

# Otago Mental Health Support Trust



Bipolar Network & Signpost

2nd floor, Security Building,  
115 lower Stuart St Dunedin  
Phone (03) 4772598  
Box 5021 Dunedin  
EMAIL otagomd@es.co.nz

**December 2005-  
January 2006**

Newsletter Date:  
1 December 2005

Christmas Party:

FRIDAY 16th DECEMBER

Woodhaugh Gardens, BBQ Area

From 5pm-8pm

**Inside this issue:**

Report 2  
from the  
office

3 Signpost  
Matukituki

4 Valley  
Tramp

5 Complimentary  
Health  
Project  
2006

6 Poet's  
Corner

7 17th  
Century  
Prayer

We will bring food, drink and some outdoor games. Feel free to bring some music or anything else you would like to contribute.

Lets hope for great weather.

If it is raining,( hard!) we will have it at the rooms. A decision will be made by 3pm and will be on the answerphone so call if you are not sure. We can help people get home.

**Office Hours: Monday to Friday  
10 am –2pm.**

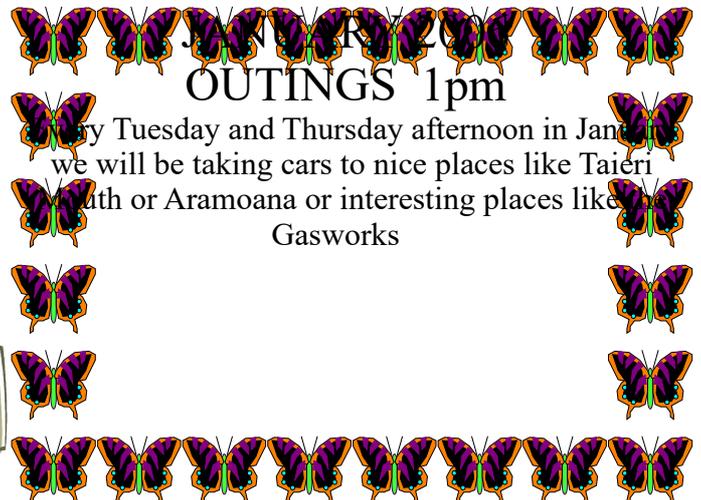
**XMAS OFFICE HOURS:**

Only closed for the Statutory Holidays of Mon/Tues. Skeleton staff work Wed 28 Dec—Fri 30 Dec. Full back from Wed 4 Jan.



**OUTINGS 1pm**

Every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon in January we will be taking cars to nice places like Taiari with or Aramoana or interesting places like Gasworks



# REPORT FROM THE OFFICE

## EDUCATION EVENING.

In November we held our night education group dealing with medication.

Tanya Appleby from the hospitals pharmacy attended and her contribution as usual was very good. She is very generous with her knowledge about all manner of medication (and not just mental health).

We will look to hold another night early next year. This will be advertised in the next newsletter. If you have any interest at all in medication I advise you to attend.

DON.

## RETREAT.

We visited the Catlins again this year for the first time in 5 years. As in the past we stayed at Papatowai. We arrived in 25 degrees of magnificent sunshine and this set the tone for our stay.

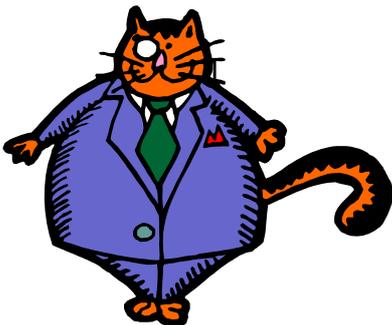
People quickly took the opportunity to visit the beach and to tramp the adjacent bush walked. Two brave souls ventured into the water and swam while others walked in up to their knees.

Liz Bolwell brought her guitar and entertained us. Everyone of us really enjoyed her singing - so thank you Liz.

The highlight of our travels was the time we spent at McLean falls. But the bush walks, bird song every where was great. There is a serene beauty about our forests which is certainly a source of great pleasure to many.

Every one thoroughly enjoyed the food and the company in what was a wonderful experience.

DON



## LIBRARY BOOKS.

Thanks to people who have returned books. There are still a lot that have been issued for more than a few months. We also have some new children's books. A review of these can be seen in Mike's SIGNPOST report.

HELEN

## VOLUNTARY WORK.

Thank you very much to Ian Dalziel for his voluntary work in the office looking after the phones on a Monday. Much appreciated especially while I (Helen) was away .

HELEN

## ASIAN HOLIDAY.

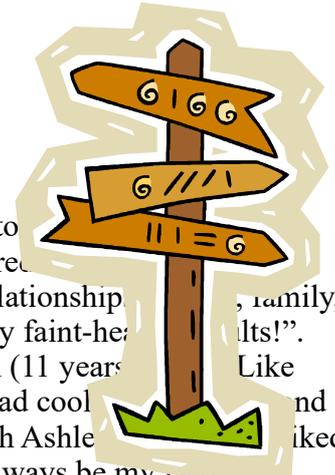
It's nice to be back home after spending 2 weeks in Vietnam and a week in Thailand. Certainly appreciate blue sky, green grass ( or any grass) and clean water. Of the 10 countries I have travelled to in Asian alone; Vietnam was the most difficult communication wise but also the cheapest! Was great to see the non commerical side of a country that doesn't have any McDonalds, KFC, Pizza Hutt or 24 hour diary.

A bowl of noodles in Vietnam costs 50c, a packet of cigarettes 90c (not that I smoke), a pair of Levis jeans \$15, 50c to have the jeans taken up, DVD \$1.70 (most likely to be a copy), \$8 for a hotel double with a view of the harbour. These prices seem cheap to us but we must also realize that the average wage is \$3 per day and most people work 12 hours a day for 7 days a week!

TRAVEL TIPS while in Asia: always take anti diarrhoea pills, use bottled water (even to brush your teeth with), take your own toilet tissue as public toilets don't provide any and dispose of it in the rubbish bin next to the toilet not down the toilet, beware of having ice with drinks as sometimes the water to make the ice is not pure.

HELEN

# SIGNPOST



We have some great new children’s books in the library. They have been chosen to help children feel good no matter what life may throw at them. “Poems with Attitude Uncensored” is a collection of poems for teenagers, straight-talking with humour about the things that matter most, sex, relationships, family, acne, drink and drugs... “a real book for teenagers, and probably not to be read by faint-hearted adults!”. Several books for younger children were reviewed and ranked for us by Ashleigh (11 years old). “Like Myself” was Ashleigh’s first choice because “it was quick and easy to read and had cool illustrations” and her choice was “Halibut Jackson”, a delightful book about overcoming shyness which Ashleigh liked “because it was strange.” Other titles include “How Do You Feel?”, “You Will Always be my Dad”, “When’s my Turn” and “Hands are not for Hitting”.

The computer in our library is for *you* to use. You can use it to browse the books, videos and other resources in the library. You can also use our broadband connection to find the latest information on bipolar and other disorders, your medications, places to get support, find somewhere to live... For something different you might like to try MoodGym, on-line interactive cognitive behavioural therapy for depression.

We have printed out copies of two different mood tracking calendars. People find these useful to keep track of the way their mood changes and relate it to the other things going on in their lives. Daily monitoring of your sleeping patterns, alcohol and drug use, and other significant events can help you and your doctor get a better idea of the right treatment for you. Ask us for a copy.

Our trip to the mountains was great therapy – three days in the mountain air, the sunshine, great company and a beautiful view. It will be back again soon. MIKE McALEVEY

Finally, mental health first aid from the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance:



## ***What helps***

## ***What hurts***

I know you have a real illness and that’s what causes these thoughts and feelings.

It’s all in your head.

I may not be able to understand exactly how you feel but I care about you and want to help.

We all go through times like this.

You are important to me. Your life is important to me.

You have so much to live for—why do you want to die?

Tell me what I can do now to help you.

What do you want me to do? I can’t change your situation.

You might not believe it now, but the way you’re feeling will change.

Just snap out of it. Look on the bright side.

You’re not alone in this. I’m here for you.

You’ll be fine. Stop worrying.

Talk to me. I’m listening.

Here’s my advice...

## **ASPIRING HEIGHTS - Matukituki Valley tramp.**

At roads end 2.5 hours up the Matukituki Valley is Aspiring Hut.

The wind roared down the valley kicking up dust as we tramped towards the hut, never relenting. We stopped only long enough to have a snack and rest by the river. The hut came into view, nestled in the lee of the valley it was started in 1938 and finished after the war. It sleeps 48 people.

Mount Aspiring can be seen from the back of the hut, still in cloud at this moment but magnificent for its sheer size. After a break to rest our weary bodies, Paul and I headed through the bush to Shovel Flat, 1 hours walk over boulders and tree roots. The swing bridges we crossed traversed a river cascading over boulders below.

As quickly as we entered the bush it parted and there before us was a valley opening leading further into the National Park. The wind was still whistling through the tussock and clouds skimming over the peaks suggesting gale force winds higher up. The views all around us were breath taking. Twin falls carving a path down the mountain side, water being blown back like a water spout and ever present were the mountains all around.

On day 2 Paul, Tony and I headed back to the car park but before we headed back to Dunedin Paul and I went to see the Rob Roy Glacier.

Access to the truck is by swing bridge, across the Matukituki river. The walk is a steady climb mainly through bush.

Although receding rapidly the sheer size of the glacier was apparent even half way up the tramp looking through the canopy of bush. All the way up thundering down beside us was the glacial fed river, rock, trees and other debris strewn to the side the force of the water over the years carving its own track.

As if we could keep climbing up to the ice flow the track ended with information signs marking the end of our walk.

There before us towering high above was the Bob Roy Glacier shimmering in the clear blue sky, Its sheer size was there to see and capture on film. Even a kea didn't want to be left out as it had a closer look at Paul's pack and my camp. I stopped long enough for a couple of photos.

To be there and admire the wonders of nature has to offer will remain forever in my memory. As if we hadn't experienced it all that day a thunderous noise echoed around, and avalanche starting high above. ~~The glacier spoke. All I could do was to look skyward in wonder at what I had just seen.~~

Before the tramp ended Paul and I revisited the Otago Boys High School lodge down the road from the car park. 27 years had gone by. The lodge needed a good spring clean but much was as I remembered it back then.

As we headed down the road we stopped long enough to look back and see Mt. Aspiring in clear view the weather gods were smiling on it that day.

GREG MCLEOD

  **COMPLIMENTARY HEALTH PROJECT 2006**  

 In February 2006 a group of complimentary natural health practioners will be linking together to offer their services to 10 bipolar and mental health clients for a trial period of 6 months. 

 Some of the healing models available will be: Aura-Soma (colour therapy), massage, Spiritual Guidance, Emotional clearing, Journeying, Breath Work, life coaching, craneo sacrial therapy, natural medicines, Bowen technique and more. 

 The aim of the project is to assist people in their healing journey. 

 By compiling the results of the six month trial period we can then put forward to the relevant government bodies for funding so that these healing models are readily available for all those people who desire it. 

 For further information contact :

DEBBIE PRATT  
The Universal Centre  
First Floor, Security building  
115 Lower Stuart Street  
Dunedin.

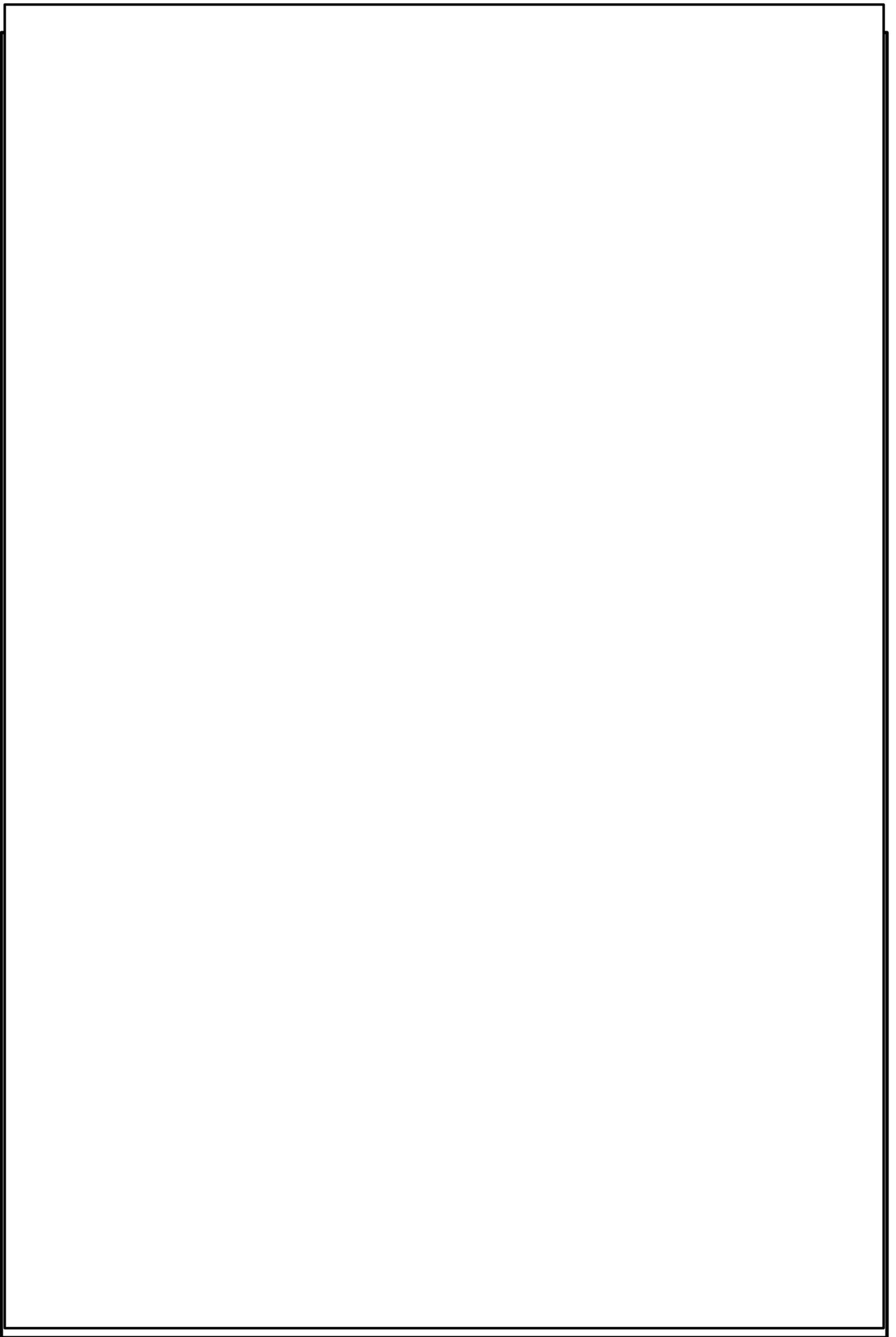
Ph: 477-0205 (work)  
Or 476-0442 a/h

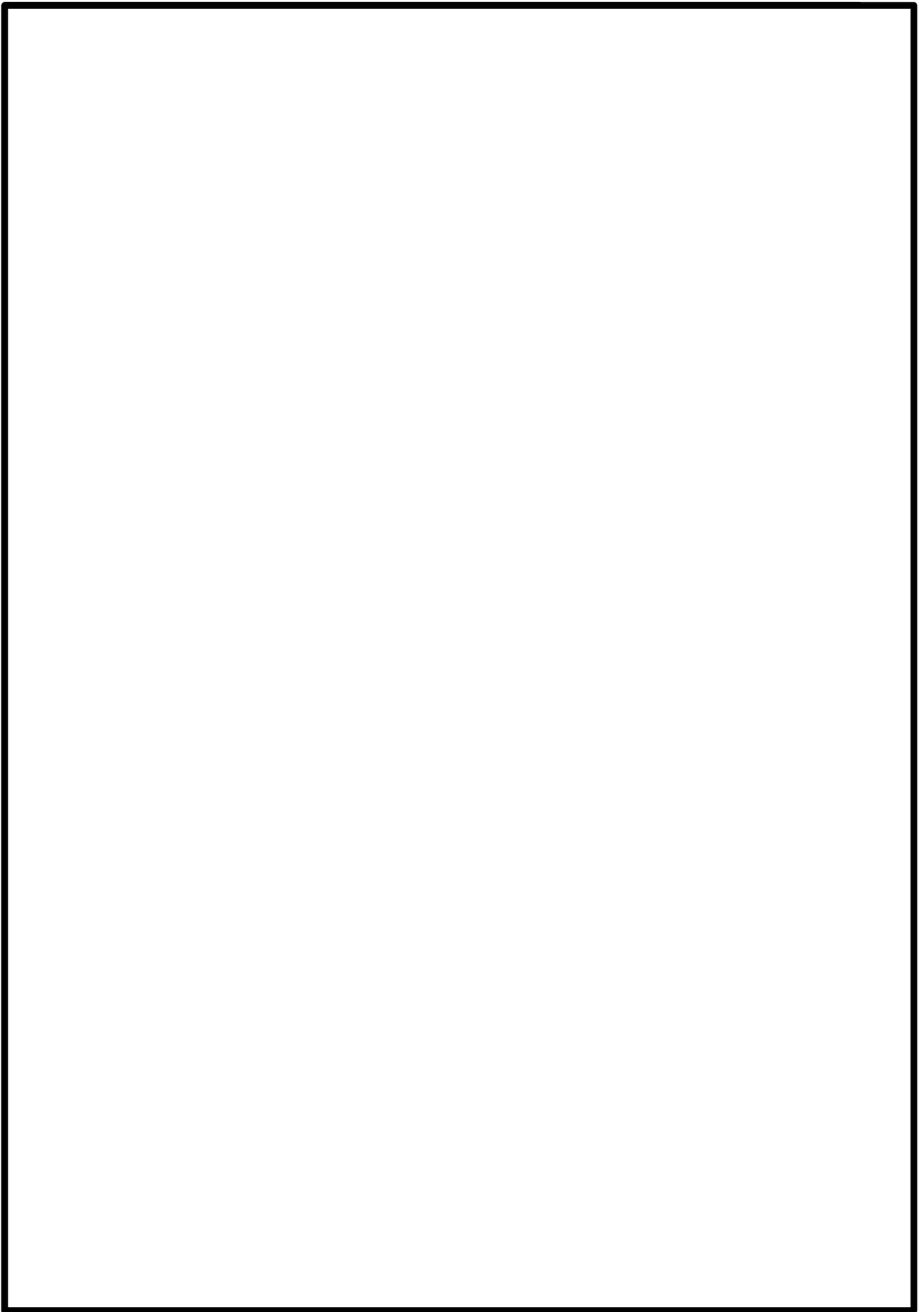
Your input is greatly appreciated.

**Gentle Mountaineering and Tramping.**

**Anyone wishing to go for 3 or 4 days  
gentle mountaineering please ring :**

**Crispin Ranford  
Ph: 471-8401**





# SOCIAL DIARY

## DECEMBER 2005

Women's Group (Day Group)  
*Wednesday **21st** December*  
meet at the rooms at 1.45pm

Women's Group (evening)  
*Wednesday **7th** December*  
Meet at the rooms  
7 pm

SPECIAL shared Lunch  
*Tuesday **13th** December*  
*Fresh bread, meat & salad to  
make your own rolls.*

*\$3*

Followed by a new release  
Video. Phone in please.

## JANUARY 2006.

OUTINGS EVERY TUESDAY and  
THURSDAY  
1pm



## Social Recreation Group

Run by Greg Mcleod

Ph 4772598

Have fun wet or fine.

Social activities beneficial for body and mind: the first step to a healthy lifestyle.

Just bring yourself or a friend. Activities are group decisions.

Costs kept to little or nothing

Meet every Wednesday 1pm at the Trusts' office : 2nd floor, Security Building, 115  
Lower Stuart St.

Types of activities: Wet or fine days catered for

Table tennis, pool, art gallery, scenic walks at beach, bush, town etc; indoor cricket, cards, board games, Badminton, Unipol, local attractions, swimming, meals, frisbee- many more ideas.