

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 698, August, 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.

6 August

"Tough Trampers". Old movies transferred to a DVD show tramping as it was over 70 years ago. See the gear, river crossing and transport used by our forebears. Note: nude bathing scenes may offend some people; Parental guidance recommended. Try and recognize some of the areas in the DVD.

13 August

OTMC member Pam McKelvey tells us what it is like to spend 9 days alone in a remote West Coast hut.

20 August

British Columbia on the west coast of Canada has a population density 3 times less than NZ's. Gregor Richardson describes his experiences in Jasper National Park and on Vancouver Island.

27 August

The Annual General Meeting of the OTMC. Come along and have your say on any issues about our Club.

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

As you will be aware the committee have been taking turns to write the Bulletin editorial during this committee term - due to a lull I get to write an editorial after all!

I hope members have read the recent series of articles in the June 2009 FMC Bulletin regarding tramping clubs in New Zealand. This focus on clubs is quite timely as your committee have been discussing similar issues for some time, following a noticeable decline in active OTMC activity. Figures quoted in the FMC articles suggested that tramping is in the top 10 of recreation activities, and that 12% of the population participated in a 'tramp' over a one year period. Putting the definition of 'tramp' aside, the figures show that while there is a significant number of people walking, traditional club membership is decreasing.

Looking particularly at our club, over the past 30 years or so there has been a gradual rise in average age, coupled with a similar reduction in people participating on a weekend tramp (day trips continue to prosper). The rise in the median age means that it is now very difficult for the club to attract and retain younger, or junior members (late teens) - the very members who traditionally rose through the club ranks into positions of leadership and management.

In 2000 we tackled this very problem and produced a 'strategic plan'. While the plan had many good ideas, it lapsed in part to many of the ideas not being actively followed up.

I believe the OTMC needs to clearly define where it wants to fit in the tramping spectrum. My personal belief is that a tramping club like the OTMC needs to facilitate trips away that are off the 'tourist tracks', with an emphasis on trips to untracked areas or areas where people would be uncomfortable undertaking within their own resources. With plenty of information available from DoC, the Internet and a plethora of guide-books tracks like the Hollyford, Rees/Dart or Greenstone/Caples can be undertaken by anyone quite confidently.

The club should continue to promote trips that require or enhance bushcraft skills such as navigation, river-crossings and decision making. Doing so opens up an endless amount of trips to great areas that most 'trampers' wouldn't venture to. I wrote many years ago in this bulletin about the concept of 'no tracks, no huts' - I still believe there is merit in this idea.

To attract new members to our neat club, we ourselves need to create a more vibrant environment—this could be one way.

As I said, the committee have been discussing these issues, and we would really like to hear what the rest of the club think. As a first step we are developing a survey to find out what we should (or should not) be doing. We also invite members to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) and let us know your thoughts, be it a letter to the Editor, or perhaps just to the committee. We can also discuss the OTMC at the upcoming AGM (Aug 27).

Antony Pettinger
President

Membership

This month we welcome Lucy Mycock of 26 Mannering St, Ph 454 4700, as a new member. She is Derek's wife.

Jill Cullen is resigning because other commitments are not giving her time to tramp.

And Pam McKelvey has moved back to town, to 24 Springhill Rd, Ph 453 4990.

Subs for the new year are coming in nicely. When this was written, 57 people had paid. Others will have found a request with this mailing.

Ian Sime
Membership Secretary

OTMC COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the 2009-10 OTMC Committee are open now and close with our Secretary on August 13, 2009. To be nominated for the committee you need to be a financial members of the club, and have your nomination proposed and seconded by two financial members of the club.

Positions to be elected at the AGM are: PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT, TREASURER, SECRETARY, CHIEF GUIDE plus SEVEN COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

The AGM is on Thursday, August 27 at 8.00pm in the clubrooms.

90° South Presentation at Otago Museum

(As your new Editor, I thought it only fair that I should submit an article so that I won't be asking you all to do something I am not prepared to do myself!)

A wonderful evening's entertainment was provided recently at Otago Museum.

First up was Nigel Watson, Executive Director of the Antarctic Heritage Trust who described the conservation work the Trust is involved in. Their latest project is to preserve Captain Scott's 1910–13 base which was in danger of being submerged under tonnes of snow and ice. A video presentation showed the building of a vortex generator which effectively displaces the snow so that it fails to fall around the base. We also saw the work involved in lifting (and then re-laying exactly) the lino floor so that the rotting woodwork could be replaced. This is expensive work, and the Trust welcomes any contributions. Visit their NZ website at www.nzah.org if you are interested in becoming a member or finding out more.

Next up was Grahame Sydney who professed it was a welcome change to be talking about someone other than himself. He proceeded to give an informative and riveting talk about Herbert Ponting who had been the expedition's photographer and whose footage was used to produce the film we were about to see. Visit <http://images.rgs.org/herbertponting.aspx> for an interesting Royal Geographical Society article.

Supper was then served, provided by the same firms who had originally supplied provisions for the expedition. We drank the same blend of tea taken south (Typhoo tea has reproduced the original blend as a fundraiser); Mainland supplied various cheeses in keeping with the NZ dairy products taken; Cadbury's provided chocolates (Fry's had been the original suppliers).

Then came the film itself – a 70 minute documentary based on original footage with the narrative provided by Ponting himself. This was a moving, first-hand account which made the hardships endured and the courage shown unforgettable.



And if that weren't enough, the film was then followed by a quiz. Members of the audience were given the chance to win substantial prizes, including Scott Base clothing.

The evening started at 7pm and finished at 10:15. It was without a doubt one of the most stunning and thought-provoking evenings I have spent.

Adrienne Dearnley



Trip Reports

Harbour Cone *21/6/2009*

A large group of 15 trampers made their way to Hoopers Inlet. From there we assailed the heights of the Harbour Cone, unfortunately it was a bit misty so the view wasn't so good. We descended the cone to virtual sea level via the Bacon Street track and then back up the hill, past Larnach's Castle to the summit of Peggy's Hill (still misty). Along the way we visited a number of sites of former farm houses, you can always identify them by the stands of macrocarpa and stone ruins. There are a large number of former farm house sites on the peninsula.

On our return leg we visited some impressive lime burning kilns, a good example of early industry on the peninsula. After the kilns we made our way via the Nyhon Track to the cars. It was a most enjoyable and challenging day out.

Gavin MacArthur.

I went on this trip and was completely fascinated by the lime kilns. I was hoping someone would send me a photo to include. For those who have never visited them, they are a short (signposted) walk from Sandymount Road. -Ed.

Stone Hill Pureurehu Point

14/6/2009

Leader Gordon Tocher.

As I hadn't had a good walk for a while the 'all' grading of Gordon Tocher's planned walk seemed like a good place to start, especially with the promise of a steep hill to start with. Having been out with Gordon to Heyward Point I knew a walk in his backyard was likely to be entertaining and informative.

We were not disappointed. Even the drive out in his van was filled with neat snippets of information about the history of the Aramoana Road area.

Nine of us left from his house in Waipuna Bay and we were straight into the climb up the steep side of Stone Hill. According to Gordon it was named after the antisocial stone rolling behaviour of an elderly lady defending a rumoured still, however the presence of plenty of rock and stone walls indicates a more obvious if somewhat less imaginative source. The 290m ascent went smoothly with the occasional pause for information and catching of breath. Slow but steady, I wasn't often alone at the back. After 40 minutes we made it to the top in good form and into a brisk cold southerly. The views up and down the harbour were indeed magnificent.

Strolling over the top to the Heyward Point road and out of the wind we were joined for the second half by a family of three happy walkers including 6 year old Kieran. Soon leaving the road for more cross country we set off down the hill to the beach. It is important to note that nearly all of this walk was over farmland for which Gordon had already arranged permission.

Walking down, Gordon warned of something I had not heard of before - under runners. Harmless looking bits of erosion or depressions that disguise deeply eroded holes where they go under the surface. Big enough to

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swallow a sheep. Luckily we did not encounter any this large. Working our way down the hill, enjoying the paradise ducks and views of remnant bush while avoiding the plentiful onga-onga, we eventually reached sea level on the other side. Here we had a look around the well appointed cave bivvy. Complete with shelving, short drop, fire place and door it was quite impressive. Then the last quick walk to Kaikai beach for lunch. Lunchtime was limited by Gordon who, with the initially clear day clouding over, was keen to get us back before the rain.

Returning to the road by a different route which included lovely views up and down the coast to Blueskin Bay we paused for a quick poke around the shell of the old Harris family home and took turns to use Gordon's monocular to peer at the surfers at Murdering Beach, now far below. Getting back to the road was a relief for 6 year old Kieran who, despite the odd sit down, had soldiered on. He had discovered that unfortunately when you walk there you have little choice but to walk back.

With everyone from the original 9 declining the offer of a car ride from the top we returned down the hill. A word to the wise... if you go on this walk with Gordon and he offers a choice of ways around an area take the one he goes on. As the ground on the alternate route got muddier and slipperier below the bog those crossing to join him on the drier ridge he went down were executing some magnificent slides including a classic and undeniably funny muddy set of trousers for Aurelie.

The few spits of rain turned into drizzle shortly after we got back to Waipuna Bay, excellent timing to finish an enjoyable walk in great company. Four and a half hours and 8.2km. Many thanks to Gordon for his time and leadership.

To view a map and pictures of the walk go to <http://tinyurl.com/plu4sa>
This is a simple easy to type address that will redirect you to a photobucket picture page so don't be surprised when it does.

Peter George for Aurelie Jonquet, Sarah Song, Hilda Firth, Marina Hanger, Ran Turner, Gene Dyett, Bronwen Strang, Gordon Tocher, Janet, Russel and Kieren.

Raingauge Spur

28/6/2009

The windscreen wipers were on as I headed to the clubrooms in Young Street at 9.00 am that Sunday morning. After working out who would be travelling with who, we headed over the Saddle Hill motorway and the weather began to clear. Eleven of us started up Raceman's Track following into the headwaters of the Silverstream towards the Silver Peaks. The



bush was regrowth – kanuka, with emerging Fuchsia, whiteywood and broadleaf. We followed the old water race and Gavin, the trip leader, pointed out the surveying pegs, derelict iron pipes and tunnels. These were constructed for the Dunedin water supply at the end of the 1800's.

After about an hour, we reached the weir, where we had a short break for morning tea. Two of the group members turned back after the break, and

nine continued on. We started the steep and slippery climb up Raingauge Spur. Gavin and I pointed out the various plants to Isabel (from France). These plants included lancewood, bush lawyer, Coprosma, Hebe and Astelia. After about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour, we stopped for lunch. One member of our party saw he had a signal on his cell phone and checked his messages. He told us there was a family emergency and he had to return home. After discussion, he headed off back to Swampy Road and back to his vehicle. This was also the ride home for four of us, but he agreed to collect us if needed.

After lunch, we continued climbing to the Swampy Road. The vegetation changed to tussock, flax, speargrass, Dracophyllum and plenty of snowberries, which we tasted but their normal sweetness of the summer had faded to a pea-like taste. There was cloud and mist at the top so no view, and we noticed that it had begun to snow very lightly. We then headed down the Swampy Road to the locked gate. After discussion, it was decided that we would not head down the Steve Amies track, because it would be steep and slippery from the precipitation. So it was the long walk down the hard gravel road back to the cars. I was shocked to see a burnt-out Mitsi by the locked gate which, during the blaze, could have easily set alight the kanuka scrub nearby. All the way down the road, there were numerous piles of household rubbish and garden rubbish dumped by unthoughtful people trying to save a couple of dollars by not taking it to the tip or putting it in a DCC-approved rubbish bag. But how much petrol did they use to get to this remote area to dump it? Closer to Whare Flat, we noticed huge mud wallows that 4WD hoons like to drive into, turning the area into wasteland.

Apart from these things down the road, it was an enjoyable trip, to an area with a lot of history and scenery. A call to one of our party's partners to provide transport was successful in getting us all back to the clubrooms by about 4.00 pm. On waking the following morning, the snow was halfway down Flagstaff and Mount Cargill!

Thanks to Gavin McArthur for leading the trip.

Richard Forbes

Trip List

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

8-9 August

Rock and Pillar Range (All)

Tony Timperley 473-7257 & Ralph Harvey 453-4330.

This may be your last chance to stay in the historic Leaning Lodge Hut before it is replaced. Access to the hut is a 2-3 hour climb from Kilmory Station, up the Lug Stream Track, 9 kms north of Middelmarsh. From the hut there are fabulous views over the Strath-Taieri Plain and once the summit ridge is reached (one hour from the hut) there are 360deg views of Otago's many ranges - including the Lammerlaws, the Remarkables, the Kakanuis and our own Silver Peaks. Long walks can be taken both north and south along the summit ridge, which is dominated by rocky schist tors or rocky pillars. It is most likely that we will experience snow underfoot, so this will be an opportunity to revise or familiarise yourself with alpine conditions.

Trip List closes 30th July.

22/23 August (I)

Basic Snowcraft Course (Iceaxe and Crampons)

Matt Corbett 487 6595

*** NOTE: This weekend is weather and snow dependant so the date listed may change to suit conditions.

This weekend is designed for people who are interested in getting above the bushline in winter. The main skills to be covered are walking on snow (especially slopes) and the use of an iceaxe and crampons. Although the need to use crampons on most 'tramping' trips is minimal, the ability to be

able to use an iceaxe proficiently is vital. In the event of an unplanned slide the iceaxe will most likely be the only thing that can stop you. This weekend will teach the correct use of an iceaxe, and will include many slides down a safe snow slope, allowing you to practice stopping yourself before you slide over the pseudo bluff at the bottom of the hill. Whilst some important skills are covered during the weekend it is also great fun. An older set of parka and overtrousers are recommended if possible, invariably there is always someone who comes home with some nice rips to display. If there are more participants interested than we can handle safely, priority will be given to OTMC members.

Come along to club or contact Matt for more information.

29/30 August
Nordic Cross Country Ski Weekend
Marina Hanger 476 2013

Have you ever tried cross country skiing before? ? Are you keen to give it a go? Then come and join us for a great weekend on the Pisa's exploring this range on skis - a fantastic alternative to winter tramping!!

This trip is particularly geared for beginners as an introduction to back country skiing, but is also suitable for experienced skiers.

We plan to stay in Wanaka on the Friday and Saturday nights and travel up to the Waioarau Snow Farm by day.

The snow farm has many kilometres of groomed trails and is the gateway to back country skiing on the Pisa Range. One of the many enjoyable routes is the 12km River Run and Loop which winds its way through the picturesque Meg River Valley and returns via the top loop giving contrasting views of the Alps. Meadow Warming hut is situated in the valley and a great place to stop off for lunch.

Ski hire is available on the field - ski and track passes costing \$60 per day. Cross country skiing lessons are also available should you wish to take these up.

For the experienced skiers an option is to ski to the Kirsty Burn hut on the

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Saturday, overnight in the hut and explore the back country from there. Does anyone have, or know of anyone who has, a holiday house we would be able to rent for this weekend? The reason is that accommodation in Wanaka is at a premium during this period because of the University Winter Games.

Please let Marina know - ph 476 2013 or 027 324 0003

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	Adrienne Dearnley	455 5801
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the September Bulletin, deadline is 07/08/09, publication 20/08/09. You can submit material by email to "adearnley@actrix.co.nz"; or post handwritten/typed copy or a CD to Adrienne Dearnley, 60 Musselburgh Rise, Dunedin. Or phone me! Thanks.

DAYTRIPS

August 2

Mt. Cargill / Skyline Track (E/M)

We start at Sullivan's Dam, walking up the forestry roads to Mount Cargill, and after some good views from the top we head down the Mount Cargill ("Cloud Forests of Leith" and "Escarpment") section of the Skyline track. This runs back down to Sullivan's Dam, and is unique for something so close to Dunedin in that it is designed to have a back-country feel. Be prepared for mud on some sections (trip cost \$4).

Leader: Janet Barclay 489-2598

August 9

Rongomai/Honeycomb (M)

We start at Evansdale Glen and walk up beside Carey's Creek. After a detour to the Whaitiripaka Falls, we follow the Rongomai track, which is a steep climb up the top of a spur through native bush then what used to be pine forest but has now been felled, until we reach Mountain Road at the edge of the Silver Peaks, a climb of about 320 metres. The Honeycomb track provides an alternative route down to Carey's Creek. Note that there are stream crossings, and slopes might be slippery. Trip cost is \$6.

Leader: Roy Ward 473-9518

16 August

Orbell's Cave (M)

This walk is inland from Waikouaiti, traversing hilly pastures with a steep descent and a long ascent (what goes down, must come back up again). We drive to McGrath Rd, just before Waikouaiti, and head inland via Buckland's Crossing and take a long drive down Blucher Road to where it becomes Lamb Hill Road. The tramp begins from the stockyards and follows a 4-wheel drive

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track (still called Blucher Road) before descending steeply to Three O'clock Stream. We then go down stream until we reach Orbell's Creek and climb up to the cave, which is on the true left of the creek. After lunch in the cave, we will re-cross the creek, climb up to the ridge and head back to Blucher Road. On reaching SH1 again, a left turn to Waikouaiti could bring you a reward of an icecream. Cost \$10.

Leader: Tony Timperley 473-7257

August 23
Powder Ridge / Long Ridge / Green Ridge (F)

Starting from Whare Flat car park, we'll probably do this trip in reverse. We'll head up Raceman's Track along the Silver Stream to warm up, before climbing up a prominent spur to Green Ridge. The route will then take us along and up Green Ridge, past the old Green Hut site, towards Pulpit Rock. Depending on the weather this might provide a good view of the Silver Peaks and surrounding areas. From Pulpit Rock it's all (mostly) down hill along Long Ridge, and then Powder Ridge and back to the cars at Whare Flat. It should be an interesting day with a variety of bush and open tops travel, and a variety of track quality. Maybe a bit of bush bashing. You'll need to be reasonably fit and keen for a longish day, so bring a torch. (trip cost \$4).

Leader: Wayne Hodgkinson 473-8390

August 30
Government Track (E)

The Government Track is a remnant of a formed dray road built in the 1860's to transport goods to the Lawrence Goldfields. The track starts from the roadside near Berwick and climbs gradually (1:130 gradient). There is some lovely bush walking, and as we gain height there are good views of the lower Waipori Gorge. It is hoped that we will return down Kowhai Spur to make it a round trip, however that will depend on arranging an access permit from Wenita, otherwise we return the way we came. Trip cost is \$8.

Leader: Roy Ward 473-9518