

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.) P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

President's Piece

I recently read two articles in the ODT (13 & 14 May) about an Israeli trumper who had been badly injured during a fall on the Milford track. She had survived the almost impossible, having spent two nights and three days in the open before help arrived.

Initially I really felt for this woman, however after reading the articles in more detail I found that: she was tramping solo; staff from DoC warned her that she was under-prepared; and she decided to ignore their advice as she had tramped in South America.

This almost cost her life, as snow closed in immediately after the rescue. One of the ODT articles finishes, "Just weeks before her Milford Track ordeal, Ms Parnes lost a car to the surf at Oreti Beach, near Invercargill". She has cost the taxpayer \$15,000 for the rescue, plus medical costs, not to mention the rental car lost in the surf.

One of the great benefits of belonging to the OTMC is that we all learn to respect the elements we tramp in and to not make the above mistakes.

Wishing you safe and enjoyable tramping.

Terry Casey, President.

Committee Members 2003-2004

President	Terry Casey	454 4592
Vice President/Clubrooms	Sandra de Vries	473 7224
Secretary	Jenni Wright	454 5061
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Imm. Past Pres./Publicity	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Chief Guide	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Ian Sime	453 6185
Gear Hire	Mike Brettell	455 1515
Daytrip Convenor	Cathy McKersey	455 0994
Funding	Greg Powell	454 4828
Library	Jonette Service	454 2323
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987
Social Convenor	Fiona Webster	487 8176
Property Maintenance	Peter Mason	455 7074
Bulletin Editor	Robyn Bell	488 2420
Conservation	David Barnes	454 4492

Visit us on the Internet at:
www.otmc.co.nz

SAR

OTMC hosts SAR Training Day June 20

SAR is club speak for Search and Rescue – an organisation of volunteers who, through the police, contribute their specific skills to search for people lost in our area. This day follows on from the club night of April 15, and is going to look at some of the emerging technology now available for SAR, and tramping in general. With devices like personal locator beacons being talked about in the media, and the growing use of GPS (navigational aids) in tramping, this is a great chance to learn about the benefits of these gadgets, and other SAR topics. Meet at the clubrooms at 9am.

Contact Teresa on 477 4987 for more information.

Club News

HUT BOOK

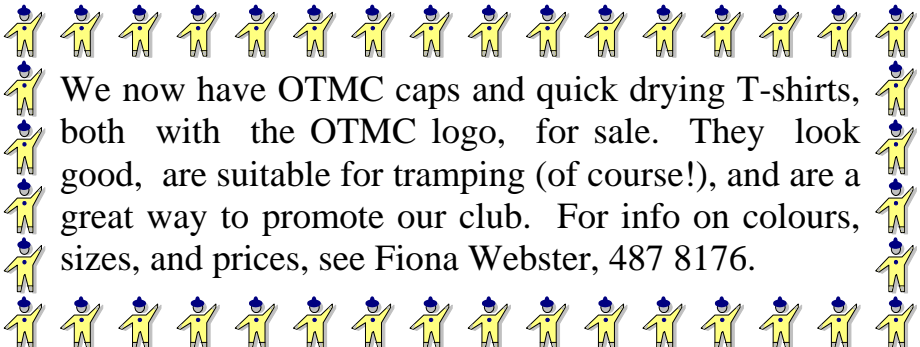
At the Club meeting on Thursday 29 April, Murray Johnston of Waitati handed in a hut book from a hut which once stood at the foot of Gap Ridge on the bank of the Waikouaiti River South Branch. It had been recovered by John McElroy, a local farmer, after the hut had somehow been demolished. A photo of the hut is pasted in the front with the caption "Polite Hut Visitors Book - For the use of visitors 1948 - Donated by *Our Gang*". The first entry is on 28 Nov 1948, and the last on 15 Dec 1956.

Several OTC visits are listed including familiar names. Many other individuals and groups are named. But there are also groups who do not name their members but just give the group name, often with a distinctive logo. Examples are the *SAME OLD MOB*, *SHAKOBITES*, *The Anaemic Arastakats* with musical notations, *TRAPPERITES*, *The Mountain Goats*, *The Pack Rat*, *THE TROJANITES*, *The Saints*. It would be great if anyone who knows about any of these groups could name any members. The book will finally be lodged with Club archives in the Hocken. Ian Sime, 4536185, i.sime@xtra.co.nz

GIFT TO THE CLUB LIBRARY

Walking in Ireland, by Sandra Bardwell, Helen Fairbairn, Gareth McCormack.

This is one of the excellent Lonely Planet series of guidebooks. It has detailed descriptions of over fifty walks in the Republic and Northern Ireland and how to get to them, plus little maps and photographs, and special sections on wildlife and history. You feel you can't wait to go there. This book was given by Deirdre Pim who visited here and tramped with us. Be sure to read her poem and invitation to us on page 3. Jonette Service, Club Librarian



We now have OTMC caps and quick drying T-shirts, both with the OTMC logo, for sale. They look good, are suitable for tramping (of course!), and are a great way to promote our club. For info on colours, sizes, and prices, see Fiona Webster, 487 8176.

OTMC HUTS



Your club has been well served by past members who have, over a number of years, purchased or built assets to be used and enjoyed by club members of the present (that's us) - the Clubrooms, the Ben Rudd property and a number of back country huts.

While your club is still the "proud" owner of four back country huts, namely Jubilee, Yellow, Leaning Lodge, and 25 mile Hut, we have now reached a situation where we have to make some decisions regarding these assets. Jubilee and Yellow huts are in the Silverpeaks Scenic reserve and management, including ongoing maintenance, of these huts has in effect been taken over by DoC. Either hut (but probably not both) may be replaced courtesy of a Rotary Club project in the near future.

Leaning Lodge is located in the Rock and Pillar Scenic Reserve and according to a DOC back country accommodation inspection report, will require "a significant amount of remedial work to bring it up to a condition suitable for continued use by the public". The retirement date has been assessed at 2005 - i.e. the hut has more or less reached its retirement date. There is a good chance that this hut will be removed - forever! The University Botany Dept is interested in having a hut kept in this location. Are we? .If so in what capacity? .As owners? A co-coordinating body? Fundraisers?

The 25 Mile Hut is situated on Rees Valley Station and is therefore out of DoC's jurisdiction. However this hut is in a worse condition than Leaning Lodge but gets quite a bit of use by trampers doing the Dart/Rees as it is only two hours from the road end, which makes it a convenient stop-over for catching the 10am bus. The hut book's comments on it's condition aren't too complimentary.

While society has changed and there doesn't appear to be the same enthusiasm or commitment for hut work/maintenance parties as there was in the past, I believe that it is important that we consider what sort of legacy we are going to leave for future club members and Thursday the 24th of June is your opportunity to have some input on the hut ownership issue. Don't forget that this current committee is likely to sell or give some of these huts away! (Look at what happened with Big Hut).

Alan Thomson



Trip Reports

Lake Manapouri Kayaking 22-23 November 2003

A threatening murk descended into full-on torrential rain as 15 hardy kayakers headed to Te Anau for two days paddling on Lake Manapouri in late November 2003. Trip Leader Mike Brettell tried to look on the bright side as the van's wind-screen wipers struggled to keep up with the deluge, but the prospect of two days of heavy precipitation didn't fill anyone with great joy. But.... as so often happens with the unpredictable weather of Fiordland, the next morning dawned sunny and still and the thought of two days on the water was a much more enticing prospect.

We met on the shores of Lake Manapouri with Daphne Taylor, one of the co-owners of Fiordland Wilderness Experiences from whom we had hired most of the kayaks. As only a few people were experienced kayakers, we got the full briefing – including Daphne giving a very thorough explanation (and demonstration... on dry land, mind you) of the procedure to follow when one capsizes. This seemed completely superfluous, as we observed the perfect mill-pond of Lake Manapouri. But, what did I say about the unpredictable weather of Fiordland....???

The group eventually departed at about 10.30 am in seven single kayaks and four double kayaks. Despite the fact that I had only been kayaking on one previous occasion, I soon got into the rhythm of paddling, and the great conditions made the whole experience very pleasurable. We lunched at a largely sandfly-free bay (called Stony Bay), at which time most of the party decided that their wetsuits were getting rather hot, and the cool waters of the lake looked quite inviting. However, I suspect by the reactions of the brave bathers, that the cool waters lived up to their reputation, and (interestingly enough) nobody had a particularly lengthy swim!

Our destination for the day was Motorau Hut in Shallow Bay, and we intended to work our way there following a bit of an explore up the lake to Hope Arm before turning back to our camp site for the night. However, the weather decided that it had been benevolent for long enough, and we started to battle an increasingly strong southwest wind. Now, having been kayaking only once previously, I had felt reasonably confident that the challenges I had faced in the sea at Stewart Island would surely be worse than anything that could happen on a mere lake. Wrong! The size of the waves and the force of the wind turned the mill-pond Lake Manapouri into a boiling cauldron and we all had to work hard to paddle to Shallow Bay.

The plans for part of the group to continue paddling further around the bay so that they could camp there rather than stay in the DoC hut came unstuck because of the weather. This created something of a debate with the DoC hut warden, who, in line with DoC's policy, would not permit camping on the site. However, as Mike pointed

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out, the safety of the group would be compromised if they were forced out again onto the churning waves. Eventually, I think they agreed to disagree, and nothing was said when about six of the team dosed down on the beach.

The wind wasn't much better the next morning, and Mike didn't inspire great confidence within me when he suggested that if we needed to check out our capsizing technique, these were perfect conditions. The first challenge was getting off the beach, and I have to confess to some considerable nervousness at this point. However, all went well, and some determined paddling meant that everyone managed to launch off the beach... no mean feat considering the gale-force wind.

Although fine, the rest of the day was always made challenging by the strong wind. Ironically, the wind was almost non-existent where we stopped for lunch (Supply Bay), but apparently this was entirely due to its sheltered location. Back out into the lake, we spent the afternoon aiming for the shoreline at Manapouri township – a location, which whilst always visible, seemed to take forever to reach. Arrival time back at the shore was about 3.00 pm, and everyone had battled the waves without capsizing... a great achievement, considering! Here's hoping it's a technique that we never have to put into practice....

Thanks to Mike and the OTMC for a great experience.

Arthur's Pass Easter 2004

As we all know, the pleasures of tramping extend beyond the challenges, the adventures and the sheer enjoyment of nature's beauty to the intriguing mix of people and personalities, attitudes and ages. Our Arthurs Pass Easter group was unusual in that it included three teenagers, the oldest of whom, Andrew (18) emphatically stated: "If you've reached 30 you're definitely old."

What were Bruce and I, both the "wrong" side of 40 (Bruce not by much), to make of that? The tone was set for a break full of banter and friendly abuse. The lasting memories will not just be of stunning landscapes but also of Bruce's largely futile attempts to give as good as he got.

The climb up the steep track behind Arthurs Pass township to the top of Avalanche Peak is highly recommended, although not on the first morning in deep fresh snow with 4-day packs including tents. Panoramic views continued all along the subsequent supposed "half-hour" ridge traverse, which turned into 1 1/2 hours of plugging and slogging. After slipping and stuttering down the long, steep and snow-covered scree slope short of the Crow face of Mt Rolleston, we made near-new and empty Crow Hut just before dark.

The next day, in deteriorating crud, we arrived by early afternoon at commodious Carrington Hut in the Waimakariri Valley and decided chilly weather was not for camping. Carrying day gear only allowed for a relatively quick trip, with plenty of boulder hopping, the next day to Barker Hut at the head of the White Valley and

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back in reasonable conditions. This 6-bunk shelter (owned by the Canterbury Mountaineering Club) sits atop a bluff in an amphitheatre of peaks, glaciers and snowfields. Little wonder it is up there among the most spectacular hut settings anywhere. A night with the wire guy ropes howling and the hut shuddering in high winds must be thrilling. The couple who stayed the previous night said they had seriously thought of belaying each other across the 15m from hut door to toilet. Our visit was much calmer, although breezy and cold.

The final four-hour walk out from Carrington was most pleasant, despite several chilly river crossings. Rugged Arthurs Pass National Park successfully worked its charms on all five of us - the young and the old. And despite what Andrew says, there's still hope for us more mature trampers.

When we finally made it to the top of Avalanche Peak, already there from one of the other groups was grey-bearded, 60-something Bill. He had obviously been waiting some time.

Philip Somerville for Joseph and Andrew Donnelly, Bruce Bernasconi and James Somerville.

Rees Valley 24 - 25 April

Most had not set foot, boot, or seat in the Rees Valley, therefore it was with great enthusiasm we set forth in our two 12-seater rentals from our mildly frosty Friday night camp at Lake Sylvan. Under a cloudless blue sky we loaded ourselves camel style and darted up the Rees, enduring bemused stares from river grazing Hereford cattle. While some headed to seek 25 Mile Hut, others carried on to Kea Basin.

Spongy uneven underfoot terrain slowed things at times, with a number of "wet" watery crossings to negotiate, along with a couple of pulsing, wide-wired, electric fences to get through. Being a standard stayer myself and not always up with the thoroughbreds, I missed some of the excitement, but telltale signs were there to be read on our catch ups - that of wet "bottoms" and damp "tops". We soon advised the removal of "warm" clothing to alleviate the tops, with light hearted bantering as to whom would lend a dry pair of shorts to the "bottom". This also interested the pursuing sandflies.

Now heading through bush following a reasonable track, we climbed for around a couple of hours, passing some cozy rock bivvys, one of which was grass/tussock based, to reach Kea Basin. With not a kea in sight we set up camp in the shadow of Mt Earnslaw, having heard three avalanches and seeing one on the way up. It was going to be a cold night.

Following an early tea most, along with their body-warming sustenance, gathered for a night of heady high spirits. We learnt that at age four, a male colleague used some pretty grownup terminology to refuse the ballet lessons on offer! Being so cold I had opted for the sleeping bag with my jaw clamped closed, not wishing to be accused of

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taking over the show by “chattering” all night.

Morning found us with frozen boots, and still in the shade of the mountain. Some were dunked in the creek to help thaw them. Leaving our camp in tact we set out on the, in places steep and difficult, climb towards the snowline. With breathtaking views right down the river valley behind us, we tried our hands as film stars, posing as part of the landscape for the camera. Back at base, now basking in sun, we enjoyed a lunch and packed up, returning via a slightly different route alongside the river to meet up at the vans for the return home.

You will have noticed throughout this article a lack of name dropping. To fix that, 1 from 21, thanks heaps to Dave our leader, our drivers, and all who took part.

P.S. We came close to fame, until we turned right from the Cromwell bridge.....Shrek lives to the left.

Liz Keast

Trip list

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

Weekend trips have been running very well lately, with a couple of trips with 2 vans each, (now regarded as a big trip for the club) and a successful Easter trip to Arthur’s Pass. It is good to see some of our Bushcraft 2004 participants coming along on our trips and seeing first hand what really does go on in our club.

The trip to Arthur’s Pass highlighted the immense scope of differing length trips able to be done in the area, from day trips to many multi-day trips. Although a large unseasonal dump of snow fell at Arthur’s Pass the day before Easter and changed a few plans, the weather was kind to us. With a good road available, this area should be used more by the club – look out for more trips on future trip cards.

Deb Carr and I were forced to make the tough decision of cancelling the Routeburn Crossover trip the night before departure. This was not an easy decision to come to, especially the night before, but we had to consider the safety of the entire group (29 trappers) . With snow levels reported of up to a metre on Harris Saddle we decided the risk was too great above Lake Harris and on the Hollyford face. As you will know, this was the second attempt to run this trip. We will try again later this year – third time lucky?.

I would also like to pass on the club’s appreciation to Sandra de Vries for offering to drive a van from Glenorchy to the Divide. This kind offer allowed another 9 people to join the trip (had it run). Thanks, Sandra.

*Waitutu / Port Craig (Queens' Birthday weekend)
Dansey's Pass & Mt Domet (19—20 June)
see last month's Bulletin for details on these trips*

Lake Monowai / Green Lake Area (M-FE)

July 24-25

Peter Stevenson 454 4148

Peter tried to get this trip of the ground in December, but it seems everyone was caught up in the pre-Christmas rush. Now he is going to run it (voluntarily, I might add) in winter. Due to the conditions likely to be encountered in June, I imagine that the main option on this trip will be to Green Lake from Monowai. There is a fairly good track, although the section from bushline, over the pass and back down to Green Lake will be snow-covered. The hut at Green Lake is small (officially 4 bunks, we have had 12 in it), so camping will be required (sites available behind hut). There should be time on Saturday afternoon to visit Island Lake, a bit further on from Green Lake. Depending on snow conditions, Mt Cuthbert may be accessible from the saddle. The Borland Rd is closed to vehicles at this time of year, and it is a long walk, but it can provide the option of a round trip. Trip list closes July 15.

Winter Routeburn (all)

July 3 & 4

Wolfgang Gerber 453 1155

We'll be walking to Howden Hut where we will be staying Friday night. On the way a trip up to Key Summit in the moonlight is always popular/romantic/sexy/nostalgic. On Saturday the walk to Lake MacKenzie Hut (50 bunks) will take 3-4 hours at the most. There are numerous options available from a walk around the Lake (which has a subteranian outlet) and visit split Rock, to exploring the basin and beyond, to walking up the Zig Zag for a wonderful view of the surrounding mountains and the upper and lower Hollyford Valley and on a clear day the Tasman Sea. Care must be taken as the track can be quite icy.

My usual Quiz night will happen after dinner and the theme this year is "Fancy Dress" (so raid your Granny's wardrobe or the wife's!) And there will once again be prizes for the best dressed.

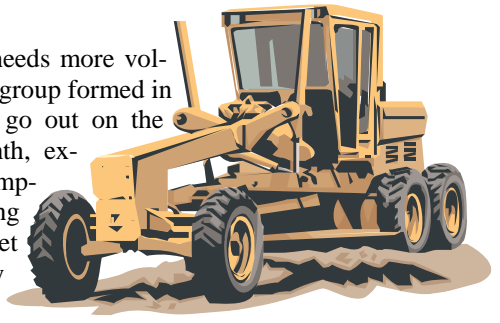
As these are winter conditions care must be taken on the track and specially around the Earland Falls which can be very slippery. Numbers will be limited in order to respect the hut and track.

Trip List will close on June 24. For more Information see me or Antony on any Club night.

PS. Warning to single people - two marriages have resulted after couples met on my trips!

TRACK CLEARING GROUP

The Track Clearing Group needs more volunteers. We are an informal group formed in 1987 by Steve Amies, and go out on the first Thursday of each month, except January. We are all trampers who wish to put something back for the pleasure we get from tramping the many tracks in the Dunedin area.



The present members are all getting on in years, and could use some assistance from younger folk - between 20 & 70 is fine. Men and women are both welcome.

It is our aim to clear each track to a standard which will not require attention for a further three years. The chief beneficiaries of our work are your clubs and similar groups who enjoy using these tracks. We mostly use loppers, hedge shears, saws and sometimes grubbers for flax. You will need work gloves, lunch, and some of the tools mentioned above.

Anyone interested should contact either Rex Malthus 473 7919, or Ivan Mclachlan 455 7975.

Hedgehog House Calendars

Hedgehog House has calendars for 2005 for sale at discounted prices to club members. Their brochures and order forms are on the clubroom wall

“.....Both the New Zealand Alpine and the Antarctic calendar feature 24 stunning new images including a full page centrespread. The focus in each is on wilderness landscapes, natural history and recreational activities such as tramping, climbing and skiing. The photographers represented in our calendars are among the best outdoor photographers in New Zealand and the printing quality is comparable to the best in the world.”

New Zealand Mountain Safety Council

There are also brochures on the clubroom wall from NZMSC listing their books, publicity material and teaching aids for sale, and videos for loan. These are all quality publications and invaluable information for those going into the hills.

DAYTRIPS

Mt Hyde via the Aquaduct 30 May

This trip will start from the Taioma road with a walk through the forest and then a wee drop down to the aquaduct to cross the Taieri river, a climb to Mt Hyde (443m), and then retrace our steps back to the vehicles. This is a trip that the club hasn't done in a while so it will be new territory to most.

Contact: Alan Thomson 455 7878

Rongomai - Honeycomb Loop (M) 13 June

A lovely walk along a stream and up through bush. We will park at Evansdale Glen, about 25 km north of Dunedin, and walk up beside Careys Creek. This provided the water supply for the former Seacliff Hospital, and you can still see weirs and pieces of the old pipeline. The Rongomai track climbs steeply up through native bush and past rock outcrops to the exotic Silverpeaks Forest, then comes out on Mountain Road where we should get great views of Blueskin Bay and of the Silverpeaks. The Honeycomb Track lets us take a different way down to the creek. There are several stream crossings, and the downhills can be slippery. The walk should take about 4 1/2 hours.

Jonette Service 454 2323

Search & Rescue 20 June

See Antony's article on page 2 (and be there!)

Catlins Waterfalls (Very E) 27 June

It's almost five years since we last did this trip, which will see us spend more time travelling backcountry roads than walking. In fact it's the sort of trip that you could invite your grandmother to come on. There might even be time to walk through an old railway tunnel, and visit Kaka Point for a paddle and an ice cream. Carpool \$10. Contact Ian Sime 453 6185

Social Programme

Coming Thursday Night Meetings

- 27 May** **Debbie Cleland** will talk about her experience on **Outward Bound**
- 3 June** **Queens Birthday** - no club night
- 10 June** **Rob Lawrence** will tell us of his adventures in **Africa**
- 17 June** **Alistair and Lindsay Morris** will talk on **Walking in England**. They are over from England where they both work for an organisation similar to DoC and are involved in maintaining walking tracks there.
- 24 June** OTMC committee has set this night aside for club members to say what they think should happen to club **huts and other assets** - please note this is not the AGM. See Alan's article on page 4 for more details.
- 1 July** **Betal Kut** - a recent recruit from Bushcraft 2004, will tell us about her homeland of **Turkey**
- 8 July** **BYO**

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convenor) if you can help - see the Committee member list.

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the July Bulletin, deadline is 17/06/04, publication 01/07/04. You can submit material on floppy disc (PC not Mac please), email 'rbell@pooka.otago.ac.nz' (without the quotes), or post to Robyn Bell, 8 Roy Crescent, Concord, Dunedin. Thanks.