerei Norton (Projects Coordinator, Natural Resources Unit, Ngai Tahu) and Yvette Couch-Lewis (Project Coordinator, Te Hapu o Ngati Wheke Runanga, Rapaki). The presentation explained Ngai Tahu environmental perspectives, illustrated the Kaipapa Kereru project seeking to restore kereru numbers on Banks Peninsula, and detailed the experiences of



the ongoing restoration project for Omaru Stream at Rapaki. The presentation was both informative and entertaining and was very well received by the audience. Craig, Takerei and Yvette may have thought they had finished for the evening after completing their presentation, but they kept getting involved in informal discussions with interested members until around 10.15pm.

Craig's poem which captures the feelings of the Tangata Whenua for the local landscape, appears on p. 8.

Work Party Reports

EASTENDERS

It has been a quite momentous year for the 'Eastenders' work party. Besides the work-related happenings, two special events occurred. In October we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the formation of the group, and in December we were the recipients of a Civic Award from Christchurch City Council.

In contrast to last year, the work party was not hampered by wet weather, and in fact had only one cancellation of any scheduled work day during the year. Currently our membership stands at 45. Regrettably our numbers have come back from 50, due mainly to retirements, but I am happy to report that our ranks are being filled by younger recruits.

Our year's work was again quite varied – track building, track maintenance, tree releasing, major weed clearance and dismantling old fences. Tracks where major works were undertaken included the Evans Pass – Godley Head track between Livingstone col and Breezes Bay col, Chalmers Track, Cavendish Bluffs and the new Heathcote – Bridle Path track. The group completed the dismantling of the old one kilometre fence between the Castle Rock car park and the Bridle Path saddle. One day was spent digging hundreds of holes in preparation for the school Arbor Day plantings at Latters Spur, and considerable time was spent releasing trees at the Sumnervale Reserve. We were also pleased to be able to spend a day at Ohinetahi Reserve to assist in cleaning up the Titoki Track and beyond, for the Society's outing on 22nd February. It is hoped that we will spend some more time during the coming year at Ohinetahi Reserve. Other work was carried out cutting grass with Weedeaters and slashing thistles on the Whakaraupo and Stan Helms Tracks. Much work was also carried out by some of our members on the new extension to the Captain Thomas Track, and we are especially indebted to Bill Le Gros and Terry Evrard, in this regard.

John Willocks

OHINETAHI

The 150 hectare Ohinetahi Bush Reserve above Governors Bay, owned and managed by the Summit Road Society, can be considered the flagship of the Society. It is managed by a group of 13 volunteers who work on the Reserve on the Tuesday of each week, lead by life member, Gordon Kirk. An estimated 1,350 person-hours of volunteer work was carried out during the year.

Maintenance of the extensive network of tracks is a major activity of the work parties. Keeping the tracks clear of grass, bracken and other vegetation in spring and early summer is an important activity. Improving the benching, drainage and steps on tracks is also carried out. This year, a major activity has been weed control. Large infestations of noxious weeds continue to be discovered and are dealt with by cutting at root level and then painting with herbicide. Cherry, Old Man's Beard, Banana Passion Fruit and Burberry are the main concerns. Spraying with herbicide is avoided wherever possible to protect native seedlings. This work is slow and difficult, mainly on steep country, with the weeds among thickets of bracken, gorse and native vines.

continued on page 3



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

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| President | Maurice McGregor | 332 0597 |
| Vice-President | Mike White | 03 312 1551 |
| Secretary | John Goodrich | 326 7330 |
| Treasurer | Paul Loughton | 322 7082 |
| Board Members | Geoff Bendall | 384 9254 |
| | Barry Gerard | 326 5105 |
| | Anne Kennedy | 377 0364 |
| | Janey Thomas | 03 314 9514 |
| | John Watson | 332 5169 |
| Honorary Life Members | John Jameson | 354 5925 |
| | Gordon Kirk | 960 7134 |
| Representatives | | |
| Selwyn District Council | Bill Woods | 03 318 4825 |
| Banks Peninsula | Doug Couch | 328 8984 |
| Hagley/Ferrymead | John Freeman | 326 6406 |
| Spreydon/Heathcote | Paul de Spa | 041 8999 |
| Port Hills Rangers | | 332 5627 |
| Dept of Conservation | Tony Woods | 388 1678 |
| Work Parties | | |
| Eastenders | Geoff Bendall | 384 9254 |
| Kiwigang | Anne Henderson | 352 8058 |
| Ohinetahi | Gordon Kirk | 332 7134 |
| Weekenders | Jim Grennell | 358 4438 |

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.

Work Party Reports continued

The Society applied to the Biodiversity Condition Fund administered by the Department of Conservation, and was successful in obtaining \$2,300, from a fund where applications exceeded the number of grants awarded by a ration of 3:1. This money was used for the purchase of 1,000 native seedlings that we planted during the winter, along our boundaries directly above Governors Bay. Summer drought, rabbits and hares have taken their toll on these, but to date we have a survival rate of approximately 65%. Replacement and additional plantings will be carried out this coming winter.

Historically, the land within the reserve has been ravaged by fire and grazing, year by year there are clear signs that the regeneration of native forest is proceeding well, and that the existing mature forest canopy is generally in a very healthy state. Mike White

WEEKENDERS

The 'Weekenders' group commenced our work party schedule on 22nd February 2003 with the core group of five members and we achieved a total of ten work days during the year. Efforts to attract additional members have to date not proved successful but we are always keen to attract additional people to support our weekend efforts with our work party activities.

The 2003 schedule centred mainly on track maintenance, weed clearing and tree release work around Scotts Reserve, Mitchell's Track and the Harry Ell Track with various levels of work required to maintain tracks and reserve areas in good condition. Some old fence removal work was also completed on the Summit Road below Scotts Reserve but this task is a slow job without the aid of machinery.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of members of the Weekenders Group, John Watson, John Goodrich, Richard Pickering and Steve Cottrell for their efforts during the year and the continued time they devote to attending our work party's, a small but dedicated team.

Jim Grennell



Arbor Day 2004; mature and future gardeners contributing to the revegetation of the hills

Membership

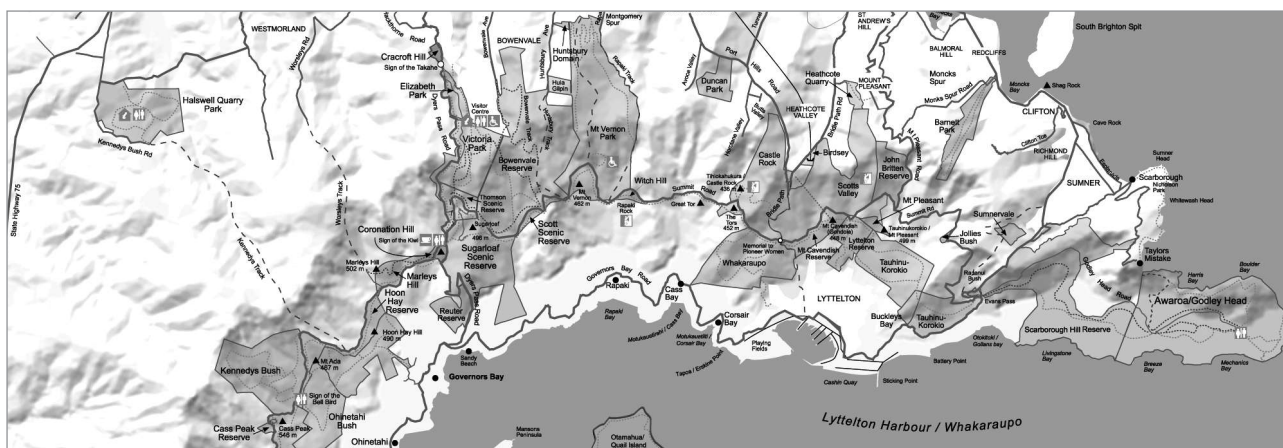
Yes it's that time of year again – the Secretary's reminder about renewal of membership subscriptions.

Many thanks to all those who have renewed their membership. Even if you are unable for whatever reason, to take an active part in the Society's work, your support is valued. In recent years, membership has been fairly static at around 240. We would like to increase this, and are always on the lookout for new members. You can do your bit by telling your friends, relatives and acquaintances about the Society and the work we do.

John Goodrich, Secretary

Welcome to the following new members:

- Chris Budgen
- Derek & Margaret Carver
- Bob & Mary Cheesman
- David Doak
- David Hyde
- Dr Laurence Malcolm
- John McKirdy
- Terry Welch
- Lyn Wright



Port Hills 'Regional Park'

Some real progress is now being made on the concept of a 'Regional Park' for the Port Hills. As mentioned in the last Newsletter, the Board agreed to commission the production of a 'vision document', which will set out the options, implications and the issues associated with implementing a Regional Park. A team from Landcare Research has now started on the preparation of the 'vision document', and aims as the

first phase, to have a presentation available by the end of August, outlining the issues, options and initial propositions. The first stage of this process took place on Saturday 29 May, at a well attended (and fairly intensive!) workshop. It would not have been feasible to open this up to the whole membership, and we will let you have details of Landcare Research's report when this is available. In the meantime,

if you do want more details, or feel that you can contribute in any way, please contact the Secretary.

The work on the Regional Park concept is in addition to the Society's normal work, and we would like to thank the Community Trust, which has awarded us a grant of \$5,000, to make this first phase possible.

Port Hills Rangers update

The Port Hills Ranger Team thoroughly enjoyed the damp cold start to winter as we saw the moisture levels rise in the soils in time for our winter revegetation projects. Di Carter is hoping to have all the plants (20,231 to be exact) in the ground by the end of June. The Summit Road Society work parties have been very helpful in both preparing sites for planting as well as helping out with planting days.

Andrew Crossland has completed a years worth of bush bird surveys in reserves such as Ohinetahi, Kennedy's bush, Omahu and Ahuriri and is now compiling these to see if there is some meaningful data that we can use to help us manage these ecosystems. Early signs indicate a healthy abundance

of some species and we hope to tie this in with other monitoring work we are doing on animal pests, invertebrates and vegetation transects.

Nick has been working with other national bodies to complete a new track standards document that can provide some generic guidelines and standards for agencies that manage publicly accessible land for recreation. Nick managed to ensure that they included shared use tracks and has almost completed our own standards for mountain bike tracks that can will hopefully be adopted as a national standard.

The new Ranger office is virtually finished, just some carpet and window blinds to put in. The team won't know themselves after moving out

of the falling down woodshed that we have occupied for the last 5 years into a modern office.

Phil has been steadily enlarging our predator control programmes. We have a mustelid line stretching from Victoria Park to Ahuriri Reserve near Gebbies Pass, which is catching lots of weasels and rats. Weasel were previously thought to be of a minor impact on these hills but the numbers are forcing us to reconsider this. Trap lines throughout Kennedy's Bush, Cass Peak, Ahuriri and soon Sugarloaf reserves mean that we have a good level of control now happening in these precious habitats. The trap lines consist of possum, rat and mustelid kill traps. We hope to extend this programme along with

monitoring throughout the reserve network.

I have enjoyed retaining contact with many of the groups involved in enhancing recreation and wildlife values on the hills. Many of the groups have such similar visions and goals that there would be great value in coordinating some workshops to combine our fire power and passion. One of my tasks this year is to create some interagency coordination by investigating the concept of a forum that can bring in all those groups that play a key role in managing, preserving and enhancing the Port Hills.

Paul Devlin
Head Ranger
Port Hills Reserves
Christchurch City Council



Arbor Day at Ohinetahi 15 June 2004

In what will hopefully become another tradition, this year on the 15th June, we held a further Arbor Day with Governors Bay School on our own Ohinetahi Reserve. Once again, we were blessed with good weather.

30 students planted native saplings around the Governors Bay stream, close to the Bay Heights entrance to the reserve. We are delighted that the school is keen to 'adopt' this as an ongoing project. Gordon Kirk already has plans to keep the children entertained with work on

keeping the stream clear, weed control and further planting.

In this age of television, DVDs, video games and the text messaging cult, it is reassuring that our young people can still be enthusiastic about the natural world, and derive pleasure from the simple act of planting trees.

We gratefully acknowledge funding from the Lion Foundation for the purchase of the plants for the Ohinetahi winter plantings.



Outings 2004

Ohinetahi Reserve – Sunday 22 February ▶

The day proved perfect for walking, fairly dull, warm and not a breath of wind. 20 people boarded a coach at the Governors Bay fire station for the short trip to the Sign of the Bellbird where Anne Henderson led the group along tracks built by the Society. This gave everyone the chance to experience the superb views over the harbour and to appreciate the range of flora and the regenerating bush. Members of the Ohinetahi Reserve work party were on hand to talk about the reserve and their work. For most people the walk took around two hours. The exception was one keen supporter who took over four hours (his knees do not like going downhill), but for this had the bonus of his own personal guide. Thanks must go to the work party for the preparation for the outing, and for all their work which makes Ohinetahi such a great place to be.

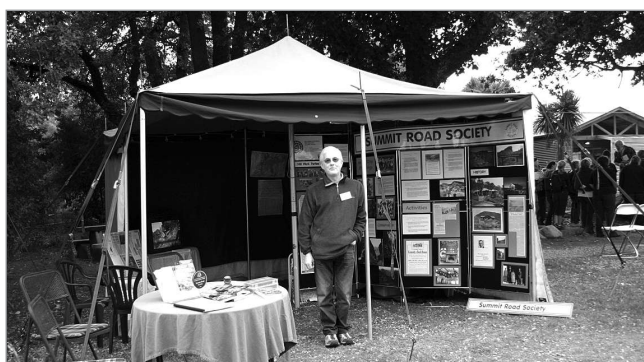
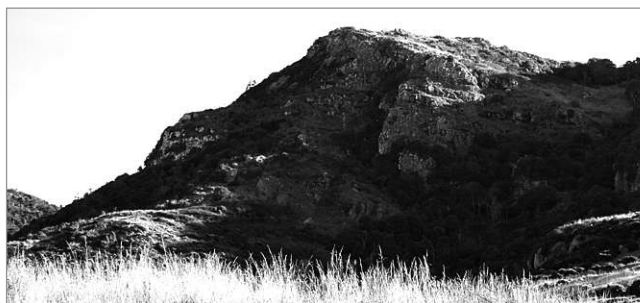


◀ Christchurch in the Park – Sunday 21 March

A display was put up at the St. Margaret's College and Christ's College collective 'Christchurch in the Park' community event, North Hagley Park. Businesses, professions, services, craftsmen, community groups and education providers were invited to profile their product to the public. The event focused on showcasing Canterbury and was well attended by the public - the Society's stand stirred up considerable interest which kept the minds busy!

Whakaraupo Track – Sunday 28 March ▶

For the Whakaraupo Track, the weather was not as kind. A strong wind made it impossible to talk about the track at the start, but fortunately we found enough shelter later on to sit, chat, and enjoy the views over afternoon tea. 24 people took part and had a good afternoon, particularly as everyone was back at the cars before the threatened strong southerly wind arrived.



◀ Canterbury Conservation Day, Motukarara – Sunday 18 April

Our annual display at the Canterbury Conservation Day again proved successful, and we were kept busy talking to visitors. The problem with this event is that those manning the display get very little chance to sample the displays and talks that form part of the day. On the plus side, it is always useful to 'network' with the other organisations that attend.

Godley Head – Sunday 23 May ▶

The 23rd of May was cold and wet in town, which was probably the reason that only 16 attended. True to character, there was no rain at all at Godley Head, and the sun even shone for a while. The Godley Head Heritage Trust has ambitious plans for the buildings and gun emplacements, including a museum/interpretation centre. Peter Wilkins from the Trust was our host. Peter set aside a whole afternoon to explain the Trust's plans, and to talk about the fascinating World War II history of Godley Head.



Resource Management Update

The resource management area has been busy since the last Newsletter.

Otahuna Farm

The owner of Otahuna Farm submitted an application to change the current resource consent for subdivision into 40 hectare blocks with one house unit on each (allowable under the draft Selwyn District Plan) to a group of six 4 hectare blocks with a house unit on each, be high on the hillside, in excess of the 200m contour, below the existing Bellbird Lodge. The proposal also provided for an open space covenant on 209 hectares, and design controls on the houses themselves. Whilst the Society welcomed the introduction of design controls, which we had pushed for at Mount Pleasant, and applauded the principle of an open space covenant, we objected to the application. Our grounds were basically that the houses would be visibly intrusive, and would introduce a semi-urban environment into a predominantly rural area. There were 12 submissions opposing the proposal, which were heard at a hearing before a Commissioner on the 5th March. The Commissioner has now made his decision, and has refused the application. The grounds for this are basically similar to our objection, and also that the development would be in contravention of a number of principles in the draft District Plan. Initially Otahuna Farm Limited appealed to the Environment Court, but has now withdrawn.

Kennedy's Bush Road

In this proposal, Christchurch City Council had agreed to the extension of the residential development boundary and for a subdivision for 100 houses, with 'environmental compensation' of 190ha of land on the upper slopes coming into Council ownership. After lengthy discussions, the Society decided not to object because on balance it considered that the advantages of further land in public ownership outweighed the impact of further residential development. It is fair to say that all those who looked at the proposals were personally very concerned about the continued urban spread in this area, but recognised that in taking a Society position it is important to act within our aims and

objectives. At the recent Environment Court hearing, the only objector was the Kennedy's Bush Residents Association. In the event, the judge refused the application, concluding that the subdivision should not be considered in isolation, and that a comprehensive approach to the whole of the Landsdowne Valley is required. Clearly, this is a significant decision, but it does signal the need for the Society to keep a close watch on the future of this area.

Godley Head

Christchurch City Council and the Department of Conservation have invited submissions on a concept plan for the creation of an Awaroa/Godley Head Coastal Park, articles about which you may well have seen in the local press. Following a meeting, we submitted a detailed response on the proposal, which included;

- Our support for the overall concept, the refurbishment of the historic buildings, and the creation of a visitor centre.
- A strong recommendation for the removal of cattle, and the introduction of properly managed sheep grazing, as the best way of ensuring the 'health' of the flora.
- Some suggestions on tracks and access.
- Our opposition to a predator-proof fence, on the grounds of management difficulties and cost, particularly the poor cost-effectiveness for reintroducing species to the area.

The Council and DoC are currently considering the submissions, and there will be further meetings in the near future.

Community Plans

These plans are different to the past annual and long-term plans prepared by local authorities, and in accordance with the Local Government Act 2002 set out to describe the outcomes that the community wants to achieve. We have made submissions so far to Christchurch City Council's and Environment Canterbury's Community Plans. In both we have put forward the view that the Port Hills are sufficiently different to other parks, reserves and land in general in the city and the region, to require specific 'outcomes' relating to the environment, landscape, conservation values and recreational use are appropriate for the Port Hills. In this way we feel that the importance and uniqueness of the hills will not be overlooked in future planning.

PLANNING DAY

The annual Planning Day was held on Saturday 8th May. This was an opportunity to review the Society's work over the last year, and to set objectives for 2004/2005. The conclusion was that for the coming year it is 'business as usual'. Whilst we did not achieve all of last years 'action steps', our level of activity during the year was very reassuring, as was the view that there was no need to change or add to our objectives.



Board members John Freeman, John Jameson, John Goodrich, Maurice McGregor, Paul Loughton, Paul de Spa and Bill Woods meeting for the last time in the Camelia Room, Christchurch City Council chambers. Meetings are now held at the new Beckenham Service Centre.

A Society of Volunteers



Volunteer Doug Meherne assisting with planting on Arbor Day June 2004

Ode for the Volunteer

Many will be amazed to find when the day of judgement nears,
That there's a special place in heaven set aside for volunteers.
Furnished with big recliners, satin couches and footstools,
Where there's no Committee Chairman, no group leaders or car pools.
No eager team that needs a coach,
No bazaar or cake stall,
There will be nothing to staple, not one thing to fold or mail.
Meetings will be outlawed, and telephones won't ring.
Instead there will be cool drinks and gourmet dinners and rare treats fit for a king.
You ask, "Who serve these privileged few and work for all they are worth?"
Why, all those who reaped the benefits and not once volunteered on earth.

Anon.

At this year's Planning Morning, a new objective was agreed – "To ensure that there is recognition of the role of the volunteer in the work of the Society".

As it so happened, just prior to the meeting, the Secretary of another volunteer group had rung to ask if I could tell her how we were so successful in the recruitment and maintenance of our hill work party volunteers. One of the reasons why our work parties are so well patronised is because in the main, they live on or near the hills, and they readily identify with the aim of the Society to "...improve the natural environment and open character of the Port Hills...." We strive to see that rights

as volunteers are respected through:

- Taking part in decision making.
- Having clearly defined tasks that are suited to their performance and ability.
- The provision of advice and support from the Port Hills Ranger Service.
- Being given information about how the Society operates.
- Knowing that their accomplishments are recognised by the Board and the Christchurch community.

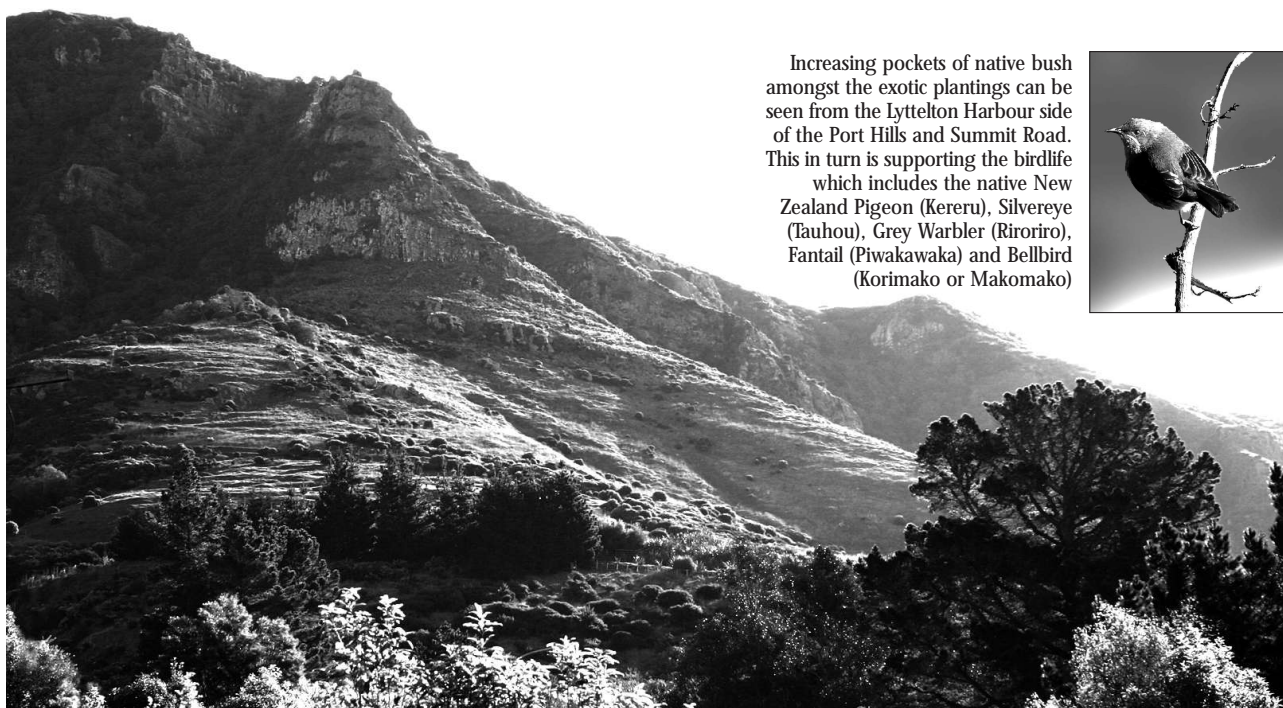
The Board and the Activities and Promotions Committee, staffed by an Executive Secretary (also a member of

a work party), see that objectives are met, money is raised, new members are recruited, and programmes are extended.

The importance of our volunteers cannot be stressed enough. As I mentioned in my annual report, we have a pool of 70, who in 2003, contributed over 3,000 hours of work on the hills. This is an achievement in itself. However, we must also remember that this work gives credibility to all our other activities.

According to the 'Ode for the Volunteer', work party, Board and Committee members will get their just rewards.

Maurice McGregor, President



Increasing pockets of native bush amongst the exotic plantings can be seen from the Lyttelton Harbour side of the Port Hills and Summit Road. This in turn is supporting the birdlife which includes the native New Zealand Pigeon (Kereru), Silvereye (Tauhou), Grey Warbler (Riroriro), Fantail (Piwakawaka) and Bellbird (Korimako or Makomako)



Arbor Day 2 June 2004

For the uninitiated, Arbor Day, which is a day dedicated to public tree planting, began in the U.S.A. in 1872. The first New Zealand Arbor Day plantings were held at Greytown in the Wairarapa in 1890. Locally, the Summit Road Society arranged the first Arbor Day plantings in Christchurch at Cracroft Hill Reserve in 1948. Arbor Day plantings, involving local schools, have been an annual event since, the only exceptions being a few occasions when the weather was too bad. A conservative estimate of the number of trees planted on the Port Hills by Christchurch school students as part of Arbor Day is 60,000!

This year, children from Cashmere Primary School, Christchurch South Intermediate and Halswell schools enjoyed glorious sunshine on the 2nd June, and successfully planted 480 native saplings on Latters Spur, in Victoria Park. This event is very much a partnership with the city Council, particularly the Ranger Service. Thanks go to Di Carter for providing the plants and organising the Ranger Team for the day, Councillor Chrissie Williams who took the time and trouble to speak to the children (and to bring her own spade!), and to the Eastenders for their help in preparing the site.

In what will hopefully become another tradition, this year on the 15th June, we held a further Arbor Day with Governors Bay School on our own Ohinetahi Reserve. We gratefully acknowledge funding from the Lion Foundation for the purchase of the plants.



Beats being in a classroom!



John Jameson joins the children from the three schools while Park Ranger Di Carter explains the plan of action.

Newsletter contributions

Any contributions to the Newsletter are welcome. If there are any writers, poets or photographers out there, or indeed any members who feel they would like to put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard and share their thoughts about the Port Hills in general or the work of your Society, please feel free to contact the Secretary.

The Soil Remembers...

Have you ever knelt down to the earth and kissed the land
and felt that something good was about to happen?

Have you ever put your ear to the ground
and listened to the stories our land has to tell us?

Did you ever think that it could?

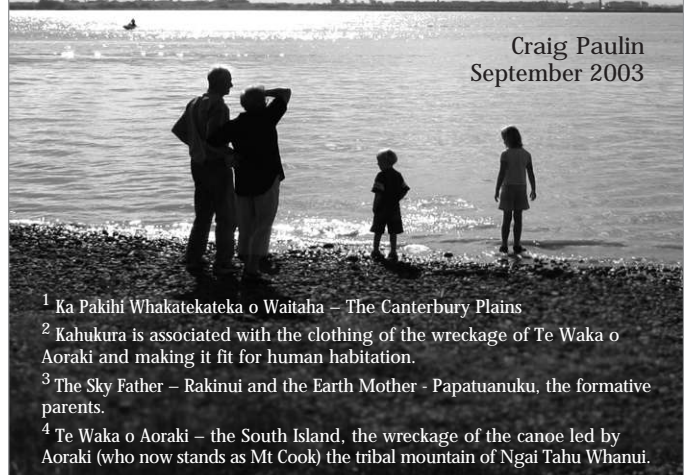
Did you ever think that it could?

Our land, this place,
the floor of our home
the vast plains of Waitaha¹
it's got things to tell us
about being alone.

For on top of it once stood
the proud Kahikatea forests of Kahukura²
that held up the Sky from the Earth³
and clothed the great wreckage of Aoraki⁴.

It knows all about change
and people and comings and goings
of glaciers, of rivers and of rain, sun and wind.

And it knows where the great things begin
in the seeds, the timeless seeds
in the memory of forests and wetlands
and of times gone by
and in the knowledge of all of our ancestors that can guide
us this time.



Craig Paulin
September 2003

¹ Ka Pakihi Whakatekateka o Waitaha – The Canterbury Plains

² Kahukura is associated with the clothing of the wreckage of Te Waka o Aoraki and making it fit for human habitation.

³ The Sky Father – Rakinui and the Earth Mother - Papatuanuku, the formative parents.

⁴ Te Waka o Aoraki – the South Island, the wreckage of the canoe led by Aoraki (who now stands as Mt Cook) the tribal mountain of Ngai Tahu Whanui.