

## ***JULY 2007 WILDERNESS LODGES JOINT NEWSLETTER***

- **NEW RAINFOREST ROOMS (24) AND LUXURY RIVERVIEW ROOMS (4) AT LAKE MOERAKI A GREAT SUCCESS.** The carefully preserved historic Red Dog Saloon dates from the 1962 Lake Moeraki-Haast Highway construction camp and is all that remains of Lake Moeraki's distant past. The 18 old small Moeraki rooms have now been demolished. We have just completed the 3-year re-development of this into a very stylish Wilderness Lodge. Guests love the new rooms. Our 4 new Riverview Rooms are particularly popular. Spa baths, views down the Moeraki Rapids from inside your room and from your verandah are very inviting for those guests wanting a stylish Wilderness Lodge experience. New Rainforest Rooms are equally spacious with great tree fern, forest canopy and some river views.
- **4 NEW ALPINE LODGES AT ARTHURS PASS OFFER A SECLUDED BEECH FOREST "TREEHOUSE" WITH SUPERB ALPINE VIEWS.** The luxurious Alpine Lodges have now completed their second full year of operation. They are stunning. You are amongst the forest canopy with native rifleman and bellbird singing outside your window and balcony. The Lodges won the 2005 Master Builders Association NZ Commercial Building Supreme Award. Their spa baths, spacious lounge area and magnificent mountain views are a huge hit. Our less expensive 20 Mountain View Rooms also have exceptional views.
- **MAY 2007 LAKE MOERAKI WILDERNESS WEEK POPULAR FOR SOUTH ISLAND KIWIS. MORE WILDERNESS WEEKS PLANNED;** A "Who's Who" of South Island notable people joined us for a magical 6 days nature discovery at Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki in May 2007. These weeks are designed to introduce New Zealanders to wild and natural South Westland. Based from Lake Moeraki, we enjoyed fantastic food and accommodation, canoed on Lake Moeraki and the Lower Moeraki River, ventured south to Jackson Bay and road's end on the Cascade Plateau, we walked the historic track to Blue Hut, visited the Glaciers, Ship Creek and Monro Beach. At the end of the week, we prepared a fascinating bird and fern list for the Moeraki Valley. For dates of our forthcoming Wilderness Weeks at both Lodges over 07/08 contact [gerry@wildernesslodge.co.nz](mailto:gerry@wildernesslodge.co.nz)
- **PRINCE CASPIAN, SECOND MOVIE IN "THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA", FILMED AT LAKE MOERAKI MARCH 2007.** Lake Moeraki and the Moeraki seacoast recently hosted a film crew shooting the sequel to the Disney movie "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe", filmed near the Arthur's Pass Lodge in 2004. The main scene at Lake Moeraki in Prince Caspian was on the pristine Moeraki River seacoast. We hosted the children, the main actors.
- **FODOR'S 2007 NEW ZEALAND GUIDEBOOK AWARDS BOTH LAKE MOERAKI AND WILDERNESS LODGES PRESTIGIOUS "FODOR'S CHOICE" TOP RANKING.** "As travellers we've discovered a place so wonderful that its worthiness is obvious. And sometimes that place is so experiential that superlatives don't do it justice; you have to be there to know. These sights, properties and experiences get our highest rating, Fodor's Choice, indicated by orange stars throughout the book" (page 7). Only 10 accommodation properties in the South Island including both Wilderness Lodges were given Fodor's Choice ranking in their latest 2007 guidebook. The other 8 are Lake Rotoroa Lodge (Nelson), Charlotte Jane and Claremont Country Estate (Canterbury), Bay of Many Coves Resort and Old St Mary's Convent (Marlborough), Lake Brunner Lodge (West Coast), Corstophine House (Dunedin) and Eichardt's Private Hotel (Queenstown). If you prefer the assessment of fellow travellers rather than a popular guidebook we suggest you log on to [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com). Check out the extensive guest reviews of both Wilderness Lodges. There are 13 stunning independent guest reviews of WL Arthur's Pass and 10 of WL Lake Moeraki. A great website for tourism intelligence.

- WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS FROM WILDERNESS LODGES STAFF.** Wally Bruce and Deb Skelton continue over 2007/2008 as the Managers of Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass. Both are nature enthusiasts and have led guest trips throughout this summer at Arthur's Pass. They love the settled outdoor lifestyle of the Lodge after many years of travelling while guiding Backroads clients worldwide. Sadly, on 20 July, we farewelled Lake Moeraki Managers Dorothy Piper and Malcolm Edwards. They have performed wonderful service at Lake Moeraki for the last 5 years and are moving to Central Otago to open their own Kokonga Lodge [www.kokongalodge.co.nz](http://www.kokongalodge.co.nz). Wilderness Lodge Owners Anne Saunders and Gerry McSweeney are managing Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki from 20 July 2007 onwards. They will continue to move between both Wilderness Lodges after that date as they recruit the new Moeraki staff team. The new Managers at Lake Moeraki are John Holton and Sally Lilley. They have spent the last 2 years as Managers of the Mitre Peak Lodge at Milford Sound for Ultimate Hikes. Prior to that they both have had careers in teaching, business and are passionate nature lovers and trampers.
- OUR WILDERNESS LODGES GUIDED ADVENTURE PROGRAMME AT ARTHUR'S PASS DISCOVERS KEA PARROTS, MOUNTAINS, ALPINE FLOWERS AND LAKES IN THE HEART OF THE SOUTHERN ALPS. AT LAKE MOERAKI WE DISCOVER TAWAKI PENGUINS, ANCIENT RAINFOREST, FUR AND ELEPHANT SEALS OF SOUTH WESTLAND'S WORLD HERITAGE COASTLINE.** The lodges are set in totally contrasting natural areas. Our guests always point out to us that as the lodges are so different we should encourage a two to three night stay at each lodge to make the most of their stunning settings. We are the place to visit to combine gentle adventures, comfort, great food and wine with friendly Kiwi hosts and guides. The Lodges are set in thousands of hectares of wild natural land that we own and also protect. There is a magnificent walk network for guests to explore. Our nature guides take you to explore these areas on foot and by kayak on a daily changing programme of nature adventures. We also invite visitor volunteers to help in practical conservation work such as weed tree removal and wildlife surveys.
- JUNE TO DECEMBER 8 (approx!): TAWAKI-FIORDLAND CRESTED PENGUIN BREEDING/VIEWING SEASON AT WILDERNESS LODGE LAKE MOERAKI.** Every year from now on these large (70cm high) penguins come in from the Tasman Sea to breed on our wild seacoast. They have spent the last 4 months feeding and sleeping on the sea. The world population of this very distinctive penguin species is perhaps 4,000 birds making it the world's second rarest next to the Galapagos penguin. Tawaki only breed from southern South Westland to western Stewart Island in dense coastal rainforest. Lake Moeraki is one of the only (and probably the easiest) places in the world people can easily see these delightful birds.
- HIKING NEW ZEALAND-WILDERNESS LODGE ARTHUR'S PASS COMBINE TO OFFER 2 NIGHT LODGE EXPERIENCE AND TWO DAY GUIDED CASS SADDLE- LAGOON SADDLE GUIDED TRAMPING TRIP.** For the coming 2007/2008 starting in October, Hiking New Zealand are offering a special 4 day tour from Christchurch. It includes a guided walk over the Waimakariri valley's most popular overnight tramp. It also includes one night in a mountain hut, a day of Wilderness Lodge guided nature adventures, two nights at the Lodge together with all meals and activities and the famous Tranz Alpine Train back to Christchurch. This special three night/four day adventure package from Christchurch is designed to combine a challenging guided tramping trip through the Canterbury high country with two nights/two days of indulgence and nature discovery at the Wilderness Lodge. Book at [www.HikingNewZealand.com](http://www.HikingNewZealand.com)
- EVERY 2 DAYS AT WILDERNESS LODGE ARTHUR'S PASS, WE OFFER NEW ZEALAND'S ONLY OPPORTUNITY FOR VISITORS TO HELP BLADE SHEAR A FINE WOOL MERINO SHEEP. THIS WOOL IS FOR ICEBREAKER CLOTHING SOLD IN THE WILDERNESS LODGE SHOP.** On our 2,400 hectare (6,000acre)

farm we have 4,000 merino sheep. Every 2 days guests join Farm Manager Neil Woods to muster sheep with Border Collie dogs, cuddle new lambs and to shear a sheep with old fashioned blades. This merino wool is amongst the finest and most highly prized in the world. We are one of a small number of high country farms that supply "Icebreaker", NZ's fashion leisure clothing company that is taking the world by storm. Icebreaker's stunning clothing range is on sale in the Wilderness Lodge shop.

- **QUALMARK 4 STAR PLUS GRADING FOR BOTH WILDERNESS LODGES AND A RAFT OF GUIDING CONSENTS AND PASSENGER SERVICE LICENCES ARE THE HALLMARK OF A FULLY PROFESSIONAL ECO-TOURISM OPERATION.**

The Lodges' high quality operations have now been formally recognised by Qualmark. Both Lodges also hold Passenger Service Licence No 222871 for guest transport. We hold DOC Guiding Concessions (Canterbury 15048 GUI and West Coast 14903 GUI) and a Marine Mammal Watching Permit (Number11/25/00). Our eco-tourism operates under our Wilderness Lodges Conservation and Environment Policy.

- **GREETINGS. THANKYOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT OVER THE 2006-2007 TOURISM SEASON. OUR RATES REMAIN ARE TO REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR 2007/2009.** Please contact us [gerry@wildernesslodge.co.nz](mailto:gerry@wildernesslodge.co.nz) if you need 2007/2009 rates that are displayed on the website. The Website also now has an [Image Gallery](#). High resolution images of both Lodges are available there.

Contact us and come and visit us soon at both of New Zealand's Wilderness Lodges

*Anne Saunders and Dr Gerry McSweeney*