

**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.



Tomas Sobek

Committee Members 2014/15

President	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Vice President	Richard Forbes	453 1327
Secretary	Richelle Adams	476 1302
Treasurer	Rodger Clarkson	473 6053
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Membership Secretary	Richard Forbes	453 1327
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Daytrip Convener	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Website	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
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Visit us on the Internet at: www.otmc.co.nz

As I lay in bed on Sunday morning , waiting for the day to arrive, I saw a satellite race across the sky. This was not a unexpected or once in a lifetime event. But it did give me reason to pause and think. The night before I had seen a shooting star and only a week before that an amazing silent lightning storm somewhere in central otago. I thought of the many wondrous things I have seen by just keeping my eyes and ears open. Many people would not have seen these events. That in turn made me think of the things I have seen while tramping in the more remote parts of our lovely land. On several tramps (mostly before I joined OTMC) I have seen people jump out of bed, throw down a quick breakie and then rush out the door intent on getting to the next hut first to secure the best bunk. When at last I arrive and take the last bunk (beside the guy who snores) I ask everyone about their days travel and the experiences they had. “did you see the kaka ? “ “ wasn’t that waterfall amazing ! “ “ I hope you were careful and didn’t walk on the purple fungi” quite often the reply is “oh we didn’t see that”. It’s about then I wonder what did they see ? Maybe just their boots hitting the ground. I guess what I’m saying is that it’s really worth the time to slow down and observe the world around you. You’ll be amazed at all the things going on and if you slow down enough (maybe stop and rest) you might just see all the things that stopped because you interrupted them with your noisy arrival. This of course can apply to life in the city as well as in the back country. I’m probably preaching to the converted but give it a try. You may well be amazed at what you’ve been missing. If you want to talk to me about it, just stop and wait a while...I’m usually at the back of the pack

Letter to the Editor

At the AGM, Bruce Moore told us a bit about his early days as the first Chief Guide for the OTC, and how that set the scene for the way the Club is organised now. He also said this really important thing, which I have now heard many times: how being in the OTC/OTMC shaped one's career and professional development. The Club has given many people a good start in life by simply giving the youngster a responsibility, encouraging self-esteem and confidence, and fostering one's organisational skills; and doing so probably more effectively than any traditional schooling could.

I would like to take the opportunity to mention the folk before me who gave me a great boost at a critical time in my life, without which I'm not sure if I would have amounted to anything: Dick Brasier, Judy Knox, Bruce Moore, Trevor Pullar, Bruce Campbell, Ross Adamson, John Armstrong, Roger Conroy, Don Paterson and, later, Ron Keen. "Thank you."

Richard Pettinger

Chief Guide Comment

We are now well through our Winter Programme, with the days getting longer and hopefully warmer. Winter is not necessarily a time to hibernate, but can be a great opportunity to experience our familiar landscapes as a different environment. Often after tramping for a year or so, people get interested in the next 'thing', which might involve getting into some Alpine areas. With this in mind, it is an ideal time to upskill with some alpine experience, as the snow is easier to find than in summer. Often trips will involve travelling over a saddle or ridge with snow on it, regardless of the time of year. Two key trips are coming up – Ralph and Andy's Snow Skills – Basic Iceaxe and Crampons weekend will both introduce and reinforce some essential skills you should have if interested in tramping in snow conditions. Self arresting using an ice axe is something that needs to be practised until it is automatic should it be required. Similarly, Richard Pettinger's Snowcaving trip has been a regular with the OTMC, both for simple enjoyment and as a safety shelter technique should it be necessary. Snowcaves are also used as a planned accommodation avoiding the need to carry a tent. Try it out, you might get hooked. Moving into September we have a new trip into a new area with a new Trip Leader. Thank you Rose for taking us into the Manapouri / Garnockburn area.

So, there's something for everyone. Pop your name on the Trip Lists of your choice and get out there and do it. It is never too early to start thinking about the Summer Trip Programme – let me know your thoughts and preferably offer to lead a trip.

Trip Reports

Huxley Forks July 26-27

Group Brodrick hut.

- Friday

We started 6pm sharp and made our way to Lake Ohau, and arrived and parked the van on a grassy part. Richard got our packs loaded up his 4x4 and gave us a easy walk up to Monument hut. We arrived to find nobody was there yet so we got ourselves a nice mattress for the night. Some of us had their tent already pitched up and enjoying the night as they joined the ride with Richard.

- Saturday

We woke up to a perfect day and no cloud in sight and the sun rising slowly. We started walking up the track just before 10am and reached the wire bridge after an hour. We had a small break on the very sunny flats next to the Huxley river and we arrived at the Main Huxley Forks hut. This was just after 12noon. Maria and I had our lunch early as we aimed for another hut up the Huxley North Branch river, the Brodrick hut. Phillip Sommerville left us just before the hut flats to do some mountaineering on his own and crossed the Huxley river bear footed.



We started after 13:20pm and made our way to Brodrick hut, we talked to John and Ralph before and knew it would take us between 2,5 and 3,5 hours to reach the hut. So enough time to be there before sunset. The track started past the wire bridge over the Huxley North Branch in forest and quickly turns into a steep grind up where there was a huge tree fall and we had to find the track again. Maria had some more difficulty stepping over huge beech trees but we found the track and had a break. We continued a little further up and the track lead us down to the river bed and was marked with 2 orange poles. We followed the river bed and rock hopped along side the river. There were a lot of slips left and right as we went up the river. As we were advised that at a certain moment the track would go up into the forest and towards the hut, I followed the markers we

saw. We traversed over steep forest and over steep crevasses that were a little bit too steep for comfort. Later that evening we thought it would be better to walk closely to the river bed on the way back and should avoid the orange markers leading into the bush and parallel to the river because the small slips noted on the DOC website were actually



much much bigger. Of course we anticipated slippery rocks etc. as we were in July, and we passed some slippery rocks and steep icy slopes which we escaped by leaping for the safe parts. All in all a good exercise for assessing problems as you go. We stopped several times and looked at some steep and huge slip both sides along the river. From the beginning we were tramping in the sun and we took of some layers within half an hour. When

we advanced towards the hut the sun became to low and some layers came back on again. But my hat stayed on the whole time and was soaking wet from the work out we were getting. We followed a few times more the orange markers through the forest and it made us go up and down a little bit more than we had to but it gave us an awesome look over the river and up to Brodrick pass and surrounding mountains. The sun disappeared behind Mt Strauchon and just after 4:10pm we reached the hut. The hut was still warm inside as if someone had left the fire on. We had a cup of tea, lit the fire, chopped some wood, made our 4 course dinner, played a game of scrabble and went to sleep in a warm hut just after 9pm.

- Sunday

We woke up just after 7am and quickly got ourselves organised for breakfast, packing our bags, cleaning the hut and after a quick photo shoot session we descended down the river @ 8:15am. The morning brought us a river with lower water levels and of course icy slippery rocks but only on the creek ends so progress out the valley was fast and we managed to shave a half hour of our time we went in. At 10:40am we arrived at the Main Huxley Fork hut and we still could smell the fire smoke from the trampers last night. We made our way out of the Huxley valley and saw Richard standing on the river bank looking for trampers, it turned out they were also still looking for Phillip. We reach Monument Hut again nicely before 1pm. and after a deserving lunch we walk out without our back packs thanks to Richard.

Peter Boeckhout for Maria Hamelink

Snow Skills 9-10 August

From when I first went snowcaving in 1969 and especially once I started leading these annual trips, I used to worry about the weather we might have on the trip. You are up in the death zone all weekend, really, and it could be really miserable if things turned crappy. We would be forced to take turns to get out of the wind and the driving snow to dig. We would make two entrances just to keep everyone occupied and active and warm. And, the leader would get dirty looks for dreaming up this cruel punishment.

In recent years weather forecasts have become steadily more accurate. Nowadays, we have a dilemma, as leaders of trips, especially snowcaving. So: if the weather forecast seems not too bad, and you decide to go anyway, you are no better than the ignorant optimists of old. And, if you decide these days to go ahead, anyway, and it turns out you misjudged and then things got really bad, those poor souls on your trip could hate you forever for putting them in this cold and potentially hypothermic situation. They would never trust you again. So, in the days leading up to the snowcaving trip, I am normally watching the 3-day forecast closely, fretting about whether to call it off, to avoid people ending up in a really bad way, and hating me forever.

This year I had no such qualms. The weather forecast from several days in advance, was good in both senses – it was for ultra-fine weather and turned out 100% reliable. Phew. Also, there was ample snow, which there hadn't been three weeks earlier. Luck was on our side.

Twelve people signed up, joined at the last minute by Tracy, who didn't want to miss this specially promising trip.

We got away by about 7.10 am and ran out of coastal cloud by Roxburgh where we had a bit of a preparatory talk in the Teviot Tearooms, over hot drinks. The road was a bit cut up, and there were snowdrifts ahead, so we stopped the cars by where snowmobiles are often parked and walked from there. We made good progress, and after about an hour, those in front were ready to leave the road to check out then choose a good site, while I turned to talk to a young runner coming up fast behind us.

Maximilian had raced up the road to sound the alarm that a party member had conked out. Amit turned out to be our Burmese Firecracker (Tracy called him our Eveready Bunny). He dropped his pack, turned around and scurried back down with Tracy to bring Ralph's pack up. Some double-packing occurred – Alex for one stretch resembling a small tank. The load ensured he sank into the snow more often and deeper than most. We all got to the gully by lunchtime.

Every year the snow lies differently. This was the best I have ever encoun-

tered. Depth and texture were spot-on. The site chosen by the lads in front was perfect. We avoided today's particular death zone under the loose cornice, and watched bits fall off from a safe distance. There was sufficient depth of snow for probably twice as many caves, in nice steepish terrain lower down the slope than normal. It was all very convenient, with not too long a walk to the creek for water (albeit with part of the water run threatened by avalanches). I was so pleased that when I had arrived Lun was already digging enthusiastically in a well-chosen spot. Everyone got into digging, taking turns to have lunch and sightseeing breaks. Fast progress was made.

Wayne tried an igloo as an aside, but it looked like his team ran out of steam to do justice to the available snow, or maybe they preferred the thought of huddling up tight in their cave. Rob's team made a grand entrance which they later blocked up into a somewhat narrow hole reminiscent of the arrow-slots in an ancient fortification. There was no stopping my team from going mad, and we soon had a palatial bench for the five of us, with a carefully smoothed ceiling.

There comes a moment in the process of digging a snowcave when you know damn well that you could now all huddle in the hole you have already, and survive a night out of the wind and in a cocoon of relatively warm air. But, when you've got shovels (rather than bowls, ice-axes and fingernails) and enough time, this is when you start being creative and then it becomes all cosmetic with room for everyone to lie down and with your spiral staircases, shelves and handrails and everything a palace might have except an indoor bathroom. (That's never going to be a good idea.)

Every cave was a work of art in one way or another, but several people were in no hurry to avail themselves of the icy comfort of their boudoirs. Tomas was scurrying around with his camera (to spectacular effect as it turned out) and Alex and Amit were among those just spell-bound staring into the clearest, moonlessest star-filled sky you ever saw. It was a very special evening. It is so lucky for the Club to have access to this perfect setting for this spe-



cial, social trip. Gaining experience that could save the life of those crazy enough to venture into the snows.

I understand everybody had a comfy night and next morning the view was stunning, with a valley full of cloud below us, stretching as far as Mount St Bathans. We did various wanders up onto the tops in windless conditions and mucked about to fill out the morning. Tracy found the snow not conducive to shovel riding, however.

Back at the caves, we ate lunch, played at seeing how thick the roofs were, etc, and once again chose not to put all the snow back in the holes. (We left more than footprints, I must confess – it was a bomb site of snow, rivalling nature's avalanche debris along the slope.)

The walk out and coffee in Roxburgh and drive home was uneventful, all getting back by about 5.30. Thanks for making this another great trip!

Richard Pettinger for Tracy Pettinger, Rob Seeley, Joe Skinner, Isabelle Gensburger, Tomas Sobek, Wayne Hodgkinson, Barry Walker, Ralph Harvey, Maximilian Berger, Teck Lun Soon, Alex Tups, Amit Myint.

Mountain Safety Council First Aid Course

Workplace First Aid Courses in the Outdoors - Registrations Open Now!

Workplace First Aid in the Outdoors – Full 2 Day Course
Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th October

For bookings and more information about these courses please visit our website <http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz> or contact Toni on 03 313 0507.

Triplist

**4-5 October
Dumb Bell Lake (M)
Gordon Tocher (472 7440)**

Head towards Lake Ohau, park the van and head up Freehold Creek to the tussock basins to the south of the ski field. Options abound for a weekend trip, either camping in the basins or head down to Dumb Bell Lake. Dumb Bell Lake is a sub-alpine lake nestled in a tussock and scree basin at 1557m. The plan is to follow easy tracks up Freehold Creek and follow a lightly marked route to the lake.

**25-27 October (Labour Weekend)
Central Otago Rail Trail
Gene Dyett 4557465 or Ray McAliece 4544211**

150 KM of pure fun from Clyde To Middlemarch, Ride it, Experience it, immerse yourself in Central Otago's Beauty and Rugged History. Will Be leaving 6pm Friday and heading for Clyde, this will give us more time for other options on Saturday afternoon. First night stay is Omakau, Second night stay will be Ranfurly. Land of Schist and Tors, there are 12 red ganger's sheds along the way for shelter also info panels as well. We cross 45 Degrees South Latitude and the highest point near Wedderburn. Cafes, Historic Pubs, Viaduct. Historic Hayes Engineering, Gilchris's NZ oldest general store, Golden Progress Mine and Tunnels to ride though are but just a few of the many things to see and do. Finishing at the Quench Cafe Middlemarch on the Monday for a well deserved break before heading home. Check out the Website www.otagocentrailtrail.co.nz

**25-26 October (Labour Weekend)
Roxburgh Gorge Cycle
Jane Cloete 467-2328**

NOTE that this is NOT the main OTMC cycle trip on this weekend. The main group will be enjoying three days on the Central Otago Rail Trail. This trip is a bit expensive, but apparently the boat trip is worth doing once in your life.

DATES: Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th October – stay Saturday night in Roxburgh OR just one long day on the Saturday. **Numbers:** Maximum of 5 people. There will be NO back-up road transport so you will need panniers or a backpack with your food (2 lunches, one breakfast, a portion of a shared meal, snacks and drinks) and also wet-weather gear, evening clothes.

DISTANCES: Day One 11+ km bike, 13 km boat, 25km cycle – lots of hills but all well-graded (total 36 km on the bike). Day Two 45km cycling. Somewhat flatter than Day One. Total 70-80km cycling
OR 70-80 km all in one day, on the Saturday.

Cell phone coverage is limited for most of the journey

TRANSPORT: Car pool to Beaumont. Road transport from Beaumont to Alexandra is arranged by the Beaumont Jet people. They are doing the boat transport mid-gorge too.

ACCOMMODATON: Saturday night is at the Roxburgh motorcamp (all bed-linen and a towel is supplied).

COST for the 2 days = \$150 pp (- maximum - hopefully will be a bit less by the time all is totalled up (includes transport Beaumont to Alexandra, boat trip and accommodation)



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.

DAYTRIPS

5th October

Unexplored Silverpeaks (F)

Richard Pettinger (487 9488)

So you've survived the insanity of snow caving, the AGM and the NZ Elections, can you survive this? A trip with no known destination until we assemble at 9am at the Clubrooms. Starting at Whare Flat, Semple Rd, Leith Saddle, Woodhaugh? Who can tell. We will go to a place no-one on the trip has been to before (or if they have they forgot). Fitness is fairly essential as is a sense of humour. \$8

12th October

Waitati—Mt Cargill Cycle

Rodger Clarkson (473 6053 or 021 0268 2778)

With the Labour Weekend rail trail trip a couple of weeks away this is a good opportunity to do one of Dunedin's best cycle fitness circuits in preparation. This trip is a combination of gravel and tarseal road riding with 2 x 3-400m climbs.

Cycle time for the basic circuit is about 2 ½ hours cycle time at an easy pace and is about 35km There may also be opportunity to do some easier off road tracks in the area. We'll leave from Willowbank Dairy (Corner George St and Malvern St near Woodhaugh Gardens) at 9:20am. Trip Cost: Free.

19 October

Catlins—Papatowai Walks (E/M)

Ruth Harvey (481 1455)

Join Ruth for an interesting jaunt into a lesser visited Sunday walk destination. Meet at the clubrooms at 9am prepared for a walk in the Catlins. \$30

26 October

No trip (Labour Weekend)

The OTMC Bank Account is now with ASB. The new account number is:

12-3150-0311684-00

Remember to include your name and the reason for your payment when paying by internet banking.

Non-members must pay for trips when signing the trip list, members before the trip departs

Thursday Night Programme

2nd October

Active OTMC member Barry Walker is widely travelled. In this presentation, Barry will show and describe for us a 35- day trip along South Africa's southern coast from Cape Town to Johannesburg. This journey will include the kingdoms of Lesotho and Swaziland, and six days in the Kruger National Park. .

9th October

Ruth Harvey is also an active OTMC member and she has 10 years experience as a clinical dietician. She has been tramping for 25 years, which has included some mountaineering and ice climbing. Ruth will give us the benefit of her knowledge and experience when she discusses food selection based upon the type of tramping trip you are doing. She will also highlight some foods and drinks which may cause problems.

16 October

BYO - For this session we should have "exclusives" from the goings on at Richelle's crib in Albertown. (There may be some photos from the tramps they did from there.) There should also be photos from Dumbell Lake and the Sunday trips, including those brought out by the survivors of Richard's "Unexplored Silver Peaks".

23 October

No social evening event as everyone will be getting ready for the Labour Weekend bike trips.

30 October

First Aid - Part 3. As the first two courses were so well supported, Helen will be doing a follow-up First Aid course. This time she will cover neck and spinal injuries and how to move a patient with these injuries, which will include stretcher work. The other main topic will be hypothermia outdoors, its treatment and prevention.

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 Gene Dyett (phone 455 7465, email m.gdyett@xtra.co.nz)

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