

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 688, September 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.**

4 Sept

Roy Ward spent two months in the USA, going on a ten day hike to the Eagle Cap Wilderness area in Oregon. Hear of this and other hikes he did in the Oregon area.

11 Sept

Garth Lawson (from R&R Sport) is Chairman of the Mountain Safety Council Dunedin Branch, he will tell us about the MSC.

18 Sept

Alan Scurr has been on several of the Otago Cavalcades, he will tell us about them.

25 Sept

Bring your own pictures to show us.

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 4330, email ralphh@ihug.co.nz)

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

PRESIDENT'S PRELUCE

It's been a long time since we have recorded two consecutive weekend trips as being cancelled, but that is what has happened with the recent trips planned for the Routeburn (Falls Hut) and Mt. Armstrong (the third attempt). There are varying factors that have caused the cancellations, but the dramatic decline in membership numbers in the past year have not helped. You will read in the accompanying annual report that membership numbers have now decreased for the past two years and this in turn is having a downstream effect on trip numbers. Presently day trips are the most active activity undertaken by the club. One of the first tasks for the incoming committee will be to address the drop in both trip and club numbers.

Speaking of trips, work has commenced on the weekend summer trip programme, and can be viewed on the OTMC website. Summer has become the time the club trips become more interesting due to non-reliance on huts. The challenge now is to find leaders for the trips. I am really keen to spread the leadership role within the club out wider, so I encourage anyone who is thinking of leading a trip to contact me. We are planning an 'introduction to leading weekend trips' night at club in October.

As stated above, it is that time of the year when the committee report on the year's activity to the members. The format of the report has changed this year, in that in the main we present an all inclusive overview of the past year. I think this has the benefit of delivering a more consistent report, as well as reducing the size, and hence the cost to the club. I would welcome any comments on the change. If, after reading the report you have unanswered questions then I urge you to attend the AGM. The last few AGM's have been easy-going, and I again guarantee that no one will be persuaded to 'volunteer' for a position they don't really want. The AGM is the place to discuss your thoughts regarding the club with the outgoing / incoming committee as well as other members, and will be held on Thursday, August 28, at 8pm in the clubrooms.

The committee met with Dave Tucker, a representative of Windpower Maungatua at the August Committee meeting and we were provided with an overview of their proposal to build a moderately sized wind farm near the Maungatua summit. The club response falls under the conservation and advocacy role, ably fulfilled by David Barnes. As in any issue David seeks to represent the view of the club – if you have views on this proposal please let David know. Each committee member has a short DVD outlining the plans – everyone is welcome to seek a copy to view. Alternatively this may be shown at club one night. The company plan to file for resource consent in September, so we will be making a submission after that.

Antony Pettinger
President

Membership

We are sorry to note the recent death in Christchurch of Alan Thomson who was our Treasurer from 1961-68 and was elected a Life Member in 1971.

John Armstrong who was our President for two of those years has written about Alan elsewhere in this Bulletin.

We are pleased to welcome Peter George and Antony Mabon as new members. They have both been regularly attending Thursday meetings for some time, as well as going on several tramps.

Lucy Jones and Elizabeth Liefing are not renewing their membership.

Ian Sime

Membership Secretary

Stone Hill and Purehurehu Point Sunday 8 July 2007

The day dawned with one of the heaviest frosts of the year, and I was wondering if some of the group might have problems getting to the clubrooms. However after a few phone calls it was arranged to pick several folk up on the drive to Waipuna Bay.

The freezing temperatures ensured there was no dallying, eleven intrepid trampers set off from the shore of Otago Harbour up the slopes of Stone Hill in a quest for sunlight, the award for the most hardy goes to Gavin being the only one to show up in shorts. There was no breeze and the ground gave good traction as all the boggy areas were frozen. After a couple of stops to remove layers of clothing the party duly arrived at the snow-covered peak of Stone Hill (294m). We basked in the very welcome sunshine and took in the vista of the Peninsula and a mirror-flat harbour, the view extended all the way to Dunedin.

A short amble across the ridge bought us to the Heyward Point Rd and a comfortable descent beside Jennings Creek to Purehurehu Point for lunch. Just before reaching Kaikai Beach there is a very well appointed cave used

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Alan Bruce Thomson

1937? to 23 July 2008

I first knew of Alan at Otago Boys' High School where he was a year ahead of me. The course he was taking was rather unusual in that he was one of the few pupils ever to take a couple of units at University while at the same attending school in the Upper Sixth. I tried to emulate him the following year but the university clamped down on the practice.

Alan continued with Accountancy and Commerce and at the same time worked for a public accounting firm which was the norm for the time. What I didn't know was his interest in tramping and the Otago Tramping Club.

Ron Keen continues.

"My first memory of Alan was as a member of the Kew suburban "gang", while I was a member of the Calton Hill "gang". We would have been about 12-14 years old. This was also about the time I met his brother Royden. Our greatest claim to fame was raiding Lady Sidey's glasshouses. We met up again when Alan joined the OTC. I joined in 1956 and Alan was a year or two after that.

When he was Treasurer of the OTC (1961-1968), he became known as "Scrooge" for his unwillingness to release funds for projects which the rest of us deemed necessary!!!!

He had a bit of a reputation for taking alternative routes (i.e. getting lost). The classic was in the Takitimus, in the early 1960s, when he lost his party completely by heading into the wrong valley, reappearing next day completely convinced that it was the rest of us who went astray!

Alan was part of the group who frequently used "The Homestead". One weekend the rest of us were in there and to embellish our meal we looked for our stored supply of garlic cloves. Not a sign of them. Some time later, I was talking to Alan and he happened to mention that he'd tidied up around the hut and decided to plant the daffodil bulbs we had in there. They were, of course, our garlic bulbs!!

I clearly remember the trip that Bryan Freeman, Royden, Alan and I did into the Esk Valley in Fiordland. As this is part of the Takahe Reserve,

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Trip Reports

Eyre Mountains

8 September 2007

Only six intrepid souls set off from Dunedin in two vehicles on Friday night. After tea in Gore we headed to Mossburn before turning off towards Five Rivers. Having found the road end we wanted and checking in with the local farmer, we set up camp in the dark on the side of the farm road.

The weather was fine and all slept well. We didn't seem to be in any huge rush to get moving early, except for Trevor who, having packed his tent and devoured a hearty breakfast of cold fish cakes, was sitting on a tree stump waiting for the rest of us to wake up! He seemed to get a bit bored with this and was also seen striding up and down the paddocks in full wet weather gear (it wasn't raining) checking out his new GPS unit.

After breakfast we drove to the road end and set off down the muddy and rutted forestry road that follows the Cromel Stream. We reached Cromel base hut and took a short break before we hit the track proper. It became quickly apparent that the tracks are little used and pretty much unmaintained. Going was slow with the track overgrown and blocked with windfall in many places. Those with less than average-sized legs spent lots of time scrambling over and under fallen trees. There is a steady climb to the saddle between Cromel and Acton Valleys before the track winds down to the Cromel Branch Hut, which is set above the river in a large clearing. It is a four bunk ex-forestry hut with resident possum in the entrance way, and four dead ones in the long drop. Cause of death remains unknown!

This was our stop for the night with the following days route still under debate. We could return by climbing and following the ridge line or via the bush. Bruce and Trevor decided they would try and find the track to the ridge, while the rest of us would return via Acton Valley and climb over a low saddle back to Cromel Valley and the vehicles.

The next morning was fine with a heavy frost. Those who had foolishly left their wet boots at the door woke to solid blocks of leather. Much

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moaning and groaning! After watching another of Trevor's cold fishcake breakfasts the party split for the trip out and were on the tracks by 8 am. Bruce and Trevor headed for the hills and a track they didn't ever find. So after some time looking they were forced to abandon plan A and retrace their steps back to the hut, and from there return via the previous day's route.

Our group was, by this stage, well down the Acton Valley where the track seemed to be a bit better marked and maintained than the previous day. Reaching the end of the valley it was time to start the climb. Quite a slog it was too! Up and over the top with the bush closing in as we crossed the saddle. Not much in the way of track markers and plenty of scrambling over fallen trees again. After a descent that seemed to take forever we found ourselves back at the Cromel Base hut with a note from Bruce and Trev who had passed through some three hours earlier. We finished our trip in the dark to find Trevor in his tent waiting for us; he had decided we may have stopped for the night at the earlier huts. A long eleven hour day followed by a drive home with Pizza at Gore to finish.

All round a great trip and company and perhaps an area to be visited more often.

Andrew Jarvis for Jonette Service, Kathryn Jeyes, Wendy-Anne Miller, Bruce Bernasconi and the late Trevor Mason.

Milford in white

2 May

It was an ominous start to the trip when we woke to snow and rain at Te Anau. Donning our parkas we headed off to meet the bus taking us to Te Anau Downs for the boat ride across the lake to the start of the Milford Track. We were pleasantly surprised to find we were travelling in a cov-

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ered boat so no standing out in the cold and rain for us – although two brave souls did take that honour and travelled in the smaller boat. After the obligatory photo shoot at the sign marking the beginning of the track it was off. Reaching Glade House in time for a light shower of rain, we carried on over the large suspension bridge and into the trees. We wandered along, enjoying the sneak previews of the river through the trees. The Milford Track is one of the Great Walks with a wide gravel surface, no chance of going astray and mile pegs along the way to ensure we kept on target. The weather continued to be dull and overcast and the odd shower of rain to keep us cool. The walk from the beginning of the track to the repositioned Clinton Hut takes about an hour, and we reached it in time for lunch and just before a heavy shower of rain. We picked our bunks, ate lunch and settled in for a long afternoon by the fire.

We whiled away the hours by playing cards and went for a short walk to the Wetland Board Walk. From here you get some great views up the valley and surrounding mountains. The moss that covers the ground is the most amazing colours with burnt reds, orange and yellows.

The next morning dawned clear, and after packing we headed away early in order to give us plenty of time to enjoy the views we hoped to get. After leaving Clinton Hut the track continues to wander through the beach forest, following the Clinton River. We took the time to visit the old Clinton Forks Hut site and were surprised at how far the river had encroached on this site. It had been around 15 years since we had been here before and the Clinton Forks Hut had still stood on this site. Further on we came across the dead lake. This is a fascinating place where a slip in 1982 created a lake, with many dead trees still standing. Further on we took the short walk to Hirere Falls and the Guided Walkers lunch stop. When we came to the sign proclaiming a view of McKinnon Pass we were disappointed to find it clagged in with cloud. Still, we wandered on enjoying the splendour of the rock walls on either side of the valley boxing us in. We took the short detour to Hidden Lake and spent some time capturing the feathery waterfalls on camera. Further on we took a compulsory stop to visit Pompolona Hut (the guided walkers hut). This is an interesting place with many huts hidden in the bush.

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It was not far on that we entered a large flat with good views of the surrounding mountains. We were heartened to see the cloud clearing from McKinnon Pass and again took time out for more photos. The closer we came to Mintaro Hut the colder it got until there was snow on the sides of the track. Mintaro Hut was a pretty picture, covered in snow and looking very inviting. Only problem was the fire was cold and nothing to start it with. Some enterprising males in our group were determined to get the fire going and for this we were grateful when the hut eventually heated up. It was a full hut at Mintaro with other groups arriving well into the night, having started that morning at the start of the track and missing staying at Clinton Hut. Some people were forced to sleep on the floor near the fire as there were not enough beds, one didn't even bring a sleeping bag! We had a marvellous tea here at Mintaro Hut, in celebration of Antony's birthday, complete with birthday cake and candles. What a great place to spend a birthday!

to be continued.....

SILVER PEAKS 1, 2, AND 3 CONQUERED!

SUNDAY, 15 JUNE

Despite the cloud base being just a few metres above the clubhouse roof, 14 optimistic souls turned up to tackle the Silver Peaks: perhaps we all wanted to have experience in route-finding in heavy mist.

This certainly appeared to be what we were going to have when we arrived at the Semple Road carpark. But nevertheless people were eager to get started, so much so that at 1000 hours when Tony was taking his usual 15 minutes longer than everyone else to get his boots on, Jonette took over the leadership and led off the group. (Note: Tony – hereinafter referred to as the “True Leader” – disputes this interpretation of events: he insists that he delegated Jonette – hereinafter referred to as the “Nominal Leader” – to head the group for the first part of the ascent, so that he, Tony, could show true leadership by keeping an eye on his flock from behind.)

As we ascended, the mist showed no signs of lifting and at one point it rained briefly. After a brief morning tea stop at the Green Hut site, we

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clambered up the steep, muddy track then along the ridge until Silver Peak No.1 (above Pulpit Rock at 760m) loomed out of the mist. The Nominal Leader, eager to make the most of her delegated responsibilities, raced through the mist to the summit, bidding the others to follow. However, it was not until the True Leader, carefully shepherding his flock before him, crested the summit to the accompaniment of heavenly choirs, that the mist lifted. This cloud lifting miracle is recorded on camera, but unfortunately we don't have the accompanying soundtrack, which only the True Leader seems to have heard.

The mist continued to clear as we headed towards the 767m high Silver Peak No. 3, which has the status of a trig station and is at the beginning of Rocky Ridge. Our conquering of this summit was also duly recorded with the New Zealand flag fluttering from an ice-axe held proudly aloft.

With clear blue skies above us and completion of our mission assured, we set off to climb the highest peak, the 777m high Silver Peak No.2 (don't ask about the numbering system!), which was triumphantly conquered at 1300 hours – a good time to stop for lunch, but not before some photos of ice-axe and flag waving. The whole of the Silver Peaks now lay below us and we knew how Sir Ed and Sherpa Tensing must have felt when they looked over the Himalayas after conquering Everest.

Taking heed of Sir Ed's maxim that a mountain is not conquered until you are safely off it, after a leisurely lunch we descended No.2 and began our trek back to "base camp" (the cars on Semple Road). As we neared the end of our journey we were able to look back and see the three Silver Peaks outlined against the western sky, which gave each of us a sense of the enormity of our achievement. Just before we emerged onto Semple Road, the group insisted that the True Leader lead them out in order to address the cheering multitudes who would be waiting. Unfortunately no-one was there so we all quietly got into our cars and drove off. (The Nominal Leader's version of this is that the True Leader ran ahead and when the rest of the group emerged at 15.30 hours, he was waving his flag-bedecked ice-axe in the air and shouting " We knocked the three bastards off!" at a non-existent crowd. Ah well, we all have our fantasies – heavenly choirs and all that.)

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True Leader Tony Timperley (tongue-in-cheek) for: Jonette Service (Nominal Leader), Gavin MacArthur, Paul Bishop, Ron Minnema, Debbie Nicholas, Maryann Darmody, Kim McEllea, Sandra Francis, Paul Cunliffe, Jo Baillie, Colette Nicholson, Pete Holmes, Julie (?).

Postscript: In acknowledgement to the contribution made by the Nominal Leader to this expedition, a photo of her on the summit of Silver Peak No.1 is now on display in the clubrooms to the right of the library cupboard. Any resemblance to the photo taken by Sir Edmund Hillary of Sherpa Tensing Norgay on the summit of Mt. Everest is purely co-incidental.

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by the Lewis Family of Deborah Bay for generations. The cave has a couple of bunks, table, cupboards etc and the remains of a door and window. Lunch gave a chance to explore Kaikai Beach and the rocky base of Purehurehu Point, not to mention plenty of practice at pronouncing Purehurehu. The return journey took a slightly different route scaling Purehurehu Point for a view of Murdering Beach and up the ridge, while trying to avoid the attention of the cattle in the paddock, to the abandoned concrete homestead of Harrisons Farm. Apart from the lack of a floor, the building is in remarkably good order considering its age.

Our good deed for the day was to assist the farmer muster his sheep from the top paddock of Stone Hill down to Aramoana Road. This entailed scrambling through trees atop Stone Hill to get to one corner of the paddock, then fanning out to sweep the sheep to the gate diagonally opposite. There was a slight breeze and we were now in the shade, the ground was still frozen and it is obvious why sheep have such thick fleeces. Eleven OTMC members played sheepdog so well that the farmer later declared it to be the quickest muster of that paddock ever.

All in all a very enjoyable day in the great outdoors in the middle of winter, rewarded by stunning views made clearer by the crisp frost, so don't hibernate – get out and enjoy yourselves.

Gordon Tocher for Rob Seeley, Jonette Service, Teresa Gutteridge, Annette Winter, Lucy Jones, Roy Ward, Gavin MacArthur, Bronwen Strang, Trevor Mason and Janet Barclay.

TripList

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

Mt. Somers (All)
27/28 September
Leader to be confirmed

Unfortunately Dave Chambers is unavailable to lead this trip as planned, but it is certainly planned to go ahead. Spring is a wonderful time to visit Mt. Somers, and with two well appointed huts it is certainly suitable for all grades. It is a gentle, but interesting walk into Woolshed Hut, passing by a former coal-mining area. Once here you have the option of heading to the saddle leading to Bowyers Stream and Pinnacles Hut or an attempt on Mt. Somers (1687m) itself. Morgan Stream, not far from Woolshed Hut is also a worthwhile excursion.

If transport options allow there is a nice through trip to Sharplin Falls via Pinnacles Hut. This option involves a couple of river crossings, but provides a great overview of the entire area.

Trip list closes September 18.

Luxmore Hut / Mt. Luxmore (All)
11/12 October
Wendy-Anne Miller 454-5999
Andrew Jarvis 453-4158

The last tramping weekend on the winter trip programme sees us heading for Luxmore Hut on the Kepler Track. Luxmore Hut offers great views over Lake Te Anau and towards the Eyre Mountains. From the hut it is normally an easy climb to the summit of Mt. Luxmore (1472m) which has even better views. Another popular side trip from the hut is to the Luxmore Caves, but unless you are an experienced caver we wouldn't recom-

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mend going in too far. Accommodation will be in Te Anau on Friday night, and the hut fee is \$10 (or Annual Hut Pass).

Trip list closes October 2.

The Complete Otago Central Rail Trail (Cycle)
October 25-27 (Labour Weekend)
Antony Pettinger 473 7924

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

Day one of our trip will see us riding from Clyde, through the outskirts of Alexandra and onto Chatto Creek via Galloway. The route out of Alexandra via the rail trail is really neat – quite different from the State Highway. After refreshments at Chatto Creek it is up and over the first climb of the line for us – Tiger Hill. The steepest gradients on the whole line are 1 in 50, so it won't be too difficult. Then down the hill to Omakau, where we are spending the night at the Omakau camping ground. As in 2005 we will be tenting.

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

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

There will be a display in the clubrooms, as well as the trip list, which closes on the 16th of October. Numbers may be limited due to transport considerations.

These were results for an Ozwords competition where entrants were asked to take an Australian word, alter it by only one letter, and supply a new and witty definition. You'll need to be an Aussie to understand!!!!???

Billabonk: to make passionate love beside a waterhole

Bludgie: a partner who doesn't work but is kept as a pet.

Dodgeridoo: a fake indigenous artefact.

Fair drinkum: good quality Aussie wine.

Flatypus: a cat which has been run over by a vehicle.

Yabble: the unintelligible language of Australian freshwater crustaceans.

Bushwanker: a pretentious drongo who reckons he's above average when it comes to handling himself in the scrub.

Technicolour lawn: the front yard after a rave party

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 4330
(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 October Bulletin, deadline is 12/9/08, publication 25/9/08. 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

Yellow Ridge / The Gap / ABC Cave (M) 7 September

We drive to the top of the Tunnels Track, and go down this and up Yellow Ridge, which is an enjoyable (if slightly steep) bush walk, followed by a walk through tussock with great views in fine weather. From the end of Yellow Ridge it is a short walk to The Gap, and from there to ABC Cave. Depending on the group and conditions, there is the option of going further towards Jubilee Hut or through the bush opposite ABC, then we go back the way we came. As a bonus, bring a mug and some of your favorite coffee, tea or other hot drink, and freshly boiled hot water will be provided at ABC Cave at lunch time. Trip Cost: \$7

Leader: Roy Ward 473 9518

Saddle Hill Traverse (E/M) 14 September

Note change of date from trip card

We leave the clubrooms at 9am and drive up Saddle Hill via Scroggs Hill Road. After parking at the woolshed on the right hand side of road, we walk down a road to a native bush walk, then up through farm land to the small hill of Saddle Hill. Lunch is at a Log House which has been newly completed. After lunch we will complete the traverse by ascending to the highest point of Saddle Hill where hopefully we will enjoy the panoramic views, then back to our cars and home. Duration 4 to 5 hours, good foot wear essential. Car pool \$5.

Leader: Alan Scurr 489 5538

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Green Hut Site / Silverstream / Raingauge (M)
21 September

Note: Change of date from the tripcard

This includes the Green Gauge route. We meet at the clubrooms at 9 am and drive north to park at Silverpeaks access at Hightop. We walk up Green Ridge (bush and views) until shortly before the former Green Hut, then climb up to the top of Green Ridge. We follow a spur down until we cross Silverstream, then go up steeply to join Raingauge Track to near the elbow on the Swampy Track. Back via Rollinsons Track and up the Swampy-Hightop route to reach the cars probably by about 4.30 pm. There is plenty of attractive bush and good views on the way. Car pool \$6.

Leader: Jonette Service 454 2323

Taieri River Walk (E)
28 September

This track, known as the "Taieri Millenium Track" is a very easy track leads into the gorge that begins up the river from Taieri Mouth, going high up for part of it so there are really good views of the River, and finishes near Henley with the last part being more of a bush walk. We have the options of starting at the Taieri Mouth end and doing the scenic part as far as John Bull Gully (further for those that are interested) and back, or if the logistics can be arranged we may start with cars at each end and do the full track as a cross-over. Trip Cost: \$5

Leader: Roy Ward 473 9518