

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 684, May 2008

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

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

8 May

Garth Johnson will tell us what's happening at Fairy-down, and about their new Macpac range.

15 May

Craig McKensie will talk about his trip to the Suban-tartic Islands.

22 May

Phil Somerville tells us about his ascent of Mt Aspir-ing.

29 May

Will Sweetman will talk about his recent trip to India.

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. If you can help please contact Tony Timperley (phone 473 7257, email cathy.tony.t@actrix.co.nz) or Ralph Harvey (phone 453 4544, email ralphh@ihug.co.nz)

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

There has been a definite trend in declining weekend trip numbers for some time now, which has culminated in the OTMC 2008 Easter trip being cancelled. Four people had signed the list but as the club was unable to provide sufficient leadership the trip was called off. This would be the first time in many years that the Easter trip was cancelled, although some years have had low numbers. I can't say why interest in trips is waning, and in particular why interest in longer trips has all but disappeared. There may be some who say that the destination was unexciting, but in lieu of any other destinations I thought that the Ohau valleys would offer much to those so inclined to scan the maps. In the past any opportunity to spend an extra day or more in the hills was jumped upon. Now, if we choose to go tramping we seem to prefer the 'short, sharp hit' of a one or two day trip. I know everyone appears to be busier than before but I have personally found that tramping can become a saviour – once you are out in the hills everything gets put back into perspective. What once seemed important soon pales into insignificance when amongst our spectacular back-country and work can be forgotten about, at least for a few days. If you were one of the 67 trampers who have joined us on one of the six weekend (or longer) trips held so far this year I hope you enjoyed the trip – you have tramped in what has been one of the best summers for this time. On the other hand, I would like to know what members think of multi-day trips. There is always minimal input when it comes to compiling the next trip card, but as we look ahead to the next summer card there are plenty of opportunities to do sections of the ever-growing Te Araroa Trail, as well as exploring parts of the multitude of conservation parks being established or extended – but will the OTMC support any trips to these places? Let us know by having your say in the Bulletin.

I write this in the week of the tragedy of the canyoning trip at Tongariro. Unfortunately the OTMC has suffered a similar fate with the loss of Trevor in a creek in February and I know full well how that affected the club. I also know many members will have felt those same feelings of dread as the news of the Tongariro filtered through. For us to lose one member is a complete tragedy, I cannot imagine how everyone involved with the Tongariro incident must be feeling, given that six of the victims were only 16, and all were under 30 years of age. The OTMC has all affected people in their thoughts at this sad time, and please remember to never, ever take any waterway for granted.

Regards
Antony Pettinger

Membership

Quite a few changes this month.

We're pleased to welcome Leon Everitt, (Helen's husband) 27 Shandon St, Roseneath, 4727868; Sandra Francis, 60 Stafford St, 477-6313; Colette Nicholson, 456 North Road, 473-1143; Bernadette Thompson, 135 Hagart Alexander Dr, Mosgiel, 489-4212.

These folk have moved: Kaylip Khoo to 5 Erin St (no phone change); Michael van der Hurk to 10 Windsor Pl, Mosgiel, 489 8639; and Fieke Neuman now at 15A Durham St, 453 4899

Robin Frame and Ann Hicks have resigned. Robin is spending more time with his grandchildren, and Ann is back off to Christchurch.

Ian Sime
Membership Secretary



LEANING LODGE

Progress has been made at Leaning Lodge. There are now three buildings at this location and the one without the lean is the new toilet. On Sunday the ninth of March a group of seven set off up to the Rock and Pillars to erect a new building over a hole that had been dug the previous April. It was quite a task to carry the panels that had been prepared by Ray from the carpark to the site. Once that had been done it didn't take too long to assemble and tie down. Thanks to Alan Scurr for using his ute to cart the panels and to Ray for organising the materials.

Alan Thomson for Chris Burton, Ray & Jill McAliece, Alan Scurr & Kerrie, and James Harrison

More Club info.....

OTMC Social Programme

I would like to sincerely thank Ralph Harvey and Tony Timperley for volunteering (with very little arm twisting!) to co-ordinate our social programme, at least in the short-term. The vibrant Thursday meetings go hand-in-hand with our tramping programme and thus are a vital function of the club.

But, to be really successful, Ralph and Tony are going to need all the help they can get to maintain an interesting and informative range of evenings. It would be great if all members can channel ideas and names of possible speakers to Ralph and Tony. Talks don't have to specifically be about tramping – we have had quite a diverse range of talks over the past few years, which adds a nice variety to the club. You can contact Ralph on 435 4330 or Tony on 473 7257.

OTMC/DCC Skyline Track Update

It was with good intention that the club proposed to complete our obligation to the Skyline Track by using club members. Unfortunately it has become apparent that this could take longer to achieve than we would like. To this end, the OTMC have a agreement in place with the Dunedin City Council, where the Task Force Green group will carry out as much work as the remaining funds in the OTMC Skyline Track Fund allow. The advantage of this arrangement is that work will be able to continue through the winter and we will hopefully be in a position to arrange a suitable opening before the years end. Work will concentrate on the undone sections between Sullivan's Dam and the Power Lines. If funds allow additional work will be done on the spur track to the 'Leith Lookout'. This offers the best view in the area, and the OTMC and DCC are keen to retain this link

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

in the event that the State Highway is realigned and legal access can be negotiated to link with the Leith Saddle track (currently being rebuilt by DoC). The current spur to the highway is not a legal track and is not endorsed by the OTMC or the DCC.

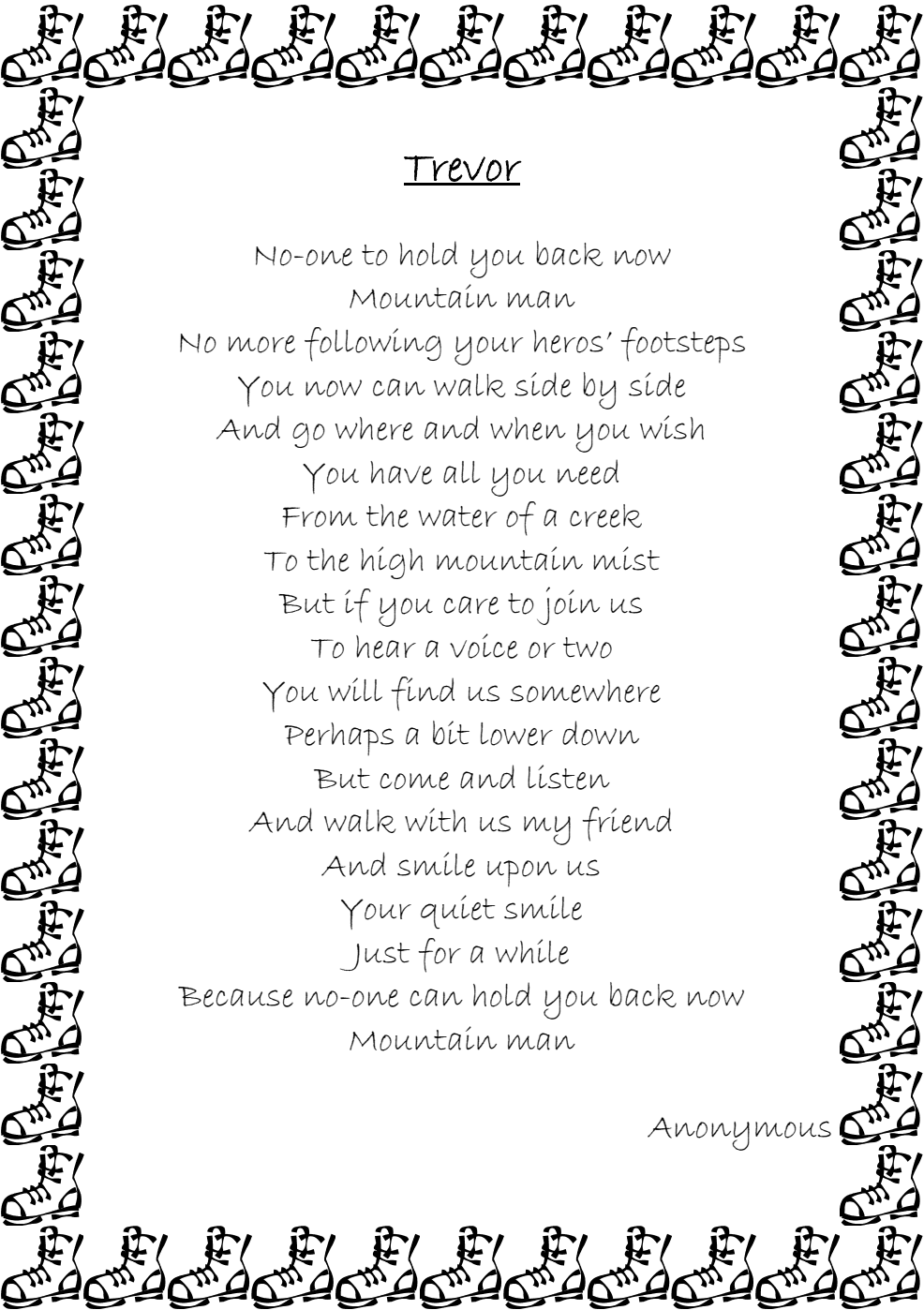
Another possibility we are looking at is arranging an official realignment from near Pigeon Rock to Cowan via the pine plantation. A track has been developed here (again not by the OTMC), but as this crosses City Forest land a formal arrangement will need to be gained. The advantage of the proposed diversion is that it is more in keeping with the Skyline concept, and is suitable to a wider range of abilities. The section currently named the 'Escarpment Track' will remain, but would not form part of the official Skyline Track in the event the pine forest route eventuated.

I thank all members who have assisted Matt thus far with the track – and would like you all to know that I have volunteered the clubs assistance as 'packhorses' to get material on site for TFG. The more we can carry as a club means that more of the original donors' money can be spent on the track. I will use club nights and the email list to advise when these carry-days will be. Based on the last one it would seem that Saturdays work well.

Email List

The club runs an email list, which is primarily used to pass on notices and reminders to members and friends of the club. You can subscribe to this list here: <http://lists.otago.ac.nz/listinfo/otmc> or email: otmc@ihug.co.nz to be added to the list.

Antony Pettinger
President



Trevor

No-one to hold you back now
Mountain man
No more following your heros' footsteps
You now can walk side by side
And go where and when you wish
You have all you need
From the water of a creek
To the high mountain mist
But if you care to join us
To hear a voice or two
You will find us somewhere
Perhaps a bit lower down
But come and listen
And walk with us my friend
And smile upon us
Your quiet smile
Just for a while
Because no-one can hold you back now
Mountain man

Anonymous

Trip Reports

EARNSLAWBURN 23 - 24 FEBRUARY

The Earnslawburn is a small valley nestled at the head of Lake Wakitipu and next one over from the Rees Valley. Access is from the Glenorchy / Paradise Road or alternatively from the Rees Valley via Lennox Pass, the latter being a fit option for experienced trampers.

It was originally intended to have one group take the Lennox Pass route. Trevor Mason had already done a recce trip up to the pass from the Rees Valley and plotted the route on his GPS and was intended to be the party leader. Unfortunately, as we all know, Trevor was accidentally and tragically drowned the week prior to this trip and as a result I decided to cancel this option.

Therefore the route that we did take on Saturday to follow the marked track up the valley and camp at the head with good views of the Earnslawburn Glacier that evening. The track is an easy one and mostly in the bush but clearing to open flats at the top end of the valley. There are plenty of good camping sites, although the thick grasses makes sleeping areas a little lumpy. Water is OK to drink but very cloudy and silty from the glacier. There is a rock bivvy on the true right of the river near the bush end, but a crossing is required to gain access and it is probably better (depending on the river flow) to cross upstream and walk back to it. It is well signposted on the track. Along the way we met a group from the Hokonui Tramping Club who were going over Lennox Pass and out on Sunday via the Rees.

Although the forecast was for lots of rain we were pretty lucky with only the odd spit of rain during the day. On Saturday night it blew and rained most of the time so it was a little uncomfortable for those of us in the flys. Unfortunately one of my group got completely soaked but most kept reasonably dry, so apart from a little lost sleep there was no real harm done. A talking point for Saturday evening was the fact that Jimmy and Richard carted in aluminium camp stools – I suspect this is a first for any OTMC

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

tramp!

Sunday started out with no rain and once the clouds cleared we experienced lovely sunny weather until about 3.30 p.m. when the rain closed in again and it was necessary to don the parkas. However we had enjoyed the spectacular views from the ridge for most of the day.

The route out on Sunday was to climb to the ridge between the Earnslawburn and the Rees and follow it downwards to the head of the Earnslawburn and the car park. We trekked back down the valley to the spot adjacent the rock bivvy and then started climbing when we reached the first creek past this point. It is quite a grunt uphill and a matter of just finding your own way with no marked route. Once the ridgeline is reached the vegetation clears and it is pretty easy walking. Plenty of spear grass on the way up so gaiters are an advantage.

One thing we did learn is that you need to allow plenty of time for this route, particularly when the party consists of mixed levels of fitness. It was fantastic to see that all completed the tramp and I know that for some that it was a difficult slog on the Sunday. So to those people, well done! It was also great to see people helping each other out by sharing loads and giving encouragement. This attitude is part of the spirit of the OTMC and I am glad to say it is alive and well. Another great OTMC weekend and another trip to tick off my list.

Greg Powell for Derek Mycock, Monica Fry, Richard Powell and James Bennington.

Logan Park Valley / Signal Hill / St Leonards Explore February 24

I learnt many things leading this “metro” trip. Mainly I learnt not to change the E/M (easy / medium), as it was advertised, to an M (medium). I forgot that most people work from the printed bulletin or Internet information rather than notices given out at Club nights. Two different messages ensure that definite E people come and definite M people too. Thus a real source of po-

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

tential conflict is created – in the internal workings, physical and mental, of both the E and the M, and in the leader herself. The Es wonder why they are working so hard to keep up; the Ms are frustrated as the challenge they seek is not happening – and I realise the monster I have created by allowing myself to be carried away when planning the trip – making it longer and harder on each reccie! Maybe this tension is present in some form on most trips. I was very dismayed it was full-on in mine – created by my own desire.

The second thing I learnt is that the times one does on one's own in cool southerly weather, can be very different to times for 16 - in 28 degrees!

However some of the good things on this “metro” trip were:

Knowing from the beginning that if the trip was too demanding for any, there was a short way home which was explained and accepted;

Meandering up from Ravensbourne, over to Logan Park and having a fascinating view into the Quarry on the way;

Being able to ring a taxi from Logan Park to send an ill trip member home;

Singing the National Anthem (thank you Jonette) beside Thomas Bracken's grave for the benefit of three North American visitors with us;

Having the freedom to reassess and cut out a section of the trip;

Visiting a possible rock climbing wall in Signal Hill Rd and eating legendary Tararua biscuits in the shade (yes, we were already shade seekers and it was only mid-morning);

Finding a little used track from Opoho School back to Logan Park (worth any reader investigating);

Grunting steeply up on the other side using perhaps the only non-bike track left on that hillside, with one male in the party doing an honourable thing and assisting with a load;

Sadly saying goodbye to five of the group, but finding out later on a check-up call that they had all enjoyed the various days they had very much – one had gone to the beach – maybe we all should have!;

Meeting the Phoenix club near the transmission poles at the top of Signal Hill to learn they had abandoned their initial plan and were heading back to their cars the shady and easier way – I didn't feel such a wimp for beginning to entertain a similar idea;

Having a magnificent and shady lunch spot found by the trusty front scouts, looking across to Macandrew Bay, down to Tairoa Heads and Aramoana and across to Mt Cargill. It was softened by sheep and cattle manure mixed with pine needles.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

Here we reassessed – again. We took into account the present time (after lunch so not early), the reccie times (they had been taken at moderate speed and showed there was still a long way to go), the plans some understandably had for the evening (so needing to be home at an early hour) – and the temperature, the roasting temperature. Homeward felt the best direction, so this is the way we headed.

Here I return to the learnings: I found it really hard not to feel a complete failure – which if it had been anyone else I would have told them that was very silly as that is not what tramping is about – one does not have to reach the initially planned goal - there are many things in the journey to get pleasure from. But I didn't feel that at the time and I found it hard to let it go.

But on the way back there were good things too – especially for me the introduction to a little track diversion and then a pleasant wander back along the road to join what seemed like a high proportion of the American tourists in NZ, all enjoying the sun and the views from the Signal Hill Monument. To them we must have looked most odd, especially when we disappeared down the track in front of the monument and were gone from sight, rather like an apparition. We headed home from the cars high in Ravensbourne long before the day was finished. Maybe some even went to the beach.

What extra had been planned to do? For some time I have been interested in the harbour side of Signal Hill and with information from DoC and the cooperation of some good value landowners, had sorted out the plan continuing along to nearly join Cleghorn St, turning right and going steeply down through a rough and bushy gully (Stephenson's Reserve) to St Leonards, walking for half an hour on the road, and heading up across a dreamy brown-top paddock, into a short section of bush (part of Burns Park Scenic Reserve) and out near the top of Signal Hill again. Ah well, this will wait for another time.

Thank you to Ann, Fiona, Janet, Jonette, Gill, Norene, Penny, Sue, Susan, Gavin, Ralph, Ran, Roy, Tony and Wayne. I don't know what you guys learnt, but thank you anyway for your forbearance. The memory for me is a good one - now.

Bronwen Strang

Circumnavigation of 16 March the Orokanui Fence

It was a lovely clear morning as eight of us gathered at the clubrooms for the drive to Port Chalmers and then up the hill to the ecosanctuary car park. Here our numbers swelled to 15 as more people arrived under their own steam, including our hostess for the day, Chris Baillie, and her sister Jo. Chris kindly volunteered her time (her day off from managing the sanctuary) to escort us and talk informatively about the project.

We walked around the outside of the specialised pest-exclusive fence, which is a hike of over nine kilometres. This is something that volunteers do every day to check for damage and remove pests from the traps. The eradication programme is almost complete and the ecosanctuary is expected to be open to the public later this year. Some of the native birds already establishing themselves in the area include riflemen, tomtits, grey warblers and brown creepers; with kiwi, takahe and many more to be introduced over time. A visitors' centre is also planned with a café, restrooms and education centre for public use. This, together with extensive walkways within the ecosanctuary, will ensure an attractive asset to the area for both locals and visitors.

The highlight of our daytrip was entering the enclosure and meeting the family of kaka - Mum, Dad and the two kids. The offspring are about to be released from Mum and Dads' care to come and go as they please, and it is hoped that the extra space made available in their enclosure will encourage Mum and Dad to make more babies.

If you want to feel a part of this exciting asset-in-the-making you can have your name engraved on a plaque and stuck on a fence post for a small donation of \$100 - what a nice idea!

Thank you Fieke for leading this trip. Janet Barclay for Jonette Service, Viv and Andrew Oliver, Leslie Norris, Bronwen Strang, Fiona Sanggong, Mark, Genevieve (12) and Marielle (8) Devereux, Gordon Tocher and Peter Woods.

Hollyford Hobbles

8-9 March

This trip was listed as "Mistake Creek/ Hut Creek (U Pass)", but as we approached Te Anau and the rain got heavier, the two van groups (totalling 20) decided to implement Plan B and head to the Divide shelter where we would spend the night. We had lost our leader, Ann, and her group of four who were in the luxury of a 4WD, after leaving Gore but reasoned that if they did not see us at the Cascade Creek camping site, they too would implement Plan B.

However, they did not, so our leaderless group set about making themselves comfortable in the Divide shelter, except for poor Kathryn who had deposited her gear in the yet to arrive 4WD! When it became apparent that we were to be leaderless for the night Kathryn gratefully received extra clothing and other items to help keep her warm and then she retired to one of the vans to try and get some sleep.

At dawn it was still raining, and when Kathryn emerged from the van with a sprightly bound, the gallant males amongst us asked if she had slept well. "I had wonderfully comfortable night," she replied. In answer to our puzzled expressions, Kathryn explained how in the passenger section the horizontal ergonomic contours of the three-seat row fitted perfectly with her contours when she was lying down. She was so enamoured with this sleeping arrangement that she is seriously considering buying a set of these seats to use as a bed at home!

As we were packing up after breakfast to head for the Hollyford road-end, our leader and her group arrived and chastised the 20 van group members for not camping out at Cascade Creek, but agreed that Plan B was to be implemented. As the leader's group had not yet had breakfast, Leader Ann gave the van groups permission to set off and we would all meet up again at Hidden Falls Hut.

At the start of the track, as we were all donning our wet weather gear there was a cry of anguish from Wayne – "My boots! I've left my boots at the shelter!"

To be continued.....

TripList

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

I thank everyone who offered suggestions, or have offered to lead a trip on the new trip card (enclosed). I would like to especially thank Roy for his work in compiling the day trip programme, especially given the impact of the accident on the Marathon in February.

The weekend trip destinations have been arranged to suit the current members – there is no point in running too many trips in winter that don't have access to a hut as they won't be well supported. That said, every trip will always have options away from the nearest hut. The programme sees a return of an OTMC snowcaving weekend, as well as another trip in the series of day trips over a weekend – this time to Omarama where there are many day trips around, including several which have resulted from the tenure review process.

I'm sure there is a trip for everyone, so get marking those dates on your calendar now.

May 17-18

Jubilee Hut (Silver Peaks) (All)

Ray and Jill McAlicie 455 6740

It's true – there were some great socials held in the original Jubilee Hut. The largest gathering I can recall is 15 in the dead of winter 1986, complete with a cold southerly and snow overnight. 12 on the bunks, 3 on the floor, tidy clothing, games, pot luck dinner, music....

With the new hut we have decided it is time to revisit an area so close to town for an overnight trip (apart from Bushcraft when was the last weekend trip to the Silver Peaks?, I'm thinking it was around 1990).

Because there is virtually no travel involved this will be a Saturday/Sunday trip, with departure from Dunedin depending on who wants to go which way etc. (You can even walk all the way from home if you want!). The hut sleeps 10 on bunks, and has a large porch for the overflow.

More information will be available at club nearer the time.

May 31- June 2

Hump Ridge / Port Craig (M-FE)

(Continued on page 14)

Matt Corbett 487 6595

The Waitutu area has become a sort of traditional trip for the club to do during Queens Birthday. The two main options on this trip are either a circuit of the Hump Ridge and down to Port Craig, or an in-and-out trip to Port Craig itself.

The trip to the Hump Ridge is the tougher option but can offer some amazing views out over Te Waewae Bay towards Stewart Island (on the other hand the weather can be the pits, so prepare for both!). If you plan to use the Hump Ridge hut (Okaka) officially you are meant to book beforehand, although the hut fee is half price. There is a DoC hut at Port Craig.

A trip to Port Craig offers the opportunity to explore the history of the area. Sawmilling was the reason Port Craig was established and there is still a lot to see, including the highest wooden viaduct at Percyburn.

Committee Members 2007-2008

President	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Vice President	Greg Powell	454 4828
Secretary	Jill McAliece	455 6740
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Imm. Past Pres	Terry Casey	454 4592
Chief Guide/Transport	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Ian Sime	453 6185
Gear Hire	Matt Corbett	487 6595
and	Dave Chambers	454 3857
Daytrip Convenor	Roy Ward	473 9518
Funding	Greg Powell	454 4828
Library	Kathryn Jeyes	455 2473
Clubrooms Officer	Terry Casey	454 4592
Website/Bushcraft Director	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Publicity	Tony Timperley	473 7257
	Ralph Harvey	453 4330
Social Convenors	Tony Timperley	473 7257
	Ralph Harvey	453 4544
(outside committee)		
Bulletin Editor	Robyn MacKay	488 2420
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the June Bulletin, deadline is 15/5/08, publication 29/5/08. You can submit material by email to "rebell@xtra.co.nz"; or post handwritten/typed copy or a CD to Robyn MacKay, 8 Roy Crescent, Concord, Dunedin. Thanks.

DAYTRIPS

Hunters Track, Waikouaiti South Branch, Walkers Track (M) **4 May**

This walk needs at least two cars to work. We meet at the clubrooms at 9 am then drive up to the mountain road. We leave a car at the end of Walkers Road then go back to Hunters Track. We go down to the Waikouaiti South Branch, then along by or in the stream, eventually climbing 40-50 metres up on the true left along an ill-defined track. We eventually descend to meet the end of the Rosella Ridge track then climb an awful hill back up to the mountain road. Parts of the track are a little bush-bashy but on a good day its very pretty. If its raining heavily we'll go somewhere else.

Leader: Bill Wilson 477 2282

Bull Creek to Akatore (E/M) **11 May**

Come and complete the last bit of coastline from Bull Creek to Akatore – Trevor's wish to join the earlier trips up. There is a sizeable seal rookery en route – from one spot I counted at least 50 in view. The walking time will be about 5 hours but the car shuffle will extend this, so maybe for the wait in the afternoon bring a book! You may prefer not to bring your boots as your feet will likely be in saltwater for one short section. There are no waves or strong current however so you could go "bare-feet" for this distance. Running shoes would be fine for the trip.

Leader: Bronwen Strang 473 1610

Mount Cargill / Graham's Bush (E) **18 May**

(Continued on page 16)

After shuttling some cars around to Sawyers Bay, we start at Bethunes Gully. The climb up Mount Cargill is about one and a half to two hours, firstly through pine trees then native bush, and is relatively steep but up a very well formed track. From the top there is one of the best views of Dunedin, also views of the harbour, along the coast and the Silverpeaks. We then descend down the other side, past Buttars Peak (maybe taking a short side trip) and the Organ Pipes, down into Graham's Bush, and out to Sawyer's Bay. The whole trip is about four hours or so. Car pool cost \$5.

Leader: Roy Ward 473 9518

Possum / Rosella Ridges (M/F)
25 May

This trip will be a fairly long day out with some memorable ups and downs and the certainty of getting wet feet. Leaving the cars at Mountain Road we drop down to the South Branch of the Waikouaiti River before heading along to Possum Hut via the "Gold Possum Pics" plaque. There is a bit of an uphill grunt behind Possum Hut but there are great views once you reach the bush-line on Green Hill. Rosella Ridge is a sharp ridge that branches off to the right about halfway up the Pulpit Rock track. The route passes some interesting rock formations and presumably there is a possibility of seeing Rosellae. Towards the end of the ridge there is a side-track to the right that heads down to the South Branch. We cross the river several times while heading upstream to locate the old forestry road that will bring us back up to the cars. Phewsh!

Expect to spend 6 to 8 hours out tramping, so pack plenty of four-season gear, including a torch. Carpool costs \$6.

Leader: Fieke Neuman 453 4899 (new phone number from late-April)

Queen's Birthday
1 June

No daytrip, enjoy your long weekend.