

# FMC Bulletin

Official quarterly of the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand

Number 178 · November 2009

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**Mining the Conservation Estate**

**What is Schedule 4?**

**Wild Rivers**

**Managing St James**





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# FMC Bulletin

Number 178 · November 2009

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**The editorial direction of the *FMC Bulletin*** is to provide a forum for the expression of opinions and for news and debate on matters of interest to those who use New Zealand's public lands. Opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* do not necessarily reflect those of Federated Mountain Clubs or of affiliated clubs.

**Contributions** should be submitted in electronic form to [blackrobin@xtra.co.nz](mailto:blackrobin@xtra.co.nz) or mailed on disk to: The Editor, FMC Bulletin, Box 14224 Kilbirnie, Wellington 6022. Colour transparencies and photographs should carry the name and address of the submitter; otherwise return can't be guaranteed. Electronic photos should be .tif or .jpeg files between 1MB and 5 MB. See [www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz) for more detailed information.

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Deadline for contributions for the March 2010 Bulletin is 31 January (send copy to [bulletin@fmc.org.nz](mailto:bulletin@fmc.org.nz)). It should be distributed to clubs by 15 March 2010.

Cover: A possible future for the Hooker Valley, Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park?

Illustration: Chris Slane



# Editorial

## The Mines of Moria

by Shaun Barnett

Mining on the public conservation estate is an issue that has concerned Federated Mountain Clubs ever since its formation in 1931. Over the past decade, however, mining has warranted only brief mentions in the *FMC Bulletin*, notably the OceanaGold mine in Victoria Forest Park and the Pike River coal mine in the Paparoa Range.

But deep in the Mines of Moria, an ominous thumping sounds.

Mining as an issue has reared its ugly head again, with a recent controversial speech by Gerry Brownlee, the Minister of Energy and Resources. Brownlee wants to open up those most precious parts of the conservation estate, among them our national parks, to mining. As Brian Stephenson explains in his article in this *Bulletin*, these areas are explicitly protected from mining by part of the Crown Minerals Act called Schedule 4.

In his speech, Brownlee said that over 70% of New Zealand's mineral wealth lies under the

conservation estate: places like the Paparoa and Victoria ranges, the Coromandel and Kahurangi National Park.

Before 1996, that sublime corner of the northwest South Island was protected as Northwest Nelson Forest Park. A number of people felt the area had botanical, natural and landscape values worthy of national park status, and during the early 1990s began a national park campaign. Notable among the proponents were former FMC executive members Craig Potton and Andy Dennis. Even though the area, as Northwest Nelson Forest Park, enjoyed some level of protection, it had little safeguard against mining. Proponents of the national park, knowing of the area's rich mineral wealth, wanted stronger protection. Thanks to their efforts and that of the Department of Conservation, we gained Kahurangi National Park in 1996.

Some detractors worried that Nelson's best-kept secret was being leaked, and an influx

The editor at a campsite, Mt Owen, Kahurangi National Park Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography



of tourists would crowd the tracks and huts so valued by local trampers. However national park status probably did less to raise the area's profile than *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy which featured Mounts Owen and Olympus to advantage. The films arguably did more to raise awareness of New Zealand than the Tourism Board's own '100% Pure' campaign.

Mt Owen was sexy as the scene for the computer generated Mines of Moria, but a real mine will have considerably less appeal.

It seems the Cave Troll, the hideous guardian of the Mines of Moria, turns out to be Brownlee. His speech has rightly horrified the tourism industry.

I won't suggest too many similarities between the troll and Gerry Brownlee, but there are some. The Cave Troll is a heavy, blunt instrument designed to take the shock in the battle of the mines. Behind it are the rapacious goblins, eager for minerals. We, the defenders of national parks, need to take our stand – like Gandalf – and shout "Thou shalt not pass!"

There is of course a not-so-ugly side to every troll. By waving his club, Brownlee has drawn attention to an issue that conservationists have long considered largely over – making us realise our own complacency. Before this debate surfaced, I had little understanding of Schedule 4, or conversely, what it does not include.

What is equally worrying is some of the media reaction to Brownlee's comments. It seems Sauron's armies are gathering strength and support.

The *New Zealand Herald* editorial of 2 September claimed: 'The days of open-cast eyesores have been consigned to history.' Really? The *Herald* editor has clearly not been to Stockton (see Quentin Duthie's photo on page 26).

Perhaps more surprisingly, *The Listener*, once the bastion of liberal left-leaning thought, supported Brownlee in its editorial of 12 September. The unsigned editorial stated: 'Other areas [of the conservation estate] are less blessed and include old mines, scrappy bush and land that is surely of little interest or value. In addition, much of the estate is inaccessible



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and never seen by anyone except deer hunters and lost trampers.'

The depth of ignorance in that paragraph is difficult to fathom, and displays virtually no knowledge or understanding of the conservation estate. It also assigns the only values of conservation land as scenic or recreational, and implies the writer has no concept of biodiversity or its intrinsic worth. First and foremost, conserving biodiversity is the role of conservation land. Maintaining biodiversity is difficult when digging up habitat.

Once upon a time writers like Gordon Campbell would have written a feature article in *The Listener* defending national parks. He now writes opinion pieces for a free local newspaper, *The Wellingtonian*, where he said of Brownlee 'The speech raised all the old bogeys of mining raping and pillaging the environment for short-term gain, with the tacit support of its friends in government.'

Campbell went on to ask: 'Should we be handing over our best environmental assets for real estate and mining purposes? Or should we be managing them for the benefit of entire generations, current and still to come?'

Fortunately the lands in Schedule 4 will not easily be removed from the list without a major battle.

Since his speech, Brownlee has claimed: 'We certainly have no intention of digging up the Crown's conservation estate. This is a stock-take, which is perfectly reasonable.' But if no digging, why a stock-take?

My initial reading was that the National Party used Brownlee as a shock troll to distract

the public from the Government's plans to let all sorts of goblins into other parts of the conservation estate, those parts not protected by Schedule 4. But information recently unearthed using the Official Information Act makes it clear that Brownlee already knew exactly which national parks he wanted to get at. They include Paparoa, Kahurangi and Fiordland national parks. Government mining papers released in early October also indicate that the minerals industry now has the privilege of vetoing new conservation park boundaries, in secret.

Even if no revision of the Schedule 4 list occurs, it seems clear we must be prepared to face renewed mining interest in other parts of the conservation estate – many of the places we love to tramp and climb in. For these reasons I urge you to read Robin McNeill's article, also in this *Bulletin*, and to join FMC's 'Post a Photo' campaign.

If nothing else, the mining debate of the last couple of months should be a strong message for us – those who know and appreciate the wild lands of New Zealand – to advocate their intrinsic values to the wider public. Values that are simply not compatible with mining.

The trampers, climbers and conservationists of the past fought hard to establish our world-recognised parks and reserves. Many National MPs of the past also oversaw the establishment

of national parks. A National Party guided the landmark 1952 National Parks Act into being. National was in power during most of the 1950s, when Fiordland, Aoraki/Mt Cook, Te Urewera and Nelson Lakes national parks were created. Mt Aspiring National Park was formed in 1964 under a National Government. National Prime Minister Jim Bolger opened Kahurangi in 1996.

We need to remind the present Government of this history, and why we value our exceptional national parks and other reserves.

Let's ensure that mining in national parks remains just an evil fantasy.

#### Acknowledgement

Many thanks to Chris Slane for generously allowing us to use his cartoon on the cover.

#### References

'What Lies Beneath', editorial in *The Listener*, 12 September 2009

'Unearthing our Natural Assets', by Gordon Campbell in *The Wellingtonian*, 3 September 2009

'Mining Review Needs to Strike Good Balance', editorial in *The New Zealand Herald*, 2 September 2009

*Opening Address to Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy 2009* by Gerry Brownlee, 26 August 2009



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# President's Column

by Rob Mitchell

In this issue I comment on three developments: the Government's dream of mining in national parks, exploring new recreational opportunities in Auckland and North Auckland and tramping to a different mapping grid.

## He Has Got to be Dreaming!

The August announcement by the Government that it would examine opportunities to extend mining activity in conservation lands including national parks has brought justifiable opposition from conservation and recreation groups, at least two conservation boards and the tourism industry.

Minister for Energy and Resources, Gerry Brownlee, has got to be dreaming! The Government needs to wake up to its shortsighted opportunism and develop an economic growth strategy based on long term and sustainable economic strategies – not short-term opportunism. Enthusiasm from the New Zealand Branch of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy for a mining 'renaissance' is premature. The irony that the West Coast

region, once mining reliant, now looks to tourism for economic growth, cannot be ignored.

The Government will need to weigh the superficial glitter of mining with the unattractive 'bust' side of the equation. In doing so the Government needs to answer some hard questions.

**Firstly:** Successful sporting teams, and countries, are more likely to succeed when they play to their strengths. New Zealand has proven strengths in managing its conservation assets and tourism. When New Zealand's international tourism reputation is so valued, why should mining be permitted to degrade and terminally damage New Zealand's natural assets, assets protected by a partnership of the Government, the public and commercial interests over the last 130 years?

**Secondly:** Mining is essentially one-off, short-term mineral exploitation. Why should a one-off industrial activity like mining be permitted when continuous economic activities such as tourism and recreation largely support the ongoing preservation of national parks?

FMC President Rob Mitchell on Mt Earnslaw, Mt Aspiring National Park



**Thirdly:** When will the Government bring together its ideas on economic development and conservation so that the electorate can properly evaluate them? Voters deserve carefully analysed policies, not glib speeches and ad hoc announcements. New Zealanders deserve a more mature government approach to conservation.

This issue of the *Bulletin* challenges the wisdom of the Government's thinking about mining in national parks and conservation areas. More than that, FMC encourages you to make your concerns felt, by writing to the Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism John Key, the Minister of Conservation Tim Groser and the Associate Minister of Conservation Kate Wilkinson.

**Outdoor Recreation in Auckland**  
Changing tune, lets look at a positive response to the Government's initiative to develop recreational parks in Auckland and North Auckland. In late October, the Federated Mountain Clubs organized a forum in Auckland

for tramping club representatives and others interested in outdoor recreation. Arising from positive input from member clubs, the forum's purpose was to make recommendations to DOC for developing new walking, tramping and camping opportunities in the most populated regions of the country.

FMC proposes that user-oriented principles should be applied in future planning and development. FMC's proactive approach has been designed to draw on community ideas rather than following the more conventional sequence of waiting for DOC to formally kick-start recreational planning. We will carefully assess the outcomes of the Auckland Forum and explore the potential of similar gatherings in other regions. The initiative resulted from the considerable efforts of Auckland FMC team members Viv Milne, Brian Stephenson and Jane Dudley.

### Topo50 Maps

In September Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) launched its new Topo50, 1:50,000 topographic map series. The new series uses the more accurate Geodetic Datum 2000, which is ideal for outdoor enthusiasts using digital navigation tools, and emergency personal locator beacons. Applying the new technology will also be a boon for LandSAR. Christmas has come early for some. FMC recognizes that many trampers and climbers treasure historic charts. But to encourage updating to the new maps, FMC has supported the launch of the new Topo50 map series by LINZ by providing opportunities for clubs and individual FMC members in substantial bulk purchase discounts. Were you a winner?

### Finally...

Many of you will be well advanced with organizing your annual trips into New Zealand's magnificent national parks, high country and coastlines. Plan well, take care. Have a wonderful Christmas and an invigorating break with your families and friends.

I will be out there with my family too.

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# Club Membership and FMC

The series of articles concerning FMC and club membership in the June 2009 *FMC Bulletin* was great reading and succinctly outlined the membership issues faced by clubs. However, FMC's decision to reach out to individual trampers as individual supporters is of concern. As Brian Stephenson stated in his article, this decision needs to be canvassed with club members and he challenged with 'Let the discussions begin.'

FMC's top objective (from its website) is 'to promote our clubs' activities' while now FMC is promoting individual membership. I, on the other hand, advocate for FMC to present a stronger endorsement of clubs when advertising. For example, in the advertisement for FMC membership on page 41 of the June *Bulletin* there is little endorsement of club membership before offering individual membership to FMC.

Shaun Barnett's article states 'It [FMC] must somehow find ways of ensuring that its clubs remain the cornerstone of the organisation.' To ensure this, FMC needs to introduce a strong endorsement of club membership on the website and in advertising. Secondly, FMC should facilitate clubs to network on membership development, with the aim of developing a national promotion highlighting the benefits of club membership. A national campaign advertising in the *Bulletin* and *Wilderness* magazine will be more powerful than individual club efforts.

FMC would then have achieved its top objective.

Graeme McGowan, Publicity Officer,  
Auckland Tramping Club

---

## Tenure Review Outcomes

I was interested to read Rob Mitchell's comments on tenure review in his President's Column (August 2009 *FMC Bulletin*). Although a long-time FMC supporter, in my view Rob's comments display a certain naivety concerning tenure review outcomes.

Rob notes that FMC has a long tradition of supporting the development of publicly owned lands, for the overall benefits that accrue to the whole community. However, there is no point in acquiring more conservation land if that land will not be properly managed. Also, there is no point in transferring to the conservation estate unproductive, scrub-covered land which is unlikely to attract any significant recreational or tourism use. I believe significant parts of the land so 're-acquired' by the Crown through tenure review to date falls into this category.

Rob also states, 'Tenure review has also enabled many farmers to gain freehold rights to the more economic farmland'. As a rural law specialist I can confirm that many of those same farmers immediately subdivided and sold

those very lands, meaning public access over them is now denied forever. Is this a good outcome for FMC members? I think not – previously we had every chance of accessing all pastoral leased land with prior permission, now we have no chance of accessing some of the nicest areas.

The pastoral farming lobby is powerful, but its motivations are not always as they seem. On balance, leaseholders have clearly achieved the better outcomes through tenure review. We – New Zealanders – have 'gained back' a few worthwhile areas through tenure review, but we have lost more through clever negotiating by the farming parties.

With tenure review starting up again, I encourage FMC to take a more detailed interest in this process, on a lease-by-lease basis. The decisions on which lands will return to the conservation estate, and which will become freehold, is a critical one for all New Zealanders. As the public voice of many keen New Zealand outdoors people FMC plays a very important role.

Mark Copeland,  
Rotorua Tramping and Skiing Club

## Graham McCallum

The August 2009 *FMC Bulletin* had several interesting references to Graham McCallum, and I would like to add a few highlights from his earlier days when we were classmates at Wellington College (1942-46).

Graham had glandular fever as a lad, and was excused from any school activities involving heavy physical exertion such as athletics, rugby and even cadet training. However, unbeknown to the school authorities, he used to take off for weekend tramps, and even took part in the annual trampers' marathon in the Orongorongo Valley of the Rimutaka Range.

Mac used to laugh at the rest of us having to sweat it out on the parade ground and on route marches during 'Barracks Week' while he sat in comfort in the shade of the armoury supervising the issue and maintenance of rifles and other army equipment.

Many were the weekends when I joined him on trips over the 'Gut Buster' and through the Five Mile Track carrying in corrugated iron sheets attached to our 'A-frame' packs (rather a tricky task in the bush, and even worse on windy days) as part of rebuilding Shamrock Hut (which was then just across Browns Stream from the Tararua Tramping Club's Waerenga Hut).

I recall one moonlit night – when the beech-pole framing was almost complete, but only a few sheets of iron covered over the sacking bunks – waking up to see opossums sitting around the still warm stone fireplace, and some of them doing acrobatics around the framing!

It was about this time, when I was still a rather fit cross-country runner, that Mac suggested we run over the Tararua tops, beginning at Poads Road late on Friday night, sleep at Te Matawai Hut, then along to Powell Hut for Saturday night, and out to Kaitoke on Sunday. Fortunately for me it clashed with another commitment.

This was quite typical of the sort of thing that Mac would do. I can still recall his carefree smile – just like in Ashley Cunningham's photo.

Thanks for the memories Mac.

John Hunt (formerly of Kaumatua TC and FMC Executive, recently moved to Feilding and now a member of Manawatu T&SC)



Photo: Ashley Cunningham

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## Bert Barra

Re-reading the article on Bert Barra (March 2006 *FMC Bulletin*) had me recalling my own parents' recollections of this remarkable hunting and bush legend. Bert did in fact come north from the South Island in 1935 as stated, but first settled in Puketitiri, an isolated community northwest of Napier, where my parents farmed. He was employed shooting deer.

He soon established a reputation as a 'Bush Gentleman', a leader of men, not one to be trifled with, and the envy of many with his great skill in firearms marksmanship, fitness and bush survival skills.

Shy, but not reclusive, Bert liked a bit of social life. Much against his Boss's better judgement, Bert persuaded him to let the team of three stay over at Puketitiri Hall for a dance following a local sports meeting. Celebrations lasted well into the early morning. Bert, knowing he was expected to be in the field by daylight, crashed down for a wee kip in a nearby shed. But sleep was impossible with the nearby festivities still in full swing. Without hesitation, Bert raised his rifle and shot the chimney pot off the hall chimney. Apparently, the vast amount of ensuing smoke and soot soon dispersed the revellers.

Humiliated, and in retaliation for the 'misconduct', the Boss made the men pack up and march out immediately, while he sedately rode on horseback beside them, over the 15 miles of rugged track and fords to the Mohaka River. Here he supervised, lounging in the sun smoking, while Bert led his men across the chest-deep Mohaka, with their swags on their heads, toward their hunting ground. Once around the

---

## Praise for President

Your column in the August 2009 *FMC Bulletin* was inspiring. You put it all so succinctly and clearly. The clubs are fortunate to have you at the helm and I hope you will stay there for some years.

Dan McGuire, Nelson Tramping Club

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first manuka bushes, safely out of sight, Bert threw his swag to the ground with a sigh and the words, "I'll teach him who's Boss." There the hunters rested for two days, before proceeding to their designated employment.

Bert successfully courted the most eligible and beautiful spinster in the neighbourhood, Miss Marjorie McBurnie. In 1938 they married in Napier, then proceeded to the Wairapa where Bert bought land and combined farming with his hunting exploits.

Interestingly, he introduced Barry Crump to hunting, and Barry worked for him. After a while Bert sacked Barry 'for laziness' (Bert was quite a taskmaster and perfectionist) but they remained friends. Barry visited Bert in hospital shortly before his death.

Sadly, Bert's hunting photos and diary were removed from his hut – probably when he went into hospital, and family have been unable to find these. His diary was carefully prepared in sequence and he had begun a rough version of a book.

Bert is survived by his daughter Pauline, who lives in Hastings.

Pam Turner, Heretaunga Tramping Club

The appearance after a letter-writer's name of a club affiliation is no indication that their club supports the views expressed, unless their position as club president or secretary is also stated.

A king-size bar of Whittaker's chocolate for the best letter goes to **Pam Turner**.

# FMC Focus

A Round Up of Executive News & Activities – for more details visit [www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)

From Northern Convenor  
Barbara Morris:

- DOC has advised more changes in the CMS processes. The Northland CMS is unlikely to be notified for public comment until 2010, as the conservancy attempts to comply with the Government's priority to establish a Waipoua National Park. The Auckland conservancy is monitoring the progress of the now-revised Waikato document, scheduled for NZCA scrutiny in October. The Bay of Plenty document has been withdrawn to allow consideration of the newly formed East Coast/Bay of Plenty conservancy. A draft CMS for this region is not expected for possibly two years.
- Ratepayer funding for the next three years has helped alleviate the financial difficulties of the Maungatautari Ecological Trust (near Cambridge). FMC understands that the Trust has sought a further \$1.2 million from the Minister of Conservation for running costs over the next three years. Within the next few months visiting trampers can expect an entry charge.
- The Quick Start cycle tracks, announced by Prime Minister John Key, should benefit northern trampers. Hopefully the proposed tracks in the Hokianga, Hauraki Plains, Waikato, and central North Island will provide additional walking opportunities. Clubs in these areas should contact councils and DOC to ensure that recreation, not just tourism and commercial opportunities, remains a priority for cycleways.

From Central Convenor  
Owen Cox:

- DOC has begun preparatory work on the Wellington CMS. Interested clubs should register on the DOC website

([www.doc.govt.nz/getting\\_involved/consultations/current](http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting_involved/consultations/current)).

- The Kahurangi National Park Management Plan is undergoing a partial review. The review covers the provisions of the Management Plan concerning the Heaphy Track, use of mountain-bikes in limited areas of the park and air access. The proposals are in line with FMC's thinking.
- FMC made a submission on the Te Araroa Walkway proposal for a new track down Oriwa Ridge in Tararua Forest Park. Our submission did not favour the proposed route and suggested alternative options nearer the western edge of the range (see the summary of the FMC submission in this *Bulletin*).
- DOC has released a management proposal for St James Station. This outlines suitable areas for mountain biking, particularly on tracks in the eastern part of the old run, and the need to protect the slopes flanking the main divide (see the summary of the FMC submission in this *Bulletin*).

From the Southern Team:

- The Fish and Game application for a Water Conservation Order on the Hurunui River in North Canterbury (supported by FMC) was partially successful, with a recommendation for a WCO on the North Branch, but not the South Branch.
- The Government has ordered a Ministerial Review of aircraft management at Milford Sound. FMC's interest is primarily because there is a direct correlation between Milford Sound air traffic and over-flight intrusion for trampers and climbers. FMC's position is that the allocation system was requested by aircraft operators, negotiated after extensive consultation, principally



with aircraft operators, and signed off as part of the management plan by the Southland Conservation Board and the New Zealand Conservation Authority. We believe that there is no basis for revisiting it.

- FMC commented on DOC's proposed Wild Animal Recovery Operation (WARO) framework – including its impact on 'natural quiet' and wilderness areas, deer number reductions and interactions with other users. We have applauded moves towards mandatory GPS data loggers in helicopters, and hope that this eventually becomes the standard for all aircraft operating on the public conservation estate.
- The Government scrapped a previous tenure review restriction on lakeside properties. The changes are designed to assist short-term economic development. FMC believes the Government should review its decision, which is likely to increase difficulties in sound long-term lakeside land management – especially in the fields of landscape protection and recreation planning.



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# Notice Board

## Proposed Mountain-bike Race Over Harper Pass

A proposed commercial mountain-bike race over Harper Pass early next year provoked lively debate among the FMC executive. How appropriate are competitive sporting events on conservation land, particularly our national parks?

Some believe our parks are primarily for solitude and quietness, to be enjoyed at a leisurely pace, and not raced through. However others might view this position as a value judgement that denies the needs of one section of the outdoor community.

Discussions eventually centred on the more objective problems of adverse effects on tracks, damage to fragile ecosystems, the date of the event, and whether it would encourage future illegal biking. FMC sought the opinions of local Canterbury clubs in an effort to produce a submission representative of the views of our diverse membership.

The 250-kilometre race, scheduled for January 2010, starts at Amberley and finishes at Hokitika. A 50-kilometre section of route crosses conservation land in the Hurunui catchment of Lake Sumner Forest Park, with a small section in Arthur's Pass National Park – where competitors will be required to dismantle their bikes and carry them for approximately 11 kilometres.

The FMC submission stated:

- Concerns about competitor numbers – 400 on a single day, possibly 800 in the future – using a track which appears to have approximately 300 users annually, and which already shows damage from foot traffic and water run-off.
- That the offer by the applicant of a voluntary contribution towards track maintenance is made mandatory if the concession is granted.
- That the timing is changed from the peak family holiday period of January to later in February, thus reducing potential user conflict.

The full submission can be viewed on the FMC website ([www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)). Hearings have been held and FMC awaits the outcome.

Barbara Morris, FMC Executive

## Westland/Tai Poutini National Park to Celebrate 50 Years

Westland/Tai Poutini National Park holds a special place in the hearts of many New Zealanders. When suggestions were made that the scenic reserves protecting the glaciers and lakes should be added to Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park, West Coasters united to support the idea of a national park of their own in Westland.

Now, almost 50 years on, DOC has plans for the park's anniversary on 26-28 March 2010. A weekend of celebrations will include scenic flights to view the park from the mountains to the sea, guided walks and an evening of talks and presentations.

People interested in the celebrations should register their interest via the DOC website ([www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)) with keywords '50th anniversary'.

DOC is also interested in photos, documents or articles relating to the history of the park. Anyone willing to lend such material should please contact Katrina at DOC Franz Josef ph 03 752 0796, email [wnp50anniversary@doc.govt.nz](mailto:wnp50anniversary@doc.govt.nz)

## New Red Hills Hut

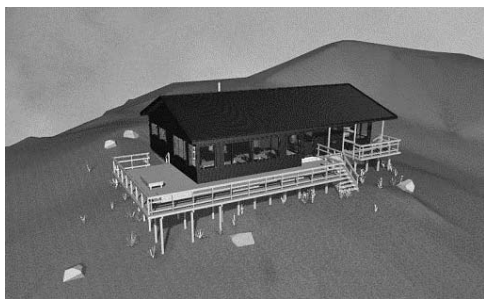
By Christmas a new six-bunk Red Hills Hut will replace the old one on the edge of The Plateau, in Mt Richmond Forest Park. The hut lies on the Te Araroa Trail, linking Mt Richmond Forest Park with Nelson Lakes National Park. An informal vehicle access to the hut through Rainbow Station was closed some months ago and a new tramping route has been opened with a car park some 12 kilometres northeast of St Arnaud on State Highway 63.

## New Angelus Hut Planned, Nelson Lakes National Park

DOC is replacing the popular Angelus Hut in Nelson Lakes National Park with a better-designed facility. Unfortunately for the tramping public, the hut's alpine location means building in the off-season is not a practical option. Work will start in December and the hut will be unavailable over the summer months. A May 2010 opening is anticipated.

The current hut was built in 1970, replacing a four-bunk corrugated iron hut built in 1956 by the Nelson Ski Club. Substantial renovations were carried out in the 1990s to add more bunks, though this compromised the living area. While the current hut has 26 bunks, up to 60 stay there on summer nights. In marginal weather campers further cram the cooking area.

Various options for a new hut were investigated, and in the end DOC decided on a new 28-bunk hut, built on the existing hut site. It will feature double glazing and modern insulation materials and will use passive heating methods. An extended living area will accommodate an additional 10 campers, with facilities for pack and boot storage. The new hut will operate under a booking system.



An artist's version of the new Angelus Hut Image: DOC Nelson Conservancy

## Mountain Weather Forecasts

*FMC Bulletin* readers may have heard the extended mountain forecast now broadcast on the Radio New Zealand National Programme at 4 pm. It is also broadcast at 5 am, using the forecasting of MetService. The MetService website ([www.metservice.co.nz](http://www.metservice.co.nz)) also has good extended

mountain forecasts, but they do not specifically cover North Island ranges outside national parks. Having better web coverage is particularly important for the Tararuas, where two weather-related deaths have occurred this winter.

This excellent forecast could be further useful if it specifically covered places like Tararua Forest Park, which are subject to peculiar weather not always occurring in other parts of the North Island ranges.

The extended mountain forecast available from Radio New Zealand resulted from requests from trampers. Readers could encourage better web-based mountain forecasts by writing to the Minister of Transport.

## Science Delves into the Past Hidden in Glaciers

Last winter scientists drilled ice cores from glaciers in Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park to help glimpse the future. The glacier ice cores tell the history of climate change in this region of the Earth. Scientists can read ice layer composition like a book, and can translate this information to help understand the changing temperature of the Earth over time.

Clues to time, such as a layer of Ruapehu ash, can help piece the puzzle together. Ice cores collected across the globe so far show that climate change does not happen evenly at the same time or in the same region.

Aoraki/Mt Cook glaciers have lost up to 60% of ice volume since the 1850s, so scientists have to get these records before they are lost forever. One 54-metre core was removed from the Tasman Glacier.

During the next two winters the scientists will attempt to retrieve promising ice cores from Annette Plateau near Mueller Hut, and from a small basin beneath Mt Hutton in the Murchison Valley.

The team is made up of GNS Science and Victoria University, and involves Chinese, US and New Zealand scientists. Ground-penetrating radar reads the thickness and layering of the ice below, then a power-generated drill cuts the ice. After the core is winched out, it's insulated, packed and taken back to the laboratory for analysis.

## Kaumatua Tramping Club 50th Anniversary

In June 2010, Wellington's Kaumatua Tramping Club (KTC) will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Club member Judith Doyle would like to know if it is the oldest club to specifically cater for an age group. Judith says the KTC aims to cater for trampers 'over 35' although the average age of members is in the 60s. Christchurch's Over 40s Club began in 1978. In the club profile in November 2008 *FMC Bulletin*, they claimed to be 'the first of its kind formed in New Zealand, and arose from a need to cater for the more mature person.' Clearly, the Kaumatua TC beats them by some 20 years. Do any other clubs cater for a specific age group? If so, please email us at [bulletin@fmc.org.nz](mailto:bulletin@fmc.org.nz)

## Waikato Tramping Club 60th Anniversary

The Waikato Tramping Club will celebrate 60 years of activity in Hamilton on 15-16 May 2010. An afternoon function is planned, leading into a happy hour and dinner on Saturday and a get-together for lunch on Sunday, with an optional short tramp. The club is keen to contact as many past members as possible so please get in touch if you once tramped with us. See our website ([www.wtc.org.nz](http://www.wtc.org.nz)) email [wtc60th@paradise.net.nz](mailto:wtc60th@paradise.net.nz) or write to PO Box 685, Hamilton 3240.



Labour Weekend, 23-25 October 2010. Events will include photo displays, a dinner with guest speakers – and some tramping. Importantly, there will be the opportunity to catch up with old tramping friends. Organisers look forward to celebrating with both current and past members. More information will be advised in subsequent bulletins and posted on the club website ([www.htc.org.nz](http://www.htc.org.nz)).



Heretaunga Tramping Club members building Waikamaka Hut, Ruahine Range, 1939. Photo: Heretaunga Tramping Club collection

## World Heritage Highway Guide Correction

The August Bulletin contained a special offer of \$20 for FMC members on Andy Dennis's *Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Highway Guide*. Unfortunately the incorrect email address was provided. The correct address is [admin@bcdco.co.nz](mailto:admin@bcdco.co.nz)



## Past Bulletins up for Grabs

Executive member Lex Smith has a set of past *FMC Bulletins* from the years 1988 to 2008. Any readers interested in these should contact Lex by email [smithers@xtra.co.nz](mailto:smithers@xtra.co.nz)

## Rimutaka Forest Park video

DOC has produced a video celebrating Rimutaka Forest Park. It can be viewed via the DOC website ([www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)) by typing in Rimutaka Forest Park Video in the search box.



Transport in the 1950s Photo: Waikato Tramping Club collection

## Heretaunga Tramping Club Anniversary Celebrations in 2010

Next year sees the 75th anniversary of the Heretaunga Tramping Club, based in Hawke's Bay. To mark the occasion, the club plans to hold a weekend of activities and celebrations at



## Quest for Fire

In the August 2009 *FMC Bulletin*, Wellington Tramping & Mountaineering Club member Steve Kohler described how to make a fire using only natural materials. A video of his technique is available on You Tube. Either use this link a general search on Google, or use this link ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYfhY\\_7E2UE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYfhY_7E2UE))

## Canterbury Stations Offer New Walking Tracks

A new walkway across Dry Acheron Station to reach the Big Ben Range should be open by this summer. In mid-2007 the Dry Acheron Station, located between Lake Coleridge and Korowai-Torlesse Tussocklands Conservation Park, was sold to an overseas purchaser. Conditions for the sale by the Overseas Investment Office included two conservation covenants on areas of ecological significance, as well as providing public walking access across this freehold land.

Recent developments include fencing an area for a car park off Lake Coleridge Road, marking a poled route from the car park to the two covenanted areas and through to the Big Ben Range on public conservation land. The new owners plan to provide information at the start of the new walkway.

Signs and track markers have also been built on Mt Cook Station, where some retired farmland has become conservation land through tenure review. This provides access for people headed for Jollie Stream.

Pedestrian gates now provide access to Matata Reserve near Mt Nimrod on the Hunter Hills. Because there is no legal easement and it crosses private land, ranger Michael Craddock has worked cooperatively with an adjoining landowner to develop this public access-way.

## From the LandSAR Newsletter July 2009

Recently, Wairarapa LandSAR purchased a number of X21 LED torches from the Led Lenser brand. After numerous months of trialling many lighting options, discussion with other SAR groups and outdoor users, they opted for the X21. While other lights have brighter outputs,

this torch with 1050 lumens and up to 300 hours burn time on four D-sized batteries proved impressive.

Wairarapa LandSAR tested the torches during an operation in Aorangi Forest Park where they searched steep faces and bush-covered spurs during darkness. From a high leading ridge the X21 was used to shine across to the opposite ridges and down into the valley systems below. As a comparison they had a quality spotlight scanning the terrain also, but found the white light of the X21 much superior. It is also lighter and the batteries lasted longer.

## Toi Toi Trekkers Tramping Club Celebrates 35 Years

Toi Toi Trekkers Tramping Club of South Auckland celebrated its 35th birthday on 19 September, at The General Store Restaurant on the roundabout at Whitford. About 50 members, past and present, attended this happy event. Drizzly rain prevented folk from gathering on the large open verandah, but the warm welcoming fire by the bar made a good substitute!



The Toi Toi Trekkers cake  
Photo: Anderton family

Club President Noel Newsome warmly welcomed everyone and thanked Colin Johnstone and all those on the committee for their months of work planning the successful reunion. After speeches, a delicious finger food lunch was served, enabling everyone to circulate and mingle. Colin Johnstone spoke briefly and then invited Eileen Newsome to cut the huge chocolate cake, which had a scrumptious layer of thick icing, decorated with boots, logs and rocks.

A continuous slide show of photographs reminded people of past tramping trips and the room buzzed with chatter all afternoon. Historical photographs featured on the table as well. A group photograph was taken just before guests reluctantly started to leave.

Barbara Marshall



Auckland Tramping Club members at the opening of the Ngāro Te Kotare Hut in 1929. Photo: George Haycock/Auckland Tramping Club. Haycock was an Auckland Tramping Club member and photographer. The Auckland Library holds some 700 glass plate photos, a large number of which were taken by George. The collection forms a great record of tramping from the 1920s to about 1950.

## Auckland Tramping Club Waitakere Hut 'Ngāro Te Kotare'

In May the Auckland Tramping Club celebrated 80 years since the completion of its hut Ngāro Te Kotare (The Hidden Lookout) in the Waitakere Ranges. The club formed in 1925, and members soon decided to build a hut. In 1928 four members each put up £25 to purchase seven acres of land – which the club paid back in 1930.

Construction involved considerable work by club members, who had to squeeze their activity into a short weekend. In the 1920s most people worked on Saturday mornings, so members caught the 1.45 pm train from the city, carrying heavy loads of building materials on top of already heavy packs. Arriving at Henderson, a 15-kilometre tramp up to the hut site lay ahead.

By 1929 the hut had become an integral part of the club. Members stayed there on Saturday nights and enjoyed Sunday tramping in the ranges. Over the years the hut has been extended, modernised and well maintained. However, without power or lighting it retains the atmosphere of a back-country hut. A wood-fired range provides heating and cooking, even though gas rings add some modern convenience.

Today, with the Waitakere Ranges only a 40-minute drive from the city, the club bus

makes weekly Sunday and Wednesday trips to the area for day tramps. The hut still provides ideal hut accommodation for weekend visits from other out-of-town clubs, schools, individual groups or families.

Club President Doug Astley says Ngāro Te Kotare is the ideal destination for those who want a break away from the hustle and bustle of city life. The hut, which featured in the June 2007 *FMC Bulletin* 'Huts as Heritage' column, can be booked through the club's website ([www.aucklandtramping.org.nz](http://www.aucklandtramping.org.nz)).

## Mt Doom – a Chocolate Volcanic Cake

3 cups couscous

6 cups water

1 cup drinking chocolate

1 cup chocolate chips

½ cup strawberry jam

1 teaspoon of chilli powder (more or less to taste)

1 litre tub of gooey raspberry ripple ice-cream (or similar)

Greek yoghurt

Optional extra – chopped crystallised ginger pieces

Boil water, add drinking chocolate and chilli and stir in couscous. Leave to soak for about five minutes. Stir and allow to cool to about blood heat. Stir in chocolate chips and ginger (optional).

Tip the ice-cream into the centre of a large mixing bowl (or serving plate) to form the volcano core. Shape the couscous into a volcano shape around the ice-cream. Pour the jam and yoghurt over the top to form runnels of lava and snow. Serves 12 hungry trampers.

Warren Wheeler

(from The Palmerston North Tramping & Mountaineering Club newsletter June 2009)

## Free WWW Track Information

For some time trampers, climbers and other recreationists have been able to plan trips using Google Earth and Virtual Earth. Now there is additional information. DOC tracks are available for the public to download via the Koordinates website (<http://koordinates.com/layer/753-doc-tracks-may-2009/>).



# Club Profile

John Wilson profiles the Waikato Tramping Club

Waikato Tramping Club members in the Kaimanawa Ranges Photo: John Wilson

Three young Hamilton women went tramping at Easter 1950 and enjoyed themselves so much they decided to form a tramping club. They approached the Department of Internal Affairs, a public meeting was called and the Waikato Tramping Club was born. The inaugural tramp in May was to Wairere Falls in the Kaimai Range.

Tramping took place all around the Waikato and further afield for a couple of years, then thoughts turned to building a bush hut. In the early 1950s, that was how it was before the NZ Forest Service began its major hut-building programme in 1956. Enthusiastic members built Waiorongomai Hut in the Kaimais by 1954, Waikato Hut on Ruapehu by 1956, and Waitengaue Hut in the Kaimais by 1968.

All became popular retreats for members and memories of notable occasions at the huts are still retold today. Unfortunately arsonists destroyed both Waiorongomai and Waitengaue, and because they were considered too close to road ends and consequent vandalism, neither hut was replaced. Waikato Hut, however, was enlarged to its present size in the mid 1970s. Many members look on it as a loved second home, and non-members also enjoy staying there.

The club runs a tramp most weekends to local hills and to Te Urewera, Egmont and Tongariro national parks, as well as Whirinaki, Coromandel, Kaweka and Ruahine forest parks. During the summer one or two week-long tramps are usually planned for mostly South Island locations.

Like all clubs, members have a lot of fun and build up great friendships. A club night is held on the first Wednesday of each month, where a guest speaker usually gives an interesting presentation, club news is disseminated and members have a good natter.

The club puts considerable effort into attracting new members and successfully maintains membership at about 220. Most active members range in age from the 30s to 60s. The club website presents the club well and increasingly attracts new members.

On the 15 and 16 May 2010 the club will celebrate its 60th anniversary with a weekend of functions. We are keen to contact as many past members as we can, so please get in touch if you once belonged to the club. See the club website ([www.wtc.org.nz](http://www.wtc.org.nz)) or email [wtc60th@paradise.net.nz](mailto:wtc60th@paradise.net.nz)



# Club Profile

## Brian Stephenson introduces the Alpine Sports Club

Brian Stephenson ski-touring around Crater Lake, Mt Ruapehu Photo: Lesley Topping

One of FMC's oldest clubs, the Alpine Sports Club, of Auckland, marks its 80th birthday this year. Sir Ronald Algie, keen climber, ski-tourer and later Speaker of the House of Representatives, was the founding President of ASC in 1929. Algie's former law students and others associated with the University of Auckland formed the core of the new club and they called themselves 'The Sundown Strollers.' ASC catered for a wide range of mountain and outdoor interests, including tramping, mountaineering, skiing, ski-touring, camping, caving and canoeing. An incidental intention was that ASC would provide young climbers with an opportunity to qualify for membership of the New Zealand Alpine Club, which for many years required climbing experience as a condition of entry.

The club attracted a lively membership. Like most clubs of that era, it became especially vigorous after the Second World War. The Hunua and Waitakere ranges were handy for quick trips but the club's reach extended to mountains all over New Zealand. Activities included bush and tops tramping everywhere. ASC groups often spent summer holidays on climbing trips at Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park.

ASC's first hut, a dilapidated bushman's shanty beside the Waitakere's Anawhata Stream, was repaired and christened 'Chateau Mosquito' in facetious comparison with the

Chateau Tongariro. The hut decayed long ago but its moniker lingers on in the name of the access track. ASC built its second hut in 1933-34, on land the club purchased on Anawhata Road. After falling victim to arson, the hut was rebuilt. Waitakere Hut is still a valued gathering place for members and others. Runnymede Hut, a basic hut of punge logs and malthoid was built by the club in the Mangatangi Valley, Hunua Ranges, in 1949. It lasted until 1966 and the Mangatangi Reservoir now covers the site in about 10 metres of water.

The club built its first Ruapehu Hut in 1950, then in 1966 constructed the A-Frame Lodge, about 50 metres further up Salt Hut Ridge. Enlargement of the A-Frame in 1994 just preceded the 1995-96 eruptions and a bad snow year. Together both huts offer 56 beds. Members can book online and pay by direct credit. As well as being in high demand by the skiers, the lodges provide a base for the alpine instruction course weekends and for summer tramping.

ASC membership peaked at 850 in 1994. The club kept its membership above 700 until recent years but a predicted (and budgeted for) reduction in members followed a decision in 2005 to raise the subscription to cover all of the club's fixed costs, including the Ruapehu huts. This followed the realisation, after the eruption years and the bad snow season, that poor



revenue from bunk nights could run out the club's reserves. Since then, membership has stabilised at about the 500 mark, with an additional 100 children of family member subscribers. Each year 20 to 30 new members join.

Stan Forbes, Ian McNab and Graeme Hasler documented the club's first 55 years in the 1986 book, *Alpine Sports*. For its 75th anniversary in 2004, the club commissioned a 60-minute video documentary, *The Mountain Journey*, co-produced by Graeme Hasler and Brian Stephenson. Catharine Watts, daughter of Sir Ronald Algie, was one of the keynote speakers who attended a formal dinner during the celebrations.


ASC fosters clubs within the club. Originally, Veteran members tended to congregate. A 'Midis' group then formed, because (they said) they found the Veterans too boring. The Midis later matured into Veterans, while (of course) losing none of their vigour and sparkle. Then there are the regular trampers. Skiers and snowboarders form another distinct group, and contribute mightily to the work of maintaining the Ruapehu

huts. At least one ski instruction weekend occurs per season and club members often ski in a US or Canadian resort during the northern winter.

ASC's climbing group is also active at Ruapehu and elsewhere, with a mountaineering course during the winter and a climbing trip in Aoraki/Mt Cook or Westland National Park in January. An annual family summer camp has run since 1969, often attracting more than 100 people. There is also a kayaking group and another that maintains the Waitakere Hut.

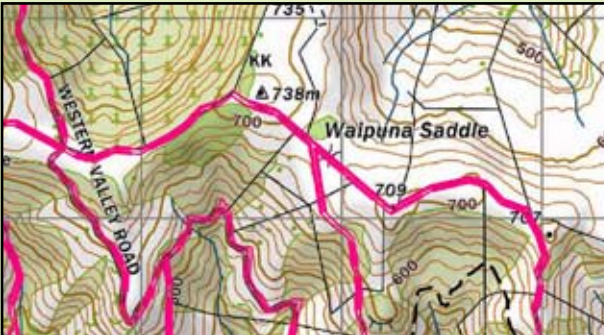
President Graham Wadams says he feels well supported by an enthusiastic Club Committee, several of whom are in their first term. Refinements to the online booking system and website are occurring, bookings for the Ruapehu huts are up and revenue ahead of forecast. A 2010 ASC calendar will feature photos taken by members. ASC meets the first Tuesday of every month at the St Marks Church Hall, 5 St Marks Road, Remuera. For more information, see the website ([www.alpinesport.org.nz](http://www.alpinesport.org.nz)).

Brian Stephenson  
ASC President 2002-2004



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Weather to Go?

# Ten Reasons to Hate a High

By **Bob McDavitt**, MetService Ambassador

Cumulus clouds build up over Fastness, Mt Aspiring National Park, during a High, probably the result of reason 10  
Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography.

Anticyclones are usually associated with light winds and sunny skies but they also have some undesirable attributes, especially when they get blocked and linger. In the last *FMC Bulletin*, we examined how a High created gale force winds in the Tararua Range, contrary to what a basic reading of the weather map may have suggested (see 8 below). It was just one of 10 reasons to 'Hate a High'.

1. Near the centre are dead winds and usually an area of low cloud causing dull days called 'anticyclonic gloom', or dirty air which may turn into fog.
2. Round the rim, winds are strong. If the central pressure is over 1030 'it's going to get dirty' so look for a gale somewhere on the outside of the High.
3. Highs intensify the trade winds in the tropics. It may take about a week for a High to travel eastwards past New Zealand, and during this time the stronger trade winds tend to give night-time rain to the eastern side of the larger tropical Islands. In Fiji this is sometimes called Bogi Walu.
4. The bigger the Highs are, the slower they move, blocking the fronts and lows that are trying to follow them. When this block is released, the western (back) end of a high may become a breeding ground for storms.

5. Intensifying Highs tend to squash together the isobars between themselves and any nearby low pressure centres, creating 'squash zones'.
6. A deepening low-pressure system and an intense or lingering anticyclone get together like the arms of an eggbeater and create a zone of enhanced wind and rain.
7. As air flows around a High, it spins out across the isobars and speeds up until it is as much as 20% more than that indicated by the isobar-spacing.
8. If a mountain range blocks the air flowing around a High, the air tends to squeeze around the mountains rather than flow over them. This splits the wind flow over New Zealand into rivers of wind and puddles of calm. Sometimes a narrow gap is made just above the mountains through which pent-up air may be suddenly released at a rapid rate.
9. In winter and spring a High may bring unwelcome frost.
10. In summer and autumn a High may allow sea breezes to converge and, if it is cold enough aloft, this can form thunderstorms and hail.

[Bob.mcdavitt@metservice.com](mailto:Bob.mcdavitt@metservice.com)





# Huts as Heritage

by Shaun Barnett

Sefton Bivvy, Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park, Canterbury

The restored Sefton Biv with the Sealy Range beyond Photo: Steve Baker/Black Robin Photography

Map H36, GR 743-203

The spectacularly sited Sefton Bivouac is perched at 1,650 metres on a knoll below the heavily glaciated eastern faces of Mt Sefton and the Footstool. The hut owes its existence to famous Mt Cook chief guide Peter Graham. In 1915 Graham decided to build a small hut below the Te Waewae Glacier, to provide a base for climbers making attempts on Sefton and The Footstool. However, materials were not carried up to the site and the hut finally erected until May 1917. The hut was similar in style to the original Almer Biv, built above the Franz Josef Glacier in 1915.

Measuring just 2.5 metres by 3.1 metres in area, the A-frame Sefton Biv is fairly basic with four bunks and not much else. Corrugated iron cladding encases a timber frame, and a stone wall surrounds the bivouac. Although Hooker Hut (built in 1909-10) is older, Sefton Bivouac is considered the oldest hut in Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park still on its original site and in its original state. In contrast, Hooker Hut has been substantially modified over the decades, and moved a number of times.

The year after its completion, heavy snow badly damaged Sefton Biv, but it was soon repaired and served as a useful climbing base for over eight decades. Then in 1999, DOC renovated and improved the hut, while maintaining its historic integrity. According to DOC's Shirley Slatter: 'All the corrugated iron

cladding was removed, the frame repaired and the original iron replaced. Building paper and plywood was put inside, and a sample of the original congooleum framed and put inside to show what it was like.' DOC also placed the hut on piles and constructed a wooden floor to replace the original earth floor. After repainting, the restoration was complete.

Appropriately, the hut now has a Historic Places Trust rating and serves as reminder of times past, when hut construction was a much more laborious task. According to conservation architect Chris Cochran: 'The building has architectural significance as a building fit for its purpose, robust, simple and appropriate in the context of a high altitude hut. Despite its minute size, its rugged appearance befits the drama of its mountain setting. It is a good (and now very rare) example of a mountaineering structure of the early period of development of the sport of climbing.'

Reaching the hut requires some steepish scrambling up a spur from Stocking Stream, which is accessible by diverting off the main Hooker Valley track. Travelling up Stocking Stream itself should be avoided (this is a major avalanche path), and the route should only be tackled by experienced trampers and climbers. The hut is free for overnight use.

Acknowledgement: Many thanks to Shirley Slatter, DOC Aoraki/Mt Cook, for help with this article. ([www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz))

References: *Mick Bowie, The Hermitage Years*, by Nan Bowie, Reed, 1969



# DON'T MINE OUR PLACE

By Robin McNeill

A lignite surfacing mining operation in Hambach, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, such as we could expect to see in Southland Photo: Jeff McNeill

If you are on Death Row and a uniformed official comes to measure your neck size, it is possible that you are about to own a tailored shirt. Darker prospects would certainly overshadow such cheery thoughts.

Similarly, Gerry Brownlee's recent announcement about undertaking a stock-take of minerals in land set out in Schedule 4 of the Crown Minerals Act has rightly excited the deepest suspicions of conservationists and outdoor recreationists – notwithstanding Conservation Minister Tim Groser's telling us not to be alarmed and Prime Minister John Key's reassurance that modern mining technology allows for only 'surgical incisions' into the landscape.

## Oversight?

Was Brownlee's well reported announcement a measure of openness, or oversight? Brownlee could easily have quietly asked an officials committee to do the stock-take without public notification and none of us would have been any the wiser, at least in the short term. It would have saved Government the embarrassment of dealing with the substantial fallout experienced to date.

Equally, Brownlee could have omitted to mention the words 'Schedule 4' in his announcement, whereupon no one could object to a stock-take. After all, setting aside

arguments over whether lignite should be mined in the first place, could anyone object to a DOC-administered esplanade strip in the Matura Valley, now hundreds of metres from the Matura River and with cows grazing on it, being used for mining?

**Schedule 4 is only 30% of the Problem**  
The fact is that Brownlee deliberately mentioned Schedule 4 lands in his announcement, leaving no room for ambiguity. Contrary to some inaccurate newspaper reporting, Schedule 4 lands make up only about 30% of the public conservation estate administered by DOC. Inclusion in Schedule 4 is reserved for only our most highly prized, respected and internationally recognised lands: national parks, nature or scientific reserves, some scenic reserves, wilderness areas, marine reserves, Ramsar wetlands, and the Coromandel. Protecting each one involved considerable public consultation and some only gained their special status after an act of parliament was individually passed to protect the land for its intrinsic worth.



Conservation parks, forest parks, many scenic reserves, stewardship land, and most of the West Coast are not protected by inclusion in Schedule 4 – mining can go ahead in these places right now, as in the OceanaGold mine in Victoria Forest Park, near Reefton. Indeed, in his speech at Conservation Week in Wellington during September, Minister Tim Groser noted that there are already 82 mines operating on DOC land.

By implication, when the Government asks if Schedule 4 lands should be mined, there can be no doubt that it has already formed a view on these other public conservation lands.

### Surgical Incisions

Just as puzzling was Brownlee's suggestion that Schedule 4 lands harboured vast lignite fields. The lignite fields in Southland and part of Central Otago are indeed huge. Lignite fields in the Maitai Valley are by far the largest of these, currently home to well manicured dairy farms. Not by coincidence is Solid Energy the largest owner of dairy farms in Southland. In this light, the added urge to mine Schedule 4 lands for lignite seems odd.

As for Key's reassurance, lignite mining on the scale envisioned for Southland involves a

rolling front five kilometres wide, two kilometres long and maybe 100 metres deep; over their lives these mines will crawl across some 40 kilometres of paddocks. It is disingenuous to call this a surgical incision.

Coromandel is the other area where mining companies have known ambitions for its gold. Coromandel was included in Schedule 4 after the highly vociferous and well supported anti-mining campaign in the 1980s. Given the acrimony then, one could expect protesters to again throw their bodies in front of bulldozers if Coromandel faced more mining, and so re-litigate a very thorny problem for the Government.

### Conservation Economy

Minister of Conservation Tim Groser now finds himself in a difficult position: his thoughtful speech at the FMC AGM addressed the need to use public conservation lands responsibly for the economic benefit of New Zealand. He also stated that our public conservation lands need to be able to be enjoyed by those in our larger population centres. The trouble here is that Coromandel forms some of the most popular front-country for Aucklanders, the very population he was alluding to.

The Douglas Range, Kahurangi National Park. During the mid 1990s, conservationists fought hard to create Kahurangi National Park, an area well-known for its mineral wealth. Prior to 1996, when the national park was gazetted, the area already had some protection as Northwest Nelson Forest Park. However proponents rightly recognised that national park status offered greater protection against mining Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography



Both Key and Groser have to deal with opposition to Brownlee's announcement from not only every outdoor recreationist and conservationist, but the entire tourism industry. The '100% Pure' brand, one of the most recognised brands in the world, has ten years' standing. The tourist industry knows that '98% Pure' just doesn't cut the mustard, pointedly noting that tourism is now the country's largest earner.

## Mining Again on the Agenda

Since the 1980s, we have complacently believed that no Government would again have the appetite to mine our back-country.

We were wrong. Further, what Brownlee has inadvertently highlighted is that some 70% of our public conservation lands can be mined right now and that miners are apparently eying it up. And don't wait for the newspapers to tell you where mining is planned. Unlike applying for a tourism concession to walk over public conservation lands, miners can get permission to mine and trash these same lands without any form of public notification, let alone consultation.

So, if mining our back-country has been off the agenda for the last nine years, it is clear that now the gloves are off. We urgently need watertight protection from mining for not only Schedule 4 lands, but all those other places where we go tramping, hunting and climbing. Clear action is called for.

**Post a Photo, Save our Back-country!**  
Because the miners have had the ear of Brownlee, the Government's thinking has

not been balanced. Now, it is up to outdoor recreationists, conservationists and tourist operators to redress the imbalance. Letters to the Minister of Conservation provide the strongest message to Government. The very least you can do to preserve our tramping and mountaineering lands is to join the FMC 'Post a Photo' campaign.

To join the campaign, find a photo of your favourite tramping spot. Don't worry if the land is included in Schedule 4 or not — that needn't be your concern. Print the photo and on the back write a few passionate sentences stating where the photo was taken and why you love the area. Ask that it be protected from mining. Letters don't need a stamp. Include your name and address and post it to: Mr Tim Groser, Minister of Conservation, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. You may prefer to email your photo and comments to the Minister at [t.groser@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:t.groser@ministers.govt.nz) Also send copies to your local Member of Parliament.

Please overwhelm the Minister's office for the rest of this year with a constant flow of photos.

Should you bother? If nothing else, you owe it to your children and grandchildren to protect our back-country.

Remember, gone is gone forever.

This article represents Federated Mountain Clubs' position and may be downloaded from the website ([www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)) and further distributed only in its entirety, and must acknowledge both the author and Federated Mountain Clubs.




The 'surgical incision' mining that is Stockton Mine, West Coast, pictured in January 2009 Photo: Quentin Duthie



# POST A PHOTO SAVE OUR BACK-COUNTRY!

Federated Mountain Clubs and Wilderness Magazine are concerned about plans to open up our national parks and other reserves to mining. You can help preserve our tramping and mountaineering lands by joining our 'Post a Photo' campaign.

To join the campaign, find a photo of your favourite tramping spot. Print the photo and on the back write a few passionate sentences stating where the photo was taken and why you love the area. Ask that it be protected from mining. Letters don't need a stamp.



To the Hon Tim Groser,  
Minister of Conservation  
Parliament Building  
Wellington

(no stamp needed)

Please don't mine Fiery Col in Mt Aspiring National Park. It's part of a great weeklong tramping trip called the Five Passes in the Olivine Wilderness. From the col, the rusting-red ultramafic rocks form a background to the spectacular Darran Mountains. A mine would wreck the place.

Best regards,  
Shaun Barnett



Photos: Lead Hills, Kahurangi National Park; Tops, Victoria Forest Park; Fiery Col, Mt Aspiring National Park. Shaun Barnett



# What is Schedule 4? by Brian Stephenson

Lake Manapouri from Shallow Bay, Fiordland National Park Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography

When you say ‘conservation law’ the mind does not skip immediately to the Crown Minerals Act 1991. Its long title describes it as ‘An Act to restate and reform the law relating to the management of Crown owned minerals.’ It’s about mining. Schedule 4 is part of the Act.

Pause here for a quick lesson in general land law. When you buy your house in Petone, Fendalton or Hokitika, you think of yourself as the ‘owner’ of the land. You can do anything on it. Well, not quite. You have bought a bundle of rights to the land from Her Majesty, The Queen. It’s a big bundle but it doesn’t include absolutely everything imaginable. The Queen holds onto the rights to the gold, diamonds, oil – in short, any minerals – underneath the land. You control the surface. You can still make a dollar out of what’s underneath by charging for access. As for the minerals themselves, ‘the royalties go to Royalty’. One of several Acts of Parliament which govern the rights over searching for, extracting, and making money out of, minerals is the Crown Minerals Act 1991.

Now cut to some ‘real’ conservation law. At the top of the heap is the National Parks Act 1980 and its predecessors, right back to the Tongariro National Park Act 1894. The 1980 Act proclaims that it is about ‘areas of New Zealand that contain scenery of such distinctive quality, ecological systems, or natural features so beautiful, unique, or scientifically important that their preservation is in the national interest.’

‘Beautiful, unique or scientifically important’ are unusually poetic words to find their way into an Act of Parliament. They stand for indescribably profound concepts. They cross every culture. They touch what it is to be human.

This brings us to the seminal event of 20th century conservation politics in New Zealand, the Save Manapouri campaign, which ran from 1959 to 1972. As Otago writer Neville Peat put it: ‘What captured the public’s imagination across the country was the prospect that a lake as beautiful as Manapouri could be interfered with, despoiled and debased.’ Ten percent of New Zealand’s population signed the petition opposing the raising of the lake. They succeeded.

The legacy of Save Manapouri was an awareness that ordinary citizens can shape the way we manage land with features ‘so beautiful, unique, or scientifically important that their preservation is in the national interest.’

After Manapouri several organisations, including FMC, cast a critical eye over the quality of legislative protection of other special places. They were shocked to discover that, in law, mining was allowed anywhere, even in national parks. Their concern eventually found expression in Parliament, in the Protected Areas (Prohibition on Mining) Bill. When he introduced it to the House on 4 September 1990, the Labour Government’s Minister of Conservation



Philip Woollaston noted: 'New Zealand is one of the very few countries with legislation that permits mining to occur in national parks. This has resulted in critical comment by bodies such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and our international reputation for national park management has been somewhat tarnished as a result. The United States of America, Canada, and Australia all ban mining in national parks.'

The Bill was not a sprinter. It did not reach a second reading until 19 November 1997, when the Minister concerned was National's Max Bradford. By then, as Bradford observed, the Crown Minerals Act and the Resource Management Act had been passed: 'Both these Acts impacted significantly on the subject of this particular Bill and removed the possible presumption in favour of mining inherent in the Acts they replaced.' The following day, Bradford moved the third reading of the renamed Bill and the Crown Minerals Amendment Act, including Schedule 4, passed into law. He observed, somewhat prophetically, that:

'The debate over the acceptability of mining in land managed by the Department of Conservation is longstanding, and strong views are held on both sides of the argument. I suspect we have not heard the last of them. However, this Bill represents a reasonable approach that seeks to balance competing interests whilst still addressing the issue of what additional restrictions on access to the Crown's minerals we want to have when those minerals are in particular categories of conservation land.'

What's in Schedule 4? It's the very top drawer of land with high conservation values: land so far off limits to mining that, under Section 61, access to minerals is not even up for discussion: 'The Minister of Conservation must not accept any application for an access arrangement or enter into any access arrangement relating to any Crown owned mineral in any Crown owned land... described in Schedule 4.' It includes national parks, nature or scientific reserves, wilderness areas, sanctuary areas, wildlife sanctuaries, marine reserves and wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

The Minister of Energy and Resources, Gerry Brownlee, acknowledges that, 'collectively the areas currently covered by Schedule 4 make up around 13% of New Zealand's total land area and include the highest value conservation areas.' Having said that, Brownlee is keen to review Schedule 4 because, 'Some of the areas within Schedule 4 are known to host significant potential for zinc, lead, copper, nickel, tin, tungsten and other metals.'

There is a disconnect between, on the one hand, Brownlee's enthusiasm for reviewing Schedule 4 and, on the other, Minister of Conservation Tim Groser's view that mining could be done in 'small discrete areas.' It is unthinkable that Groser intends that expression to mean areas 'so beautiful, unique, or scientifically important that their preservation is in the national interest.' Brownlee, on the other hand, seems to mean that areas such as Waitutu, Paparoa, Kahurangi and the Coromandel (the last one not a national park but in Schedule 4) should lose their protection simply because they contain minerals. That proposition does not sit well with the core value in section 4 of the National Parks Act that 'They shall be preserved as far as possible in their natural state.' Nor does it accord with the Act's purpose of 'preserving [them] in perpetuity as national parks, for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the public.'

A week is a long time in politics. 'Perpetuity' may be somewhat shorter.

FMC





# Sifting at Sefton Biv

## An extract from **Paul Hersey's** new book *High Misadventure*

Sefton Bivouac, with Te Waewae Glacier and The Footstool beyond Photo: Steve Baker/Black Robin Photography

Derek Chinn and I looked up. Above the shadow of the mountain, dank clouds raced each other across the sky, and spindrifts of snow swirled into aerial eddies behind a rocky spur. The wind sounded like a distant locomotive, and we knew that only our sheltered alcove was protecting us from its full force.

So much for a pleasant early-winter climb, I thought. It was June 2002, and Derek and I had finally managed to co-ordinate a weekend together for alpine climbing.

"What do you reckon?" Derek asked, scowling in the general direction of the cacophony on the summit ridge.

"Not quite what I had in mind," I replied. "Don't know that I'm ready to throw it in yet, though."

"Me neither," Derek agreed. "No point in hanging around here. We may as well get as high as we can before the weather really kicks in."

Ironically, 'kicking in' was exactly what we needed to do. The snow slope we were traversing alternated between bullet-hard glacial ice and waist-deep lee-side snow gatherings that

required various swimming techniques. Our goal – the summit of the Footstool – was not giving up without a good old-fashioned struggle.

The Footstool is Mount Sefton's little brother. In the right conditions, the Footstool offers a pleasant amble across easy-angled glaciers above Sefton Bivvy, followed by a short steep section to the summit. There are more difficult routes on its East Face but, given the approaching weather system, Derek and I opted for the straightforward Main Divide access.

Situated near the confluence of the Hooker and Mueller glaciers, the mountain and bivvy are exposed to winds from both the north and south. And that day, a pre-front north-westerly was doing its best kite-flying routine.

Derek and I were roped together but moving as one. We crabbed across icy sections before resorting to free-styling with our arms and breast-stroke kicking through the snow drifts. It was my turn to break trail, so I was ahead of Derek. I stopped and looked back to see how good a path I was creating. Derek was up to his armpits in broken snow.

"This is no bloody easier going second," he muttered. I smirked.

Behind and below Derek, to the south-east, I could make out Mount Cook Village between the cloud bursts. A coffee wouldn't go amiss about now, I mused. Still, it was good to be out in the mountains, even if the weather was less than agreeable.

We traversed the Tewaewae and Eugenie glaciers, moving onto firmer snow as we increased our altitude. The teeth of our crampons squeaked like frightened mice as they found purchase against the frozen snow.

Eventually we reached the snow-plastered ridgeline of Ka Tiritiri o te Moana – the Southern Alps. I stopped for a short rest and looked to the north. The Hooker Glacier appeared serene in its seemingly gentle amble downhill from the western slopes of Aoraki, with winter snow smoothing its crevassed wrinkles. Only a few kilometres further along the divide from where we were, past Cadogan, Du Faur and Madonna peaks, was Copland Pass. The pass was first crossed by Arthur Harper in March 1895, and its popularity was enhanced by the natural hot pools at Welcome Flat in the Copland Valley.

The wind kept blowing spindrift in my face so I turned to the south. Past Sefton, the Mueller Glacier folded away towards Barron Saddle, before the sudden drop down to Dobson Valley. Derek called across to me that we should keep moving. I put my water bottle back in my pack – most of the water had turned into mini icebergs anyway.

Four hours after leaving Sefton Bivvy, Derek and I reached the windswept summit of the Footstool. Clouds enveloped us momentarily and then galloped on, harried by the wind. Poised above the 1700-metre plunge down to the Copland Valley, we braced ourselves against the wind's blasts.

Derek said something to me, but I couldn't hear him over the wind. I cupped my hand to my ear and shrugged my shoulders. He pointed at the clouds and pulled a face. I nodded, agreeing with his more experienced assessment. The weather did appear to be getting worse, and it was probably time to start heading back. I pulled



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my ice axes out of the snow and started down-climbing. Derek followed shortly after.

We returned to Sefton Bivvy and tried to decide whether to carry on down to the village. Neither of us had commitments the following day, though, so we agreed that a night at the bivvy wouldn't go amiss.

Sefton Bivvy is little more than a tin shed with a wooden floor. Rebuilt by DOC in 1999, its only amenity is a radio. Access to the shelter is along the Hooker Valley Track, veering off at Stocking Stream, and then up an exposed spur. From the bivvy, the views to the north and south take in some of New Zealand's grandest mountains, including Aoraki, Hicks and Sefton.

Derek and I settled in for the evening and, outside, the north-west storm gathered momentum. Wind gusts careered around the walls of the shelter, singing and screeching against the structure and causing it to vibrate.

"Not going to blow away, are we?" I joked to Derek. "Well, you never know," he said, dryly.



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The racket of the wind kept me awake most of the night. The constant roar was like a jumbo jet – or at least one of its engines – on open throttle outside the hut. In the brief lulls between gusts I could hear Derek snoring. I was reminded yet again of my climbing companion's ability to sleep in almost any situation.

The next morning the storm was going hammer and tongs, and I figured we wouldn't be moving anywhere in a hurry. Sheltered from the brunt of the maelstrom, I lay in my sleeping bag staring at the roof and Derek tried to read a book he had carried in. The wind increased steadily. At times the hut shook rather dramatically.

I started to wonder about the structural integrity of our shelter. But when I snuck a look at Derek and he did not appear concerned, I figured I didn't have anything to worry about. But later that morning, and shortly after a particularly violent gust, Derek unzipped his sleeping bag and started to get dressed. I didn't say anything until he was midway through lacing up his boots. "What, do you actually think the hut might blow away?"

Derek shrugged his shoulders. "Wouldn't want to get caught with your pants around your ankles if it did, would you?"

I did not say anything, but quietly followed suit. I was not sure where we would vacate to – possibly the big overhanging rock next to the hut, if we could make it against the wind – but I was not about to ignore Derek's lead. Derek is a civil engineer and has helped design a number of this country's high alpine huts, including Plateau and Mueller in the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, and French Ridge in the Mount Aspiring National Park. So he was more than qualified to assess the situation.

Soon after I finished dressing, the wind blew the hut door open. The whole hut seemed to expand for a few seconds. Derek quickly forced the door closed and propped a walking pole against it.

"This area is renowned for getting a bit pretty breezy at times," he said. "You know about Three Johns Hut, don't you?"

I shook my head. I wondered if I wanted to know at that point in time.



Derek and I decided to leave the hut and managed to reach the rock shelter by commando-crawling between wind gusts. We were exposed to the elements, but I felt less concerned than in Sefton Bivvy. An hour or so later the wind swung around to the south-west and eased, and we headed back down to the Mount Cook Village.

Alpine huts are supposed to be safe havens where trampers and climbers can shelter from a storm. A network of huts is scattered throughout New Zealand's backcountry. Some of these alpine huts are maintained by DOC and others are looked after by volunteer organisations such as the NZAC or CMC. When any climbing trip is planned, the location of any huts in the area is a must-know.


The idea that huts are not entirely safe takes some getting used to. Sometimes DOC warns travellers that a certain hut is within a historical avalanche path, but this is usually only a risk during winter and early spring. Concern about the structural integrity of a hut is a far more worrying proposition.

The Sefton Bivvy experience was not the first time I have been worried about the integrity of a hut. Years earlier, my friend Guy White and I spent a night at Copland Shelter while travelling over Copland Pass en route to Sefton's North Ridge. The shelter on Copland Pass is little more than a huge round water tank rolled on its side, with a wooden floor and a door. Perched high on a narrow spur, Copland Shelter is lashed to the bedrock with wire strops. During the night lightning flashed past us down to the valley below, and the wind forced the hut against the strops. At one stage Guy and I were so convinced one of the strops had broken that I tied into our climbing rope and Guy belayed me out the door to check. Everything was secure, but I spent most of the night wondering if the shelter was at risk of being blown down into the Hooker Valley.


This extract was a prelude to Paul writing about the infamous Three Johns Hut disaster of 1977, when four climbers were killed. A review of *High Misadventure* will appear in the next *Bulletin* (March 2010).



Author Paul Hersey during his 2006 first ascent of the north ridge of Mt Hopkins Photo: Kynan Bazley



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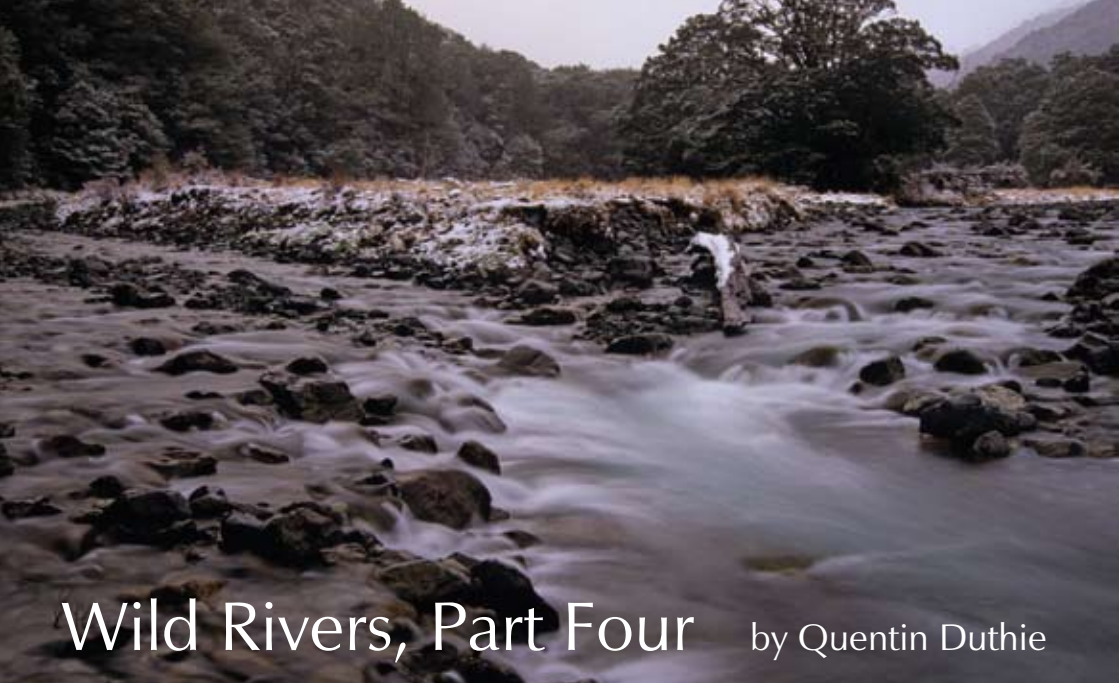


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# Wild Rivers, Part Four

by Quentin Duthie

The upper Hurunui River North branch, recently recommended for a Water Conservation Order, Lake Sumner Forest Park, Canterbury Photos: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography.

The Wild Rivers campaign continues to gather momentum. By the time you read this, the campaign will be publicly launched. One of the first actions is to celebrate wild river values and educate the public about the threats that face them. A 'Day on a Wild River' event is planned for the weekend of 28-29 November. Many FMC clubs will participate and we hope you can join us too.

Also by the time you read this, a decision by council commissioners on the fate of the wild Mokihinui River (see *FMC Bulletin* August 2008) will be known, and likely, appealed. Meridian's dam proposal would not only destroy a pristine wild river gorge, but is unnecessary, given two other large-scale hydro options on the West Coast

(the Arnold scheme and the Stockton Hydro Project) that will fulfil local energy needs with minimal impact on unmodified wild rivers.

In each of these schemes, the proponents have argued for the benefit of West Coast power self-sufficiency. However, in an alarming twist, 'meeting demand' now seems to be replaced by turning hydro into an export opportunity. The West Coast Regional Council would like to turn the Coast into an 'electricity generation centre' to 'explicitly promote the West Coast as an ideal region to export hydro power to the rest of New Zealand.' The West Coast is certainly renowned for its rainfall and rivers, and clearly tourism – the most important industry and largest employer – is based around wild rivers and glaciers. Damming wild West Coast rivers would be a terrible mistake. We also know that government RMA reformers are considering making access to conservation land easier for hydro dams. These developments show the need for strong wild river advocacy, and your support has become all the more important.

Meanwhile, across the main divide, the proposed Water Conservation Order (WCO) for

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the Hurunui River has met only partial success. FMC supported Fish and Game's application for a WCO to preserve the two upper branches in their natural state, and ensure adequate flow and water quality of the lower river. The Tribunal subsequently approved the WCO on the North (Lake Sumner) Branch, but declined it for the South Branch. Little difference exists between the 'nationally outstanding' characteristics of the two branches, and being part of the same river, any development to one will impact on the character of the other. The decision seems like an attempt to find a compromise solution, and will likely be appealed.

Despite the WCO approval for the North Branch and much of the lower river, developers promptly lodged applications to install a weir on Lake Sumner to raise its level, and a 75-metre-high dam, with a seven-kilometre-long reservoir on the South Branch, and to take water for irrigation that would reduce the lower river flow by 32 cumecs. What is most galling is that a 2007 Canterbury Strategic Water Study, involving industry and environmental stakeholders, agreed on a low-impact farmland water storage proposal in preference to developing the wild Hurunui River. The WCO application would not have affected that proposal. Perhaps emboldened by the election of a new government, the developers have abandoned the agreed option and applied for high-impact damming of the Hurunui.

In the North Island, the Wairarapa Irrigation Trust has plans for water storage and irrigation. The Trust's original proposal involved dams on four separate wild rivers within Tararua Forest Park – the Tauherenikau, Waiohine, Waingawa and Ruamahanga. The Trust recently assured Forest and Bird that dams are not on the cards, but FMC and other Wild Rivers campaigners will remain vigilant. The Tararua Range is 'the home of tramping in New Zealand', and battles to protect it from dams have been won and lost in the past – the Otaki still flows freely from source to sea because of a 1970s campaign, but the Mangahao was dammed in 1924 for 38MW of power.

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Even more alarming is the recent statement of the Minister of Agriculture, David Carter, that Water Conservation Orders are 'a very blunt type of process' and he 'would expect the Land and Water Forum will look quite seriously on whether this mechanism has outlived its usefulness'. WCOs remain the primary tool for protecting 'nationally outstanding' rivers from dams and major irrigation takes. Just whether the Minister envisages some other form of protection or no protection at all remains unknown. Or whether he thinks the WCOs on rivers like the Motu, Mohaka, Buller and Rakaia should be removed. Such a proposal would be outrageous, given the current situation whereby New Zealand has a mere 16 WCOs and has increasing pressure on our remaining wild rivers for hydro and irrigation. Addressing the ever-growing and unsustainable demand for electricity and farming intensification is the only solution.

Former *Bulletin* editor John Rhodes enjoying a day trip down the lower Waiohine Gorge, Tararua Forest Park



FMC and other Wild Rivers campaigners are part of the Land and Water Forum. They will advocate for wild river conservation and recreation values as part of a collaborative governance process. This attempts to find a durable and acceptable reform proposal for the way New Zealand regulates and prices water management. While the primary focus is on the lowland issues of water pollution and over-allocation of scarce water resources, it will inevitably impact on the legal protection of wild rivers, including WCOs and conservation land protection. Wild River campaigners will seek much more secure protection for our wild rivers.

In the meantime, FMC encourages you to check our website ([www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)) for event details of your local 'Day on a Wild River', and get involved. Only by promoting the wild and sustainable values of our rivers can we hope to stem the tide of threats that our precious rivers now face.

The Waiohine River, taken from the new footbridge at the Walls Whare road end, Tararua Forest Park, Wairarapa







# Quick Mountain Quiz – Wild Rivers answers p. 46

1. Through the gorge of which river did pioneering canoeists Marmaduke Dixon and George Mannering first descend in 1889?
2. Which river has serious Grade 6 rapids caused by uplift during the 1929 Murchison Earthquake, and is now a goal of ambitious rafters?
3. At the confluence of the West Coast’s Landsborough and Haast rivers, which is the bigger of the two?
4. What was the first ‘Wild and Scenic River’ in New Zealand?  
A. Landsborough B. Rangitata C. Waikato D. Motu
5. How many New Zealand lakes and rivers have a Water Conservation Order?  
A. 6 B. 16 C. 60 D. 160
6. What is New Zealand’s longest river?
7. What is New Zealand’s most voluminous river?
8. Which West Coast River has the following named gorges: Morgan and Windhover?
9. The Ngaruroro River, renowned for its rafting and fly-fishing, flows through which two North Island forest parks?
10. Which river is New Zealand’s only one to cut through the divide of a mountain range?



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# FMC Photo Competition

Over \$1200 in prizes and prize money.



This competition aims to encourage clubs to run their own photograph competitions, and then submit winning entries into the national **FMC Photo Competition**. Winners of the competition will feature in the *FMC Bulletin*, providing an opportunity to celebrate fine outdoor photography from club members.

## Competition Dates

Please fill out the attached entry form. Closing date for entries is **31 January 2010**. The results will be announced in the March 2010 *FMC Bulletin*. Judges are Shaun Barnett and John Rhodes.

## Categories

Judges will choose a winner from each of the six categories below, then select an overall winner. Individual category winners will each receive a prize, and a cash prize of \$250 will go to the club with the overall winner.

1. Outdoor Landscapes (no people)
2. Hut or Camp Life
3. Above Bushline
4. Below Bushline
5. Native Flora and Fauna (no people)
6. Historic (photos must be identifiably pre-1980 and feature some aspect of club life. Black and white encouraged but not essential).

## Entries

Entries will be made by a club, with a limit of two entries per club in each category. Photos will be submitted electronically except for the Historic category, in which original prints or slides would be acceptable. Files between 500KB and 5MB will be submitted on CD. No digital manipulation is permissible except for tonal or exposure adjustments, cropping and sharpening. Photos must be taken by a member of an affiliated club since 1 January 2007 (except for Historic) and will not have won any other awards in any photo competition except the member's own club competition. Any historic

slides or photos must have the photographer's name and a caption clearly written on the back. Mark slides with a conspicuous dot on the lower left hand corner for viewing.

Photos must feature subjects in New Zealand, not overseas.

For the purposes of the FMC Photo Competition, each section (e.g. Wellington Section) of the New Zealand Alpine Club will be treated as a separate club. This is because the NZAC already runs its own national photo competition, and sections run their own local competitions.

Individual supporters are not eligible to enter because the competition aims to provide a national extension of club competitions.

Entrants agree to FMC's right to use the photos (with acknowledgement) in any FMC publication, but the photos will not be used outside FMC publications unless negotiated with the original photographer.

Judges' decisions are final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

## Prizes

Each category winner will receive one of the following prizes:

1. Freshmap Topographic mapping for the whole of New Zealand. Value \$285.
2. Book *Light & Landscape* by Andris Apse, Craig Potton Publishing Value \$150.
3. Book *New Zealand's Wilderness Heritage* by Les Molloy, Craig Potton Publishing. Value \$90.
4. A head-torch from Bivouac Outdoor. Value \$90.
5. An annual subscription to *NZ Wilderness* magazine. Value \$80.
6. Oringi tramping socks, two pairs. Value \$48.

Each category runner-up will receive an Image Vault Huts Poster ([www.imagevault.co.nz](http://www.imagevault.co.nz)), valued at \$35.



Trampers pass ice on tussock, Tararua Forest Park Photo John Rhodes/Wairarapa Visuals



To: Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (Inc), PO Box 1604, Wellington 6140

Name of Club: .....

Category:  Outdoor Landscapes  Hut or Camp Life  Above Bushline  Below Bushline  
 Native Flora and Fauna  Historic

Name of photographer: .....

Ten word description of photo: .....

Date taken: .....

Photographer's contact details: .....

Phone: ..... email: .....

- Our club has the permission of the photographer to enter the FMC Photo competition.
- The photographer gives permission for their photography to be used in publicity material relating to FMC.
- The photographer confirms that the file has not been digitally manipulated other than for exposure or tonal adjustments, cropping or sharpening.

Copyright remains with the photographer.

Any decision by the judges is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

Many thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, without whom the competition would not have been possible. We encourage readers and participants to support our sponsors.

# craig potton publishing



# FMC TRAVEL CLUB

## FMC TRAVEL CLUB

The FMC Travel Club offers wonderful small group holidays that support FMC. Many satisfied past travellers have shared their comments to us. Check out dossiers from past trips to see how we do things and get on contact lists for advertised trips. See also the FMC website ([www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)).

Trip concepts and possible leaders are always welcomed too.

## 2010 SCHEDULE

**TASMANIA** departs 22 February. Our near neighbour is a perfect destination for an FMC-style tramping holiday, and our itinerary combines the best aspects of Australia's smallest state. The 2010 trip is full already, but a repeat is planned for early 2011.

**NEPAL** departs 4 April. **Itinerary change!** Following our successful trip into the Everest and Gokyo Lakes region this year, we are now repeating that instead of the previously advertised Langtang trip. Graham Foulds leads this spring departure. Awesome Himalayan tramping, Sherpa culture, the wonders of the Kathmandu Valley plus a safari in Chitwan National Park. Be quick!

**VANUATU** departs 21 April. A five-island exploration of this tropical country in the company of friendly locals. Plenty of tramping through jungles to active volcanoes, rugged coastlines, hot pools and more. Witness the land diving festival

and try superb snorkelling. Bring an adventurous spirit. Contact me urgently.

**SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND** departs June. Several national parks and World Heritage sites wrapped up in a three-week trip at a pleasant time of year. Fraser Island, Lamington National Park, Carnarvon Gorge and more. Contact me urgently.

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Poling dugout canoe, Rapiti River, Royal Chitwan National Park, Nepal



# FMC TRAVEL CLUB

interesting and there is cultural exploration too. David Henson ably leads this trip from Manchester. Combine it with your visit to family or friends, or follow it with Switzerland. Open for registrations.

**SWITZERLAND plus!** departs 19 July. The Italian Dolomites – The Swiss Alps – Circuit of Mont Blanc. Choose one, two or three sections! Arguably the finest European tramping is contained in this trip, brilliantly led by Marianne Reinhard, our regional expert. The limestone Dolomites are a contrast to Switzerland, with cultural differences too. The Mont Blanc circuit has been much anticipated. Comfy accommodation and efficient transport links it all together. Open for registrations.

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**CAMINO DE SANTIAGO** Thank you for the many enquiries! A holy year in 2010 means the trail will be overrun with pilgrims and walkers, making logistics difficult and quality of experience reduced. Leader Helen Burns and I have decided to delay the trip 12 months to September 2011. See below.

**Tentative ideas for 2011** (\* awaiting leaders)

**Tasmania** February

**Bhutan/Sikkim\*** March/April or October/November

**South Africa\*** most months possible

**South Australia\*** April to October

**Mongolia** July

**Alaska/Yukon\*** July/August

**Switzerland plus** – June to September

**Rockies of USA/Canada\*** May to September

**Iceland\*** July/August

**Camino de Santiago** September

**North Queensland\*** May to October

Other possible destinations I'd like to offer include: Yunnan China; parks of southwest USA; sections of long distance trails in USA; Peru; more of western Canada; Papua New Guinea; and a range of trips in Australia, such as the Larapinta Trail and parks of Victoria and New South Wales.

**All enquiries to**

John Dobbs,  
FMC Travel Club Convenor  
Tel: 06 835 2222  
Fax: 06 835 4211  
Email [john@tsnapier.co.nz](mailto:john@tsnapier.co.nz)

Churches, Cortina D'Ampezzo, Dolomiti, Italy Photos: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography





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- support and enlarge our national parks, reserves, and the conservation estate

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Our website ([www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)) has full details about Individual Membership, Youth Membership and Family Membership and how to enrol and pay your subscription online.

Alternatively, cut off the section below (or photocopy) and post to us now.



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# Mt Aspiring National Park Draft Management Plan



## David Barnes summarises the FMC submission

Climbers, Mt Brewster, Mt Aspiring National Park Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography

Mt Aspiring National Park was formed in 1964, after a long campaign that included FMC. Initially the park comprised 200,000 hectares but since then has been expanded to include such areas as the Haast Range, the Red Hills, Mt Earnslaw/Pikirakatahi, the Olivines and the Waipara catchment. At 355,543 hectares Mt Aspiring now forms New Zealand's third largest national park after Fiordland and Kahurangi.

Perhaps more than any other national park, Mt Aspiring provides unrivalled opportunities for tramping and mountaineering at all levels, ranging from the beginner trampers on the Routeburn to the wilderness exponent in the Northern Olivines, and from the "trampers' peak" Mt Earnslaw/Pikirakatahi to technical climbing routes on the faces of Mt Aspiring/Tititea. FMC made a comprehensive 13-page submission on the draft plan.

The draft plan is, in my opinion, a very good starting point. The wording provides clear prescriptions to DOC staff charged with managing the park. It makes realistic attempts to limit the pervasive spread of commercial use, 'dumbing

down' of recreational opportunities, and assaults on natural quiet. However, inevitably, there are areas where we think the plan does not go far enough, and we know there will be pressure points where those with different views from ours (particularly commercial operators) will be pushing hard in the opposite direction.

### Natural Quiet

Many points in our submission are focussed on natural quiet. We seek formal recognition that this is one of the 'natural features' which the National Parks Act 1980 requires the park to be 'managed primarily to preserve'. We support plans to investigate overflight bans in the Olivine Wilderness and to ban aerial trophy hunting, and make some suggestions about restricting landings at some sites to weekdays so as to avoid conflict with weekend trampers.

### Forbes Back-Country Zone

FMC strongly opposes a 'back-country' zone on the Forbes Mountains north of Mt Earnslaw/Pikirakatahi specifically to allow high levels of aircraft use for filming advertisements and movies.

The idea of having a zone that is 'less than remote' completely enclosed within a remote zone is illogical, and to do so to allow a commercial activity that is required to be 'consistent with the recreation opportunities present in the place' makes no sense. It is also inconsistent with the statement that 'Protection of the remote challenging and natural quiet values of the Dart/Rees Track will remain a priority'.

### Bevan Col Aircraft Activity

Recognising that helicopter access to Bevan Col would be one of the most contentious issues dealt with, FMC has actively canvassed its constituent clubs and members for their views. Although there is not unanimity among or within clubs, we are confident that the position that we arrived at is one that has widespread support from within our constituency.

We support the intention of aircraft-free periods at Bevan Col (currently proposed to be Christmas and Easter), but are strongly of the view that the periods are woefully inadequate. The few other sites where landings are to be allowed in the remote zone are aircraft-free for 257 or 334 days per annum. This proposal, in an area that gets far more non-aircraft-based use, is for 18 aircraft-free days. We suggest that alternate months aircraft-free would be far more equitable. A month provides an adequate window of opportunity for both aircraft-based and non-aircraft-based climbers, particularly those whose plans are oriented around annual leave periods. We also note that air access to Bevan Col is not solely a problem for climbers.. Almost every flight overflies the West Matukituki valley, so realistic restrictions on landings would have a positive spin-off for trampers and day walkers in the valley.

### Facilities

FMC supports not allowing further new huts in the park. The draft plan provides for 'small scale' alterations to existing huts. In view of the recent massive expansion of the private hut at Routeburn Falls, it is clear that DOC will have to be extremely vigilant in how it monitors the application of this clause in the future. We doubt that anyone could regard the Routeburn Falls redevelopment as in any way 'minor' (see March 2009 *FMC Bulletin*).

### Guiding in the Olivine Wilderness

We firmly oppose guiding in the Olivine Wilderness. The occurrence of even very low levels of guiding creates a 'trade route' effect, with advertising of trips, the potential for time-tabled trips (already one guidebook warns trampers about the presence of guided groups on specific days at specific sites in other national parks), and pressure to modify, mark or bolt routes used regularly (even if not permitted).

While a guide in some cases would be no different from an experienced trampster leading a group of less experienced friends into the area, it is not uncommon (at other locations and in other parks) for guides to lead clients into areas that they simply could not get to under their own steam. These people cannot be said to be 'encountering nature on its own terms', which the plan describes as the *raison d'être* of wilderness zoning.

### Boundary Changes

FMC supports the addition of the Lower Dart Conservation Area (including the Earnslaw Burn and Dans Paddock) and those parts of the Shotover Conservation Area that are in the Snowy Creek and upper Rees catchments to the park. We also support future expansion of the park's boundaries as future tenure review outcomes allow.

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1. The Waimakariri. 2. The Karama in Kahurangi National Park. 3. The Landsborough. 4. D Motu. 5. B. 16 (now includes Hurunui North Branch). 6. The Waikato. 7. The Clutha. 8. The Waitaha. 9. Kaimanawa and Kaweka forest parks. 10. The Manawatu River, which cuts through the North Island axial ranges between the Ruahine and Taranaki Ranges.

# Executive Profile

## Basil Hooper

I am a 53-year-old sheep and bull beef farmer with two adult children. I grew up on, and now farm, a property inland from Waitotara, where the rugged Waitotara hill country peters out onto the fertile south Taranaki plains.

Four years of boarding in Wanganui for secondary schooling was more than enough town life for me and I have made farming my life with few regrets.

In the early 1980s I helped hunt a possum block in the Waitotara Forest with my brother-in-law. This was in the New Zealand Forest Service days, when hunters were allocated their own areas to control. I learned bush-craft and developed a knowledge of and respect for the extensive area of tangled steep hill country that stretches from back-country Stratford to Wanganui.

We were allocated areas south of Maungarau into the upper Pokeka and later towards Train's Hut – enormous areas for two people to work on a part-time basis. But we took out thousands of possums and I believe, with some satisfaction, that we made a difference.

My affection for this area later motivated me to get involved with the fight attempting to retain the hut and track system between the Matemateaonga Track and the Waitotara Valley road end. This did not have a particularly successful outcome (there is now little hut and track system left), but it made me more determined to advocate for the Waitotara-Wanganui region, an area I believe is sadly neglected.

In the late 1990s I joined the Wanganui Tramping Club, and have participated on the committee twice. As an active trumper in the club, I enjoy the company of such a friendly bunch of outdoor enthusiasts enormously. So much so that I intend to marry one of them sometime soon.

My main tramping focus is mid-week day walks and the occasional overnight trip. My favourite type of trip is exploring new unmarked



Basil Hooper on Mataimoana Track in the Waverley back-country Photo: Tracey King

routes over bush ridges, and seeking the old formed packhorse tracks that meander through the conservation estate.

There is something special about these old paper roads, unused for so long that mature trees grow on them. My ancestors were surveyors and pioneer farmers in this area, riding these same tracks on horseback. Some of my strongest concerns include the casual destruction of some of these tracks with bulldozers, and the sometimes aggressive discouragement of public access by the neighbouring landowners. Many of these paper roads provide important legal access to the conservation estate. Access is one issue I will actively pursue while serving on the FMC executive.

While getting to know my fellow FMC executive members, I made it clear that my views are parochial, and that my area badly needs advocacy. They indicated that this was fine, but could I lift my horizons just a little, say, to the Ruahines and north Taranaki as well?

All trampers who walk this wonderful corner of New Zealand, please feel free to contact me about any concerns you may have.

[baz.hooper@clear.net.nz](mailto:baz.hooper@clear.net.nz)

# Summary of FMC Submission on Te Araroa Oriwa Ridge Proposal

By Owen Cox

FMC does not support the proposed Te Araroa route down Oriwa Ridge in Tararua Forest Park, despite our being firmly in favour of the Te Araroa concept and of improving walkways in general. The funding involved is Government funding, and needs to be considered in the context of other spending on huts, tracks and bridges in the range.

The reasons for FMC's stance are as follows:

1. The route cuts through the middle of a remote area that has traditionally been managed for no facilities, especially south of Oriwa. The area includes the upper Otaki and the Waitewaewae catchments. The New Zealand Forest Service removed the old mid Otaki Hut and the tracks in the upper Otaki, after a decision to manage it as a remote experience area. Oriwa Ridge itself has never been tracked south of Oriwa. More recently DOC removed Oriwa Biv. Undeveloped areas are needed as part of ensuring a range of recreational opportunities.
2. The proposal does not open up worthwhile opportunities. Unlike routes on the western fringe of the Tararuas, Oriwa Ridge will be inaccessible for day trips, while removing a valuable remote experience – creating a net loss of recreation opportunities in the Tararua Range. Further, as the route traverses an area of high altitude, wet forest on any track will quickly become muddy. Potential Te Araroa walkers would have to tackle this in addition to the existing muddy tracks at either end (Waitewaewae and Waiopahu). DOC already receives many comments on the times and difficulty of the Waitewaewae Track.
3. Safety. Snow and freezing conditions are common on the Oriwa Ridge. Anyone


missing a track on Oriwa Ridge will find themselves in quite difficult country with only very weather-dependent escape routes.

4. Alternatives to the current proposals exist. FMC's favoured route options lie to the west of the current proposal, and would not impact on the core part of the Waitewaewae/upper Otaki remote zone.

A western route would have the advantage of opening up a range of worthwhile short trips in the Tararuas, while offering a longer option. The routes would encourage some rational management of the numerous informal and poorly known tracks in the western foothills. The objective of a lengthy through-bush section for Te Araroa would also be achieved. A full description of the best options is contained in FMC's submission, available on the FMC website ([www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)). Other alternatives include a coastal route.

If Te Araroa walkers seek a true Tararua experience of several days, then the existing track network along the Main Range, and even the untracked river walk, are available. However, some thought needs to be given as to what kind of person is likely to be walking the route. If, as we suspect, the main users are not those currently tramping longer trips, then the coastal or western foothills are best. If only experienced and fit trampers are expected, then identifying a route through the existing network would work.

FMC encourages DOC to have an open meeting with clubs, other users and the Te Araroa Trust to properly discuss the various route possibilities. The current management zoning needs to be factored into these.



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# Uncle Jacko's Cookery Column



## Cloud Computing

I love so-called Web 2.0 apps (those clever interactive applications found on the Internet). The Google guys in particular have made inroads, with the latest being a very accurate track map for New Zealand found at (<http://koordinates.com/layer/753-doc-tracks-may-2009/>) prepared in conjunction with DOC.

Sensitive as I am to FMC President Rob Mitchell's deep rooted suspicion about these new-fangled Internet things, I am sure that the first thing he will investigate when using this particular Web tool is a zoom-in of Lake Monowai.

Here he would find that the generic term 'cloud computing', for which Google is so famous, is indeed a completely accurate description of the technology. So, it's not perfect, but you get the idea of where this sort of thing is going. I already know of people who spend their weekends touring the world from their computer desks instead of tramping.

Owners of Apple iPhones will no doubt also have started assailing you with the wonders of iPhone apps. They will proudly demonstrate how their cell-phones can be highly accurate navigation tools. They can instantly transform them to find the International Space Station, take photos and operate as music tuners for singsongs around campfires. Thankfully, they come with earphones enabling these people to convert them to iPods and so tune in and turn off. But I love the technology!

## Survival Bags

Ex-pat David Samson, on a recent visit back to the Land of Long White Clouds, pointed out to me that plastic survival bags used as a pack liner are all very well for keeping gear dry, but asks if you will really be in any position to use the bag when caught by a sleet-driven gale on some godforsaken exposed tops. He notes that it's hard enough to open your pack to find gloves under such conditions, let alone empty

it in order to extract the survival bag. At least, not in a way that prevents everything hitherto in your pack from getting saturated or dispersed into the adjacent valleys.

David usually trogs around the north of England where the trees don't grow and shelter is hard to find, so he packs a Bothy Bag. Google these things to find out more, but essentially they are an almost-sealed nylon bag that you climb into. While single person Bothy Bags are okay, I am reliably informed that even in atrocious weather, cramming six people into larger ones will soon warm you all up. Don't get me wrong, they are not designed for comfort, just survival, but they do work. They are especially suitable for youth groups. I'm sure many trampers could easily make their own version.

## Floors in Huts

When my German mate Fisch and I arrived at Brewster Hut earlier in the year, members of the Oamaru Tramping Club greeted us with mild amusement. Contrary to our predictions of an empty hut, upon which we had decided to leave our sleeping mats behind, there were no spare bunks. But the Omaruvians were all good sorts and offered us a surfeit of very comfortable sleeping mats with the result that everyone got a good night's sleep. "Make sure you advise in UJCC to always carry a sleeping mat to huts", were their cheerful parting words the next morning. I could, but reaching Brewster Hut requires a fair hike up the hill, and if others are willing to do the hard work for you, then why encumber yourself with unnecessary weight? If that sounds ungrateful, then trust me, I'm very grateful, but as writer of this column, I also get to have the last word.

## Darwin's Other Law

Darwin's famous law concerning the survival of the fittest is just over 150 years old. Less famous is Darwin's unknown corollary,

'The Survival of the Unfittest'. It is a special case that particularly applies to peanuts in scroggin bags, but also rolled oats taken tramping. Simply stated, the most unattractive food in your pack will not get eaten and will remain for your next trip. In an attempt many years ago to disprove this corollary by only taking food from the leftovers box, we were, by the end of the trip, appropriately dubbed 'The Very Hungry Party'. But it reinforced the fact that most of us eat too much in the Hills, kidding ourselves that we need lots of extra energy.

## Who Do You Call?

Who do you call when coming home late from a trip? Loopies on occasions have failed to turn up after a tramp and later on been declared missing or dead, which is not good. Once upon a time, you could leave your intentions with DOC, or police, but as the loopies are often less diligent about signing out than signing in, this has led to some lack of enthusiasm within those organisations involved in unnecessary search and rescue efforts. This leaves us with a problem. Family or flat members who are not coming on the trip are always good to leave intentions with, but what if everyone you know is also heading out into the Hills?

Non-tramping friends and acquaintances are okay, but are not always sure of their role. Someone once declared us overdue at 6:30 pm on a Sunday evening in spite of everyone being told to bring torches and spare batteries. That led to quite a lot of police work and embarrassment all round.

## Alice's Restaurant

Unless you turned to this page first, by now you will have realised that some of us are really concerned by suggestions of mining in the areas where we go tramping. Unthinkably, this is actually back on some agendas.

Hopefully you will read the articles on Schedule 4 in this *Bulletin* and take the time to print a tramping photo and post it to the Minister of Conservation, Tim Groser. I'll be sending a photo and it would be awkward if mine was the only one he got.



Thomas (Fisch) Fischer on the Brewster Glacier after a good night's sleep, Mt Aspiring National Park  
Photo: Robin McNeill

I am reminded of Arlo Guthrie's 'Alice's Restaurant', that I learnt on one memorable tramping trip, back in the Stone Age:

'You know, if one person, just one person does it, they may think he's really sick and they won't take him. And if two people, two people do it, in harmony, they may think they're both faggots and they won't take either of them. And three people do it, three, can you imagine, three people walking in singin' a bar of Alice's Restaurant and walking out? They may think it's an Organization. And can you, can you imagine fifty people a day, I said fifty people a day, walking in singin' a bar of Alice's Restaurant and walking out? And friends, they may think it's a movement!

Hakili Matagi, Robin McNeill,  
44 Duke Street, Invercargill 9810  
r.mcneill@ieee.org

# Bush Yarn: Ashley Cunningham Remembers

## The Wilberforce

Friend and fellow New Zealand Alpine Club member Janet Holm recently wrote a delightful book, *Caught Mapping*, (Hazard Press, 2005) portraying some of the colourful surveyors who measured early New Zealand. Such men later staffed the Department of Lands and Survey (L&S) which was made great by the calibre of its members. In 1919 L&S in turn gave birth to another Department, the State (later New Zealand) Forest Service (NZFS), whose staff were no less colourful. L&S managed national parks and reserves, while the NZFS managed state forests.

Field staff of the two departments generally got on well together, but sometimes, at the top level of administration, there was some serious wrangling, usually over territory or land use.

One such dispute involved Canterbury's Wilberforce Valley, in the 1970s. Geographically, the Wilberforce lay near the boundaries of

Craigieburn State Forest Park to the east, and Arthur's Pass National Park to the northeast.

The NZFS managed isolated pockets of forest in the valley head known as State Forest 25, but the greater area was mainly Crown land or, at lower levels, pastoral lease to Glenthorne or Mt Algidus Stations. The upper Wilberforce was botanically unique; NZFS deer cullers ranged over the whole area, and the northern headwaters were popular with trampers doing the Three Pass trip.

Having such a large catchment under the control of two government departments was unsatisfactory. Botanists pressured for greater protection of the unique forests, and the public favoured 'park' type management of the alpine region between Mount Cook and Arthur's Pass national parks. Hunters often needed to get separate permits from each department.

Huts of the Wilberforce Valley Illustrations: Ashley Cunningham



Manuels Hut



In 1980 senior L&S field officer Ken Taylor and I (from the NZFS) were assigned to recommend a solution. First we needed to assess the area.

Ken and I did some research around Christchurch, speaking to L&S and NZFS officers and hunting down interested (and knowledgeable) people in three other Government departments, the two universities and the Catchment Board. Some of these later joined us in the field, notably the botanist (and ex-All Black) Brian Molloy. Altogether, we interviewed about 20 specialists in various fields, and in some cases went back later for more advice.

Then we started the fieldwork, helped by local ranger Glenn McDonald. First a helicopter flight provided an overview; then the legwork proper began, which lasted about a week. Some of the old huts we stayed in had much character, and I couldn't resist sketching them. From the hut books, where they existed, we also assessed their amount of use.

The most interesting thing about the upper Wilberforce is the presence of vegetation normally associated with the West Coast. For some reason the West Coast rain comes over into the head of the Wilberforce

much more intensively than in other Canterbury catchments, and the vegetation reflects this. The most striking features are the abundance of cedar forest, and the presence of *Dracophyllum traversii*. This latter plant, while common in alpine Westland, is absent elsewhere in Canterbury. Cedar forest rarely occurs elsewhere in Canterbury, but the Wilberforce boasts abundant, large, and healthy stands. Leatherwood, pink pine, bog pine and southern rata are also present. Some kamahi even

occurs in the Gibson and Moa streams.

The Wilberforce Valley also has an interesting history. A pass, perhaps known to a few Maori, was later crossed by John Browning in 1865, initiating quite a lot of activity in the following years. The steep eastern slopes were soon tracked and the first sheep were taken across to Westland the following year. An accommodation house and blacksmith's shop were established opposite the Wilberforce/Harper confluence, and a rough coach road was constructed as far as the foot of Browning Pass. Authorities even considered a railway through to Westland. But while many people passed

Urquharts Hut





this way, its popularity was soon eclipsed by the Arthur's Pass route after the road was completed there in February 1866.

Some gold mining activity occurred in the Wilberforce too. Fine gold at the mouth of the Rakaia led to the discovery of a quartz reef at over 1,600 metres on Mt Harman. It proved to be thin and unrewarding at the surface, so miners drove in a lateral tunnel, which by 1885 was reportedly over 300 metres long. However the quantity of gold proved insufficient for operations to continue. Shortly afterwards an avalanche buried the mouth of the tunnel. During tough times, such as at the start of the 20th Century and in the 1930s and 1970s, there has often been renewed interest in this source of gold.

Ken and I considered that we had three choices: to recommend a status of National Park, State Forest Park, or Crown Land Management Area.

Our report spent three pages laying out the pros and cons of each option, and finally we recommended that the area be gazetted

as a State Forest Park. We made 13 other management recommendations to do with land use, historical heritage and vegetation protection.

By the time the Department of Conservation took over about six years later, some, but not all, of our recommendations had been carried out. For example, the forested parts of the upper Wilberforce were added to adjacent Craigieburn Forest Park by 1984.

Although our 30-page report was not published, several copies were made, and one remains in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. I did a lot of mountain jobs for the Forest Service, and the Wilberforce will always remain as one of the most pleasant.

#### References

*Upper Wilberforce Land Use Study*, Department of Lands & Survey, New Zealand Forest Service, Christchurch, April 1980

*Guide to Craigieburn State Forest Park*, New Zealand Forest Service 1985, 274/17



# Summary of FMC St James Submission

By Richard Davies

DOC's recently released discussion paper on the St James Conservation Area reflected its first efforts to plan under the new 'conservation economy' policy of the current Government.

Key features were: mixed recreation use; a very permissive approach to aircraft and vehicle access; and an emphasis on economic return in any decisions on land management.

## FMC General Comments

Management of St James should be sensitive to recreational use of adjoining land, particularly west of the Waiau River where the area meets Lewis Pass National Reserve and Nelson Lakes National Park.

FMC has concerns that the discussion paper focused more on utilisation than protection. A 'conservation economy' should mean the economic benefits derived from protection of landscapes and ecosystems, not commercial development completely inappropriate for conservation land.

## Mixed Recreation Use

FMC supported plans for mountain biking in the eastern part of the area and agreed to the St James Walkway remaining off-limits for bikers due to potential user conflict. FMC supported horse trekking, but considered that commercial trekking should not be permitted in the Waiau Valley beyond the Maling Track.

We supported continued use of the Waiau and Clarence for rafting, kayaking and canoeing. FMC agreed that heli-skiing should be limited to the area between Fowler Pass and the Edwards Valley and strongly opposed any extension of heli-skiing to the western side of the Waiau.

## Aircraft and Vehicle Access

FMC felt DOC's aircraft proposals were far too liberal. Unrestricted aircraft activity should be limited to the true left of the Waiau, to the Ada/Waiiau forks and across to Fowler Pass. This would allow fishing, heli-biking, whitewater

sports and heli-skiing with minimal impact on those seeking remoteness on the western ranges. Wild Animal Recovery Operations should be limited to the area south and east of the Ada/Waiiau confluence and the Waiau River.

We supported vehicle access in the Waiau only under a controlled permit system, which would allow DOC to manage potential negative impacts like vandalism and driving off formed roads.

## Land Management

DOC proposes to maintain a herd of horses in the Waiau Valley. FMC believes horses would slow the re-growth of native plants, with negative impacts outweighing any benefits.

DOC also sought comment on stock grazing or allowing regeneration for the purpose of carbon sequestration. FMC believes that:

1. The priority should be local ecosystems and recreation rather than generating revenue.
2. No grazing should occur at all in the Clarence Valley above Lake Tennyson, and any grazing revenue should be directed back to weed control in the St James Conservation Area.

FMC strongly opposed suggestions for hydro and wind-power schemes, irrigation, water storage generation. Damming wild rivers is not an example of conservation economy; , as dams destroy a non-renewable asset. People visit places like the St James Conservation Area to escape from industrial landscapes.

## Private Huts and Lodges

Another disturbing trend in the discussion paper was in suggestions for building huts or lodges in partnership with private operators. FMC expressed concern that taxpayer funding could be used to build a hut, only for the private operator to gain monopoly or priority use of it. FMC strongly opposes development of permanent private accommodation on public land.

# Back-country Accidents

**Johnny Mulheron** reports.

Area: Warnocks Bluff, Mt Philistine, Arthur's Pass National Park

Activity: Solo mountaineering

Deceased: 38-year-old male New Zealander

Date of Death: 23 October 2008

## Summary:

The deceased was an experienced outdoors person, although he had limited technical mountaineering experience. After informing friends of his intentions, but not when he would return, he set off on a solo climb of Mt Philistine to advance his technical mountaineering experience. He had no overnight equipment with him.

It appears that during an abseil in difficult terrain his anchor failed, resulting in a fall of over 100 metres that caused significant injuries. He survived the fall, but very likely continued to descend for a short distance before dying.

Cause of Death:

Chest and multi-traumatic injuries as a result of a fall from height.

## Comments

### 1. Going Solo Generally Increases the Risk

Ways of reducing the risks are to:

- Sign a DOC intentions card and hut logbooks, and tell other people your clear intentions, including when you are expected out. DOC at Arthur's Pass maintains a free 24-hour SAR Action Card system; sign in at DOC Arthur's Pass or phone them during office hours (Ph 03 318 9211). A SAR will not get under way until 8:00 to 9:00am the morning following your 'due out' date. Always let someone else know your plans so that action may be initiated earlier if needed. Remember to sign out too!
- Carry an EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon, also known as a PLB.) The deceased owned one but had not taken it with him on the climb. Had he

taken it, the climber could have activated it and possibly been rescued before his injuries overwhelmed him.

- Tramp or climb to your level of experience and abilities. No one else can assist in the decision-making process.
  - Be well prepared with route knowledge, clothing, food and equipment.
  - Always check the weather forecast. Regardless of what is forecast, you are the best judge of the current conditions and your ability to cope with them.
- 2. Abseil Anchors are Critical:** Failure of abseil anchors is catastrophic. Each different mountain medium – rock, snow and ice – has different strength and failure characteristics. It takes experience and knowledge to understand these and how best to rig anchors.
- 3. Don't Underestimate the Location:** The mountains of Arthur's Pass are significantly lower than other popular mountaineering regions of New Zealand. For this reason people often underestimate them, sometimes viewing them as 'training' climbs for the higher peaks further south. However the peaks of Arthur's Pass have many of the same challenges as those further south, including avalanche risk, extreme weather conditions, difficult approaches, unstable rock and very steep terrain. Many experienced mountaineers and trampers have underestimated Arthur's Pass to their peril.

Check out the excellent website ([www.softrock.co.nz](http://www.softrock.co.nz)) for the latest Arthur's Pass conditions. An excellent New Zealand Alpine Club Arthur's Pass mountaineering guide is also available, email [publications@alpineclub.org.nz](mailto:publications@alpineclub.org.nz)

[accidents@paradise.net.nz](mailto:accidents@paradise.net.nz)



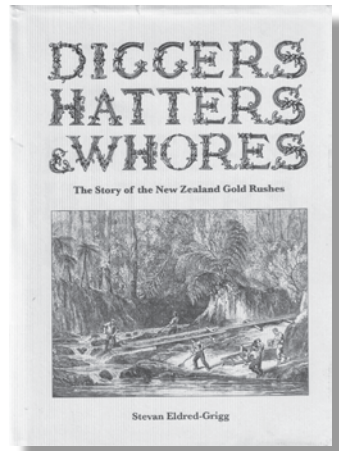
# Reviews

## Diggers, Hatters & Whores

### The Story of the New Zealand Gold Rushes

By Stevan Eldred-Grigg, Random House, 2008. Hardcover, 544 pages \$55. Reviewed by Shaun Barnett (New Zealand Alpine Club).

Murder, sex, riches, poverty, toil, madness and mayhem. It's all there in Stevan Eldred-Grigg's excellent history of the New Zealand gold rushes.



Gold rushes played such a large role in shaping colonial New Zealand that it is surprising no general history has appeared before. Philip Ross May's excellent *The West Coast Gold Rushes* has long been out of print, and regardless did not cover Coromandel, Nelson, Marlborough or Otago.

Gold diggers first came to New Zealand in any numbers to toil in the Aorere Valley of Golden Bay in the 1850s, then rushed Otago, investigated Nelson and swamped Westland during the 1860s. Many were veterans of previous gold rushes in California and Victoria. Miners brought not only a new wave of colonists to New Zealand, but a new order – or disorder.

One of Eldred-Grigg's strengths is his ability to dash – or at least dilute – myths. Myth has it that the 1849 Californian gold rush originally excited gold fever, but he reveals that – over a century before – Brazil experienced the first real rush. Myth also has it that any discovery of 'colour' prompted a fully-fledged gold rush almost immediately, but in fact a combination of events had to coincide. It took good gold, a credible prospector, willing landowners, compliant politicians and media interest to whip up sufficient frenzy for a rush. More surprisingly, perhaps, was the fact that not everyone sought the economic benefits of a gold rush; many of the landed gentry, particularly those in conservative Otago and stolid Southland

opposed the rushes. One run-holder wrote 'If N.Z. produces gold it will be the property of the refined quintessence and condensation of all the rascaldom of the world.'

As well as a sharp eye for the apt quote, Eldred-Grigg's text is lively, racy even, his language rich. Take this description of the West Coast: 'A long narrow land lapping more than three degrees of latitude along the western slopes of the South Island. Steep dark beaches, long dark lagoons and dripping dark valleys. Warmish torrents driving downwards from a weltering sky.'

Part one is an overall history of the gold fields in roughly chronological order, while part two details the social aspects of how diggers lived. While the author takes obvious delight in the darker aspects of digger life – drunkenness, theft, prostitution, illness and murder – he always places these in context and perspective.

The attractive hardback tome bulges with over 540 pages, has a sumptuous design and brims with superb illustrations. Amongst many others, well-known artists including J C Richmond, William Fox, Charles Heaphy and J T Thompson have their work nicely reproduced, and these are complemented by historic advertisements and line drawings. Curiously, only one photograph features.

The book is not without minor disappointments: a map would have aided readers' understanding of the gold rush



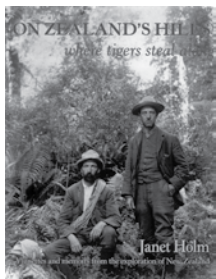
geography. Where is Tuapeka? The index is poor (notorious murderer Richard Burgess is indexed once, but makes 5-6 appearances in the text). More photographs were needed. Eldred-Grigg also fails to give the goldfields much modern context. There's no reference to gold trails like the Wangapeka or Wakamarina still being important tracks, or of the work done by the Department of Conservation restoring mining relics at sites throughout the country.

But these are small concerns; Eldred-Grigg's book is a triumph; a rollicking good read, an important history, a tome that is a pleasure to behold.

## On Zealand's Hills, Where Tigers Steal Along. Vignettes and Memoirs from the Exploration of New Zealand

By Janet Holm, Steele Roberts, 2008. Hard cover, 184 pages, \$45. Reviewed by Shaun Barnett (NZ Alpine Club).

Canterbury historian (and NZAC member) Janet Holm explores the lives of 19th Century European settlers in New Zealand in this, her latest book.



Charles Darwin did not think much of the place during his 1835 visit on the *Beagle*. Holm quotes him in the introduction: 'I believe we were all glad to leave New Zealand. It is not a pleasant place...the greater part of the English are the very refuse of society. Neither is the country itself attractive.'

Some arrivals, like the sealing gang landed on Open Bay Islands in early 1810, came simply to do a job, and meant to leave soon after. Dropped off on the tiny West Coast islands, the eight men clubbed copious seals but were not retrieved because their ship *Active* foundered on its way to Australia. After a year eating seal meat, fish and kiekie, the men rowed to the mainland in their boat, but found it even worse with rats, mosquitoes and sandflies to contend with. Finally, after a three-year ordeal, another sealing vessel rescued them.

Some would-be settlers – like William Carling Young – came to escape England. Young ran from an over-bearing mother, a failed love affair and an unsatisfactory career. Aged just 27, he drowned – a fate that befell many other settlers in the raw, largely bridgeless country.

In the vignettes that follow, Holm explores the lives of settlers who made a good fist of living in the colony. Alfred Domett, a fellow poet and friend of Robert Browning, settled in Nelson, became a politician and even made Premier before retreating back to England and poetry in his old age.

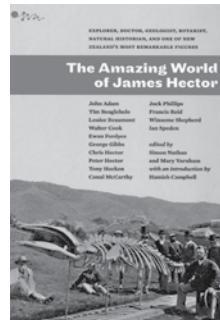
Of most interest to trampers are the chapters on surveyor James McKerrow, geologist Alexander McKay, Milford Sound hermit Donald Sutherland and Fiordland explorer William Grave (who features on the cover standing next to Arthur Talbot). Of Grave, Holm writes: 'He was content to battle through sopping bush, struggle neck deep down tempestuous torrents, face weeks of rain – constantly soaked to the skin, lower himself over unknown precipices, sustained by rope or bootlaces tied to snow grass.'

Well written, liberally sprinkled with aptly chosen quotes, and an eye for the quirky or amusing, *On Zealand's Hills* provides interest and introspection on 19th Century New Zealand life. Handsomely produced with colour illustrations, it's a worthy volume for any trampler's library.

## The Amazing World of James Hector

Edited by Simon Nathan and Mary Varnham, Te Awa Press, 2009. Softcover, 185 pages, \$25. Reviewed by Shaun Barnett (NZ Alpine Club).

James Hector so dominated New Zealand science in the last half of the nineteenth century, that it's a wonder he isn't a household name. He excelled as an explorer, surveyor, geologist, natural historian and



botanist, but also played important roles establishing the New Zealand Geological Survey, the Meteorological Department, the New Zealand University, the New Zealand Institute, and the Colonial Museum.

Perhaps his greatest gift, however, was as an administrator and organiser – despite almost indecipherable handwriting. He seemed to attract loyalty in his staff, was judicious with funding, and wrote a tremendous number of scientific papers – all suggesting the Protestant work ethic of his Scottish origins. As a young man, after graduating from Edinburgh University as a doctor, Hector participated in an extraordinary scientific exploration (The Palliser Expedition) of Western Canada in the late 1850s. He discovered a route through the Rockies – Kicking Horse Pass – that very nearly spelt his untimely demise. While trying to secure a horse struggling in a stream eddy, Hector received such a resounding kick that he fell unconscious. His companions were about to place him in a shallow grave when he revived. After returning to Britain, the well-regarded Hector accepted a position as Otago Provincial Geologist.

Soon after arriving in Otago during 1862, the energetic Hector set off exploring and surveying the mountainous west. In 1863 he reached the col now named after him at the head of the Matukituki, and after trudging down the Arawhata River, almost reached the sea. Later that year, he found a passage through the Southern Alps from Martins Bay, up the Hollyford Valley, over Key Summit and into the Greenstone Valley, which earned him a hero's welcome back in Dunedin.

Hector's Canadian and New Zealand explorations are just two chapters in this small but perfectly executed book. Some of New Zealand's best-known historians and scientists, along with descendants of Hector, gathered in 2007 to commemorate the centenary of his death. *The Amazing World of James Hector* was the resulting series of essays about his life.

The well-edited volume manages to create a highly readable text despite the number of

authors, with historic photographs, line drawings and other illustrations augmenting the essays. As the book clearly demonstrates, Hector deserves greater recognition. Happily, co-editor Simon Nathan is working on a full biography of James Hector.

## The Boomer's Guide to Lightweight Backpacking

By Carol Corbridge, Frank Amato Publications, 2008. Soft cover, 102 pages, available from Amazon.com for US\$12.89 + postage. Reviewed by John Rhodes (South Wairarapa TC).

Most active under-50s find it hard to accept that in a few years their joints will be complaining and their muscles wasting away. They can slow their degeneration by exercising hard; but they can't stop it.

Enter lightweight tramping. This new religion has a swelling numbers of knee-afflicted adherents. Among its high priests are Bryan Dudley of Auckland Catholic TC ([www.tramplight.co.nz](http://www.tramplight.co.nz)); Arizona's Ray Jardine ([www.rayjardine.com](http://www.rayjardine.com)), and now Carol Corbridge of Oregon USA, author of *The Boomer's Guide to Lightweight Backpacking*.

Corbridge's research in pursuit of anti-gravity nirvana is impressive. 'I've made charts and spreadsheets. I've read everything I could find about backpacking and walking and gear. I have cruised the web. I've tried at least 10 different backpacks, from the standard to the wildly experimental. I've used wearable sleeping bags with arm holes and hiked for miles in sandals. I've slept in hammocks and created homemade sleeping bags for my dog...' So this lady is qualified; indeed, anyone who's spent 60 nights in the hills in one season at age 57, travelling light and comfortably, is worth paying attention to.

After a four page introduction, Corbridge gets down to business with her first category of gear – shelters. Chapters follow on food (bring



none home), water, clothes and so on, finishing with how to make your dog carry 10% of its body weight. The no-nonsense, engaging style is a pleasure to read, and is enlivened still more by Jayna Harrison's quirky cartoons.

The recommended gear is nearly all at dot com web addresses. Much of it may not be stocked by New Zealand retailers, but a strong Kiwi dollar now makes Internet shopping in the US attractive. However, a significant exception is the Aarn Natural Balance pack, made in New Zealand by FMC Bulletin advertiser Aarn Tate ([www.aarnpacks.com](http://www.aarnpacks.com)). Corbridge's Aarn Natural Balance pack isn't the lightest she's tried, but it wins hands down for comfort. 'It's an engineering marvel and may well be the future of backpacking', she says.

Lightweight tramping has no absolute rules, so work out your own kilogrammatic salvation. Corbridge leaves her undies at home(!) but carries a fly-fishing rod and – no kidding – a pair of flippers. To be certain of vision and warmth at night, she takes three light sources

and as many ways of fire-starting. You gotta cook those trout.

On gizmos, Corbridge's candour is refreshing. GPS: 'So far I'm not impressed.' PLB: 'I sold it after a season.' However, hiking sticks get a tick: 'They can also be used to knock rattlers out of the way and scare off the occasional cougar.' So there, Uncle Jacko.

For book orders see  
FMC Mail Order Books, page 62.

Reviews Next Issue (March 2010)

*Chance is a Fine Thing* by Philip Temple

*High Misadventure* by Paul Hersey

*Off the Beaten Track* by Colin Moore

*The Third Man Factor* by John Geiger

*Weekend Tramps in the Kaimai Ranges*

by Anne Dudley

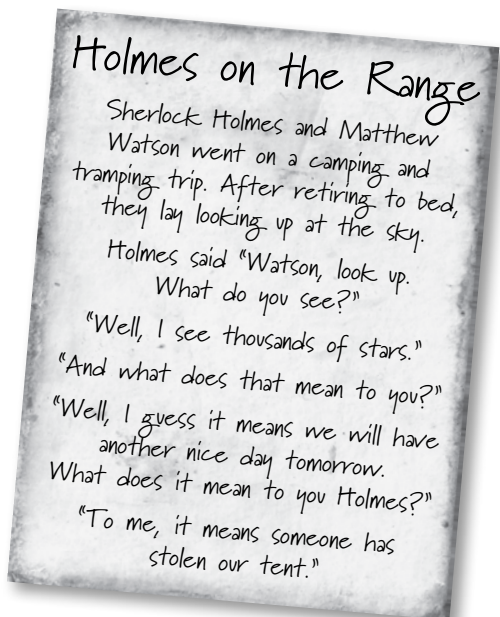
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## The Last Word

From *Pack & Paddle*, the Gisborne Canoe & Tramping Club bulletin.

July 2009



# Little Ads

**EYRE & TAKITIMU MTS, FIORDLAND** etc. Secure parking, some accommodation, transport, tramping & hunting info. Pete Mason, 5 Ida St. Lumsden. 027 310 2344 or wildtraditions@gmail.com

## **FINISHED WITH THIS BULLETIN?**

Leave it in a hut or waiting room, or give it to a friend (or better still, a member of the Canterbury Mountaineering Club). Tell them if they like it to become supporters of FMC – see page 3.

**FMC PACK LINERS** 100 for \$56 or 25 for \$20  
incl. p & p. See page 43.

**GIVE AN FMC INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTER MEMBERSHIP** to a friend - see page 3

**HEAPHY TRACK HELP** car relocations, food drops, transport & portering in Kahurangi & Abel Tasman parks. Derry Kingston, helen.derry@xtra.co.nz or 03 525 9576, www.heaphytrackhelp.co.nz

**HIGH PYRENEES:** independent group for fortnight's tramping & touring. August 2010.  
Contact moniquesaville@yahoo.com.au

**KAIMAI RANGES** weekend tramping guidebook  
\$29.50 + p & p. www.tramplight.co.nz

**KAWEKA CHALLENGE** Feb 27-28 2010. Contact tim.anderson@paradise.net.nz (06) 844 9933.  
www.kawekachallenge.org.nz to register on line.

**NZAC LODGES** - perfect bases for tramps in great places. Mt Cook, Fox Glacier, Arthur's Pass, Mt Ruapehu.  
www.alpineclub.org.nz or 03 377 7595.

**RAPID SHELTERS** risk management gear. Simple, strong, effective rip-stop nylon shelters, various sizes. Proudly NZ made. info@naturallyadventurous.co.nz or 07 386 5556 for fact sheet.

**USE YOUR FMC CARD** for great discounts!

**WALK THE WEST OF IRELAND** landscape, culture & cuisine. Ten-day small group walking tours in spectacular western regions with local guides. June & July 2010.  
Rachel Ryan, 03 545 1071. www.walkthewestofireland.com

**WILDERNESS MAGAZINE** discount for FMC card holders.

## **FMC MOUNTAIN & FOREST TRUST**

The FMC Mountain & Forest Trust aims to enhance mountain and forest recreation in New Zealand by funding:

- Research and/or projects relating to mountain, hill and forest recreation.
- The provision of recreational and/or educational facilities for such sports in New Zealand.
- Instruction courses for such recreation.
- Support for the conservation of New Zealand's wild or natural lands.
- New Zealand or overseas study tours or courses.
- Conferences, lecture tours and publications relating to mountain or forest recreation and/or conservation.
- Scientific work or research relating to the forest or mountain environment and its conservation.

The Trust is approved by the Inland Revenue Department as a charitable trust, allowing taxpayers to claim a tax rebate for donations.

Donations (and enquiries about providing legacies) may be sent to: Federated Mountain Clubs Mountain & Forest Trust, P.O. Box 1604, Wellington. Cheques payable please to "FMC Mountain & Forest Trust".



# FMC Mail Order - Books

NUMBER 178 To: FMC Books  
30 Brook St  
Lower Hutt 5011

Name: .....

Address: .....

email: .....

I am a member of ..... Club, which is affiliated to FMC.

I am an individual supporter of FMC Date: .....

<b>Tramping, Walking and Mountaineering Guides</b>	Price	Qty	Total
<i>Arthur's Pass to Mt Cook, A Tramping Guide</i> Sven Brabyn	20.00		
<i>Tramping in the South Island, Mt Richmond to Arthur's Pass</i> Sven Brabyn	20.00		
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