

**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.**

1 Sept

B.Y.O. - Snowcraft, Mt Cook, Tomahawk and Boulder Beach - bring your photos along to show at club

8 Sept

Peter and Maureen Cumming pedalled their way across China, and will tell us about their adventures

15 Sept

James Reardon of the Skink Recovery Programme will talk about his work on Macraes Reserve

22 Sept

Hans van Deitmasch talks about and shows us his photos of tramping in the Australian Alps

29 Sept

B.Y.O. - Ahuriri, Sutton Salt Lake, Mavora Lakes - tell us about it

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.

PRESIDENT'S PIECE

August 2005 marks the end of the OTMC Committee year and is the time we hold our annual meeting. As you will see in the Annual Report accompanying this Bulletin, the club is in good heart. We have had a rise in membership, and trips and meetings have been well supported. This all bodes well for the upcoming year for the OTMC.

Now is also a good time to reflect on what makes the OTMC what it is. The bottom line is the contribution many varied people give to the OTMC cause. Whilst the work of the Committee appears obvious there are many other people involved with the club, without whose contribution the club would founder. I'm talking about the people who look after our clubrooms, lead day trips, and our party and weekend trip leaders. The list becomes endless when you consider those who join us on our trips, help with Bushcraft, contribute to the monthly Bulletin, advocate for environmental matters on the club's behalf and generally promote the good name of OTMC. I read somewhere the other day of the struggle some other clubs are having in finding and maintaining people to run their clubs. I'm happy to say this is not a problem the OTMC has. While the outgoing Committee deserve the club's appreciation, I would also like to extend a big thank you to all who have assisted the club in some way over the past year – your efforts have not gone unnoticed.

It was with great sadness we have learned of Doug Forrester's recent illness. Speaking personally, Doug has been for me an integral part of the club, as he joined the club a couple of years before me. I remember in the early 80's going on plenty of day trips with Doug and it was always a pleasure to tramp with and learn from Doug. For those of us on the recent 10 day trip the news comes as shock. With the benefit of hindsight, the achievement Doug made on our trek over some challenging terrain is simply incredible. The particular trip we undertook had a special significance for Doug and we are all proud to have shared the journey with him.

Doug, I know you have a significant battle in front of you, but I'm sure the whole OTMC family joins Debbie and I in wishing you and Marie the best of luck over the next few months – don't hang up those boots yet – I'm sure we will see 'The Phantom' back in the hills.

Antony Pettinger
President

FOR SALE: Backpack for carrying child. Macpac va-
moose - top of the line, including proper full tramping
harness, 25 litre base pocket and removable 15 litre day-
pack. Designed for child up to 5 years old, and for over-
night tramps. Little used, very good condition. Retail
\$499, our price \$250. Phone Piotr at 453 6627 evenings

Federated Mountain Clubs are holding two training courses in the South Island as follows:

ABOVE BUSHLINE WORKSHOP
(Craigieburn): Friday evening 23rd – Sunday 25th September

Most clubs enjoy tramping the tops of the main ranges, crossing alpine passes and moving through non-technical mountain terrain and this workshop covers the necessary skills and knowledge for club instructors or experienced members who might lead such trips. It does not cover the more technical aspects of an alpine course and is aimed at tramping above the bushline rather than climbing mountains. The workshop is very practical and shows by example, sharing and doing how to teach these skills. It will be held in the Craigieburn area and will involve camping on snow on Saturday night.

Aspects of the workshop

- Micro-navigation and location awareness techniques.
- Risk management
- Environmental awareness
- Leadership
- Travel on a variety of alpine terrain types – scree, rock, tussock and snow.
- Alpine hazard identification.
- Emergency alpine shelters – snowcaves / slots / mounds / flies.
- Route finding - consider avalanches, bluffs, other terrain traps.
- Securing a party across hazardous terrain - handline, belaying.
- Basic snow travel and safety skills - step cutting, self arrest, crampons, basic belays.
- Camprcraft in alpine terrain and conditions.
- Weather interpretation.
- Emergency procedures - escape routes, injury, lost person.

NAVIGATION / RIVER SAFETY WORKSHOPS
(Waimakariri area): Friday evening 4th – Sunday 6th November

These workshops are designed for senior club leaders and instructors to help them refresh skills and learn how to pass on their knowledge to others. Topics covered will include:

- Map and compass
- Micro-navigation
- Direction from the sun, stars
- Location awareness
- GPS
- Assessing rivers
- Gear and clothing
- Moving through water

- Mutual support method
- Recovery techniques
- Risk management

A wet suit will be necessary to allow time to be spent in the water.

The OTMC Committee invite members to consider attending these courses. The club will make a contribution to the course fees, whilst you need to arrange your own transport. In doing this the club would expect you to share your new-found skills with other club members, either via Bushcraft or on club trip.

Nominations for the “Above Bushline” course close on August 26, so we (the OTMC) would need to know a.s.a.p., and no later than August 18. Nominations for the “Navigation / River Safety” course close on September 30, so there is not so much rush. In both cases, if you wish to be considered for nomination by the OTMC, please contact Antony, who has the forms.

Trip Reports

MT COOK

5-7 AUGUST

Dave Chambers led another of his fine-weather tours into the mountains returning to Thar Lodge deerstalkers hut just up the road from The Hermitage. It was impeccably organised with a 6pm departure, Alan Thomson phoning the café in Kurow to ask them to stay open until we got there for takeaways and a smooth, if a bit foggy, trip into the high country. Thar Lodge has the luxury of a generator, gas lights and heating so you can picture fourteen weary workers luxuriating in style while bunks were sorted and plans were made for Saturday.

The intrepid six; Dave, Fieke, Jonette, Ralph, Luke and Gary made it to Mueller Hut for lunch and then a short hop up for more magnificent views from the top of Mt Olivia. The snowline didn't start until above the Sealy Tarns and they made good time both ways in windless, sunny conditions. The occasional roar of an avalanche made it all very adventurous and we were privileged to see a falcon and half a dozen keas in the cloudless skies. Christine, Alan, Carmel Terry, Sue, Peter, Kerryn and Nicola all went to Sealy Tarns. Some made a day of it by going on up the Hooker Valley afterwards, others moseyed around the smaller walks and sights near the camp.

Wolfgang would have approved the pre-dinner drinks in the plush surroundings of The Hermitage bar (ancient establishment that it is) but of course we were there solely for research purposes. With Thar Lodge having a BBQ and stove, the standard of cuisine was well above the norm that night.

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On Sunday a consensus sent us behind The Hermitage in the direction of Red Tarns. These were lovely, but about two hundred (vertical) metres above them is a fantastic lookout rock, so let no-one say we were derelict in our OTMC duty. We climbed the damn hill! It was worth every step as there was a cloud bank drifting below us and a sense of atmosphere developing – very “Wuthering Heights”.

We confirmed the usefulness of new technologies on the Sunday morning. We had just left the hut but had little view of the Cook area when an avalanche rumbled and crashed way behind us for about three minutes. “That was a big one” was the general consensus and Dave could show us which was the newly-bald rock area because he had a ‘before’ picture from the previous day on his camera which could be instantly dialled up. Don’t you love the gadgets!

We discovered a new watering hole on the return journey at Waitaki Village. The café and bar has excellent coffee and Luke make short work of his quiche.

It was an altogether brilliant weekend with congenial company and a really decent van from Rhodes making the trip that much more comfortable. Thanks Dave!

(Unfortunately I’ve lost the name of the author of this article, but thanks for it. Ed)

Okay, let’s set the scene. You’re energised after a day tramping in the fresh air, you have just eaten a carbohydrate rich green curry, some rhythmic tunes are playing in the background (yes, some may call it snoring) and you are being offered the chance to play a mind-bending game with your community of fellow trampers. I’d have jumped at the chance, wouldn’t you...?

Routeburn Trip Report. June 2004. “Ten Things” version. (Note: incorrect postage applied, resulting in very slow transit)

.....well, to those of you who would’t – I arrived in NZ in May 2004 after a six month stint in Perth, Australia. That was a mistake, too hot on land and sharks in the water. What I needed was a nice cold, ice cold winter. Dunedin (minus central heating) certainly provided it. My first weekend trip away, after learning how to cross rivers repeatedly in search of lost walking poles on the day trips (walking pole still missing in action, I believe) was to be Wolfgang’s Winter Wonderland Routeburn trip. A well-executed drive up to the start of the track on Friday night, which disproved the saying “More haste, less speed” (Terry), marked the beginning. Although, strictly speaking, the planning was the start of the trip, which included advice from Philip to bring a “hunk” of wood. Sorry, where was I? Yes, we had arrived. In the darkness I first heard Bruce, as he was unloading the bags, complaining about the weight of one of them, my bag. Funny, I thought I had followed the kit list, and off we went...

Introductions to the trip group made , not sure if we had an official group name, but I will remember them as the “Tops is best” group. This group were unlikely to be taking it easy, I thought. They weren’t keen on bush, especially Ralph, “It all looks the same”, and thought head lamps were the greatest thing since sliced bread. And they were keen, if possible, to summit Mt Cook this weekend. We had a few hours’ walk to the first hut via Key Summit, which provided a less-than-unlocking view due

to clouds. And so to bed.

Inspired by Dave I chose to sleep outside in the FRESH air (cold vs snoring). And so to the morning. From my experience on the Matukituki trip, if sleeping outside make sue you retreat inside before the kea wakes up, or they will taste your sleeping bag! Morning, and Wolfgang could now turn on his smug mode, for it snowed overnight and everywhere was now covered in a fresh thick blanket of the white stuff, a true winter wonderland. And in the morning light it became clear why my bag was a little heavy. My generous housemate, who I had asked for hunk of wood, had duly provided a small tree for me to bring along. Now I know how big a hunk of wood should be.

And so to the days walking - along, up, around , down, up, waterfall. and along to the next night's hut. The groups then spilt, being with the "Tops is Best" group I was heading up Ocean Peak - excellent! This was a highlight, which says something as the day had been far from mediocre already. And it was time to admit that Bruce wasn't the only one who missed the avalanche debris that we walked through. I mean the snowballs were only the size of a small car, easily missed, eh? (Notice the bit of NZ lingo at the end of the sentence there?) The group slowly reduced in size as we went up, but "Tops is Best" so I kept on. Unfortunately the weather closed in and there was too much snow around for an assault on the top of the mountain so after a discussion of all the factors, to which my contribution was, um, a bit tired, we decided to head back down. I'm still amazed how quickly you can get down compared to going up, but we were helped by a few snowball fights and snowslides down.

In no time we were back in the hut, but had to cut the wood before the fire could be started. Then food/wine/banter → quiz. I seem to remember a slight bias to the questions. Bias away from what our group knew, but I think some people must have been studying. And there were some super costumes, some of which took some emergency care, courtesy of Dunedin hospital, to be fully appreciated. →More banter, booze, and warming by the fire. And then to bed. Some people having more mountains to climb the next day than others now.

And when in bed, well on the floor for me anyway, it was time for a game I thought. The mind bending one I mentioned earlier. The game was simple enough, name 10 things you can do with your left boot. Those who were there will remember a slight reluctance to play this game. Was it the late hour, the fact you may have been asleep beforehand, or just that you were worried you wouldn't get to ten? As I remember, I think you only made it to nine before the game was banned by popular approval. Oh well, next time. And no, I still don't accept walking in it or peeing in it. My favourite answer was to use it as a flower pot.

The next day, avoiding the yellow snow for starters was the trip back to the vans. People chose a number of routes back to the bus, some off to see some rocks, I think. This time Key Summit provided a snow filled, 360 degree view. Mentally the brain was working overtime looking at all the possible routes we could take in the future. And I hope you have kept that cable car scheme at bay. And so back to Dunedin.

Great trip OTMC, Still missing you
Andrew Kirby, Nottingham, England.

Triplist

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

The recent spring-like weather we have been having has inspired me to get my act together and compile the next weekend trip programme, covering the period from November to May 2006. There is definitely a trip here for everyone, with a lot of favourite areas being covered. Most of the areas chosen offer many and varied trips in order to develop the idea of the 'All' grade. Trips graded 'all' literally mean that these are areas where there are trips suitable for all grades, from a quiet valley wander to a pass hopping/peak bagging circumnavigation of an entire area. Here's what is planned so far:

Nov 5-6	Jackson Bay / Stafford Range (All)
Nov 19-20	Timaru River (All)
Dec 3-4	Maitland / Freehold Creek (All)
Dec 10-11	Silver Peak Tramp and Train III (All)
Jan 21-22	Mt. Domet (Dansey's Pass) (All)
Feb 4-6	Waitangi w/e (Routeburn / Rockburn (MF) or Greenstone / Caples (All))
Feb 18-19	East Matukituki (All)
Feb 25-26	Bushcraft 2006 (Tirohanga WE)
Mar 4-5	Green Lake / Borland (All)
Mar 11-12	Bushcraft 2006 (Silver Peaks WE)
Mar 25-26	OTMC / BC Combined Trip (Eglinton Valley) (All)
Apr 1-2	Garvie Mountains (All)
Apr 14-17	Easter 2006 (Arthur's Pass) (M-C)
Apr 29-30	Yet to be allocated

Makarora Region (M/C)

October 1-2

Gary Dawe 467-2252

Makarora, being a premier tramping area, is always a popular trip with many options available. A definite starting destination for this weekend is the rarely visited Wills Valley, from the Gates of Haast Bridge. The lower gorge section of the Wills is quite interesting, and will challenge some trampers,

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but the effort is worth it. The Wills opens up into large flats (though there are not many flat spots) in the vicinity of Wills Hut. Other options are an overnight trip to Brewster Biv (Mt. Armstrong may be an option), a trip up Cameron Creek to the hut, or exploring in the area of the Blues or Fish Valleys. The trip card lists climbing options available – as this year’s snowcraft course looks quite promising an attempt on Brewster may be considered.

The Wilkin and Young Valleys don’t offer a lot for a 2 day trip, but there are firm plans for a group to leave a day earlier and boat up to Kerin Forks, then spend two nights in the Siberia Valley. A trip to The Crucible is a must, and there is an option to explore further up the Siberia Valley. The trip list will close on September 22.

The Complete Central Otago Rail Trail (Cycle)
October 22-24 (Labour Weekend)
Antony Pettinger

This weekend will see us traversing by cycle (with support vehicle) the length of the historic rail line from Clyde through to Middlemarch, a total of 151km of mainly easy riding. This section of the line was constructed between 1891 and 1907 and closed to traffic on the 30th of April, 1990. After this the land the trackbed was built on was vested in the Crown and now the Department of Conservation manage the trail for us.

The idea of converting the line to a ‘rail trail’ was first mooted in the early 90’s, and the OTMC was a supporter from the start. The club saw this as an excellent way to increase recreation in our area. It is unfortunate that other line closures such as the Catlins River Branch and the Roxburgh Branch didn’t result in such an outcome.

Day one of our trip will see us riding from Clyde, through the outskirts of Alexandra and onto Chatto Creek via Galloway. The route out of Alexandra via the rail trail is really neat – quite different from the State Highway. After refreshments at Chatto Creek it is up and over the first climb of the line for us – Tiger Hill. The steepest gradients on the whole line are 1 in 50, so it won’t be too difficult. Then down the hill to Omakau, where we are spending the night at the Omakau camping ground. We have two cabins booked which sleep six, first in first served. The rest will need to tent.

Sunday will see us travelling the most spectacular section of line through the Poolburn Gorge. This includes some impressive bridging, as well as two tunnels over 200m in length. Onwards to Oturehua and over the highest point of the line to Wedderburn. The ‘ruling gradient’ for us is at most 1 in 52. From Wedderburn it is more or less downhill to Ranfurly, where we are

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staying at the camping ground in tents.

Monday is the ride through to Middlemarch via the old stations of Waipiata, Kokonga, Tiroiti, Hyde, Rock and Pillar, Ngapuna and finally to Middlemarch. We travel 38km on the first day, 55km on the second, and 58km on the third day.

Not many of our trips have an exclusive website devoted to them, but this one does: <http://www.otagoctrailrail.co.nz/>

This site includes a lot of useful information, as well as some pictures and some history. A search on Google gives a lot more sites to visit. If you want to read more about the actual history of the line in the New Zealand Railways day I'd recommend a book titled 'Over the Garden Wall – story of the Otago Central Railway'. You should be able to find this in the public library. There is a display in the clubrooms, as well as the trip list, which closes on the 13th of October.

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 October Bulletin, deadline is 12/09/05, publication 29/09/05. You can submit material on floppy disc (PC not Mac please); email 'rbell@pooka.otago.ac.nz' or 'rebell@paradise.net.nz'; or post to Robyn Bell, 8 Roy Crescent, Concord, Dunedin. Thanks.

DAYTRIPS

Yellow Hut/The Gap (M) 28 August

We start at the tunnels track, descend to the Waikouaiti River, then up through the bush to Yellow Hut, which is on the bush line. We should get great views over Blueskin Bay from the hut. We continue along the ridgeline until we reach The Gap, at a height of 870 metres. The ridge is above the bush line so we should get good views of the Silver Peaks and out to sea. We return by the same route and should be back at the club rooms by 4 pm. Boots and gaiters are recommended. Carpool cost \$7
Contact: Ralph Harvey 453 4330

Peninsula Treasures (E) 4 September

Judy Wilson is scheming up a mystery tramp somewhere on the Otago Peninsula. Phone her closer to the time for more details on where she plans to go, how long it will take, etc. Or just turn up on the day for a surprise, satisfaction guaranteed!

Leader: Judy Wilson 455 3924

Sutton Salt Lake (or another destination to be advised) 11 September

Unfortunately, Sandra is now unable to lead this daytramp. Please contact Antony Pettinger on 473 7924 if you would like to lead the trip, or to find out details of it's destination.

Possum Busters 18 September (EM)

This daytrip is a change of plan from the one advertised. We'll start at the Bullring and make our way over Flagstaff across to Swampy Summit. From

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there we will descend onto Possum Busters Track and return to Flagstaff via the Rhododendron Dell to the Bullring. The trip should take 4 to 5 hours.
Contact Gavin MacArthur 455 0027

Pulpit Rock (M) **25 September**

Join me on a trip to the fabulous new Pulpit Rock Restaurant. This is the latest in outdoor restaurants with no walls or roof to detract from the magnificent 360 degree views. There is luxurious seating amongst lovely flowing stands of native tussock, and you can join the latest craze in third world dining by eating on the ground. Enjoy the wind flowing through your hair with the naturally provided air conditioning. Surround sound is also provided. No artificial lighting and definitely non – smoking.

The chefs are of the highest caliber, but this is because you have to bring your own food. Feel free to bring a small quantity of wine or beer to sup with your meal but please note that drunkenness by patrons will not be tolerated and will result in ejection from the restaurant.

The trip is a well known tracked route to Green Hut (1-2 hours). From there the route is recommended for experienced trampers only but as you will be with a party don't let this deter you. Including the restaurant lunch I expect the trip will take about 6 hours return.

Being the Silver Peaks, come prepared for bad weather – see back of the trip list for details of the minimum gear requirement. *(Though I'm sure Greg will have a word with The Boss to ensure sunny skies and great views! Ed).*

Phone Greg Powell on 454 4828 (home) or 456 0810 (work)

Pre Rail Trail Warm-Up (Cycle) **2 October**

It's time to grab your bike, pump up the tyres, oil the chain and get peddling. If you are thinking of doing the Rail Trail Ride, or just fancy the day out on two wheels then come along - it will be an easy to moderate trip. I will announce the exact route a couple of weeks beforehand. No it won't be hard. Yes it will be fun. Free chocolate for all those who attend. So think about it and hopefully I'll see you there.

Leader Gary Moss 455-6533