

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 689, October 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.**

2 October

Yvonne & Stu King manage Glade Lodge, a private hut on the Milford Track. They have 50 trampers to look after each day, and will tell us what this involves.

9 October

Antony Pettinger and other club members, will explain what's involved in being a trip or party leader, so that you can confidently be a party or trip leader in your club.

16 October

Dave & Penny McArthur will tell us about their trip to Switzerland, and possibly part of their trip to Sweden as well.

23 October

Bring Your Own - show & tell.

30 October

Antony Hamel will tell us about the good, bad and ugly of Dunedin Tracks. He will also tell us about his new book "Dunedin Tracks & Trails", published in October 2008, and the successor to "From Sea to Silver Peaks".

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**

Antony, our President, has been writing this page for years, and felt that it was time the job was shared around. I've drawn the short straw, or perhaps I'm the lucky one since there's no restriction on what to write. I have two questions.

Question 1

Do we all know that our old records are safely stored in the Hocken Library (now titled Hocken Collections)? There are Hut Books, Bulletins, Outdoors (our once upon a time annual journal), Photograph Albums, Anniversary Records, Annual Reports, Membership Rolls and Members' Records, and lots more, all fascinating stuff.

As Membership Secretary, I have a paper file of current members, and when people leave, their sheet is filed under Past Members. I still hold the records of folk who left during this millenium, but if you left before 2000 your file is in the Hocken. Occasionally a past member re-joins, but once something is in the Hocken, they don't let it out! However they will provide a stamped copy for current use.

Our records are open, ie anyone can go to the Hocken and look at them. And anyone can become a Hocken member - there is no charge. We have a great deal to thank Thomas Morland Hocken for.

Question 2

Do we all realise how fortunate we are to belong to the OTMC?

We are one of only a few tramping clubs throughout the country who meet every week. Most clubs meet either every month or perhaps every second week. For many years Fiona Webster provided us with an interesting and varied Thursday night programme. When she stood down from being Social Secretary we wondered how we would cope, but Ralph Harvey and Tony Timperley have equalled her high standard.

And we are also one of only three tramping clubs who own their club-rooms. This allows us the freedom to decorate them just as we want, and since the refurbishment a year or so ago, don't they look great! Those of us who remember having to move from one set of rented rooms to another, sometimes having to share them with other groups, or having to meet at an unsuitable time, probably appreciate our present situation even more. It was largely due to Alan Thomson's financial policy while he was Treasurer for eight years during the 60s, that we were able to pay \$40 000 cash for our building when it came up for sale in the 90s. (See John Armstrong's tribute to Alan in last month's Bulletin.)

Ian Sime

Membership

Again we welcome two new members this month: Jane Cloete, 459 Highgate, 467 2328; and Adrienne Dearnley, 60 Musselburgh Rise, 455 5801. Jane was actually a member during the 90s.

Phil Keene and Angelica Treschl are not renewing their membership. Phil is moving to Christchurch.

Korvin Lemke, who has spent the last 6 months here at school, has returned to Germany for the start of their school year. He made good use of his time with us, both tramping and attending club nights. On his last evening he showed us pictures of the many trips he had done.

Ian Sime

Membership Secretary

Trip Reports

MILFORD IN WHITE 2 MAY

Continued.....

We were up and away reasonably early as we wanted as much time to spend on McKinnon Pass that we could, particularly with the short daylight hours available. It was cold as we wandered along the track through the bush and headed slowly up the zig zag to the top of the pass. The clouds were marvellous to watch with the dark colours changing the higher we went. We eventually reached the top about an hour and half from leaving the hut, coming to the large memorial cairn honouring Quinton McKinnon. The top was covered in mist and a cold wind blew around the cairn, resulting in a short stop for photos then on towards the shelter. This is another half hour along the top of the pass and was a magical walk through the

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swirling mists, ankle deep snow, admiring the frozen tarns, watching people disappearing and reappearing like ghosts. We reached the shelter and spent some time inside warming up and refuelling on chocolate. As others arrived the shelter became crowded so we shouldered our packs and headed down the track. It was marvellous to come out of the mist and feel the warm sun on this side of the pass. We stopped for a short break to warm up and watched the mist swirl around the pass, clearing and then reappearing. The further we wandered down the pass the more determined we became that the mist was clearing and eventually we stashed our packs on the side of the track and headed back up the pass to the shelter. We were rewarded for this extra effort with the mist clearing from the pass and wonderful views back down the Clinton River. We spent quite a lot of time on the pass, admiring the views, then reluctantly we eventually headed back down the pass towards our packs. We stopped for a late lunch, enjoying the last of the sun before we headed down into the gloom of the Arthur Valley. It became noticeably colder when we walked out of the sun into the shade of the valley and the trodden snow on the track had frozen making it quite slippery. The track follows a series of wooden and metal walkway/stairs down into the valley. The metal stairs were particularly slippery in the ice. There are a number of waterfalls that are well worth stopping to look at. It is quite a walk down from the pass and eventually we came to Quinton Hut.

Again we dropped our packs and grabbed our parkas to head along the track to the impressive Sutherland Falls. They have a massive drop of 580 metres and are one of the highest waterfalls in the world. We could feel the pressure of the water falling before we came out of the bush. Of course we had to put our parkas on and do the obligatory walk behind the waterfall. It was extremely wet, water coming up under the parka as well as down on top of us. We completed the full circle walk behind the waterfall by crossing the river where the falls hit the bottom. It was great to know that my new parka was well worth all those \$\$ as I was completely dry inside. Time was getting on and so we didn't linger long at the falls, heading back to Quinton Hut and our packs. This short diversion took about an hour and a half. The walk to Dumpling Hut seemed to stretch out before us and we pushed along at a good pace with darkness falling early in the

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bush. We managed to get to Dumpling Hut just on dusk. We were pleased to find a few beds left but not so for those behind us, who arrived in the dark. It was another full night in the hut but this time the hut was lovely and warm as others ahead of us had already gotten the fire roaring.

The next morning was another cold start and we were entertained by a few errant keas. But with the long walk out to Sandfly Point ahead of us and a boat to catch by 2 pm we needed to get on the track. It wasn't far until we came across a pair of gaiters which had fallen off a pack, and picking these up we carried on along the wide, gravelled track. A stop here and there for photos of the surrounding mountains but never lingering long as the valley bottom is a cold place to be in winter. We had a short break at the Boat House before crossing the large swing bridge and towards Bell Rock and MacKay Falls. Bell Rock is an interesting rock where the water has eroded inside, creating a bell shape and high enough to stand in. MacKay Falls is a beautiful waterfall and both are well worth a stop.

The track past the falls is an impressive piece of engineering. It was laboriously cut into the rock by prison gangs in the late 19th century, creating a platform to walk along. There are some great views of Lake Ada, and we remembered there was a jetty that we thought would be a good lunch stop. We were most disappointed to find the jetty gone and the lakeshore still in the shade of the valley, making it very cold. We decided not to linger and carried on to Sandfly Point where we would stop for lunch. Just as we arrived at Sandfly Point the boat also arrived, which we were quick to hop on. It took us out to Milford Sound and the first sun we had seen since yesterday. The valleys are deep and the sun does not reach to the bottom. It was at Milford in the sun that we eventually had our lunch, which was left over birthday cake.

Thanks to Antony and Ann for being such great company on one of the best trips of the year (so far).

Daley's Flat Hut – Dart Valley

20-22 June

Although it was the shortest day, therefore mid-winter, it was not cold when we left the road-end shelter and headed for Chinaman's Bluff, packs heavy-laden with supermarket bags full of coal. After rounding the bluff and then dropping down onto the flat, we could see up the valley with the Barrier Range on the left and Earnslaw on the right, with Pluto Peak sharp against the sky. Despite some cloud hovering around, all the tops were clear with remarkably little snow on them for this time of year.

Coming off the flat at Spaniard Stream and climbing slightly above the Dart River, we came into a section of forest that appeared to be teeming with native bird-life. First we saw a flock of rare mohuas, their bright yellow heads dancing through the branches. No sooner had we got over this excitement, when just a few metres further on there were four or five kakariki (yellow fronted parrots) in the branches above us. Also keeping us company were friendly robins and fantails, along with riflemen who were hopping vertically up tree-trunks.

We stopped for lunch at a left-hand bend in the track which gave us an attractive view up the river. It was here that we became painfully aware that the Dart Valley was sandfly country – with a vengeance! They were in clouds hovering over any exposed skin before landing and biting. With anguished cries we called to each other for repellent – but each time the reply was the same: “I didn't bring any as I thought that with it being winter there wouldn't be any sandflies.” How wrong we were!

Not lingering any longer than it took to eat a quick lunch (with sandflies for extra protein) we continued on the track above the Dart. In the river along this stretch were numerous extremely large rocks around which the river surged. It was obvious that they were too large to have been washed down river - so they must have come crashing down from above us! This realization brought a quickening in pace until we came out onto the next wide river flat, before the very interesting Sandy Bluff.

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The route over this bluff has warning notices informing trampers of vertical cliff drops and a steep descent on the northern side. However, bowels were kept in control with the help of hand rails, fixed ropes and a staircase; but it was still a relief to complete this section. From here it was a straightforward tramp along flats, then through a section of bush before emerging at Daley's Flat Hut.

This hut is very well situated facing north, with a magnificent view up the valley. On the front deck we were shocked to find a dead kakariki. After determining that it was not doing an impression of a Monty Python dead parrot, we gave it a decent burial in the bush. (As it appeared to be recently dead, we guessed that it had broken its neck by flying into the glass ranch-sliders that open out onto the deck.) Before settling into the hut, the more energetic of our party, WendyAnne, Andrew and Antony (still wearing his pack and carrying the coal!) walked further along the flat to the Margaret Burn footbridge where they crossed the Dart River to have a potter around on the other bank. When he finally took his pack off, Anthony, like the rest of us, saw that it had not been necessary to lug coal for five hours as there were large sacks of the stuff already at the hut.

Following good food and drink, all of us were climbing into our sleeping bags shortly after nine. By this time it had begun to rain and the wind was beginning to strengthen – a precursor for what the night was to bring! Those who were in the front bunkroom were subjected throughout the night to the Daley's Flat Hut version of Chinese water torture. As there was no downpipe connected to the guttering, the rainwater poured straight off onto the ground. The sounds which were produced (and echoed around the bunkroom) varied from a drip-drip-drip to a passable impression of the Niagara Falls in full flood. Also, just as one was about to nod off, the hut would be shaken by a strong gust of wind, accompanied by much door banging and rattling. It was a long night for some of us!

Mercifully the wind had dropped by daybreak, and when we set off for our return tramp it was raining only lightly. As we came off Sandy Bluff the rain stopped, the clouds parted and the tops were again revealed, this time with more snow on them. Unfortunately, the fine weather also allowed the sandflies to come out in their swarms, as Tony found out when he stopped to take a photo of Pluto Peak. By the time he had finished, the exposed

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part of his legs looked as though he had been attacked by someone wielding a hedgehog!

The sandflies were also waiting for us when we reached the van at the Chinaman's Flat road-end. They were so bad that some of us elected to get changed in the long-drop with the door closed, rather than in the shelter. A tourist couple drove up, got out of their car and asked us if they were at Paradise. At first they probably wondered why most of our group were sitting in a van with the windows steamed up, and those outside were waving their arms around. The woman quickly found out she was not in "paradise" and jumped into the car and refused to come out, despite the entreaties of her partner.

Despite the sandflies and the overnight water torture, this was an enjoyable trip, with its varied terrain, and is preferable to tramping to and from Alabaster Hut on the Hollyford, which with its unvaried terrain and hard track surface, is more like a route march.

Tony Timperley for: Jill McAliece, Alan Thomson, WendyAnne Millar, Andrew Jarvis, Antony Mabon, John McBurney, and Gene Dyett.

West Matukituki

5-6 July

Not to be put off by the severe weather warnings during the week, our hardy band of 11 set off from Dunedin at 6.30 pm. I put our late departure down to ladies and their make-up. I had few worries about the tramp, however road conditions on the way there was a major concern. As it turned out it wasn't too bad with only a few snow flurries after Lawrence and Roxburgh. One of the locals we encountered at the fish and chip shop in Roxburgh was giving us very strange looks when we told him what we were up to, and although he didn't say, I suspect he was thinking "what a bunch of loonies". After Alexandra the road conditions were excellent but

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the gravel road into Raspberry Flats was white with frost and the speed was a little slower. We arrived at Raspberry Flats shortly after midnight, donned our winter woollies and commenced the two hour tramp into Aspiring Hut. While it is an easy walk during the day, at night when the terrain is covered in snow and one can only see as far as a headlight beam it becomes a little more onerous, hence the walk in took closer to three hours. However we all enjoyed the experience and Sandra even decided to take a swim in one of the creeks. All were in bed by 3 am and asleep, I suspect, by 3.02 am.

On Saturday morning we all treated ourselves to a lie in and a catch up of lost sleep from the previous evening. A hasty meeting after breakfast saw the group split into two with seven taking the steep route up towards Cascade Saddle and the remaining four heading off to explore the upper reaches of the valley. I was part of the valley party but I understand the Cascade party reached the bush-line and would have been treated to some magnificent views. I am told that above the bush-line there was fresh knee-deep powder snow. The valley party made it to the head of the valley and part way up the French Ridge track before we hit our “turn back” time. I think at this point I need to confess to Wendy-Anne that there is no French Ridge Winery. In summer I think the valley walk would have been somewhat boring but in winter it is an amazing place. A real “Winter Wonderland” with an untracked expanse of white frozen snow. The snow seemed to absorb all sound at it was very quiet apart from the crunching of snow underfoot and the occasional conversation amongst ourselves. We arrived back at the hut at 5 pm to find the Cascade party was already back and had lit the fire with the coal we had carted in. The common room had a nice warm feel about it, which was great as the outside temperature had already started to drop for another overnight frost.

Next morning we awoke to ice on the inside of the windows but a beautiful day with clear blue skies. The group split up again with Kate following our footprints from the previous day up the valley, and Sandra and Collette staying behind to give the hut a good spring clean. (This was their penance for something they had done wrong the previous evening.) The rest of us headed back towards Raspberry Flats and the detour to the Rob Roy Glacier.

For me the trip to the glacier was the best part of the weekend. It is not

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difficult at all with a nice easy gradient but the winter conditions made the trip that much more special. The trees were nicely coated with snow and as the sun came up they would occasionally drop dollops of snow on this tramper as he passed underneath. Korven and I made a new friend in the form of a very gregarious kea. After the bush came beautiful soft powder snow, the occasional “crack” of an avalanche off the adjacent glacier, and, of course, great views of the Rob Roy Glacier.

We arrived back at the vans at the designated time of 3 pm only to find that we were missing three of our ladies. They arrived about 40 minutes later (I put it down to make-up again) so it gave us time to have a quick brew and warm up the cold hands.

The snow, the weather, the hut and most of all the people made this a great weekend and my thanks to all in the party for their company.

Greg Powell for James (Mt Cook) Harrison, Sandra (I luv swimming) De Vries, Colette (I luv the French) Nicholson, Adrian (I’m on a diet) Perreux de Pinnacle, Daryl (can’t cook a main) Wood, Andrew (Brmmm Brmmm) Jarvis, Wendy Anne (I luv teenagers) Miller, Korvin (not so fussed on the French) Lemke, Kate (I luv old cooks) Dobson and Anthony (dicky knee) Robins.

Heywards Point Plus

13 July

Not just another Sunday, being the Sunday after a historic rugby win or historic rugby loss, depending on which team you were supporting. Carisbrook will never be the same and while many a rugby supporter nursed the side effects of such a night, others were gathering for the OTMC daytrip titled “Heywards Point Plus”.

A trip of contrast with regard to weather and numbers walking from my first daytrip with the OTMC being the Berwick Forest daytrip two weeks prior. From soaking rain in the forest to soaking sunshine on the coast and

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a four fold increase in numbers walking. The Colmar Brunton poll taken by Gordon gave the statistics for the party that four or five were there as a direct result of the article in the D Scene advertising the scheduled daytrip and the number of members was close to the number of non members.

So after gathering at Aramoana and a quick run down on safety we made the initial climb from sea level to the farmland hill tops above. From there it was a gentle meander along the hill tops to Heywards Point where lunch was had amidst the local wildlife. The marine life on the island opposite provided the spectacle of a one on one rumble between two playful youths. Had they been wearing rugby jerseys one might have thought they were watching highlights from the night before.

After lunch we retraced our path for a while and then detoured across farmland, as arranged with the local farmers, which involved skirting around cattle before we descended down to Aramoana Rd. Here our exit onto the road coincided with the farmer shifting sheep from one paddock to another, resulting in a gate being open, giving the sheep a sniff of freedom which they duly took. Some sprinted by the trip leader and other members of the party took place to round up sheep, and in no time at all freedom was over for the sheep and calm restored.

Now Gordon took it upon himself to not only carry your typical equipment and clothing for a daytrip but to bring his home library as well, so throughout the trip at every point of interest a huddle was formed, a mini lecture on history given and the appropriate literature and /or photos passed around. With this along the way we learnt about sea caves, stinging nettle, spits, moles, local wildlife, local vegetation and points in history such as the smelter that never was or the wayward pilot of a ship.

Naturally, with any collection of people not only do you take part in the chosen activity but as an aside, and a very important aside at that, you meet people. With this you become educated in little facets of other peoples lives and occupations from botanists and doctors recently arrived in New Zealand, people in the education industry, small business owners, mechanics and a GPS enthusiast (geocache.co.nz). The “plus” in the title perhaps. Without taking anything away from the stunning views of the coast, harbour entrance and back towards Port Chalmers, an understanding of the history of an area you walk through always enhances the experience and

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while I can not speak for others I think most would agree that Gordon's passion for what is in essence Gordon's back yard was clearly evident and the history passed on throughout the daytrip invaluable to all. Thank you Gordon.

Brent Vink for Gordon Tocher (Trip Leader), Alan Thomson, Keith Murphy, Colm O'Shea, Murray McGregor, Shanon O'Sullivan, Janet Barclay, Jonette Service, Peter George, Julie Nailard, Darryl Wood, Constance Scheppach, Gavin MacArthur, Bronwen Strang, Adrienne Dearnley.



Knee replacement

There's a mate I used to tramp with who has knee problems. He is considering getting a replacement knee, and would like to know how the operation affected any other trumper who has had it done.

Was it worthwhile? What will he be able to do afterwards that he couldn't do before? If tramping is a problem, can he cycle? He would appreciate any advice, and I can put you in touch with him.

Ian Sime
4536 185
i.sime@xtra.co.nz

TripList

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

Mistake Creek / Hut Creek (All)

November 8/9

Leader to be advised

It has to be third time lucky for this trip. Planned trips in September 2007 and March 2008 were both transferred to other areas due to the Fiordland weather, so fingers crossed this time.

Mistake Creek is situated within the Earl Mountains, with access just short of Cascade Creek on the Milford Road. The intention for most will be to complete the circuit of Mistake Creek and Hut Creek via the aptly named U Pass (1395m). There is a track up both Mistake and Hut Creeks to the bushline. The section over U Pass is untracked. The preferred direction is Mistake to Hut as this means you are ascending the tricky waterfall below U Pass. There are no huts in the area so this will be a camping trip. Faster parties may get over U Pass on the Saturday, which allows time to investigate the head of Hut Creek, including the once popular Glade Pass route.

The trip list closes on October 30.

Motatapu Track (Crossover) (MF)

November 22-24 (Sat-Mon)

Antony Pettinger 473 7924

The Motatapu Track, linking Lake Wanaka to Arrowtown, was opened earlier this year and now we have the first OTMC trip planned for the track. The trip will leave Dunedin on the Friday evening as usual, but is a three day trip, returning Monday night. We are also planning the trip as a crossover with parties travelling from each end.

A lot of the track was part of an historic route linking Wanaka with Arrow-

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town and DoC are now in the process of developing the track. The initial sections have been benched, but the higher areas would still be classed as a route, albeit well marked. There are two 12-bunk huts available at this stage (with a third to be built). As it is quite a distance from Arrowtown to Roses Hut we may camp somewhere between Macetown and Roses Saddle to make the days more even. The track itself ends at Macetown, which is full of early gold-mining history. There are two options available from here, either over Big Hill (great views) or via the Arrow River with the river-crossings.

Due to the trip being a crossover and the hut size we will be limiting the numbers on the trip. The trip list closes on November 14.

Committee Members 2007-2008

President	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Vice President	Greg Powell	454 4828
Secretary	Jill McAliee	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
Daytrip Convenor	Roy Ward	473 9518
Funding	Greg Powell	454 4828
Library	Wolfgang Gerber	453 1155
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
Search and Rescue	Marina Hanger	476 2013
(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 November Bulletin, deadline is 17/10/08, publication 30/10/08. You can submit material by email to "rebell@extra.co.nz"; or post handwritten/typed copy or a CD to Robyn MacKay, 8 Roy Crescent, Concord, Dunedin. Thanks.

DAYTRIPS

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

Unexplored Silverpeaks (FE) 5 October

Let's see if we can go somewhere more interesting than last year's daytrip. Somewhere none of us has been before. Clubrooms at 9 am. Phone Richard Pettinger on 487 9488.

Racemans, Greengauge, Pulpit Rock, Powder Ridge (M/F) 12 October

We meet at the club rooms at 9 am then drive to Whare Flat. We go up Racemans Track, which is fairly flat, to the bottom of Raingauge, then continue through the bush above Silverstream to the bottom of Greengauge. We then climb steeply up through the bush to Green Ridge and on up to Pulpit Rock. We continue down Long Ridge and Powder Ridge back to Whare Flat. The walk is mainly in bush except from Green Hill to the top of Powder Ridge, which are above the bushline and should give good

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views. The day is fairly long so don't expect to be back much before 6 pm and bring a torch just in case. Carpool cost \$3

Leader: Bill Wilson 477 2282

Woodside Glen / Lee Creek (M) 19 October

West of Woodside Glen are the unexplored valleys of North and South Lee Creek, which lead to the tussock tops of the north Maungatuas.

Our trip starts at the Woodside Glen car park. We head up the ridge then sidle round into North Lee Creek branch, then climb steadily up the main ridge over several side gullies. We follow a trapping line and animal trails, as this area is trackless. The bush is easily travelled and as we climb we get glimpses of the creek below and Taieri Plain. At 500 m we meet the tranquil upper reaches of the creek, then climb out of the valley and head up the tussocks to a large rocky outcrop (700 m). This is our lunch stop which has a commanding view of Taieri Plain and the hinterlands. Our travels then take us down into the South Lee Creek branch, past a waterfall, and down into the creek before climbing out to join up with the north end of the Maungatua track.

For those who joined me for the first explore (South Lee Stream) last year, we will cover mostly new ground this time. While most of the bush is trackless it is easy travel with the bonus of no gorse! Dress warmly and allow six hours. Carpool cost \$7.

Leader: Ran Turner, 473 8652

Labour Weekend, 26 October - No daytrip, enjoy your long weekend

Sunday 2 November - Destination and leader to be advised