

OPTIONAL BUSHCRAFT WEEKEND (KEY SUMMIT – LIVINGSTONE – HOWDEN)

OTMC Bulletin, April 1987, (Pages 10-11)

Our trip to the Divide was going nicely till about 10 minutes before drop off when someone suggested to walk up to Key Summit and camp there for the night. What a shock to the system when I was just dreaming about falling off the bus, pulling out my sleeping bag and crashing.

The walk up in the dark was fantastic; with the moon out the view was superb, it was really worth while doing.

Sue and Barry confirmed the site, the fly went up in no time, a weird shape but soon we were all bunked down, 6 inside. Sue and Barry outside. In the morning it was cold cold cold. Sue had ice on her biv bag and Barry made unintelligent sounds when spoken to.

The two parties split, with Barry's group leaving first. About an hour out we met up with a Japanese gentleman, he wanted to know where Key Summit was.

We walked along the ridge for the first couple of hours but Polly and Sue seemed to prefer to be off the track and on the side of the mountain - holes and scrub included.

With Brian and Polly's long legs they didn't seem to fall into quite so many holes as Sue or I. We kept climbing until about 2 when we stopped for lunch. We saw Barry's party and Sue, Polly and Brian ran up to meet them, I fell asleep in the sun.

Sue, Polly and Brian went and looked for a way down as we all decided no more climbing - descent time. They found a drop which didn't look too bad.

Three hours later we got to the hut. What a fantastic time, it was like going back a child hood and doing crazy things. Bush bashing, bum sliding (with Matagouri stops) walking down creeks, falling in holes (till only head and shoulders showed). It is something I will always remember but boy was that hut a welcome sight.

Fly up, tea prepared and early to bed. One of these days I will learn to sleep on the ground.

Easy day out Sunday to Howden. Sue, Polly and Brian went up to the Falls, once again I sunbathed.

Then more excitement Cindy arrived looking really crook. Stand by I might have to go with her in the helicopter. Thank god she walked out, I don't like helicopters. Halfway back it was realised Antony's party wasn't with us, so we had a prolonged stay at Te Anau. Mini golf with Barry and Elspeth with Dave keeping score.

A very quick trip back to Dunedin only 1 1/2 hours late.

Thank you Sue for being a fantastic leader and giving us a truly memorable weekend.

"Polly I would really love to have your lovely legs". (Wouldn't we all! - Ed).

Pat Grant for Susan Harding, Polly Stupples & Brian Lowther.