

**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.



The OTMC visited Dasler Bivouac in April 2014  
Photo : Tomas Sobek

### 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 Convenor	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.otmc.co.nz](http://www.otmc.co.nz)**

The places that we tramp in are a hugely important aspect of the whole tramping experience. Most of the time, most of us like to tramp in places that are largely unmodified. Living in a country that is, by global standards, both recently populated and sparsely populated, we're lucky that there are lots of places that tick that box. We also appreciate the freedom to tramp throughout our public lands. Sometimes, we like facilities – tracks, bridges, huts etc – and, a bit like Goldilocks with the porridge, we've all got our own ideas of what's just right – not too flash, not too rugged.

Lucky as we are to have all those things, there's a constant battle going on to protect and enhance the places we love. Can you imagine access charges to use Aoraki Mt Cook National Park? What about guided walkers only on the Milford Track? Pine trees all over the Silver Peaks? The majestic Waitutu Forests clear felled? What if there was a gondola up the Caples or a tunnel through the Routeburn Track? How would you feel, having tramped for five days to reach the Olivine Ice Plateau, if a couple of helicopters disgorged some picnickers beside you?

These have all been real and credible threats to places we love, and all are fights that have been won because ordinary trampers stepped up and fought. To a large extent, that was done through the collective voice that being in clubs gave them, along with the wider collective voice of the national organisation, Federated Mountain Clubs (FMC). When your OTMC subs bill arrives and you think "what do I get for this?", one invaluable but intangible aspect is being part of that voice.

This club has an impressive history of activism. It joined FMC soon after it was formed, when the big issue was a Government proposal to lease the Mt Cook National Reserve (now Aoraki Mt Cook National Park) to a tourism company. That's right – the whole park available for only paying customers. One of the club's proudest moments was leading the original Freedom Walk over the Milford Track in 1965. That was a real game changer. Until then, only paying guided walkers could use the track. The OTC (as it then was) action spurred the powers-that-be into providing separate huts for non-guided trampers.

A couple of events in 1982 opened my eyes to the possibility that speaking up made a difference. Janet Girvan took a few of us to the Waitutu forests when they were under serious threat of logging. I fell in love with the place, and it's still a favourite. And the Silverpeaks County wanted to zone all of my beloved Silver Peaks for forestry. The club was involved in both campaigns – for Waitutu, supporting national bodies like the Native Forests Action Council, and in the Silver Peaks leading the charge – and I wanted to be part of that.

At that time, the club had a sub-committee called the Outdoor Recreation Group – not a particularly enlightening name. Conservation & recreation advocacy subcommittee would have described it better. I learnt at the feet of people like Bruce and Ken Mason, Janet Girvan, Mark Hanger and (especially) Richard Pettinger. Thirty-plus years later I am, to some extent, a one-man subcommittee, although I do get useful input from a few members, notably Mike Floate, Rob Mitchell and Richard Pettinger. Recently, Tony Timperley and Alan Thomson stepped up and presented the club’s submission to DoC on the Conservation Management Strategy.

What I’d like from you guys is not necessarily attendance at meetings or writing submissions, but two things 1. Keep an eye on the places you care about and make sure the club knows about threats to them. 2. If you think the views that I’m putting forward on behalf of the club don’t reflect the views of you, the members, let me know.

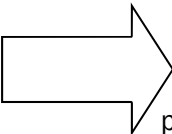
**David Barnes**  
**Conservation & Recreation Advocacy Officer**

# *Membership*

OTMC membership now stands at 196

New members during the last month  
Diana Munster (returning member)  
Ruth Harvie

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



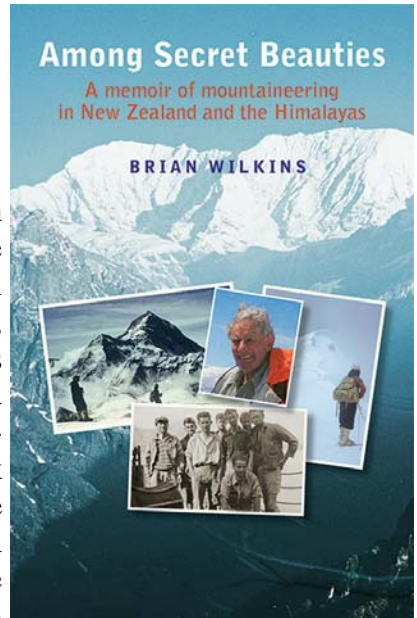
**Trip reports needed**—if you’ve been tramping lately, we’d love to hear from you. Be it a day or weekend trip, please put a few words on paper and let us know where you went. Include a photo or two if possible and send to [debsnz@ihug.co.nz](mailto:debsnz@ihug.co.nz).

## Book Review

# Among Secret Beauties, by Brian Wilkins

When a climber in his eighties decides to commit his memories to a book, the results aren't guaranteed to be good. However, a potential reader need have no such qualms about this memoir.

Wilkins grew up in Dunedin and was an active member of the Otago Section of the NZ Alpine Club. He was selected to go on the club's first big Himalayan expedition, to the Barun Valley under Ed Hillary's leadership. (The expedition was arranged and personnel selected before the 1953 Everest expedition). The first half of the book deals with the Barun trip, starting with the dramatic events surrounding Wilkins and Jim McFarlane falling into a crevasse, the subsequent injury to Hilary as he and Wil-



kins rescued Macfarlane and the effect of that injury on the rest of the expedition. He then goes on to cover a variety of climbs in New Zealand, notably the eventful first ascent of the North East Ridge of Mt Aspiring/Tititea and the first west east traverse of Mt Earnslaw/Pikirakatahi.

Wilkins writes really well. The description of a Himalayan peak as “a huge elongated stack of large unattached rocks, the whole pile stamped Withdrawn from Circulation by the geological librarian” is an example of why this is not just a dull recounting of peaks and events. He's not afraid to challenge previously published accounts of events he was involved, even when the authors are big guns like Hillary, John Hunt or (particularly) Norman Hardie. Some may see this as having a bit of an axe to grind, but it does not detract from the stories. The book is well referenced, so readers who want to delve more deeply into the stories can easily do so.

The obvious comparison, for a memoir covering Himalayan and New Zealand climbing, is with Mike Gill's *Mountain Midsummer* (1969), long a favourite of mine. *Amongst Secret Beauties* can stand up well in that company.

**David Barnes**

# Trip Reports

## Roaring Meg Crossover

January 2014

When I originally planned this trip, I'd imagined half the group walking up-track from Roaring Meg to Cardrona, and t'other half walking downwards. Well, it sort-of worked out that way, but the planning had a lot of changes in-between.

Twelve of us went for the weekend – my apologies to those other people who were a bit late booking in, but car-shuffling took a lot of organising and I couldn't take more. And the hut was squashed enough with 12 people!

Prior planning was mainly worry about the weather forecasts. The Pisa Range is a wee bit away from the main divide but there was a massive low pressure set to go up the west coast on Sunday, preceded by gale force winds on Saturday. Four of the group were originally going to go up to the Meg Hut from Lowburn – a very exposed route.

We took 4 cars, staying in Cromwell Friday. The next day the forecast wasn't much better – the rain was now set to begin 5am Sunday, not Saturday evening – and I put my foot down about the Lowburn route – too exposed and walking uphill into a gale wouldn't be fun! I also pointed out that the Roaring Meg track had a small waterfall that is tricky to negotiate in good weather, let alone in the downpour expected on Sunday so most decided to walk up the Meg track in the dry on Saturday, and walk out to Cardrona on Sunday. The main group of 10 started going up from the Roaring Meg at 8.30am whilst Barry Walker and I took 2 cars round to the Cardrona car park. Most of the group took the 'short-cut' from near the top of the Meg Track – the track description of 'numerous river crossings' was very accurate! - but the stream was low and they encountered no problems. Kathy and Chris decided to keep their feet dry and went on up to Tuohys Saddle before descending back to the hut – it only took 10 minutes longer. Barry and Jane had potted slowly up from Cardrona and got to the hut about an hour before the main group.

The Meg Hut is a wee gem! Set at the junction of three valleys, it has 8 bunks and in view of the rain forecast we did not put up tents and all squashed in: 10 on bunks and 2 on the floor. Most of us had sleeping mats and donated them to the floor-sleepers. Apparently concrete isn't at all bad with 3-4 mats underneath you!

The afternoon was taken up with gathering wood, cutting it to lengths with a blunt saw (the axe was broken!), and short exploratory trips. One stalwart group went up the hill 'backwards' on the Lowburn track to see what had been missed.

Sunday it started to drizzle at 5am, but by 7am, when we were getting up, it was still only a drizzle so four trampers decided to go back down the Roaring Meg (but I noticed that they avoided the 'numerous stream crossings' and went up-and-round via Tuohys saddle!). The remaining eight tidied the hut and then tramped up to the saddle and down to Cardrona, still only in drizzle. Driving back to Cromwell, we were at Mt Pisa station when we could see the big black clouds of the weather front ahead – the weather bomb had arrived! By noon it was pouring, but we were by then safely in the warm house at Cromwell. Later the four trampers from the Roaring Meg route reported that the weather wasn't too harsh as they descended the gorge.

### **Jane Cloete**

My thanks to my companions for their tolerance of the many changes to the original plan when I panicked about the weather bomb; and for their general helpfulness and geniality on the trip: Barry Walker, Joe Skinner, Kathy Woodrow, Chris Pearson, Betty Meiklejohn, Tim Russell, Michael Firmin, Jane Bruce, Spen Walker, Ruth Pankhurst, and Tomas Sobek.





## Possum Hut

### Sunday 9 March 2014

I was startled into wakefulness from a dream in which 79 eager people turned up for this trip. Getting to the Clubrooms at 8.58am, I was relieved to see only two there. But Wayne was there and about a dozen more were out of sight inside the rooms.

By 9.30am we had picked up our 18<sup>th</sup> person in Waitati and the convoy drove to the Mountain Tack carpark. We stormed off down the road and then down the grovelly track to Possum Hut. I thought, if we put all the names at the end of the Bulletin article, as we must do, then the report itself has to be short, or it'll be held back waiting for space and might go somewhat stale. So, it was important that nothing much happen on the trip that could take up even more Bulletin pages. I tried to pretend there were fewer people, but we couldn't lose anyone, so that strategy failed. Luckily nobody gave birth.

We learnt you can get 16 people in Possum Hut. (Count the legs in the photos and divide by two.) Wayne wondered if all of us could



get in the hut lying down. Bags not be underneath, I thought. We showed no lack of enthusiasm or fitness and were at the Green hut site for an early lunch. Whatever happened to having at least one slow person on a trip? Two side trips were then held, one to the water hole and the tiny hut there (not big enough for 18), and the other to Pulpit Rock. There's no stopping this lot. Soon we were stomping off along Green Ridge and driving home (with an ice cream stop in Waitati) and were all back by 4pm. A very nice little trip with a big mob.

Those who came along were: David Barnes, Shannon Blair, Jade Blake-Whitney, Lucy Jones, Raewyn Duncan, Isabelle Gensburger, Barry Walker, Antony Mabon, Yuki Fujita, Steph McLaughlin, Holly Peacock, James Bliss, Christine Hopkins, Steve Hopkins, Wayne Hodgkinson, Jill McAlicie, Jane Terry & Richard Pettinger. Thanks to Steve, Barry and Antony for driving.

# TripList

## CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

You will find the new Winter Trip Card enclosed with this Bulletin. Once again, we are all totally indebted to our Trip Leaders who volunteer their time and commitment to enable our tramping club to actually go tramping, as none of it just happens by itself. Obviously thanks also go to Alan Thompson and his happy band of Day-trippers for keeping the Day Trips alive and well. It's always good to see the regular names pop up, and absolutely terrific to see some new ones.

So thank them graciously, and please treat them kindly!

One thing we can all do to help with the all trips is to make sure we have the suitable personal gear as outlined on the back of the Trip Card. Your Leader should not be expected to provide for someone else's oversight. Another good way to help with overnight trips is to ensure you have paid the trip fee in advance, and consider that you are also making a commitment when you sign the trip list, as it can cause all sorts of difficulty if you pull out at the last minute after transport has been arranged. As the club aims to simply break even on trips (ie not lose money) a person pulling out after the Trip List closes (8 days before the trip leaves) is still liable to pay the trip fare, at the Leader's, Chief Guide's, or Treasurer's discretion.

On the subject of Trip Fares, you might notice a general increase. This has been approved by your committee, as necessary to avoid some recent issues. The longer distance trips are charged more than the shorter ones, largely as a trial for this Trip Card. Again, our goal is to not lose money on trips. We will use the Winter Trip Card as a trial.

One thing we have experienced recently is a smaller core of participants able or willing to bring their own vehicles, which is fine if we have the numbers for a van. There has been a concern that car drivers feel under pressure to charge a reduced fee to their passengers, this is most disappointing as it results in the driver effectively subsidising their passengers' transport. Our Guidelines state 2 x Fuel cost (including any Road User charges), shared among those in the vehicle. The purpose is to cover the non-fuel costs, eg wear and tear, tyres, risk etc. This can cause problems



with different numbers in each car, or different fuel consumption rates. The fairest solution is for ALL to pay the same fee, regardless of transport method, with all drivers being fully reimbursed through the club.

Feel free to comment on these matters.

Anyway, let's get out there and hit the hills!

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

**17-18 May**  
**Gunns Camp/Day Trips in Hollyford Valley [All]**  
**Wayne Hodgkinson ph. 473 0950**

This is a first so it should be interesting! Most of us will have some knowledge of Gunn's Camp as a somewhat rustic means of accommodation on the way to or from somewhere else. How many have actually stayed there? The camp was run by Davey and Murray Gunn for 50 years until 2005, and is now run by the Hollyford Museum Charitable Trust.

There are cabins, a backpacker dorm, kitchen, hot showers, toilets – all those mod cons we think necessary when we are not actually tramping.

An example of trips available from this base include Gertrude Saddle (depending on ice) 4 to 6 hours, Lake Marian 3 hrs, Key Summit 3 hrs, Hidden Falls 4 – 5 hrs, and various shorter day walks or even an energetic climb up the Deadman's or Pass Creek Tracks to the Routeburn.

A possible loop might be up Pass Creek to Howden Hut, and down via Key Summit to the Divide to link in with another group going to Key Summit from the Divide (for transport).

Or you might just want a relaxing time to read a book or go fishing.

The possibilities are ENDLESS!!!!!!

The longer distance for this trip gives us a cost of \$75 for transport. The backpacker dorms are \$25 per night, and you will need to bring cash as there are no eftpos or debit facilities at the camp.

Let's try for a van!

*(Continued on page 10)*

**Queens Birthday Weekend**  
**31 May-2 June**  
**Green lake Area [All]**  
**Wayne Hodgkinson ph. 473 0950**

Green Lake is the result of one of the largest documented landslides on earth, near the end of the latest glaciation about 13,000 years ago.

We will take advantage of a 3 day weekend to explore this area, with 2 main options available. Starting from Lake Monowai campsite, we will walk about 6 hours to Green Hut for our main accommodation. For day 2 we can either explore the tops via Borland Saddle, or take a lower level route and explore past Island Lake and into the Grebe Valley towards the historic Clark Hut. Both options would return to Green Hut for the night. Sign the Trip List in the clubrooms. Trip cost \$70

# DAYTRIPS

**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

**11 May**  
**Track Maintenance [All]**  
**Alan Thomson ph. 455 7878**

Starting from Sullivan's Dam, the Skyline track heads up towards Mount Cargill with the OTMC being instrumental in the building of this track.

In November last year (after quite a bit of snow damage over winter) some of our club members spent time removing broken branches and other debris from the first segment of the track and attached netting to some of the

boardwalk. However there are still quite a number of boardwalk sections that need to have netting installed and this is the target for today. So, please bring a hammer, (staples and netting will be provided) loppers, pruning shears and gardening gloves. This is a great opportunity to contribute to the upkeep of one of our local walking tracks. Car Pool cost \$5.00

**18 May**  
**Millennium Track**  
**Raewyn Duncan ph.**

This is a lovely walk, starting alongside the Taieri river until crossing boardwalk at Muddy creek. The track climbs steadily to where there are good views up and down the gorge. After climbing into a gully with large tree ferns, the track emerges at a high point and shortly afterwards drops down to John Bull Gully for lunch. There is the opportunity to carry onto the Henly end of the track.

**25 May**  
**Skyline Track**  
**Tony Timperley ph.**

This tramp has everything: rock scrambling, spectacular views, and a ramble across open farmland. The tramp starts at Sullivan's Dam, then climbs up through native forest, over an exposed rock ledge (with great views to the north) to eventually emerge on Cowan Road just below Mt Cargill. We will use the A.H.Reed track to climb up to the mast and enjoy the 360 deg views over the full length of the Otago Harbour, inland Otago, plus north and south coastal views.

What goes up must come down, so we will amble down Cowan Rd before cutting right to cross open farmland back towards the dam; however, just before we reach it we follow a pipeline through bush, along a muddy track, before emerging back at Sullivan's Dam. Car share cost: \$5

# Thursday Night Programme

## 1 May

The trio of OTMC members Antony and Debbie Pettinger and Andrew Pask completed a 3-day circuit above the North Routeburn, taking in the North Col and Lake Wilson. They will give us an illustrated talk describing this epic tramp

## 8 May

The Old Ghost Trail in Kahurangi National Park has recently been completed. It follows an old gold miners' road for 80km from Lyell in the Upper Buller Gorge to Seddonville on the West Coast. OTMC member Peter Loeber and some of his friends tramped over this trail recently and Peter will describe his experiences for us

## 15 May

During Waitangi weekend, Tomas Sobek and fellow OTMC members tramped the circuit from Flats Hut, up North Routeburn to North Col, on to Lake Nerine, then to Park Pass, down to the Rock Burn, before coming out over Sugarloaf. With the help of magnificent photos for which he is known, Tomas will describe this trip for us.

## 22 May

Each year, we all look forward to Antony Hamel's idiosyncratic and entertaining presentations of the Otago Cavalcade Walks. This year the walks covered the territory from the St.Bathans/Naseby area and finished in Ranfurly in time for the Art Nouveau Festival.

## 29 May

When tramping in the foothills, seeing native falcons can be a highlight of the trip. Dr Donna Falconer has studied the Eastern Falcon, or Karearea, (which some of you may have seen in the Mt Somers area) and will present the results of her findings to us.

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))

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