The Bulletin

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc # 825 November 2022

Upcoming Trips & Events

✶ WEEKENDS ✶ ✶ Xmas Camp: Upper Wilkin ✶ Routeburn - Lake Wilson ✶ ✶ SUNDAYS & SATURDAYS ✶ ✶ Leishman's Fall - Chalkies ✶ Leith Saddle - Burns Track - Swampy Ridge - Mountain Road - Red Hut Site - Rongomai - Evansdale ✶ Campbells Road to Bethunes Gully ✶ Garden's - Brown House - Upper Junction - Blanket Bay ✶

Winter Wonderland. Photo credit: Caitlin Robertson

OTMC Bank Account

The OTMC bank account with ASB is … 12-3150-0311684-00
Please include your name and the reason for the payment when using internet banking (which is the preferred option). Non-members must pay for trips when signing the trip list,members should pay before departure. Vehicle suppliers/drivers will normally not pay the trip fee and will be reimbursed fuel costs later (check with the trip leader or Treasurer Sharen if in doubt).

Gear Hire

OTMC has a large amount of gear available for members to hire.
NO hire charge for members for the first week!
See or phone our Gear Hire Committee member.

- Ice Axes
- Crampons
- Cookers & Billies
- Packs
- Tent/Flys
- Climbing Helmets

Your Committee

President/Centenary/Website + media enquires	Antony Pettinger	(03) 473 7924	antony.pettinger@gmail.com
Vice President / OTMC Post 2023	Sharon Rutherford	027 2291961	sharen.rutherford@gmail.com
Secretary	Debbie Pettinger	(03) 473 7924	debspettinger@gmail.com
Treasurer	Rodger Clarkson		rodger.clarkson@xtra.co.nz
Chief Guide	Wayne Hodgkinson	03 473 0950	wphodgkinson@xtra.co.nz
Membership Secretary	Ivan		
Bulletin Editor	Caitlin Robertson	0274891153	caitlinr007@gmail.com
Daytrip Convener	Mark Stephenson	027 6151870	markstephenson@xtra.co.nz
Thursday Night Planner	Tracy Pettinger	(03) 487 9488	Tracy@pettinger.nz
Weekly Updates	Tina		
Clubrooms Maintenance	Dave Bunn	029 779 7006	
Gear Hire	Ralph Harvey	03 4534330	

Get in touch

Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club, 3 Young Street, Dunedin
http://otmc.co.nz https://facebook.com/groups/otmcnz
otmcnz@gmail.com
Thursday meeting at 3 Young St, South Dunedin Doors open 7:30 for 8pm start, all welcome
Sign up to our email list: https://lists.otago.ac.nz/listinfo/otmc

Kea Conservation Trust Update

Lead Removal - Season 1 Totals

The numbers are in!

Here is how much lead we removed in Arthur's Pass and the Matukituki so far:

- We completed work on 32 buildings
- Our builders spent 877 hours removing lead
- They replaced 644m of flashing
- As well as a whopping 15,020 nails
- A big Thank You to our volunteers who donated 107 hours of their time!

This wouldn't have been possible without the support of our partner Dimond Roofing. They are contributing to the material costs of the project, as well as the lead-reduction process which is carried out by Dimond's preferred installers of architectural products, RoofingSmiths NZ.

You can read more about our partnership with Dimond Roofing here.

A big Thank You also to our builders Rob, Hayden, Damian and Mark for their fantastic work.

To find out more about their work visit their site:

https://www.keaconservation.co.nz/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=how_much_lead_have_we_removed&utm_term=2022-10-11

Trip Reports

August
Leith Saddle/Pipeline Track/Rustlers Ridge/Swampy Summit/Leith Saddle Track. 21st August. Tony Timperley.

It was a drizzly morning with low cloud obscuring Swampy when nine optimistic trampers met with pessimistic leader Tony at Woodhaugh Gardens. Predicting that these conditions would persist, Tony suggested that the group do a relaxing low level ramble rather than what could be a muddy and misty slippery scramble. Expecting a unanimous vote for the ramble, you can imagine his surprise when all nine voted instead for the scramble. As an advocate for democracy, Tony accepted the wishes of the majority, so off the group headed for the Leith Saddle carpark.

Yes, it was misty on Leith Saddle and, yes, it was muddy on the Pipeline Track; however, once we had proceeded beyond the Burns Track junction the track became green and pleasant underfoot and the mist began to lift. On reaching the start of the Rustlers Track we all shed a layer before starting the climb which was uneventful other than Richard having to clear the track of fallen trees and branches, of which there were many.

Distant Saddle. Photo credit: Richard Pettinger.

As the track emerges above the bushline it swings hard left below a grassy knoll, which is where we stopped for drinks and nibbles. Fortunately the cloud had lifted and we were rewarded with 360 deg views, the Silver Peaks to the west, Kakanuis to the north, coastal views to the east and Swampy Ridge (which was our next objective) rising up above us to the south. Although we could see the hills and ridges we also saw that the valleys were still in the mist and as we savoured our drinks and nibbles this mist began to finger its way up the narrow gullies just below us.

Dropping down from the knoll and back into the bush, by the time we reached the Rustlers-Burns track junction the mist fingers had closed around us. Despite this, we spurned the temptation to escape down the Burns and doggedly continued to trudge up Rustlers with Richard again having to clear obstructive fallen trees and branches from the track. His efforts were rewarded as we came above the bushline and again had expansive views, so much so that we were able to wave to friends in Mosgiel as we walked along Swampy Ridge. As there was a cold breeze when we reached the transmission tower, we had lunch sheltering in the lee side of the base.

Sheltered lunch. Photo credit: Richard Pettinger.

Fully refreshed following our leisurely lunch, we ambled along the first flat, tussocky section of the Leith Saddle Track until we climbed up to Swampy Spur, a rocky high point on the ridge where again we were given panoramic views up the coast to the north and Mt Cargill to the east. From here, however, the descent is very steep and muddy, made worse by the frequent heavy rains during July and early August. (Do you know that we had over 400% above average rainfall for July?) The deluges had scoured out channels in the track which were very slippy and in some sections great holes had been gouged out below the so-called “steps” forcing some of us to hang on to the vegetation, usually flax, and swing down. Luckily, none of us ended up with a muddy bottom and we reached the graveled section unscathed. Here there is an observation point which overlooks the city and upper harbour, Thankfully, bushes

which previously obscured the view have been partially cleared and this enabled some of us to wave to family and friends.

The final section was a leisurely amble through what Antony Hamel describes as a "bush tunnel through thriving undergrowth" which takes us through cedar, miro, totara and fuchsias. One highlight is a massive dead trunk which is remarkably sculpture like and should anyone have the means to extract it, they could make a fortune auctioning it at somewhere like Sotheby's.

We arrived back at the Leith Saddle carpark 5 hours almost to the minute after setting off. The sun was shining, so, despite leader Tony's initial reservations, we had a great tramp despite some mist and mud.

Tony Timperley for: Mark Stephenson, Debbie Guthrie, Peter and Leonie Loeber, Owen Rapp, Shane Gallagher, Tim Russell, Richard and Tracy Pettinger.

SEPTEMBER 2022

3-4 OTMC Snowcaving Weekend - Old Man Range / Kopuwai Richard Pettinger

IVAN to send

4th Goldminers Direct - Rosella Ridge Mark Stephenson

The A-Team turned up: Mark Stephenson, Lucy Jones, Nathan Dawson, Debbie Guthrie, Geraldine Kerr, Imogen Coxhead, Sandra Divett.

This was supposed to be a circuit of River Track, Rosella Ridge and back via Green Hut site to Mountain Road.
However, it was forecast cold and windy, possible showers and snow warning on the Leith Saddle by 4pm. So we did a shortened version avoiding the open stretches of the Rosella and Green Hill ridges.

It was fine when we set off. From the car park on Mountain Road, we tilted down the Miners Direct track to the upper Waikouaiti Stream and joined the River Track. This is a well made track now with some artistic flourishes in step-making, boxing and shuttering at some points. Much to be admired.

After morning tea along the track, we turned up Rosella Ridge track. Good birdlife and lovely Manuka/ Kanuka groves. As we wended our way up spine of the ridge, the wind picked up and the day turned dark. A few flecks of rain pocked our cheeks. At the junction with the Hunters Track (marked HAT #1) we debated the next move.

Common sense won the day - the wind was gusting gustily by this stage - we headed down the Hunters. Debbie asked how steep it would be, to which the leader replied: 'Dunno, never been down there'.

It was steep but not wet, so managed by all. Except then we found ourselves at the bottom of a steep hill again! Nothing for it but to puff our way out of it up the Hunters Access track to join the top of the Possum Hut Route, onto Mountain Road and back to the cars.
The gusts were a big crikey by that stage, so good decision to avoid the ridge tops. Less so to walk through conifer forest in a gale.
Ah well, we survived! And no snow on the road, home by 4pm.

10th (Saturday) Puketapu (Palmerston - travel via bus). Gayle Somerville.

On the top. Photo Credit: Steffan Rolfe.

18th Silver Peaks day trip

Tracy needed to see a blank day on the Club calendar filled before the 100 Trips began, so suggested she would lead a standard trip: A Green Ridge to Possum circuit with what turned out to be a windy excursion to Silver Peak passing the Painted Forest.

We ventured into increasing, blustery NW wind, with a stop to check out the water hole at the Green Hut site, then on to Silver Peak where it was pretty hard to stand

up. We retreated to a fairly sheltered spot on the track under a high spot between SP and the Pulpit. That was a nice respite, before getting back out into it to the relative peace of bush on Green Peak. Leonie, Peter and Gayle had an appointment with Phil Somerville(!) so took off home along Green Ridge.

The rest of us descended to Possum, enjoying being out of the wind.

We went back to the cars via Eucalypt Spur and Gold Miners Direct, which was quite painless and fairly, as it happens, direct. I continue to be really annoyed by the gumtrees spreading from those the adjacent Forestry folk planted in the 1980s, in what was to be the Scenic Reserve.

Richard Pettinger for Tracy P (leader), Peter and Leonie Loeber, Dave Bunn, Ricky Kim, Ash Flintoff, Olena Onishchenko, Gayle Somerville, Shane Gallagher.

Possum Hut from the bank above. From left, Shane, Ricky, Tracy, Dave, Olena with Ash behind her. Taken by Richard

17-18th Tussock Wonderland - Meg Hut. Will Sweetman.

Welcome to our story of our "Spring" tussock wonderland. We all rolled our way up to Cromwell on Friday night ready for the adventure. Here we all began to put faces to names and as always making instant hiking buddies chatting eagerly about the coming hike and learning all about group.

Come Saturday the whole party got together for take off. We roared off to Lowburn, the very end of the track to drop the shuffle car off and squeezed everyone into the other 2 vehicles. They wound their ways through the Cromwell/Queenstown road and then up the Cardrona valley to the top view and car park. Here we nestled the cars up the back and we “gatered-up” to hit the trail. Of course the first slog really was a slog up a wide dirt path. We picked away it as the kids bounced up (wishing my pack was as light as theirs) never the less we all trundled up the hill, taking in the views up the Cardrona valley and across the tops of hills and mountains beyond.

Our morning tea break was near Mt Allen, featuring spanyard, much to the dislike of Sossie who had decided to sit directly on a tussock with a spanyard prowling underneath and got bum pricked! This wouldn’t be our last spanyard encounter either. We continued along the path that took us around the south side of hills, snow and ice lay over some of these stretches and we were very naive of the danger until the first slip, which I slipped straight over onto the ice, the sunblock flew out of my pack with many onlookers watching the sunblock skidding further and further down the hill on the ice. In my mind she was long gone, the mental point of retrieval had been and gone. When it finally stopped I got back up and we very gingerly made it across with a few more slips and some extra ice kicking techniques learnt pretty fast by the team. Unfortunately the ice/snow had not been mentioned in our toolbox and we were now extremely aware of what we had not prepared for, among 11 people none had even thought of spikes or ice axes. We marched on. Most of the snow/ice walking was uneventful and merely slowed us down. One final bit as we escape the south side of the hills had uses hiking poles and kicking in foot holds for hikers to scramble those final few metres as we hit the slippery ice again.

The snowy side. Photo Credit: Rodger Clarkson.

From here we marched across the tops in snow/ice and yes tussock! Following the well worn path and markers where the snow and ice were visible. Now when you

only walk in valleys, the tops are truly something special, exposed, 360 views and endless mountains. This was our tussock wonderland.

Snow, tussocks and trampers. Photo Credit: Rodger Clarkson.

For lunch we scrambled part way up the Quartz Knoll and huddled from the wind behind huge rocks, enjoyed the views and took in some much needed substance. From here we reached the top not long after. Elated. We could see the the Cardrona ski field! But we weren't finished there, one more hill, the Queensbury Hill and then mostly downhill, down and over into the last hurdle to the hut. Here we made camp for the night, 3 happy little tents, and a nice warm hut courtesy of Emma carrying coal in and some effort from Gary and the team with some very good condition ax and saws taking out their last drops of energy on dead pines.

Winter Wonderland Wanderers. Photo Credit: Rodger Clarkson.

Sunday we were told there was a little up hill and like almost always we seem to always need to cross a river. So after we packed and tidied up we scuttle over the river and then up the hill. And after a while “little” hill became quite solidly “uphill” trekking. Mostly out of snow and a cool breeze keeping us trotting along. The kids happily hiked along talking endlessly. While some stopped for a quick bite behind a rock, some decided the wind was just to much to bear and wanted to keep moving we reached another icy climb. A solid section full of ice. While a few traversed following the markers others decided the direct approach was going to be easier. Mark, Emma and Gary had traversed the top of the ice with the rest of the pack trundled in a direct line across. This seemed to be the smarter option as they discovered the track came back down again. Back into the tussock we trundled down the hill together and it wasn’t long before we caught back up to Emma and Gary playing in the snow. A perfect snow slide. Dropping packs and grabbing jackets, pack liners and tarps we had turns sliding down the hill in the snow!

Heaps of fun and watching the kids launch themselves into tussocks was hilarious! Now just when you thought that was going to be the end of the silly sledding for the day we had another thing coming. Not long after another hill saw us using the short path of just sliding down rather than trying to walk down. And then all of a sudden we almost walked straight into 3 deer around the corner!
Ah humans!!! the deer were startled and turned to run straight up the bank. We all stopped and watched in awe. Guess we know why there were hunters in this area. We trekked down the valley onwards. And would you believe it more snow and ice and tussocks. What we thought was the end of the snow and we marched happily

through tussock gave way of shelf of snow and ice. We watched as Emma and Gary tried to follow the marker into the ice, then hastily started climbing the tussock to get above the ice. We reached the hill midway. The team huddled together unhappy with the ice level and then looking further up the hill also not great prospect climbing all the way up there when the path was almost right in front of us. Caitlin (the slightly overconfident test dummy) decided it was worth testing the ice for slipperiness. She waddled over the ice and since she was quite happy with its lack of slipperiness the rest of the team followed. As she popped just out of sight she then slipped flat on her ass and slid right down exactly to where the path continued. And of course with her direction everyone else also did exactly the same, some definitely more graceful sliding than others!

Right: Graceful Sliding. Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson.

By this stage everyone was well accustomed to ice walking and watching Caitlin slip and slide down the ice so they knew where to avoid! One massive shelf of ice was tricky for all and all the party members took extreme caution and spread out across the shelf to where they could carefully make their way. From this, the biggest and worst of the ice scrambling was over and the team finally did a couple mini traverses over ice and slid down onto deep creek hut for lunch. With wet bums and hungry bellies the team rested their bodies and minds.

Our fearless leader Will, Garry and Emma went on ahead with the car keys to go do the car shuffle as the rest of us made our way a little quieter out. We were relieved to climb the very last hill and take in the views of lake Dunstan and Cromwell below. Climbing on tussock and rocks as we made our was from what felt like the tippy top right down to the low Lowburn. A very small but soul destroying climb of about 100m over and into Lowburn where the kids raced off into the distance ready to find the end.

Kids take charge. Photo Credit: Rodger Clarkson.

By the time we were all climbing over the style and onto the roadside who should appear but our chariots! Great timing.

This has very much been a true adventure with heaps of fun along the way, thank you so much to Will Sweetman from Mark, Rodger, Elke, Ben, Deb, Tily, Sossie, Emma, Gary and Caitlin.

24th Swine Spur - Swampy Ridge - Big Rock - Porkies. Clare Noakes.

Clare Noakes, Olene Onishchenko, Ash Flintoff, Leone & Peter Loeber, Nicola and Mary met at Woodhaugh on a very soggy day and decided that Swine spur and Swampy ridge would not be enjoyable so an alternative trip to Racemans track was decided. We drove to the Whare flat car park and set off in a light drizzle around the fence line track to keep our feet dry. We had not gone far when we came to a major slip so had to pop through the fence to bypass it. The rest of the track was pretty good but quite a few trees down over the track but pretty negotiable. We had morning tea in the rain and lunch in the rain at the weir at the end of the track. We came back via the tunnels track but no one was keen on going through the tunnel! We came down the track to the swing bridge and walk back through the stream and back to the cars as the rain stopped! Was a very enjoyable tramp with a lovely bunch, thanks for joining me.

A slighty damp team. Photo Credit: Clare Noakes.

OCTOBER 2022

2nd Lawrence - Gabriels Gully. Jane Cloete.

Seven of us came on this trip - Jane Cloete (leader), Ash Flintoff, Debbie Guthrie, Lucy Jones, Leonie Loeber, Peter Loeber, and Ruth Thomas.

An early start at 8am led to a non-eventful drive up, except for a duck and her many ducklings waddling down the road - I think we managed to avoid them all!

Parking at the corner of Lawrence, the original plan was to leave the cars there and take a circular route, going first to the Daffodil Reserve and finishing via Blue Spur.

So we started for Wetherston's - it's only 2.5km on but seems longer on tarmac! One admiring glance at the Daffs from a distance but we resolutely headed uphill towards Gabriel's Gully. Ash found a perfect place for a wee rest: some felled tree trunks of various sizes meant a choice of seats.

Downwards to the Gabriels Gully conservation area. There are now many 'interpretation' boards around the gully. To read them meant also to get a wee rest without admitting to the others how much you needed the rest! But uphill all the way to the Pollard Dam at the top. There didn't seem to be so many primroses this year though one clump of daffs was the fluffiest variety that I've ever seen. Downhill back to the main gully (careful use of bushes en-route because there isn't at toilet as such) and lunch in the sunshine with a tiny breeze.

What to do next? Blue Spur road looked high, hot and dusty! The 'main' road was tarmac all the way! Decided to retrace of our morning tracks back to Wetherston's and Lawrence. The journey downhill was marked by two things: firstly a ewe tucked in a sunny sheltered nook who had just had twin lambs (both were covered in yellow vernix and the cord of one had only just separated off). When crossing farmland it is always useful to have Lucy Jones in the group because a sheep had got cast. When Lucy gave it a couple of heaves, it jumped up and bounded away. Thanks Lucy!
Then the road from Wetherston's to Lawrence wasn't so boring this time because the Vintage Car club had a trip to the area - lots of wonderful old cars trundling along!
A pause at a cafe, then home to Dunedin, getting here by 4.30pm-ish.

9th Unexplored Silverpeaks. Richard Pettinger.

Quality turnout, not quantity – three of us, Ross, Wendel and me.

I had sussed out a likely location on Tracy's 18 September day trip. It needed to be a trip that was short and, er, sweet(!?) as I had an important function beginning not long after and would need to be not too late, muddy, stuffed or scratched.

It seemed to work out. A bigger team would likely have been much slower. We scooted along Green Ridge, dropped towards Possum then plunged into the untracked wilderness down into the creek that flows past Possum, then climbed out onto the spur off Rosella Ridge. We understood this to be called Cedar Spur, with a "Cedar Direct" back to near the stream confluence near Possum, I see from OTMC Bulletins where various trip reports refer to Cedar and Direct Spurs a bit interchangeably, so it is all a little uncertain. We need to be consistent with location names for the purposes of any SAR call-out.

Like on previous Unexplored Silverpeaks trips, we came across groves of very large trees, this time silver beech, and it is like meeting old friends for the first time – if that makes sense. ☺ Going home was straightforward and included a nice detour down Arthur's River Track which was a new experience for me, although I've struggled through and explored the South Branch of the Waikouaiti on both banks over a few decades. In the 70s it seemed as wild as the Olivine catchment was back then.

A hundred years or more ago, the Silverpeaks' main tussocky ridges were the logical places for getting around these hills. They would have been kept open by occasional burning, and latterly grazing. There may have been the odd remnant of a Maori pathway, as on Green Ridge. Today's ecological health of the Silverpeaks depends on

the staying power of snow tussock and the seeds of any woody species from before any burning, including that by the first people. As I said to Ross after the subsequent Rocky Ridge trip, we should celebrate where we see the bush coming back. Wendel says “it is amazing to be in that bush, to see it close up and, where we were, there were almost no introduced vegetation species”, a thing that really warms my heart.

Of course, it is fine to maintain a track but, as we see, cutting a track, like farming, traipses gorse and other weeds as our early trampers would have observed. And, sometimes, a magnificent tree or at least its offspring are chopped out to provide a nice straight track.

We considered we are lucky to have untracked scrubby country, difficult terrain and beautiful ecology, so close to town. Thus saving us traveling to and traipsing through gazetted Wilderness every time we need to touch nature so closely. And we certainly have close encounters on these challenging trips, although this day, unlike last year, I did make it to my subsequent appointment intact, on time and in great spirits.

We certainly celebrate true New Zealand on these Unexplored Silverpeaks trips. With a little masochism thrown in.

Richard Pettinger for Ross Davies and Wendel Broek.

Ross and Wendel pause in a remarkably open piece of Dunedin-area wilderness, on the southern slopes of Cedar Spur. Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.

OTC / OTMC Centenary - 100 Trips for 100 Years
Celebrating 100 Years of Tramping and Mountaineering - 1923/2023

OCTOBER 2022

16th (Sunday) (100 Trips 001) Hightop - Green Ridge - Mt Allan Ridge.
Antony Pettinger.

The Big day arrives! Trip 001 off the trip card and 16 eager trampers brave the early Sunday morning for an adventure in the Silver Peaks.They reach they start of the track a little a gasp in the cars as on the edge of the Silver Peaks the foresty block has been leveled. The once grand pine forest gone and sun bathed the road to the start of the track. Once parked up away they all went hopping up the path together. The group every so often changing the order up so we could chat to new and old friends. Up and up they climbed, to pulpit rock and onwards down green ridge to mt Allan ridge. Here was our lunch break with the views onwards to Mt Allan and painted forest. Here Antony surprised the group with cake! Celebrating the start of the 100 year trip.

We walked up the top of the hill to get better views and then down and back along the track and home to the cars.

We had a merry time!

Caitlin on behalf of; Antony & Debbie & Jade Pettinger, Debbie Guthrie, Leanne & Peter Lober, Mandie Lungley, Janice Hodges, Lindsay Aitcheson, Dave Bunn, Gayle Somerville, Olene Onishehenko, Terry Pairman and Chloe Upton.
(apologies if I spelt your name wrong).

Debbie No. 2 Guthrie, Silver Peaks. Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson.

22-24th (3 Day Weekend) (100 Trips 002) Greenstone / Caples Weekend (Labour Weekend - 3 Days)l Antony Pettinger

Greenstone / Caples Trip Report - Full circuit in tents - Labour Weekend 2022

Four of us piled into the car on Friday morning, pleased to be trading in a wet, grey Dunedin day for a sunny weekend in the mountains. After a monotonous five hours of driving we finally arrived at the end of the road and quickly scrambled to get onto the track. Knowing we had some big days ahead of us, we were eager to get going and cover some distance before evening.

Setting off from the carpark at 2pm, the track begins with a climb to get through the gorge before branching off into two tracks - the Greenstone and the Caples. We took the swing bridge over the river and made our way up the Greenstone. We happily wandered along the track for a couple of hours, mostly in the bush but enjoying the short open sections. The weather was superb, not a cloud in the sky and just enough of a light breeze to keep us cool.

We eventually reached Slip Flat and began contemplating where to set up camp for the night. We consulted the map and decided to check out the nearby Slip Flat Hut to see what it was like. There was no marked track up to the hut, so after a bit of bush-bashing and a scramble up the hillside we were delighted to reach a small clearing containing a tidy 3-bunk DOC hut. We quickly set up camp with Dave and myself in our tents whilst Debbie and Antony opted to spend the night inside the hut. We enjoyed a lovely evening around the fire (thanks to Dave and the healthy amount of dry wood nearby) before turning in for the night.

Dinner at Slip Flat Hut. Photo Credit: Antony Pettinger.

We awoke on Saturday morning to clear skies and dew on the tents. It was quite chilly in the shade of the valley so we got ourselves organised and underway fairly quickly. We made use of the emergency bridge crossing Slip Flat Creek to keep our feet dry and enjoyed walking through the bush for a while.

We soon came to the turnoff for Greenstone Hut so dumped the packs and went to have a look. Whilst crossing the bridge over the Greenstone River we saw a group of packrafters scrambling down the side of the gorge, getting ready to set sail. We watched them with great curiosity as one by one they slipped into the fast flowing water and made their way downstream. It was then back to the packs to carry on for a bit until morning tea time.

The condition of the track after the turnoff to the hut deteriorated as it was littered with windfall. After making our way over and around a couple of large trees, we opted to bush bash our way down the bank to the open river flats. We enjoyed a picturesque morning tea break on the shores of the Greenstone River before carrying on up the valley.

We soon rejoined the track and from here it was a few hours of walking along the open river flats. We spotted the odd cow grazing in the distance as well as Rats Nest Hut across the river. The wind had started to pick up a bit and after meandering

along for a couple of hours, we found a sheltered spot to have lunch. We enjoyed lying in the sun for a while before continuing.

The further up the valley we got, the more we noticed the landscape around us beginning to change. As the sky was clear, we could see Mt. Christina looming ahead, as well as catching brief glimpses of Tutoko and Madeline. We enjoyed the ever-changing scenery for the afternoon - from wide open river flats to picking our way across a large rockslide to sections in the bush. There were some boggy bits that required extra care otherwise it was largely an uneventful afternoon.

Around 5pm we began looking for a suitable campsite for the night - it turns out this was easier said than done. We wanted somewhere flat, sheltered out of the wind, a nearby side creek for drinking water and away from the cows. Another hour of walking later and just as we were contemplating heading to McKeller Hut as it was only a few km away, we finally found somewhere that ticked all the boxes. It was now getting close to 7pm so we got ourselves set up and turned in for the night.

After one of the comfiest nights I've spent in a tent (thanks to the lovely soft ground) we awoke to find a couple of cows had decided our campsite was going to be their grazing patch for the morning. They didn't seem bothered by us and before long we were back on the track. We enjoyed a short break at McKeller Hut before winding our way up alongside Lake McKeller. We found a few tracks that enabled us to get down to the lake shore to have a look - absolutely beautiful!

A quick morning tea stop at the turnoff to McKeller Saddle / Lake Howden and before long we were beginning our ascent up to McKeller Saddle. The track was nicely graded and gently made its way up the hill, as opposed to the steep track Antony and Debbie remembered from their youth. We enjoyed plenty of stops to marvel at how high we had climbed from the lake. We made good time and reached the top in just over an hour. We found a sheltered spot to have lunch before enjoying the views from the saddle.

Being a beautiful blue sky day, the view in all directions was stunning. Looming ahead of us was the distinctive Mt. Christina, which Antony remembers as a boy being the first mountain that made him fall in love with tramping. As much as we wanted to spend hours on the saddle, we weren't able to linger too long as we still had the descent down to Upper Caples Hut ahead of us. We enjoyed crossing the boardwalk, dotted with tarns that reflected the mountains perfectly.

On McKellar Saddle. Photo Credit Antony Pettinger

Far too soon we were saying goodbye to the saddle and heading down towards the Caples Valley. The track down seemed to be much longer than going up the other side and we were soon over the relentless pounding on the hard gravel track. We were all tired and had sore feet after walking nearly 20km, so you can imagine how relieved we were to reach the turnoff to Kay Creek as this indicated we were close to the hut.

After catching up with the other OTMC parties at Upper Caples Hut, we set about pitching our tents and getting dinner started. We were soon eaten alive by sandflies, a sharp contrast to the non-existent sandflies of the previous two nights. After cajoling a friendly tramper to take a group photo of the 20 OTMC members at the hut, we turned in for an early night as some light drizzle started to set in.

After spending the night listening to the raindrops on the tent, we were not surprised to awake to a grey, misty and wet day. We quickly packed up and were on the track by 7:30am, with most of the other OTMC parties leaving ahead of us. It was a pretty bleak walk down the Caples Valley as the rain did not let up. We enjoyed the moody landscapes as we powered along the river flats before stopping at Mid Caples Hut for a sugar boost.

View of the Caples Valley from Mid-Caples Hut. Photo Credit Antony Pettinger.

From Mid Caples Hut we put our heads down and walked, it was too wet to be stopping. Excitement levels were high when we reached the junction with the Greenstone as we knew we only had another 20 minutes to go. With the car park in sight, we raced down the final stretch, excited to soon be putting dry clothes on and warming up.

Thanks to Antony for organizing the trip, it was fantastic to have 27 OTMC members spend the (mostly) sunny long weekend tramping in the Greenstone and Caples Valleys. A great way to start the 100 Trips for 100 Years Centenary Programme.

Jade Pettinger for Antony and Debbie Pettinger and Dave Bunn.

NZDA Hut loop

The happy hunting grounds of the Greenstone and Caples tracks were again ablaze with activity over the labour weekend. Barvo company was on a mission to sweep in from the landing base camp and push through the sub-alpine McKellar saddle to join up with the remaining OTMC companies that were in the area. Although the OTMC air support was to be deployed there were no guarantees that we could rely on their availability given the uncertain weather conditions.

It was our mission to ensure that the overall 61km perimeter was secure, luckily the NZDA had set up a supply dump at the Mid Greenstone Hut, with enough food to allow us to replenish our troop for the push over the saddle on the Sunday. The strategy was simple, dine out on homemade chocolate pudding then in the morning send ahead our younger scouts (Cassie Newman and Olena Onishchenko) to check that the area was clear while the senior members of the troop (Maree Macrae and Ivan Mason) advanced steadily towards our objective.

Progress was steady with only light activity encountered and working together as a tightly knitted unit we were able to sweep in from the north and descend towards the remaining NZDA site known as Upper Cables Hut. Based on prior intel we had anticipated that we would encounter two additional occupiers in the general area however there was a lot of activity on the Caples track.

Mckellar Saddle! Photo Credit: Ivan Mason.

Barvo company had unbeknown walked into a situation that can only best be described as a "Jamboree in the mountains".

The air, thick with sandflies, driven into a frenzy by the scent of blood feasted while the paparazzi insisted on group photos during the evening. Our band of sisters pulled together as best we could as the huts capacity was being pushed to its limits.

Party at Upper Caples. Photo Credit: Ivan.

The weather had turned during the night triggering a restless bustle of activity well before first light from the other OTMC companies eager to retreat to civilization. Barvo, playing it safe, again sent forth its scouts to prepare the landing craft for departure while two senior members pushed through the weather from the rear and to finally confirm with the leader of Alpha company that no one was left behind.

All that remained was to pit the might of the electric vehicle against the forces of nature, after some debate on whether to have seatbelts on or off while crossing the fords we found our selves in the relative safety of our own company, enjoying a FergBurger while sipping on coffee, consuming Danishes and sampling chocolate sorbet in celebration of a very successful Labour weekend centenary trip.

Team 10 Steele Creek

The girl gang was off on a mission to Steele Creek. The made tracks early Saturday morning after a luxurious backpackers stay in Kinloch. The first little hills warmed the team up and the sun steadily rose into the sky. Crossing the bridge and into the Greenstone valley they trot.

Along the way between merrily chatting away to huffing up hills. A tiny squeak was uttered by Debbie G, both Elke and Caitlin rushed up behind her to see a startled deer on the track! With a head full of antlers it turned and race away on the track, over a wooden bridge and then took the bank up and away, he slipped a bit but with 4 legs he managed.

After the kerfuffle the team continue on the track. Still chatting, while Caitlin played tail end charlie she quietly monitored their progress on the map. The moment she put it away back in the safety of her pocket, Debbie piped up something along the lines of “how far is it” which Caitlin replied promptly “not far, we are a few hundred meters coming up to the turn off to Greenstone”. They were highly impressed with Caitlin’s “top notch” answer. And sure enough they met the T in track with a DOC sign. For lunch Caitlin insisted the views from the Greenstone Hut as Elke had not had the pleaseure of a visit to the hut on hill. On a blue bird day the team enjoyed a moments peace and lunch at the hut.

Lunch in the sun. Greenstone Hut, Debbie Guthrie and Elke Mathewson. Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson.

After the lunch they were faced with head on winds in the valley and trees face down on the tracks to scramble over and under.

Soon they finally hit the next doc sign indicating the entrance to the Steele Creek track. From here we took one last look at the Greenstone valley as we stepped into our adventure!

Bye bye Greenstone Valley, Debbie Guthrie. Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson.

For the first km of walking the track was well marked and reasonably easy to follow, that was until we found our first tree fall. And from here we had many, many more trees to navigate around. Mostly individual trees (about 22) over the tracks, 6 multiple affect tree falls (1 major, 6 reasonable, 1 minor). Between the group we able to easily keep a track on where the path should be and the markers on the trees, pro marker finder Elke was on point, Debbie hunting markers from mid point to make sure we didn't stray and Caitlin just keeping a watchful eye.

After the tree fall we hit the river where we took a small rest and drinks break. From here only another lazy hour to the hunt in the shelter of the trees. Caitlin changing to point was sure she was going nuts as she could see a green rectangle far away in the trees. Little did she know ten minutes later, the green thing materialized into a green shed and then the adorable Steele Creek Hut.

Homely. Photo Credit:Elke Mathewson.

Here was home. The hut was just sitting on the tree line, a woodshed brimming to the roof-line close by. Rustic wooden beams keeping up the roof (probably from the surrounding trees), well catered hut with spare pots, pans, buckets, magazines and plenty of seating including a cosy pop up chair. This hut was loved. In no time we took over.

Plonked ourselves outside with a lot of bug spray and merrily had dinner in the valley watching the setting sun as it passed over the hills and we watch the line of sunlight slowly rise up the mountains. It was a very peaceful hour to ourselves. Elke offered and quickly put to work making a fire in the hearth.

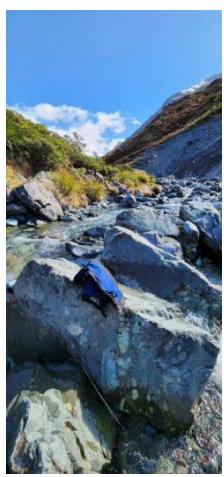
Dinner time for Team 10! Elke Mathewson, Caitlin Robertson, Debbie Guthrie. Photo Credit: Elke Mathewson.

As it began to darken they made their way inside, and half an hour later we were then introduced to our bunkmates! 7 weary wanders all the way from Mid Caples and clambered up and over the saddle and down the valley to Steele Creek Hut.
After quickly making room for the new guest, clearing the bench seats and making room on the kitchen bench, the youngest members collapsed on the bench seat and didn't move again for the next hour! The eating of chips was the only activity between talking he would accomplish now.

We quickly found in a 4 bunk hut with 11 people, we hit a bump. The other group immediately began pitching their tents which would take 4 people, leaving 7…
Reluctant to pitch our tent as our team had well settled in, we quickly offered to double bunk in order to fit everyone in. Caitlin and Debbie topped and tailed while Elke took the tiniest top bunk directly under the chicken wire ceiling.
One of the group took the floor while the others bunked up. Sorted. Talking about our trips and tails in the firelight with fairylights dancing around us, one of the hikers Petra mentioned a pair of lost gaiters so we had a bonus mission for tomorrow.

A roaring fire, a bonfire outside and happy hikers. Perfect night.

Sunday morning rolled around and the team scuttled outside with our gear. We had a quick breakfast under the cover of the trees in the dawn glow. Packed up and a was set on the path. Here we found in the clearing near the hut, where the others had camped, it had frozen overnight! Tents with the morning frost and decorated it all in ice!
We walked into the river beds, football fields wide and rocks galore. We danced up the river beds until we hit the tree line again, here we began the climb again through the trees, crossing the west branch of the river and onwards and upwards. Once out of the trees when were into the scrub and bush and rushing river.



Previous page from right to left: Debbie G and Caitlin R avoiding the scrub… Photo Credit: Elke Mathewson. The lost gaters! Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson. Scrub draws blood. Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson.

Walking along the rivers edge (and occasionally in it) when dragged our legs through the scrub Debbie spotted a blue thing on a rock in the middle while above the rivers edge, and sure enough, we jumped into the river and retrieve Petra's gaiters! Bonus mission completed. Though we could not fathom how they had been perfectly perched on this river, even overnight. We marveled at how crazy it was to find them as we continued through the scrub and into the little tussocks. We trucked up the hill quietly until we hit the snowline, we meticulously picked the best path across the snow, making the least amount of effort required as the snow was quite nuisance enough to put on micro spikes.

Steele Creek Valley from the Saddle. Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson.

Then the saddle - beautiful and windy. The wind plummeted onto us from over the mountains into the saddle. After a few quick intakes of the breathe taking views we hunted for a safe rock to eat lunch out of the wind.

The next 3 hours we move into the Caples, over the saddle, down the slippy rocky stuff and into the tree line. After 2 hours on knee breaking downward trekking we reached the upper Caples hut (NZDA) where many of the other groups managed to meet for a Sunday night OTMC catch up. With only the Home Hill crew away in the hills doing extra adventuring, everyone caught up on all the many adventures our club mates had been on.

The Decent. Photo Credit: Elke Mathewson.

Top team ten snuggled 3 people into the moondance tent and had wonderfully warm and dry night and slept to the sound of rain drops bouncing off the tent.

Monday was dismal, rain had set well in. It was just a move and get to car walk in the valley. The clouds moving over the mountains but never let up their fall of droplets. Everyone paced to the car, many got soaked through and were quick to change into their happy warm and dry clothes at the car.

Tip Top Team Ten - the girl gang - the Steele Creek adventures - had a marvellous time and wouldn't have changed any bit of it!

Thanks to the Pettinger's for arranging the Labour Weekend trip.

Greenstone car park to Mid Caples hut 21th Oct 2022

When Ash's car-load arrived at the Greenstone carpark around 2:45pm, we expected the former group to be well ahead of us, because they left Dunedin one hour earlier than us. But they had spent time picking up the hut key and brought lunch in busy Queenstown.

All of us started heading to Mid Caples hut around 3:00-3.20pm, in small groups. But we were all together at some point. Soon after we starting walking, I could hear the Caple's river and soon I saw the beautiful river on our left-hand side. We saw the bridge to the Greenstone valley after about 20 minutes, which is the bridge used for the Greenstone & Caple's big circle route. We kept going and stuck to the Caples side, without crossing the bridge.

The first day's plan was that one group walks to Mid Caples hut and the other group walks to Upper Caples hut. The Mid Caples hut group was Charlotte, Chris, Ash, Mandie, Gayle & Ricky and Upper Caples hut group was Mark & Trevor. However, Trevor started to slow down. Maybe because he is so tired of driving all the way. Ash, Mandie & Ricky stayed with Trevor, and the others went at their own pace.

Mark & Gayle arrived at Mid Caples around 5:30pm. Since we booked 6 beds in Mid Caples and 2 beds in Upper Caples, Mark & Gayle decided to go up to Upper Caples leaving around 6pm. Charlotte & Chris arrived about 5:50pm, and Trevor, Ash, Mandie & Ricky arrived at 6:00pm.

There was also a family group in the Mid Caples hut, with three teenagers and two women, with two more adults arriving later. So, overnight the Mid Caples hut has six of us and seven in the family group, in two rooms.

Our afternoon walk from Greenstone carpark to the Mid Caples hut was reasonably easy and it had everything. We walked through a few wet areas; we did a bit of hills and valleys in the trees and there were areas of open grassland. Lots of photos were taken. The weather was good and it was quite enjoyable walking.

At night time there was a snoring quartet. I like string quartet and I like to play clarinet quartet but it was the first time I listened to a snoring quartet. They didn't need a music score and it didn't need any practice. It was only needed tiredness which is pleasant tiredness. Well, the sound wasn't so pleasant, though.

Mid Caples hut to Upper Caples hut 22nd Oct 2022

Trevor left the Mid Caples hut around 7am as he wanted to get an early start. Charlotte & Chris left around 7:30am and Ash, Mandie & Ricky got away around 7:50 am.

We saw beautiful snow-capped mountains in front of us in the distance and there was the beautiful Caples river at the right-hand side of us. Since it was a fresh morning all of us walked very well but it was a very cold morning. Most of us pulled out gloves and wore them.

After walking around one hour we had a morning break for all six of us in one place. It was a sunny riverside place and such a beautiful morning.

Similar walking as the day before there were some flat areas, grass areas, crossing streams, etc. Around two hours later we arrived at a junction point. Initially we

could find the well signed Steel creek direction but we couldn't find the Upper Caples hut. But a few minutes later we could find the hut and all of us safely arrived at the Upper Caples hut.

Mid Caples hut to Upper Caples hut 21th Oct 2022

Mark and I left the Mid Caples hut around 6.00pm, just as the others were arriving. We headed off at a fast pace, up into the darkening valley. We took two 5 min breaks, and stopped to look at the deer. We saw 4-5 mobs, with the largest being over 20 strong, probably mothers and yearlings. Also, we saw three (hornless) stags tear down the hill in front of us and run straight through the Caples river as it splashed up around their flanks-why do you see these things when it is too dark for cameras? We arrived at the hut without having to switch on our torches, and rushed to light the gas, and the fire. Unfortunately, the gas was a bit temperamental, but we did eventually get tea and dinner. After several attempts, we decided it was warm enough not to need a fire.

Upper Caples hut to ridge line and beyond. 22nd Oct 2022

We headed up towards McKellar saddle the next morning, leaving the hut with our day packs at 8.30am. We walked uphill to the lovely wee bridge for morning tea, where we sat on the bank and looked down towards the Caples valley. We reached the saddle around 11.00am, stopping at the rock cairn to take photos, and peer down into the Greenstone valley. After a discussion about going down into the valley (and then climbing back up), we decided instead to go off-track, and climb up the hill on our North. We thought his might give us a better view towards the divide.

As we gained height, we tried to keep the Caples track in view. We managed to spot one unknown walker on the track, however we did see a light plane and a helicopter fly in below us, both heading into the divide. As we go closer to the top more and more of the southern alps appeared on our left. For a while it seemed like we might be able to summit (1400m); however, we called a halt at 1350m, when the drops started looking dangerous. After consuming a whole heap of chocolate, and taking some "we were there" photos, we gingerly made our way back down to the Caples track. One false turn, where we had to re-climb back up, made us wish we had turned on a tracking app on the way up. It was a terrific climb, and I would love to go back one day, with summiting equipment.

Upper Caples Hut to Fraser Creek Valley.

This track had suffered from windfall. Though well signed with orange markers, the track on the ground was often invisible. Not just large trees but countless thousands of saplings and small trees were strewn across the track.

However, it is a beautiful valley with some pleasant river crossings in the dry weather we had. Apparently there is a rock bivvy higher up but I did not reach it, turning back to Upper Caples after 3-4 hours. I'd be happy to explore further on another occasion.
Another party explored Kay Creek valley which was similarly affected by windfall. All returned tired but happy to the hut by afternoon.

23rd (Sunday) (100 Trips 003) Black Gully to Evansdale. Antony Hamel.

Cars, cars, cars. There is not much parking at Woodhaugh where we meet to car pool for the Black Gully dam to Evansdale trip. Many students have cars so George Street is chocker full of student resident parking even early on Sunday morning.

This is in contrast to the five earlier OTMC trips from the 1920s to the 1950s where members relied on public transport, mainly trams and trains, to get to the start and back from the end of tramping trips. The 1949 trip started at the terminus of the Kaikorai Cable car at 8.30am and ended at the Evansdale Station where the Sunday train would have collected them at 6.05pm. A long day and a long way to walk.

Today we use cars. In the second part of the 1920s there was one car per eight people in New Zealand. Very few people had cars and the roads were not great. No motorway to Waitati. No Double Hill Road and Mountain Road giving access into the Silver Peaks. Currently there are 0.8 cars per person in New Zealand and the roads are fast and most are sealed. Today our travel time to Evansdale Glen is 25 minutes.

Today we are doing this trip during 2022 labour weekend. Jane came and helped with the car shuttle. The track was in fantastic condition with lots of evidence of weed eaters and not a scrap of vegetation blocking the track. It was wet underfoot and surprisingly muddy in places. It was a lot quicker walk than I expected. Recent big floods have left lots of tangled vegetation in the creek. Last time I walked the length of the whole valley in 2004 the track was very rough and much slower.

The remains of the Seacliff Hospital water supply is still evident from Black Gully Dam to Evansdale. There are rusting pipes in lots of places and we found the mysterious 4 pressure releasing valves on the high bits. The effort to keep the water supply operational was very frustrating and meant it was unreliable and costly to maintain and was closed by 1959. However since the establishment of the pipeline in 1912 there has been a track down the valley that trampers have used.

In 1925 a Sunday Palmerston to Dunedin train service was introduced. The "Sabbath breaker" allowed people to come back to town from the northern beach

settlements and was part of a Railways campaign in the 1920s to boost use of trains for holidays. Stopping at Evansdale at 6.05pm the train got back into Dunedin at 7.20pm with a 1 hour 15 minute journey time. This service ceased in 1976 and the Evansdale station area is now used as a truck park.

I did have ideas of announcing the imminent arrival of our train and requiring the group to run. However we got back to our cars at Evansdale at a comparatively early 2pm and drove back into town at 2.30pm. I am glad we did not have to wait for the train.

Antony Hamel for Lucy Jones, Steffan Rolfe, Clare Noakes, Mike and Michael H

29th (Saturday) (100 Trips 004) Signal Hill to Ravensbourne, return via cycleway (including Burns Reserve). Joy Liddicoat & Philip Somerville.

29th October – Into the Unknown. Burns Reserve. Joy Liddicoat, Philip Somerville

There's nothing like exploring somewhere new in our own backyard.
That perhaps was the bait for many of the 24 walkers who ventured on a Saturday afternoon for the second of the 100 centenary walks.

We gathered at Dunedin's Centennial (how appropriate) Monument on Signal Hill to sample Burns Reserve, a rediscovered city gem on the slopes above Otago Harbour. We, roughly, traversed an area tramped by OTMC forebears on their second trip in 1923.

Joy Liddicoat had been the sole commandant for the trip, planned originally to begin behind Logan Park High School, before my insubordinate intervention.

I was aware fellow Ōpohovian Jim McQuillan was reimagining and reviving the once popular Burns Reserve. If we dabbled into its environs, we would be encountering new territory for us, as well as being closer to those original routes.

Antony thought the idea had promise, and Joy was happy to change tactics.
Thus, after much help and advice from Jim, and a brace of reconnaissance trips, we ventured forth. Jim arranged permission from landowners for access to Ravensbourne.

On the day itself, we traversed a trapline down and up through mixed bush before emerging above the privately-owned paddock. We crossed the grass, endeavouring – with only partial success – to avoid bounding cattle. There was no sign, fortunately, of the bull we had been warned about.

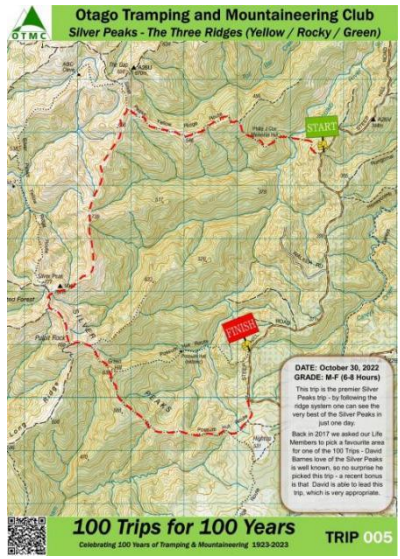
About half the contingent crossed a fence and climbed Gerry's Rock to be rewarded with glorious 360-degree panoramas up Signal Hill, to Taiaroa Head, across to the Peninsula and to downtown Dunedin.
We then traipsed down through the farm, strolled across Upper Ravensbourne and climbed up the track to the "plateau" and back to the monument. Our circuit had been completed in about three hours.

I had also proposed to lead, somewhat ambitiously, an add-on bonus walk through the upper reserve and again to Gerry's Rock. Any takers?
Phew! There were none. Our sojourn into the unknown was sufficient excitement and exploration for one day.
Special thanks to Jim and the landowners. We look forward to Burns Reserve becoming again a special area among Dunedin's myriad tramping opportunities.

Philip Somerville for Joy Liddicoat and 22 others.

The Port view from above. Photo Credit: Jade Pettinger.

30 (Sunday) (100 Trips 005) Green - Pulpit - Rocky Ridge - Yellow Ridge - Phil Cox - Tunnels Track (aka The Three Ridges) M
Antony Pettinger



This trip was announced to be a premium Silverpeaks trip and it surely was. Unfortunately our designated leader David couldn't lead his beloved hike, but the group took him with us on the hike in our thoughts. A big Thank you to Anthony Pettinger for spontaneously taking on the leadership of this trip.

After carpooling from Woodlaughs garden and dropping one car off at the end of our track we started walking at about 9am. What a different look of Silver Peaks we gained, as there was a lot of area cleared from logging, to the pleasure of a whole heard of wild goats who grazed in between the debris. Debbie Pebbinger took the challenge on to open the tricky gate, which she succeeded in record time.

The track first descended to the Waikouaiti River and then steady led us uphill to the Philip J Cox Memorial Hut (*photo below right*) where we were greeted by these two fellows *(photo below left)*:

Here we enjoyed a short morning tea and toilet break. On we went ascending over the Yellow Ridge. By this time even the ones who didn't get sweaty before got quite warm, as it was very sunny with no wind.

Photos left & right: Yellow Ridge. Photo Credit: Elke Mathewson.

From here we went bushbashing on Rocky Ridge where we had fun mixing up the leadership leading the way. Sometimes the path was quite obvious, but at other places it did happen that members of the group (without leading) easily overtook, as they happened to find a better way along. Please note, that we all stayed together as a group though. We were very fortunate as we hardly had any wind on the Ridge and good visibility, so it was easy to find our way. Some of our members were ordinarily well equipped, like Ricky as shown in this photo below:

Previous page photos; The team on top! Photo Credit: Elke Mathewson.

After 7 hours, 16.4km, an altitude of altogether 1000m, various scratches on our legs although most of us were either wearing gaiters and/or extra long shorts, we arrived happily at our car.

Thank you again to everybody who made this hike possible and who joined. I can just speak for myself, but I had a wonderful day.

Elke Mathewson

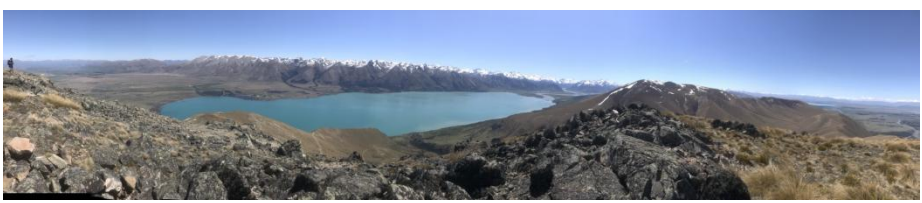
NOVEMBER

5-6th (Weekend) (100 Trips 006) Day Trips from Omarama. Debbie Pettinger.

Saturday Ben Ohua

Explorers Debbie, Antony, Ivan, Mandy, Sandy and Clare.
Six intrepid explorers set off from the car park down Ben Lyon Road to find the Greta creek track up the back of Ben Ohau. Success and off we went, so excited were we that we were surprised when we came to a bluff! Undeterred we clambered down to find ourselves on the proper track. The first stream crossing was deceptively deep and swift but no trouble for us! As we wound our way up this lovely valley 2 deer were sighted on the ridge. Too soon we were on the climb to the ridge which took the wind out of us. Morning tea was had admiring the view before setting off on the climb to Ben Ohau itself.

Lunch was called halfway up. Now I'm unsure if it was sunstroke or something OTMC people put in their lunch drinks but one explorer fell asleep while the remainder hallucinated about wild deer taking them to the top and other such fantastical happenings. We did all make it to top of the climb with most of us managing the summit to absorb the stunning 180 degree view. Then it was down, down and more down to eventually reach the cars. We all decided it was the best and most scenic way to climb Ben Ohau. A great trip with great weather and even better company. Thanks to camp mother Debbie for organizing it.



Lake Ohua

Trip report for the "Easy" group (Chris & Charlotte)—Twizel

When Sandy, Charlotte and Chris arrived at the Greta's Creek Car Park, Sandy joined the Fit group who were ready to leave, and Chris and Charlotte prepared to go up the 4 Wheel Drive track. Just as they were about to start, Sandra, Trevor and Leanne arrived, so they waited for them.

The day was perfect for tramping, cool but not too cold. The track was generally easy going, a bit shingley in places, but overall in good shape. After about half an hour, Leanne decided to head back to the cars while the rest continued. About an hour later, they reached the saddle and were rewarded with breathtaking views.

The summit called and they set off along the last leg. After a lunch break they continued until they reached the turnoff where there was a division — Sandra and Trevor opted to explore a knoll to the left of the track whilst Charlotte and Chris headed for the summit. They found themselves facing a never-ending series of 'summits', each apparent high point becoming just another point en route to the real summit. Chris was ahead and had just found the geocache when Charlotte arrived to see him tugging the ammo can out from its hiding place. Yay! While Charlotte was taking the summit photos, Chris checked his GPS receiver which confirmed that they had indeed climbed about 1000 meters.

Many thanks to Debbie and Anthony for organizing not only a wonderful trip, but also fine weather, and congratulations to everyone who completed the 20km circuit.

Saturday - Ben Dhu team,
The Saturday Ben Dhu team comprised of Rodger Clarkson, Debbie Guthrie, Sharon Campbell and Caitlin Robertson.
They set off and up to Lake Pukaki, here under the instructions of Debbie Pettinger we managed to find a wee spot off the road to park the car, we crossed back over the bridge and shuffled up the side of the road to the fence line where a doc stood indicating Ben Dhu.

And what seems like always the practice hills set in rather quickly as we soldiered up. The track at this stage was reasonable but the pines were spreading and other rough bushes making the hike a bit rougher. We passed back onto a bit of a flat for a while but quickly lost "the track" we meandered through the tussocks avoiding the Matagouri and other pricklies, Caitlin checking her map and frowning a lot but they headed upwards and onwards away from the rough flora.

A small stop just over the first rise gave was to more definite path like patterns in the growth. The team was eager to follow on, so they climbed down onto what

finally felt like the right track and meandered down into the valley following along Boundary Stream, we passed Disappointment valley without too much bother. Then we met a patch of Matagouri that was impossible to pass, with the river fill of snow melt rushing by there was no way to swap to the true left of the river.

Our only option was up. So up we climbed through the Matagouri and Speargrass avoiding as much as we could. We reached the point of climbing where up was a better option to avoid the pricklies but we walked and further away from the (non existent) track. After much negotiating the decision to go back down and find the track was made, however negotiating the bush was much to the displeasure of the team, in particular Caitlin who everyone now know the full extent of her colourful language after being led through a patch of extremely dense Matagouri and Speargrass. There were many, many cut up legs.

Debbie had an absolutely fabulous time and actually enjoyed it…

From the back of Ben Dhu we climb the slightly more luxurious and prickle free walking up to point 1360, where lunch was had watching skinks run aro und, unknown birds dive and fly around the mountains.

Lunch time views. Photo Credit Caitlin Robertson.

We headed up onto the back of Ben Dhu and followed the fence line to the peak where we were rewarded with views of Mt Cook to Ben Ohua.

Up from the saddle. Photo Credit: Rodger Clarkson.

After a small rest, photos and taking in the view, we headed straight down the front of Ben Dhu. A lot less Matagouri and Speargrass but steep. Was easy enough walking with only the odd slip on the snow grass but we clambered down quickly and with the heat of the sun beating down on us we didn't muck around.

The path was slightly more obvious going down to the car but we shook our heads. As the path had been taken over with many years of growth and the spread of pines and the pricklies. So much for walking through meadows.

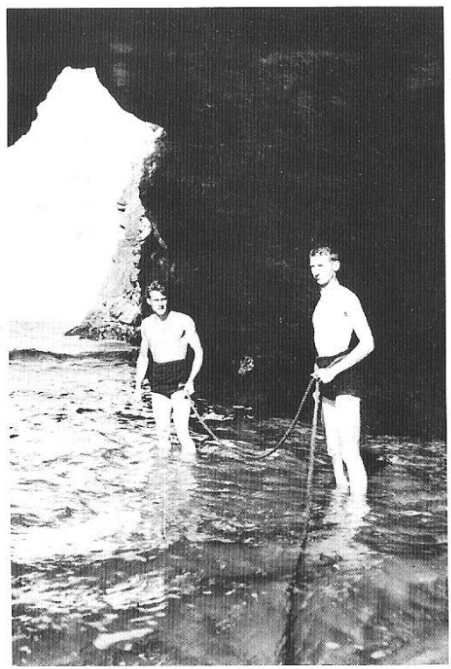
Ben Dhu was Ben Don't. Upon reflection we would use the true left of the Stream to avoid most of the Matagouri, Or just gone straight up the front and gone down the Big Rock Easement to the south.

Caitlin Robertson

6th (Sunday) (100 Trips 007) Doctors Point - McKessar Track Loop. Jane Bruce & Spen Walker.

Doctors Point – Mapoutahi – McKessar Track – Mopanui Ridgeline - Whites Road

Back in 1923, this trip couldn't be done… because the shoreline between Doctors Point and Mapoutahi was impassable until sand deposition built up a beach, exposed at low tide.



This loop has been one of our favourite low-tide day walks since 2007, when the Orokonui Ecosanctuary fenceline track created a way back to Orokonui Estuary and Waitati. This easier Mopanui Ridgeline Track route has become popular since 2017, when the Blueskin Recreational Access Group cleared the gorse from the overgrown part of Whites Rd.

Five non-members phoned up beforehand for a chat, and for four it was their first club trip. This walk was a perfect choice for them!

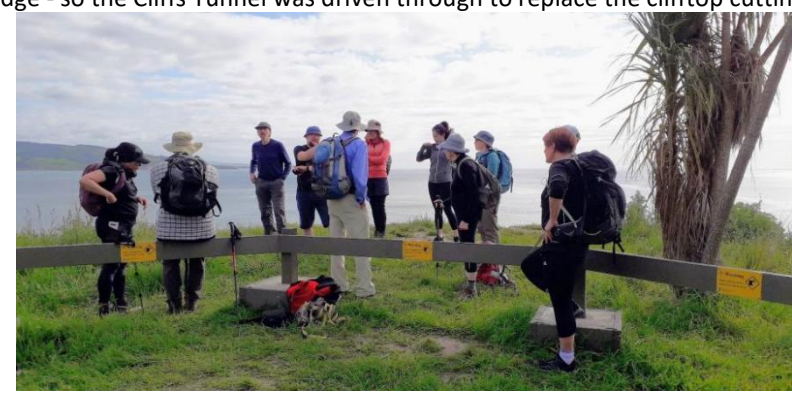
We left from Woodhaugh at 8 am – or slightly after, due to roadwork delays and parking problems. Low tide was at 8am and that early start gave us the maximum beach sand at Doctors Point. This area was called "The Cliffs", for obvious reasons, but from 1912 it became a popular holiday spot for Dunedin doctors. The Doctors Point reserve was land gifted by several adjoining property owners. From Doctors Point carpark, fifteen minutes along the beach to the Arches. Like the volcanic cliffs above the beach, this basalt outcrop dates from the eruption of the Dunedin Volcano 10 – 13 million years ago.

Under we go. Photo Credit: Jane Bruce.

As the photo shows, there has been immense sand build-up over the years. in 1935 Dr Ramsey and Dr Borrie roped up to wade through the Doctors Point Arches at a very low tide. Back in the 1990s the bump in the arch roof was still above your head, but today you need to duck to one side get through the Arches!

Canoe Beach is the crux of this walk, the first place to get blocked by the rising tide, but no problem at 9 am.

Mapoutahi Pa is the next highlight, one of only a handful of pa sites in Murihiku. Antony pointed out the railway line above the cliffs, which transformed the district when it opened to Waikouaiti in December 1877 and to Christchurch in September 1878. Rockfalls were a constant problem on the very narrow Cliffs section. In 1888 a boulder on the tracks derailed the express - luckily into the cliff face, not over the edge - so the Cliffs Tunnel was driven through to replace the clifftop cutting.



The team. Photo Credit: Jane Bruce.

We detoured to look at the small cave and high cliffs around the side of Mapoutahi.

Then we walked the length of Purakaunui Beach and around to a view of the inlet and Purakaunui township.

Along the Beach. Photo Credit: Jane Bruce.

After morning tea at the mouth of Purakaunui Inlet, we entered the forestry plantation and walked through the pines around the side of the inlet. The Weller Brothers ran a whaling station here, built 1836 for the 1837 and 1838 winter whaling seasons, catching 12 whales in the 1837 season. The manager's house was on the opposite side of the inlet, away from the smell, now a crib named "As Ye Like It". Nothing remains now, but the storehouse was still standing in 1872 when a boy remembered attending a tangi there, surrounded by heaps of whalebones.

Walter Mantell, the Commissioner for the Extinguishment of Native Claims, laid out this Maori Reserve in 1848, allowing 14 acres per person. A Maori kaik was here until the 1870s, people making a living from fishing and dairy farming, but the limited area and infertile land forced families to leave. It was partitioned into individual titles in 1891. The owners incorporated their land in 1873 and it is now in forestry.

We had an insurance lesson - in 1994 a fire escaped from a Doctors Point property, travelled along the gorse-fringed railway line, and burnt this Maori block and several other forestry blocks. The owners (who included the Hamels) took the insurance company to court and won third party insurance which paid for replanting.

With permission we visited the historic 1868 – 1937 Maori urupa, which is a fenced clearing in the forestry. Only six graves have headstones and are difficult to view because of lupins.

Five of the known burials are related to Richard Driver (1809 – 1897) the first official Otago Harbour pilot and later Purakanui farmer. Bristol-born Richard jumped ship from an American whaler in 1839. He married the Purakaunui chief's daughter Motoitoi (1824- 1846), and after her death married her sister. While piloting the 'Philip Laing' into the harbour in 1848 Richard met 17-year-old Elizabeth Robertson and married her 1849 (he lied about his age). Descendants of Motoitoi and her sister include the Tirakatene-Sullivan politicians and writer Keri Hulme.

A road walk along Osborne Road around the inlet, spotting paradise ducklings and beekeepers on the way. Then the worst part of the trip, the steep climb up Albert Road to the top of Rowland St. Big water tanks have been installed in several places – apparently a firefighting water supply is required for any new building consent.

An 11.15 am lunch at the Osborne playground – not early, we were all ready for lunch. The 1922 Neill military map of Purakanui was compared to today and Antony gave us a summary of his forthcoming Thursday night talk on this very useful map.
From Osborne, we followed a delightful community track along an unformed road to Purakanui Railway Station. A seat halfway along has views of Purakanui across the inlet.

Historical touring. Photo Credit: Jane Bruce.

Purakanui Station was the transport hub for the district with a stockyard siding, a shunt taking 14 wagons, and three railway houses for the station staff. The station closed in November 1971 but the replacement bus service didn't go to Osborne and was uneconomic.

Antony told us that the railway crossing here is going to be closed to motor vehicles shortly, with safety for walkers and bike riders protected by a $75K chicane. But we all survived the crossing of the unprotected railway line and headed up the 4WD McKessar Track.

Some huge macrocarpas mark the site of the Foote farmhouse, one of the first settler families in the area. Then we pass a "Private Property, keep to marked track" sign – apparently the landowner will be formalising an access easement.

The Hamels reassured us that they allow access to the McKessar house ruin, which they stabilised after buying the property. So we tried to imagine a family of eight living here.

George M'Kessar (1836 – 1912) was from Aberdeenshire and seems to have been at the Dunstan goldrush in 1863. He must have settled here when these farming sections were sold by ballot 1868. He married local girl Emma (1853 – 1900), 17 years younger than him, in 1871. Emma was born at the Pilot's House, Taiaroa Head, daughter of Richard Driver and his third wife Elizabeth Robertson. They had 6 children.

George was active in the School Committee and the Blueskin Roads Board. He wrote many letters to the Waikouaiti Council requesting road works, so it is no wonder the McKessar Road got that name! Emma died 1900, aged only 46. George sold his farm in 1907 and moved to live at Port Chalmers with his married daughter. He died 1912 aged 75, while visiting friends at Purakanui, falling from his horse after a brain haemorrhage. The house was burnt out by a bushfire in 1914.

The Orokonui Ecosanctuary fence is a landmark from the end of Mopanui Road. Yes, there have been club trips walking 9 km around the fenceline.

All downhill now on the Mopanui Ridgeline Track, a public road cleared by the community 2017. We enjoyed the vista of the Silverpeaks and Blueskin Bay, and we appreciated the track detour through some manuka that has been granted by the landowner.

At the bottom of the track Antony suggested we take the direct route back to the carpark, tempting us with a close-up view of the Cliffs Tunnel. No, we forgot to

bring abseiling equipment… and we admired the blooming rhododendrons in the residents' gardens walking along the road to the Doctors Point carpark.

Trip stats: Total trip time 5 hr 15 min. 4 hrs moving time. 15.10 km altogether. 451 m total ascent. Back at cars 2.10 pm and back to town by 3pm as promised.

Jane Bruce and Spen Walker for Helen Jones, Antony Hamel, Mike Hamel. Chloe Ipton, Tina Anderson, Jess Xie, Alan Wang, Hadir Kerdani, Linda Longridge, Mike Klemetson. We thank the Purakaunui Proprietors Inc for kindly giving permission to cross their Maori Reserve land.

12th (Saturday)(100 Trips 008) Craiglowan Falls & McQuilkans Creek.
Ash Flintoff.

On a fine sunny Saturday morning 8 of us left the club rooms at 9am heading to the bullring where our adventure would begin. We set off up the firebreak track till we came to the start of the big rock track & here the climbing ended it was all downhill from here.
We headed a short distance to big rock & stopped to admire the views, take some photos. Once we left big rock the adventure really began the track became overgrown & we ended up bashing our way through bush, bogs, blackberry & flax till we got to the road, but it was a very enjoyable but very slow walk down with most taking a tumble or two.
After a quick break for a drink, we walked down to Sanatorium Rd where we debated whether it was a hospital here or a Weetabix factory, but it was indeed the site of a sanatorium once. We turned off the road & then headed down a short but steep hill then scramble over rocks whilst looking for a geocache till we came to Craiglowan Falls which was worth a visit as not too many people in Dunedin would have seen this small but nice waterfall.
We had morning tea at the falls then we continued walking along & crossing McQuilkans Creek a few times while learning about the person it was named after from Anthony & how club members would visit for tea while tramping in the area till we came to the road again.
Then it was up the road a short distance & a pleasant 30-minute trip along the tunnels track in the bush till we got back to the Whare Flat car park & did a bit of a car shuffle.
Thanks to Debbie, Debbie, Sandy, Anthony, Mike, James & Duane for sharing this adventure with me Ash.

13th (Sunday) (100 Trips 009) Pipeline Track - Rustlers Ridge - Swampy - Black Tarns (aka Lagoons) . Caitlin Roberston.

Meeting at Woodhaugh, 9am, a good group of 10 people turned up to go see the Swampy Tarns.

After parking at the Leith Saddle car park, we walked the usual route, Pipeline (next to no mud, very unusual), Rustlers, where we stopped for a breather and break at the viewing point, then onwards and upwards on the Burns track. All the tracks are in great condition, thank you to whomever is responsible, very much appreciated.

Glorious day for Hiking. Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson.

About thirty meters or so before the "trampoline" transmission tower, head left (yes left!, I love a good left turn) and take your bearing by heading straight for the Mt Cargill tower. Continue until in front of you is indeed a decent sized lake/tarn. It's really gorgeous over there and only moderate scrub bashing mostly below the knee.

Head left again, and you'll find another smaller tarn and then head back and towards the Telecom tower on the Leith Saddle track, and you'll find the loveliest tarn complete with small island.

Offtrack Swampy. Photo Credit: Antony Pettinger.

Heading towards the Telecom tower again, here the bush bashing really becomes bush bashing and a lot more scratchy. Not too long tho before we all popped out at the Telecom tower site. Lunch, lots of chit chat.

A really rewarding trip. So beautiful. No one lost to the depths of any murky dark swamps. Just lots of springy stepping on sphagnum moss in the wetter bits. Lots of fun, highly recommend this off track site seeing.

Thanks everyone for a great trip and thanks Caitlin for leading.

Upcoming Trips

OTC / OTMC Centenary - 100 Trips for 100 Years
Celebrating 100 Years of Tramping and Mountaineering - 1923/2023

DECEMBER

4 (Sunday) (100 Trips 015) Leith Saddle - Morrisons **E-M** Saskia Bronstring

8 (Thursday Evening) (100 Trips 016) Tunnel Beach (clubnight) **E**

10 (Saturday) (100 Trips 017) Leishman's Falls - Chalkies (circuit) **M** Caitlin Roberston

11 (Sunday (100 Trips 018) Leith Saddle - Burns Track - Swampy Ridge - Mountain Road - Red Hut Site - Rongomai - Evansdale **F** Antony Pettinger

17 (Saturday) (100 Trips 019) Gardens - Brown House - Upper Junction - Blanket Bay (return to Dunedin via cycleway or bus) **M-F** Antony Pettinger

18 (Sunday) (100 Trips 020) Campbells Road to Bethunes Gully (return via North, Watts and Abbeyhill Roads) **E** Debbie Pettinger

28 Dec - 4 Jan (100 Trips 021) Xmas Camp: Upper Wilkin (Top Forks) **M-FE** Antony Pettinger

JANUARY 2023

8 (Sunday) (100 Trips 022) Kaikorai to Whare Flat / Chalkies (on foot) **F**

14-16 (Weekend) (100 Trips 023) Routeburn - Lake Wilson (3 Day Trip) **M-FE** Sharen Rutherford

15 (Sunday) (100 Trips 024) Victory Beach & Pyramids **E** Alan Thomson

21 (Saturday) (100 Trips 025) Mt Cargill & Organ Pipes (from Bethunes Gully) **E** Sharen Rutherford

http://otmc.co.nz/tripcard.html

Thursday Night Meetings
Club Social meetings at the Club rooms 3 Young Street, South Dunedin
Members, non-members, visitors , all are welcome to these social events. Doors open at 7:30 for an 8 pm start.

As a reminder you must pre-register on the Weekend Trip Lists at the club rooms (or contact the leader direct) before the closing date (normally two weeks before the trip start). Members must pay before departure, non-members upon registering (non-members pay $13 more than the members fee shown below.Vehicle providers may be exempt from the fee (check with the leader).Trip organizational details will follow by email.You are responsible for your gear and medical / first-aid needs (also see Gear Hire). (E)asy, (M)edium, (F)it required.

Note from the editor

The 100 year OTMC anniversary trips are finally here!
Get yourself on a trip to be a part of our great history

We will be running monthly bulletins during this time so please email your trip reports for the next issue to caitlinr007@gmail.com within a week after the trip. This is due to the shear volume of reports.

The trip leader does not have to write the report so put your hand up to take some load off their shoulders! If you include a photo or two, please note appropriate captions (names of people pictured, names of land features, etc.)

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THAT CONTRIBUTE!

Our Club - the Highlights

Celebrating everything and everyone OTMC. Send your favourite hiking photos to the editor. I may even choose it as the front cover!

Upper Caples Hut - Labour Weekend. Photo credit: Caitlin Robertson