

Otaihape Alpine Club

PO Box 180

Taihape 4742

www.otaihape.org.nz



August 2010

Hello everyone

The weather has been a bit up and down at Whakapapa recently but there's plenty of good skiing to be had. Well done RAL for keeping the snow skiable in challenging conditions. Snow over the last week has topped things up nicely.



Top O' the Bruce on 18 August

Recent visitors to the club would have noticed new lounge suites (care of TradeMe) in the lounge. They were brought up during the July school holidays and are the final touch to the refurbishment of the lounge and kitchen area.

The lounge suites were delivered to the Top O' the Bruce and taken the rest of the way by snowcat with some of the younger members of the club helping take down the old suite. It was great seeing the young ones get stuck in to what was an impromptu working bee. Kitchen and bathroom flooring material was brought up at the same time. Thanks go to members and guests who, expecting a quiet evening meal, ended up moving the furniture in. They were very gracious, considering the short notice due to weather and transport conditions coming together so suddenly



Thomas Hart and Harry (guest) hard at work

Johan Bonnevie, who donated the original \$500, visited the club in July and again in late August (to celebrate his 85th birthday). He is delighted with the tasteful changes to the hut saying he much liked the colour scheme and matching furniture.

- *Yvonne Halcombe, President*

Bookings

The preferred way to make booking is to phone Alison/Kim on 06 3880021 between 6-9pm. Phoning means you can have confirmation and the code to the door straight away. Please do not email bookings. We are working on a new booking form soon to be available online.

There are still places in the hut for the upcoming school holidays but be in quick because it fills up fast!

New members

We keep saying this, but we really do need more members to keep the club viable in the face of rising costs.

With the season underway it's a great time to encourage prospective members to visit. Club will credit non-member rate paid if they join very soon after.

Also consider bringing a guest or a friend of your child, this will help club cover costs.

Otaihape has lots to offer – we are one of the friendliest, casual, unstructured clubs on the mountain and offer ski-in, ski-out accommodation. We have a poster available for work/school/community notice boards. Email Yvonne on Yvonne@hdl.co.nz for a copy.

Lockers

We need to confirm who has which locker. If you have a locker please email Lorraine Iliston on illston@actrix.co.nz with your name and locker number by 30/9/10. After this date all unclaimed or unpaid lockers will be opened, emptied (and the contents disposed of) and reallocated to members waiting for a locker.

Club arrival and departure procedures

These have changed slightly in the past two years due to changes in the way that the hot water cylinder is plumbed.

If you are not familiar with these changes or are new(ish) to the club then please read the instructions for arrival and departure on the notice board above the kitchen bench. Bear in mind that the hut is in an extreme environment and isolated from emergency services and trades people so we do need to do things differently to what we would normally do at home.

The departure instructions cover the obvious things, like checking the windows and doors to make sure that the hut is secure, cleaning and rubbish removal.

Then there are the less obvious but extremely important things like draining the water from the pipes to ensure that they don't freeze while the hut is unoccupied and cold, turning off the power, closing all internal doors to inhibit the spread of fire, and closing curtains and shutters.

Generally things tick along quite nicely but every now and again things get missed that have the potential to cause problems in the wrong circumstances. If you are the last ones out the door then please ensure that you know and follow the departure procedure.

- Neil Ranford, Club Captain

Follow us on Twitter

The club is now on Twitter and although it's early days we believe it has potential as a communication tool for club members and as a mechanism to attract new members. And the best bit - it's free.

Just click on this link www.twitter.com/otaihapeskiclub and you'll find my recent tweets (comments, insights, news). In order to follow the club you will need to set up your own twitter account, which is fairly quick and straight forward. So, be brave and take a look.

- Sue Hawkins, Twitter Fan, lover of winter and keen skier!

Want to try snow shoes?

Coatesville-based Glenmore Sports is offering Otaihape Alpine Club Members a 25% discount on the TSL Snowshoe product range. TSL Snowshoes are ideal for moving around on the mountain, particularly hiking up or down to/from the lodge at Whakapapa. They are also a fantastic alternative activity for when the mountain is closed or the legs need a rest from the skiing. TSL also produces ski trekking poles, ski backpacks, snow boots and various other 'snowshoeing' related accessories. For more information go to www.tsloutdoor.com or contact glenmoresports@xtra.co.nz, Ph 021 995 166 / 021 995 134 Fax: 09 447 1863

The offer is available until 1 October 2010.

Sights along the way – Whakatumutumu Mission Station

By Jon Torgesen, Secretary

How many times have you travelled between home and Ruapehu? Do you know the road well? How about the history of the countryside you are passing through? Those travelling to Ruapehu from the north, from Te Kuiti towards Taumarunui, take off from the New Plymouth road at 'Eight Mile Junction'. Have you seen the cross on the top of the hill right ahead of you as you turn left towards Taumarunui? It had intrigued us for quite a while. Recently we set

out to investigate. About a kilometre after Eight Mile Junction is a small road to the right called Turua Road. About a kilometre down this road is a parking area with a track and information board. On the information board is written the following:

The site of this very early Wesleyan Mission Station was on the top of the hill at the junction of State Highways 3 and 4 (known locally as Eight Mile Junction) in the Arapae District (south of Te Kuiti and north of Piopio). The hill is shown on old maps as Hiona or Mount Zion as was the site of an old Maori Pa and then later the Mission Station. Apparently the name Whakatumutumu describes the "heaped up" appearance of the hill.

The Rev Frederick Miller and his young wife were posted from the UK to New Zealand soon after their marriage in 1839 and arrived in Wellington at the end of that year where they stayed until Mrs Miller gave birth to their first child. Then they sailed by schooner up the West Coast to Kawhia where Miller met his superintendent, the Rev John Whitely, who had established a Wesleyan mission at Ahu Ahu on the south side of the harbour, now named 'Te Waitere' after Whitely.

Frederick Miller, the catechist, and his wife wanted to establish their own mission, though both only 22 years of age. They chose to go into the area south of Te Kuiti, but the overland journey was too daunting for a young mother and child. They were taken south to Mokau in a large canoe paddled by the Maori. They entered the Mokau River and paddled upstream a mile or so to Mahoe, where some of Whitely's converts were to be found.

After resting for the night the party set off up river in a canoe, again paddled by the Maori, portaging where necessary, including at the Wairere Falls, until they reached the junction of the Mokau and Mangapehi Rivers. The high hill that Whitely and Miller were to call Mount Zion lay in the fork of the two rivers.

Miller chose a 'step' of about an acre in extent on the north eastern side of the hill as the site of his mission. From here he had views of both the Mokau and Mangapehi Rivers. The site was astride an important junction of Maori inland trails. That from the north to the south, and another via Ongarue to the Whanganui River, met at Whakatumutumu.

The inscription which is on the cairn that marks the site of the chapel gives us a fairly good description of the Reverend Frederick Miller and his short life here.

"This cairn marks the Chapel site of the Wesleyan Mission established at Whakatumutumu by the Rev. Frederick Miller sent out by the London Missionary

Society in 1840. Here at this lonely place this godly man with his brave wife led a ferocious primitive race from heathen darkness to the light of Christian civilization. He died at his post of duty aged 32 years. The cross on the hilltop marks his tomb. Servant of God, well done"

In August 1848 Miller, whose health was deteriorating went to Auckland for medical advice and treatment. He returned to Whakatumutumu in October 1848 and died soon after of tuberculosis. As he wanted he was buried on the summit of Mount Zion by his faithful Maori friends. They marked his grave with a soft rock in which they carved the name "Mira". Those same Maori friends then took Mrs Miller and three small children to Auckland where they were looked after.

In brief, that was his life. This was indeed a lonely outpost but a few people did visit here and have made records which give us an idea of their time here.

The climb from the road to the mission station takes about 10 minutes, with another 10 minutes or so to the top of the hill where the cross and grave are to be found. Imagine this lonely outpost 170 years ago in thick bush. No roads. Tough people.

Contributions welcome!

This news letter is for all club members. If you have any news/pictures you'd like to share please email Jude Hamblyn, Vice Club Captain on Judith_hamblyn@yahoo.com