The Bulletin

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc #837 November and December 2023

WEEKEND TRIPS

✶ MacIntosh Hut/Black Peak ✶ Ohau Valleys ✶ Naseby ✶ Hopkins Valley

DAY TRIPS

Round the Harbour Cycleway ✶ Government Track ✶ Grahams Bush to Bethunes Gully ✶ Harbour Cone Loop ✶ Escarpment Track Work Party ✶ Pineapple Track to Leith Saddle ✶

Black Peak summit (-ish) Photo credit: Rodger Clarkson

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 for fuel costs later (check with the trip leader or Treasurer Amy 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!

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

Your Committee

President	Wayne Hodgkinson	(03) 473 0950	
Vice President			
Secretary	Jade Pettinger	022 344 7034	jadempettinger@gmail.com
Treasurer	Amy Telfer-Chiles		amytchiles@gmail.com
Chief Guide	Mark Stephenson	027 615 1870	markstephenson@xtra.co.nz
Membership Secretary	Tracy Pettinger	(03) 487 9488	Tracy@pettinger.nz
Bulletin Editor	Helen Emerson	021 170 3302	helenemerson@yahoo.com
Daytrip Convener	Rebecca Armstrong	021 129 3802	bex_armstrong@hotmail.com
Thursday Night Planner	Rebecca Armstrong	021 129 3802	bex_armstrong@hotmail.com
Weekly Updates	Amy Telfer-Chiles		amytchiles@gmail.com
Clubrooms Maintenance	Dave Bunn	029 779 7006	
Committee, website	Antony Pettinger	(03) 473 7924	antony.pettinger@gmail.com
Committee	Debbie Guthrie		guthrie_deb@yahoo.co.nz
Committee	Tina Anderson		Tina.Anderson@asb.co.nz

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 7pm for 7.30pm start, all welcome
Sign up to our email list: https://lists.otago.ac.nz/listinfo/otmc

Trip Reports

4 November, Te Aka Ōtākou – Round the Harbour cycleway, Jane Cloete

Two weeks beforehand when I started to plan the trip there were 25 people wanting to come. As the early weather forecasts started to come in, several folk pulled out: 10 days out there was going to be rain, 7 days out it was going to be heavy rain most of the day. Withdrawal followed withdrawal, so by the time the trip actually started, only 9 names were left. But eventually there were nine of us on this trip with eight bikes: this was because we had a tandem bike as well!

Eight of us started from Shore St at 10am sharp: Jane Cloete, Carole and George Evans, Laurence and Raewyn Prattley, Gayle Somerville, not forgetting Evan and Alison Jones on their tandem (Alison is blind). We were joined a bit later by Raewyn Forbes.

Sunshine and no wind! What more could we ask! Got to Portobello in good time to be joined by Lynda from DoC. And as we stood in the sunshine, decrying the weather forecasters, the heavens opened! We were drenched in seconds! Lynda, who lives in Portobello, decided not to come because it was expected to rain much of the afternoon.

When the ferry, Wheels Over Water, arrived the rain eased and ceased by the time we got to Back Beach. But we were in need of some reviving and didn't go straight home so we stopped at the Tall Poppies Cafe (now called the Two Gypsies). Suitably sustained we pottered back to Dunedin in dry weather. No sooner had I put my bike in the garage, than a thunderstorm began, complete with thunder and lightning!

My thanks to my companions for the day: it was a good trip overall and I think we all can say that everyone should put it onto their "must do" list.

Jane Cloete for Carole and George Evans, Laurence and Raewyn Prattley, Gayle Somerville, Evan and Alison Jones on their tandem and Raewyn Forbes.

11 – 12 November McIntosh Hut/Black Peak, M, Sharon Campbell

The first weekend trip post centenary was a goodie…and a biggie, with 2400m of vertical ascent on Saturday per GPS tracking.

We had camped at 12-mile delta on Friday night and driven to the car park for the Mt McIntosh Loop just short of Glenorchy. We decided to do the loop clockwise which meant going out on the main road and crossing the Buckler Burn bridge. The track

start on the Glenorchy side of the bridge is not obvious and required some searching back and forth but for future reference its very close to the bridge. Across a gently sloping valley to start we then had a 600 m grunt up to point 1203. On the way up a section of Phil's pole had unknowingly come unstuck. As he looked for it, a quick discussion ensued about should we go back down to help him look for it, but it was very steep and quite hot so for the sake of the team we thought it best to conserve our energy, otherwise we would have helped in a shot. Lunch was around point 1342 with superb views over the Dart Valley and surrounding mountains. After lunch it was down a bit before more ascent up to McIntosh Hut.

The final bit of 2400m vertical ascent for the day. Photo credit: Rodger Clarkson

A short break there and we all headed off towards Black Peak. We found a shortcut track but it petered out and so had a short steep descent down a rocky slope to attain the 4wd track taking care not to send rocks down onto those below. I barely even mention the rock that hit me after being dislodged from the person above anymore. Once on the 4wd track it was easy to follow almost to the peak with the odd patch of soft snow to cross. We couldn't quite make the true peak due to dodgy snowdrifts and vertical rock but our secondary peak at approx. 1980m afforded incredible 360-degree views. After soaking it all in for a while it was an easy descent back to the hut.

While we were gone another 4 people turned up, so we had 9 people in a 4 bunk hut for the night. The hut has a lot of character, but low ceilings, so the taller amongst us had a few head knocks during our stay.

Mt McIntosh bedroom window view. Photo credit: Rodger Clarkson

The forecast gale-force winds had arrived by Sunday morning, so we quickly descended to McIntyre Hut, with the wind reducing once we were below the ridgeline. A careful crossing of the Buckler Burn and a look at some of the historic mining relics on the way down and we were back at the cars in quick time so treated ourselves to a visit to Mrs Wooleys in Glenorchy.

Rodger Clarkson for Mark Stephenson, Philip Somerville, Jonathan Bull, and Leader Sharon Campbell

12 November, Government Track, E-M, Rebecca Armstrong

On a slightly overcast Sunday morning 16 of us ventured up the Government track, through the Waipori valley.

The track is set amongst beech and manuka trees and initially climbs steeply before sidling gradually along the side of the valley. It was a wee bit muddy underfoot and Ongaonga (stinging nettle) was visibly present - a couple of us managed to unintentionally experience its sting!!

Lunch was had in the tussocks, under the powerlines up towards the old Dunstan Road, before returning back down to the cars.

A fantastic, warm, 17.6 km walk amongst beautiful scenery and with great people. Thanks to Rebecca for leading the trip.

Amy Telfer-Chiles for Rebecca Armstrong, Heather Taylor, Deb Wardle, Ricky Kim, Deb Nicholas, Heather MacDonald, Deb Guthrie, Ruth Thomas, Michael Priestnall, Tracy Tooley, Susan Dunn, Tom Kirk, Megan Lahood, Sandra Divett, Michael Taylor.

18 – 19 November, Ohau Valleys, All, Richard Forbes

Huxley River group.

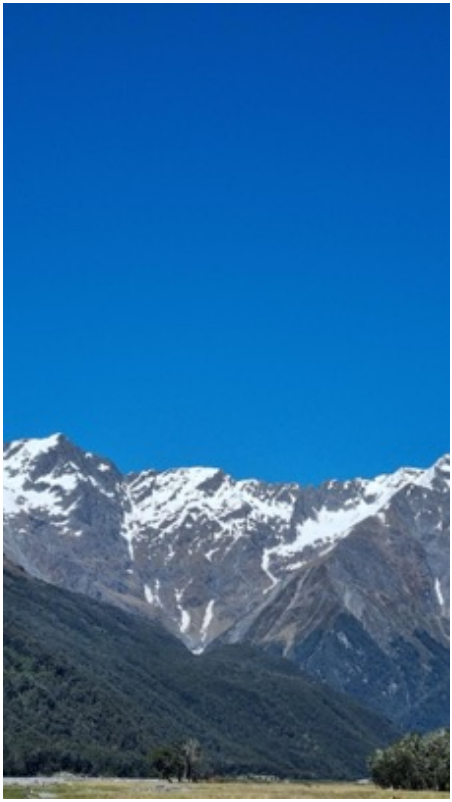
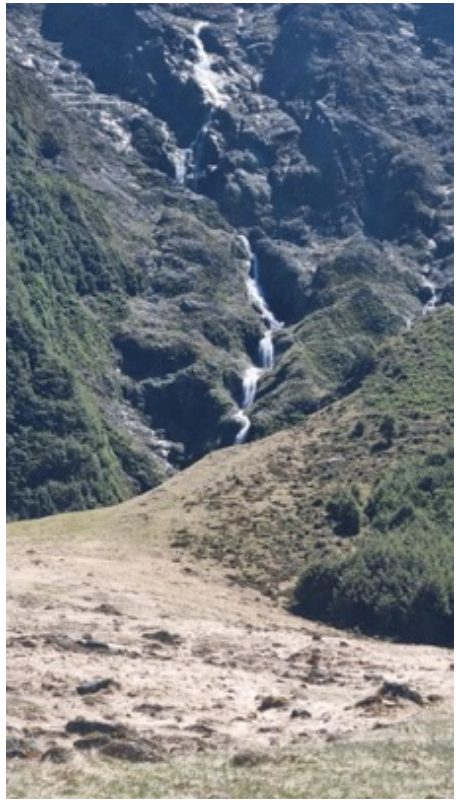
We left in Mandie's husbands' truck as it was higher, and we sure needed that. The road in was rough and testing for all of us. We met up with most of the Club at Monument Hut and pitched our tent. It was a cold night with frost on the tent in the morning.

Our group of girls set of for Huxley Forks Hut. We crossed the Hopkins River - a swift river. Other members of the Club went off in a different direction.

Left: Sandra, Janice, Mandie and Tina. Right: Tina crossing the Huxley River. Photos: Sandra Divett

The scenery was so beautiful and vast, magnificence, just takes your breath away. We crossed the Huxley River easily, then up and along we crossed a swing bridge, then followed the track for a bit, before heading down to the river flats, crossing the river in a few places. As the river got swifter and deeper, we decided to climb the steep moss bank to the track.

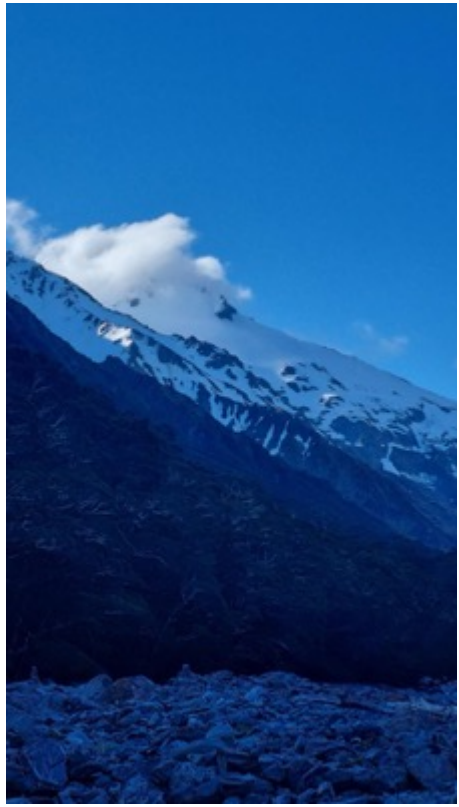
Huxley Forks Hut. Photo: Sandra Divett

Left: Looking back towards the Hopkins Valley. Right: Waterfall near Huxley Fork Hut.
Photo credit: Sandra Divett

We got to Huxley Forks Hut early afternoon and just, bliss so lovely! A few others from OTMC arrived, they were Elke Mathewson and her son Ben, Rebecca Armstrong, Michael Priestnall, Will Sweetman and his daughter.

A lot of great chats and laughs, relaxing in the sun with the views. Before dark a few of us wandered on further to 2nd swing bridge and looked up towards Brodrick Hut on the North Huxley track which is a steep track and terrible.



Left: Rebecca crossing the 2nd swing bridge. Right: Looking up to Brodwick Pass. Photo credits: Sandra Divett.

The next day all the OTMC stayed on the track and through the beech forest, before heading back to the river flats where we had a bite to eat in the back to our 4x4. Then a tricky drive out by Mandie and navigator Janice. A great weekend a lot of laughs with an awesome bunch of girls.

Sandra Divett, for Mandie Lungley, Janice Hodges, and Tina Anderson.

19 November, Grahams Bush / Organ Pipes / Bethunes Gully, M, Debbie Guthrie

We met at Woodhaugh, where Debbie organised the car shuttle process. We left a couple of cars at the Normanby Pub before heading to Sawyer's Bay. From there we set off up the Grahams Bush track. Drizzle started just as we did and persisted. It was, however, fairly warm so the weather was not too much of an issue. As we all know, Grahams Bush is an ideal track to be on when the weather is a bit wet. Debbie is a

great leader as she has a fund of knowledge about the fauna and flora plus the history of locations in which she leads trips. She also knows her tracks very well and provides advance descriptions of where one needs to take care, etc!

After an energetic walk up the Graham's Bush track we paused briefly at the Organ Pipes car park before continuing to the actual Organ Pipes, where we stopped for a photo and morning tea. The troops were consulted as to which route to take up to Buttars Peak. It was decided that we would tackle the direct ascent which starts from just behind the signpost. Sadly, we had no views from the top, other than of rocks, mist and drizzle! We then carried on the Mt Cargill track. Once we reached this track, all minds focused on finding an acceptable (sheltered) lunch spot. Richard found a delightful space sheltered by trees and tree ferns. (Helen aptly described it as a 'cosy dell'!) We found cushioned places to sit and enjoy our lunch and one another's company.

Our 'cosy dell' for lunch (left) and gathering at the Organ Pipes (right). The 'view' at Buttar's Peak (bottom).

From there we set off towards Bethunes Gully and then walked to the cars which had been left at The Normanby Tavern. Thanks to Debbie Guthrie for leading this trip and also thanks to everyone on the trip for their company. An enjoyable trip which ended at just after 2.00 p.m.

Written by Charlotte Handley on behalf of Debbie Guthrie, Tracy and Richard Pettinger, Helen Emerson, Garth Milmine, Mark Stephenson, Heather MacDonald and Heather Taylor

25-26 November, Naseby weekend, All, Rebecca Armstrong

This trip was about getting our youngsters into tramping while getting 2000 ft above worry (sea) level. Around 10 of us enjoyed the weekend in Naseby, and we were joined by a day-tripper on Saturday.

Saturday
We set out in the morning to explore Naseby forest. The forest has 50 km of mixed-use tracks so there was something to suit everyone. Gold mining sluicing remains from the 1860's and dams were visited. The sun shone and temperatures were well in the 20's. Eleven people completed various distances before returning to "base" at the cribs with 5 making the whole 19.5km including around Hoffman's and Coalpit Dams. Well-groomed dry, tracks made for luxurious walking. Luxurious actually reflects the entire trip - after a day of walking many kms around the water race in Naseby forest we enjoyed the luxury of hot showers, a BBQ of mammoth proportions, all followed by sleeping in real beds in bedrooms!

Mt Ida area. Photo credit: Amy Telfer-Chiles

Sunday
After such a feast on Saturday night we needed to do some walking. Upon arrival at the Mt Ida water race in the Oteake Conservation park it was another crystal clear day with temperatures in the 20s. We made our way up Pierces Gorge onto the water race and continued until we were able to look out over Falls Dam and the valley below. The scenery was amazing with hills as far as the eye could see. Tussocks, rugged hills and lots of Central Otago copper butterflies.

Central Otago copper butterfly. Photo credit: Amy Telfer-Chiles

A big thank you to Rebecca Armstrong and Lindsay Aitcheson for accommodation and awesome hospitality.

Amy Telfer-Chiles for Rebecca Armstrong, Kezia Armstrong, Anna Chiles, Linda Langridge, Chris Valentine and his two boys, Michael Priestnall, Lindsay Aitchenson, and Heather Taylor for the day.

3 December, Hereweka/Harbour Cone loop, M, Debbie Guthrie

On a grey and chilly morning we began our loop at the Broad Bay yacht club. Making our way up Camp Road, we soon warmed up. A lot of new building development has

taken place recently on lower Camp Road. Up, up, up the track through the paddocks, enjoying the views whilst catching our breath.

Heading towards our destination. Photo credit: Richard Pettinger

Soon we were heading towards the Hereweka trust reserve and using the top part of the track system following the newly painted yellow markers. There are many tracks to follow and lots of room to explore this delightful broad valley. However, things were getting wild, wet and windy, so over we went to the base of Hereweka. Just one last grunt left to get to the top. As always, so rewarding to get up there, even in not so nice weather. The views came and went, and we put the world to rights regarding politics and the economy.... job done! Excellent conversation and chocolate.

Returning back down towards Bacon Street enjoying the now clearing weather, back to the lower part of the Hereweka reserve. A really big amount of work has taken place with plantings and tracks. It is looking fabulous, thank you to those responsible.

Back now to the cars and looking back up at the loop we've just completed, the weather has cleared. Isn't that just often the way.

Tracy reckons the emerging tradition of giving the first day-tripper having a fall $5 could turn into a con, where people stage a "fall"!
Photo credit: Tracy Pettinger, noting that the ice-creams are now on Richard, when the weather warms up enough …

Thank you to Mandi, Helen, Lucy, Tracy, Richard P, Heather, Steffan and Lynda for joining me on a windy and slightly wet Sunday. Debbie G.

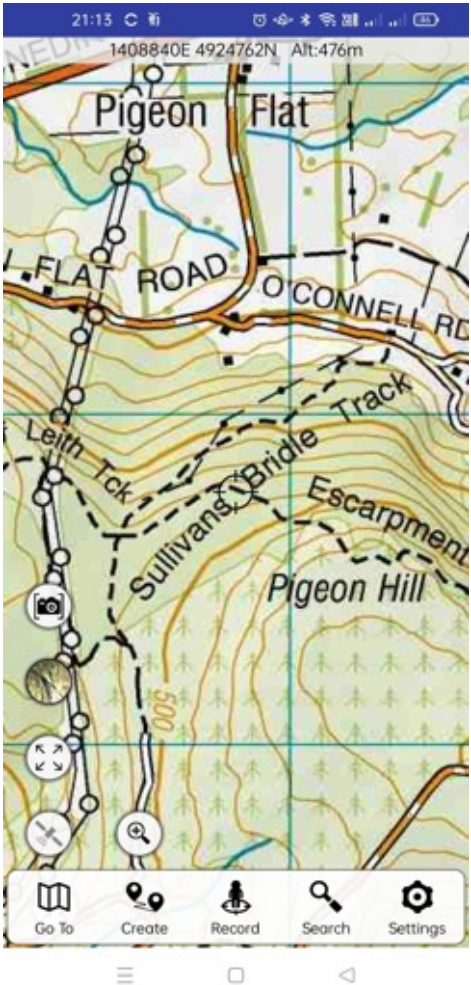
10 December, Escarpment Work Party, Tony Timperley

On the trip were: Tony Timperley (trip leader), Peter Loeber, Rebecca Armstrong (writer) and Rodger Clarkson.

Four OTMC members turned up to assist with track maintenance on the Escarpment Track. Tony, Peter and Rebecca walked in via the forestry access road from Cowan Rd (unmarked gated entrance - hard to find). The section of the Bridal track that appears to go directly to the lower Escarpment track is very overgrown and rather impenetrable. We ended up having to head down to the power lines and follow them up to the track.

Meanwhile, Rodger, who left later in the morning and headed up the recently cleared Cloud Forest track from Sullivan's Dam had reached the Escarpment track before us. We arrived to a beautifully trimmed track and wondered if some track angel(s) had already cleared the track for us. We found our track angel, Rodger, 15 minutes walk further up making quick work with the overgrown ferns.

There was intermittent rain throughout the day (and previous day), some heavy but the track was not as muddy as expected however it was sometimes a bit difficult to



navigate once the trimmings were under foot and we couldn't see mud, rocks and holes.

We didn't manage to get as far as Pigeon Rock so another track maintenance day would be good.

On the trip were: Tony Timperley (trip leader), Peter Loeber, Rebecca Armstrong (writer) and Rodger Clarkson.

17 December Pineapple Track to Leith Saddle, M, Debbie Guthrie

Six of us gathered for the last day trip of the year, parking the cars at Booth Road before we set off up old Pineapple Track stopping to admire the trees on the way up.

We reached Pineapple Point and seemed appropriate to pause and admire the view, the seat and the sign. A passing family took the time to thank the OTMC for creating the lookout and the hard work to clear the area, although they were a little confused by the empty pineapple tins on the bushes - and why we weren't clearing them away!

Enjoying Pineapple Point. Photo credit: Helen Emerson

Onwards and upwards on the main Pineapple Track to the junction and turn off to Swampy Ridge track. The sky had darkened by now, but it was still warm, so we had no hesitation in carrying on our planned route. The walk along the Swampy Ridge track at this time of year is especially lovely with the flax in flower.

Arriving at the viewpoint on the Leith Saddle track.

Photo credit: Helen Emerson

On to Swampy and we sheltered from the strong wind behind one of the towers to eat our lunch and share Debbie's Oreo biscuits. Then headed off down the Leith Saddle track with great views over the city and north to Blueskin Bay and the Silver Peaks. There's a fine viewpoint and some deep steps, and then the descent continues onto the well-maintained section of track down to the northern motorway.

Crossing the motorway raises the adrenalin a little, and then it's an easy 6km walk down Leith Valley Road. The much-anticipated rain started to fall before we arrived back at Islay St. We got back into the cars at around 2.30pm just as the rain really started to kick in. We had covered 17.3km and about 650m ascent.

Many thanks to Debbie for leading a great trip, and the great company from all. This was Heather's last trip with us before she returns to Canada, and the last OTMC day trip for 2023.

Helen Emerson for Debbie Guthrie, Mark Stephenson, Heather Macdonald, Lucy Jones, Rebecca Armstrong.

28 Dec 2023 – 2 Jan 2024 Ruataniwha Conservation Park – Lake Ohau Hopkins Valley New Year Trip, ALL, Steffan Rolfe

'Putting the O in the OTMC'

From Omarama, we managed to drive as far as Monument car park. There were a few ruts to test our 4WDs on but no major mishaps held us back. Luckily the weather had been dry, though rain was expected.

We set off for Elcho hut in the afternoon. There were a few river crossings, enjoyed by all. Michael took his boots off to keep them dry on the first one. Nice try.

Our technique improved over time. Initially, the taller stronger ones linked up for a crossing. That was OK, but when they looked back, they realised they'd left all the 'little people' back on the other side. That didn't go down too well. Ah well, back to the drawing board, and there was plenty of opportunity to practice. The river was thigh deep, moderately swift and the footing bobbly and hard to see. This was before the rain. By the end of the trip we had it sussed: big person upstream, smaller in middle, bigger downstream. Link arms, grab packs, loosen straps rada, rada. You know the drill really, but actually doing it right takes some thought and practice, we discovered.

Elcho hut is a lovely 12 bunk residence though some of the spaces are sharing a double bunk. It was cosy but we had the hut to ourselves. Just as well probably as it rained on and off for the next three days. Sometimes heavy but not all that bad. However, the rivers and streams were all swollen, deeper and faster. We decided to do day trips from Elcho instead of heading up the valley with further rain coming.

Top: One of many river crossings. No point trying to keep your feet dry …

Left: Elcho Hut, home for 4 nights

Photo credits: Mark Stephenson

Side trips included Dodger hut and return, up to North Elcho stream, and a short one to the Cullers hut in the late afternoon. A fair bit of time was spent in the hut, drying out, eating and talking shite. New Year's Eve was similar: drying out, eating, playing monopoly deal, bananagrams, drinking various whisky liqueurs, gin etc, and yes you guessed it, talking even more shite. We had to wind the clocks forward a couple of hours to see in the new year. Basically, we were all horizontal and snoring away by 10.30pm (real time).

New Year's Day the weather started to fine up a bit. Thoughts turned to photography. An OTMC calendar was mooted, in the style of semi naked firemen, or fully monty. Only Tomas has been captured 'au naturel' so far (?Brovember), but Rodger has offered to be cOcktober. I'm not sure who wanted to be Fannyuary… I guess it's a work in progress. Submissions welcome.

We had fun positioning ourselves to create the letters 'OTMC'.

After a great little trip to a waterfall up a side stream of the Elcho, we had our final night in Elcho hut. The next day was perfect weather for our walk out and back to civilisation. A final plunge in the river on a hot day was the perfect end to the trip.

Mark Stephenson for Steffan Rolfe, Rodger Clarkson, Sharon Campbell, Michael Priestnall, Bridget Priestnall, Sharon Bretherton, Joe Bretherton, Tomas Sobek.

It's fun to tramp with the OTMC. Photo credit: Rodger Clarkson

Upcoming Trips

For the next day and weekend trips see:

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

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

Bulletins will be published every 2 months during 2024 so please email your trip reports for the next issue to **helenemerson@yahoo.com within a week after the trip**.

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!