

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



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



Three Passes—traversing to Park Pass

### Committee Members 2013/14

President	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Vice President	Richard Forbes	453 1327
Secretary	Richelle Adams	476 1302
Treasurer	Tina Anderson	
Chief Guide/Transport	Wayne Hodgkinson	473 0950
Membership Secretary	Richard Forbes	453 1327
Bulletin Editor	Debbie Pettinger	473 7924
Ben Rudds / Gear Hire	Sam Patrick	
Social Convener/ Gear Hire	Gene Dyett	455 7465
Social Convener	Tony Timperley	473 7257
Daytrip Convener	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Website	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Rep / Bulletin	Ross Hunt	453 0983
Clubrooms Maintenance	Andrew Pask	453 5719

**Visit us on the Internet at: [www.otme.co.nz](http://www.otme.co.nz)**

Who is this Alan Thomson that joined the committee last year?. Well, surprise, surprise, this is his second time around. I joined the tramping club in 1993 and at the 1996 AGM found myself being voted onto the committee.

I attended the OTMC's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1998 and found that this club wasn't "just a tramping club", but an institution with an impressive history and quite a considerable support base of generations of members going back as far as the 1930's. Amazing!.

At the 1998 AGM I was talked into becoming Club President, a position that I held for the next five years. Luckily the club has always had a talented and capable group of committed and enthusiastic committee members, none more so than our current President and his wife. Antony was Chief Guide during the term that I was President and I found his and Debbie's support, knowledge and commitment to the club to be very helpful.

Why did I join the OTMC?. I had read that the Milford track was reputed to be the greatest walk in the world and as it's only half a days drive from Dunedin I thought that it was something a man must do, but what did I know about tramping?. In 1992 I saw an advertisement that the OTMC were running a bush-craft course which would teach you all you needed to know to go tramping. That sounded just the thing. This course ended with me sleeping on tree roots, on a sloping piece of plastic under a fly in the Silver Peaks. The four of us kept sliding down to the bottom of the fly so it was a most uncomfortable night and not conducive to getting a good nights sleep. Not so sure why I joined the club after that.

Anyway I did, and what a lot of fun and adventure it has been. Some of the memorable trips with the OTMC have been the Ball Pass in Mount Cook National Park, A trip into George Sound, the Dusky Track, the Hump Range with Doug Forrester a couple of years before the new Hump Track was put in, Kayaking on Lake Manapouri, Wolfie's mid-winter social quiz nights, and Ian Sime's mid week tramps where we headed off on a Monday morning and returned on a Friday.

This gave participants more time to explore. Being self-employed I was able to come to an arrangement with the boss where I could take the occasional week off to go on these trips.

After my first stint on the committee, which ended in 2007, I was talked into going on the Ben Rudd management Trust which manages a 112 acre block of land on the back of Flagstaff that the club owns. Then, when a builder stands up at a meeting and says that he will help refurbish Leaning Lodge to get the club out of a bit of a bind, you can't let an opportunity like that go past. So I ended up on the Leaning Lodge Trust as secretary/treasurer/dogsbody to ensure that Ray got all the support that he needed.

And here I am back on the committee as Day trip convenor and maybe mid week trip convenor if there is sufficient interest among members for mid-week trips. If any-one is interested then talk to me.

All I can say now is roll on more tramping club adventures.

**Alan (Day Trip convenor)**

---

**Letters to the Editor** How come the Club is so slack? How is that most Club members sit back and let a few do all the work? How many years has the President had to carry the load of President and Bushcraft Director and Web-site manager? It is unprecedented in the Club history for someone to be left with the responsibility of President for so long? In the past most Presidents have served for 1-3 years and the turnover has been healthy and helpful. The Club was awash with a pool of Past Presidents to dip into for wisdom and continuity in any crisis.

Is it a case that the current President has been doing such a comprehensive job and set the bar so high that nobody else wants to step forward? Probably, but all the more reason for people to step up and shoulder some of the load. Imperfect Presidents are OK - many of us were variously deficient in the older days and didn't do much harm. Certainly the more imperfect we were the more others were encouraged into the role thinking "if she/he can do it then why can't I? ". We all brought different skills and ideas and emphasis to the role and then someone else came along and had a go. Sort of like a relay. We all learned and grew with whatever role we got volunteered into and the Club was stronger for the turnover. And so were we.

In any case, it is risky for the Club to allow someone to maintain so many crucial roles concurrently, and for so long. What about burnt out? Illness? Needing to move out of town? So come on Club members. Who is going to put themselves forward to help? From what I've observed from afar, there are a number of people who would be as competent at President as many of us Past Presidents. And if there are not members capable of organising a Bushcraft course then there is a failure of leadership training within the Club. The Club needs to be actively identifying potential leaders and encouraging and using them.

**Ross Davies**

# Trip Reports

## TRACK CLEARING - Work Done; Work to Do; A Good Day; A Sad Day; A Second Good Day Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 2013

Lucy J and I met two new members, Steve and Christine, at the clubrooms and set out for the Cloud Forest track, up from Sullivan's Dam. Armed with secateurs, loppers and a pruning saw, we were out walking by 9.30am. Passing the dam, the water was flat calm and there were wisps of mist rising – very pretty. But soon we were working! It was a while since I'd been up that track but the state of it wasn't *quite* as bad as I had expected. Steve chopped away at the bigger stuff with his loppers, Chris and I stuck to secateurs and Lucy used both her loppers and secateurs. We went at a great pace and by 11am were at – the junction of the track with the Leith Saddle track! 10 minutes usual walking pace had taken four of us 90 minutes to clear! And that was just clearing enough to see the track – no great manoeuvres at all!

The junction sign said “30 minutes to the Pylon clearing” but being as it was 11am we decided to work for 45 minutes and then just head to the clearing and into the sun for lunch. (It was cold in the wet forest!). 11.45 we stopped chopping at the ferns, twigs and branches and stepped up the pace to get to the sunshine. Alas, around the corner was a VERY large tree down! Too big for my pruning saw so we crawled around it. The thought of lunch was good! But for the next 45 minutes we had to saw, lop and secateur many many shrubby plants and branches that were blocking the track, eventually stepping into the sun (and wind!) at 12.30. Just ½ hour for lunch and then back again, still trying to clear the view of the track at ones feet. We reached our junction at 2.20pm. “Great” I said, “We could go on the viewpoint track, get there in ¼ hour and be back to the cars by 3.30pm”. All agreed. A wee while later I turned back my sleeve to check the time – no watch on my wrist! We'd only been going 10 minutes, so we decided to put a marker on the track, then go to the top, check out the view, and look for the watch on the way back. A great view over the motorway towards Swampy Summit, but regretfully no watch was found on the way back. My favourite watch! I've got another but it just ain't the same!

Still, we could be very satisfied with the work we'd done – even though there is HEAPS left to do. If anyone is going up that track in the summer, please take a pair of secateurs with you! I called in at the DCC during the week to tell them about the fallen tree but had difficulty contacting the right person.

And the second good day? I went up the track again on the Thursday following (Very heavy rain the night before): lo and behold – my watch! Still ticking nicely. My thanks to Steve & Chris Hopkins and Lucy Jones for a very satisfactory day.

## An Unexpected Journey across the Tararuas

I know it's a bit odd, but I'm a South Islander who likes the Tararuas. The plan for my fifth trip there was for four of us to leave Wellington after a meeting, drive to Otaki Forks and walk into Field Hut for Saturday night, then head up the Southern Crossing to Bridge Peak before taking the Main range to Maungahuka Hut. Simple? We thought so.

We were late getting to Otaki Forks, so flagged Field and bunked down at Parawai Hut, 5 minutes from the carpark. Sunday dawned warm, overcast and muggy. Déjà vu – identical conditions to those I'd encountered on the Southern Crossing 2 ½ years previously, which augured well, as on that occasion things had improved once we were above bushline. Sure enough, by the time we'd slogged up Judd Ridge and over Tiro tiro Knob to Field Hut, the skies were clear. Field Hut is the oldest purpose built tramping hut in the country. Dating from 1924, it was the Tararua Tramping Club's first major project and was named for one of the club's founders, local Member of Parliament Willie Field.

Five minutes beyond the hut, we broke out into open country. Ridge travel is, to me, what the Tararua Range is all about. The couple of hours climbing the meandering ridge as we gained 600 metres or so in height to Bridge Peak made for really pleasant travel, albeit a bit hot in the lower reaches. However, as we climbed, a stiff breeze came up to lessen the risk of overheating.



Tararua Peaks from near Maungahuka Hut

At the junction between the Southern Crossing and the main range route, just short of the new Kime Hut, we found a spot out of the wind where we could soak up the view while we ate lunch. From there, it was a drop of 300 metres – seeming to almost drop into the head basin of Hector River - before the undulations of the ridge

began. The founders of the Tararua Tramping Club liked to sprinkle names of their comrades over the landscape, and it seemed that every bump that we crossed had a name – Boyd-Wilson, Vosseler, Yeates and McIntosh all had to



The Tararua Ladder (VUWTC)

be surmounted on our way. After the turnoff to Penn Creek, we started to head up to the Tararua Peaks, Tuiti and Tunui. Although my research meant I was aware that we'd need to descend the infamous 25 metre ladder, I hadn't twigged to the nature of the terrain leading up to it. I've never had a head for heights, and deteriorating joints mean that any agility I once had is largely gone, so the next half hour or so was no fun. Scrambling ascents, sidles with big dropoffs and exposed, awkward descents, sometimes with ropes or chains to grab, eventually took us to the ladder.

Although steep and the height of a six storey building, the ladder itself was fine. It was followed by a bit more awkward stuff before we made our last climb of the day, over Maungahuka, and dropped to the hut of the same name.

The hut is beautifully sited by a tarn just below the ridge and was a just reward for the trials of the previous hour. As we relaxed and rehydrated, I started to contemplate the return over the Peaks – or rather, avoiding it. In hindsight, although the solution I came up with seemed simple, this is where things started to get messy. Cellphone reception was found nearby, and soon I was talking to a helicopter pilot on the Kapiti Coast. A price was agreed, Nick was keen to take the second seat and an 11 o'clock pickup the next morning was agreed on.

Peter and Pat set off for the Peaks at 8, in fine but breezy conditions. By mid morning, the breeze had morphed into a fierce south easterly. I rang the pilot. "Can't fly in this", he said. "Ring me at 6 and I'll either come then or at dawn tomorrow". Things were getting complicated. We had the car keys, and the four of us had planes to catch on Tuesday morning. By midday, we could barely see the other side of the tarn and the wind was screaming. We cancelled lunch, thinking we might need it tomorrow, and hibernated. Conditions were even worse at 6, and I had to put on full storm gear to go out for the phone call. The news was not good – no chance of getting in before Thursday. Time for Plan C.

If the helicopter hadn't been available when we made that first call on Sunday, we'd have just bitten the bullet and gone out over the Peaks. But the conditions we had now meant that wasn't an option and, even if it was, the ridge travel beyond there would have been somewhere between unpleasant and dangerous. Likewise, going north to Anderson Hut and returning to the Forks via the Otaki River would have meant too long on the tops, as well as being too far to do in a day, which was really the limit that we could stretch our food to. The only viable options seemed to be heading for the Wairarapa. We discarded going out to Walls Whare via either Cone Hut or Totara Flats, largely over concerns about phone coverage at the road end, and opted to make for Holdsworth Lodge. The map suggested that could be done in twelve hours – the longest day either of us had done for years.

After a night where the wind shook the near-new hut periodically, we had a morsel for breakfast, rugged up and headed up Maungahuka. Turning left, we began the long descent to Neill Forks. Although visibility was poor, generations of trampers had left an adequate ground trail which soon took us to bushline. From here, the weather would no longer be a concern. The long descent eventually brought us to the Hector River, where a bridge, not that obvious on the map, took us to Neill Forks Hut. We allowed ourselves a short respite there before tackling the climb to Cone Ridge. A lunch break here was brief but well earned, and then we began the meander north towards Totara Flats. All good things end, and eventually we had to undertake another knee-jarring descent before a short wander by the river to the hut. Time for more food and fluid top up, and then it was time to tackle the last hill of the day. Part of the Holdsworth Kaitoke track, it's one of the more established routes in the Tararuas, but still involved a climb of nearly 600 metres, which was an effort after nearly 8 hours on the move. Finally we reached the track to Mt Holdsworth, the de facto Great Walk of the Tararuas, and it was all downhill from there – albeit on a foot wearying hard surface. At Rocky Point, we were able to use the cellphone confirm our ride to Wellington before taking the last stretch to Holdsworth Lodge. Henry the warden had been alerted to our impending arrival and generously supplied tea and toasted sandwiches – a pleasant end to a long day and an interesting trip.

**David Barnes**

# TripList

## CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

**1/2 March**

**Mt. Armstrong [M]**

**Gordon Tocher ph. 472 7440 477 8944 or (021) 677 818**

**Please note date change from trip card and new phone number**

Mt Armstrong (2174m) is located near Haast Pass and close to Mt Brewster. So long as there is not too much snow on it the peak is readily scaled by trampers. The views from the summit are stunning, on a clear day both Mt Cook and Mt Aspiring can be seen; not to mention a few hundred other peaks. The route to the hut entails firstly crossing the Haast River, then continuous 1000 vertical metres uphill through forest, then tussock to the near new 12 person Brewster Hut (1450m) for Saturday nights accommodation. As this trip is highly susceptible to poor weather, it is prudent to make alternative plans should the River be too high to cross. The options of either an alternative weekend of 15 & 16 March or a trip to another location (maybe Ohau area) on the 1st & 2nd will be at the choice of the majority of people who sign up.

Trip cost \$60 plus DOC hut ticket or annual hut pass.

**Advance Notice - Stewart Island**

**18-27 April**

**Wayne Hodgkinson 473 0950**

Most of you may have noticed that this year's Easter trip includes the nearby ANZAC break, to enable a useful 10 day break for those able to take 2 or 3 days off work. Stewart Island has a wide range and variety of trips available, and having up to 10 days makes all a possibility. DOC have ample information on their website, and in pamphlet form. Samples are in the clubrooms. Some trip examples



below:

1. Rakiura Track – 3 day ‘Great Walk’ (E/M)
2. Mount Anglem – You could climb Stewart Island’s highest peak at 980m. 5 to 7 days (E/M)
3. North West Circuit – One of, if not THE best tramp in NZ, in the opinion of many people who have come a long way to get here. 10 days. (M/F)
4. Southern Circuit – 8 days (F)
5. Tin Range / Gogs – 10 days including scrub and bush bashing – no huts south of Rakeahua. (FE)

Trips 1 to 4 are all on good tracks, (maybe a bit muddy in places) and have huts available. All of the above can be reduced or shortened by making use of Water Taxis on Paterson Inlet – giving fast access to or pick up from North Arm, Freshwater, Fred’s Camp, or Rakeahua Hut. You could also choose to do a shorter trip e.g. Rakiura Track or Mt Anglem, and spend some time on short walks or other trips based from the town of Oban – a great place in its own right. Those doing the 10 day trips would need to aim for the 9:30am ferry from Bluff on Good Friday.

Clearly, each actual trip that runs would require someone to act as Leader for the group doing that trip. There will be an ‘Expressions of Interest’ list in the clubrooms – and feel free to see me any time.

# Membership

## Membership

Club membership now stands at 194

## Members joined during last month

- Sue Levick (returning member)
- Ruth Pankhurst

I am still looking for people to assist with advertising in The Star newspaper for the OTMC open day 15th/16th March.

If you are able to help please get in touch.

**Richard Forbes**

**OTMC membership Secretary**

# DAYTRIPS

**2 March**

**Taioma—Outram Glen Tramping/Pack Floating [M]**

**Wayne Hodgkinson (473 0950)**

Tramping where the object is to get wet. A trip for experienced trampers who are familiar with river travel. River flows of 5cumecs max will allow an interesting trip combining riverside tramping, scrambling and wading around obstructions and “pack floating” through some of the deeper pools. Wayne will tailor the trip to the river conditions on the day. See Wayne for details. M Carpool \$10.

**9 March**

**Possum Ridge [E/M]**

**Richard Pettinger (487 9488)**

A classic Silverpeaks day walk. Knowing Richard’s trips though—be prepared for some interesting sidelines. E/M Carpool \$8.

**15 March**

**Club Open Day**

We need members who can come along to the clubrooms between 10am and 4pm on Saturday to explain the workings and advantages of belonging to our tramping club to any prospective members who turn up.

**16 March**

**Open Day Tramp Leith Track [E]**

The follow-on tramp to the Open Day. Meet at the Leith Saddle walk (top of the motorway) where we will have a tent set up. Help take small parties to the top of Swampy Summit Groups leave every hour between 10am and 2pm. E

**23 March**

**Bullock Track Roxburgh [E/M]**

**Steph McLaughlan (481 7116)**

This is a steep walk following an old pack track up to the Old Man Range behind Roxburgh and the Teviot Valley. Originally used to service gold mining settlements far in the hills. E/M Carpool \$20.

**30 March**

**Orokanui Cycling [M]**

**Chris Pearson (455 4673)**

See Chris for his intended route.



# Gear for Hire

The OTMC has a large amount of gear available for members to hire.

Ice axes	Crampons	Packs
Cookers	Billies	First Aid Kit
Tents	Personal Locator Beacons	
Climbing Helmets	Avalanche Transceivers and Probes	

Members can hire gear for \$5 for up to one week. If you can't get it back to club then each week is an additional \$5. Phone Gene or Sam if you can't make it to club nights to bring gear back.



## OTMC Open Day 15-16 March 2014

The Open Day is an opportunity to introduce and promote ourselves. It is the current members of the OTMC that can be the best publicity for the club. Please talk to your friends and work-mates about what you do with the club and encourage them to come along sometime during the weekend. We need members to come along to the club rooms for part/all of Saturday, 15 March to talk to the public about the club and encourage them to come along on our walk on Sunday and to Thursday night club nights. If you can't help on Saturday, then meet at the Leith Saddle car park on Sunday to 'lead' a group of people up onto Swampy Summit. The clubrooms will be open from 10am—4pm on Saturday. Join the guided walk on Sunday to Swampy Summit via the Leith Saddle Track on the hour from 10am—2pm.

# Thursday Night Programme

## 6 March

Ian Bretherton will talk to images of a 100 day voyage on a double-hull sailing waka, the "Haunui". The waka crew sailed 8000 nautical miles from San Diego, down the Mexican coast, across to the Cocos and Galapagos Islands, through the Tuamotu Archipelago, finishing in Tahiti. On this epic voyage, Ian and the crew navigated using the stars, a skill we trampers could learn from, should our GPS's malfunction! pagos Islands, through the Tuamotu Archipelago, finishing in Tahiti. On this epic voyage, Ian and the crew navigated using the stars, a skill we trampers could learn from, should our GPS's malfunction!

## 13th March

Following on from last week: All you ever wanted to know about GPSs and PLBs. Electronic navigation expert Alan Wilden will enlighten us on how we can use these devices to our greatest advantage. .

## 20th March

As trampers we are all aware that DOC underwent major restructuring last year. How will this affect the those areas administered by DOC where we go tramping? Newly appointed Partnership Ranger Simon Alefio-Tuck will come and talk to us and answer our questions about DOC and the Otago area.

## 27th March

BYO. Again there should be plenty of photos/ videos from Leaning Lodge (Gene's trip plus the official opening), Mt Armstrong, West Matukituki, plus those from any of the Sunday tramps.

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](mailto:tonytimps@xtra.co.nz)) or Gene Dyett (phone 455 7465, email [m.gdyett@xtra.co.nz](mailto:m.gdyett@xtra.co.nz))

**Visit us on the Internet at: [www.otmc.co.nz](http://www.otmc.co.nz)**