



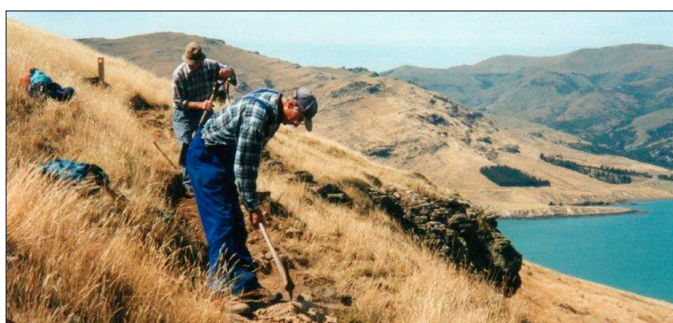
## People

### Bob Cawley

We were sad to learn of the death of Bob Cawley on the 21st of April. An obituary appeared in the Christchurch Press on the 24th of May which covered his interesting career, his love of the mountains, his tramping and climbing exploits and his trips to Antarctica. What was not mentioned was his love of our local Port Hills and his work for the Summit Road Society.

Bob was an early member of the Eastenders, joining in the late 1980s, a time when there were over 30 active members with a range of significant projects in the Sumner, Redcliffs and Mt Pleasant areas. He retired from the Eastenders around 2000. Both John Willocks and Geoff Bendall, who each coordinated the group for 10 years or so agree that Bob was enthusiastic, supportive and could always be relied on. John remembers his practical nature coming to the fore in the days before the modern gels and applicators for painting cut plant stems when he perfected a simple home-made spray for tordon weedkiller. Bob's involvement, however, was not limited to 'getting his hands dirty' for the Society, and he was a valued member of the Activities and Promotions Committee at a time when a lot of work was being done on publicity and our programme of outings and events, and efforts were being put into increasing our membership. Living close to each other, we shared many car journeys between Sumner and Cashmere putting the world to rights. It was Bob's initiative that resulted in the weekend work party. Whilst this did not have the longevity of our other groups we are proud of what we achieved over the space of 10 years, none of which would have happened without him. For quite a while he was prepared to give up his Saturdays to show us 'youngsters' the ropes and only let go of the reins when he was happy that we were mature and experienced enough to go it alone.

John Goodrich



Bob Cawley with the Eastenders above Livingstone Bay

### Ken Hall "A stalwart of the Summit Road Society".

Ken is one of the longest serving members of the Ohinetahi Reserve volunteer work party at the age of 84. He can't remember when he joined the team, but it was in Gordon Kirk's time in the early 1990s, about 20 years ago. He is one of the most regular and toughest of the team. It pays to keep well away when he's attacking gorse, broom and blackberry along the tracks with his swinging slasher. The accompanying photo shows Ken levering out buried boulders with a crowbar to make a smoother surface on the Cass Ridge Track.

Ken is a modest fellow and is somewhat deaf especially when he forgets his hearing aids! When tackling weeds through the steep trackless and bush covered hillsides, the team spreads out and Ken tends to wander widely so at the end of the day he is sometimes hard to gather in. However, he always eventually turns up at the cars for our ride home. He wisely takes a break each winter to visit family in Queensland but returns as regularly as clockwork each spring and rarely misses the weekly work party for the next eight to ten months. Environment Canterbury's days murdering wilding pines in the Craigieburn Basin and elsewhere in the foothills is another of Ken's pursuits, and he has been a keen member of the Over 40s Tramping Club, although less active recently. Ken's value to the Society through his work on Ohinetahi Reserve has been enormous. Although easily missed due to his modest nature, we expect to get some more years out of him yet.

Mike White



## Mystery Photographs

The two pictures in the last newsletter remain a bit of a mystery. Nothing further has emerged about the trailer and we assume it's just one of many used in the construction of the Summit Road. The initials carved into the stone wall at the Sign of the Packhorse are probably that of William A. Gray from the family that originally gifted the land to the public.

## Ohinetahi Reserve update

Sunday 13th April saw a post-earthquake milestone at Ohinetahi when **Hon. Ruth Dyson MP** formally reopened around two-thirds of the reserve and its walking tracks. This has been a long, frustrating but necessary process, which as you will have read from previous newsletters involved lengthy discussions, and the commissioning of a geotechnical survey to identify the risks and hazards in the aftermath of the earthquakes. The final piece of the jigsaw was the purchase and erection of appropriate signage. The Board would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Port Hills Rangers, without whose support and advice we would not have been able to get this far, the City Council for the grant which enabled us to have the report prepared and to fund a substantial proportion of the cost of the signs and the Over 40s Tramping Club who helped to erect the signs. Despite how long the process has taken, the Board remains convinced that this was necessary to ensure public safety.

The next major task is to look at the rest of the reserve and to investigate whether it will be possible to reopen the remainder of the tracks. At this stage, the following tracks are still closed: *Faulkner's, Totara Log, Bivvy, South Boundary from Faulkner's to Titoki Track, Titoki from O'Farrell's to Ngaio Track and Ella's from the Crater Rim around Mt. Ada.*

As normal, the Ohinetahi team has been as active as ever, carrying out its routine tasks of track maintenance, weed and animal pest control and intends to do some more planting in the near future. Despite there being quite a lot of storm damage on the Port Hills during the autumn, Ohinetahi Reserve seems to have escaped this.



Ohinetahi opening



From Mike White:

### A GOOD YEAR FOR THE PLANTINGS

*It has been an exceptionally good year for the plantings and mature forest on Ohinetahi Reserve. Good spring rain gave high moisture levels which were maintained by summer top-ups until about February when there were a couple of months of dry weather. Autumn deluges restored the moisture again and the warm autumn and early winter have allowed the plantings to keep on growing into the winter. The spurt in growth of all the native plantings on the Reserve has been most noticeable and gratifying for the team.*

*These good growing conditions have also been good for the open grasslands where the native seedlings are planted. Grasses grow much faster than the seedlings and can overwhelm and choke recent plantings. They compete for soil moisture and nutrients which can hold back plant growth. Even the larger plants can have their lower areas smothered with grasses stifling growth on the lower branches causing 'legginess'. It's preferable for the seedlings to spread out from ground level into a bushy shape restricting the light and thus discouraging further grass growth. So as the experts say it's important for good plant growth to continue weeding around the seedlings for up to 4 years after planting. Thick mulching restricts grass regrowth for up to 9-12 months and helps to prevent moisture loss in dry summer months. Weeding and mulching is hard tiresome work but very rewarding as the native plantings flourish. Why not visit the Reserve now that it has re-opened, walking up Ngaio Track to O'Farrell's Track, seeing the plantings, turn right for 200m and return down Titoki Track through the mature bush for a 40 to 60 minute walk.*



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Port Hills Rangers	Paul Devlin	332 5627
<b>Eastenders work party</b>	Paul Tebbutt	384 3086
<b>Ohinetahi work party</b>	Anne Kennedy	337 0364
<b>Omahu Bush work party</b>	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.

## Omahu Bush update

As mentioned on a number of occasions previously, the tracks at Omahu Bush were largely unaffected by the earthquakes. We have now been able to reopen Prendergast's Track and with the help of the New Zealand Alpine Club have been able to reopen Gibraltar Rock for rock-climbing, which is now a scarce commodity on the Port Hills. The Omahu team has continued with its routine maintenance, and once again was joined on one occasion by a small team of additional volunteers, this time from Chorus, who had a successful day attacking gorse. Landcare Research staff have also visited the reserve to carry out monitoring of rat numbers and to trial some modified traps. This should add to our knowledge of animal pests at Omahu Bush.

## Eastenders update

The team continues to be as active as ever, and has worked in its traditional area at Jollies Bush, Barnett Park and on the Captain Thomas Track which suffered following the wet autumn weather. Further afield they have spent time on the Crater Rim Walkway, on the Rapaki Track and in Victoria Park where the human scenery proved a bit of a distraction. In June they were joined by Esther Waters, a mature student at CPIT, who is doing a social documentary project, told through images. To dispel some of the myths, she is looking at the range of active pastimes undertaken by retirees—"Retired Seniors in Action". Two of her photographs appear on this page.

## Call for volunteers for central tracks

The Rangers have approached the Society to see if there is any interest in forming a new working party for the tracks and reserves on the central part of the Port Hills. This would cover the area from the Bridle Path to probably the area around Kennedys Bush. The Eastenders will still make occasional forays into this area, but there will be enough work for them in their 'traditional haunts' for a long time to come. If you are interested in this, or know anyone who may be, please contact the Secretary.



Phillipstown School students at Arbor Day 2014



Chorus volunteers with the Omahu Bush team



The Eastenders working on a new track next to the Summit Rd

PHOTO: ESTHER WATERS



Omahu Bush and Eastender Paul Tebbutt

PHOTO: ESTHER WATERS

## Arbor Day

Our annual Arbor Day plantings were held on Wednesday 4 June, again in the Latter's Spur area of Victoria Park. The number of trees that have been planted here by school children is now quite impressive and the hillside is slowly but surely being cloaked by native bush. This year the two classes from Cashmere Primary school, who take part each year, were joined by children from Phillipstown School and Seven Oaks School. Once again the weather was kind giving us an impressive record for fine days at this time of year. The Society would like to thank Port Hills Ranger, Di Carter for her help in maintaining this tradition and, of course, for supplying the trees.

## Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on 25 March at Beckenham Service Centre. After the routine business, Dr Sam Hampton, Lecturer in Hazards and Geothermal, University of Canterbury spoke to the meeting about the Horomaka Geopark project. Sam is part of a community group investigating the possibility of Banks Peninsula becoming a 'GeoPark'. This exciting concept, which would see the peninsula, including the Port Hills, becoming a UNESCO designated area, recognised internationally for its scientific importance and integrating the concept of protection, education, and sustainable development, was mentioned in the last newsletter. All who attended agreed that this is something definitely worth pursuing. If you want any more detail please visit:

[www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth/global-geoparks/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth/global-geoparks/)

or the group's Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/HoromakaBanksPeninsula](https://www.facebook.com/HoromakaBanksPeninsula)

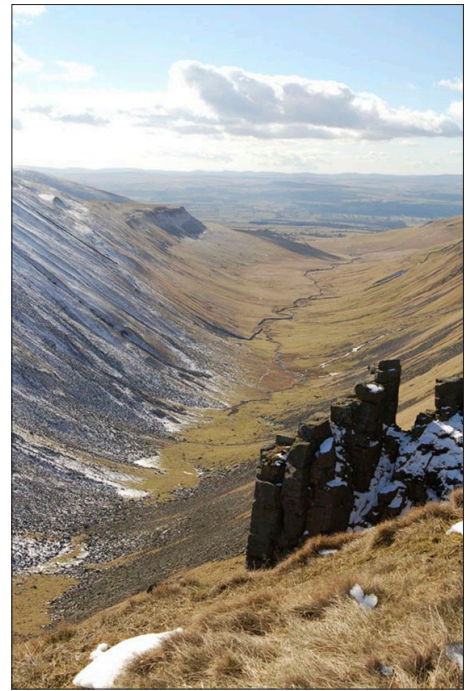


*Similar topography to Banks Peninsula... Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark, Ireland*

## The Board and the Activities & Promotions Committee

The AGM saw three retirements from the Board, all of whom will be sorely missed. **Annette Foster** was the Selwyn District Council representative for a number of years. When she left the Council, she continued on the Board in a personal capacity, where her experience in local body politics and her clear thinking ability were invaluable. **John Hayman** was a member of the Ohinetahi work party for a number of years, so in addition to liking a good debate, brought practical knowledge of what is involved in the management of the reserve. **Tony Edney** is taking a temporary break and we hope he will be re-joining us in a few months' time. Tony has also been involved in the management of Ohinetahi Reserve, particularly with animal pest control. On a more positive note, we are delighted to welcome **Hamish Grant** to the Board. Hamish is a keen cyclist and 'user' of the Port Hills, and a solicitor by profession.

The retirements mean that we now need some more Board members. The Board meets on the third Tuesday of the month from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. Whilst experience of committees and governance would be an advantage, a love of the Port Hills and support for the work of the Society is more important. If you are interested please give the President a call.



*North Pennines Geopark; Whin Sill, UK*

The Board is also delighted to welcome three new local body representatives. Local farmer, **Councillor Grant Miller** has been appointed to represent Selwyn District Council. **Paula Smith** represents Lyttelton/Mt Herbert Community Board. Paula has recently been elected to the Aoraki Conservation Board and is also on the Banks Peninsula Water Zone Committee. **Melanie Coker** has been appointed to represent the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board. **Islay McLeod** continues to represent Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board. These representatives are an important link between the work of the Society and local communities, and allow us to keep abreast of any issues and initiatives that affect the Port Hills.

The Board's main focus since the earthquakes has been on reopening Ohinetahi Reserve, so the A & P Committee has been neglected. This was set up to manage our outings and events, to look at ways of increasing membership, and to generally raise the profile of the Society. The Committee has recently reconvened and is having a fresh look at events, promotion and membership. Among a number of initiatives we are considering are a series of lectures, making more use of the website, and to use other social media. If you are able to help or know anyone who may be interested, please contact the Secretary.

## The Summit Road

As you may have seen in *The Press*, the section of the Summit Road from the top of the Rapaki Track to the Bridle Path was formally reopened to cyclists and pedestrians on 1 July. Remediation work is still being carried out below Mt Cavendish bluffs where there were significant rockfalls and damage to the road, and this section will be reopened when the work is completed. Our understanding is that the decision to restrict this to cyclists and pedestrians will be reviewed in 2016. The carriageway below Mt Cavendish has suffered considerable damage, and there must be real doubt about the cost effectiveness of repairing this to a standard suitable for vehicular traffic.

The Society sees this as a great opportunity to start discussions on changing the nature and the status of the Summit Road. At the end of 2009, the Summit Road Protection Authority, the body set up to administer the Summit Road Protection Act, put forward a suggestion to create a 'Heritage Road through a Park'. The Authority submitted a paper to the City Council which suggested changes to the nature of the road as a result of the changes in vehicle ownership and use, changes in outdoor recreation and the attitude to the natural environment, and changes in land use since the road was constructed. It suggested:

▣ **An improved status for the Road:**

Whilst there is no denying that a drive along the Summit Road is a unique experience, its increased popularity has brought with it a number of problems, the safety of cyclists and walkers being the most obvious. The relative remoteness of the road also means that the continued problems of vandalism and 'boy racers' are very difficult to police. In addition, there are no indications by way of signage or interpretation about the special nature of the road and its history. As the Authority points out "the traveller....would be forgiven for thinking that the Road is just a sealed track, of no special value or merit." It has suggested an integrated management plan which would address these issues and recognises that the road runs through a significant area of reserves with public access—a de-facto park.

▣ **Better indication and interpretation:**

The Authority identified the lack of signage and the inconsistency of existing signage, proposing that there needs to be appropriate signs at the beginning, end and significant points, better and more uniform signs for the reserves, and interpretation panels at key features.

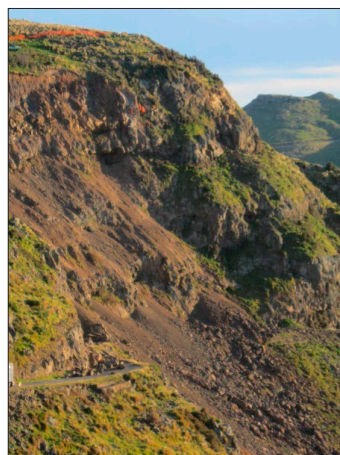
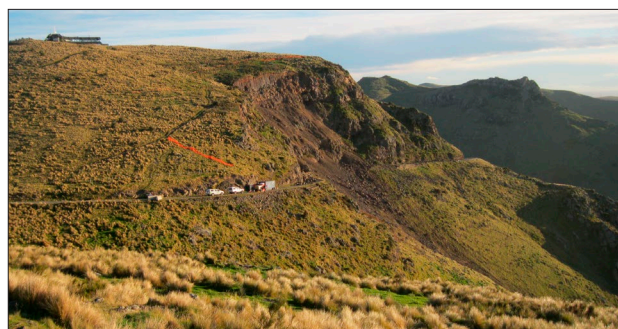
▣ **Better protection for the road and its users:**

Anyone who uses the road will recognise that the mix of cyclists, pedestrians and cars on a road of this nature is potentially dangerous. The Authority has suggested a number of measures such as reduced speed limits and closing all or parts to vehicles. Perhaps the Council's decision on the section from Mt Cavendish saddle to the Rapaki Track is the first step.



PHOTO: NICK GROVES

The earthquakes and all the subsequent recovery work have meant that no further discussion has taken place, but the Authority is keen to raise the concept again. The Society fully supports this and sees that the earthquakes have presented an ideal opportunity to recognise the uniqueness of the road and to look at how it is managed. The next stage of the District Plan review should be taking place later in the year, and both the Authority and the Society will be making submissions to this effect. If you agree with the concept, we would urge you to do the same.



*The changing face of Mt Cavendish. Loose material is being moved with the use of explosives which has now made this section impassable for the time being. Following the quakes this closed section made the news with report of cyclists making a path through the debris to access the other side.*

## The 'Head to Head' Walkway

The head to head way is a project to form a single, branded route round Lyttelton harbour, from Godley Head to Adderley Head. Of course, lots of tracks already exist; it's just a matter of joining them. The Council has scoped possible routes, as close to the sea as possible, and some new links, like the new track between Diamond Harbour and Purau have already been made. Funding is available this financial year to make some more progress on bringing this project to fruition.

The idea dates from the 2006 merger of Banks Peninsula District Council with Christchurch City Council, the commitment made then being a negotiated aspect of amalgamation. As well as providing new opportunities for circular routes up, down and along the top of the Port Hills, the head to head offers the exciting prospect of linking with the new Ferrymead to Sumner Coastal Pathway and the Peninsula tracks leading up from the south side of the harbour. Thus it could soon be possible to walk or cycle on a continuous series of tracks from the central city to Akaroa. The standard of the head to head way might be variable according to local circumstances, so it's not necessarily a walkway—or any particular type of track. The specific form of some links remains to be seen. What is certain is that the head to head will be a boon for outdoorsy enjoyment and the regional economy. Walkers might take two or three days to wander round the harbour, dropping in at local attractions and staying at hotels or B & B's.

Jeremy Agar

### Head to Head update:

Christchurch City Council's Annual Plan originally proposed that the planned \$314,000 expenditure be deferred. However following a number of submissions, including one by the Summit Road Society, \$142,000 has been brought forward to this financial year. This will be for work on the Pony Point to Naval Point and Allandale to Governor's Bay sections. Work is likely to start in the spring. The complete walkway will be constructed in sections with a completion date of 2022.



Lyttelton Harbour from Godley Head



Adderley Head from Godley Head

## Rod Donald Trust

The formation of a Banks Peninsula Trust arose at the time of the merger of Banks Peninsula District Council with Christchurch City Council in 2006. A Trust would enable funds from the sale of farms endowed to the Peninsula in 1800s to be retained for the continued benefit of the Peninsula environment and communities. The name Rod Donald was suggested for the Trust to honour this highly respected and influential politician who had died in 2005 and to reflect his deep love for his constituency of Banks Peninsula. After a public consultation process demonstrated support for both the concept and the name, the organisation was formally constituted as a Charitable Trust in July 2010. The trust deed gives the Trust a wide mandate to promote sustainable management and conservation, recreation, culture and heritage, research projects and public education in the area formerly administered by the Banks Peninsula District Council.

For more information, visit: [www.roddonaldtrust.co.nz](http://www.roddonaldtrust.co.nz)

The Trust has just published "**Banks Peninsula Walks**" an informative colour A4 ring-bound guide to walks on the peninsula and the Port Hills with relief maps and easily accessible summaries of the walks, plus a series of more localised brochures—well worth adding to your collection of local guide books. More details are available on the website.

Also worth highlighting are the work that the Trust is doing with the Department of Conservation to improve/upgrade the summit walkway from Gebbies Pass to Hilltop ("the spine of the lizard"), which will be a huge step in furthering Harry Ell's dream, and the partnership they have entered into with Orton Bradley which will support the day to day running of the park and allow the manager to spend more time to focus on new attractions and marketing.



Suki Thompson (Rod Donald Trust)