letin Number 696, June 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.

# **Upcoming Social Programme**

#### 4th June

BYO, hopefully the Queens Birthday weekend trip will have been successful so there will finally be some photos to show of a club trip.

#### 11th June

Volcanic viewpoint visits? Summits of steamy stinks? Tracy & Richard Pettinger have had something of a love affair with volcanoes in Italy and Indonesia. These lava lovers will warm you with stories of their scoria scrambles, rambles on rumbles and ash-field ascents.

#### 18th June

The return of the 'World Famous in Young St' club auction, with the proceeds going towards a selection of the new topo map series for to club library. Bring along any unwanted tramping gear, books, baking, home brew, or anything else you think we can sell, they can be left at the club rooms on Thursday nights, see Greg, Tony or Ralph.

#### 25th June

Kathryn Jeyes (GP) and Fiona Webster (ICU and emergency nurse) will help us brush up on our first aid skills - come and learn from this dynamic duo.

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 tonytimps@xtra.co.nz) or Ralph Harvey (phone 453 4330, email ralphh@ihug.co.nz)

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



## Use It Or Lose It.

In February this year I raised a few eyebrows when I put my name down for the Bushcraft course - not as an instructor, but as a "pupil". Why was I doing this? After all, I been a member of OTMC for about eight years and been on numerous tramps during this time. Also, prior to this, in the mid-1990s, I spent a week on my own traversing Kahurangi NP in changeable weather; and, in the early 1990s, a friend and I had to navigate in heavy mist using map and compass for most of a day when doing the five-day Richmond Ranges Alpine Route. So why, with this and other tramping experience gained over the years, did I sign up for a bushcraft course for beginners? Pull up a chair, make yourself comfortable, and I will tell you why.

Like most of you, I looked at the Bushcraft 2009 photos and information when they were displayed in the clubrooms from January. At first my attitude was "Yep, I know how to pitch a tent, what gear to take, etc," (although I did forget to pack my sleeping bag once!). Then I looked at river crossing, and, with the Trevor Mason tragedy in mind, I thought, "Do you know how and when to cross a river safely?" I realized that the answer was "No." The only time I had had an experience of a group river crossing was about five years ago when on a tramp in the Takitimus with the late Doug Forrester, who was a very experienced OTMC tramper. Like the other three members of the group, I just did as Doug instructed as he guided us through thigh-deep and reasonably fast-flowing water. In a similar situation I would not be able to pick the right spot to cross or know how to link up with other members of the group. This gap in my tramping knowledge needed to be remedied.

The other gap is far more embarrassing to admit: I could not remember how to use a compass to get bearings, set and follow a course, or identify a distant feature. This was a classic case of "use it or lose it". For various reasons during the past

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10-15 years I had not had reason to use a compass and had therefore forgotten how to do so. I realized that if I was on a tramp and needed to check my bearings, I would first need to read a set of instructions on how to do this. Wouldn't that be embarrassing if I was a trip leader!

By now I was beginning to realize that there were some yawning gaps in my bushcraft knowledge – and I hadn't even begun to think about outdoor first-aid or what to do if I was lost in the bush. So, there was only one thing to do to plug these gaps – attend the Bushcraft 2009 course. This I did and, even in its truncated format, it filled a number of these gaps. (Antony certainly gave us plenty of river-crossing experience in the East Matukituki!) One other thing I learnt was that even if you don't use it and you lose it, by revising it you can revive it. (It is bushcraft I am referring to here!) However, there are still gaps to be filled, especially with the aforementioned first-aid and what to do if lost in the bush.

In the next few months the club will have Thursday evening sessions on first-aid and stoves/cookers, but what other gaps do we need to fill? Be honest – would you know exactly what to do if you were lost (besides just setting off a PLB, that is)? Does the club need to run a revision Bushcraft course for members who have not "used it", therefore have "lost it"?

Oh, by the way, I have just checked that I still have my first-aid kit in my pack. I have. Fortunately, I haven't had to use it for years. Is there a volunteer willing to have an accident to see whether I can still remember how to "use it" (or whether I have "lost it")?

Tony Timperley.

# Membership

We welcome two new members this month: Richard Forbes, 133 Glenpark Ave, 4531 327; and Iain Milne, 14J Blundell St, 4737 941. They both did the recent Bushcraft Course. Good to have you aboard!

Ian Sime Membership Secretary

# Auction Reminder

# We have a date confirmed:

# 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009

We are looking for heaps of stuff to auction, so;

- Clean out the tramping cupboard of all that surplus gear you don't need.
- Bake a cake (or some scones).
- Dust of the Home Brew (I can still taste yours Richard).
- Check the attic / garage.
- Grab a few promo items from work.

Drop it into the tramping club on a Thursday night or into the National Bank – South Dunedin (tell the tellers it's for Greg) during business hours (no horses or vehicles though – they should go straight to the clubrooms).

Funds raised will be going towards purchasing a selection of maps for our tramping areas from the new series of 1:50,000 topo maps being released in September. These will be able to be used on club trips.

**Greg Powell** 

# Change in OTMC Bulletin Editor

Following the publication of the May 2009 Bulletin the Committee have received a resignation from Robyn MacKay as our long-serving monthly Bulletin Editor (see below). While her resignation has been accepted with regret, we as a Committee would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge what a tremendous commitment of time and energy Robyn has given for the good of the whole club over many years. Robyn took over the Editorship in September 1998 and, apart from a break in the early 2000's, has fulfilled this key role until now. Given that we have eleven bulletins a year, Robyn has edited around 100 issues—surely making Robyn our longest serving Editor.

For those that retain their Bulletins it is easy to see from browsing through them what a great job Robyn has done. Anyone who has edited a club magazine will know how hard it can be to source material to print, but most of our Bulletins have appeared as 12 or 16 pages—no mean feat when you consider how hard it can be to get people to write trips reports (although Robyn has a fearsome reputation in this regard!)

Robyn, you will be missed greatly as our Editor—we know we have been lucky to have had this vital role fulfilled so admirably during your tenure. The Committee, on behalf of the entire OTMC would like to offer our appreciation and thanks for a job well done.

Antony, for the OTMC.

# A note from Robyn Mackay

It is with regret that I am resigning from the position of Bulletin Editor. Parenthood has meant taking on some new things, such as staffing the Parent's Centre Toy Library. But that also unfortunately means giving up some old, such as editing the OTMC newsletter.

I have very much enjoyed editing the OTMC Bulletin, and have electronic copies of issues back to between 1998 and 2000, with a gap when Graeme

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Donaldson was editor, then again from 2003 until now. My thanks go to the regular contributors such as Ian, Antony, Alan T, David B, and prompters such as Roy; and the many "irregular" contributors of trip reports, news items etc. The job was made much easier by your willing, interesting, and often witty, submissions.

I hope a new editor will step forward soon, and I wish him/her all the best in, what has for me been, a very rewarding job. I will remain an OTMC member, and look forward to the surprise of my monthly OTMC magazine, and tramping emails. Hopefully I'll be out tramping again in the not-too-distant future!

Regards, Robyn MacKay

# Position Vacant... OTMC Bulletin Editor

As you will see from the above, Robyn has retired from the role of Bulletin Editor. This means that we are now looking for someone who is interested in taking over this important role.

Since 1997 our Bulletin has been put together in Microsoft Publisher (sorry Wolfgang!) which is pretty simple to learn, particularly if you have used MS Word. Most contributions are supplied electronically which reduces typing (yeh!). Once complete the Bulletin is printed at home, and then photo-copied commercially (printer/paper cost are re-imbursed by the club). It is a role that does require a significant commitment of time per month (there are eleven editions per year).

Contributions are supplied by the various committee roles (Chief Guide, Membership, Social and President, as well as our trip leaders). It is nice to have a least every weekend trip reported on, and other contributions / letters / recipes are welcomed.

This can be a rewarding job, and if you spread the work out over the month doesn't seem so onerous. We can supply this template, although the Editor is free to change the design of the Bulletin.

If anyone is interested in this key role please contact Antony (ph 473 7924 or apett@es.co.nz)

# OTMC Bushcraft...Where To Now?

With 2009 I believe we have reached a crossroads for what has been the traditional OTMC Bushcraft Course. The OTMC, along with many other tramping clubs, have run a bushcraft skills course for many years. The course has had it's ups and downs over the years, but has enjoyed a very good reputation from the wider community. Numbers in earlier times were very good, to the point where we forced to limit numbers but in recent years a steady decline in interest has been noted. The course was cancelled in 1997 due to a lack of participants, and wasn't run in 2008—primarily due to no one wanting to organise it. We had planned to resume the course in 2009, but due to various reasons this did not happen as planned. Although a lot of people are required to run a successful course, it still requires someone to volunteer to oversee the entire course from an early stage.

As this years course was cancelled after some applications had been received we decided to offer these people an introduction to bushcraft skills and take them on a weekend trip to the East Matukituki. As it turned out we held two evening meetings covering clothing, boots, gear, map reading, compass instruction and trip planning. The weekend trip tied all these facets together and emphasised the importance of river crossing skills through much practical experience. I believe the 10 people who took part increased their tramping skills and had a good time.

From an organisers point of view I found it a lot easier than running a full on course. We could run the smaller course with just four leaders/instructors, and as we used our clubrooms we could reduce the cost to just the weekend trip (\$55).

I have suggested to the Committee that this might be the way forward, with some tweaking (some of the topics had to be compressed for the time available). The advantage is that it is much easier to organise, we can tailor the course to the participants, and we are more likely to get current club members along to brush up on particular topics. The other advantage is that due to the reduced work involved we could run more than one per year, perhaps one just before the main summer tramping season.

Having been involved with Bushcraft since the mid 1980's, I believe now that times and peoples habits have changed meaning that a successful full course is unlikely in the future.

The Committee invite feedback members on which direction the OTMC should take—we still believe that providing bushcraft instruction to the public is a key role tramping clubs should undertake.

# Trip Reports

# Pigeon Island – 13-14 December, 2008

The final trip for the year and it was billed as a social trip so we packed the car, including the kids and headed off at 7am on Saturday morning for Lake Wakatipu. We arrived at around 10am, a little early for the boat ride across the lake so we spent a few minutes relearning the art of skipping stones.

Not long after we arrived, our local boatie (Ray McAliece) arrived and we were soon zipping across Lake Wakatipu to Pigeon Island. Pigeon Island is an island in the middle of Lake Wakatipu, you can see it clearly from the road to Glenorchy. From the road the island doesn't look very inviting, it's covered in scrub with very few open, flat areas – well that's what it looked like from the road. As we came closer a large bay opened up with plenty of camping available and a small, picturesque hut at one end. This was our destination. We arrived at the island and put up our tents. It was a beautiful day with blue skies, no wind and a fantastic view down the lake towards Queenstown. A truly magical spot.

After lunch we decided that a trip to the highest point on the island was a must so we set off, following a cut track that took us around the southern end of the island before climbing the 'peak'. The peak is 461m (well, the lake is 308m!) with a trig on top. From the trig we had a tremendous view up the lake towards Mt Earnslaw and the Routeburn. This was a view that none of us had seen before, Mt Earnslaw and the surrounding mountains from the middle of the lake. With a 360° view it was a picture perfect day and we couldn't have asked for better. The cameras were busy capturing it all.

After a flag raising ceremony we carried on with a circumnavigation of the island. We discovered a couple of small inlets during our traverse before eventually arriving back at our campsite. We set up the BBQ and enjoyed a drink in the sun before it dropped behind the mountains and we adjourned to the hut for the official entertainment. We had a

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very entertaining night with Wolfgang, Alan and Wilbert on guitar with Richard accompanying on bongo drums. The sing-along was wonderful entertainment and lasted well into the night.

It was a reasonably early start to Sunday and after a relaxed breakfast we packed the tents and loaded the boat for the return trip across the lake. We were pleased to be on our way home as the mountains were covered in low cloud – so different from the day before.

Thank you to Antony for organising 'the best social trip of the year'. A special thank you to Ray, without him and his boat we would not have been able to discover this magic place. Thank you to our musicians who made the weekend so memorable and thank you to everyone on the trip, whose company made this the great trip it was. Sign me up for the next one!

Debbie Pettinger

# The Five Pass Trip

(Fohn Saddle / Fiery Col / Cow Saddle / Park Pass / Sugarloaf Pass)

## January 29 – February 4, 2008 Part One

The 'Five Pass' trip is often called a classic, and for good reason. It is also a trip a few of us had wanted to do for sometime. It all came together during the latter part of 2007, and lunchtime on Tuesday, January 29 saw 6 of us loading up at the Lake Sylvan car-park. After shifting our vehicles to the Routeburn Shelter we were off on the well formed track to Lake Sylvan, heading for Rockburn Hut. The weather was perfect as we enjoyed the view at Lake Sylvan. The track past the lake deteriorates, and becomes muddier, but still easy enough to follow. After reaching what was to be our highest point for the day, 500m, it was down to the lower section of the Rockburn, with a break beside the tranquil glacier coloured pools. We opted to cross the Rockburn here (it was very low) rather make the detour to the high-water bridge. It was nice to get out of the bush for a while as we travelled up easy flats on the true right of the Dart, heading for the Beansburn. The

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Dart does (or did in early 2008) cut into the right bank twice, once we were able to boulder hop beside the river, but at the second point we had to detour into the bush, where the remnants of a track was easily found. As we reached the confluence of the Dart and Beansburn around 5pm, we elected to make the most of the good weather and long January daylight hours and head up the Beansburn to the first flats. We had been warned by various people of the dreaded track up the Beansburn, but were pleasantly surprised to find our most recent information was correct – that the track had recently been cut and remarked by DoC. This allowed us to make good time to the flats, for once shaving some time off what was printed in Moir. A pleasant night was spent under the trees in the middle of the flats.

Wednesday dawned fine, with valley mist providing a cool temperature. We had no fixed plans for the day, other than a vague idea that it would be nice to get to Fohn Saddle or even the lakes that night. In the end we had a nice cruisy day, enjoying the many ups and downs the Beansburn offers. The track from the flats to the bivy rock marked on the map remains on the true right all the way, and has been re-cut and orange triangles installed (late 2007) all the way to the bushline. Once out of the bush it is best to stick close to the river, particularly as you approach the bivy rock, as the tussock is so uneven it seems to take forever to get through. Once at the rock we decided that we would leave Fohn Saddle for the following day. With time on hand we set up the mountain radio to get the latest forecast, which promised rain on Friday (as forecast earlier in the week). It was also interesting to observe the creek in front of the biv - in the afternoon there was no flow, but by the following morning it was flowing fully. It blew my long-held theory that river flows are lowest in the morning!

Thursday, day 3, and we were finally heading to our first pass. I had a very good route guide from the late Doug Forrester which advised us to cross the Beansburn at the bivy-rock and head up the true left. The river could get interesting to cross above the biv in anything other than normal water flows. If this is the case then it is possible to remain on the true right to the foot of the climb to Fohn Saddle. The going was a bit scrubby as we headed upstream, and after about 1km we headed back to the true right and stuck close to the river. The point where you

head up to Fohn Saddle is obvious, and is marked by rock cairns. The climb starts on a protruding ridge and is steep – coming down in wet conditions could be interesting. The weather was closing in and we weren't helped by heading up to the clag and mist that engulfed the saddle. Despite this, our 400m climb was rewarded with some great views down the Beansburn and through to Lake Wakatipu. A cool wind greeted us on Fohn Saddle and we hunkered down behind rocks for a short break.

We had hoped to get across to the Fohn Lakes and camp, but given that heavy rain was forecast we elected to head down towards the Olivine Ledge and see how far we could get before the front arrived. We headed down from the saddle and continued to descend on the true left of the creek draining the lakes. At about the 1200m contour you need to cross to the true right where easy tussock slopes avoid the steeply eroded creek bed. There is a reasonable bivy rock slightly north of this point. A short traverse to the southwest took us back across the Fohn Lakes creek and onto the Olivine Ledge. The Olivine Ledge is a broad shelf about 300m above the Olivine River and provides relatively easy, though boggy in places, travel to Fiery Col. The ledge ends abruptly at Fiery Creek, but a scrubby scramble on the true right of Fiery Creek leads to the last small basin before the final scramble to Fiery Col.

We decided to camp here as we were not confident of finding a spot on the far side of Fiery Col near Cow Saddle, given the terrain and time of day. Our camping choices were limited given that we had tent flies, but we soon had the two flies up right beside the rather innocuous looking 'Fiery Creek' that could be easily hopped across...

To be continued next month...

Antony P for Debbie Pettinger, Ann and Chris Burton, Peter Stevenson and Matt Corbett.

# Triplist CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

There is not too much to actually comment on as far as weekend trips go, because the three most recent trips have been cancelled, no doubt an unprecedented situation for the OTMC. The Easter trip suffered from a lack of interest, whilst the Kea Basin and Kepler trips were cancelled due to the weather.

While the latter two cancellations couldn't be helped there is still a distinct trend in declining trip numbers (as we discussed in last years annual report and AGM). In years gone by the Easter trip was always popular, but out of the past three Easter trips two have been cancelled due to a lack of numbers, and the 2007 trip to Arthurs Pass had but one party. I'm not sure why this is, as the areas we tried to run trips to have plenty of neat options available, especially for four days. I suspect though the reason is the changing demographics within our club. The average age of members in the OTMC (and possibly many other clubs) has risen noticeably since say the 1980's. It appears that as we age we become more selective in what we do with our leisure time and tramping is not always the number one priority.

I still believe that there are other contributing reasons we have seen a steady decline in club activity, such as working hours (weekend rosters), better access to transport (more people own their own transport) and more 'competition' for peoples leisure time. I'm not sure that we as a club can change this—we are probably better off looking at ways the OTMC can adapt to suit our current membership. In the meantime, we should all make the effort to grab the pack and get out and enjoy our wonderful country—even in winter.

## 13-14 June - Jubilee Hut (Silver Peaks) (All) Roy Ward - 473 9518

The Silver Peaks are a rugged piece of wilderness that have some magnificent views and a mixture of tussock, scrub, manuka/kanuka, broadleaf forest and beech trees, and it is right on our doorstep! Jubilee Hut is quite a new DoC hut in the Sliver Peaks which can be reached in 3-4 hours. The easiest option to get there on this trip is going in at Hightop, along Green Ridge, past Pulpit Rock (I highly recommend the view from the top), down the Devil's Staircase (parts of that are steep) and out the same way. A slightly fitter option is to go down the Tunnels Track, up Yellow Ridge, past the Gap and ABC cave, and out along Green Ridge. People who want a longer trip have too many options to list here (and I'm more than happy to discuss them), but I'd suggest going in via Tunnels/Yellow Ridge, and leaving via the Gap, Rocky Ridge and Green Ridge. Bring a sleeping mat, as Jubilee Hut only has 10 bunks and gets quite a lot of use.

The trip will leave town at 8am Saturday morning and return Sunday afternoon. Hut fees for Jubilee are \$5 (one ticket) or annual hut pass. Trip list closes June 4.

# 4-5 July—Winter Routeburn (Lake MacKenzie) (All) Wolfgang Gerber - 453 1155

This was the proposed mid-winter trip last year but heavy snow and tree fall closed the road to Milford at Knobs Flat, so we're going to try it again this year.

We'll be walking in from the Divide to Howden Hut (1 hour) on Friday night and if the conditions are good a side trip up to Key Summit is a must and it also can be quite romantic in the moonlight).

The walk on Saturday morning to Lake MacKenzie will take between 3-4 hours at the most. Along the way the scenery will be wonderful including views of the upper Hollyford Valley, the Earland Falls and of course the "Orchard". Many photo opportunities will be there.

Once at Lake MacKenzie Hut there are numerous walks, from an easy stroll visiting Split Rock and exploring the upper valley, to a walk up the zig zag, past the memorial, and up to the start of the Hollyford Face for some awesome views of the MacKenzie Basin, the Darren Mountains and the lower

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Hollyford Valley. For the fit ones Ocean Peak is awaiting you. (Snow skills essential).

My annual quiz night will start about 8.00pm with yummy prizes and this years theme is to wear a sports top. There will also be a prize for the best decorated Table. (bribes will be accepted) This trip is for everyone, from climbers to people who just want to have a cruisy trip. See you there.

Trip list closes 25 June

#### Committee Members 2008-2009

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	lan 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 sommittee)		
(outside committee) Bulletin Editor	Postion Vacant	
		454 4400
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the July Bulletin, deadline is 12/06/09, publication 26/06/09. You can submit material by email to "apett@es.co.nz"; or post handwritten/typed copy or a CD to Antony Pettinger, 11 Watkin Street, 9010, Dunedin. Thanks.

# DAYTRIPS

# A Day On The Rail Trail (Cycle) June 7

The Middlemarch end of the rail trail is only a 1 hour drive from Dunedin and the plan is to cycle Middlemarch to Hyde or Daisybank return. This is a great section of the trail, lots of bridges, a tunnel and good coffee and carrot cake at Hyde. Bikes can be hired from Cycle Surgery Middlemarch office at \$35 a day plus panniers at \$5 so you do not even need to have a bike. Good to arrange this beforehand so they can have the right bike set up and waiting for you. This can be used as an introduction to the trail and may motivate some to have a go at the whole thing. This is a rerun of the 22 Feb trip that was cancelled due to rain. I am sure that will not happen again. Being winter it may be a bit chilly even on a nice day.

Leader: Antony Hamel, 453 5240 (trip cost \$12)

## Stone Hill / Purehurehu Point (All) June 14

Here is a chance to blow off the mid winter cobwebs, with a walk up a nice steep hill, rewarded by magnificent views at the top.

We will ascend from the harbourside at Waipuna Bay through farmland to Stone Hill. On a clear day there are magical views up the harbour, so bring your camera (you can see a previous trip photo on the rear wall of the clubrooms). Then a comfortable amble down to Purehurehu Point to visit a well appointed cave dwelling and lunch and a walk along one of the beaches if desired. The return journey will be over a similar route. You should be back in town about 2.30pm.

Leader: Gordon Tocher, ph 472 7440, contact me beforehand if you want

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to take the option of driving to Stone Hill and avoiding the climb.

Mobile Phone: 021 677 818 (Trip cost \$5)

#### Harbour Cone (E/M) Iune 21

If you pay Dunedin rates, do come and explore your own investment! We will travel to the seaward side of Harbour Cone and head up what are very old, yet new tracks, to the wonderful vantage point at the top of the cone, then down the harbour side to Bacon St. On the return trip the plan is to head over the top of Peggy's Hill to the road and the lime kilns, returning to the cars down the Nyhon track further east. The Peggy's Hill section, however, may be a year or so too early, as a track there is only at the wishful thinking stage I believe - I am in the process of negotiating with the DCC. Cross fingers!

Leader: Bronwen Strang, 473-1610 (trip cost \$4)

## Raingauge Spur (M) June 28

This walk is in native bush on the western side of Swampy. We drive to Whare Flat and walk along the Racemans Track following an old water race which was part of the Dunedin water supply. When the race ends at a weir, we turn up Raingauge Spur, go steeply up a rough track for about an hour and a half and come out high on the Swampy Road near the elbow.

There are good views out to the south and west here. We turn off the road again near Trig Q, and go down the Steve Amies track to Racemans and back to Whare Flat. Cost \$4.

Leader: Jonette Service, 454 2323