

FMC Bulletin

Official quarterly of the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand

Number 189 · August 2012



William Colenso
FMC Scholarship reports
Wind in the Mountains
Transforming Arthur's Pass





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FMC Bulletin

Number 189 · August 2012

Published four times a year by the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (Inc.), PO Box 1604 Wellington 6140. www.fmc.org.nz
National Library: ISSN 0110-6120

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www.hullabaloo.co.nz

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The *Bulletin* is free to members of affiliated clubs.

Supporters of FMC: Individuals may become supporters of FMC for \$35 annually. Supporters receive the *Bulletin* and the FMC Discount Card, which offers discounts including FMC maps and books and a DOC Backcountry Hut Pass. Supporters also get regular email updates.

Annual Subscription to the *Bulletin* is only available to organisations and libraries (but not individuals) for \$25 (overseas \$35).

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Contributions should be submitted in electronic form to bulletin@fmc.org.nz or mailed on disk to: The Editor, FMC Bulletin, Box 1604, Wellington 6140. 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 for more detailed information.

The final content of the *Bulletin* is decided by the editor. An executive committee chaired by the President of FMC will consider concerns relating to published items. Write to the Editorial Subcommittee, PO Box 1604 Wellington 6140.

The *FMC Bulletin* is printed using vegetable-based inks on Sumo Gloss & Matt, a chlorine-free and acid-free paper, sourced from a sustainably managed plantation forest.

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Deadline for contributions for the November 2012 *FMC Bulletin* is 10 September 2012 (send copy to: bulletin@fmc.org.nz). It should be distributed to clubs by mid-November 2012.

Cover: Colenso country – Dave Hansford at the top of Colenso Spur, Ruahine Forest Park.
Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography

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President's Column

Partnership

by Richard Davies

One of the key points of discussion from the recent FMC AGM was the idea of partnership.

The Associate Minister of Conservation, the Hon. Peter Dunne, talked about the need for DOC to partner with the private sector, the Non-Government Organisation (NGO) sector and communities to get their job done. At a workshop we discussed the role that clubs and FMC could play in maintaining huts and tracks, and the pros and cons of this.

What are we to make of all this? The idea of partnerships for conservation is not a new one to most of us. Many clubs and individuals have entered into 'maintain by community' agreements since the Recreational Opportunities Review in 2002, and for decades other clubs like the New Zealand Alpine Club and the Heretaunga Tramping Club have built and managed huts for public use.

Club members have been responsible for conservation work for years as well, ranging from maintaining trap-lines, to pulling wilding pine trees, or planting native trees as the Hutt Valley Tramping Club has accomplished on Matiu/Somes Island.

Our friends in the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association have a similar history of hut and conservation work, and mountain bikers are responsible for building many tracks and planting trees in various parts of the country.

So partnership is already an integral part of the way many of us engage with and enjoy the outdoors. It's fair to say that I haven't heard too much recognition of this from high up in DOC, although understandably the closer you get to the hammer or the grubber, the better it is understood – and there are some great relationships between DOC staff and their communities at a local level.

If we look at the positive side, it should mean greater recognition for the good work already accomplished by the outdoors

community. It will also mean, hopefully, that there will be better support for volunteers – or at least a reduction in unnecessary bureaucratic impediments.

But it's hard not to dwell on the negative side. Conservation in New Zealand essentially relies on preserving sufficient habitat for indigenous species to survive, and removing introduced predators and threats to those species. Only the government has the scale of resources and the depth of scientific knowledge needed to achieve this. Even with the best will in the world, small community initiatives can only be the cream on top. Further, DOC has to decide on national priorities, which may not always mesh perfectly with local communities.

Greater involvement of the private sector will also create challenges for FMC's traditional values. Across the country, there are many excellent examples of business people who care about conservation and 'put something back' by funding pest control, or donating money to hut

Tuhoe country: trampers approach Kanohirua Hut, Te Urewera National Park. Shaun Barnett



and track projects. By and large these initiatives are excellent and well supported. Indeed, they often reflect local NGO efforts.

However, challenges arise when the stakes get a bit bigger, and we get into trade-offs. How would we feel if a mining company funded pest control that was the equivalent of the biodiversity loss it will cause? What if it funded more, so there was a net benefit? This is called biodiversity off-setting. Off-setting involves a complex range of technical issues including comparison, measurement and monitoring.

For now though, trampers and climbers need to focus on how we feel about it from an ethical perspective. If private funding could conserve one ecosystem, would we be willing to lose another one to achieve that?

Even greater complexity results when we can't compare like with like. With the recent decision to approve aerially assisted trophy hunting in the Hooker-Landsborough Wilderness Area, DOC has attempted to make a gain for conservation by requiring a certain number of that to be culled for each trophy that is taken. This might improve conservation, but the loss is to recreation, because the wilderness value of the Hooker-Landsborough has been diminished. So far, DOC seems incapable of thinking about the trade-off in diminishing social values to improve conservation. FMC will need to fill that space.

I should mention here that FMC's submission achieved a small concession out of this flawed process, resulting in the removal of the area around Marks Flat and Mt Hooker from the permit. Keen trans-alpinists will be surprised to hear that the original decision claimed that this area was inaccessible to foot-based recreation! I haven't had too many problems walking through the area on my four or five trips through there.

One potential good outcome from DOC's partnership approach would be agreements that better enable clubs to manage tracks and huts. Sadly, the feedback I have received from some clubs does not match the rhetoric from politicians and DOC Head Office. DOC will quickly kill the idea of partnership if staff insist that clubs sign a 25-page contract, with the

threat of ripping out the hut if they don't. This has already happened in one instance, and any clubs that have similar experiences should let us know.

Another area of challenge arises from Treaty settlements. I recently attended a excellent summit on the future management of Te Urewera National Park, arranged by Ngai Tuhoe. A wide range of users came and spoke about what Te Urewera means to them. I spoke about how trampers from all over the country appreciate Te Urewera National Park as a special place, and that for trampers in the top of the North Island, while not having the length of attachment that Tuhoe have, it is still 'their place'.

I also spoke about the values that FMC would want preserved in any treaty deal, and that the National Parks Act provided a minimum set of values (for example, assured public access, protection of biodiversity, and limited commercial activity).

At the conclusion of the day Tamati Kruger from Tuhoe accepted the propositions put forward by all speakers. I can't possibly hope to articulate what Te Urewera means to Tuhoe, so I won't even try. Suffice to say, for Tuhoe the preservation of the ecosystems of Te Urewera won't be subject to the same national prioritisation exercise that DOC must go through to allocate funds.

As DOC looks to focus and prioritise its spending on conservation, and iwi like Tuhoe want a greater level of protection for conservation land in their rohe, and have the means to fund it, it isn't hard to see a future where iwi will direct funding into conservation efforts, and local club initiatives could fit in with this.

FMC can see both the opportunities and threats from this new approach to conservation. At this stage, all I can give you is more questions than answers, but these changing times are going to challenge traditional FMC views. The executive would welcome any feedback and thoughts, or simply comments and questions, as this work advances.





Letters



Jan Heine (on right) crossing a river in Mongolia Photo: John Williamson

Jan Heine

After seeing the photo of Jan Heine crossing a river in 1974 in the March 2012 *FMC Bulletin* (page 8), I thought this photo might be of interest.

It shows Jan in the Altai Mountains of Mongolia last year. Still crossing rivers 37 years later!

John Williamson, Zavkhan Trekking

Fridge's Other Qualities

With respect to the article 'Refrigerated Huts' (June 2012 *FMC Bulletin*), as well as being known primarily as 'Chief Tararua hut bagger' and 'Paramount Fridge Magneteeer', I also remember well the trip when I first became acquainted with Peter Harvey. I invited him on a float down the mid-Waiohine River gorge. He showed up proudly at the water's edge resplendent in a wetsuit the wrong size, a flaccid partly-inflated car tube, and a single cannibalised kayak paddle blade into which he had stuffed a broken mop handle. This was going to be his secret weapon!

Prima facie it looked promising, but after a few river bends, it became apparent that a full two blades on a handle are required for propulsion. Fridge spent an age in

the Waiohine spinning like a china teacup, or finding (even creating?) eddies in the river, so that he would more often be seen heading upstream in the gorge. For me, innocently by-standing downstream, it seemed he spent hours defying gravity and going the wrong way, and the wind and whitewater tried but could not drown out all the echoes of profanity. For those of you who know the turbulent upper Waiohine River gorge, I consider his peripatetic route quite some accomplishment.

Anyhow, it was the funniest thing I have seen in the hills, and I remember keeping warm through agonizing, quivering laughter. I believe the paddle has been mounted, and is now on display in Lowry Bay as a monument to one man's folly.

Joe Nawalaniec, Carterton

Intention Forms

I may have missed something in discussions on this topic, but I can't see an adequate answer for last minute changes of plan. I may head to Glenorchy or the Wanaka area with tramping alternatives in mind. Frequently I will make my mind up at the last minute on a particular tramp depending on weather, transport or suggestions from other trampers. After talking to DOC staff in Makarora I once changed my intended route at 9 a.m. on the start day. I have always filled

out the intentions slip just prior to leaving and put it into the appropriate box. Contact with friends or family outside a particular area is often not possible. I have often met up with visitors to New Zealand who have no contacts in the country but have a good knowledge of DOC locations and are very comfortable with the old system. Are the DOC offices out of the picture entirely?

Michael Bond, Christchurch

Trespass Law

While C.G. Duff is undoubtedly right (Letters, June 2012 *FMC Bulletin*) in his description of the law around *criminal* trespass – and in doing so, shows how pointless 'Trespassers will be Prosecuted' signs are – he overlooks the separate tort (civil wrong) of trespass. Anyone on private land without express or implied permission will in most cases have committed a trespass, even if not at a criminal level. Legal action for civil trespass is possible, although almost unheard of, as the landowner has to take the action at his own expense. Winning

such a case would often be easy, but the victory could be hollow. The landowner also needs to show that he has had a loss to justify a damages award, which is the only sanction. But the fact that you probably won't land up in court doesn't make your action right.

Apart from that, in my opinion, being on private land without permission is in most cases simply rude (and so, for that matter, is refusing permission without good reason).

David Barnes,
Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club

No Tourist Charges

I refer to the editor's footnote to the correspondence relating to charging for national park entry (March 2012 *FMC Bulletin*) when he said that it 'seems entirely reasonable' to charge overseas visitors at Waitangi NZ\$20 (it has gone up already – now NZ\$25) Entirely reasonable for whom?

I do feel that this selective entrance fee unfortunately discriminates against overseas visitors and particularly affects young people on a limited budget, who I have heard often turn around at the Waitangi ticket office and forgo the visit. What a pity! Discrimination even if covert (I've felt it in transit at Los Angeles) leaves a bad taste.

As to the main letter from Felix Collins – I do despair when I hear this talk of charging levies and fees to overseas visitors. Even worse is his proposal that we all carry identity passes in our national parks.

Last year I believe that revenue from the tourism industry overtook dairy, and for the first time became the country's leading export earner. What a contribution overseas visitors make already. Like all good hosts, we should be making them even more welcome – and especially the youngsters.

To talk of charging these people national park fees or a tourist tax is like Fonterra charging cows to eat grass!

Bob Lancaster, FMC supporter, Nelson



View from Lathrop Saddle Photo: Catherine Sintenie

No Mining in the Back-country Please

Last April, we relished a few days tramping in the stunningly rugged West Coast country of the Toaroha, Upper Kokatahi, Crawford and Styx Valleys. We hauled and clawed our way over steep passes, waded back and forth across rushing creeks, but were, thankfully, subjected to limited battle with dense West Coast bush due to the recent visit of a DOC track-clearing gang. We were so very excited to stumble across several of the increasingly rare blue duck splashing around in the creeks, and when we were accompanied by the endearing, but now very seldom seen, rock wren one lunch break,

we could barely contain ourselves. We saw no other humans, and it would have been a perfect trip in perfect weather, but for the fact we were continually accompanied overhead by a helicopter with a long pole projecting from the front. It was conducting a grid, magnetic surveying for minerals. The analogy of rape seems particularly appropriate.

The very idea that this exquisite habitat, with its unique treasures, might be destroyed forever by mining just sickened us to the core. Whatever would we tell our grandchildren? We can't just sit back and let this happen!

Catherine Sintenie, Geraldine

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Tourism and Conservation

A couple of weeks on holiday, tramping in Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park and the Ruataniwha Conservation Park, saw us return to the farm serene and fit, only to fume anew at this misguided proposal for a Dart-Milford tunnel through the Mount Aspiring and Fiordland national parks.

As an original submitter opposing the scheme, I was gratified to receive from FMC the link to the Federated Mountain Clubs substantive submission opposing this grossly inappropriate proposal. In this state of mind, we were no mood to read the Nelson–Marlborough Conservator's comments about how the classic old Heaphy huts supposedly need replacing and the existing swing-bridges on the Heaphy track need upgrading. Neil Clifton states that, although swing-bridges are for some a highlight, many find them 'daunting'.

Why should a small minority of people (who apparently have conveyed to DOC that they find a well built swing-bridge daunting) be catered for? Is this more of the effect of the disturbing view held by senior DOC officials who 'are clearly into encouraging and enabling tourism'. Are we now supposed to believe that

section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987 is merely an outdated notion?

Existing swing-bridges on the Heaphy are quite adequate. They ensured that my 70-year-old mother didn't have river crossings to contend with when she recently walked the Heaphy. Are we to believe that 'legal requirements for space per visitor' have suddenly changed? Huts have been booked to full capacity on a number of Great Walks for many years. Has there been an injury or death at one of the admittedly busy Heaphy huts?

In our view, DOC should simply inform would-be trampers as to the level of difficulty of specific tramping tracks and routes, and leave individuals to choose a tramp suitable to their level of fitness and experience, not sanitise tramping trips further or have over-spec facilities in the back-country. Clifton's comments sound like unnecessary expenditure to me.

One last question: what is this nauseating new logo on the DOC website, 'Conservation for prosperity'? What happened to the more appropriate 'Protect, enjoy, be involved'?

Zelka Grammer, Maungakaramea
(individual FMC member)

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DOC Funding

I share many of Eric Sullivan's views in the letters section of the March 2012 *FMC Bulletin*. The arguments that Rob Brown and Richard Davies raise in response to Eric's letter are, as I see it, beside the point. The government is currently spending much more than it collects; borrowing in excess of \$100 million a week to make up the difference and getting further and further in debt. This is unsustainable in the long run and the government must cut its spending, increase its take, or both. There seems no reason why DOC should be exempt from cuts.

The responses to Eric's letter by Rob and Richard read to me like criticisms of views that differed from theirs, to the extent of Rob accusing him of 'running a political agenda'. If anyone is doing that it's Rob, who is clearly a supporter of big government.

FMC is a 'club of clubs' established to lobby the government of the day on behalf of its member clubs and, through them, individual club members. As such, ideally it ought to reflect the views of the majority of the membership.

Fording Rivers

It is encouraging to see the coverage given rivers and fording following Brian Wilkins's efforts – long overdue. I hope it won't degenerate into a contest between the different techniques, for they all have their place. I was involved in a fording incident that claimed a life, and that has made me take an interest in the subject. If we had used a rope that person would have lived. Safety in rivers lies in flexibility of thought and technique; there is no best way. Each technique is designed to handle a different situation, and they often have to be adapted to suit a particular problem. They all have their inherent dangers. The important thing is for trampers to understand each method, and its strengths and weaknesses.

As with all techniques, individuals will disagree on the detail. This is good because rivers differ and they have never read the textbook. Different experiences create differing responses. I have always distrusted mutual support or



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However, the FMC executive is appointed indirectly, through the various club committees, and is at some remove from ordinary members. In my experience those who stand for the executive tend to have strong views and indeed, often political agendas, which may or may not reflect those of the membership they represent. With letters to the editor being one of the few ways for most members to give feedback to the executive, I think more care is needed in responding to differing points of view.

Roger Coombs, New Zealand Alpine Club

grasping, for I have seen how comprehensively it can fail, but that does not mean that the method is wrong; it is well tried and has withstood the test of time and used within its limits there's nothing the matter with it, despite the extravagant claims made for it by some organisations. All techniques have their limits and if we are to be safe we have to know what they are. The more variations you know, the better.

John Rundle, Hutt Valley 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 and a Craig Potton Publishing Back-country Huts Journal for the best letter goes to Zelka Grammer.



Executive Profile: Nick Plimmer

My first real awareness of FMC came about when I accidentally set fire to an *FMC Bulletin*, carefully placed in Teal Bay Hut by Robin McNeill, when he joined an Otago University Tramping Club trip.

Born and raised in Auckland, early on I embarked on tramping trips to the Waitakere and Hunua ranges, with occasional trips to Tongariro National Park and its environs. I moved to Dunedin to attend Otago University, and joined the Otago University Tramping Club (OUTC), serving on the executive in a number of positions, and spending numerous weekends tramping in the lower half of the South Island. This also gave me a mild interest in advocacy, including at the time, the Mount Aspiring and Fiordland national park management plans.

The highlights of my tramping career occurred during my early university days, and included a traverse of the Olivine Wilderness Area, a climb of Mt Somnus via the couloir, and shooting my first deer in Doubtful Sound. After graduation from Otago University, I spent time living and working in Auckland, where my attention was drawn to mountain biking and sailing.

Itchy feet then took hold and I travelled to North America, spending time working at a ski resort in Alberta, Canada. Returning to the Otago University for postgraduate studies, I once again found myself on the executive of OUTC, and spent weekends with the dedicated individuals operating the Awakino Ski Area. I also became more aware of the Federated Mountain Clubs while attending a FMC youth forum. My decision to join FMC came from my concern at the proposed monorail and tunnel projects in Fiordland, as well as interests in advocacy.

I'm currently a member of the OUTC, the Waitaki Ski Club (Awakino Ski Area) and the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association (Otago Branch). I'm interested in the areas of freedom of access, outdoors safety and tramping club development.



Nick Plimmer Photo: Penzy Dinsdale

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Notice Board

Save Fiordland Society Challenges DOC and Government

Save Fiordland has formally become an incorporated society, with the immediate focus on saving New Zealand's UNESCO Te Wahipounamu World Heritage Area from two private-access private-developer proposals that threaten to drill and deforest the area. The group believes that both the Snowdon monorail and the Routeburn tunnel proposals are grossly inappropriate and unnecessary.

The society's long-term goal is guardianship of New Zealand's conservation areas, and meaningful protection of the country's largest World Heritage area.

In July, a large number of people gathered in Te Anau, resulting in a 'Save Fiordland' campaign, determined to promote the urgent message of defending what belongs to all New Zealanders, and the wider world, within the UNESCO World Heritage Area. Save Fiordland is a coalition of people from all walks of life and political affiliations, and the group has invited all parties to engage with and support the campaign.

Campaigners want to know why DOC approved these inappropriate development proposals in principle, when both are clearly contrary to the values of both the Fiordland National Park Management Plan and the UNESCO World Heritage Area. The group will question key people involved in this decision, notably Prime Minister and Tourism Minister John Key, Minister of Conservation Kate Wilkinson, and local MP Bill English, as well as DOC's decision-makers including the Director-General and the Southland Conservator. The Save Fiordland Society believes that the public must now take a guardianship role, after DOC has effectively abandoned that job.

On 15 July the society ratified its constitution, elected an executive committee, and also elected esteemed scientist and former

Save Manapouri champion, Professor Alan Mark, as its founding patron.

Chairperson Daphne Taylor said, 'History shows that Fiordlanders take their guardianship role seriously. They understand it. There is no confusion as to the travesty involved in DOC's approval in principle the tunnel and monorail projects in our world heritage area. And there is certainly no confusion as to what is needed to achieve the immediate goal of stopping the two concessions being granted.'

(Abridged press release from Save Fiordland Society)

Daphne Taylor, chairperson

Save Fiordland Society, tel 03 249 7868,
billanddaphne@xtra.co.nz

Wilderness magazine wins MPA award

Wilderness won the sport and leisure magazine of the year at the Magazine Publishers Association (MPA) awards in June, beating stiff competition from boating, fishing and rugby



magazines. *Wilderness* writer Josh Gale also won journalist of the year in the same category. The Auckland-based magazine has been published since 1991, and current editor Alistair Hall said, 'The Magazine of the Year award is a great success and recognition for *Wilderness*, which enjoys a very loyal and committed readership. Indeed, it is thanks to many of those readers, who write about their trips, that *Wilderness* has been able to produce such a compelling and diverse magazine every month.'

Wilderness magazine is one of the sponsors for the annual FMC photographic competition, and FMC congratulates the *Wilderness* team on their success. FMC members get a discount on *Wilderness* subscriptions (see: www.wildernessmag.co.nz).

FMC AGM, 9 June 2012, Christchurch
Executive for 2012-13 (no election required):

President: Richard Davies (NZAC Wellington). Vice President: Peter Wilson (Otago UTC). Special Vice President: Brian Stephenson (Alpine Sports Club & NZAC Auckland).

Executive: David Barnes (Otago T&MC), Rob Brown (NZAC Canterbury), Owen Cox (Parawai TC, Wellington T&MC), Robin McNeill (NZAC Southland), Barbara Morris (Taupo & Nga Tapuwae TC), Paddy Gresham (Taranaki TC & NZAC Wellington), Dennis Page (Hutt Valley TC), Rob Mitchell (Otago T&MC & NZAC Otago), Lesley Topping (Alpine Sports Club), Nick Plimmer (Otago UTC), Claire Sims (Otago UTC), Peter Lusk (Buller TC) and Patrick Holland (Nelson TC).

Two non-executive appointments were also confirmed: secretary Josie Broadbent (Marlborough TC and Victoria UWTC) and treasurer Graeme Lythgoe (Hutt Valley TC).

Address by Hon. Peter Dunne, Associate Minister of Conservation

FMC was delighted that the Hon. Peter Dunne was able to attend the AGM. Mr Dunne acknowledged that two topical issues of importance to FMC members, Aerially Assisted Trophy Hunting and the Big Game Animal Council Bill, were currently being addressed by Parliament but as they were currently before review committees he did not want to comment further on these matters at this stage. Instead, he focused on other issues that he felt were important to the conservation portfolio. He is keen to encourage additional engagement by DOC with partner organisations (such as FMC) and to seek their input into the management or governance processes that relate to the recreational aspects of the department's mandate - e.g. input into the hut and track network. Mr Dunne also emphasised that the concept of preservation should not equate to areas being exclusively locked up ('look but don't touch') and off limits to complementary recreational activities. Access was another important issue and the Associate Minister stressed that he was opposed to any developments that would cause

exclusive capture of public land (e.g. rivers or hunting blocks) and putting it off limits to all but a privileged few.

Address by Jaz Morris, Otago University Tramping Club

Jaz presented a well received talk and slide show on Young People and the Outdoors. He emphasised that many young people were still doing exciting and adventurous activities in New Zealand's forests and mountains. To illustrate the point, he gave brief synopses accompanied by some inspiring images of FMC Youth Scholarship Expedition Award winners' trips (Max Olsen; Transit River, Fiordland; and James Thornton; Glaisnock Wilderness, Fiordland) that took place over the previous summer season. He also gave examples of other OUTC adventures that have featured prominently in the club's annual publication *Antics*. The challenge FMC member clubs face is how to capture members of the university clubs once they leave tertiary study and move into careers and family life.

FMC Youth and Young Adults Scholarship Scheme: Round Three Winners

FMC, with the support of the FMC Mountain and Forest and Maerewhenua Trusts, awarded three Youth and Young Adults Scholarships for the third round of awards (closing date April 2012). The winners were:

- **Expedition Award (\$1,000):** Wouter van Beershtoten (Canterbury University TC) for a traverse of the Princess Range and a climb of Caroline Peak in the vicinity of Lake Hauroko, Fiordland.
- **Skills Award (\$ 600):** Chris Owen (NZAC, Canterbury) to attend a High Alpine Skills Course at Mt Cook.
- **Skills Award (\$ 500):** Nicola Whelan-Henderson (St Hilda's Collegiate, Dunedin) to attend a Mountain Skills for Youth Course at Arthur's Pass National Park.

Applications for the fourth round of scholarships close on Friday 7 September 2012, and include one \$1,000 Expedition Award and three \$500 Skills Awards. See www.fmc.org.nz for more details.

Pests Knocked Down in the Kepler mountains

Work to return birdsong to the Kepler mountains is in full swing with the first knockdown of stoats and rats completed. Traps were set at the start of April and checked for the first time at the end of the month, resulting in 48 stoats, 37 rats and six mice in the traps.

This first knock-down follows an intensive eight months of work by DOC contractors cutting tracks across a 3,000-hectare area of the Kepler Mountains. In March, Fiordland College students, Venture Scouts and members of the local community then placed the 472 stoat and rat traps at 100-metre intervals along these tracks. The traps were pre-baited with a hen's egg to attract resident stoats to use the tunnels as a source of food.

Murray Willans, Chair of the Fiordland Conservation Trust said 'This first knock-down is a milestone to be celebrated, and is the result of several years of hard work and planning behind the scenes.'

The project's principal sponsor is Kids Restore New Zealand, a programme under an Air New Zealand Environment Trust that encourages leadership and environmental education for young people. The Community Trust of Southland provided extra funding. The existing trapping undertaken by the Kepler Challenge committee and their volunteers will act as a 'ring fence' around this work, with most of the pest control undertaken within the Kepler track area.

Ruud Kleinpaste, of Kids Restore New Zealand said, 'If we are serious about restoring our New Zealand, we have to be serious about the the control, or better still the extermination, of introduced predators.'

In the coming months intensive rat control, using additional traps and bait stations, will be set up in a targetted area covering 450 hectares from the control gates to Brod Bay. Some extra traps will also be set up for feral cats.

The aim of this project is to restore the Kepler area to its former state. The overall

focus is to reduce the number of pests, in the lower 3,000 hectares of the Kepler and then eventually in the entire Kepler peninsula. From here, the next step is to bring back some of the species that are currently close to extinction in the area.

Visit: www.fiordlandconservationtrust.org.nz

Old FMC Logo Remains

After reviewing options for a newer, revamped FMC logo, the FMC executive has decided to stick with the old, tried and trusted one. Earlier this year, the executive asked *FMC Bulletin* editor Shaun Barnett to investigate a new logo, so he engaged designer Jo Kinley to come up with a range of options (see below). Barnett favoured a change, and liked the third logo on the left, but respects the executive's unanimous decision to stick with the traditional one.

Logo options by *Bulletin* designer Jo Kinley



Hut Bookings on the Rees–Dart track

Last year, FMC submitted against a proposal to introduce a booking system on the Rees–Dart track in Mount Aspiring National Park. DOC has recently decided that a booking system will proceed and that it will run from 3 January to 28 February each year. DOC accepted FMC's submission that it applies to the Dart Hut and campsite only, and that it will not be implemented until the Annual Hut Pass can be used electronically as a payment method. This means it won't be operational until the 2013-14 summer. We still believe that the data used was inadequate to support a booking system decision. However, the inclusion of the Annual Hut Pass in the booking system augurs well for this to be expanded to outside the Great Walks, and will stem the hut pass's erosion of value in recent years.

David Barnes, FMC Executive

Hydro-Electric Power Developments on Wild Rivers

West Power recently announced an intention to resume investigations into the construction of a 'run of the river' scheme on the West Coast's Waitaha River. The proposed 16-20 MW scheme is similar to the Amethyst Project near Harihari (due to be completed in 2013) and involves taking water out of the river, piping it downhill via a tunnel to flats below Morgan Gorge, and returning it to the river. The area involved comprises conservation 'Stewardship land' and the project would require concessions from DOC as well as concessions under the Resource Management Act. FMC will monitor the proposals closely. Interested readers should consult the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's recent report on wild rivers: www.pce.parliament.nz/publications/all-publications/hydroelectricity-or-wild-rivers-climate-change-versus-natural-heritage/.

Track Closures to protect Kauri in Auckland

From 1 July, 13 kauri protection zones in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park in Auckland

were put in place to protect healthy kauri trees. Kauri dieback disease is widespread in the Waitakere Ranges, but several pockets of healthy, apparently unaffected trees still exist.

The Auckland Council has closed 15 tracks in these areas to form kauri protection zones and to keep these areas free of the soil-borne disease. These closures will be reviewed in a year. The closed tracks total 27 kilometres (out of the 250+ kilometres of tracks throughout the Waitakere Ranges) with the Hillary Trail not affected. The following tracks (or sections of track) will be closed:

- Robinsons Ridge Track – Cascade Kauri
- Chateau Mosquito – Anawhata
- RGB Track – Anawhata
- Walker Kauri Track – Waiatarua
- Dreamlands Track – Waiatarua
- Taumata Track – Waiatarua
- Lucy Cranwell Track – Piha
- La Trobe Track – Karekare
- Nuggets Track – Huia
- Crusher Pipeline Track – Parau
- Nihotupu Ridge Track – Parau
- Summit Track (between Nihotupu Ridge and Hamiltons Farley Track) – Parau
- Farley Track – Parau
- Bob Gordon Track – Mt Donald McLean
- Manchester Unity Block (between Victory Road and Big Muddy Creek) – Parau

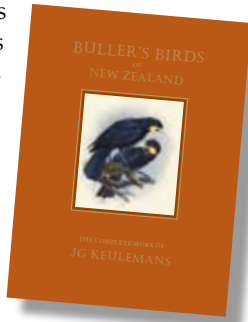
Clubs interested in a printed copy of the protection areas map should contact Craig Bleakley at the Auckland Council. Visit: www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz, or www.kauridieback.co.nz.

Safety in the Mountains

The new edition of FMC's flagship outdoor skills publication *Safety in the Mountains* has been printed. Prices are as follows: retail \$9.95, FMC members \$8 (available through www.fmc.org.nz). Clubs and member schools can buy it at a special bulk price of \$50 for 10 copies (including GST and postage). Clubs or schools wishing to order bulk copies should send their orders with payment to Administration Officer, PO Box 1604, Wellington, or email admin@fmc.org.nz.

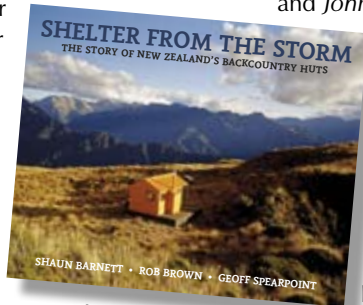
FMC Book News

Three exciting new titles will appear later this year. Te Papa Press will publish *Buller's Birds of New Zealand*, *The complete work of JG Keulemans*, by Geoff Norman. This is a complete, all-new edition of the classic nineteenth



century ornithological paintings of John Gerrard Keulemans for Walter Buller's *A History of the Birds in New Zealand*. As well as featuring fresh reproductions of the original watercolour paintings, the book also tells the story of this internationally significant bird artist and his work. Geoff Norman is a Wellington trumper, designer and bird enthusiast.

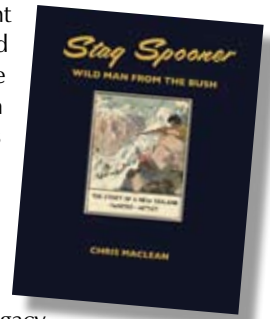
Shelter from the Storm, The Story of New Zealand's Backcountry Huts details the remarkable history of our huts and profiles over 90 huts in individual chapters. Written by Shaun Barnett, Rob Brown and Geoff Spearpoint, the 365-page hardback book will be published in October by Craig Potton Publishing. In several essays,



covering farm, mining, deer-culling, tramping club, science, memorial, DOC, Lands and Survey, tourism and climbing huts, the authors explain the development of our backcountry hut network, one of the most extensive and diverse in the world. The FMC Mountain and Forest Trust supported publication of this book with a substantial \$5,000 grant to offset the high production costs.

Craig Potton Publishing has also produced another fascinating book, due for release in August: *Stag Spooner, Wild Man from the Bush* by Chris Maclean. Stag (Neville) Spooner (1917-

1946) was a government deer culler in 1939 and 1940, initially in the Tararuas, and then on the South Island's West Coast. While his successful career as a culler was cut short by the Second World War, he did leave behind a remarkable legacy



from this period, an illustrated diary of his experiences that he entitled *Those Wild Men from the Bush*. The diary, which forms the heart of this book, is a fascinating chronicle of the life of a professional hunter, who somewhat unusually, was also an artist. In an extensive biographical essay, Chris Maclean details Spooner's life, not only as a hunter and artist, but also as an ambulance officer during the war. Maclean, a trumper, writer and historian, is well known for his landmark books *Tararua*, *Kapiti* and *John Pascoe*.

Reviews of all three books, with extracts, will appear in the November 2012 *FMC Bulletin*.

Wairarapa Hut and Track News

(from DOC Masterton)

After a trial booking system at Powell Hut last summer, DOC has decided to implement a booking system for both Powell and Jumbo Huts in Tararua Forest Park for the 2012–2013 summer.

Those wishing to stay at either hut between 1 October 2012 and 30 April 2013 must book well in advance through the DOC website (www.doc.govt.nz). Bookings open on 1 August 2012. Wardens will operate at both huts over summer.

Gas cooking facilities at Tutuwai, Totara Flats and Mitre Flats huts will be permanently removed in August 2012 to reduce costs. DOC will continue to supply firewood to these three huts.

Great Walks Hut and Campsite Fees Standardised

In July, DOC introduced a new three-tiered pricing system for Great Walks huts and campsites. Fees for the Great Walks huts and campsites had varied around the country, leading to some confusion and inconsistency. The new system is simpler and sets uniform charges. There was no change to the fees for the other 940 DOC back-country huts around the country.

Great Walk Huts (per adult, per night)

- Tier 1: \$54 (up \$2.90) Milford, Routeburn and Kepler Tracks.
- Tier 2: \$32 (previously between \$30.60 and \$35.70) Abel Tasman Coast Track, Heaphy Track, Tongariro Northern Circuit, Whanganui Journey, Lake Waikaremoana Track.
- Tier 3: \$22 (up \$1.60) Rakiura Track.

Campsites (per adult, per night)

- Tier 1: \$15 – Serviced campsites – flush toilets, tap water, kitchen/cooking bench, hot showers etc
- Tier 2: \$10 – Scenic campsites – pit or composting toilets, water from tap/stream/lake.
- Tier 3: \$6 – Standard campsites – pit or composting toilets, water from tap/stream/lake.

'Check, clean, dry' stopping the spread of didymo in Fiordland

DOC and Fish & Game are delighted that the testing of 22 rivers in Fiordland National Park, previously known to be unaffected, showed no new signs of the invasive freshwater pest didymo. DOC freshwater ranger Lyndsay Murray said 'This is our third year in a row with no new records of didymo. It's a fantastic result and shows that people's willingness to 'Clean, Check and Dry' all their gear continues to help prevent didymo spreading further into the pristine waters of Fiordland.' Ms Murray said that once didymo has established itself in a waterway there is no known way to eliminate it, so preventing it from spreading to new rivers

is critical. Didymo, first found in New Zealand during 2004 in the lower Waiau River, has since spread to many rivers and waterways in the Southland Plains and along the eastern boundary of Fiordland National Park (including Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri and the Eglinton River). Quick reaction by lead organisations (headed by Biosecurity New Zealand – MAFBNZ) and an engaging 'Clean, Check, Dry' campaign has resulted in many Fiordland rivers remaining didymo-free. Each year Fish & Game and DOC collect water samples from selected sites and send them to NIWA for analysis.

Protection call for non-renewable wild rivers welcomed

FMC and Forest and Bird both praised a recent report on wild rivers and hydro-electricity, released by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE), Jan Wright.

FMC President Richard Davies said, 'Trampers and climbers recognise the vulnerability of our remaining wild rivers, and this report does an excellent job of identifying the policy changes that are required to give them a level of protection that befits their importance to all New Zealanders.'

Forest and Bird Advocacy Manager Kevin Hackwell said, 'New Zealand's wild rivers should not be paying the price for our demand for energy. Our wild rivers are not a renewable resource. Dr Jan Wright has recognised that once a river is dammed, it is lost forever. Her report is thorough and tackles the core issues.'

Mountain Map Workshop

The New Zealand Cartographic Society is hosting a workshop on mountain cartography at OPC Taurewa in September. Wellington cartographer Geoff Aitken will present a paper about the making of the 1936 Tatarua map (see: <http://web.env.auckland.ac.nz/public/mcw2012/>). The workshop will follow immediately after the National Cartographic Conference (GeoCart' 2012), held the preceding week in Auckland, see: <http://web.env.auckland.ac.nz/public/geocart2012/>.

Nelson Hut and Track News

(from the Waimea Tramping Club newsletter)

Kahurangi National Park

Mountain Biking on Heaphy Track

The second year of a three-year trial of mountain biking on the Heaphy Track began at the beginning of May and huts are heavily booked for the weekends. A one-kilometre section of the track in the MacKay Hill area has been upgraded using a \$5,000 donation by the Nelson Mountain Bike Club, with another \$5,500 for materials given by mountain bike businesses. An estimated 1,700 mountain bikers rode the track last year.

Heaphy Track

The new Perry Saddle Hut was opened in June. The old hut site will be used for a campground. Construction of the new Heaphy Hut is expected to be completed by the end of the year. New swing-bridges have also been erected over the Swan Burn and the Gunner River.

Leslie-Karamea Huts

Huts on the Leslie-Karamea track have suffered damage to the floors as a result of fishermen wearing spikes and instep crampons into the huts, particularly Crow Hut. Fishermen have also been staying for extended periods in the huts when use is limited to three consecutive nights, which

The new Perry Saddle Hut Photo: DOC Golden Bay

ensures that the huts remain accessible for other users. The long-stay visitors have also flown in gear, including suitcases, which has occupied a large amount of space within the huts as well as being out of character with what people expect. DOC invites any feedback on these issues.

Mt Arthur Hut

Volunteers have helped paint the Mt Arthur Hut. DOC is also seeking funding to replace the eight-bunk hut in the future. The new 16-bunk hut could be relocated 20 metres higher up the ridge, above the bushline, and would include improved living space to cater for the hut's 21,000 visitors per year. DOC is keen to hear from those interested in plans for a new hut.

Abel Tasman National Park

The Totaranui Road was officially reopened in June after repairs to the major slips and washouts resulting from last December's floods. The Awapoto Hut's roof has been repaired after a tree fell on it.

Anchorage Hut, the busiest hut in the country, will be replaced next year, with an increase in capacity from 24 to 34 bunks – matching the bunk-space of nearby Bark Bay Hut. Plans include four bunkrooms and increased living space to better accommodate the hut's large number of visitors. The existing



hut will be closed and dismantled in May 2013 to enable construction of the new hut in a similar location.

Nelson Lakes National Park

Following the major avalanche behind John Tait Hut four years ago, remedial work has been carried out behind the hut to divert water and snow. As well, DOC may periodically close the hut when this is warranted.

The pre-Christmas floods resulted in the loss of the West Sabine swing-bridge and a replacement is planned for spring. One of the Travers Valley swing-bridge towers was also damaged but a replacement bridge has been installed.

No definite long-term plan has been decided about the shelters on Mt Robert. As a short-term measure DOC is considering locking Relax Shelter, to preserve its historic fabric. During May some remedial work was undertaken on Bushedge Shelter including removing lead head nails. Another stage has been completed of the Paddys track upgrade on Mt Robert. The Paddys-Pinchgut upgrade programme will take another year.


West Coast

During March, Cedar Flat Hut, inland from Hokitika, was extended from six bunks to twelve bunks. During April, DOC renovated Kirwans Hut in Victoria Forest Park, near Reefton. The hut's eight classic wooden windows were continually leaking so they have been replaced with double-glazed aluminium windows.


Tararua Footprints guidebook available online

Merv Rodgers's comprehensive guidebook to the tramping tracks and routes of Tararua Forest Park is now available online. The *Tararua Footprints, A Trumper's Guide to the Tararua Ranges* guidebook was published by Canterbury University Press in 1996, but has been out of print for at least ten years. While the guidebook has not been updated, much of the information on times is still relevant and useful. Rodgers, a Tararua Tramping Club stalwart, has generously made the book available free. See: <http://ttc.org.nz/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/TararuaFootprints/HomePage>.






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A Canadian's Perspective of New Zealand Tramping

by Heidi Krajewsky



Heidi Krajewsky and her husband Stephen Anstee on top of Mt Arthur, Kahurangi National Park Photo: Heidi Krajewsky

My Australian husband Stephen Anstee and I arrived in New Zealand in October 2011, after spending two years sailing across the Pacific from Canada in our small yacht. Our original plan was to stay on our boat and cruise around the country while we waited for the hurricane season to finish in the tropics. However, once we arrived we realised that we needed some serious exercise to rid ourselves of 'boat body'. We soon discovered that we had stumbled upon the hiker/bushwalker/tramper's paradise.

Canada, Australia and many of the other places we've visited in between still have

wonderful, vast tracts of wilderness, but the infrastructure (tracks and huts) are nowhere near as extensive and accessible as what we found here in New Zealand. The information about all these tramping opportunities was also fantastic and easy for a foreigner to access – DOC visitor centres, I-sites and guidebooks in public libraries.

We set ourselves a three-month itinerary and tried to cover as much of the country as possible, varying the habitat we encountered from alpine to forest to coastal. As our fitness improved, we slowly increased the length and

Dec 21 Summer Solstice Coldwater Hut to John Tait Hut

Black Shag

Little Shag

Black Swan

Paradise Shelduck

Grey Duck

Blackbird

Song Thrush

NZ Robin

Bellbird

Chaffinch

Welcome Swallow

Canada Goose

Tomtit

NZ Robin on Stephen's boot.



Looking up Hopeless Creek Valley from Travers River
at the Travers Range. Lunch stop 21 Dec. 2011.



Red Admiral *Bassaris generilla*



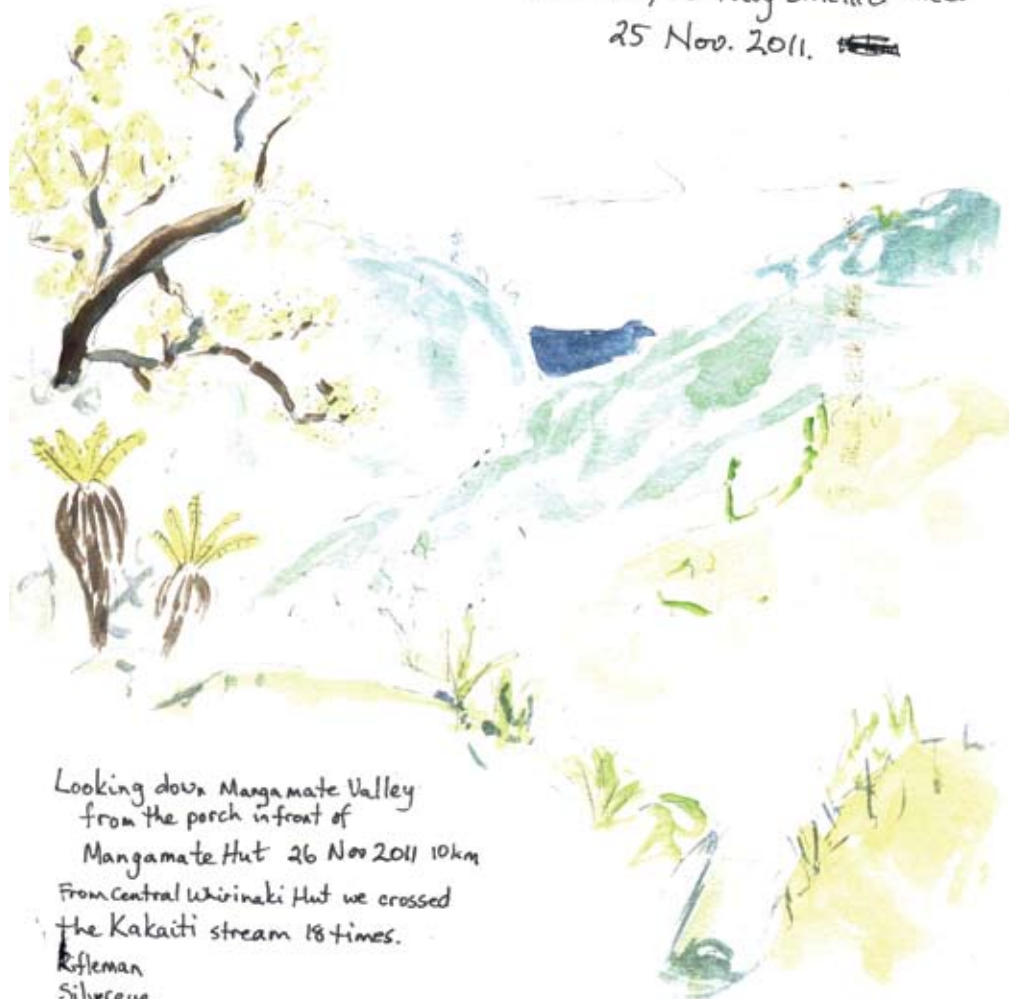
outer edge of the wing looks tattered : frayed.



glazes of the bright orange on the back of the wing

Central Whirinaki Hut
Beautiful butterflies kept landing on my toes! Was it the red flip flops that they liked? I just had a bath in the river, so they smelled nice.

25 Nov. 2011. ~~2011~~



Looking down Mangamate Valley
from the porch in front of
Mangamate Hut 26 Nov 2011 10km

From Central Whirinaki Hut we crossed
the Kakaiti stream 18 times.

Rifleman
Silvereye

difficulty of trips. For the sake of our limited budget we avoided the Great Walks and found tracks that weren't busy at all. We both work as ecotourism guides in Canada, so our focus, as well as tramping, was to see and appreciate as much of the native flora and fauna as we could. Often we took longer to cover the same distance as others travelling the same way, but it was important to us to take time, admire the scenery and make sketches and notes along the way.

In the end we tramped nearly 650 kilometres (boat body mission successful) on 10 different routes stretching from Cape Reinga to Stewart Island. We spent 34 nights in our tent and 39 in huts, and fell in love with New Zealand! I should also mention that we were taken in by a few people that we met on the trail for a night's rest in comfort and shown genuine Kiwi hospitality and kindness. We were also educated about the New Zealand tramping and outdoor culture by reading the variety and selection of magazines left in the huts (including several *FMC Bulletins*) and reading through all the comments in the hut books.

Thank you New Zealand. This place of yours is beautiful and I hope you can always keep it that way.

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Here is a summary of the walks that we did during our stay:

1. Cape Reinga Coastal Walkway: four days of beautiful beaches and coastline with lovely campsites.
2. Whirinaki Forest Park: a short three-day loop along the Whirinaki and Mangamate valleys with impressive podocarp forests.
3. Kaimanawa Forest Park: two days along the Umukarikari Range for views of Tongariro and our first glimpse of alpine vegetation.
4. Egmont National Park: bad weather on the circuit around Mt Taranaki meant that our best views were driving up to the hike.
5. Tararua Forest Park: we did two circuits over Mt Holdsworth and Cone Ridge.
6. Kahurangi National Park: up to Mt Arthur and the Tablelands, with the alpine flowers really starting to bloom.
7. The Travers-Sabine Circuit with a detour to Lake Constance and Blue Lake, Nelson Lakes National Park.
8. The Croesus Track in Paparoa National Park, with great views to Aoraki/Mount Cook.
9. Arthur's Pass National Park: up the Andrews Stream, Poulter River, over Minchin Pass, down Townsend Creek, the Taramakau River, Otehake River, and Lake Kaurapataka.
10. The Northwest Circuit over 12 days in Stewart Island (Rakiura National Park). This was paradise for watching wildlife, especially kiwi and seabirds!

All illustrations by Heidi Krajewsky



Carpet of Red Beech leaves
Nothofagus fusca around
Cone Hut 11 Dec. 2011
12km.



Mountain Daisy
Celmisia sp.

Cone Ridge
11 dec. 2011.

FMC Youth Scholarships – Expedition Reports from the Winners of Rounds One and Two

by Dennis Page with contributions from Max Olsen and James Thornton

The following are summaries from our recent FMC Youth Scholarship, Expedition Award winners' trips that took place during the summer of 2011–12. For current information about the awards scheme, please consult the FMC website (www.fmc.org.nz). The closing date for the next round of awards is 7 September 2012.

Max Olsen (22), Otago University Tramping Club, winner of the inaugural Expedition Grant.

Transit River expedition, Fiordland National Park, 27 December 2011–6 January 2012.

Although Max had initially planned to undertake his trip during winter 2011, the lack of available party members to accompany him forced him to postpone the trip until summer. But as Max put it, 'this allowed us to plan a much more ambitious trip.' On the morning of 27 December 2011, Max and party members George O'Sullivan and Tom McKellar were taken by boat to Sandfly Point, where they proceeded to walk up the Milford Track to the confluence of the Arthur River and Diamond Creek. This section of the trip Max describes as 'very entertaining, as we drew plenty of confused looks from walkers and guides alike, probably due to our combination of eleven-day transalpine packs and crocs (we stayed in crocs until we left the track, not wanting to put unnecessary wear on our stiff boots).'

From the confluence, Max describes travel up the true right of Diamond Creek as relatively straightforward on obvious deer trails. After several hours, the party reached the bush edge and gained spectacular views of the valley. An hour later they found a delightful campsite beside a waterfall and a perfect swimming hole.

Unfortunately, rain over the next couple of days meant somewhat miserable and slow travel. However, the prospect of good weather for day four motivated the party to keep moving in order to reach the valley head and be strategically

placed to tackle the steep section between Pt 1189 metres and the snowfields directly below Lady of the Snows. By the end of the third day, the weather did clear and from a well-positioned campsite in the head of the Diamond, the trampers undertook some route scouting, rightly anticipating tough travel through the fearsome bluffs surrounding them.

Reaching Lady of the Snows on day four required strenuous efforts and considerable rope work, but fortunately perfect weather helped to ensure success. The rocky ridgeline above the snowfield, not far from Lady of the Snows, provided a perfect lunch location, with views of all the surrounding peaks and the sea in the west. Max even managed a quick ascent of the 'Lady' while later that afternoon, Tom and George made possibly the second recorded ascent of Pt 1811 metres. From their 1,500-metre campsite next to a snowfield, they watched the sunset over the ocean, one of the trip's unforgettable highlights for Max.

New Year's Eve provided further highlights, with the group managing to reach Lake Moreton, although this did require several 20 to 25-metre sections of rope-work. Max describes the lake as being 'every bit as spectacular as I had imagined, and we wasted no time in swimming in the lake, and bathing in the tarns around it. After dark we

had dinner, and, it being New Year's Eve, we sat around a fire on the solid granite lakeshore until turning in late, in the rock bivvy that lies right beside the outlet.'

The good weather continued into the New Year and the party broke new ground by descending from the ridge above Lake Moreton to the Transit River. Max takes up the story: 'From about 1,260 metres we headed directly north down a steep and somewhat unnerving section of exposed rock and snow-grass. Fortunately, this section didn't last for long, and we were soon back on beautiful granite slabs, progressively more interspersed with patches of snow as we approached Pt 1508.

Views in every direction were breathtaking, but the view back to Lake Moreton, with its sheer waterfall outlet, was particularly impressive. After admiring the views for some time from Pt 1508, George descended to set up camp on a plateau under Pt 1017, while Tom and I put in an ascent of Pt 1549. This summit, with an enjoyable, if exposed, steep snow-grass climb, gives perfect views of Lake Ronald and its ultramafic mini-Red Hills, as well as the Transit Valley, and Mt Pembroke to the north.

'I would probably have to rate the Pt 1017 campsite as my favourite of all time. From the plateau, the land drops sheer for nearly 700 metres straight into the valley, and the cliff-edge even featured a 'diving-board' rock, which we were able to peek over for thrills. When we turned in, I went straight to sleep, but George and Tom were kept awake by parrot screeches and what George described as a rhythmic booming sound. Knowing that we were in one of the last places where kakapo had been found in the wild, we



Lady of the Snows from snowfields near Pt 1811 Photo: Max Olsen



Max Olsen on a ridgeline above the Transit Valley, with Lake Moreton beyond Photo: Max Olsen

reported the noises to DOC upon our return, but a DOC team sent in to look, found nothing.'

On the following day the threesome completed their descent to the Transit: 'perhaps the least pleasant travel we encountered on the trip and comprising a lot of swearing at leatherwood. Our route included two abseils, but on reflection, one of these could probably have been avoided. The area between the 400–600 metre contours included some very unpleasant and steep scrub which might not be a lot of fun in the other direction, or with anything other than perfect weather.'

Fortunately, after they reached the Transit River travel was easier for the most part, although by now their food was running out. They made unsuccessful attempts to catch trout in the river while en route for

Transit Beach, with thickets of ongaonga and kiekie and occasional swamps to negotiate. The party had better luck fishing from rocks at the beach, and augmented subsequent meals by Tangaroa's bounty.

After a rest day at Transit Beach, where vicious sandflies harassed the party, the final full day of the trip comprised a seven-hour tramp over the hills to Anita Bay (Milford Sound) in the rain. On their last night, the team camped

in a ruined stone cottage in front of a blazing rata-fuelled fire before Rosco's Kayaks collected them the following morning.

The expedition has clearly left a positive and indelible impression on Max who describes it as 'the most amazing tramping trip I have ever done.' I hope others have been suitably inspired by his team's accomplishments, which made the perfect start for the FMC Awards Scheme.

James Thornton (23), Otago University Tramping Club, winner of the Second Expedition Grant.

Glaisnock Wilderness expedition, Fiordland National Park, 27 January–8 February 2012.

James initially intended to set out from the Worsley River (accessed by boat across Lake Te Anau) and then into the head of the Castle River. From the Castle headwaters, his team planned to traverse Barrier Peak and descend into the head of the Dark River, followed by travel to Bligh Sound via Lake Grave, Robb Creek and Saddle, the Bernard Burn and the Wild Natives River. They planned to return to Lake Te Anau, via the Glaisnock River, by one of the several possible routes, including Cone and Edith Saddles, the tops in the vicinity of Lake Beddoes, or Oilskin Pass and Edith Saddle depending on conditions. In all, the party planned for 10 days of solid travel with additional time allowed for exploration, climbing or bad weather delays.

On 27 January, a party of six that comprised James Thornton, Tom Mckellar, Max Olsen, Alexis Belton, George O'Sullivan and Nina Dickerhof, jet-boated across Lake Te Anau to the Worsley River mouth in good weather. They camped at the confluence of the Worsley and Castle Rivers. Unfortunately, a series of fronts soon delivered volleys of bad weather to the region, forcing the party to modify



Party members on the 'Olsen Traverse' – a rope handrail erected by party member Max Olsen to assist the group ascend a slope in the upper Castle River Photo: Nina Dickerhof



The party enjoy lunch above Saint's Creek Photo: Nina Dickerhof

their original plans. On the second day, James recorded: 'Rain, heavy packs and a flooded river slowed us down considerably in travelling to the head of the Castle. With a forecast of some rough weather coming through over the next couple of days, we spent the next morning route-scouting. We managed to get through a bluff that barred access to gentler slopes above the Castle's cirque. The bluff involved a couple of pitches and a nasty wee traverse across a steep, wet and vegetated watercourse. Dark clouds were brooding to the west, and with an unsure decent we decided to head back down to our camp in the early afternoon. We spent the next couple of days in our tents as some rough weather came through.'

At the head of the Castle on day seven, with a single good day of weather forecast, the party decided to set off with daypacks to attempt Barrier Peak, a prominent landmark lying between the Castle, Worsley and Dark Rivers. However, further drizzle and poor visibility prevented the group from climbing out of the Castle's cirque until about midday. 'After a miserable lunch we decided to give the bluff a go, the rock was getting reasonably dry, although visibility was still quite poor. It was only once we were above the bluff that the sun began to pierce through the murk. Barrier Peak is a classic Fiordland mountain, with steep valley walls that give way to more gently angled terrain, before a final, steep, summit pyramid. We climbed the south-east ridge of the peak, and although at first this looked rather imposing, it turned out to be an enjoyable scramble on solid granite.' The party reached the summit at around six in the evening, and they were intrigued to find a piece of string tied around a summit cairn rock. They later discovered that their friend, Danilo Hegg, had left it there.

With a poor forecast issued for the remaining five days of their trip, the party reassessed plans and opted to traverse the Franklin Mountains south to the Glaisnock. After retracing part of their route back down the Castle River, they travelled up Saints Creek and based themselves at a camp by an unnamed lake below Mt Kane. The group soon christened it 'Turtle

Lake' owing to a small turtle-shaped island near its centre. The campsite served as a useful vantage point for exploring more of the Franklin Mountains. Two of the party, Max and Alexis, swam out to the island from opposite sides of the lake, and then raced each other to the top. In addition, the group also spent an afternoon climbing the highest peak of the range, Pt 1785, via the northeast ridge.

The group spent their penultimate day ascending Pt 1709 and Mt Kane, before travelling south-west along the tops to what James describes as a lovely campsite beside a couple of tarns on the tops between Newton and Nitz Creeks. On the final day of the trip, the group descended into the Glaisnock and arrived at Glaisnock Hut around lunchtime. 'We then spent the rest of the day being driven slightly mad by the heat and the sandflies.' However, 'a pleasant boat ride the next morning down Lake Te Anau's North Fiord, and through the famous 'narrows,' was a nice way to finish a splendid tramp. We didn't quite get into the country that we initially intended to, but we still had a superb trip, and I'm now brimming with ideas for further trips into the area. Thanks FMC, for making the trip possible!'

For more of Nina Dickerhof's photos of the trip, see: <http://ninadickerhof.smugmug.com/Tramping-in-New-Zealand/Fiordland/Castle-River-Barrier-Peak>.



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DD / MM / YY

TIME

:

AM
PM

WHAT ARE YOU DOING AND WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

Start Date: DD / MM / YY Time: : AM PM Activity:

Intended track/route/huts and alternatives:

Note: Always enter your progress and changes to plan in hut logbooks, even if you don't stay overnight.

OUTDOOR USER/LEADER DETAILS (Overseas visitors please include your passport number and your nationality.)

1	Family name: <input type="text"/>	Address or Passport Number & Nationality: <input type="text"/>
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	Cell Number: <input type="text"/>	Medical Conditions & Medication: <input type="text"/>
	Home Phone: <input type="text"/>	

WHO ARE YOUR GROUP MEMBERS? (Overseas visitors please include your passport number and your nationality.)

2	Name: <input type="text"/>	Phone: <input type="text"/>	Medical Conditions & Medication: <input type="text"/>
	Address/Passport No./Nationality: <input type="text"/>		
3	Name: <input type="text"/>	Phone: <input type="text"/>	Medical Conditions & Medication: <input type="text"/>
	Address/Passport No./Nationality: <input type="text"/>		

ADDITIONAL GROUP MEMBERS? (Overseas visitors please include your passport number and your nationality.)

4	Name: <input type="text"/>	Phone: <input type="text"/>	Medical Conditions & Medication: <input type="text"/>
	Address/Passport No./Nationality: <input type="text"/>		
5	Name: <input type="text"/>	Phone: <input type="text"/>	Medical Conditions & Medication: <input type="text"/>
	Address/Passport No./Nationality: <input type="text"/>		
6	Name: <input type="text"/>	Phone: <input type="text"/>	Medical Conditions & Medication: <input type="text"/>
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* If you need to add more group members, please download the additional group members form.

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<input type="checkbox"/> GPS	
<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit	Mountain Radio Call sign: <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra food	
<input type="checkbox"/> Survival Kit	Other: <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Shelter	
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Locator Beacon	
<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (with spare emergency ammunition)	

HOW ARE YOU TRAVELLING TO AND FROM THE AREA?

Type of vehicle etc. Please also include name of bus/rental car company, if applicable:

If you are leaving a vehicle in the area for your return, please provide details below:

Registration no:	Make and model:	Colour:	Parked at:
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This year, groups travelled to Tasmania, South Australia and the Outback, the Larapinta Trail, Peru, Bolivia, the Italian Dolomites, Austrian Stubai and the Swiss Alps. When you read this, the Aegean Trilogy (Croatia, Albania and the Corfu Trail) will be under way. Many enquiries mean we intend to offer it again in 2013 – read below.

PERU / BOLIVIA (departs May 2013) The 2012 programme reduces to five weeks with less high altitude and camping. All the 'greats' that make a tramping adventure here fantastic remain: Nazca Lines, Cusco, Inca Trail, a home-stay on Titicaca, La Paz, the Choro Trek, Amazon, Andes, Uyuni salt plains and Pisco Sour. Eileen Cameron leads you through her favourite continent.

Europe programme:

UK MEGA (departs May 2013) Linkable modules.

Module 1 England and North Wales: Coast to Coast Walk, Hadrian's Wall, Snowdonia and more.

Module 2 Scotland: The West Highland Way, three islands, Ben Nevis, Loch Ness, and a ride on a steam train.

Module 3 Ireland: An anti-clockwise circuit from Belfast to Dublin, featuring mountain, hill and coastal tramps while exploring this ancient landscape and enjoying Irish hospitality.

ICELAND (departs July 2013) Andy Dennis leads another popular adventure to the enigmatic land of fire and ice. Varied tramping and touring. Tick Iceland off your bucket list in 2013! Optionally add Greenland too. Contact us now.

KYRGYZSTAN (departs July 2013) Seeking thirsty adventurers! Into the heart of the Tien Shan (Celestial Mountains) to Khan Tengri base camp (4,100 metres). A tramping adventure with Cossack and Chinese influences as well as stunning scenery. Already seen the Himalayas or Andes? Try this for a change! Eileen Cameron leads. Contact us now.

TOP END AUSTRALIA (departs July 2013) Kakadu, the Jatbula Trail and Litchfield. Mainly camping, with escarpments, gorges, waterfalls, wetlands and wildlife aplenty. The timeless Northern Territory will appeal to those who love Australia. Colin McNatty leads this adventure.

ADRIATIC TRILOGY (departs September 2013) Croatia, newly emerging Albania (excellent mountain tramping, World Heritage listed sites) and the Corfu Trail in Greece. Great combination, contact us now!

JOURNEY TO KILIMANJARO (departs September 2013) We spend longer acclimatising to ensure a high success rate at summiting this

Glen Coe in flood, Aonach Dubh (Three Sisters) beyond, Scotland Photos: Shaun Barnett Black Robin Photography



FMC TRAVEL CLUB

African peak. Excellent infrastructure and support. Ideally, add Mt Kenya as a prequel and a safari or relaxation at Zanzibar to follow. Contact us to see how it all works. A brilliant trip!

NEW ENGLAND / CANADA MARITIMES (departs September 2013) A thorough exploration of complementary areas, not yet fully researched as we go to print. Get on the contacts list and stay informed as plans evolve.

PATAGONIA (departs November 2013) Repeating our successful 2011 trip with Eileen Cameron. Huge in scope and features, this region will amaze. Torres del Paine, Tierra del Feugo, glaciers, Chilean fiords, volcanoes and mighty Iguazu Falls – an adventure of great contrast.

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Lastly, check the travel club pages on www.fmc.org.nz for updates between *Bulletins*.

All enquiries to

John Dobbs, FMC Travel Club Convenor
Tel: 06 835 2222, fax: 06 835 4211
email: john@tsnapier.co.nz

Graveyard at Priory ruin (15th Century), Bellinskelligs, County Kerry, Ireland



Arthur's Pass Calling

Gerald Bruce-Smith reports on pest-busting in the national park





Beyond the tramper's obligatory track-side glances in Arthur's Pass National Park, there's a lot of privately funded and managed bird species recovery work going on.

The South Island's first national park – and the nation's third – is home to a number of endangered birds, including the Great Spotted kiwi, kea, whio and rock wren. With the threat of predation becoming increasingly recognised in the late 1990s, several key conservation and recovery projects have established in recent years.

By 2003 resident mountaineer Graeme Kates became so concerned with the increasing sightings of stoats and the diminished morning chorus in Arthur's Pass Village, that he initiated his own local trapping project. The initial catches well surpassed even his expectations.

In early 2005 a partnership was formed between the Arthur's Pass community, the BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust (BNZSTKT) and DOC. Together, these groups established an extensive trapping network from the Otira Valley carpark to Klondyke Corner. Funded by the BNZSTKT, with on-going voluntary input from the community, this network has since significantly expanded.

Kiwi with radio transmitters are monitored using telemetry and tracker dogs. In 2008, several kiwi chicks were discovered during routine monitoring – an exciting discovery. Increased funding enabled a study of the kiwi population: its territories, health, habits and – most importantly – chick survival. A decision to leave all chick incubations in situ provided an effective gauge of the predator control work. Around 30 birds are currently monitored, including 12 known pairs.

Other birds benefit from the trapping work, and the morning chorus has improved progressively. Several 'lost' species have also returned to the valley. Kea numbers within the Bealey Valley have remained encouragingly healthy, with kereru and weka encounters no longer unexpected. In December 2010, this project was incorporated as the Arthur's Pass Wildlife Trust, a charitable trust.

Another significant turning-point for the future of whio within the national park came in 2005. Some people had concerns that a decline in blue duck numbers in the Deception and Mingha catchments was caused by disturbance during the annual Coast to Coast race. However, race organisers Robin Judkins countered by initiating the Coast to Coast Blue Duck Recovery Programme. The programme established predator control through the valleys to show that stoats and rats provided a much greater threat, and were the real cause of decline.

Such alpine river headwaters are now recognized as the last bastions for whio on the eastern side of the Southern Alps. Given sufficient protection from predators, whio populations from these valleys should spread into the adjacent territories, thereby providing a sustainable population.

Improving predator control has been a driving force for this recovery programme, and under trapper Sam McLeod's management has expanded into the upper, east and lower Edwards, the lower Bealey, the

Whio in the Crow Valley Photos: Gerald Bruce-Smith



Sam McLeod laying traps in the Edwards Valley

Otira, and more recently from the Waimakariri Bridge upstream, through into the White and up to Campbell Pass. Who sighting cards are placed in the key huts, with the DOC biodiversity team at Rangiora monitoring numbers from reported sightings.

This extensive Coast to Coast predator control network also provides protection for other bird species including kea, rock wren, falcon and particularly Great Spotted kiwi, which can be heard from several huts in the area.

Private trapping in the Crow Valley commenced in 2008, with who returning and successfully breeding the next year after an absence of several decades. They provide company for a male kiwi that journeyed over the tops from McGrath Creek several years ago.

To contain the potential movement of mustelids up the true right of the Waimakariri River, and improve predator control at and on Bealey Spur, the local community has also improved their trap placement and monitoring over the past year, with encouraging results.

Together, all these trapping regimes, combined with DOC's extensive work in the Hawdon and Poulter Valleys, give an impressive

coverage of the national park and will hopefully halt the decline of native bird species.

Trampers and climbers will no doubt be the best judges of the success of these recovery programmes, and can assist by recording sightings in hut logbooks or reporting them to DOC. For a comprehensive record of the Trust's work visit the website www.apwt.org.nz and see their display at the Arthur's Pass Visitor Centre.

Gerald Bruce-Smith is the secretary and trustee of the Arthur's Pass Wildlife Trust and a NZAC member.

Editor's note: During a five-day trip to the Hawdon and Edwards valleys this February, I was impressed by the birdlife. We saw numerous kea, heard kiwi every night, and observed two groups of rock wren.

FMC

Weasels: small but deadly



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Planning Your Words Carefully

Executive member **David Barnes** asks why some DOC staff interpret 'should not' in a management plan to mean 'oh, alright then'.



“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.”

– Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*

I’m starting to wonder why we bother with national park management plans, and why groups like FMC put so much time and effort participating in the planning process. My pessimism arises from the constant flow of concession applications for activities that are clearly, on any reasonable reading of the plan, not allowed, and the repeated ‘approval in principle’ of these activities by Department of Conservation decision-makers. The three that come to mind – the Routeburn tunnel, aerial trophy hunting in the Olivine Wilderness Area, and an increase in guided walkers on the Routeburn Track (all in Mount Aspiring National Park) – are, at the time of writing, still awaiting the outcome of a submission and hearing process. However, in my view, none of them should have got to that point in the first instance. It seems to me that DOC is sometimes misdirected on which tests it needs to consider.

There’s a convention that statutory planning documents should not fetter the ultimate discretion of the Minister (who, in practical terms, almost always delegates the decision to a DOC official). For that reason, plans rarely contain an outright prohibition on matters that the Minister must legally decide. Rather, they use terms like ‘should not’. But the General Policies on National Parks and in most cases the plans themselves make it quite clear that ‘should’ or ‘should not’ means something that should only be departed from in ‘exceptional circumstances’. I don’t see anything exceptional about any of the proposals mentioned above to warrant over-riding the clear intention of the plan.

DOC staff prepare an ‘Officer’s Report’ that summarises the concession application, details any statutory or management plan considerations, reports the views of area office staff, and lists any special conditions to be applied if the concession is granted. It’s the basis of the decision. In all three of these cases, the decision-maker approved the concession,

subject to public notification, submissions and a hearing. (Concessions can be granted on a non-notified basis, but usually only when the activity is compliant and unlikely to be of public interest.) In each of the cases, the report makes no attempt to describe anything about the proposed activity that makes it ‘exceptional’ in a way that warrants a radical departure from the national park management plan.

Of perhaps even greater concern, in each case the report focuses on effects, and concludes that they would be acceptable, using terms like ‘not more than minor’. This is not something that should be considered unless the exceptional test is met. It doesn’t actually matter if the activity will have absolutely no effect on ecosystems or other users if it’s not an allowed activity.

In each of these three cases, the applicants had (and, I believe, took) the opportunity to contribute to the planning process. Despite that, DOC staff did not recommend that their views be accepted, and nor did the Conservation Board, the Conservation Authority or the Minister – each of whom has to sign off the plan. Having lost that battle, these applicants are trying to have another bite at the apple, and some DOC staff seem to be bending over backwards to allow this.

A formal process exists for seeking changes to management plans. Concessionaires who can’t live with a management plan are able to initiate that process. The integrity of our management planning process needs to be defended – by park users and by DOC staff. Those DOC staff who work so hard to get a really good plan, one that takes into account a wide range of community views, must despair at these repeated attempts to bastardise their work.

Once a national park management plan is in place, we shouldn’t have to keep fighting rearguard actions. The plan supposedly provides certainty, and it’s time for DOC to say ‘No’ to activities not allowed by management plans.



Forest and Bird's Mokihinui River share

Victory for Mokihinui River

by Shaun Barnett

The Mokihinui River, located in north Westland, drains the southwestern mountains of Kahurangi National Park, including the Thousand Acres Plateau. It's wild, earthquake-ravaged country, with the river's several major tributaries including the Hemphill, the North Branch and South Branch.

One of New Zealand's largest remaining wild rivers, it supports a range of endangered wildlife including blue duck as well as the South

Island long-tailed bat and two giant land snail species. Long-fin eel and the giant and short-jawed kokopu inhabit the river.

Trampers, hunters, and anglers all enjoy the area's forest and tracks, and the river itself provides outstanding opportunities for rafting and kayaking. A planned new mountain bike trail from Lyell to Mokihinui on the 'Old Ghost Road' is being constructed.



This timeline celebrates the recent victory over the decision not to dam the Mokihinui.

1996 Kahurangi National Park is formed, but controversially, the Mokihinui catchment is excluded, and it remains as Stewardship land.

March 2008 Crown-owned energy company Meridian announces its intentions to build an 85-metre-high, 300-metre-wide dam on the lower Mokihinui, which would create a 14-kilometre-long reservoir, and flood 330 hectares of forest.

2008 Immediate opposition to the dam comes from FMC, Forest and Bird, Fish & Game, the NZ Rafting Association, the NZ Recreational Canoeing Association, Whitewater NZ, World Wildlife Fund NZ, the Green Party, the New Zealand Historic Places Trust and the Buller Conservation Group, among others.

10 April 2008 FMC's submission to the West Coast Regional Council opposes the dam.

May 2008 Forest and Bird's Nelson campaigner Debs Martin writes 'Mokihinui Magic' article in *Forest and Bird*.

August 2008 FMC runs major articles in the *Bulletin* condemning the dam proposal. Executive member Quentin Duthie writes 'The Mokihinui is one of the few rivers on the Coast that is challenging enough to create a quality whitewater experience, yet it is also a suitably wild river for first-timers like me; a perfect introduction to the joys of whitewater recreation in wild places, yet still attractive to old hands.'

August-November 2008 The resource consent hearings begin.

April 2010 Resource consents to dam the river are granted to Meridian. Forest and Bird lodges an appeal against the consents.

May 2010 The Department of Conservation lodges an objection to the dam in the Environment Court. Environmental groups also plan for battle in the court.

September 2010 Craig Potton's *Wild Rivers* television documentary series screens on Prime TV, with the first episode devoted to the wild values of the Mokihinui.

March 2011 Forest and Bird produces a \$100 Mokihinui River share to raise funds to fight the dam proposal.

May 2012 *Hydroelectricity or wild rivers? Climate change versus natural heritage* report published by Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Dr Jan Wright. It states 'On the one hand hydroelectricity helps New Zealand reach its target of 90% renewable electricity by 2025 and supports its 'clean and green' image. Yet while the scenic rivers are also part of that clean green image, there is a fundamental aspect which is that once altered a wild and scenic river cannot be remade.'

22 May 2012 Meridian cancels the project, and withdraws from the Environment Court case.

17 July 2012 The West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board announces its support for adding the Mokihinui River and catchment to Kahurangi National Park.



L-R: Nelson photographer and conservationist Craig Potton photographing the Mokihinui River gorge. Nelson publisher, trumper and conservationist Derek Shaw (author of the 1991 *North West Nelson Tramping Guide*) on the 'Suicide Slip' section of the Mokihinui River track. Photos: Andy Dennis

Weather

Wind in the Mountains

By Leigh Matheson, Metservice Forecaster



The 'Taieri Pet' cloud formation provides evidence of high winds above Te Papanui Conservation Park, Otago.

Photo: Antony Hamel

Have you ever wondered why you can fight through screaming winds on a saddle to later sit on the peak in relatively light conditions? Or that some parks are constantly battered by strong winds, while others aren't so much? Well, I did.

The answer is not a particularly simple one, but the best analogy is that mountains (in most cases) are like rocks in a river.

Watching changes in river flow, and how the water behaves as it flows around the rocks, is largely how air behaves when encountering the mountains. However, there are some differences, because air is not uniform in density and temperature like a river, and water vapour readily changes state within the atmosphere, adding or removing energy as it does so. So, in some cases the air is encouraged to flow around, rather than over the mountains, while in other instances air will readily lift, or is forced to lift.

The strength of mountain winds therefore depends largely on the state of the atmosphere, or in other words, the large-scale weather situation.

In the region of a broad trough or low pressure system, the air is in a 'lifting environment', so when pushed against the ranges it will often freely rise over the mountains. In these cases, the wind is often less markedly different between saddles and the peaks and you can expect the air speed to increase with height.

In the region of high pressure, the air is in a 'sinking or stable environment', so is resistant to being pushed over higher peaks and will instead flow through gaps and saddles. Contrary to the idea that air speed increases with height, in light and moderate flows, the wind will instead increase about the saddles and gaps.

However, as the wind speed becomes stronger for example, as a front approaches behind a retreating ridge the strengthening flow will eventually force air over the higher ranges and peaks, greatly enhancing the wind speed as it does so. The most common situations to experience these very strong winds occur when a front moves in from the south behind a retreating ridge, or when a ridge strengthens rapidly behind a southerly change. In these

advancing or retreating 'stable' environments, the strongest winds can be experienced, with hurricane force winds not unusual.

The photo taken in Otago highlights a classic lenticular cloud, which forms in such environments when the wind becomes very strong. As the air 'pours' over the ridge tops, then rapidly descends on the lee side, it causes the air to bounce and create waves downstream (you can see this downstream of boulders in a river). At the top of the wave, the water vapour briefly condenses before it sinks again, creating these clouds. The air speed through these clouds can be in excess of 180 kilometres per hour, yet the cloud itself remains stationary as the wave remains stationary.

This particular lenticular cloud is known as the 'Taieri Pet' which is fairly common over Otago's Taieri Plains. In this case, the wind has met a number of ranges upstream in just the right sequence, which amplifies the wave, creating a greater area of lift in that region and hence causing a thicker, layered-looking cloud to form.

If you are concerned about extreme winds over a particularly sensitive part of your trip, ask yourself these questions.

1. Is the park exposed to that particular direction of wind? Will it be lying parallel or perpendicular to the flow? (The air speed will be enhanced if the flow is directly against the range.)
2. What does the weather map tell you? Do you have a retreating or developing ridge of high pressure? (This could be an indicator of very strong winds – check the forecast for confirmation.)

Check the forecast. The forecast gives a general view of the flow strength over the range, expect differences in the strength depending on your location within the range, but if the forecast wind is high, expect a rough day out on the tops!

For more information on this topic check out Erick Brenstrum's blog at <http://blog.metservice.com/2009/09/ridge-top-winds/>.

If you have mountain weather questions, email them to bulletin@fmc.org.nz, and we will ask Leigh to answer them in future weather columns.



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Big Hut, Rock and Pillar Conservation Area

Skiers approach Big Hut. Photo: David Barnes

Big Hut stands at 1,325 metres on the Rock and Pillar Range, a proud reminder of the days when you had to be really tough to be a skier. The standard access route goes straight up the eastern face of the range, a climb of 900 metres over 3.5 kilometres. The guys and girls of that era used to make this ascent, lugging all their supplies and the heavy ski gear of the day, for a weekend sliding around on the gentle slopes of the summit plateau.

The Otago Ski Club built Big Hut in 1946, no doubt part of that same post-war enthusiasm that saw many other back-country huts spring up. The club had outgrown the 28-bunk stone structure that it had used since 1938. Big Hut was originally conceived as a 140-bunk structure, but the final version accommodated half that number.

Ultimately, the invention of ski-tows and chairlifts reduced the attraction of the Rock and Pillars to mainstream skiers, and the focus for the Otago Ski Club shifted to Coronet Peak. The hut was taken over by the Otago University Tramping Club and then the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club. The hut saw a something of a resurgence in use in the 1980s, when lightweight Nordic ski gear became readily available, especially during the few years that hire gear was available in Dunedin. In 2003, a group led by indefatigable back-country campaigner Bruce

Mason formed the Rock and Pillar Hut Trust and made the OTMC an offer they couldn't refuse. Since then, the hut has been the scene of what must be one of the most impressive back-country refurbishments ever undertaken, with the FMC Mountain and Forest Trust making a contribution to the project.

Walls were relined, insulation added and the exterior completely replaced. One new feature, probably unique in New Zealand, is a thermosiphon air panel – a passive system for drawing warmed air into the hut. Although the device has been successful, this is still the one of the coldest huts I've ever been in during winter. On the day the photo was taken, we chose to lunch outside.

Today, the hut is able to accommodate a maximum of 25 people. For groups of 10 or more, bookings are required and a warden will be present. Even when booked, a few bunks are kept available for casual users. It's an ideal base for cross-country skiing and snow shoeing. However, the Rock and Pillar Range is very exposed and prone to extremely cold temperatures and poor visibility at any time of the year.

Further information

www.middlemarch.co.nz/old/big_hut/index.html

The First Fifty Years: a History of the Otago Ski Club (Inc), by S.B. Boyd, Otago Ski Club, 1932.

Bookings: bighut@middlemarch.co.nz or text 0274 358 311.

Club Profile

Cynthia Gavey introduces the Whangamata Tramping Club

The Whangamata Tramping Club grew out of the enthusiasm of a group of local trampers led by the late Jack and Helen Stewart, about 40 years ago.

Formally established in 1983, the club met mostly on a Sunday with an average of 10 members per tramp. At that time, the total population of Whangamata was not much more than 500. Trips covered all the main tracks in the Coromandel and areas around Paeroa and Kati Kati, and a keen, fit group also organised trips as far afield as Great Barrier Island, Tongariro National Park, Mt Tarawera, Lake Waikaremoana, Mayor Island and other places.

During the late 1980s, a decline in club membership led to the remaining keen members joining Chook Sutton from Kati Kati who, with his group, was a frequent walker in the Whangamata area.

By 1994 the club had grown again, and now has a membership of about 40 active

trampers. Many others continue to keep their association with the club even though they no longer live in the district.

Tramps are arranged on the first and third Sundays and fourth Monday of each month. Each year the club also organises an away trip of about five to seven days, often in the South Island, and also makes use of the huts in our area to have longer local trips.

For several years, the club has arranged day trips over the Christmas period, suitable for families and less experienced people, and aimed to encourage visitors to get to know some of the district's better maintained tracks.

Whangamata is mainly populated by retirees, so like many others we are an aging club but welcome and encourage new members. The club is in good heart with an enthusiastic band of leaders and organisers.

If you are in the district and would like an outing, contact club president Mike Morrison (ph 07 864 7823), or secretary Chris Conroy (ph 07 865 7228).



Whangamata Tramping Club members at Trilobite Hut in the Cobb Valley, February 2012, part of a seven-day trip over the Douglas Range to Bainham. Photo: Whangamata Tramping Club



Uncle Jacko's Cookery Column



Kindling

On a recent trip, one of us discovered that Kindles are only good for kindling if you don't carefully pack the Kindle using a very rigid backing board to stop it flexing. We don't know this for sure, but we do know that a Kindle protected only by padding may suffer catastrophic failure. A week's worth of reading material in case you get stuck in the pit is no good if you can't read it.

Enamel mugs

We enjoyed a winter trip at the end of May into the Landsborough, almost 34 years since I was last there as a teenager. Packing my pack I found I couldn't find my ice axe, so a quick visit to my next door neighbour retrieved my 35-year-old wooden shaft Grivel ice axe. My mates didn't appreciate the ice axe returning to the location of its first major tramping trip when it was new, and teased me relentlessly, more so when they found out that my one-pint enamel mug was likewise with me back then. The level of teasing eased when one mate sat on his plastic mug and broke it, shortly followed by the other mate melting his plastic mug by the fire. Saving weight is useful, but lightweight plastic need not outperform 35-year-old technology.

Oringi parkas

On the same trip Geoff Spearpoint tried out his new parka: he reckons that the cheapest Oringi parkas – not the one advertised in this *Bulletin*, but the entry level shorter model, the Cambridge at half the price – is perfectly adequate. On the second day, he burnt a decent hole in it by sitting too close to the camp fire, so more testing is required, though preliminary results look promising.

More on extended cellphone lives

Bill Stephenson and I have been exchanging emails over additional battery reserve for cellphones. External powering of cellphones is not quite as straightforward as it should be, but Bill confirms that with four AA NiCd cells (not standard cells, which would provide too many volts) in a battery holder, things work well. To date, fancier prototypes have not been so successful. A USB 4xAA battery case box charger and 10-in-1 charging cable ordered over the Internet will make sure that your cellphone can be connected, no matter what its pedigree.

Hakili matagi, Robin McNeill

r.mcneill@ieee.org

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Steve Baker and Jenny Christie beside the Landsborough River, West Coast Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography



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SALLY FORD CLIMBING AT WYE CREEK.
PHOTO: GUILLAUME CHARTON.



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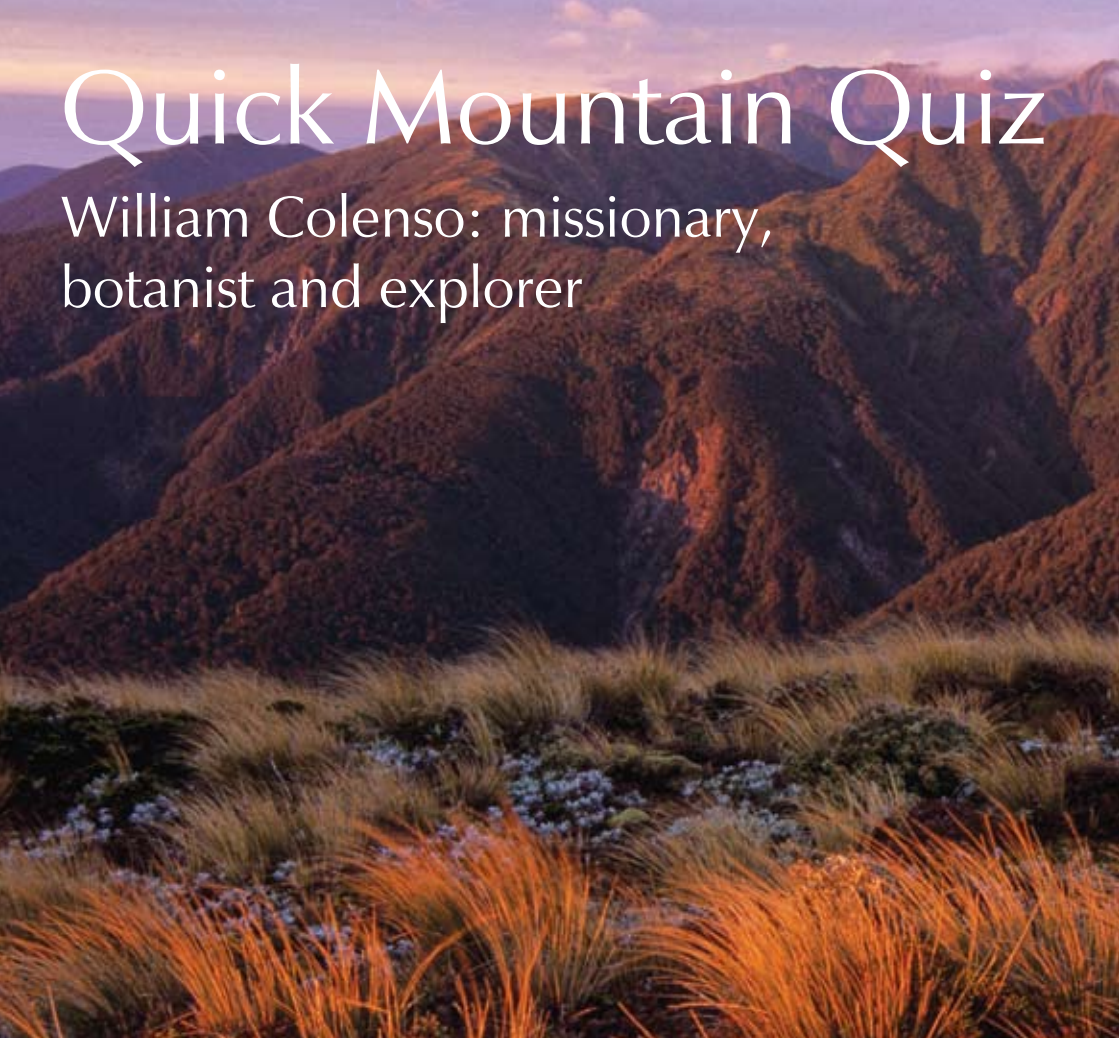
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Quick Mountain Quiz

William Colenso: missionary,
botanist and explorer



The Ruahine Range viewed from the top of Colenso Spur at dawn. Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography

1. William Colenso came to New Zealand from which part of England?
A. Devon. B. Cornwall. C. Yorkshire. D. Hertfordshire.
2. In what capacity did Colenso primarily come to New Zealand?
A. Missionary. B. Printer. C. Whaler. D. Farmer.
3. When Colenso finally established his own Anglican mission station at Waitangi in Hawke's Bay, he quickly made plans to cross the Ruahine Range. Why?
4. Colenso made eight crossings of the Ruahine Range in total, one by way of Maharahara peak in the lower Ruahine Range. Over which peak in the central Ruahine Range did he make his other seven crossing? A. Hikurangi. B. Kaweka J. C. Te Atua o Mahuru. D. Wharite.
5. Four features in Ruahine Forest Park are named after Colenso, including a spur, a peak and a hut. What is the fourth feature?
6. During his travels through Te Urewera in 1843, Colenso almost came to blows with another Pakeha he met there. What was the cause of their argument?



7. What was the surname of the famous botanists, father and son, who both served as directors of Kew Gardens, and with both of whom Colenso corresponded, also sending botanical specimens to them?
8. What is the plant *Achipylla colensoi* better known as?
A. Wild Irishman. B. Bayonet plant. C. Bristly carrot. D. Speargrass.
9. On his first approach to the Ruahine Range in 1845, Colenso walked up which river?
A. Makarora. B. Whanganui. C. Mohaka. D. Clutha.
10. William Colenso famously spoke out during the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. What was his concern?

1. B. Cornwall. 2. B. Printer. 3. To reach the isolated Maori village at Inland Patea. 4. C. Te Atua o Mahuru. 5. Lake Colenso. 5. Over religion: the other Pakeha was a Catholic priest. 7. Hooker. They were William Hooker (the father) Joseph Dalton Hooker (the son). 8. D. Speargrass. 9. A. Makarora 10. That the Maori version was too different from the English version and would create misunderstanding.

Reviews

Focus on William Colenso

by Shaun Barnett

In the last two years William Colenso has made an extraordinary comeback, with four new books featuring his life or work as their subjects, as well as a major conference in Napier.

Printer, missionary, explorer, naturalist and politician, the nineteenth century Cornishman who helped found Napier was a fascinating character by any measure. Trampers know him best for his travels over the Ruahine Range, and through the bush country of Te Urewera. Colenso's eight crossings of the Ruahine Range, including the first by a Pakeha, marked him out as an explorer, and on these journeys he was also the first to collect alpine plants from the area. Colenso became a prodigious footslogger, not just because he loathed sea travel, but also because he enjoyed walking. Indeed, he can arguably be called New Zealand's first trumper.

Colenso can also be regarded as the father of New Zealand printing (although strictly-speaking he was not the country's first printer). After leaving Cornwall, aged in his early twenties, he arrived in New Zealand in 1834 to work as a printer with the Church Missionary Society. Not only was Colenso present at the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, but he printed the Maori version of it. By then fluent in Te Reo, Colenso wanted to become a missionary, and eventually had his wish granted when in 1844 the CMS posted him to Hawke's Bay as a deacon in order to establish a mission station at Waitangi, near present-day Napier. It was from here that Colenso launched himself into the Ruahines, using a long-unused Maori trail across the ranges.

But in 1852 Colenso fell from grace after it became known that he had fathered an

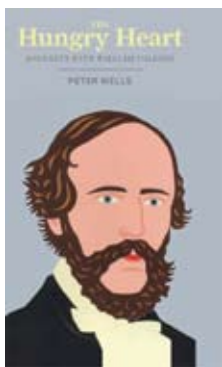
illegitimate child with a Maori woman, Ripeka Meretene, who was part of the household staff at Waitangi. Expelled from the church, despised by many of his former allies and friends, Colenso nevertheless continued to stay in Hawke's Bay, and reinvented himself as a land-owner, naturalist, collector, school inspector and – briefly – politician. Overbearing, difficult and outspoken are some words to describe his character, but generous, whole-hearted and misunderstood are others. In many ways he was a man far ahead of his time – notably in his view that Maori should not sell their land, for which he was disliked by both land-hungry Pakeha settlers and those Maori wishing to profit from sales.

Last November, the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery hosted a major conference on Colenso, marking the 200th anniversary of his birth. About 100 people attended, with presentations covering all aspects of his life and work. The conference also coincided with the launch of Peter Wells's ambitious new biography of Colenso, *The Hungry Heart*, and two more volumes featuring Colenso's work – one on his collections, and the other on his letters to the editor, both edited by Colenso-ophile Ian St George. St George is also about to release a new edition of the classic 1948 biography of Colenso by A. Bagnall and G. Petersen. Colenso would no doubt be delighted by all this attention. Complex, spirited and energetic, Colenso excelled in so many aspects of life, and lived for so long (he died in 1899, aged 88), that his life and writings form important parts of our colonial – and indeed tramping – history.

The Hungry Heart, Journeys with William Colenso

By Peter Wells, Vintage, 2011. Hardcover, 470 pages, \$49.99. Reviewed by Shaun Barnett (New Zealand Alpine Club).

Napier writer Peter Wells was one of two key-note speakers at last year's Colenso conference. He had spent the previous two years researching and writing about Colenso's life after winning a Copyright Licensing Ltd writer's award to do so.



Wells tackles his subject unconventionally, as the subtitle 'Journeys with William Colenso' suggests. Indeed, this is a very personal look at Colenso's life, one that also offers fascinating insights into the writer's own process for researching and writing the book. Wells arranges his material more by theme than time, but the book does follow a rough chronological sequence. By allowing theme to dominate, Wells manages to examine aspects of Colenso's life with intense focus, while lightly glossing over others. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given how much detail the biography by Bagnall and Petersen covered, Colenso's journeys through Te Urewera and across the Ruahine Range get scant treatment, which will disappoint some trampers (indeed 'Ruahine' and 'Te Urewera' are not listed in the grossly insufficient index).

That deficiency aside, Wells has a rare ability to conjure an extraordinary sense of place from the past. In his speech at the Waitangi Mission memorial site, near where the station was located, he painted a vivid picture of Colenso's life here: the constant flooding, the dense toetoe, the ever-menacing presence of the sea; and of the whare tuhitihi, Colenso's library – a beautiful blending of Pakeha and Maori architectural styles – crammed with books, botanical specimens and artefacts.

At his best, which is often in *The Hungry Heart*, Wells shines dazzling light into the past. His analysis of the Treaty of Waitangi is one of

the most illuminating parts of the book, and he rightly points out the unbelievable audacity of the young printer in raising his voice to question Governor Hobson on the potential misunderstanding of the treaty. As Wells writes, 'This disputatiousness, this momentum towards irregular, private, individual thought, was what both distinguished and undid William Colenso. It was the beauty of his being and the destruction of his career path.'

Wells often writes with masterful elegance, using unexpected but perfect metaphors. Elizabeth's stark letter to her estranged husband after they separated, never to see each other again, says Wells, 'glints with permafrost'.

This is a biography of many exquisite highs and occasional rock-bottom lows, not just because of the subject's tumultuous life. Mostly I found it a highly original, entrancing read, but there are times when Wells inserts himself into Colenso's life too casually. For example, in his rather cursory treatment of Colenso's early life in Cornwall he speculates far too much on the nature of Colenso's sexual thoughts. Use

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of the word 'randy' to describe him several times grated, when it seemed to me he was little different in this regard from any other young man.

But I strongly suspect that these occasional lows come with the territory. You don't get a penetrating examination of Colenso's life and soul without the author occasionally missing the mark. A large part of the book focuses on Colenso's life at Waitangi, which was a pivotal time and highly charged emotionally. Colenso was preaching church values in public, but privately his life was on the edge of collapse, with his marriage failing and the damning evidence of his affair – a son – soon to explode publically. Wells writes very movingly about the personal agony which Colenso endured after being ostracised, and then the decades of loneliness when his other two children – Fanny and Latimer – never visited him again.

The handsome hardback has a wonderful (and again highly unconventional) cover illustration: a modern portrait of Colenso by artist Gavin Hurley. The cover blurb of *The Hungry Heart* claims that Wells 'refreshes our vision of this awkward, highly talented man' and I couldn't agree more. Wells has broken new ground with this biography, and while not without flaws, *The Hungry Heart* has earned him a deserved place as a finalist in the 2012 New Zealand Book Awards.

William Colenso

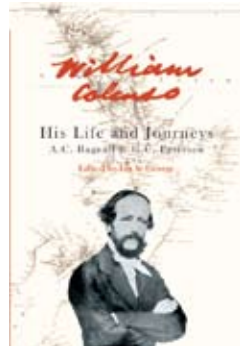
By A.C. Bagnall and G.C. Petersen, new edition edited by Ian St George, Otago University Press, 2012. Reviewed by Shaun Barnett (New Zealand Alpine Club).

This thorough, chronologically-based biography of William Colenso, first published in 1948, has long been out of print, and often commands high prices when rare copies of it appear at second-hand book auctions. Happily, Wellington GP and self-confessed Colenso-phile Ian St George has edited a new edition, adding to his two other books on Colenso's writings.

Unfortunately the new edition was not quite published as the *FMC Bulletin* went to print, so I cannot comment on any new content, but I have read the old edition extensively. I certainly recommend it to readers who wish for in-depth accounts of Colenso's peripatetic life. Bagnall and Petersen, both trampers, not only understood this aspect of the explorer's life, but knew the mountain terrain as well. They used extensive verbatim accounts from Colenso's journals to detail his Ruahine Range crossings and also his travels through the mountains and forests of Te Urewera.

Colenso also walked along the entire length of the coastlines of Hawke's Bay and Wairarapa on his frequent journeys to Wellington. In this regard, the biography perfectly complements the one by Peter Wells, which has only fleeting coverage of this aspect of Colenso's life.

William Colenso was first published nearly fifty years after his death, and gave due prominence to him. This new edition will be eagerly welcomed by trampers and historians alike. Read together with *The Hungry Heart*, it provides a contrasting and sometimes strikingly different perspective of Colenso. Each biography has its own strengths, but together they give readers a rich understanding of this most important nineteenth century figure.





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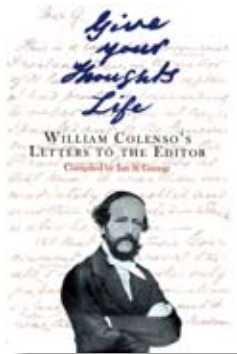
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RUN BY TRAMPERS FOR TRAMPERS

Give Your Thoughts Life, William Colenso's Letters to the Editor

Edited by Ian St George, Otago University Press, 2011. Softcover, 498 pages, \$65. Reviewed by Shaun Barnett (New Zealand Alpine Club).

'...you have the Press, both open and free: use it. Give your thoughts life, let all good measures be brought forward, and well ventilated.' – William Colenso in the *Hawke's Bay Herald*, 1859.



In 1898, his last full year of life, with a body sometimes wracked by rheumatism, William Colenso managed to write 1,081 letters, some of them pages long. This one-time stammerer was not above raising his voice – he was a preacher after all – but it was through the printed word that he best expressed himself.

Ian St George came to admire Colenso through an interest in native orchids, of which Colenso collected many specimens. In *Give Your Thoughts Life*, he presents an extensive range of Colenso's newspaper letters – more than 200 of them. That he was able to do so is an excellent product of the National Library's 'Papers Past' project, an online searchable database of most early New Zealand newspapers, some dating to as recently as 1945. This invaluable resource makes their contents available to all, through a number of different search functions according to author, subject, key words, date or newspaper title.

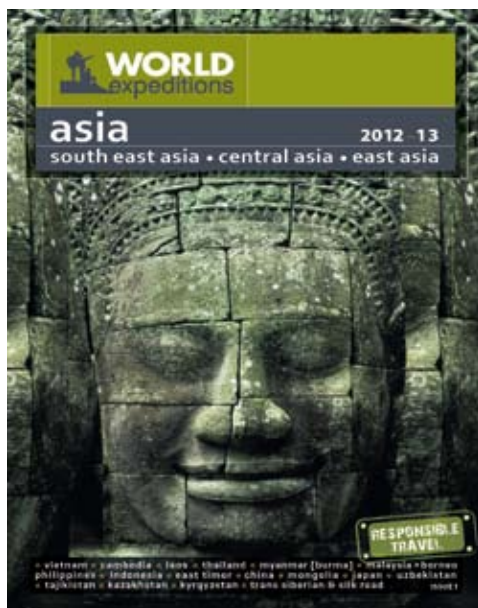
St George used Papers Past to unearth much of Colenso's vast output of newspaper letters, which cover an equally vast array of subjects. Colenso's interests were broad, and he wrote copious letters to express his views in a range of newspapers, dating between 1847 and 1898, but most notably the *Hawke's Bay Herald*. His letters cover events large (Te Kooti's rampage through the East Coast) and small (new building regulations). They often reveal great sympathy for the poor, the condemned, or

the misunderstood – all things he had himself experienced.

Colenso could write with great sympathy, or with stinging waspishness, and rarely are his letters without interest. In one letter, Colenso wrote that he considered the Paheka term for matagouri 'Wild Irishman' as 'a low uncouth vulgarism [that] has been unthinkingly given "down South" to a species of thorn, a close-growing spiny shrub with very small and few leaves and long spines – appropriately enough named by the old Maoris – Tumatakuru – Facesmiter ...'

The book contains not only letters from Colenso, but other contemporary correspondents who wrote to newspapers about Colenso. A perceptive introduction and several timelines of Colenso's life help to put his letters into biographical context.

Ian St George should be commended for restoring these letters to life, and collating them in an accessible form. They provide insight not only into Colenso, but also nineteenth century New Zealand life.



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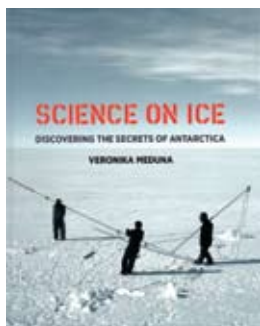
Science on Ice, Discovering the Secrets of Antarctica

By Veronika Meduna, Auckland University Press, 2012. Hardcover, 226 pages, \$59.99. Reviewed by Shaun Barnett (New Zealand Alpine Club).

Science writer and broadcaster Veronika Meduna will be well familiar to any Radio New Zealand listeners who enjoy her

programme *Our Changing World*. In this, her latest book, she explores the fascinating world of Antarctic science. Meduna mostly focuses on modern New Zealand scientists working in the New Zealand sector of the frozen continent, since the establishment of Scott Base in 1957–58, but also celebrates the work of overseas researchers, and where relevant, includes reference to science carried out during the Heroic Age of exploration under men like Scott and Shackleton.

Five broad themes divide the book. The first, 'Uncovering the Past', covers ice core research that has helped explain not only the icy continent's past, but also past climatic conditions in the wider world. 'Life' not only covers research into the famous Antarctic penguin species (Adelie and Emperor) but also Antarctic fish, lichens, mosses and micro-organisms. I learnt that the muscles used by Emperor penguins to operate their legs are located deep within their warm core, ensuring that they can move their extremities even in the



most frigid conditions. And as you'd expect from an experienced journalist, Meduna writes with verve. Adelie penguins, she says, inhabit a noisy penguin metropolis. 'The colonies are always in motion. Even when birds are incubating eggs, they rarely sit completely still or stop calling, sky-pointing their beaks and trumpeting a throaty string of shrieks.'

Even more fascinating are the adaptations made by fish species to avoid freezing, including doing away with haemoglobin. The chapters 'True Antarcticans' and 'Oasis in a Frozen Desert' were a revelation to me, dispelling myths that most of the frozen continent is lifeless. Quite the contrary, microbiologists are discovering a huge diversity of bacteria and other minuscule organisms that inhabit all sorts of extreme environments, ranging from the hot volcanic vents of Mt Erebus to the bottom of the frozen lakes, and even the glaciers of the interior. Some of these organisms survive by spending long periods dormant or freeze-dried, and prove that life persists even in the most hostile conditions. Antarctic lichens, Meduna writes 'are ecological endurance athletes' – organisms that grow as slowly as one millimetre per century. Some have been found living only 400 kilometres from the South Pole. The final chapter, 'Beyond the Ice' details mind-boggling research into the very nature of the universe which occurs right at the South Pole.

Excellent photographs, superbly reproduced, form another strength of the book, many of them taken by helicopter pilot Rob McPhail. Meduna writes with all the confident fluidity of someone who knows science, but even more importantly, someone who knows how to communicate science. She renders quite complex facts and concepts into accessible prose, and also manages to celebrate the work of individual scientists. She explains the difficulties of doing science in the windiest, driest, coldest continent, but equally conveys the deep appreciation that most of these scientists feel for the place.

An absorbing read, *Science on Ice* should appeal to a wide audience.

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Climbing Dictionary

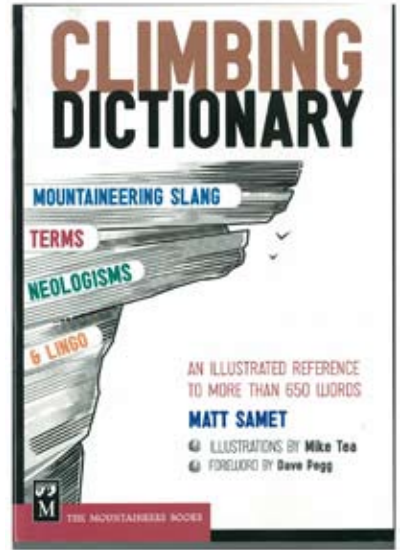
By Matt Samet, illustrations by Mike Tea, The Mountaineers Books, 2011. Softcover, \$17 (available through www.fishpond.co.nz). Reviewed by John Nankervis (New Zealand Alpine Club).

Knowing the language is a critical part of being a mountaineer, rock or ice climber, boulderer or gym rat. To be puzzled at a yell from above of 'Hold!' could cause sheepishness, even humiliation and distress. Matt Samet was for a long time editor-in-chief of the USA's *Climbing*, and still writes the 'Sporting Life' column for that magazine. From those days, he began collecting terms and phrases specific to climbing in all its genres. The idea of a climbing dictionary came to him while sitting atop the commode during a commercial break for 'South Park', reading the Urban Dictionary. The result is this wonderfully erudite and funny collection of mountaineering slang, terms, neologisms and lingo.

Snappy definitions, 650 of them, are given, as well as origins, usage, variants and synonyms. It does have a North American bias but there are plenty of British and European imports too. I haven't yet spotted any uniquely New Zealand terms – 'snow pickets' and 'snow flakes' are there but not 'snow stakes' and 'kiwi coils'. But hey, most of our lingo comes from the Brits and the Yanks anyway. And you can visit climbingterms.com to add some local lingo to the lexicon. Some of the etymology is quite detailed, such as that for 'clean climbing' and 'cams'. I learnt a lot. It is not a surprise that the A-Z format was adopted.

By the end of 'A' I was laughing aloud with entries like 'aggrosheen *n*: Profuse perspiration dripping off a climber', 'altitoots *n*: Flatulence caused at high altitude' and 'ape index *n*: The difference between a climber's height and fingertip to fingertip wingspan....' There's also a tongue in cheek explanation of the origin of 'avi poodles'. Samet is knowledgeable and pithy as well as witty, while Mike Tea's drawings are always both informative and artistic.

A review of a dictionary should not be long, so I'll stop now and get back to the 'B' entries. Go buy it and get immersed. It's small and light enough to slip into your crag or alpine pack. It could save your life but it's not a substitute for it. Matt Samet implores the reader to go to the cliffs 'sending the gnar, crushing the crimps and redpointing the proj!'.



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Safety in the Mountains, 11th edition

By Robin McNeill, Federated Mountain Clubs, 2012. Paperback, 72 pages, \$10. Reviewed by David Barnes (Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club).

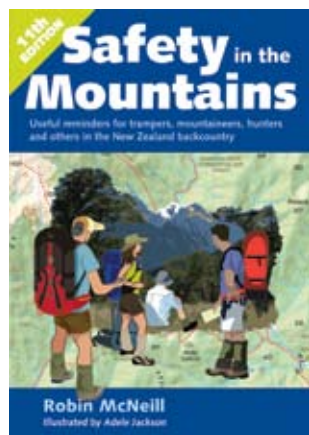
How do you update a publication that's been around for 75 years? Can it be done, and should it be done? When supplies of the 2003 (10th) edition of *Safety in the Mountains* ran low, these questions landed on the plate of *Moirs Guide South* editor and Uncle Jacko's Cookery Column author Robin McNeill. He seems to have found the answers.

First published in 1937 with the subtitle 'A Handbook for Trampers and Mountaineers', and intended to be taken into the Hills, by the 1970s it was a weightier tome. With other publications, notably those of the Mountain Safety Council, covering much of the same ground, for its sixth edition *Safety in the Mountains* was shrunk down to the pocket-sized volume that I've known since I first took tramping seriously. Designed more as an aide mémoire than a comprehensive instruction manual, it has also probably done service as reading for the hut-bound and as a place to score games of 500.

So, what's changed in the new edition? A complete re-write, with major layout changes, the new version has a 60% increase in pages – although paper choice has meant there is not a concomitant weight increase. So, instead of a list of bullet points, most topics have quite detailed information. Cartoons of bush-singlet clad trampers are replaced by the clear graphics of illustrator Adele Jackson that generally enhance the message. This is particularly well done in the section on snow and ice travel, where a picture (with a few words) really is worth the proverbial thousand words. The illustrations in the map and compass section may well make a critical difference to someone who only consults a compass when the situation gets dire, and the accompanying text provides one of the clearest I've read on a topic that bamboozles many people.

Some aspects of the hills are no different than those encountered 75 years ago, but one

big change, even since the last edition, is electronic technology. The book covers the use and limitations of GPS receivers, personal locator beacons and cellphones, and lists a number of useful websites.



The first aid section has been renamed 'Wilderness Medicine', and, with assistance from two doctors with extensive back-country experience, Claudia Schneider and Garry Nixon, provides extremely useful and very pragmatic advice. It's the first time that I've seen the impracticality of CPR in a wilderness setting acknowledged in print. Although the book is primarily aimed at the novice in the outdoors, this section alone will probably see me restore *Safety in the Mountains* to its rightful place in my emergency gear.

Robin McNeill's trademark off-beat humour doesn't get much airing in the new book, but the instruction to 'in an emergency, apply match here' was a laugh out loud moment.

Overall, this is a worthy successor to the previous editions and one that all trampers, climbers and hunters should look at owning. Some of that information just might come in handy one day.

Reviews next issue (November 2012)

Stag Spooner, Wild Man of the Bush by Chris Maclean

Buller's Birds of New Zealand, The Complete Works of J.G. Keulemanns by Geoff Norman

Shelter from the Storm, The Story of New Zealand's Backcountry Huts by Shaun Barnett, Rob Brown and Geoff Spearpoint

Into the Silence, George Mallory, the Great War and Everest by Wade Davis

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Text translated from
OUTDOOR MAGAZINE
Germany



The Last Word

William Colenso on speargrass in the Ruahine Range

‘One of our party, a strong, robust Maori, had been pricked or stabbed rather severely by a large *Aciphylla*, insomuch that the blood spurted out: at the sight of this he got enraged ... and throwing off his back-load, and obtaining the long handled axe, which another was carrying, he hastened towards the plant, vowing he would cut it up by the roots! The spear-like leaves, however, spreading out all round it like a circle of fixed bayonets – being longer (including their big leaf stalk) than the helve of the axe and very tough and elastic, quite kept him from doing any harm to the plant, which seemed to mock his impotent rage; so, after gaining a few more pricks from it for his labour, he was obliged, doubly vexed though he was at our looking on and laughing, to give up the unequal combat.’

Letter ‘The Wild Irishman’, *Hawke’s Bay Herald* 6 February 1894, as quoted in *Give Your Thoughts Life, William Colenso’s Letters to the Editor*, compiled by Ian St George

Speargrass, *Aciphylla colensoi* Photo: Shaun Barnett/Black Robin Photography



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2012/2013

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