

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 649, March 2005

**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.**

March 10

Under the Skirts of Erebus - Fieke Neuman recently went to Antarctica on an Arts Scholarship, where she met marine biologists and was inspired to design frocks

March 17

Rob Lawrence will talk about his recent adventures to the Olivines

March 24

Easter - no club night - enjoy your break

March 31

B.Y.O. - bring your own trip pictures and tell us what you got up to

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convenor) at "fionaw@tekotago.ac.nz", or 487 8176 if you can help.

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

PRESIDENT'S PIECE

There's heaps of activity within the OTMC at present which is great to see. As I write this piece we are expecting 25 or so people on our annual Bushcraft course, which is about the number I was planning for. My thanks go to everyone who has helped in some way thus far. Publicity has gone very well this year, with the display in the library particularly causing many positive comments.

I mentioned the issue of club property in last month's 'President's Piece', and can now add some further information regarding Leaning Lodge. DoC have now agreed that the hut can stay (on its present site) with some remedial work required to upgrade the foundations. Since the AGM last June the Committee has been compiling a list of people interested in the future of Leaning Lodge. Now that we have the okay from DoC, the Committee will be making some recommendations to bring to the full club for discussion and a final decision. One idea that has been discussed around the committee (and wider OTMC) is the formation of a trust to look after the hut and its interests, similar to what we have done with the OTMC's Ben Rudd Property and Big Hut. The club, as a whole, will be making a final decision on this hut as soon as possible – if you have an opinion then please discuss it with a committee member.

The issue of Jubilee Hut has arisen again, with DoC now planning a replacement in their 2006/7 year. The new six bunk hut will be resited to a more favourable location near the foot of the Devils Staircase. The Committee supported this move at the February committee meeting, but no decision on ongoing OTMC involvement has been made.

'Til next month,

Antony Pettinger
President



Daytrip Leaders Needed

Are you willing to lead a day trip? Leaders are now required for the Winter trip card. Leading a trip is easy, and there is also a set of guidelines to assist you on the day. Call me to discuss options of dates/walks.

Cathy McKersey ph 455 0994

LEANING LODGE JUBILEE HUT

Thursday 17 Feb 2005

started just like any other day, but ended as one which should be noted indelibly in OTMC history. That morning, Peter Mason talked by phone with Tim Cross, DoC engineer for Otago/Southland, and got the OK to go ahead with retaining Leaning Lodge, strengthening its foundations. Until that time, the threat of demolition had been real. We can now go ahead with drawing up plans, getting the necessary permits, raising the needed funds, and doing the building.

That afternoon, at a meeting of DCC people with Bill Wheeler of DoC and our Peter and Ian, it was agreed that a replacement for Jubilee Hut would be built. A standard DoC 6-bunk hut, but without a stove, is proposed for a site near the foot of the Staircase. DoC will provide the bulk of the funding, and the project management. Trusts and other organisations are to be approached for other funds.

So the day which started out just like any other day, ended with our two main huts, whose future had previously looked very precarious, secure for the foreseeable future.

Ian Sime

BOOK AMNESTY BOOK AMNESTY BOOK AMNESTY BOOK AMNESTY

I am cataloguing our wonderful Book Library at the moment and I notice there are quite a number of books outstanding or missing. So can people check at home, work, the in-laws, the girlfriend's/boyfriend's flat (or both!), the Ex's, in the loo, or maybe at the crib, for any of these and please return them to me, no questions asked. If anybody would like to donate a book they are very welcome.
Wolfgang

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Trip Reports

MACETOWN

LABOUR WEEKEND 2004

It's always good to leave early and as we drove away from home, in Alan's car, I was contemplating the long weekend trip and what side trips to do. Then for some reason I went over my gear in my head (*must be lots of space in there! Ed*) as you do sometimes. Boots, billies, stove, food, boots, tent, jacket, clothes. Boots? Boots?!! What!!! Did I pack my boots and tramping gear?? It's OK, they're in my bag. Did I pack my bag?? STOP AND TURN AROUND PLEASE ALAN - I'VE FORGOTTEN MY BI##*Y GEAR. The sweat poured off me like the Sutherland Falls. I could just read the trip report - "Trip Leader Forgets Tramping Gear". We arrived back at my place to find my smiling wife Fiona asking me, "Did you forget something?" I nodded as she gave me my gear and I asked her, "You haven't seen my head anywhere have you?" As I left I heard laughter. Thank Doug* we were only two minutes into our trip. As you can imagine, the conversation was based around my incident for sometime, but at least only Alan S, Fiona W, Hikaru (Peep) and I



know about it.

We arrived in Arrowtown to find that the backpackers had gone upmarket and my favourite "Establishment" had been pulled down to eventually be replaced with a shopping complex. Lucky tourists. We set up our tents beside the No Camping sign and proceeded to talk over our options for the following days at the "New" New Orleans "Establishment" while sampling some of their product.

The trip in next morning was along the river passing: New Chum Gully, Scoles Tunnel, view of the Big Hill track, Opium Bobs Hut, Arrow Falls, the intake weir for the irrigation scheme, and the Three Sisters Rocks. It was "dry boot" until we reached the junction of Soho Creek (Roaring Billy

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Creek) when I had to honour my pledge to carry Peep across one river crossing. Which I did. But only once. A lot was done for Japanese and New Zealand relations by my gesture.

We walked past Soho Station, Coronet Creek (Eight Mile Creek) and after a few more river crossings finally hit the outskirts of Macetown, where on our left we noticed the burned remains of a hut. It had survived over a hundred winters only to be burned down by a careless English day-tripper who expected to find a flourishing town at Macetown. Obviously he did not study the area before setting out. I hope he got a good spanking!! No, he might have enjoyed that too much. Perhaps a good telling off might have done the trick. We made camp across the river close to the Anderson Battery and soon “Tent City” was born once the other OTMC’ers arrived. We then explored Scanlan Gully.

Next day was the biggie for us as we walked beside the Richburn past Hanging Valley, Sylvia Creek, the Homeward Bound Battery, and into Sawyers Gully where we found the Maryborough Battery. It used to have five stampers, a ten metre water-wheel, and its mine was situated at an altitude of “1300 metres”. The Premier Co. bought the battery, five more stampers were added and it became the most successful mine in the Macetown area. The gold seekers used cyanide to extract the gold from the ore in big vats. My party then climbed a steep ridge out of Sawyers Gully which would take us down to Sylvia Creek.

The expected weather change soon happened with the clouds moving in, but no rain as yet. Up and over we went and noticed the party climbing the big ridge to Advance Peak. I hope someone took a photo of them in the distance, as it was a cracker of a view. Then we came down the upper Sylvia Creek past the remains of a plane crash site, Smithies, the disintegrating All Nations and United Battery sites, and eventually back to the junction with the Richburn. When we got back to base we were greeted by the expected rain, which only lasted about 20 minutes. Then a yummy tea was consumed and we all socialised ‘til it was time to hit the hay. (Would you believe it, we even saw a street lamp outside a certain European’s tent?)

The following day some people walked back along the river track, and some chose the grunt up the Big Hill track via Coronet Creek. The ones choosing the latter were rewarded with wonderful views of Vanguard and Advance Peaks including the surrounding hills, and as we hit the saddle the Arrowtown Basin made a pretty picture with the blue sky. A debrief in the car park, an ale in the beer garden, a snack, and finally home in good time.

Thanks to all for coming along for a great long weekend trip, and it’s heartwarming to see numbers on trips increasing.

Wolfgang for all 23 of us.

PS:- I used the word “Doug” instead of “God” to avoid upsetting any religious people that are reading this. I would like to say that “Doug” is purely a fictitious name, which I pulled out of a hat. (OK, Doug?)

PSS:- No vermin, pests, stoats, wasps or sandflies were harmed in anyway while writing this report. Pity eh?!!



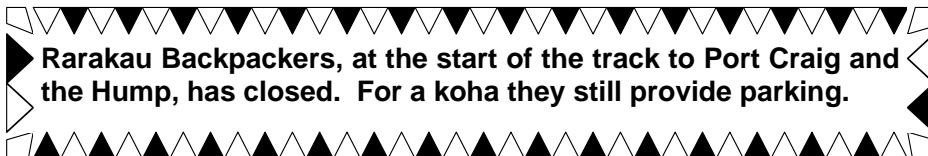
MURKY MEMORIES

Thick fog covers Leith Saddle as we prepare to leave the car. That's not uncommon there, but it's usually cold or damp or both. Not today. We hope to climb out of the murk – time will tell. A few minutes road bashing brings us to the familiar climb up to the pipeline. Six years since I was last here but it's very familiar. This was the main entrance to my teenage Silver Peaks. Around the pipeline, to the gap in the trees that marked the start of the Burns Saddle track proper when the track was less distinct. A sign does that job now. Up through the fuchsias – remarkably dry under foot. Out into the open – still in the murk. Chest-high long grass soaks us to the skin, but it is warm enough not to be unpleasant. Beyond the saddle the track has been cleared of gorse and the mud seems to have disappeared too. Onto the Swampy Ridge track. Only a year since I was on this bit. Through Sleepy Hollow and on to Green Ridge before Eucalyptus Spur looms up and we hang a right. Thirteen years since I was last here – thirteen!! No longer in the murk – now we're below it. The spur bottoms out and we head upstream, bound for Possum Hut and lunch. Where have the bunks gone – and the doors, and windows? Two young hunters go past. I think hunting in the Silver Peaks is basically tramping while carrying but not using a gun – they never seem to have got anything, or even seen anything. The stream's taken a hammering in the recent heat wave, so some engineering is needed to obtain a much-needed water refill. We tackle the grunt behind the hut. Again, the traditional mud is dry. The grunt doesn't last long, and the meandering track along the

(Continued from page 7)

ridge crest is very pleasant. The murk has lifted a bit and we can see Green Hill, but any higher than that we'd be back in it. We stop for a long break at Green Hut. The hut's been gone for nigh on 17 years, so for most people they've been going to a non-hut for longer than they were going to the hut – if in fact they've even seen it. But most people persist in calling it "Green Hut". Ostensibly we're waiting to see if any of the marathon crew are around. The reality is if they're here at 2pm they're doing a Metherell-esque time, so the truth is we're having a nice long spell in a nice spot on a nice day – not that you need to make excuses for that sort of behaviour. Only eight weeks since I was last here but that wasn't a day to linger, with horizontal hail. Ten minutes down the track, we meet some Scouts, who are delighted to hear that they don't have far to go. But we're back in the murk. At the end of Green Ridge we encounter the marathon support crew and learn that they're looking at more than another hour's wait. Leaving them to their vigil, we retrace our steps toward Swampy. At the Burns track turnoff, we can the proposal to head up over Swampy. It's late-ish in the day (we didn't start very early) and we rationalise (wrongly, it transpires) that we'll still be in the murk up there, so more pain for no gain. Through to the saddle, a short break, and then we opt for the Rustlers' Ridge option. "Only an extra five or ten minutes," I say to Eric, who hasn't been that way before. Another thirteen-year memory, and this one contains corrupt data – it's more like an extra twenty. As we descend into the cloud forest, we're back into sodden vegetation, and the previous five hours drying out is reversed. Soon we pick up the old pipeline track, which metamorphosises into the vehicle track we started on. Five minutes on the road brings us back to a fog-enshrouded car. Down the motorway, we see a murk-free city with Flagstaff and Swampy standing guard behind.

David Barnes for Eric Lord.



(Continued from page 11)

ADVANCE NOTICE:

**Eyre Mountains (Jane Peak Side) (M-C)
23-25 April (ANZAC Weekend)
Antony Pettinger 473 7924**

This trip is destined for the Mavora side of the Eyre Mountains and is relatively bush-free, meaning good travel along the tops. Jane Peak is the highest peak in the area at 2022m, and should be a good prospect for this trip. There are options to complete round trips as well as through trips. At this time of year expect cold nights and hopefully fine weather. Camping out will be required.

TripList

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

The first two weekend trips have started well for the OTMC, with 24 people on Alan Thomson's trip to the Homer area in late January. Brilliant weather, but it sounds like it may have been too hot for tramping!. On the other hand, Phil Somerville's trip to the Takitimu Mountains had a wetter experience, but in true OTMC tradition the participants made the most of the trip and had an enjoyable time.

It's that time again – all going well, the next trip card (May-October 2005) will be included with the next Bulletin. I have a rough draft of the weekend trips, these will include a Wolfgang Routeburn in July, the Rail Trail at Labour Weekend, a basic Snowcraft Course, and a return of the Mt. Cook Daywalks trip we ran in 2003. We also need to compile a full list of day trips – Cathy McKersey, ph 455 0994, would love to hear from any volunteers (it will save her ringing you). We can also help out with suggesting destinations.

One point that has been raised (again) is the importance of leaving on time and having a short, sharp stop for tea (thanks to Doug for mentioning this). Many of our weekend trips have over 4 hours travelling time just to get to the roadend. Then there's the poor driver who has to drop parties off all over the place after that. Weekend trips leave at 6pm, meaning you need to plan to be at the clubrooms at 5.45pm so that the trailer can be loaded, heads counted and away at 6pm sharp. Equally, it is in everyone's interest to have as short a meal break as possible (with, as Doug suggests, the ongoing driver getting his tea first). Something to think about.

Finally, please remember to pay for your weekend trip before you go – and stick together out there.

Head of Lake Wakatipu (M-C)

25/28 or 29 March (Easter)

Deb Carr 4780393

To say that the options are endless for 4 or 5 day trips at the head of Lake Wakatipu is an understatement. There are many round trips, as well as a classic 5 day trip, and many options to get off-track.

The normal confusion with Otago Anniversary day continues, meaning that some people will celebrate the holiday on March 29, the day after Easter Monday. To this end, we are promoting 2 options for this trip – a four day or a five day option.

Here are some options to think about:

- Greenstone River / Steele Creek / Caples / Kay Creek / Scott Creek. This would make a great 4 or 5 day trip. If the weather is fine it would be a great chance to explore Death Valley from Kay Creek.
- The Five Pass trip. This is the classic trip mentioned above. Cruise up the Beansburn to Fohn Saddle (beautiful), and then make your way back to the Routeburn via Fiery Col, Cow Saddle, Park Pass and either North Col or Sugarloaf Pass
- The Rees / Dart circuit – a good trip but expect it to be busy at this time of year.
- Routeburn / North Routeburn / North Col / Lake Nerine / Park Pass / Rockburn / Sugarloaf. This is another must-do trip in the area. If the weather is fine there is no better place to camp than Lake Nerine.
- Greenstone / Caples circuit. Again, this will be busy. There should be time for a day trip along the way, either Steele Creek, up on to the Livingstone Range and back via Key Summit/Howden, Fraser Creek or Kay Creek.
- Caples River / Fraser Creek / Emily Pass / Routeburn. This would be a good time of year for the crossover.
- Rockburn / Park Pass / Lake Unknown. This was attempted in 2004 but the weather was too much.

These are only a few options I came up with, there are many more. Note that the Routeburn track itself is still in open season (meaning you need to book to use the huts/campsites).

Headwaters of Lake Ohau
(Bushcraft 2005/OTMC Combined Trip) (All)
9-10 April
Greg Powell 454 4828

The combined Bushcraft/OTMC trip for 2005 is headed for the Ohau area which has been a traditional destination for the optional weekend for many years. There are 4 main valleys flowing into the Hopkins that can be visited:

Maitland. Not visited too often. Good for return trips or through trips. A cross-over to Freehold Creek is becoming quite popular, as well as crossovers to the South Temple.

Temple. Popular for the round trip of the North and South Branches. The gut leading from the North Branch is steep and needs experience. The South Branch, being the longer valley, can be visited on its own right for a weekend. A fit party

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

can (conditions allowing) cross from the South Temple to the South Huxley via Gunsight Pass. (The bridge at the north/south forks and by the South Temple Hut no longer exist.

Huxley. The most popular of all the Ohau valleys. It is an easy stroll to Huxley Forks, where there is a hut and good camping. From here, a trip to Broderick Hut and Broderick Pass (North branch) offer good scenery. The South Branch isn't visited so often, but is spectacular, situated under Mt. Huxley. There is a bivvy style hut here, known as the dog kennel (sleeps 2).

Elcho. The least inaccessible of the four for a weekend. You need to make good time to Elcho Hut so that you have a good chance to explore the valleys.

For the climbers, there is a trip up the Neumann Range and onto the Dasler Pinnacles, at 7550 ft.

The trip list will close on March 31.

(Continued on page 8)

Committee Members 2004-2005

President	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Vice President	Greg Powell	454 4828
Secretary	Jenni Wright	454 5061
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Imm. Past Pres	Terry Casey	454 4592
Chief Guide/Transport	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Ian Sime	453 6185
Gear Hire	Greg Powell	454 4828
Daytrip Convenor	Cathy McKersey	455 0994
Funding	Greg Powell	454 4828
Publicity/Library	Wolfgang Gerber	453 1155
Social Convenor	Fiona Webster	487 8176
Clubrooms Officer	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Bushcraft	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Committee	Sandra de Vries	473 7224
Committee	Peter Mason	455 7074
(outside committee)		
Bulletin Editor	Robyn Bell	488 2420
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the April Bulletin, deadline is 17/03/05, publication 31/03/05. 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.

DAYTRIPS

River Safety Day 6 March

Part of the OTMC's Bushcraft course, River Safety Day covers essential skills for tramping, and is held on (and in!) the Taieri River.

Lawrence Round Trip 13 March

This walk begins and ends at the Gabriel's Gully Historic Reserve and should take about 3 hours. It climbs up on good track through beech forest, often using old raceways, to the Otago Dam. There is a middle section through pine forest then the track returns via the Cornishmens Dam and more beech forest to the historic reserve. Meet at the club-rooms at 9 am. Transport charge \$10.00
Contact Bill Wilson 477 2282

20 March & 27 March

These 2 weekends are observances of Otago Anniversary Day (for some) and Easter respectively, so there will be no Sunday daytrip on either date.

Mt Allen / Mt John / Mt John Hut (M) 3 April

A circular trip with some walking through forestry tracked roads, ending back at the vehicles. Bring lunch, wet weather gear, hat/gloves (gaiters optional). Car pool cost \$8. This walk is being included in the Mayoral Track week calendar of events.
Leader is Doug Forrester ph 487 6416