

**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.



On the Serpentine Range—February 2014

### Committee Members 2013/14

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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	
Clubrooms Maintenance	Andrew Pask	453 5719

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

The back country in recent times has had some natural changes with nature, as always, having the last say and adding a couple of new swimming holes in the Wilkin/Young and Rees/Dart areas.

But also man is try to change our adventure playground with “tunnels”. Thank goodness it collapsed and did not get built. A highway from Haast to the Hollyford is being talked about again, and for good measure there is also talk of a monorail being bulldozed through to Te Anau Downs. What’s next? A boardwalk staircase to the top of Mount Cook for the tourists? But all jokes aside—is DOC becoming just a tourist operator? The almighty dollar speaks, DOC has funding cuts and staff losses to deal with but the difference between “Front Country” and “Back Country” is becoming more unbalanced with “Front Country” getting the bigger slice.

You don’t need to look far to see that corporates are getting asked to provide sponsorship like Dulux Paints providing paint for back country huts and the community most times has to come up with the labour for the job. Or clubs like ourselves that are taking on projects to save our back country heritage. Clubs like ours and other outdoor community groups, I am sure, don’t have money trees growing at their clubrooms.

How far does this balancing act go? I was speaking to a gentleman at the Leaning Lodge Open Day who was one of the original ski tow operators and he was saying that it had been some time since he was last in the Abel Tasman area. With the average large DOC hut years ago costing around the \$250,000 give or take but with costs going up over time. Yes you would expect an increase in the cost of building a new hut but when he was at Abel Tasman over Christmas time 2013-2014 one of the newly built huts was like a palace and with a price tag of \$700,000 to \$800,000. That’s a whole lot of remote “back country” huts, track clearing and DOC campsites that could be improved over time in our remote valleys and mountains.

Our club has just had our Waitangi 4 day weekend trip with one group completing the Serpentine Range and finishing at Lake Wilson, then out along the Routeburn Track to the car park. The section between Falls and Flats Hut, sadly has now been all smoothed out to form a super highway. Thanks to clubs like ours and other outdoor and community groups like Forest and Bird who keep fighting for what’s ours, and that of future generations to come. The government and DOC are just our caretakers on our behalf and need to keep that balance in check. I’m sure we would like future generations to enjoy the back country as much as we have and not suddenly find a valley that was once remote now has vehicle access to a hut that is also five star accommodation. This would be so wrong. There is heritage and adventure out there for everyone but is this balance

disappearing, I hope not.

In the future when I take my grandchildren to the back country to camp out or stay in a hut. I would like them to see the country for what it is now and that the balance between back country users and tourism has an equal balance. Are we making the tourists too comfortable and complacent that they forget that just a few metres from these super highway tracks and five star palaces is a completely different world of changeable weather, tough terrain at times and that good navigation skills are needed to complete most tramps into our wilderness areas?

I guess that it is up to everyone to help keep this balance of cost and tourism versus back country and the great outdoors for future generations to come.

**Gene Dyett**  
**Social convenor and gear hire**

# *Membership*

Club membership still stands at 194 although a few people have taken away membership form to be filled out

We had 44 people through the door for the OTMC open day with some people staying for quite a while to look at the displays we had on offer. Thanks to those of you that came to the clubrooms to help out on Saturday and a huge thanks to Gene (and others) who set up the displays on Friday night. It was a shame about the weather for the walk on Sunday

Also thanks to the people who assisted with advertising in The Star to promote the open day:

Richelle Adams from Adams Flags  
Treavor Deaker from 8 Ranges Wines  
Mountain Safety Council  
R & R Sport  
Richard Forbes from Neville Stewart Landscaping

Please support those that support us

**Richard Forbes**  
**Membership Secretary**

# Trip Reports

## Geocaching in Oamaru

20 October 2013

So off we go in our Mount Cook Denning Jumboliner Mk1, an original 1977 Mt Cook Landliner “City of Wellington”. For those of you that are petrol-heads, well make that diesel-heads, this Otago Heritage Bus Soc Inc bus is powered by a rear mounted Detroit V692 turbo charged 2 stroke (yes 2 stroke) 9.1 litre diesel with 4 speed Allison automatic transmission and Air-bag Suspension no less! Quite a ride, she was driven by Andrew, who we got to hear later during the quiz's had been to 35 countries (and skied in 30)!

Of the 24 on the bus when we started out, Wayne Hodgkinson, Raewyn Duncan, Andrew Higgison, Jane Bruce, Spen Walker, Jan Burch and Barry Walker were from OTMC, the rest were mad Geocachers. We added a couple of hitch-hikers along the way, and, as a result of maybe a miss-count, forgetfulness, or just plain wishful thinking, very nearly left two behind at Palmerston (yours truly being one of them). We of course blamed the organiser for this very-nearly mishap.

On the way we were treated to some quizzes, a tramping related one where we OTMC'ers excelled, a geocache one where we all (mostly) failed miserably, and a OH Bus Soc Inc one where if you found the brochure (in the seat pocket in front of you) you did well, otherwise you maybe scored zero. Regardless, it made for an entertaining trip, well done Jan for the questions and Andrew (the non-bus-driver-non-skier one) for being such a learned quiz master.

So to Oamaru where different groups went their different ways. I and 6 others did the “Skyline” track, which was a bit of a ramble over the hills with great views over the town and out to the coast. Interspersed along the way were about a dozen geocaches which (as a non-believer) were quite amazing in their variety and sneakiness. I list what I can remember to give you fellow non-believers an idea of what “they” go through...

A marker peg with a hollowed out flapped compartment containing “the Cache”.

A buried plant growing grass (like how would you know it was there in the paddock!) under which was “the Cache”.

First find a “tool” (a magnet on a length of string), and then lower it down a plastic pipe sticking out of the ground amongst the gorse, to raise out “the Cache” - what sort of mind figures this out? ...

A bucket hidden in bushes containing a plastic rubbish bag with books (Wayne took away a good Lee Child novel).

A small black bag, and later a smaller black film canister, hanging in a tree (“impossible” to find).

A box with a screwed and bolted top, so unless you had some tools (my small “swiss army” knife undid some, a friendly neighbour helped out with the rest)...

A hole about 1cm round going through a concrete pylon, “the Cache” was in the hole!

And all the while recording codes from “the Cache's” to derive a final clue for a final Cache via some complicated formula that required some Einstein knowledge - we were either going to complete the search in style or end up somewhere south of Stewart Island, luckily (or with good management) the last Cache was found nearby and we could safely return to the bus.

An uneventful cruise home, no bodies lost, completed a very interesting day. Well done Jan Burch for a rather different daytrip that went off almost without a hitch

Am I now a believer? Interestingly Marie (a devout Geocacher) had 2418 Caches to her name prior to this trip, so I figure I'm so far behind that, really, well, I just don't think I'm gunna start.

**Barry Walker**



## Raboh Ridge - 19 January 2014

The weather was looking vaguely threatening when we left the clubrooms, bound for Raboh Ridge but with Plans B & C packed and ready to use. First we had to undertake a short exercise in mathematics and contortionism to prove that five into a Hyundai Getz does go, which got me pondering – if you have 6 people and one small Hyundai, who goes (members? the people who rang to discuss the trip?) or who gets left behind (the last person to turn up?). Hopefully, it remains a rhetorical question.

By Hightop, the weather was looking much more promising, and so we headed for Green Hut at a blistering pace, stopping only to peel layers off. Upwards past Rosella Ridge (Plan C – cancelled), we had a mandatory summit detour at Pulpit Rock because Rose hadn't been there before. As a bonus, she bagged the geocache that's perilously located on the farthest outcrop. Showers engulfed the distant Rock and Pillars and we again wondered if our weather would last. However, before long we were atop Silver Peak and saw that those showers had passed by.

The descent styles for the Devil's Staircase ranged from Eric's zoom to my usual hobble. On the way down, I was pleased to see that the day I'd spent applying basal bark poison to Spanish heath had largely paid off. As we had lunch at Jubilee Hut, an easterly fog descended from the direction of ABC Cave and engulfed us. Similar fog on a previous trip had led me to bail out of a previous attempt on the ridge (leading to Plan B, back up the Staircase), but today I'd had the opportunity to scope a route before the fog arrived, so was confident that we'd be able to navigate without much difficulty.

I think Raboh Ridge (an acronym for Ridge At Back Of Hut) was an idea of Antony Hamel's, with a view to either creating a round trip or perversely trying to avoid having to lose height when you leave the hut only to regain it on the Staircase. The first half hour is up a face in bracken and manuka scrub, which makes useful and frequently necessary handholds. We veered left, taking what seemed to be the most obvious line and avoiding some rock outcrops. Eventually the face morphed into a spur, and with that the animal tracks we'd been on intermittently became more consistently followable. At 700 metres, we encountered a fenceline. Visibility was not much more than 50 metres, so the fenceline was useful navigational aid as we turned and headed south. Soon we were on the old farm tack traversing the upper edge of the Painted Forest. Jan and Peter had had a traumatic experience of the Painted Forest on a club trip last year, so greeted my advice that Dark Horse Hut would only require a couple of minutes tangling with the Forest with scepticism. In actual fact, from the waratah in the dip that marks the turnoff, it took a mere 75 seconds – albeit, through bush lawyer – to get to this rumpty shelter. Back on the track, one last grunt took us to Silver Peak's southern face and the sign that marked the completion of the round part of the trip. From there, all that was required was to retrace our steps past Pulpit Rock (glad that we'd popped up to the summit in the morning when there was a view), stopping briefly for gingernuts at Green Hut and getting to the car a little over four hours from Jubilee Hut.

David Barnes for Eric Lord, ~~Peter Hughes~~, Jan Burch & Rose Colhoun

## McNally Track Trip Report

23 Feb 2014

Sunday morning dawned promising after a wet Saturday night and having checked Met service online, I saw the rain wasn't meant to arrive until 2pm, with sun and wind in the meantime. Two other trampers, Jane and Rose, met me at the OTMC clubrooms and at 9.05am, the three of us travelled to Milton. At the start of the track, we met with Fran, from Brighton. While she waited for us to arrive, she'd been "killing" time looking around the "dead" centre of Milton. (The start of the McNally Track is opposite Milton Cemetery).

At 10.10am, we set off through farmland, reaching the first viewpoint 20mins later, 10 minutes uphill from here are signs for the Kowhai Loop or Main Track, we chose the Kowhai Loop, a more gradual climb. At 10.55am, we reached the Main Track/Ridge option, which states 30mins either



way. I reckon it would take about an hour to walk up that steep ridge! So, we stayed on the main route, continuing uphill, and following the fence line, briefly stopping for a snack, before entering the bush. A pleasant 15mins through the gum leaf littered bush track was interspersed with birdsong from a beautiful bell-bird, seen by Jane and I. On leaving the bush, we stepped over a stile and crossed a field, with Jane noticing a flowering Rowan tree nearby .

With dark clouds looming to the south and the wind at its worst, we sheltered behind the water towers for lunch. Great idea! And from there we could actually

see the Pacific Ocean!

At 12noon, we took two quick photos, before descending through fields of turnip and stinging nettle!

During our descent, the bad weather hit us but fortunately, the gusty wind blew most of the rain away! 25mins later when we reached the bottom of the ridge and the sheltered eucalyptus grove, the sun was shining again. I was pleased to see DOC's efforts in their removal of the tree fall I had told them



View of lookout from our snack stop.





about, as it made it much easier negotiating the track through the trees. The uphill field we entered beyond this grove was sheltered too, the sunshine and warmth appealing to us and seemingly also to the singing cicadas and bell-birds in the area. 10mins later we were back at the Bush Track/Ridge Signs and 35minutes from there, back at our vehicles in Cemetery Rd at 1.10pm.

Despite the changeable weather conditions, we had a most enjoyable tramp in great company, finishing off with a drink and a bite to eat at the Black Swan Cafe in Waihola.

McNally Track, is well maintained, signposted and within easy travelling distance of Dunedin. It has several seats situated at various viewing spots throughout the track.

**Jacqui King for Fran Rae, Jane Terry & Rose Colhoun**





# Trip list

## CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

Our recent Open Day went well on Saturday 15th with over 40 people through the door – less than last year but we did have a bit of a glitch with the ODT missing the clubroom's address on their Thursday add. Many thanks to Gene, Richard, Rochelle & co for their efforts in setting up the clubrooms for the day, arranging advertising etc. Remember to support the advertisers who support us.

Sunday wasn't quite so good – constant rain somewhat dampening enthusiasms for a quiet walk up the Leith Saddle Track. Thanks to Gene, Ross, and Tony for persevering against all normal people's systems of logic. Pity we had to resort to coffee and cakes in Waitati !?

The Stewart Island trip is coming up, organisation for this is underway. People planning the 10 day trip should be working on their fitness – even if the days are not particularly long (8 hours max), and there are no big climbs, carrying gear and being on the go for 10 days is worth some preparation. We will have a meeting soon to discuss food, gear etc.

What's next? By mid April we will need the Winter Trip Programme ready for publication. We need the usual – ideas for trips, AND preferably offers to lead them. Remember there are a number of people who have lead trips in the past who will be happy to help you with that – including myself. It might seem a bit scary at first, but we have guidelines and support available AND it is the only way we can offer trips. Also – you get to choose your destination! See me, phone 473 0950, or email [wphodgkinson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:wphodgkinson@xtra.co.nz) You could always dip your toes in an area you are already familiar with.

If you don't feel up to leading a weekend trip, try a Sunday Day Trip – phone Alan Thomson at 455 7878.

**Wayne Hodgkinson**  
**Chief Guide**

**5-6 April**  
**Dasler Pinnacles [All]**  
**Richard Forbes ph. 453 1327**

This is a great spot I have always wanted to visit. The Daslers are in the Hopkins Valley near Lake Ohau. A 4WD vehicle can easily be driven to Monument Hut where we hope to spend Friday night. On Saturday head directly to Red Hut across the river bed on the true left of the Hopkins River, this will dependant on the Hopkins River flow. A Further hour upstream from Red Hut is the start of the 2 hour marked climb to the bush line to the very original Dasler Bivvy.

From here we will explore the tussock basins above the bush line with the dramatic Pinnacles behind. Moir's Guide book says the summit is reached fairly easily via the broken north ridge where spectacular views of Mts Cook and Aspiring can be had. Travel back will be retracing our steps. If the river is too high to be crossed we may go into the Huxley Valley nearby (which is bridged) for a look to Forks Hut and beyond. Trip cost \$60, huts cost \$5 per night (or hut pass).

Trip list closes Thursday 27th March

# DAYTRIPS

**6 April**  
**Mt. Kettle [E]**  
**Gavin McArthur ph. 455 0027**

Leaving the clubrooms at 9.00am and proceeding to the car park above Port Chalmers, to the start of Cedar Farm Rd. From here we'll walk up the road to the reservoir and on to the summit of Mt. Kettle. We will then tramp up to the top of Mihiwaka and hopefully the views. This will lead us on to descend the Mihiwaka track to the main road and return to the car park. Carpool from the clubrooms.

*(Continued on page 11)*

**13 April**  
**Moa Flat—Cycle**  
**Jane Cloete ph. 467 2328**  
**NOTE—7.30am start**

Do not be deceived by the title – only a third of this trip is on flattish ground! Probably about 5-6 hours cycling (*and walking uphill!*). Note that this is a circular trip – we finish where we left the cars in the morning. Leave the clubrooms 7.30am sharp. Drive to Raes Junction and leave cars there. Hopefully start cycling 9.15- 9.30am. 20+ km on flattish road, then a *very long and steep* climb up! After that, ups and downs until a final wonderful long run down back to the cars. Approx 60km total cycling.

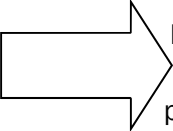
**20 April**  
**Easter—No Day Trip**

**27 April**  
**ANZAC Weekend - No Day Trip**

**4 May**  
**Berwick Forest [M]**  
**Alan Scurr ph. 489 5538**

Meet at clubrooms by 9am. Travel out to Berwick to Berwick Lodge. Leave a car at Waipori Gorge picnic ground on the way. Walk through native bush and forest tracks to Waipori Gorge then up the Government Track.. Return down to Gorge for cars. Depending on weather, track could be a bit muddy and there is one stream to cross.

Walking time is approximately 4 hours. Carpool \$8.00



**Trip reports needed**—if you've been tramping lately, we'd love to hear from you. Be it a day or weekend trip, please put a few words on paper and let us know where you went. Include a photo or two if possible and send to [debsnz@ihug.co.nz](mailto:debsnz@ihug.co.nz).

# Thursday Night Programme

## 3 April

The club has arranged two introductory First Aid sessions which will be led by Helen Beamish of the Mountain Safety Council. At the first session we will introduce the idea of "thinking like the body" in terms of when things go wrong, what the body does to try and compensate... the range of things people know about which could go wrong... and CPR, including lots of time to practice this life-saving skill.

## 10 April

At the second session, we will cover the three B's - bleeds, breaks and burns - common injuries at home and in the hills, and focus on first responses to reduce harm and promote healing, while carefully balancing the extended timeframe for care that being away from an ambulance centre (as we are when out tramping) and the need to improvise often - "doing the best we can, with the resources we have, in the situation we're in!"

## 17 April

Easter—No club night

## 24 April

ANZAC—No club night

## 1 May

Antony, Debbie and Andrew will tell about their adventures along the Serpentine Range to Lake Wilson at Waitangi Weekend. The weather and scenery combined to make this one of those memorable trips.

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

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