

**Newsletter of the Otago Tramping
and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)
P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.**



The OTMCM meets socially at 3 Young Street
every Thursday—doors open at 7.30pm,
programme begins at 8.00pm.

The Editor Speaks

As the weather warms it is great to be able to spend more time outdoors and hopefully getting out into the hills and mountains. Take the time to admire your surroundings and enjoy the solitude far from electronic distractions. Being apart of the OTMCM means you have already discovered the peace you find when sitting quietly listening to a river, admiring the surrounding mountains or simply watching the clouds move overhead. It is important we all take the time to recharge our batteries. With this in mind, please put pen to paper and write a trip report of your exploits, we'd all love to hear where you've been and what you've done.

Debs

Committee Members 2010

President	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Vice President	Richard Forbes	453 1327
Secretary	Peter Stevenson	454 4148
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Chief Guide/Transport	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Richard Forbes	453 1327
Bulletin Editor	Debbie Pettinger	473 7924
Gear Hire/Clubrooms	Gene Dyett	455 7465
Daytrip Convenor	Wayne Hodgkinson	473 0950
Website/Bushcraft Director	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Social Convener	Tony Timperley	473 7257
Social Convener/Gear Hire	Ralph Harvey	453 4330
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Committee Liaison	Ross Hunt	477 3309
SAR Contact	Teresa Blondell	477 4987

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the December Bulletin, deadline is 12/11/10, publication 25/11/10. You can submit material by email to debsnz@ihug.co.nz

Following on from comments made in the recent Annual Report and the last Bulletin, the club indeed seems to have revitalised itself in recent times, this in a time when the weather and conditions in the hills have prevented the club carrying out our planned activities. Thursday meetings continue to be well patronised, and numbers on weekend trips in particular are rising. The October committee meeting was a very positive meeting, with several major events for the club being confirmed. Andy Cunningham has been doing a very commendable job with funding aspects towards our quest to modernise some of our basic equipment and procure new safety items for use by the club and the wider public.

Another initiative the OTMC is undertaking is an open day in February 2011, followed by an opportunity to come on an easy graded tramp with the club. We feel the OTMC does have a lot to offer, and one of our problems has been how we advertise this to the wider tramping community. Our Thursday night meetings are good, but often there is not sufficient time to adequately outline what we do or how to become involved. Our focus for the open day will be to explain that the club is ideal as the next step after the Routeburn, Kepler and Milford, and that they really are just the tip of the iceberg. We are lucky to have such a wide range of areas within reach of a weekend trip, and we want to share this with more people. The actual format of the open day, plus the advertising and other details are being worked on right now, but we hope that we can enlist the help of many members, either in the planning phase or with the weekend itself. Contact any committee member if you are able to help.

Tied in with the open day is the return of Bushcraft. After not running a course in 2010, we are holding one in March 2011. The course is timed to use the open day as a form of advertising, hopefully one will complement the other. The format next year will be three evening meetings in the clubrooms followed by a return the Silver Peaks for the practical tramp. This will ensure cost is kept to a low level. During the same period we are running a map and compass day trip for both club members and Bushcraft people. The theory side will be covered at a bushcraft meeting (and possibly the club night before the actual day) with a practical day on either Flagstaff or Hightop. More information on Bushcraft will be available as details are confirmed.

On top of this, Ralph Harvey and Andy Cunningham have offered to run a series of climbing orientated trips in conjunction with our normal club programme. There is a minimum standard of competency to be met before you can participate on these weekends, and they are aimed at club members. Ralph and Andy have absolute control who they take on these trips, but I think it is a great gesture to the OTMC that these are available, given the time and cost personally being given.

The on-line encyclopaedia of New Zealand says that tramping clubs had their heyday in the 1960's and '70's – I say we are definitely trying our hardest to prove that there is still a place for clubs like ours in the present time.

Antony Pettinger
President

Membership

A few new faces have been coming to the clubrooms during the last month. They are keen to do trips and join the OTMC. So far 150 members have signed up for another year of great tramping. There are still 49 people who have yet to renew their membership, and they will be sent another reminder with this bulletin. Our constitution says that subscriptions must be paid on or before the 1st November to ensure that membership does not lapse. If you haven't already done so, please get in touch and let me know if you will be renewing your membership. There are great trips planned for the summer, so ensure you renew your membership to make the most of OTMC.

New members joined this last month

none

Members resigned during the last month

Sue Barnaby

Sue Taylor

Rick Boebel

Paul & Bronwyn Bennington

Richard Forbes
Membership Secretary

Silver Peaks Update

Members will no doubt have seen publicity about DoC's plans for increased marking of routes in the Silver Peaks. (See <http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/news/media-releases/changes-planned-to-silver-peaks-scenic-reserve/>). Some of this has now occurred. New signs are in place at the Green Ridge-Swampy junction (148908)¹, the south side of Silver Peak where the track leaves the vehicle track (117926), the bottom of the ascent to Jubilee Hut (108957), below ABC Cave (117977) and the saddle west of the Gap (125976). Markers are in place from the fenceline west of ABC Cave (113972) to the top of Yellow Ridge, where they join the existing marked route. From the cave, the route initially follows the gully heading north-east, then climbs sharply up the disused dead-end vehicle track and crosses the ridge before approaching the saddle from the south west. While neither the most direct nor the quickest route, it does remain wholly in the reserve.

All this should mean that all but the chronically stupid can find the way from the Tunnels Track to Jubilee Hut. Unfortunately, as we repeatedly see, signs and markers don't stop the chronically stupid visiting this area. This is exemplified by the group that left Hightop for Jubilee Hut in May 2009. Leaving in mid afternoon with a bad weather forecast in place and walking past two signs advising that the route was suitable for experienced trampers and that conditions may deteriorate rapidly, they arrived at the high section of the route at the same time as darkness and the predicted snowstorm – and probably came as close to a multiple fatality as we've seen in the area for nearly thirty years.

Apart from checking out the signs, former member Barry Flamank and I did manage to remind ourselves that it's still possible to have untracked fun in the Peaks. We went along Rocky Ridge before dropping down to the Hermit's Cave and continuing to join Cave Creek upstream from the Staircase.

David Barnes

¹ All grid references are on the old NZMG system and on map NZMS260 I44/J44. Information correct as at 1 August 2010.

YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE?

I remember the moment, in late August; when Ralph and I heard the ‘whumph!’ of the snow and the cracks started appearing around us; we got off that slope but if it had avalanched we had no rescue gear, and could well have been in trouble. Later on, Ralph was struggling with snow balling up under an old set of crampons he was using on a pretty steep slope. This was Fox Peak. On the way down the mountain we started discussing the need to improve our stock of Club equipment – like EPIRBs, transceivers, new crampons, first aid kits and the like.

So I volunteered to get involved with raising funds to help the club acquire a modern stock of safety and instruction equipment. What I’m looking to do is run a programme of activities across 2011 that will not only raise money to buy equipment, it will also be great fun. This will be in addition to applying for support from a number of funding organisations, where we’d hope to get a large chunk of the required money (funding organisations won’t give the Club money if we don’t make an effort to raise a fair bit ourselves – and quite right too).

The Committee has been amazingly supportive in helping me get started. A number of people – both inside and outside the Committee - have already volunteered their help to get involved. It would be wonderful if more people in the Club offered to help, hence this article. So, if you feel like you want to get involved, even just a little, then get in touch.

Ten days ago, five of us were struggling to Harris Saddle from Routeburn Falls Hut. We crossed an avalanche track with blocks as big as fridges. Then another....and another. Naturally we turned back. Even with better equipment we wouldn’t have continued; but unlike that day, incidents often happen when we don’t expect them. It might be you that needs the EPIRB in a few months’ time. So for the sake of a bit of effort, get involved.

Andy Cunningham

03 476 0404/027 476 0404

andy.cunningham@xtra.co.nz

PS – there’ll be more information coming out between now and Christmas.

Trip Reports

Mt Cargill from Bethune's Gully

25 June 2010

I was looking forward to the 'Family' tramp to Mt Cargill. I suggested to Russell that he might not be the only kid on this one and I was right.

Eighteen of us assembled at Bethune's Gully, nine grown-ups and nine kids, ranging in age from 5 through to 14. Although Jade told us that you are not a kid at 14.

The weather was perfect and the group was keen as we started off with a hiss and a roar. As little legs started to get weary, there was always a knowing parent on hand to encourage them further with a quick top up of energy. I got filthy looks from Russell as he realized he had been hard done by; we had never taken lollies on a tramp before – oops!

Dylan was keen to show Russell and me a shortcut to the top and had us clambering



up a rather scary rock face. He was very good at checking to see that everyone was handling it OK and described to us what was coming up next. I could see a capable future leader in the making. Needless to say everyone made it to the top one way or another, where we enjoyed the magic view, a bite to eat and a group photo of the kids before heading back down.

The descending journey was a lot different from the ascent, with the kids leaving us for dust in a race to the bottom. They had loads of time to play at the playground down the bottom before we finally caught up with them.

All in all a lovely day enjoyed by everyone. Even the adults not attached to children agreed that it would be nice to have more of these 'family' tramps to encourage the younger generation to enjoy the great outdoors. Anyone with ideas to entice teenagers out? Perhaps a bribe of money instead of lollies might work! And speaking of which, I did buy Russell an ice cream on the way back so all is well between us now.

A very big WELL DONE to Ruby, Neive, Jade, Dylan, Russell, Isabella, Margo, Aidan and little Alex. And a thank you to Richard for organizing from the grown ups Debbie, Jane, Lucy, Gavi, Ian, Nic, Debbie and myself (Janet).

Kirwin's Hut

Sometimes there are places where you want to go tramping or people you want to go tramping with that are just a bit out of the way. Sometimes you need to make the effort. I recently detoured home from Wellington via Westport and caught up with '80s



OTMC stalwarts Ross and Pam Cocker, having told them that a trip away together was long overdue.

We set out from Caplestone, a ghost town near Reefton, and plunged into the forests of Victoria Forest Park. Our destination was Kirwin's Hut, and our route followed an old mining pack track almost all the way. Initially, the track follows the river, with a tunnel to go through for a bit of variation. An hour or so along the track, we met a Reefton resident that Ross and Pam knew, returning from an after-work Friday night dash to the hut – his 105th trip there!! Shortly, the track pulled away from the river and began to climb. Think the Government Track, but slightly steeper. At

lunch time a group of mountain bikers came past. They were doing it easy, having helicoptered to the hut for a big descent. An hour after a small saddle that Pam was convinced signalled that we were near the hut, we finally reached a sign indicating a fork that meant we were truly getting closer. Soon, another sign indicated 30 minutes to go, but the reality was only fifteen. The hut sits on a small tussock knoll, and has picture windows providing one of the best 'from the dining table' vistas I've seen from any hut. A fitting hut to be the 100th one I've stayed at. The sunset was superb.

On Sunday, we shot up to nearby Kirwan's Hill (1315m) to sit and drink in the 360° views. It's only half an hour, and shouldn't be missed. There are alternative routes out via Montgomerie Hut and either Waitahu Valley or Murray Creek. The former involves a reputedly dull walk on a long 4x4 track, while the former involves complex transport logistics. We chose to simply retrace our steps. The



descent took us through a band of mist that created some surreal effects in the forest and meant that the previous day's humidity was a thing of the past. The gradient was such that, even though we were losing height constantly, the knees did not suffer, and we were at the car an hour quicker than the ascent.

David Barnes

TripList

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

The recent cancellation of two weekend trips may have caused some discussion amongst members. The cancellation of the Earnslaw Burn trip was particularly hard, given that in excess of 20 people were signed up. The OTMC made a decision based on the conditions at the time, and I support Richard in the decision made. We had received very good advice from club members in an adjacent valley regarding the likely snow conditions (including avalanche), and the weather forecast did nothing to help the situation. While there are some that may say the club has lost its toughness, the reality is that as a responsible club we cannot knowingly put people in situations such as that weekend. We had recent info on conditions and a reliable forecast – we made the right decision. Times have changed over the years, and we now have to be very careful about decisions we make.

As intimated at the AGM, the time has come where the club has to raise the cost of the weekend trip cost – with the new trip card weekend trips are rising from \$55 to \$60. The non-member trip cost will now be \$70 for a weekend trip (a \$5 rise as well). Trips ran at a loss last year, and with the recent rise in fuel, we now have absolutely no room to have any trip away with an empty seat. If someone pulls out with a legitimate reason (and we willingly accept this happens) then the trip will make a loss. The trips are run on a user-pays break-even basis. At best the trips may break even now, but when other on-going costs such as the trailer running costs are taken into account they won't, hence the increase. Trips that have an excessive amount of mileage will continue to be priced accordingly, like the upcoming Routeburn In A Day trip, but these trips are few. Ann presents to the committee a breakdown of every trip so we know exactly what the trend in regard to trip cost is.

The new trip card is included with the Bulletin – my thanks again to those that have offered to lead a trip – without you this club wouldn't operate. Likewise, my thanks to Wayne for compiling the day trip programme – you have done a great job in a limited time frame.

6/7 November

Informal Trip (All)

Leader and destination to be advised

The original draft of the trip card had this trip down as heading for Timaru River, but given the recent snow falls (and resultant high river flows) this may not be wise. Also, we have missed two Thursday meetings to promote the trip, so I will put up a list for people who want to head away the first weekend in November. The idea is that the people who sign up can decide where the best place to go is...trip list closes October 28.

20/21 November

Routeburn Track (In One Day) F

Ann Burton 476-2360.

(note: this trip is priced at \$65 due to the extra van running required)

The Routeburn Track is arguably the best of our closest great walks, but tramp-club members are normally confined to visiting in the depth of winter. To get around this we are holding a different sort of day trip – The Routeburn Track (in a day). It is certainly not as bad as it sounds – the track is 32km long, which means even at a leisurely pace of 4km per hour it will take less than 10 hours. The club did this trip in 2007 and we took 10 hours, which included a very long lunch break in the sun at Harris Saddle. Because we are only intending to carry day packs it creates a logistical problem with gear – your overnight gear is at the other end of the track (or you bring two sets). Details to counter this are being worked on – a likely scenario is that we will entice volunteers to drive the vans from one end to the other while we are walking the track (hence the extra cost).

That said, the track in a day is within the range of most moderate trampers – an early start is a good way to go. A further day trip will be planned for Sunday – probably Mt. Alfred for the keen ones at the Glenorchy end. More details available at club, or contact Ann.

This trip is already popular and closes November 11.

27/28 November

Mt. Domett (from Lone Creek) (All)

Those that attended the recent talk at club about the history of Mt. Domett will have seen the different ways to climb the peak. We have traditionally climbed it from the Dansey's Pass side – this trip will approach the mountain from the east, or Waitaki Valley side. There is a private hut not far from the road-end that is available for hire. The plan for this trip is to base ourselves at this hut and explore from there. The peaks of Little Domett and Domett are there, but there are plenty of other places to get a decent view from. Given the distance from Dunedin this will be a private car trip.

Trip list closes November 18.

OTMC Open Day

Every member of the OTMC has fond memories of a trips enjoyed, experiences shared and friendships made through this club. There are a lot of great reasons to belong to a club like the OTMC.

The OTMC needs to promote itself and we need your help to do this.

Coming up in February we will be holding an OTMC Open Day—check out the dates on the enclosed trip card.

We are currently formulating a plan to advertise and run the event and ask members for any ideas regarding advertising, as well as asking for volunteers to help with the many tasks that need to be done to contact a committee member.

The open day is being held on February 13 (with an evening on the 12th), as well as guided day walk on the Sunday to Swampy Saddle from Leith Saddle.

DAYTRIPS

7 November

Ship at Anchor [M/F]

Alan Thomson ph.455 7878

We will head up the Eldorado track above Lake Mahinerangi, past the new Hydro project to park our vehicles at a locked gate, and then walk over to the Deep Stream weir. From the weir it is a fairly steady climb up to the Lammermoor Plateau and over to the Ship at Anchor—altitude 980m so be prepared for extreme conditions as this is a very exposed area (great views). After lunch we will head down the steep face to Deep Stream where we can explore a historic gold mining area before trudging up a vehicle track back to the cars.

Trip Cost \$5

(Continued on page 11)

14 November

Spiers Road/Rhododendron Dell/Davies Track [E]

Richard Pettinger ph. 487 9488

Join us for a pleasant stroll over Flagstaff, with a picnic lunch on the lawn by the shelter on Ben Rudd's hut site, followed by an optional visit to see Bruce Campbell's famous 'Rhodies Gone Wild'. Our approach and descent will be by little-used tracks. A day for sanity and serenity!

Trip Cost \$5

21 November

Craiglowan Falls/McQuilkans Creek [M]

Janet Barclay ph. 489 2598

We travel to the Bull Ring where we park the cars on Sanatorium Road. From here we walk to Craiglowan Falls and Smeatons Shack, follow the water race to Long Ridge Road—there is a short or longer version of this walk depending on how we feel on the day. We will meet up with the original track at the falls for a short, steep climb back to the car. The walk takes around 5 hours. Trip Cost \$5

28 November

Rosella Ridge [M]

Wayne Hodgkinson ph. 473 0950

Leaving the cars at the second car park at Hightop, we'll head along Green Ridge past Green Hut site, and on to Green Hill. Here we will take a right turn following a reasonably good track down Rosella Ridge. Continuing past 'Little Pulpit Rock' we will take another right turn down Hunters Track to the South Branch of the Waikouaiti River. We'll criss-cross our way upstream through tussocky flats until we start to climb back up to Mountain Road and hence return to the cars. Should be about 5 ½ hours.

Trip Cost \$6

Thursday Night Programme

4 November

Rod Morris will give a talk entitled " Extinction and discovery - Mountains, a last refuge for Biodiversity" Rod's research shows a number of plants and animals used to live at lower altitudes than they do now, he will explain the possible reasons for this.

11 November

BYO - Hopefully some of our trips will have survived cancellation due to weather, so there will be some photos for us to see.

18 November

To be advised - keep an eye on the OTMC email list or the club website

25 November

Its summer - walkies time. Walk up the Leith Saddle track to Swampy Spur. We will leave the club rooms at 7pm (Sharp) Car pool \$3. Its best to bring a torch.

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