

**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.

2nd September

Glen Knol will tell us about his mountain biking trip in Bolivia.

9th September

David Barnes will introduce the CD of the Federated Mountain Club's photo competition. We should see some stunning photographs.

16th September

And now for something completely different: an education session concerning the prostate. All you ever wanted to know and were too afraid to ask... things like what is it, what can go wrong and what to expect if something does go wrong, with plenty of time for questions. Dr Elspeth Gold (an ex president of our club) is a medical researcher studying this subject.

23rd September

To be advised

30th September

BYO photos: Wolfgang's Routeburn trip, Richard's snow caving trip, and the Rock & Pillar snow skills trip.

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**

PRESIDENT'S PIECE

There has been a detectable upsurge in enthusiasm and vibrancy within the OTMC over the past few weeks. The club does go through a cyclic pattern over time and it may be that we are now entering a new peak within this cycle. It was great to see this year's Winter Routeburn trip return to days of old with a return to combining options of easy (and more advanced) climbs mixed with trips to Harris Saddle and the lake. The weather was perfect, and although Wolfgang announced this would be the last one I'm not so sure. Many thanks to Wolfgang for a well run and supported trip. Recent club nights have also been both well supported and very enjoyable. I hope this vigour can continue as we start to see longer days with Spring just around the corner.

August means AGM time for the OTMC. I write these notes just after nominations for the 2010-11 committee have closed, and, for the first time in many years, there are still vacancies. The first point I would like to make is please don't let this situation put you off from attending the AGM. The committee guarantee that no one will be forced into a position that doesn't really suit them - there is nothing in the club rules that requires us to fill every vacancy on the night. In the event there are still unfilled positions these can be filled by the committee throughout the year as required.

The other point follows on from comments made in the 2009 survey and general discussion within the club over the past year. The committee have known for some time about the lack of people coming through and standing for the committee, and continuing into office bearer and leadership roles. I still believe that it is more related to the current environment all clubs operate in rather than people not having the opportunity – it is certainly not exclusive to the OTMC. Just one day before nominations closed this year we had received four nominations for committee, and that was it. There is a lot of good work carried out by the committee for the good of the club and we now need to support them and continue to make this the great club that it is. There are many other ways members continue to contribute to the club, which is great and appreciated by myself and the committee.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my appreciation to Greg Powell and Jill McAliece, who are both stepping down from the committee. Greg has been on the committee since 2001 and has held several roles in this time. Early in his tenure Greg contributed greatly to both the Skyline Track project and in obtaining funding for the club. Other roles have included gear hire and Vice President. Jill has been our very capable secretary since the 2007 AGM, doing a great job of keeping our meetings and correspondence in order. Thanks to you both for doing a great job.

Antony Pettinger
President

Membership

So far we have had just over 100 subs come in from a total membership of just over 200 so please keep them coming in. Please remember to fill in the green form with your particulars as I am currently setting up a club membership data base and I want to have all the current information correct. Those of you paying by e-banking, I still require you to send in the completed green form.

A number of new people have recently joined the club and loads of new faces have been at the Thursday night meetings

Recently joined

Sarah Chisnall, Lucy Jones, Stefan Fairweather, Becky Cameron,
Gavin Duthie & Lea Renwick
All welcome and happy tramping

Recently resigned

Robyn MacKay, Dean Gillatt
We wish you luck

Richard Forbes
Membership Secretary

Congratulations to Jason and Tanya Henwood on the birth of their daughter Briar

Trip Reports

Snowcaving July 30 2010

(an eventful trip)

Not as many experienced club snowcavers crawled out of the woodwork as I had hoped, and the weather forecast was a bit conflicting, so I was somewhat anxious as we pulled up at the Clubrooms at 7.30 on the Saturday morning. Twenty people tore off in four cars. You have to keep cosy on snowcaving trips.

Regrouping in Roxburgh for a hot chocolate gave an opportunity for a bit of a talk about the principles of emergency shelters, and questions to be answered, then it was off up the hill. Even though the road was still frozen from the night's frost, the station-wagons stopped where the snowcats are parked in Winter, and the two 4WD SUVs had to take over pack carrying, while many people walked up the hill unloaded.

We all collected in sight of the usual gully in no time at all but, though the sky was blue, the wind on that roadline was already a nuisance. It was now a job to ascertain if the usual gully had adequate snow of good quality. While the last were still being ferried, chased or blown, up the hill, I found three factors in favour of using the usual gully: it was close, there was relatively little wind (actually it was dead calm for a while in there) and the water supply was exposed. Negative factors included: there was that usual cornice (which cannot be fully avoided); and as I dug a quick snow profile pit, I found a layer of granular snow about 20 cm down. I went to another spot and it wasn't there, but I couldn't be sure how stable the whole slope was. Especially as one forecast suggested rain overnight. It was, as usual, hard to tell if there was sufficient depth for four caves all close together.

Well, I didn't think anybody would mind if we had a bash, it being still early in the day, and, if necessary, to move on exploring the range for a

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

better site if this proved unsuitable.

As it happens, after a couple of false starts, we all found a site away from the worst of the cornice, and only one group struck any granular snow, and it was a thin layer. It all looked good. Caves went in, then split into two benches when the ground was struck. A busy three hours saw everyone with enough shelter to survive a comfortable night out of the wind, had it been a real emergency, and then the business of extra comfort, spacious living and interior design set in.

Fastest finished was, predictably, Rob's team, who chose a strange hybrid of a cave, igloo and snowmound. Worth a try, I thought. My cave was just big enough and no more so we could be snug. Jeremy's and Mike's caves, however, were victims of great enthusiasm and not-knowing-when-to-stop-ism, and I scoffed at the need to have a cathedral when a normal cave would suffice. These two caves were huge. One had two entrances. "All a bit OTT," I thought, "they'll be cold."

Dinner was had, and people were settling down to work on sleep deficits, a bottle of wine was found and shared with a few lucky folk, when the cry went out... Eight PM, and Rob's roof had fallen in, and the rest of the roof was leaking. People were wet and understandably annoyed. OK, time to reconsider accommodation. Apparently the bivvy rock hut just up the hill was not occupied and would be a possibility this year as its door wasn't frozen shut (like it was last year). Two cars two hundred metres away were also possibilities for emergency accommodation. But, as this was supposed to be about emergency snowshelters, we decided to use what was available.



(Continued on page 6)

Thank the Lord for cathedrals, I thought, as we found spaces for the homeless, easily and without too much disruption. All important gear and tools were tucked away in case it snowed or blew. All, that is, except for a certain 3 carrymats. You can't put things down for a minute, eh, Janet? Some thieving wind will come along and deprive you of what's yours, soon as look at you. I was most impressed with Janet's ability to remain cheerful while being re-accommodated, so I rewarded her by thieving Tracy's carrymat for her.

So, everyone had a cosy night after all. The stars outside were slowly disappearing, but it wasn't real cold. We watched candles glow in their tiny personal snowpocket caves while we drifted off to a perfect sleep.

In our cave, however, while others might have been welcoming August in with "Rabbits" (white or otherwise... everything is white here) our first words for the month were "WTF was that?" A troubling "whump" woke all in our cave except for Tracy (sleeps like a baby). The cave looked all secure, but Mark felt the need to check some lumpy blocks at the mouth of our entrance. A piece of the cornice where certain people had been playing and poking around, decided to change location. Sweeping over our cave fair and square, it neatly removed our outdoor décor (of tools). I had never seen the cornice move before, not even with Dave McLean riding a shovel over it repeatedly, on so many such trips.

These incidents were all due to the predicted thawing conditions, something which Rob and I had not prepared specifically for. But, while everyone in their caves was secure and safe, and caves were clearly better than any alternative, given the site and conditions, I was a bit worried about people hanging around outside should more of the cornice decide to go AWOL. Luckily the cornice stayed put (except for a bit well away from us, when we were almost all gone). Nevertheless, we didn't hang around. It was ridiculously windy and that made us all cold, so we grabbed a quick bite and a guzzle of drink, rammed our gear into packs and grabbed the tools and set off for the vehicles. That was a particularly difficult mission, as it turned out, as we fought to stay upright (largely unsuccessfully) over the crusty snow.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Packs went into the SUVs, and after a quick walk down for most of us, with the wind making conversation impossible, we were soon all away in our cars for a hot chocolate, second breakfast and debrief in the “Tussock Hills” establishment in Roxburgh. What a fine place it was. I thought some people looked a bit stunned by it all. In the warmth, over a very nice hot drink, we discussed our trip, and what we had learned for next year. Only one person thought that another snowcaving trip was necessary.

I do hope these keen (and, now experienced!) folk will consider helping out next year.

Thanks to Wayne and Pam Hodgy for being Dunedin contacts, and to Nathan & Yvonne, Tracy, Mike and Darryl for driving (and especially to Mike and Darryl for SUV transport). In hindsight, the trip was bloody good, eh? Don't you agree?

Richard Pettinger for Paul Cunliffe, Mark Jackson, Jo Baillie, Tracy Pettinger, Janet Barclay, Russell Barclay, Rob Seeley, Jeremy Beck, Marisa Beck, Jeremy Thomas, Stefan Fairweather, Yvonne Hayes, Nathan Marshall, Darryl Woods, Mike Prince, Andrew Prince, Elliot Samuel, Hamish Prince & Craig Trompetter.



Trip list

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

September 11/12

Day Trips from Omarama [All]

Debbie Pettinger (473-7924)

We normally hold a 'Day Trips From...' trip each year and this year we are returning to the upper Waitaki area. Although the title on the trip card says 'from Omarama' it may actually be from Twizel. For starters we have planned two day trips that can either be completed as planned or enjoyed as partial ascents.

The first is to a peak called Ben Dhu, a 1607m peak between Lake Pukaki and the Ben Ohau Range, near Boundary Stream. There is DoC marked route from the Mt. Cook highway to Duncan Stream via Boundary Stream. After reaching the 1300m saddle at the head of Boundary Stream, we plan to climb the remaining 300m of Ben Dhu from the west. Great views are to be had over Lake Pukaki towards Tekapo, and more importantly to Aoraki / Mt. Cook. Return to our vehicle will be straight down the Pukaki side of Ben Dhu.

The second trip is a planned ascent of the iconic peak, Ben Ohau (1522m). Located at the southern end of Lake Ohau, this peak offers completely different views from Ben Dhu. It is a 900m climb to the summit, but there are great viewpoints all the way up.

There will be snow at this time of year, so you may wish to bring an ice-axe. Both climbs are good moderate climbs, with Ben Dhu being slightly longer. There may be options to alter the plans depending on who comes along - with part climbs being one.

The area is covered by Topo50 Maps: BY15 (Birch Hill) and BZ15 (Twizel). More information available at club - trip list closes September 2.

(Continued on page 9)

September 25/26
Oteake Conservation Park [All]
Antony Pettinger (473 7924)

Oteake Conservation Park is a recent addition to the list of conservation parks and covers sections of the St Bathans, Ewe, Hawkdun, Ida and St Mary's Ranges. The club's main trips to the area have been to the southern end, visiting Mt. Domett and environs many times.

Although plans for this trip are not firmed up, tentative plans are to visit the head of the Manuherikia River between the St Bathans and Hawkdun Ranges. This is an area that has two huts (Boundary Creek and Top Hut, both 8 bunks). By using 4WD and other tracks a circuit is available, including access to the tops. Shorter options are also available. The advantage of doing this trip now is that 4WD access is not available in September.

This area is covered by Topo50 Maps: CA15 (Omarama) and CB15 (Idaburn)

Trip list closes 16 September

Peter Strang has received the following email from Professor David Wharton of the Dept of Geology at the University about soil samples in the mountains:

"Dear Peter, I wondered if some of your members would be willing to collect soil samples. We only need small samples (less than 100 grams) from sites higher than 1000 meters above sea level. They should also not be from a National Park or protected area (which require permits to collect from).

If you could publicise this amongst Mountain Club members and ask them to contact me at david.wharton@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

We will provide sample bottles and instructions.

We are interested in entomopathogenic nematodes (that infect and kill insects) and their use as potential biological control agents. We are studying their cold

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

tolerance and trying to isolate cold tolerant strains (and alpine areas might be a good place to look!).

Thanks
David Wharton"

Two Donations

Many thanks to David Barnes for donating to the club library a copy of 'A Life On Gorge River' by Robert Long. This is the story of a person (and now family) who has chosen to live in South Westland at the mouth of Gorge River, approximately 50km south of Jackson Bay.

Rob Mitchell has also donated a Macpac Torre single compartment pack to the club to be used as part of our gear hire. Although this pack has seen some use it is still in good condition and is suitable for any weekend or longer trips into the hills. Thanks Rob - we are sure it will be put to good use.

Committee Members 2010

President	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Vice President/Publicity	Greg Powell	454 4828
Secretary	Jill McAliece	455 6740
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Chief Guide/Transport	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Richard Forbes	453 1327
Gear Hire/Clubrooms	Gene Dyett	455 7465
Daytrip Convener	Roy Ward	473 9518
Website/Bushcraft Director	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Social Convener	Tony Timperley	473 7257
Social Convener/Gear Hire	Ralph Harvey	453 4330
(outside committee)		
Library/Publicity	Wolfgang Gerber	453 1155
Bulletin Editor	Adrienne Dearnley	455 5801
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Committee Liaison	Marina Hanger	476 2013
SAR Contact	Teresa Blondell	477 4987

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the October Bulletin, deadline is 17/09/10, publication 30/09/10. 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

September 5

Trotters Gorge [E/M]

Alan Thomson (455 7878)

The bush reserve at Trotters Gorge was first set aside by the Otago Provincial Authorities in 1864 and now provides an important remnant of early New Zealand native forest. There is a round trip that will give us views from above Trotters Gorge and we will then follow a ridge line down to the University hut (built in the early 1950's) before heading back to the picnic area.

Trip cost \$10.00

September 12

Mopanui/Doctors Point/McKessor Track [E]

Ran Turner (473 8652)

This is a great loop trip, with coastal views, history and bird life. We start at the end of Mopanui Rd and walk down beside the sanctuary fence to Orokonui. After crossing the river we wander along the road to Doctors Point, then through the cave archways to Mapoutahi Pa. We head round the Purakanui Inlet, which often has abundant bird life, to Osborne. Here we cross the railway line and climb up the McKessor Track back to our cars.

Cost \$6

September 19

Mt. Charles [M]

Tracy Pettinger (487 9488)

Mt Charles is the highest point on the Otago Peninsula with access over private land from Allans Beach Road. We'll be doing a round trip, if possible, on the southern side of Mt Charles, depending on the access arrangements I can make. It is lambing season. Last time I led a trip up there, we

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

had to crawl all the way because of the wind. Let's hope for a calm day, so we can get to the top! It's a nice easy trip, but we could make it more difficult if people want. Walk backwards, do it twice, do a figure of eight route, - that kind of thing.

Trip cost \$5

September 26
Gabriels Gully and Wetherstons [E]
Jane Cloete (467 2328)

"... all at once I saw a crowd, A host of golden daffodils"

It is a 75min drive to this area, so we need to be leaving promptly at 9am. Park at Gabriels Gully. The tracks we'll be using to explore this area will be a bit different from the usual tourist tracks. Lunch back at the carpark before heading west for about 3km on an old 4WD track to get a look at the daffodils. We'll be a bit early for them to be out in all their glory, but they should be pretty good to wander around. Gold coin donation to the landowners.

Trip Cost \$12.

PIZZA NIGHT – Filadelfio's (Gardens Corner)

**This popular night will be held this year on September 4th
(Saturday 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.**