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From the Chair

Four highly qualified new Trustees, Paul McNoe, Richard Suggate, Maureen McCloy and Bryan Storey joined the Board in July 2017 and contributed to a most productive year. We've made good progress with our core work to secure public access on some existing walking tracks, strengthened partnerships, run another fantastic Walking Festival, and supported major efforts to improve biodiversity on Banks Peninsula.

It has been a year of reflection on the many achievements of the Trust since its inception in 2010 with a growing realisation that this Trust should continue into the future, not wind-up once its initial funds have been used. Hence much effort has gone into strategic planning to help us determine our core goals going forward and how we can continue to foster public walking and biking access and biodiversity on



Banks Peninsula through working in partnership with others.

Simon Mortlock
Chair



Rod Donald Trustees visit the new reserve. From left - Bob Webster, Maureen McCloy, Paul McNoe, Cynthia Roberts, Simon Mortlock, Bryan Storey, Richard Suggate. (not pictured Chrissie Williams, Andrew Turner)

Montgomery Reserve Extends

Stunning Te Ara Pātaka/Summit Walkway, linking the Lyttelton and Akaroa craters via the high ridges of Banks Peninsula, formally opened in 2016; a joint project between the Trust and Department of Conservation. There is legal right of public access along most of the route as it follows unformed legal road or goes through DOC reserves. However, in several places it does cross private land and here ongoing public access relies on the goodwill of the landowners. The Trust heartily thanks the present landowners on behalf of the walking public for their generosity in allowing this to continue while we work with them to find ways to secure ongoing legal access for the future aiming at a win-win for all involved.

This year we are delighted to announce that our negotiations with landowners the Manson family at the Hilltop end of the track were completed fruitfully. The Trust facilitated the transfer of 7.53ha of their land to DOC securing a vital link where Te Ara Pātaka climbs to the entrance of Montgomery Park Scenic Reserve.



Trustee Bob Webster who led the negotiation guides a field trip to the new reserve. "As well as securing public access, the new reserve includes a magnificent tōtara remnant, a north facing slope that will regenerate rapidly now it is stock free, and an income from a communication tower that will be used for track maintenance," says Bob.

Giant tōtara in the new reserve



PARTNERSHIPS IN PROGRESS

The Trust works on projects on Banks Peninsula that improve public walking and cycling access, enhance biodiversity and disseminate knowledge about the area.

We hope that by working in a holistic manner we are building a deep appreciation of Banks Peninsula among the wider Christchurch population and developing environmental stewards of the future.

“Core to our success is building partnerships with other agencies, groups and individuals, so we are delighted to have strengthened our existing relationships this year and built new ones.”

Simon Mortlock
Chairman Rod Donald Trust



Ōtamahua Hut – A new opportunity for families

We jumped when Andy Thompson approached us with the idea of partnering to upgrade the former caretakers cottage on Quail Island into tramping style family accommodation. The conversion is now well underway, with Rod Donald Hut builder David Brailsford, supported by DOC workers Murray Lane and Scully from Aoraki, creating two comfortable bunkrooms sleeping 6 each, and a big shared kitchen/lounge with a woodburner for warmth. The hut will formally open in the 2018 Banks Peninsula Walking Festival.



Volunteers from the Ōtamahua/Quail Island Trust in front of some of the extensive plantings



DOC has made beautiful new panels

“Families will be able to relax on the cottage veranda and enjoy great views across the harbour to Lyttelton, plan adventures on the many walking tracks to the fascinating heritage sites on the island, go swimming, and appreciate the massive achievements of the Ōtamahua/Quail Island Restoration Trust in revegetating this special place with indigenous biodiversity and keeping it predator free,” says Mahaanui Area Manager Andy Thompson

MOU with Department of Conservation



Trustees Simon Mortlock and Cynthia Roberts sign the MOU with DOC Mahaanui Area Manager Andy Thompson

Our partnership with the Department of Conservation goes back to 2013, when we started to develop the Summit Walkway and associated track network into what is now Te Ara Pātaka. New projects based on our success have come along since, and we were pleased to formalise our relationship with DOC in a “living” Memorandum of Understanding providing an overarching framework and the flexibility to add new projects as they emerge in future. So far it covers our shared interests in Te Ara Pātaka, Ōtamahua Hut and Goat Eradication.



Christchurch Mayor Lianne Dalziel opened the rebuilt Stone Cottage at Orton Bradley Park

Canterbury's Oldest Stone Building Re-Lives

Another building re-purposed is the Old Stone Cottage at Orton Bradley Park. "The Trust congratulates the Orton Bradley Park Board and Manager Ian Luxford for carrying off this huge restoration task after the earthquakes all but destroyed this historically important building," says Trustee Richard Suggate who attended the formal opening in May.

Built by early Peninsula pakeha settler Sam Manson in 1848 as a shepherd's hut it is the oldest stone building in Canterbury and now functions as the Park information centre, office and a museum. "Walkers starting Te Ara Pātaka at Orton Bradley Park can visit the original Sam Manson's cottage", says Suky Thompson, "and then finish two days later passing through the tōtara remnant forest recently acquired from his descendant and namesake, Hilltop farmer Sam Manson."

Walking Access Commission

The Trust thanks Geoff Holgate from the commission for his invaluable assistance with our projects.



Limited Service Volunteers from Burnham camp braved steep and muddy slopes to plant natives on the denuded hillside and help prevent erosion

Partnering With Living Springs

A highlight of the year was forging a new partnership with Living Springs Camp and Conference Centre at Allandale. "Once we appreciated the extent of Living Springs commitment to native biodiversity restoration, the number of young people who are immersed in that biodiversity at their camps, and the willingness of Living

Springs to extend the Lyttelton Head to Head Walkway across the property, we sensed a winning combination," says Maureen McCloy. "That was confirmed when we visited to sign the MOU and found 60 young volunteers hard at work already planting the trees we had funded."



Andrew Turner, Richard Suggate, Maureen McCloy, Living Springs CEO Denis Aldridge, Chrissie Williams, Living Springs Chair John Downe and Ranger Anna Columbus are thrilled with the new MOU



Living Springs CEO Denis Aldridge and Rod Donald Trustee Chrissie Williams shake on the new partnership

Submissions, submissions and more submissions!

The Trust put forward submissions to the Long Term Plans for Christchurch City, ECan and Selwyn Councils stressing the opportunities Banks Peninsula offers for people to explore the environment on foot and by bike, for biodiversity recovery and for carbon sequestration and how we would like to work with the Councils to achieve shared aims."

Find Out More...

Read the Trust's submissions on www.rodaldtrust.co.nz/documents/other.

Origins of Rod Donald Hut



The hut begins



John Gunn framing it up



Amanda painting the hut



The completed family bach

“Rod Donald Hut continues to bring joy into people’s lives, including mine, every day,” says Trust Manager Suky Thompson, “Receiving the following email from Amanda Murray, the Southern Region Area Manager of Youthtown was a high point.”

Amanda wrote, ***“I’ve only just realised that the Rod Donald Hut was originally built by my parents. I can’t believe we have been sending kids there for ages and I didn’t realise.”*** The Trust subsequently hosted a Gunn family reunion at the hut and learnt its early history including that the family used to hold mountain biking events

there. The Gunns were delighted to learn that their sturdy little cabin had soldiered through the quakes unharmed and is now being enjoyed by so many people. “It meant a lot to Mum to be able to visit,” wrote Amanda after the reunion.

The hut has experienced a steady growth in usage and this year’s average occupancy of 49% equates



Rod Donald Hut as it looks now, with a group of young visitors from Waipuna Trust

to a family of 4.5 people living there full time. Hence the Trust engages a Hut Management team of Steffan Kraberger, David Brailsford and Fiona Waghorn who visit regularly to keep things tidy and top up the firewood so the popular pot belly can keep things warm.

Kennedys Bush Track

Walkers and runners were pleased when Kennedy’s Bush Track finally re-opened after a long closure post the Port Hills fires.

“The Trust was pleased to support the public campaign to get the track open again and thanks the Council and the landowners for finding a good solution to get this important recreational track linking Halswell with the Lyttelton Crater Rim back,” said Trustee Bob Webster. Kennedy’s Bush was the first reserve protected by legendary



Stunning views from Kennedy’s Bush Track

Cantabrian MP Harry Eil, prior to his vision of the Summit Road and the onward track to Akaroa now known as Te Ara Pātaka.

Walkers enjoy the new stile installed by Christchurch City Council in time for the Kennedys Bush Track re-opening



Banks Peninsula Walking Festival 2017 – Feedback

The Trust organises the Walking Festival annually in conjunction with Project Lyttelton, Akaroa District Promotions and Little River/Wairewa Community Trust.



Mike White from Summit Road Society discusses fire recovery at their Ohinetahi Reserve on the Port Hills



Two massive beech trees are just one highlight of Hinewai's new Opatuti Track

Survey Results

Thanks to Akaroa Dolphins for incentivising the Festival Survey with a prize trip. Respondents told us that not only do people get to enjoy the great outdoors, but there is a spin-off for the local economy.

93% PEOPLE DINING LOCALLY DURING FESTIVAL

91% PEOPLE PLANNING TO RETURN TO BANKS PENINSULA AS A RESULT OF THE FESTIVAL



The breath-taking view from Kaituna Spur above Hukahuka Turoa Covenant

The Festival offers Christchurch people and Peninsula residents a chance to get out exploring their amazing backyard.

The 2017 Festival included 30 walks stretching across the Peninsula from Godley Head to Fishermans Bay and showcased the work of 16

other organisations and many private landowners who allowed access to their properties.

"A wonderful experience – great guides with a wealth of knowledge," is how participant Heather Rowlands described the 2017 Walking Festival.

Congratulations to Hinewai Reserve on its 30th anniversary at which Peninsula resident Rt. Hon. Eugenie Sage made her first public speech as Minister for Conservation.



Delightful Diamond Harbour featured in the 2017 festival

Upcoming 2018 Walking Festival

The 2018 Festival is rapidly approaching, with tickets available from the beginning of September

"I am delighted with the creative ideas guides have come up with this year," says Coordinator Sue Church. Nick Singleton and John Fitch have dreamed up the "8 over 800" challenge climbing all the highest Peninsula peaks and at the other end of the scale we have a meander around the historic towns of Lyttelton learning about the archaeological remnants beneath, exploring Hinewai Reserve by night or birdwatching on Kaitorete Spit. There are some exciting new locations too such as Waibls track and Mt Pearce.

Special events include the formal opening of the new tramping hut on Ōtamahua/Quail Island and the Le Bons Bay Langer Reserve mini campground.

"These projects are both aimed at encouraging families to visit and stay on Banks Peninsula and the Rod Donald Trust is proud to have been a key partner in facilitating them," says Simon Mortlock.



Pest Free Banks Peninsula



Spotting the elusive goats is an art in itself. IMAGE CAM STEVENSON

"We congratulate Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust for its success in pulling together a consortium of agencies and community groups to form the Pest Free Banks Peninsula/ Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū and Port Hills Partnership," says Richard Suggate who represents the Rod Donald Trust on the group. "The aim is bigger and bolder than the government's Predator Free initiative as it includes feral herbivores and pigs. The damage they do to native habitats is as important a factor in the survival rates of New Zealand's unique endemic species, as direct predation."

Goats have been selected as the first pest to eliminate.

Compared to other pests the infestation levels are relatively low and grouped into isolated populations. The Trust was pleased to step up as the principal funder of an initial trial targeting a new muster and hunt methodology with highly experienced contractors and dog teams. DOC engaged the contractors, Christchurch City Council staff came up with temporary pens and landowners provided local knowledge, assistance

and access to yards, sheds and stock ramps. "Everyone has chipped in with their strengths", said DOC ranger Tom MacTavish who has been a key organiser of the operation.

ECAN's role

"Changes to the regulatory and funding framework are critical to the ongoing success," says Ecan councillor and Rod Donald Trustee Cynthia Roberts. "ECAN has now included goats in the Regional Pest Management Plan (2018-2038) meaning owners of domestic goats must take responsibility for ensuring they do not contribute to feral populations. A targeted rate across the whole Banks Peninsula Ecological District, including the city suburbs on the Port Hills has also been introduced to fund ongoing work on for the Pest Free Banks Peninsula including feral goat herds."

Find Out More...

Read the complete report on the initial goat eradication trial at www.rodonaldtrust.co.nz/documents/projects

The Regional Pest Management Plan is available at: <https://www.ecan.govt.nz/your-region/plans-strategies-and-bylaws/canterbury-regional-pest-management-plan/>

Pest Free Banks Peninsula/Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū and Port Hills Partnership initial members

- Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust
- Environment Canterbury
- Christchurch City Council
- Department of Conservation
- Koukourārata Rūnanga
- Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust
- Selwyn District Council
- Summit Road Society Incorporated

Other groups will be welcome to join.



Paul Devlin and his Council ranger team erect the pens. IMAGE TOM MACTAVISH



Expert musterer Nigel Sinton and his dog team. IMAGE GAVIN MARSHALL



Stockman David Hutchings, a specialist in mustering feral goats, played a critical role



Captured! 221 goats were mustered and another 55 shot. IMAGE GAVIN MARSHALL



Dogs wear GPS collars enabling their tracks to be mapped. Follow up indicates that 100% eradication has been achieved.



Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust Volunteer Coordinator

"I have been consistently impressed by the quality of strategic planning and the clear vision articulated by the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust," says Christchurch Deputy Mayor Andrew Turner.



Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust's Volunteer Co-ordinator Sophie Hartnell checks out a planting project along the Rod Donald Hut track. The Trust is pleased to be grant funding Sophie's employment for the next three years

"They are unique in New Zealand as a local organisation with the right to create conservation covenants on land titles, and they've grown stronger over the years by combining their grass-roots landowner base with financial support from Christchurch corporate partners".

"Financial support from the Rod Donald Trust has been key to making this transition", says BPCT manager Maree Burnett, "and helped put us in a position where we can expand our activities beyond protecting biodiversity on individual properties to a wider Ecological Vision for the entire Banks Peninsula."

Find out more ...
about the BPCT Ecological vision at
www.bpct.co.nz

Beating trackside gorse



Pete Ozich explains how native planting along the Diamond Harbour School Track has replaced the gorse in 5 years

The Trust is looking forward to Sophie and a team from the Student Volunteer Army carrying out trackside planting to suppress gorse along the Rod Donald Hut access track.

"The project has been inspired by Pete Ozich and his success with trackside planting at Diamond Harbour," say Suky Thompson. "We are planning to both plant locally sourced natives and help those that are already regenerating naturally with a little more light, and will monitor progress with both methods."

"We're hoping trampers visiting Rod Donald Hut will water the plants just as the kids have along the Diamond Harbour School Track," says Suky



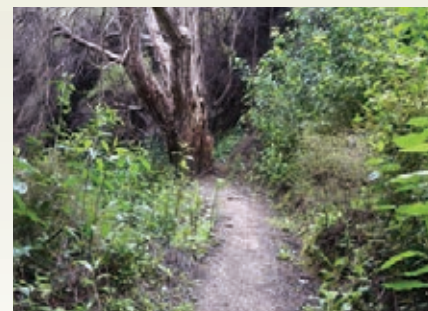
Woodills Track Covenant

"We've been learning more about the process of covenanting ourselves this year" says Suky Thompson, "while working with Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust to protect 4ha of regenerating bush on the property our Trust currently owns in Akaroa."

The property includes the popular Woodills South Track connecting Grehan Valley to the Purple Peak

stock route, now re-routed to create a beautiful bush walk.

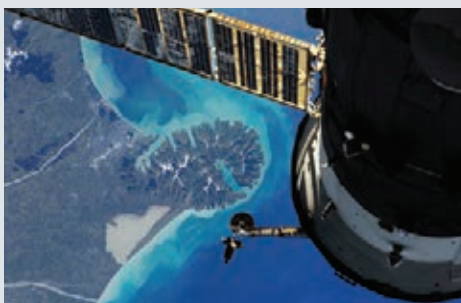
"This project presented an unusual opportunity to achieve our access and biodiversity aims while revolving the Trust's funds to make them available for future projects, as we have arranged to on-sell the land," says Suky.



Native regrowth is rapid now that stock have been removed from the property allowing palatable species like mahoe to thrive.

A Banks Peninsula Geopark?

"Banks Peninsula is such an outstanding geological landscape that it ought to qualify for UNESCO GeoPark status," says Dr. Bryan Storey after attending a workshop run by GeoPark promoter and professional geologist Dr Sam Hampton. The event held in April was well attended by representatives from many organisations and generally sanctioned the idea of submitting an application to UNESCO, while recognising that the concept needed considerably more thrashing out. "Christchurch City Council has confirmed its support for the project," say Deputy Mayor Andrew Turner.



Vision for the Trust's Future

Christchurch City Council founded the Trust in 2010 to administer funds that the former Banks Peninsula District Council had obtained from the sale of endowment land. The Trust aims to support the sustainable management and conservation of the natural environment through the parks, reserves, walkways and the enhancement of biodiversity.

"The Trust is proud of its achievements since its inception eight years ago. Banks Peninsula is now better known for its walking opportunities, and we have helped

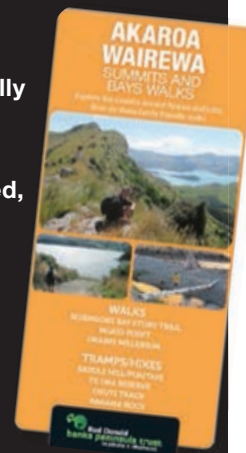
protect 460 ha of biodiversity," says Chair Simon Mortlock.

"The Trust wants to keep advancing its vision," says Paul McNoe. "Our challenge now is to find the best way to fund that vision long term. We are in a strong position having achieved so much while still retaining 65% of the original capital. Our next step is to discuss with the Council our shared goals, and where the Trust is the best vehicle to achieve wins for outdoor recreation and biodiversity on Banks Peninsula."

The new Diamond Harbour brochure featuring 5 lovely loop routes launched at the 2017 Walking Festival Guides Dinner. The Council has been busy in the Diamond Harbour area too, and walkers will notice many improvements along the coastal tracks and some helpful extra locally made signage.



Recently re-issued, our Summits and Bays brochure includes two new walks developed by the Council in Wairewa



Personnel

The Trust is governed by a Board of 9 Trustees. This year we said a sad farewell to Chrissie Williams. Chrissie had been instrumental in helping the Trust streamline its processes during a time of growth and development.



Suky Thompson has managed the Trust since 2011 and loves getting out and about on Banks Peninsula.



Sue Church did such a great job with the 2017 Walking Festival that she is back on board again this year and taking on an additional role assisting Suky.

ROD DONALD TRUST

- promotes all the walks on Banks Peninsula
- runs the annual Walking Festival
- helped purchase Saddle Hill Purple Peak Curry Reserve and extend Langer and Montgomery Reserves
- owns and operates Rod Donald Hut
- developed Te Ara Pataka tramp with DOC



Strategic Planning under the skilful direction of facilitator Barbara Nicholas.

Donations and Bequests



The Trust welcomes donations, however big or small. If you support our work or have enjoyed Rod Donald Hut, our publications, the Walking Festival or one of the new Reserves, please visit our Givealittle page.

"Bequests are particularly welcome as a way to bolster our finances long term," says Simon Mortlock.

Follow our news during the year on:
www.rodonaldtrust.co.nz

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Donations are welcomed.
You'll find us on Givealittle.
Search for Rod Donald.

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For our walking information see
www.bpwalks.co.nz