

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 693, March, 2009

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.**

5 March

Phil Somerville, Bronwen Strang, Dave McArthur and Ralph Harvey will talk about their experiences with rescues in the hills, two having been rescued, and two organising rescues.

12 March

BYO - Hopefully pictures from Dumb-bell Lake and Jane Peak.

19 March

Carol Foote will show a DVD and give a powerpoint show of a trip she did in the Rolwaling/Kumbu area of Nepal last year.

26 March

Glen Knol will tell us about down hill mountain bike riding in Bolivia, and also show us a DVD.

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**

Most of the club members will remember the tragic accident last year on the club marathon, when Trevor Mason was drowned crossing the Whare Creek ford in heavy rain. He was linked together with Roy Ward, Brad Wilson and Chris Gadd, when they were all washed off the ford by the force of the current. Tragically, Trevor was unable to get out of the creek and drowned.

Roy Ward and Janet Barclay wanted to remember Trevor by walking the first part of the marathon to Whare Creek, starting the walk at the same time as Trevor did almost a year ago. (Trevor died on 16th Feb, the marathon this year was on 14th Feb.)

On Saturday the 14th, seven club members started off from Booth Road at 4.30 am, to walk up the Pineapple track and down the road to Whare Creek ford. Three more club members had driven to the ford to meet up with the walkers when they arrived just before seven am. Three of Trevor's family joined us at the ford. There was not a formal service - the group stood in a circle on the ford, some saying things they remembered about Trevor. Janet read an extract from Barrington's writings, and she had bought white roses for each of us to drop into the creek.

Then the four walkers on the marathon continued on their way. Roy Brad and Chris completed the marathon, which was what they wanted to do to remember Trevor. Pam McKelvey completed the half marathon.

The rest of the group talked with Trevor's family members for a short while before leaving.

I am sure that Trevor's family would have appreciated the club members remembering Trevor in the way we did.

Ralph Harvey

.....WHERE FOLK "CHEW THE FAT"

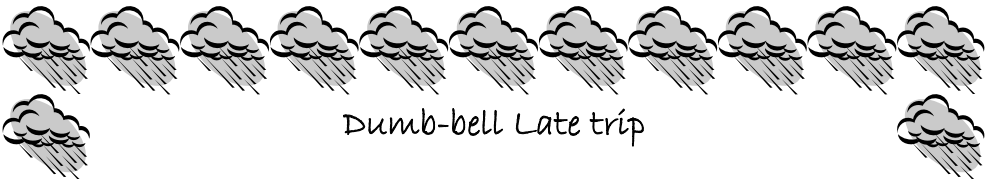
Membership

This month Wendy Buchanan & Danny Hazlitt-Black, Kaylip Khoo, Ivan Mason, Kevin Kearney, Mark Planner & Julie Bourgeois have resigned. Kevin now has two young children, while Mark & Julie are off to the UK for a year.

Alison Coveney, Hilary Phipps and Kirsty Ryder have all moved without trace.

Ian Sime

Membership Secretary



Dumb-bell Late trip

The weekend trip to Dumb-bell Lake has been postponed due to bad weather from 21 & 22 February to next 28 February and 1 March. Departure time will be 6:30 am on Saturday 28 February. Transport is by private vehicles. The intended route is up Freehold Creek along the ridgeline of Ohau Range to camp at Dumb-bell Lake, and back down Sawyers Creek on Sunday. The trip entails a steady climb of 1500 metres.

Anyone wishing to come on this trip should notify me by Thursday 26 February.

Leader: Gordon Tocher 472 7440



High Country Lark

by Neville Peat

In this, the third in his Lark series, Neville Peat has written another enigmatic book that is hard to pigeon hole yet harder still to put down.

Focussing this time on the head of Lake Wakatipu, Peat weaves together musings and information on the district's history, natural history and people, with accounts of his own travels and his encounters with the possibly fictional Lark. He considers at length diverse issues such as the plight of the South Island kokako, the wanderings of Arawata Bill and the merits of tenure review. Interspersed, we get information on the nineteenth century tourist ventures at Arcadia and Paradise, the scheelite miners of the early twentieth century, and a day at the legendary Glenorchy races. We also get conversations with local identities such as conservationist Barry Lawrence and runholders Mark Hasselman and Iris Scott.

Anyone who has wandered up the Earnslaw Burn or the Rees or onto Sugarloaf Pass will feel that they are back there as they read the author's descriptions – even if he did miss the best bits of the Earnslaw Burn by re-tracing his steps down the valley rather than exiting via the tops.

Highly recommended reading for anyone with a love of this wonderful corner of New Zealand.

David Barnes

Trip Reports

Tararua Peaks 21—23 November

contd.....

We were up at first light, trying not to disturb the anglers who had turned up long after dark. We retraced our steps for a short while, then began the gradual climb to Cone Saddle. We could have gone through the saddle for a short round trip, but instead chose the solid climb to Cone itself. At about 10 am we broke out of the bush and soon were at the summit. It was clear that the choice to avoid the Tararua Peaks was a good one, as the westerly winds were strong where we were at 1000 m and any sign of the main range was completely cloaked in thick cloud. Even Mt Holdsworth, which sits well out to the east was obscured.

It only took twenty minutes to cross the top before re-entering the bush and beginning the long descent to the Waiohine. My lunch was, fittingly, Tararua biscuits. It was nearly twenty five years since I'd last tried them, but thought their indestructible qualities and longevity would be ideal for trips like this one and the one to Kahurangi a fortnight ago, where packing up a few days before the trip and having the pack subjected to various indignities by airline staff were likely to render many other lunch options into crumbs. Ah, nostalgia – the process by which we forget adversity. I'm damned if I know how I ate the things for three weeks on the trot all those years ago.

By mid afternoon, we could see the occasional glimpse of clear tops as we descended towards Totara Flats Hut. The hut is similar to the new one at Mt Somers, and we were surprised to find anglers out-numbering trampers for the evening.

Sunday dawned drizzly, and so the morning was a parkas on, parkas off one. After crossing the Totara Flats, the route involved a fair amount of up down up down. The more popular route into Totara Flats is from Holdsworth Lodge, which involves a bigger climb but generally a more up-

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market track and no stream crossings that could be problematic.

Apart from one long photo shoot down by the river, we largely kept going, so when we had lunch some people going the other way informed us we were only ten minutes from the bridge. It's always good to do a complete round trip.

Being out early meant time for more tea in Greytown, followed by a dash up to Rimutaka trig, a 20 minute climb from the top of the Rimutaka Hill on State Highway 2. The views are well worth breaking your journey for if you're heading into or out of the Wairarapa.

David Barnes



Cone Hut

Mt Somers in Four Seasons

27 & 28 Sept 08

Six o'clock and time to go, but hang on, we forgot our most important piece of gear - bundles of, you guessed it, COAL! Of course, where would we be without it on our gear list? DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT, then we were on the right track for Mt Somers.

Tea in Oamaru was busy, with school holidays and families eating out. On the road again, thanks Ray for keeping us safe on the left side of the road most of the time, the winds were very strong at times, many thanks. Mt Somers Camping Ground, here we come. We then got settled in for the night in two cabins with ten trampers, five trampers in each. Then the fun started - what ratio of snorers and non-snorers do we have for each cabin? Then I'm sure if you are good at maths you will have some laughs working it out.

On Saturday morning a cool wind but sunny started our day. We all headed for Sharplin Falls Carpark to look at the waterfalls. Then we split into two groups, one of three and one of seven who would take the longer route to Pinnacles Hut and onto the saddle at 1170m before heading down to Woolshed Creek Hut.

The group of three took the van to the other end at Woolshed Creek picnic area and would make their way up to the now defunct Blackburn Coal Mine, (Trig R) then onto Woolshed Creek Hut where we would all meet for the night. First port of call for the group of seven was Dukes Knob (740m) with good views of the vallies and saddle, some snow around on the tops, then back down to the river. The dominant trees in this area of the track are black and mountain beech, along with broadleaf and marbleleaf.

The well marked track climbed to the subalpine area, and Pinnacles Hut came into view. It was getting hot time and to take a layer or two off; then

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the hut was a welcome spot to have lunch with views over the Canterbury Plains. The andesite pinnacles that lie scattered over the hillside are how the hut got its name, which, along with the huge columns of rhyolite higher up the mountainside, show that Mt Somers had volcanic origins.

After lunch the weather changed on us very fast while heading for the saddle. Hail was starting to hit us thick and fast, so time for coats. The rest of the day was snow and plenty of it with some parts of the track in white-out conditions. Who said it was a Spring trip? So no chance of seeing the native falcons which frequent the Morgan Stream area of the track, then we dropped down to the area of the Water Caves, Hydroslide and Trifalls Creek, but sadly not seen that day. We stayed warm by keeping on moving and thinking of a warm fire and hot drink, then “B***er me”, one more stream and wet feet later we arrive at the hut to meet up with the “A” team. A roaring fire and hot water for all, well done guys.

The new Woolshed Creek Hut is only a few years or so old, just what a tramper needs. The “A” team had a hot day getting to the hut as well, the shorter trip for them was just as hard because even before they left the car-park they had given a pint or two of blood to our mates the wonderful sandflies. The grass outside the hut was still green when they arrived but soon changed to pure white.

Time for that all important pastime - food! It was more like feed everyone for a week, where do we start?! While filling our faces with so many choices, naturally you also have a good chinwag about anything and everything. But with daylight saving do you lose an hour of social time or a hour of sleep? Speaking of sleep, the hut sleeps 26 with one bunk room for 10 people and the other for 16. So with our group of 10, a group of 5 and a group of 2, I am sure that equals 17 with some spare beds. For good measure the other groups joined in the fun of trying to work out once again the ratio of snorers to non-snorers. I’m sure that by the time this gets solved it will be Christmas 08 or 09. We finished the day with toasted marshmallows using the hut fire and by this stage of the night there was a brilliant sunset and clear skies.

Sunday morning dawned crisp and clear, and after a good breakfast and we set off following each other’s footsteps through the snow. We had a short climb away from the upper part of Woolshed Creek canyon to Trig R

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(934m), with a fine viewpoint overlooking the extensive glaciated landscape stretching westwards to the Arrowsmith Range and the Southern Alps. Wow, just magic. From this point we dropped down steadily following a poled route across snow covered tussocks to the Blackburn Coal Mine, which was well worth a stop and look around. The mine finally closed in the 1960's, there are still remnants of the industry scattered around the hillside including the old jig railway and hopper lying wrecked at the bottom of the steep incline. With a short walk from here to the picnic and carpark area it was time for lunch and a change of clothes. With the weather so fine we decided to do a bit of tree hugging at Peel Forest at the largest totara in the South Island, being 8½m around. We also had time to stop at Geraldine for icecream, coffee and a quick look around some of the shops, then homeward bound.

Gene for Ray, Jill, Alan, Paul, Jo, Annette, Adrienne, Constance and Collette

Two for the price of one – plus a performing penguin.

Tavora Reserve and Huriawa Pa

1st February

Low cloud and light drizzle, with the prospect of a Southerly change and rain, did not deter eleven hopeful souls from committing themselves to an exposed coastal walk. The drizzle persisted over the Leith Saddle but by the time we crested the Kilmog it had ceased, although the skies were still overcast.

The Tavora Reserve (“tavora” is an ancient Maori word for penguin) is located around Bobby's Head, on the coast about halfway between Waikouaiti and Palmerston. The reserve was established in 1993 by the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust, which over the years has restored the natural vegetation to improve the area and enhance it as a breeding habitat for the yellow-eyed penguin.

As we set off the southerly was getting noticeably stronger but not colder, so we remained optimistic that we would complete the walk before any

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rain set in. The first part of the walk ends on the beach where the Trust has planted pikao, a native golden sedge to replace the introduced marram grass. This has allowed the dune system to revert to its original state with many other native plants becoming established, including the strangely named Cook's Scurvy Grass – which Captain Cook apparently used successfully to combat scurvy amongst his crew.

The next section of track was a short but steep climb up to the head and into the full force of the southerly; however, as we were heading north, it was not too much of a hindrance. Also, we noticed that, rather than rain clouds gathering, patches of blue sky were appearing. At the headland we were able to look down upon rocks below where numerous fur seals were basking, some in very precarious positions seemingly hanging off narrow cliff ledges. How they got to some of these spots was a mystery, given that their lumbering clumsiness on land seems hardly conducive to delicate rock-climbing moves.

As it was “munch” time (that is, a combined morning tea and lunch) we dropped down to the sheltered northern facing slopes to admire the extensive coastal views whilst we ate and drank. On cue the sun came out and as windproof gear came off the repeated cry went up, “Has anyone got any sun-block, please?” The repeated reply was, “No, sorry. When I looked out first thing and heard the forecast, sun-block was the last thing I thought I'd need!”

After munch, compromisngly clothed (that is, trying to be protected from the mid-day sun, yet cool at the same time) we set off up the hill away from the head; but, instead of following the official Tavora track we veered north and dropped down to a small bay which is the main area used by nesting yellow-eyed penguins. We were slowly and carefully approaching the beach along a small gully when – lo and behold! – there on the beach, framed by the sides of the gully, was a young yellow-eyed penguin preening itself. This is what we came for, so out popped the cameras. The young penguin saw us and paused for half a minute; but after assessing that we posed no threat continued preening, much to our delight.

(Note: I have a confession to make here – the fortuitous appearance of the penguin was pre-arranged with the Tavora Yellow-Eyed Penguin community. OTMC will be forwarding five kilos of regurgitated fish products to

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the young penguin as a token of our appreciation.)

It was a long haul back up the hill to the track, fortunately this was followed by a sedate amble back to the cars and “laft” (lunch and afternoon tea), which was taken whilst sheltering from the southerly in the warm lee of our cars. During this time everyone agreed to call in at Waikouaiti for an ice-cream then go on to Karitane and walk around the Huriawa Pa. This pa is situated on a small peninsula at the northern end of Karitane beach. This gave local Maori a natural defence of sea and cliffs, which was also helped by the fortuitous location of a small fresh-water spring within the confines of the pa.

Energised by our Waikouaiti ice-cream, we decided to walk round in an anti-clockwise direction so that the by now very strong southerly would be on our backs when we were on the most exposed section of the walk. We still had to take care as we were just above steep cliff faces, which enabled us to appreciate why the pa was in such an easily defendable position. The walk finishes at the Waikouaiti River estuary and it was here that we saw strange wave patterns which resulted from a strong southerly blowing down the estuary coming into conflict with an incoming tide. Anyone in a small boat amongst where the two met would have been in real trouble!

But we were safe on land and soon in our small cars heading back to Dunedin after two very enjoyable and relaxing walks – plus a preening penguin.

Tony Timperley for: Richard Morrison, Jonette Service, Tina Anderson, Glennis Salmon, Tammy Jackman, Jacqui Colbert, Pam Buchan, Catherine Holdaway, Nick Holdaway, and Ken Powell.



Triplist

28—29 March

Greenstone/Caples Area (All)
Wolfgang Gerber 453 1155

This trip is an ideal follow up to the Bushcraft trip to the Matukituki as it caters for all grades of fitness and ability. We will be accessing the area from the Lake Wakatipu end, and although there won't be too many interested in completing the Greenstone / Caples circuit in two days, there is plenty on offer.

An easy to moderate graded circuit is available in the Greenstone via Elfin Bay, Lake Rere and the Greenstone Valley. Lake Rere makes a great lunch spot and the overnight stop will be at the newish Greenstone Hut (formerly the Sly Burn site). The lower Greenstone is interesting and provides many photo opportunities, with great fauna, easy bush walks and wildlife suitable for beginners or people just wanting an easy tramp.

A moderate trip is in the Caples, overnighiting near the Upper Caples Hut. If time allows an afternoon trip to McKellar Saddle offers great views, particularly towards the Livingstone Range and southern end of the Darrens, including Mt. Christina.

Wolfgang is promoting a fit (FE?) option up the Caples, onto Fraser Stream and crossing the Ailsa Mountains just east of Emily Peak, and thence down to the Routeburn Track. This trip is long, and interested people should talk to Wolfgang about this option. If the above option is not taken, an alternative fitter option is linking the Greenstone and Caples via Steele Creek. This crossing is higher than McKellar Saddle, but is shorter than the full circuit. Either option will be a challenge with up to 10 hours tramping.

This trip wouldn't be complete without mention of the classic Caples / Kay Creek / Scott Creek through trip. This involves a combination of tracked and untracked country, and the opportunity to camp on a saddle in full view of Mt. Earnslaw.

Maps E40 (Earnslaw) and E41 (Queenstown) cover this area. Trip list closes March 19.

10-13 April (Easter)
Skippers / Mt. Aurum (All)
Antony Pettinger 473 7924

Traditional tramping trips over Easter in recent years haven't been too popular for some reason, so this year we are trying something a little different. The Skippers valley, located in the Shotover catchment, provides the opportunity to tramp, climb or for historical exploration.

It is gold that Skippers was known for, and there is still plenty of evidence that shows what lengths people went to in search of this elusive prize, dating from the 1880's. The main Skippers Creek consists of two branches which are linked via an easy saddle to make a round trip. Four days over Easter provide scope to both explore and get up onto the tops for some great views. The highest peak is Mt. Aurum (2245m) and is normally accessed from the ridge that runs from the saddle that links the left and right branches of Skippers Creek. On the other side of the pass the tops can be easily reached, either as a side trip, or a traverse back to either the left creek of the forks.

Bullendale, at the junction of Murdochs Creek in the right branch, was the major settlement, and there is still plenty to explore – I'm sure you can still sense the chemicals in Murdoch Creek, which DoC rightly so advise against drinking from. Skippers was the first site for hydro-electric power in New Zealand, and the partially restored dynamo can be seen at Dynamo Flat in the left branch.

There are options for all on this trip, with the full round trip with sidetrips, and historical exploration being recommended. An alternate option is to base-camp and explore the area via day-walks.

NOTE: This trip is private vehicle and will depend on suitable private transport being available. Topomap E40 (Earnslaw) covers the area. Trip list closes 2 April.

Combined SAREX March 27/28

Wondering what SAR is all about? This might be a good time to find out - SAREX (Search and Rescue Exercise) starting Fri night (for experienced volunteers) and going through to Sat pm, with a bit of a social "debrief" afterwards. Talk to Teresa t.wasil@clear.net.nz or 477 4987 if you are interested - trip list will go up early March.

Committee Members 2008-2009

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
	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 April Bulletin, deadline is 13/3/09, publication 26/3/09. 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

Nichols Creek/Morrison's Burn. (E/M) 1 March

We take a trip up the south side of Nichols Creek and detour into the bush to view an interesting part of the upper creek that many may not have seen. We continue up to Swampy Ridge Track to the Trig then down into the Morrison Burn. Allow 4 hrs. \$4

Leader: Ran Turner 473 8652

South Waikouaiti (M) 8 March

Meet at the club rooms and drive to Mountain Rd. Leaving cars at the top of Hunter's Access Rd, go down to the Waikouaiti River (South Branch) and down the valley to the bottom of Rosella Ridge Track. Climb up the track to the intersection with Brodies' Track and descend that back to the Waikouaiti. Go back up to Hunters Access and return to the cars. The track is nearly all in bush or plantation so is good for a hot day. If there has been heavy rain we'll probably go somewhere else as you have to cross the Waikouaiti a few times. Carpool cost \$6.

Leader: Bill Wilson 472 2282

Mt Watkin (M) 15 March

This volcanic cone has some great rock scrambles (think super large version of Harbour Cone) and one of the few remaining examples of podocarp forest in Coastal Otago. The bush area of Mt Watkin has been purchased

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by the DCC in 2004 to be made into a scenic reserve, but still awaits a management plan. One of the aims of the day is to find some of those grand trees and give them a good old hug. Note change of leader. Carpool cost \$10.

Leader: Antony Hamel 4535240

Chain Hills / Halfway Bush (E)
22 March

Drive to Halfway Bush Rd at the top of Three Mile Hill Road. Walk along the top of Abbots Hill, down through farmland and bush to the Abbotsford end of the old Wingatui Tunnel. Then up onto Chain Hills, along them and up the old Wingatui Halfway Bush track to our vehicles.

Bring suitable clothing as some bush bashing may be needed. Approx 4 – 4 ½ hours, carpool \$5.

Leader: Alan Scurr 489 5538

Mystery Trip (Cycle)
29 March

This day trip will start and finish from the club rooms. The destination/duration will be decided on the ability of the riders that turn up on the day.

Leader: Matt Corbett 487 6595