

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 690, November, 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.**

6 November

Don & Josy Goodhue will tell us about The South West NZ Endangered Species Trust, their project is located in Preservation Inlet Fiordland, centered on Coal Island.

13 November

Margaret Ryan will show a DVD on the Fiordland area, filmed from the air, a “must see”, she tells us.

20 November

B.Y.O Bring your own pictures of trips you have been on.

27 November

The return of the World Famous OTMC quiz night, your quiz masters Graeme & Kathy McKersey

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**

To PLB or not to PLB, that is the question. For those not up with the current jargon, PLB stands for Personal Locator Beacon, the latest in electronic safety equipment. While I am by no means an expert, my understanding is that the PLB is a relatively new device that is able to bounce a signal from the various satellites orbiting our planet (thanks to the American Military) and allows the receiver to pinpoint the exact position from where the signal is emanating, from thus making it an ideal tool for locating persons in distress.

The older PLB's were generic in nature and the receiver, while still able to locate the source of the signal, could not identify the sender. I can recall a couple of years ago when a backpack containing a PLB was lost in a river (Hollyford I think) and went off some considerable time later sparking a false search and rescue callout. However technology has continued to advance and the latest PLB's are personalized so the receiver is able to identify the owner of the PLB which makes it easier to eliminate false alarms.

One of the issues facing the club at present is whether or not PLB's should be provided by the club for club trips. This was discussed at our last AGM but no real consensus was reached. There is always a risk when venturing into the great outdoors as we all know, and I guess that PLB's are one way of mitigating that risk should something go wrong. However in my view the clubs strategy of tramping in a group and spreading experienced trampers amongst the parties is far more effective way of mitigating risk in terms of preventing accidents through responsible assessment of terrain, weather conditions, fitness levels etc. A PLB cannot do this. There is a school of thought that having a PLB available could, in some cases, encourage trampers to take risks that should not be taken, in the knowledge that if anything should happen they can immediately call for assistance via their PLB. However, should an accident occur, then there is no question that a PLB is a very effective way to summon help quickly and certainly anyone tramping alone should, as a matter of common sense, carry one.

One concern I do have is that when an accident does occur the media, in their never ending quest for sensationalism, are very quick to try and attach blame and I believe the club could potentially expose itself to adverse publicity in the event that an accident does occur and PLB's were not being carried. There is no question that the club does have an excellent safety record and our current procedures and processes have served us well in the past. I would suggest that if we take this line of thought further then perhaps we shouldn't go tramping at all.

In any activity we undertake there is a risk, and it is good for the soul to every now and again step out of one's comfort zone. How much risk we take is a matter of individual choice and long may we have the freedom to have such a choice.

To conclude, it is my view that the answer to the question, to PLB, or not to PLB, should be a matter of personal choice for the individual club members and not the responsibility of the club itself.

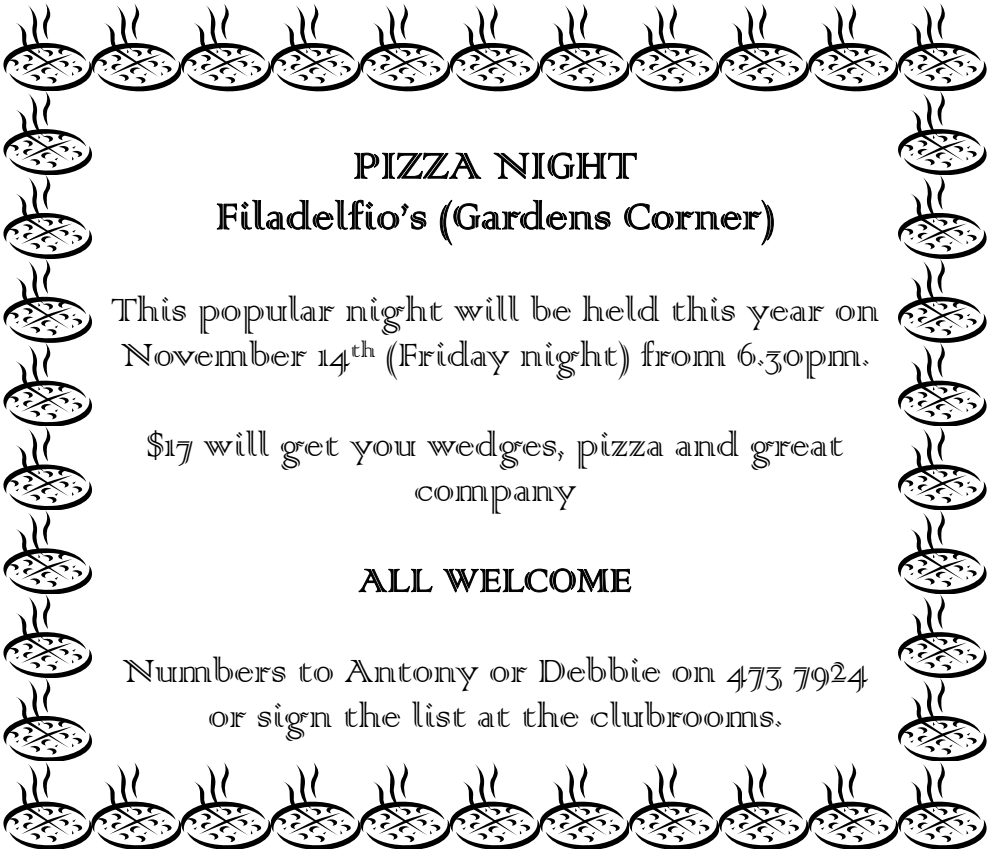
Greg Powell

Membership

This month we have four new members: Adrian & Jenny Chamberlain, 16 Kirriemuir St, 453 0 991; Jenny Conroy, 23 Hart St, 477 1219; and Brent Vink, 171 Scott St, 454 3276; but say farewell to five who are not renewing their membership: Jill Dodd, Jacob Feenstra, Harry Griffiths, and David & Joseph McAuley

These folk have shifted recently: Dean Gillatt, to 207 Balmacewen Rd, 467 5921; Fieke Neuman to 106 Rolla St, 473 7535; Colette Nicholson, to 9 Elm Row; and Darryl Wood, to 45 Ryehill St, phone unchanged.

Ian Sime
Membership Secretary



PIZZA NIGHT Filadelfio's (Gardens Corner)

This popular night will be held this year on
November 14th (Friday night) from 6.30pm.

\$17 will get you wedges, pizza and great
company

ALL WELCOME

Numbers to Antony or Debbie on 473 7924
or sign the list at the clubrooms.



Remembering Trevor Mason



Trevor wasn't always a regular attendee at OTMC meetings, so when he came he invariably paid for several trips, well in advance. This was the case early this year when Trevor planned to attend both the Earnslaw Burn trip (crossing over to the Rees Valley via Lennox Pass), and the attempted trip to Mistake Creek two weeks later. As we are all only too well aware, the tragedy on February 16 meant this was not to be. The club has kept these trip fees aside, and enquired with Trevor's family as to what to do with the money. The family has requested that the club use it in some way to remember Trevor.

The committee has discussed what a suitable tribute to Trevor would be - this task was made harder given Trevor's practical nature and distaste in all things with no real use. As Trevor had a fondness in early explorers like Barrington we have decided an appropriate use of this money will be to purchase both the north and south editions of the recently revised Moir Guide books. These books encourage exploration of our more remote areas by offering less detail in trip descriptions, which we feel is quite fitting for Trevor. A suitable inscription will be placed in both books, and a letter of acknowledgment sent to Trevor's family.

Additionally, the club has on display in the clubrooms Trevor's home-made iceaxe and crampons, made for the failed 2007 trip to Mt. Armstrong. These items will display Trevor's practicality.

Trip Reports

Mt. Kettle/Mihiwaka

3 August

After meeting at the clubrooms, 14 intrepid trampers headed for the Mt. Kettle/Mihiwaka area. Recent heavy rain had caused the area to be very wet and boggy. After attaining the summit of Mihiwaka we took in the fine vista from that point. Following lunch we tackled the downhill section. With much hanging on we slipped and slid our way down. I've never seen 14 happier faces knowing that they had made it to the road. We followed the road to the carpark and then headed to Port Chalmers for a well deserved Icecream.

Gavin MacArthur

BEN OHAU AND THE CONQUERING BEN DHU 12 & 13 APRIL

This trip began with a nearly full vanload on Friday night, which was pretty good, as trips to this area, have had trouble of attracting much interest in the past. We started out with the traditional stop at Big Ev's fish'n chip shop at Hampden. We were saddened to find Big Ev had been replaced by small and confused Ev! Things took a while but we got there in the end. Friday night was spent at a rocky campsite near the shores of Lake Pukaki in perfect conditions; in fact the whole weekend was blessed with fantastic weather.

We headed out the next morning, finding a parking area beside the main highway next to Lake Pukaki. DoC had hidden the sign well so the start of the track wasn't that obvious from the road. The track started with a steady climb towards the hills which were shrouded in morning mist. A bit of a bonus was that it hid how far we actually had to climb! After several

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hours of uphill open tussock and scrub we reached the ridge over-looking Duncan Stream and our campsite for the night. When the cloud cleared there were stunning views over Lake Pukaki, towards Twizel and of the surrounding mountains. Over a gourmet lunch we debated the best way down to the valley floor - the quick way down, a huge scree slope away to our left, or a long steep descent through rock and tussock. With building confidence we chose the scree slope. Once at the top and looking down this confidence quickly disappeared. It looked almost vertical, not the place to practice scree running for the first time. The sight though only seemed to get Antony excited and as the rest of us beat a retreat back to the ridge to start a long scramble, hanging onto scrub and tussock, he took off and ran in five minutes what would take us an hour and a half. A cunning ploy to get the best campsite maybe. Once at the bottom and the tents pitched, we headed off up the valley following the stream to check out a large-ish lake contained by an old slip. A good hour or so walk each way with a bit of boulder scrambling. Those who stayed behind at the tents for a wee nana nap (you know who you are) missed a beautiful spot. The light was going as we ate tea and the coming frost sent most of us off for an early night.

Ice covered tents in the morning made getting up a bit of a chore but promised another perfect day. Looking across at the hill we had to climb first thing didn't help either. In fact going up was probably easier and certainly faster than coming down the day before. A close encounter with a native falcon, which posed for photos at the top, was a delight. After a rest we decided that to retrace our tracks from the day before, which would be all downhill, would take us back to the van too early. Since we were most of the way there a trip up and over Ben Dhu would fill a few hours. This was an easy climb rewarded with great views towards Aoraki Mt Cook. The summit was shared with only a couple of dead sheep of Shrek proportions that probably wished they hadn't missed the muster. Coming down was a long steep descent through loose scree and rock, and hard on some ageing knees. A sunny late lunch-spot let us dry some wet tents before the last leg back to the van and a fairly quiet trip home with a few snoozers. Group thanks to Peter for his organizing.

Andrew Jarvis for Peter, Antony, John, Gene, David, Wendy-Ann (the honorable bloke) and Korvin

SNOWCAVING

30 – 31 August

Richard had been going on for years about how much fun snowcaving was, and he referred to them as the most "unique" trips on the OTMC trip card. I was talked into having a go two years ago when Phil Somerville and his son James came with us, and it was really neat. So, I signed up for Matt's "traditional" snowcaving trip this year. The trip started out not particularly traditional, but ended up that way. It was loads of fun and we all had a worthwhile experience. Matt unfortunately had to pull out at the last minute, and left Richard to lead the trip. Others also pulled out in the last week, so we had only 10 on the trip at the end. We set off at 8.30, after waiting for one person. Naughty them! This was a fair bit later than we would have wanted, and predictably the road had thawed out making it very difficult to get a 2-wheel drive van up the road.

Richard did an Intro discussion in Roxburgh's main street. A crowd gathered and about thirty young farmers from the area were interested in coming along with us in the end. It sounded so exciting. But, unfortunately it is the time of year for young lambies to be born, 3 to one mum I noticed in lots of paddocks. Poor mums! So, the young farmers had to stay to help pregnant sheep unload their babies. That bit wasn't true...

The intro discussion was about what to expect and safety etc. All very necessary in an entertaining 'Richard way'.

And then we piled back in the vehicles for more excitement sliding around on the Waikaia Bush Road in the mud and slush. Gordon's van, as was expected, couldn't get to the top, or anywhere near, so we had to get out and Andrew ferried the first load of people and packs as far as he could get up the road, then very kindly came back for the rest of us.

We had to walk a gruelling two kilometres at the most, to our site that was most suitable for two snow caves. Five people in each one. It was a very un-tramping trip in that regard. Most of us walk more than that on your average trip, don't we?

Well the snow was hard and took lots of digging. Some people are very good at digging and I noted that if we ever have a working bee in our garden those people will be at the top of the list for invites. The mother of

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enthusiasm may be necessity and digging a snow cave with four other people is very much more enjoyable than digging a row of spuds. It has to be noted that the little shovels that we had that the Club have for such occasions are quite crap at digging in snow and are just a snow clearing implement in much the same way as my eating bowl is! The best shovel was a proper garden shovel that we took along as a back-up. It has a rounded business end, (the Club ones have square ends) and it has a long wooden shaft that you can push to the full extent of your body when you are upside-down inside the cave trying to scoop out the roof. Unfortunately, it is heavy, but it is a good design.

It was almost dark when the two caves were finished. The weather had been perfect. The stars were out, as we quickly threw together a meal, washed out the bowl with a handful of snow and dived into our sleeping bags to thaw out our feet. Meanwhile...in the other cave there was an air of decadence. Wine was drunk and the hardy bunch sat around a mound of snow that was pretending to be a warming fire. They had a party and in this happy land, (just next door) they had rosy cheeks and dry warm feet. Oh, how I wished to be one of them.

Sleeping inside a snow cave is extremely quiet and extremely dark. Bliss. As long as you like that sort of thing.

The next morning the party people next door got up bright and early and had breakfast in the bright sunlight. Richard, Darryl and I were sloths. We got up last. As soon as we got up, the party party went off to find a steep slope to practice crampon techniques and be energetic for a couple of hours, courtesy of Ron, who knows about that sort of thing. Thanks Ron. James and Richard summited the mountain (well, almost) and then we all met in the vicinity of the little rock bivy hut near the road to have lunch and admire the view. The sunshine was so warm and lovely to lie in and contemplate lichen and very slow, cold flies. I had one for a pet for a while, but I wasn't disgusting enough for him. He tired of my hygienic ways and left me, off in a slow buzz into the distance. I always remember him. Sob.

We all met back at Andrew's 4WD at 3 pm and some of us marched down the mountain and some of us had an exciting ride down in that wagon, which was originally blue but now was brown. Thanks Andrew. Pity you

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couldn't find the shake button to flick the mud off. We sorted out the gear when we all arrived back at Gordon's van and hopefully everyone has their own gear at their own houses by now.

A brilliant trip! Thank you to Richard for leading it, Matt for organising crampons etc, Andrew and Gordon for driving and Ron for crampon instruction. Thank you everyone for your boundless enthusiasm and digging power. See you next time.

Lessons learnt: We should have left the clubrooms at 6 am. Yoiks, but worth it. IF the road is frozen, you get started much earlier, which is safer if the weather turns bad. Luckily for us, Andrew's 4WD helped get us all up the hill, eventually, and we began digging at 1 pm, about two hours later than Richard had wanted. If the traditional gully is not suitable, the next gully off to the left of the road, about 400 metres away is usually just fine. Enough room for the traditional busload of thirty people, if necessary. Oh, and don't rely on gear-hire shovels if you have only got four hours to dig!!

Tracy Pettinger for Andrew Jarvis, Wendy-Anne Miller, Ron Besuijen, Lynley McCristell, Gordon Tocher, Darryl Wood, James Harrison, Jill McAliece, and Richard Pettinger.





McNally Track

31 August

We started off meeting Kevin Dalton from the Rotary Club at the church in Milton. Jane was waiting there too, then we drove to the start of the track. We started walking up this steep hill and we finally got to the top of the first hill in agony. Lovely Jane gave everyone a strong mint for senior moments. We carried on up a little slope and decided to go the Kowhai Loop way. We saw some early lambs enjoying the morning sun. Mum sneaked a little photo of the backs of tramps. Then we went through a couple of gates and started sliding down a muddy slope. Luckily nobody fell over. Then we went up the second decent hill and jumped over a sty and entered the bush. We walked through the bush and finally got out and crawled up another hill where we stopped for lunch and Kevin left us to head back.

After lunch we headed a different way down the hill. We spotted a big hare racing down the hill and it scrambled into the bushes. We carried on down and came to a bridge that a tree had fallen down on. We managed to get across and found another tree had fallen on the track, so we went around it and started to go up the last hill. I threw a stick onto the ground and unfortunately it scraped Mum's knee.

We at last got to the top of the hill and raced down to the cars. We all got our boots off and drove to the dairy for a much-needed ice cream. Then most of us went to see whale bone fossils at the lime works. And then we all drove home safely.

Written by Russell (9 years) for Mum (Janet), Kevin, Roy, Gavin, Ran, Jonette, Laurel and Jane.

Trip list

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

Enclosed with this Bulletin is the OTMC trip card for the summer period. In compiling the list we have attempted again to create a wide variety of trips, with something for everyone. Again there are some trips which are new to the OTMC, including the recently opened Motatapu Track linking Lake Wanaka to Arrowtown. We are doing this as a cross-over and it has proved quite popular with most places taken. Another different trip is to Craigieburn Forest Park. We have had indifferent interest in trips to Arthurs Pass - it will be interesting to see how this one goes, situated as it is on the doorstep of Arthurs Pass. Other trips with a difference are the Temple Crossing (In One Day) and the end of year social trip to Pigeon Island. Recent Easter trips to Ohau, Arthurs Pass or Makarora haven't been well supported so in 2009 we are trying a 4 day trip to the Skippers area. Four days will allow time to both explore the extensive history of the area, and enjoy some great tramping and climbing.

There does seem to be a reluctance to lead weekend trips, hence the same familiar names feature regularly. We are attempting to overcome this, and I feel the night at club discussing trip leadership was worthwhile. We plan to build on this by providing practical opportunities to develop and further leadership skills within the OTMC.

My continued thanks go to those who continue to volunteer to lead trips, be it weekend, party or day trip leaders – you provide a vital role in our club.

North / South Temple (In One Day) (F)

December 6-7

Antony Pettinger 473 7924

Last December we had a great one day crossing of the Routeburn, so we have decided to continue the theme. The Kepler was considered but

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quickly discarded as this is probably the Kepler Challenge weekend, so we have chosen the classic crossing of the recently named Gunsight Pass in the Temple Valley. We will camp at the junction shelter on the Friday night so we can get an early start up the north branch on Saturday morning. The valley starts well tracked, but as the climb into the steep gut starts it turns to rock / boulder hopping. With a light (but well equipped) day pack we should be on the 1800m Gunsight Pass before lunch. The South Temple is longer, but travel improves continuously as we make our way back to the shelter.

This trip is definitely fit graded trip, being in excess of 9 hours. Experience with rock hopping, scree and a steep ascent will be a definite advantage. Saturday night will probably be spent at the Ruataniwha camping ground.

Trip closes on November 27

Pigeon / Pig Islands (All)
December 13-14
Antony Pettinger 473 7924

Again following the same formula from last year we have planned a social-type trip to end the weekend trip programme for 2008. Last year, on the hottest trip of the year, we walked down Lake Roxburgh. This year we are crossing part of Lake Wakatipu to Pigeon Island. Situated opposite the outlet of the Greenstone River, this island has a summit of 461m, which no doubt will be conquered. Another likely task will be a circum-navigation of the island (looks to be 5km right round). Apparently the water is only chest deep across to Pig Island, but looks to be at least 200m apart on the map. We plan to have the same social evening we had last year, with the services of popular singer/guitarist Wolfgang Gerber already secured.

At this stage I haven't decided on the transport options (the boat HAS been arranged). We will either leave as normal on Friday night and camp at Twelve Mile Delta, or alternatively travel from Dunedin earlyish on Saturday. This will be confirmed once the list closes, which will be on 4 December.

Bushcraft 2009

After a one year break Bushcraft returns to the OTMC. Bushcraft is a major club event that primarily forms the OTMC's contribution to outdoor safety in the hills for the local community. Another very positive aspect of the course is the publicity generated. Next year's course starts in late February and consists of an instructional weekend, a combined river safety / practical tramp (in the Matukituki) plus two evening meetings (see dates below). For the course to work we need both participants as well as a group of club members who are prepared to share their skills and knowledge. I believe one of the neat aspects of our course is that it is run by trappers whose love of the hills comes before a list of instructional achievements.

The committee had sought to appoint a director for Bushcraft 2009 as part of the committee allocations for the ensuing year, but this have proved unsuccessful. As we are committed to run a Bushcraft course early next year a good number of the leaders and instructors from 2007 have offered to assist, which is great.

In the next Bulletin we will be sending every member a flyer that we need to distribute as widely as possible. We had 13 great participants in 2007 and we are aiming for more in 2009. It would be great if all members can do what they can to promote the course. The club website will be updated shortly and will include all information regarding the course.

<i>Introduction to Bushcraft:</i>	24 February
<i>Tirohanga Instruction Weekend</i>	28 February / 1 March (Friday evening – Sunday afternoon)
<i>Matukituki River Safety/Tramp</i>	14-15 March (Friday Evening – Sunday night)
<i>Concluding evening</i>	17 March

Any questions or comments to Antony (BC '09 Director - 473 7924)

These are quite topical.....

Q: What is the difference between a pigeon and a merchant banker?

A: A pigeon can still put a deposit on a Ferrari.

One American to another, "I had trouble with a cheque I wrote last week."

Second American, "Did it bounce?"

First American, "No, the bank did."

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
	Ralph Harvey	453 4330
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 & Social Conven.	Tony Timperley	473 7257
	Ralph Harvey	453 4330
SAR Committee Liaison	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 December Bulletin, deadline is 14/11/08, publication 27/11/08. 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

Raceman's Track (E)

2 November

This is a pleasant flat bush walk up a valley, and it goes along the remains of a water race that used to be part of the Dunedin water system from the 1880's to the 1960's. We will walk to the top weir and back (about 4-5 hours return). We have the option of returning along the other side of Silverstream for some of the return trip. Trip cost \$4.

Leader: Roy Ward 473 9518

Spiers Road - Rhododendrons Gone Wild - Davies Track (E)

9 November

Join me for a pleasant wander over Flagstaff by routes not often used. No bushbashing or tall water on this trip. We leave the clubrooms at 9 am. Bring sense of humour.

Leader: Richard Pettinger 487 9488

Classic Silver Peaks Circuit (F)

16 November

A long day trip this one, probably 10 hours or so. We will start at the Tunnels Track, head via Yellow Ridge to the Gap, ABC Cave, Jubilee Hut, Rocky Ridge, and return via Yellow Ridge and Tunnels Track to the vehicles. Don't forget water bottles. \$5 to be given to the drivers.

Leader: Wayne Hodgkinson 473 0950

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Skyline Track (M)

23 November

We will be walking the Mount Cargill ("Cloud Forests of Leith" and "Escarpment") section of the Skyline track. This runs between Sullivan's Dam and the top of Mount Cargill, and is unique for something so close to Dunedin in that it is designed to have a back-country feel. The boardwalking of the lower section is still being completed, so be prepared for some mud. After a good look at the views from Mount Cargill, we return through pine forest, including some 'cross country' over some forest that was felled about two years ago. Trip cost \$4.

Leader: Roy Ward 473 9518

Sea to Summit Bushbash (M)

30 November

This is a new route for the club. Assemble at the clubrooms at 9am, bring whatever water you wish to drink on the trip.

This trip starts on the shore of Otago Harbour up a 140 year old donkey track and crosses the main trunk railway line. A short detour will allow us to peer into a really long, really black tunnel. The route is part bush track with a few hundred metres of bushbashing in the middle to access Blueskin Road. Stage two of the trip is a rough bush track up the side of Mihiwaka (561m), it is steep in places but we should be able to have lunch on the summit. If we are really keen there is some potential to take a slightly different route back down from Blueskin Road. Given the thick nature of some of the bush eye protection is recommended. The view from Mihiwaka should be extensive as only Mt Cargill is higher in the locality. Approximate time 6 hours. Carpool cost \$4.

Leader: Gordon Tocher 472 7440 - If you live in the Port Chalmers area it may make sense to travel direct to the start point without going to the clubrooms first. Phone for instructions or if you have any questions.